Sacred time, sacred space. history and identity in the monastery of Fulda (744-856)
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In the late spring of 835, a priest of Fulda, called Theotmar, was on his way to Mainz. In the Miracula sanctorum in Fuldenses ecclesias, written by Rudolf of Fulda some ten years after the event, we read how Hrabanus Maurus had sent the priest to the city for some unspecified business with the archbishop. But without doubt the abbot had sent Theotmar to Mainz because Hrabanus had heard that the relic trader Deusdona was in town.

Deusdona was active within an adventurous network of relic traders, among whose customers were prominent courtiers such as Einhard (†840) and Hilduin of St Denis (†855). Little is known of this shadowy figure. He seems to have been a deacon of the Roman church, who lived near the church St Peter in Chains. He certainly knew his way around the Roman catacombs. Together with his brothers, Theodorus and Lunisus, and a member of his household Sabbatinus, Deusdona had started off a successful trade in relics that supplied these treasures to northerners. In 835, after a stop at Seligenstadt for another delivery of relics to Einhard, Deusdona called at Mainz. There he met Theotmar, the priest from Fulda. The news about Einhard’s acquisition of Roman martyrs’ bones and the connections with Deusdona must have travelled fast, reaching the ears of Hrabanus. Hrabanus moved in the same circles as Einhard and other clients in Deusdona’s network. Hence, perhaps, the fact that the abbot of Fulda too became one of his customers.

According to the Miracula sanctorum, the abbot had sent his priest to investigate what wares the trader might have to offer him. The text narrates in detail how Theotmar travelled back and forth between Mainz and Fulda while negotiating with the relic dealer on behalf of his abbot. Deusdona proceeded cautiously. At that time there were many people in Mainz to celebrate the feast of SS Marcellinus and Peter (2 June). The taverns of Mainz, including the one where Deusdona was staying, were packed with visitors, amongst whom there were devout Christians, but according to the Miracula sanctorum also people with less good intentions.

2 Einhard, Translatio et miracula, liber I, c. 3, p. 241.
3 Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 9, p. 336; Einhard, Translatio et miracula, liber I c. 4, p. 241; liber II c. 2, p. 246; liber IV, c. 16, pp. 262-3. Given that the traders covered many kilometres between Rome and Francia every year relic trade must have been a lucrative business in this period (the 830s). Rudolf talks in his Miracula sanctorum about gifts of the abbot of Fulda to Deusdona and his companion, though he does not mention how much Deusdona got for the relics. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 3, p.332; also c. 2, p. 330.
Deusdona certainly did not trust all his fellow guests. He intended to wait until the festivities were over and these malevolent customers were gone, before travelling to Fulda to deliver the relics. But doubtless the main reason to stay a bit longer in Mainz was that 5 June was the feast day of Boniface, the patron saint of Fulda, and on that day a great throng would be in Fulda to celebrate the feast of the martyr. Deusdona and the abbot of Fulda could not have planned better. On 4 June Deusdona arrived at the church on the Johannesberg, a satellite church near Fulda. He was welcomed by the abbot of the monastery, his monks and the faithful who had come to Fulda to render Boniface honour. On the Johannesberg, the lay people were given the opportunity to venerate the saints, whose holy remains lay in a box held up on a stretcher. From there the procession of monks carried the treasures to their abbey church, where the box was opened the following day.

After the transaction between Hrabanus Maurus and Deusdona the interest of Fulda’s abbot in the relic trade was raised. Between 835 and 838 at least another four loads of remains of sacred bodies arrived in Fulda. In only a few years time Hrabanus had brought together the holy remains of nothing less than at least thirty-eight martyrs, most of all from Rome. What did Hrabanus Maurus do with all those relics? Why did the monks of Fulda need saints from Rome, when they already had their own martyr, namely Boniface, someone with whom they were directly linked through their history?

The story about the relic translations derives from the *Miracula sanctorum* of Rudolf of Fulda that I have briefly referred to above. It is the only extant contemporary source that reveals something of the events of the late 830s. In the *Miracula sanctorum*, Rudolf had described how Fulda had acquired the relics, the route they had travelled to their final resting-place, the miracles they had worked on the way and after they had arrived, the ceremonies surrounding the translations and arrival of the relics. Rudolf also inserted the dates of the arrival of the relics, the names of the places they were brought to and the inscriptions being made to honour, signify and remember them. The monk wrote the text within ten years after the relics had arrived in Fulda. The text can be dated with some precision: as is evident from the *Miracula sanctorum* that Hrabanus was no longer abbot of Fulda when Rudolf wrote the text and, as Rudolf does not refer to Hrabanus as archbishop of Mainz, the document has been dated

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4 Rudolf wrote: 'veritus est enim, ne forte eorum machinationibus vel fraude vel violentia reliquias amitteret'. Idem, c. 2, p. 332.
5 Idem, c. 2, p. 332.
6 Idem, c. 15, p. 340.
between 842 and 847. The second part of this chapter is about this text, analysing Rudolf’s motivations to write it.

Inevitably Rudolf’s selection of his material shapes our picture of Hrabanus’ activities as relic collector. As the Miracula sanctorum is the sole source, which describes the relic translations, we need to be careful in our conclusions about Hrabanus’ activities based on the Miracula sanctorum, but with the help of Hrabanus’ own work such as the poems that he wrote in honour of the saints whose relics he had collected, it is possible to make some distinction between the intentions of the abbot and the purposes of his biographer. Let us now turn to Hrabanus Maurus and his relic translations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>835</td>
<td>4 June Arrival of SS Alexander, Felicissimus, Concordia, Fabianus, Urbanus, Castulus, Sebastian, Pamphilus, Papia, Maurus, Victor, Felicitas, Emmerentia and Basilla in Fulda</td>
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<td>29 July Disposition of SS Alexander and Fabianus in church on Frauenberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>836</td>
<td>24 April Arrival of SS Quirinus, Cornelius, Calistus, Nereus, Achilleus, Turturinus and Stacteus in Fulda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 May Arrival of St Venantius in Fulda and disposition, together with SS Quirinus and Urbanus in church on Johannesberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>836</td>
<td>5 April Arrival of SS Cornelius, Calistus, Agapitus, Georgius, Vincentius, Maximus, Cecilia, Eugenia, Digna, Emerita and Columbana in Fulda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 July</td>
<td>Arrival of SS Quirinus, Urbanus, Cecilia, Tiburtius, Valerianus, Maximus, Agapitus, Januarius, Magnus, Zeno, Hypolitus, Aquila and Priscilla in Fulda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Sept.</td>
<td>Dedication of the church on Ugesberg, the translation of St Leoba and relics of SS Felicitas, Concordia, Basilla, Emerentiana, Candida, Eutropia, Aquila and Priscilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Sept.</td>
<td>Disposition of SS Cornelius, Calistus, Sixtus, Sinistius, Nicasius, Felix, Stacteus, Pamphilus, Crispinus, Crispinianus, Nerus, Achilleus, Sebastian, Castulus, Romanus, Papia, Maurus, Valerianus, Cecilia, Eugenia and Anastasia in Fulda’s abbey church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Oct.</td>
<td>Disposition of SS Januarius and Magnus in Holzkirchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>Disposition SS Cecilia, Tiburtius and Valerianus in Rasdorff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19: relics brought to Fulda in the 830s

Revival of relic translations

The relic translations to Fulda must be considered in relation to a general revival of relic translations in the Frankish empire in the second quarter of the ninth century. Hilduin and Einhard had set the fashion. Einhard, a worthy follower of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, had been entrusted with several monasteries including Michelstadt and Seligenstadt as a

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7 Only Stengel has argued that Rudolf wrote the text much later, namely after the death of Hrabanus, as the author wrote in the past tense about the abbot. ‘Die Urkundenfälschungen des Rudolfs von Fulda’, p. 37. I think this is not a decisive argument, as it was not uncommon to write in the past tense about living people.
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reward for his good service. Hilduin was abbot of St Denis, St Germain-des-Prés (Paris) and St Médard in Soissons and, from 819 onward, arch-chaplain of Louis the Pious.

In 826 Hilduin obtained the body of saint Sebastian. It was the first time in almost fifty years that any pope had consented to unlock the Roman catacombs for the transfer north of a martyr’s body. Factionalism and a continuous strife over the Holy See had forced the incumbent pontiff to relax old regulations that prohibited the removal of bodies of holy dead and to reopen the Roman catacombs. In exchange for Carolingian support the pope had granted Hilduin permission to take the body of St Sebastian. The following year Einhard pursued another course by not directly approaching the pope as Hilduin had done, but rather, by striking a bargain with Deusdona. According to his own account, Einhard met Deusdona in the imperial palace at Aachen. They agreed that Einhard would send his notary, Ratleic, to Rome where Deusdona would provide Einhard’s ambassador with relics of some Roman martyrs. The party that travelled to Rome included not only Ratleic, but also two of Hilduin’s servants who themselves hoped to seize the opportunity to acquire more relics. After an adventurous and quite dangerous journey, Ratleic brought his master the bodies of the third-century martyrs Marcellinus and Peter in November 827.

Others would imitate the initiatives taken by the two churchmen. Each spring relic traders such as Deusdona and his partners crossed the Alps and called in at religious communities to sell their wares. Yet relic translations were not a new phenomenon. Ever since the cults of martyrs had flourished, so had the transfer of relics to places that did not have bodies of holy dead of their own, whether authorities permitted it or not. But often the translations concerned contact relics (objects that been in touch with the saints, not parts of the bodies of the holy men and women) and at least in Merovingian Gaul transfers of remains of holy dead were rare. Only in Carolingian times did the relics become really wanted and only then did it become common practice to translate corporeal parts of

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8 See the introduction of Paul E. Dutton to his Charlemagne’s Courtier, pp. xvi-xviii.
9 Until Hilduin chose the side of the rebels in an uprising against the Carolingian emperor in 830.
11 The servants of Hilduin had stolen a small part of them. For a detailed account of what had happened, see Einhard’s Translatio et miracula, liber II, c. 1-3, pp. 245-6.
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saints' bodies. Especially the third quarter of the eighth century and the second quarter of the ninth saw a lively circulation of relics.13

The motives to acquire them were many. Private piety could inspire people to remove corporeal remains of saints, or the wish of a newly founded religious community to obtain patron saints.14 The Carolingian rulers themselves actively participated in the distribution of relics, whether for private devotion or to provide religious communities within their empire with powerful patrons.15 The Carolingians further reinforced the central position of relics within religious life. Each altar was legally obliged to contain relics and all oaths were to be sworn on relics or in a church.16 Apart from that, the Frankish kings at the same time tried to check a proliferation of relic thefts and captures by decreeing that physical remains of holy dead were only to be removed with the permission of a council of bishops or of a ruler.17

Hrabanus Maurus and his collection of relics

On the basis of what we can derive from the Miracula sanctorum, Hrabanus appears not to have used the relics to build new churches or bring the holy remains to places without patron saints.18 The majority of the holy treasures the abbot located in the abbey church of Fulda, where Boniface was buried and many other saints were represented. For the abbey church Hrabanus had two reliquaries built; one in the eastern apse of the basilica, the other on the spot where Boniface's grave had been until 819 and where now the altar of the Holy Cross stood.19 One reliquary he enriched with

13 Smith, 'Roman relics in Carolingian Francia', pp. 335-9; Angenendt, Heilige und Reliquien, pp. 149-66.
14 In 846 Liudolf, count of Saxony, together with his wife Oda acquired relics for their new foundation at Gandersheim. For more examples see Smith, 'Einhard, the sinner and the saints'; idem, 'Old saints, new cults', pp. 329-30.
15 In 841 Charles the Bald arranged the translation of Germanus to Autun. (Gesta pontificum Autissiodorensium, MGH SS 13, p. 397) and in 868 to a cella of St Maur (Odon de Glanfeuil, Ex miraculis s. Mauri, ASOB saec. IV, vol. 2, p. 166). Hermann-Mascard, Les Reliques des Saints, pp. 179-80. For more motives of Carolingian rulers to obtain relics, see: Geary, Furta Sacra, pp. 41-2; Rudolf Schieffer, 'Reliquientranslationen nach Sachsen' in: 799. Kunst und Kultur vol. 1, pp. 484-97.
17 Capitula de causis cum episcopis et abbatibus tractandis (811), ed. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1, c. 7, p. 163; Concilium Moguntinense (813), ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH Conc. 2/1, c. 51, p. 272.
18 It would be worthwhile to check other examples as well. In Essen we notice the same: relics there were not used to fill empty churches with patron saints. See Katrinette Bodarwé, 'Roman martyrs and their veneration in Ottonian Saxony: the case of the sanctimoniales of Essen', EME 9:3 (2000) pp. 345-65.
19 Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 3, 4 and 14, p. 333 and 339.
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the physical remains of fifteen martyrs, in the other one he put the corporeal relics of twenty-one martyrs.20

![Map of Saxony and Thuringia](image)

**Figure 20: Fulda and surroundings**

The rest of the relics the abbot distributed to the satellite churches of the monastery on the neighbouring hills and some dependencies farther away from the monastery.21 From the *Miracula sanctorum* of Rudolf we know the names of five of the churches which Hrabanus endowed with relics, and which saints were given to which church. This selection is probably determined by Rudolf’s decision to relate only the translation of Roman martyrs in his *Miracula sanctorum*. The relics of Alexander and Fabianus Hrabanus brought to the church of Mary on the Frauenberg22, he carried the body of St Venantius together with relics of SS Quirinus and Urbanus to the church of John the Baptist on Johannesberg23 and to the church on the Ugesberg, Hrabanus took the body of Leoba together with

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20 Idem, c. 3 and 14, pp. 333 and 339–40.
22 This happened 29 July 835, in the presence of the corepiscopus of Mainz. Idem, c. 3, p. 332.
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relics of seven female martyrs. He brought the relics of the saints Januarius and Magnus, subdeacons of the martyr pope Sixtus II, to Holzkirchen. The church of Rasdorf Hrabanus enriched with relics of the saints Cecilia, Tiburtius and Valerianus.

Johannesberg, Ugesberg and Frauenberg had been part of Carloman’s gift to Boniface and Sturmi in 743. Frauenberg lies directly to the north of the monastery, at a distance of only a fifteen minutes walk. Johannesberg sits to the southwest of Fulda near the Giesel, a branch of the river Fulda. The Ugesberg stands three kilometres east of Fulda. On Johannesberg and Frauenberg, Ratgar had built churches some twenty years before the relic translations took place. In 809 the archbishop of Mainz had dedicated the church on the Frauenberg to Mary; hence the name of the hill that was also called Bishop’s Mount, as it was the place Boniface used to retire to during his visits to Fulda. In 812 the church on the Johannesberg was dedicated to John the Baptist and perhaps to John the Evangelist. Only on the Ugesberg there had never before been a church. Here Hrabanus built a new one.

The churches of Holzkirchen and Rasdorf were even older than the ones on the Johannes- and Frauenberg. Holzkirchen, a small monastery (monasteriolum) twenty kilometres west of Würzburg, had been founded by the count of the district, Troandus, around the middle of the eighth-century and dedicated to Mary. Troandus had granted Holzkirchen to Charlemagne and the king transferred the monastery to Fulda in 775.

Rasdorf lies north of the Rhön near the old road from Frankfurt to Leipzig in the valley of the Grüsselbach. Rasdorf had been inhabited long before Sturmi searched the woods of Buchonia to found a monastery. As in Fulda, there had presumably used to be a Frankish royal curtis in the

24 Hrabanus also placed the relics of Aquila, the husband of one of the seven female martyrs (Priscilla), in the church.
25 On 25 October in the presence of the bishop of Würzburg the relics were put in a stone ark east of the altar of Mary. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 12, p. 337.
26 Idem c. 13, p. 338.
27 Carloman donated all the land north, south, east and west of the point where Fulda was founded, for a distance of four miles. Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 12, p. 143.
28 ‘et ecclesia sanctae Mariae in monte dedicata’, Chronicon Laurissense breve (AD. 809), p. 37. See also Corradini, Die Wiener Handschrift Cup 430, fol. 7v.
29 ‘Eo anno dedicata est ecclesia sancti Johannis baptistae in australi parte monasterii iuxta flumen Gisalahha’, Chronicon Laurissense breve (AD. 812), p. 38. This happened when the (arch)bisops of Mainz, Würzburg, Worms and Augsburg came to Fulda to restore peace in the community and end the conflict of the monks with Ratgar. For the patronage of John the Evangelist see Renate Köchling-Dietrich, ‘Die Andreas-Kirche in Fulda-Neuenberg’, Archiv für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte 48 (1996) p. 27.
30 See the following paragraph of this chapter.
31 MGH Diplomata I, nr. 106, pp. 150-1.
eight century. Around 780 a wealthy family from Eastern Francia donated Rasdorf to Fulda. It was then that the monks built a small monastery in Rasdorf dedicated to John the Baptist, which for the first time is mentioned in a charter of 2 May 816.

On the basis of what we know from the *Miracula sanctorum* Hrabanus did not gather and distribute Roman relics to convert pagan people to Christianity or to provide new and empty churches with patron saints. The abbot brought the relics to churches that already existed for many years, one even for almost a century, and in regions that had been Christian for quite some time. In addition to this the concerning churches already had their patron saints, namely Mary, John the Baptist or Boniface. Why then did Hrabanus present the churches new relics? To understand what the motives behind the collection of relics of Hrabanus were, we need to have a closer look at what the abbot did with the relics and the places he took the relics to.

**The church on the Ugesberg**

To demonstrate the ideas that underlay the relic translations, I will turn to the little church on the Ugesberg, nowadays called Petersberg, which had been built under Hrabanus' direction. The hill lies some three kilometres east of Fulda. It consists of basalt, with steep rock-faces, covered with forest, and as such is difficult to cultivate and build upon. The view from the top is excellent, however, as it rises fifty metres above the surrounding area, only the neighbouring Eulenberg is a bit higher. This was probably one of the reasons Hrabanus chose to build a church on top of this hill, no matter the challenges involved.

Of all Fulda's satellite churches we know most about the church on the Ugesberg. It was an isled basilica with a crypt. Only a part of the crypt has survived, amongst others, the attacks of the Hungarians. This portion of the crypt still retains part of its original ninth century wall painting. In the beginning of the previous century the wall paintings were discovered,

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33 Like there probably also was one in Hünfeld. Sturm, 'Rasdorf', p. 6.
34 *CDF*, nr. 323, p. 156.
35 In Rasdorf Cecilia became fellow-patron of the church, in Holzkirchen Sixtus. The monastery of Holzkirchen was no longer called St Mary's, Sixtus also appeared in the patronage title. See for example: *CDF*, nr. 787, p. 384. After the translation Cecilia became the second patron saint of the community of Rasdorf, after John the Baptist. See for example *CDF*, nr. 717, p. 333.
36 It was called Ugesberg till the eleventh century. The first source that mentions the 'Petersberg' (*Mons sancti Petri*) is the *Vita Bardonii, MGH SS* 11 (Hanover 1854) p. 325.
but they were unfortunately repainted in 1935. During restorations in the 1970s, the upper coat was removed again and, although the pictures are slowly fading away, part of the original Carolingian paintings is still visible.  

There are no traces of earlier occupation. With no existing church to reckon with Hrabanus had free play in the realisation of his creation and made full use of this opportunity. Using paintings, poems, architecture and relics the abbot created a piece of exegesis on the Ugesberg, which needed to be understood in not only a literal sense but also a spiritual sense.

The entrance of the church probably was on the southwest side, opposite the high altar. The centre of the church and the focus of the liturgy was the altar of the Holy Saviour in the choir. In the apse probably two scenes from the gospels were painted on the walls: Christ’s Ascension and Pentecost. The paintings are no longer there, but the *tituli* that Hrabanus had painted on the apse side are preserved partly in a tenth century manuscript and partly in a seventeenth century edition.

*Tituli* are short poems, which were inscribed on altars and reliquaries or painted on the walls of churches to edify and direct the visitors and users of the buildings in question. The practise of writing *tituli* goes back to Late Antiquity and was often used in combination with architecture and images, such as in fifth-century Nola.

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39 The *Miracula sanctorum* is the first written source to mention the building of the church. Rudolf is very clear that it was Hrabanus who built the church. Rudolf, *Miracula sanctorum*, c. 14, p. 339. See also the *Gesta abbatum*, p. 273. Although the twelfth-century *Codex Eberhardi* dates the origins of the church even earlier, the time of the first abbot Sturmi, there is no proof for this early date or for Sturmi’s involvement in the construction. Dendrochronological research has shown that the trees used to build the crypt were felled in the 830s, which accords with the dates of Hrabanus’ relic translations and the construction of the church according to the *Miracula sanctorum*. Claussen, ‘Eine Reliquiennische’, p. 245.
40 On the altar the following text was inscribed: ‘In hoc ara continetur reliquiae sancti Salvatoris de loco ascensionis eius et reliquiae duodecim apostolorum’. Brouwer, *Antiquitates Fuldenses*, c. 15, p. 162-3.
41 The *tituli* that Hrabanus wrote for the churches of Fulda are passed on to us in a tenth century manuscript from Einsiedeln, which contains Hrabanus’ poems and *tituli* and the *carmina Einsidlenis*, in Brouwer’s edition of Rudolf’s *Miracula sanctorum*, *Fuldensium antiquitatum*, published in 1612 and Brouwer’s edition of Hrabanus’ poems and *tituli*, which Brouwer added to his volume on Venantius Fortunatus (Mainz 1617). See: the introduction of Gereon Becht-Jördens to his *Vita Aegil* pp. xxxiii–vi; Dittmiller’s edition of Hrabanus’ poems, *MGH Poet. Lat.* 2, p. 158; Werner Meyer-Barkhausen, ‘Die Versinschriften (tituli) des Hrabanus Maurus als Bau- und Kunstgeschichtliche Quellen’, *HJL* 7 (1957) p. 62.
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of Nola (412-31) and promoter of the cult of the third-century confessor Felix, constructed a complex of buildings round about the grave of the saint. With tituli on the walls Paulinus explained the importance of saintly patronage and the symbolic meaning of the architecture of the complex. Paulinus wanted to direct the perception of the people and prepare them before they entered the Holy of Holiest.43

So too Hrabanus tried to guide the behaviour and thoughts of the visitors of his churches. A titulus on the left altar in Holzkirchen that Hrabanus inscribed ran:

Shining in the circle of the sun the beautiful martyr Boniface possesses this altar together with his companions. If you, reader, would like to know their names, look at this painting and read the tituli.44

The inscription reveals that the paintings and Hrabanus' tituli were intended to teach the faithful. The inscriptions urged the guests to pay respect to the holy men and women, whom the churches represented, and through them to honour God.45 Evoking their presence the paintings were also a tool in the commemoration of the saints.46 In addition to this, readers who were trained in exegesis immediately comprehended that the metrical style signalled a shift to a higher level of understanding.47

The poem that Hrabanus wrote for the apse of the church on the Ugesberg goes as follows:

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44 'Clarus in orbis solis martyr Bonifacii istud / Obtinet altare cum sociis pariter. / Quorum si, lector, tu noscere nomina quaevis, / Inspice picturam et relige titulos'. Fuldeinsium antiquitatum, liber 3, p. 140. Other examples are: the inscription of the high altar in Holzkirchen: 'Virginibus praesens sacra haec decoratur et ara, / Qua supra pietas absida laeta notat.' Hrabani Mauri Carmina nr. XLV, p. 215; Congregationes et monasteria Fuldensi eclesiae incta et adunata, p. 140. In case of the Ratgau basilica also textual sources refer to pictura. See Candidus, Vita Aegil II c. 17, l. 133-7; and Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 13, p. 338.


46 According to Hrabanus in De Universo a painting is an image, expressing the exterior of something that leads to remembrance as long as it is perceived. 'Pictura est imagine expressim speciem rei alicuius, quae dum visa fuerit, ad recordationem mentem reduxit.' De Universo, c. 9 De Pictura, PL 111, p. 563.

47 See Chapter Three, the paragraph on Candidus' use of poetry in writing the Vita Aegil.
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Look, the Creator of the people, the Victor rises above the air\textsuperscript{48},
He opens the holy entrances to his Kingdom for his disciples.
Here, heavenly prophecies proclaim his Second Coming
In a blazing fire, together with the faithful, the host of the apostles
receives the gifts of the Comforter.\textsuperscript{49}

The reading of the verses immediately evokes the images of the Ascension of Christ and the infusion of the Holy Spirit into the apostles and the confused mass of people flocking together. One is invited to visualise Christ opening the gates to the Heavenly Jerusalem. Probably the Ascension of Christ and Pentecost actually were painted on the walls of the apse. As I have explained above, paintings accompanied the altars and inscriptions in the crypt and similar arrangements of altar, inscription and painting are known of other churches that Hrabanus enriched with relics. The \textit{titulus} not only described what was on the painting but also connected the present with the past and future. ‘Here’ in the \textit{titulus} not only refers to the Kingdom of Christ, but presumably also hinted at the position of the church on the Ugesberg itself as a reflection of God’s ecclesia. Likewise ‘the faithful’ might be understood not only as the people in Jerusalem who heard the apostles suddenly speaking their languages because of the gift of tongues, but also as the present-day community who visited the church, read the \textit{titulus} and envisaged the paintings.

To the right of the apse, in the south aisle of the church there was an altar dedicated to the martyrs, in the north aisle the altar contained the relics of the confessors.\textsuperscript{50} From the aisles two stairs led the visitors to the crypt underneath. The crypt exists of three vaulted niches with a corridor to the front. The paintings in the crypt, of which part has survived, completed the inscriptions on the altars. In the middle there was the altar of Mary and the virgins.\textsuperscript{51} Above it you can still see, though vaguely, the image of Mary and two rows of virgins. On both sides of the image the Announcement to the shepherds of Christ’s birth and the Adoration of the Magi adorn the walls.\textsuperscript{52} The paintings and inscription all point to the coming of the Redeemer. Mary, the mother of Christ, the womb who had carried and given birth to the Holy Saviour, serves as the foundation of

\textsuperscript{48} Lc 24:50-3.
\textsuperscript{50} The altars are no longer there, nor are any signs of paintings, only the inscriptions on the altars have survived. Idem, nr. XLIV, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{52} Schwartz, \textit{St. Peter}, pp. 12-3.
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the church. Above her, on the ground level, the main altar carried the tokens of Christ’s Ascension and the promise of His Second Coming.

To the left of the altar of Mary and the virgins in a separate niche, there was the altar of John the Baptist, the patriarchs and the prophets of the Old Testament.53 On the ceiling of the niche the Lamb of God is painted, behind the altar the baptised Christ54, on the sidewalls the angel holding Christ’s clothes and John the Baptist’s predecessors, the men from the Old Testament. Like Mary they represent the message of Christ’s coming, the promise of salvation.

To the right of the altar of Mary, in the other niche, there used to be an altar dedicated to the archangel Michael and the heavenly spirits.55 The archangel Michael had many aspects.56 In Eigil’s funerary chapel Michael was called upon as the guide of the souls of the dead. In the Apocalypse he is the captain of his angels in the battle against the army of the devil. This is probably his meaning here: leader and representative of the host of angels.57 A reason for dedicating an altar to the angels in this setting could be that it was the angels who made God’s will known to the people.58 They had brought the word of Christ’s birth, His resurrection and of his Second Coming.59 They had accompanied Christ when he ascended to heaven.

Thus on the ground level the Holy Saviour ruled with the saints who died after Him (martyrs and confessors), in the crypt Mary, the patriarchs and prophets led by John the Baptist and the host of angels

53 ‘Hac baptista potens sacra venerabitur ara / hac vatum turba atque patrum colitur’, Hrabanus Mauri Carmina, nr. XLIV, p. 211. Patrum can also mean ‘church fathers’, but considering the programme of altars, this altar being presumably dedicated to Christ’s precursors, I think the prophets and patriarchs of the Old Testament are meant here.

54 With an almond-shaped aureole around his figure.


57 Hrabanus in his homily In festivitate sancti Michaelis archangeli: ‘Unde et ille antiquus hostis, qui se ad similitudinem ejus suberbus exulatorat, in fine mundi cum Michaele archangelo praeliatus esse perhibetur, ut per Michaelem peremptus discat, quia ad similitudinem Dei per suberbian nullus exsurgat.’ PL 110, p. 59

58 ‘ab eo quod Domini voluntatem populis nuntiet.’ Hrabanus, De Universo, liber I, c. 5, p. 28.

59 There was an angel at the (empty) grave of Christ and there were two angels at the Ascension of Christ.
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under the command of Michael referred to the coming of the Holy Saviour.60 They, also being mankind’s most powerful intercessors, were the fundament of the church. Together the six altars in the church represented the bodies of All Saints.61 The church as a whole symbolised salvation history from the time of the patriarchs and prophets to the End of Times and reflected the gradual expansion of the Church from the Passion of Christ to the time of the martyrs and confessors, foreshowing the Second Coming of Christ. It should be read from the bottom upward. Below in the crypt the forerunners of Christ were made present. One level up, where parts of the place of His ascension lay, Christ himself shone as Holy Saviour. From there the paintings on the walls of the apse must have attracted attention, which represented how Christ opened the entrances to the heavenly Jerusalem. Farther up, far above the roof of the church God resided. Some day his Kingdom would descend to earth.

Having the church built and painted, and the altars arranged, Hrabanus, however, was not finished. On the dedication of the church in 838, on the dies natalis of Leoba, the female kindred spirit of Boniface, Hrabanus translated the body of this saint from the abbey church to the basilica he had built on the Ugesberg. When Leoba died in 782, her body had been brought to the abbey church of Fulda, as it had been Boniface’s wish.62 The abbot must have had good reasons to break with the old tradition and to take her remains to the church he had recently built east of Fulda. Perhaps Leoba’s popularity, attracting many pilgrims amongst whom there might have been women, threatened the integrity of claustrum of the monastery.63 Other reasons could be a personal devotion for the

60 In his De laudibus sanctae crucis Hrabanus distinguishes between the saints before and after Christ’s birth. Together they are the living stones of the Faith. PL 107, pp. 169-70.
61 Therefore Hilde Claussen has argued that Hrabanus dedicated his church on the Ugesberg to All Saints. Claussen, ‘Eine Reliquiennische’ p. 259. Hrabanus certainly was familiar with this particular feast and indeed appears to have dedicated the church to All Saints. Hrabanus wrote two hymns on the feast and mentioned it in his martyrology. PL 112, c. xxvii and c. xxviii, pp. 1668-70. ‘Ipsa die memoriarum celebratur omnium sanctorum, quod constituit Bonifacium papa, qui dilubrum vestutum, quod ab antiquis Pantheon uocabatur, concedente Focato caesare in honorem sanctae Mariae virginis et omnium sanctorum dedicavit’, Martyrologium, p. 111. Perhaps Hrabanus learned about it when he was with Alcuin in Tours. Gerald Ellard, Master Alcuin. Liturgist (Chicago 1956) pp. 91 and 255. See also Hrabanus, In festinitate sanctorum omnium and In eodem festo, Hymni, PL 112, nr. 27 and 28, pp. 1668-9. A slightly different grouping we find in Aniane, where Benedict of Aniane had placed seven altars, dedicated to Christ, Mary, Michael and the angels, Peter and Paul (the apostles), Stephanus (the martyrs), Martinus (confessors) and Benedictus (monks). Ardo, Vita Benedicti, c. 17, p. 206.
62 ‘Recordati sunt itaque seniores eorum, dixisse sanctum Bonifatium, quod suae esset voluntatis, ut corpus illius ad ossa ponatur’. Rudolf, Vitae Leobae. c. 21, p. 130.
63 ‘Ubi non solum multa miracula uiuens fecit, immo post obitum in Bochonia silua, hoc est in monasterio Fulda, iuxta decretum sancti Bonifatii sepulta non paucis miraculis sanctitatem suam declaravit.’ Hrabanus Maurus, Martyrologium (28 septembris) p. 99; Rudolf, Vita Leobae c. 22-3, pp. 130-1. See also Julia Smith, ‘Women at the tomb: access to

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saint on part of Hrabanus and his wish to (further) stimulate the cult of Leoba. Leoba certainly was central to Hrabanus' ideas with regard to the church on the Ugesberg. On this day, 28 September, not only the body of Leoba was brought to the church, but the monks of Fulda also carried the relics of seven female martyrs thither.  

Hrabanus had made Leoba a stone ark, covered with wood and decorated with silver and gold and placed it behind the altar of Mary in the crypt. On the upper floor, at about the same position, Hrabanus located the relics of the female martyrs in a wooden structure behind the main altar. By putting Leoba behind the altar in the crypt, Leoba became integrated into the corps of virgins that was centred on Mary. In addition to this, the presence of Leoba and the female martyrs and their specific position within the church connected the past of the monastery of Fulda with the early Christian church. Leoba, a home-grown saint, intimately connected with the community's history and identity, represented Fulda's own past through her close connection with Boniface. As to the female Roman martyrs, Rome stood for authenticity and the martyrs were heroic witnesses to the faith, a tangible link to the age of persecution. The relics connected the present community of faithful, which could not quite enjoy a direct link with the beginning of Christianity through its own past, to the early Christian church. Through the relics the past continued to live in the present.  

But Hrabanus did not only use martyrs from Rome because they symbolised authentic Christianity. The abbot employed the holy remains from Rome also because to him Rome was the centre of the world. In one of his poems he exclaimed: 'Rome, pearl of the world, praise of the earth, highest power'. Through these relics, Fulda participated in the power of Rome and the papal authority, and was drawn into the orbit of the Church of the Apostles and became a centre of holiness of its own. Just as Ratgar some twenty-five years earlier had wanted to evoke the presence of Rome and its holiness in Fulda by citing St Peter's in the architecture of the


64 Felicitas, Concordia, Basilla, Emerentiana, Candida, Eutropia, Priska - and her husband Aquila.

65 It probably was also out of practicality that she was buried in the crypt. Laymen and women could visit her grave without disturbing the liturgical proceedings upstairs.

66 Other examples of surrounding a saint with relic shrines are Richarius in Centula (799) and Germanus of Auxerre (859). Claussen, 'Eine Reliquiennische', p. 262.

67 'Roma, decus mundi, laus rerum, summa potentas.' Hraban Mauri Carmina, nr. XLVIII, p. 213. Hrabanus also stressed that he had brought together relics of all parts of this world. 'Quos huc diuerris duxit ex partibus orbis / Servorum domini strenuus actus amor' Idem, nr. XLVI, p. 212; 'Cum quibus hic pausant sumpti de partibus orbis / virtute clari, Christe, tui famuli'. Idem, nr. XLVIII, p. 213.

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abbey church, Hrabanus now turned to relics of Roman martyrs. Through the relics of Roman martyrs Fulda no longer was a monastery in peripheral Hesse, but became its own 'Rome', another nucleus of holiness and another centre of the world.\footnote{See for Anglo-Saxon examples Cubitt, 'Universal and local saints', pp. 423-53.}

The abbot put his creation in sight. As it was situated on a hilltop, 'clearly visible on the high mountain' it was a focal point in the landscape around Fulda.\footnote{Rudolf wrote about the church vale conspicuum in monte excels, Miracula sanctorum, c. 14, p. 339.} It is however unclear who precisely had access to Hrabanus' masterpiece on the Ugesberg. Amongst other things the satellite churches near Fulda were retreats of former abbots. After Ratgar had been deprived of his abbacy in 817 he withdrew to Frauenberg where, eight years previously, he had built a church.\footnote{And thus he lived very near the monastery!} In this dependency he spent the rest of his life till he died 21 December 835. In the summer of that same year Hrabanus put the relics of SS Alexander and Fabianus in the church.\footnote{Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum c. 3, p. 332.} After having ruled the Fulda monastery for twenty years Hrabanus retired (as said above his position as abbot of Fulda had become untenable) to the church on the Ugesberg.\footnote{Idem, c. 15, p. 340. In 899 Sigihart, the eighth abbot of Fulda withdrew to Johannesberg. There he died in 899. Gesta abbatum, p. 273. Sigihart was buried in Fulda, Hrabanus in Mainz, Ratgar in the dependency on the Frauenberg. See also Chapter Four.}

Hrabanus clearly had a special relation with the church on the Ugesberg, even before he moved to it in 842. It is difficult to determine who else had access to the church. According to Eberhard, who in the twelfth century composed a cartulary of Fulda's property known as the Codex Eberhardi, there was in Hrabanus' time a small community of monks linked to the church.\footnote{'In quo loco primum erant monachi sub Rabano.' Codex Eberhardi, vol. 1, p. 332.} In view of Leoba's popularity probably also pilgrims went to the church, but the numbers of visitors should probably not be exaggerated. From a letter written during his stay on the Ugesberg it is clear that Hrabanus here found the peace and quiet to devote his time to the writing of exposés on the biblical books of the Old and New Testament.\footnote{‘quadam die dum quietus ab omni mundano negotio in cellula mea sederem...’ MGH Epp. V, nr, 40, p. 478.} Of course Hrabanus referred in this letter to his disengagement from the responsibilities and duties he had had as an abbot of a major royal abbey. But perhaps the small cella on the Ugesberg was indeed a quiet and not a much-frequented place in these days.
Salvation history

The architecture of the church on the Ugesberg is probably unique in its coherence, as Hrabanus did not have to reckon with an existing church and with a pre-existing disposition of altars and relics. But what about the other churches mentioned in the Miracula sanctorum that Hrabanus enriched with relics, namely the abbey church of Fulda, the churches on the Johannesberg, the Frauenberg, and the ones in Holzkirchen and Rasdorf?

Hrabanus decorated these churches too, with paintings, reliquaries and verses. In the Miracula sanctorum we read that before the translation of the Roman martyrs Hrabanus built a new church in Rasdorf, which he ornamented with paintings and a wide variety of metals, and altars and crosses made out of silver and gold. On the basis of Hrabanus’ tituli we know that also the other churches must have had paintings on the walls. But Hrabanus had no free play in these churches as he had had in the church on the Ugesberg. Here in contrast the abbot had to reckon with already existing architecture (apart from Rasdorf where he built a new church), decoration, altars and relics. In all churches with the exception of the one on the Ugesberg the arrangement of altars was already fixed before Hrabanus took the relics of the Roman martyrs there. Also in Rasdorf where he built a new church, the abbot presumably had to take into account the existing cult sites of the former church.

But Hrabanus was not concerned with supplying empty altars with relics. As in the church on the Ugesberg Hrabanus put the holy objects in sculpted, wooden reliquaries that were mostly decorated with metrical tituli inscribed in silver and gold, gems and in a few cases also with images. In each church the abbot placed the wooden structures behind the main altar in the church. To my mind Hrabanus’ aim was partly the same as with the church of All Saints on the Ugesberg, even though his freedom of movement was now more limited. The abbot used the relics of Roman martyrs and the reliquaries, loaded with references to the beginning and end of Christianity, to connect the present with the early Christian past and to show that Fulda had a place in the eschatological future.

To illustrate this I will single out one reliquary, which was fashioned after the Ark of the Covenant. Like the church on the Ugesberg it was an exceptional piece of art. Even though David Appleby has already

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75 'In quo pulchram et divinis officiis congruentem noviter extruxit ecclesiam, quam picturis et diversorum varietate metallorum decenter ornuit, altaribus et crucibus auro argentoque parasit vasisque diversi generis, quae divinus cultus exposcit, congruenter adhibitis'. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 13, p. 338.

76 See the edition of the tituli, Hrabani Mauri Carmina, nrs. XLIII-XLIX, pp. 209-15.
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paid full attention to this reliquary, I will briefly deal with it here because it illuminates Hrabanus' intentions so vividly.\textsuperscript{77}

Rudolf described the Ark of the Covenant reliquary as follows: 'In truth the bones of the remaining saints, who are named above, he placed in an ark which he made in the image of the Ark of the Covenant of God, out of wood and gold with Cherubim and handles and left it in the eastern apse of the basilica of St Boniface until he prepared a place worthy of them'.\textsuperscript{78} The reliquary contained the relics of the saints Castulus, Sebastian, Pamphilius, Papias, Maurus, Victor and Concordia. In the spring of 836 Hrabanus also put the physical remains of the saints Quirinus, Romanus, Cornelius, Callistus, Nereus, Achilles, Turturinus and Eustathius in 'the previously mentioned ark, which sits below the two Cherubim'.\textsuperscript{79} The reliquary is later attested in the early tenth-century \textit{Gesta abbatum}. The text records that the reliquary was used during a liturgical procession on Palm Sunday. 'He (Hrabanus) made an ark in the image of the Ark of Moses with rings and handles, every part covered with gold, a propitiation, the Cherubim of glory, with a portable candelabrum made of gold. He established the delightful procession of palms and was accustomed to bring out that same ark with its ornaments in great glory'.\textsuperscript{80}

On the basis of Hrabanus' own treatises on the Ark of the Covenant in \textit{De institutione clericorum} and his commentaries on the historical book of the Old Testament, David Appleby has shown that Hrabanus used the Ark of the Covenant reliquary to express his belief in the position of the community of Fulda within salvation history. Hrabanus often understood the Ark both in a literal or historical sense as well as in a spiritual sense. To the scholar the Ark of the Covenant prefigured the Christian Church. Because there were an Old and a New Covenant, the Ark symbolised the change and continuity in salvation history. Grace followed upon the laws of the Israelites, the Temple of Solomon prefigured the Christian Church, the Christian clergy were the new Levites, and the procession of the Ark into the Temple symbolised the arrival of relics in modern churches and


\textsuperscript{78} Translation by Appleby, ‘The Ark of the Covenant Reliquary’, p. 432. ‘Reliquorum vero sanctorum ossa, qui supra nominati sunt, in arca, quam ad instar arcae foederis Dei ex lingo fabricatam atque deauratam cum Cherubim ac vectibus suis in basilica beati Bonifacii martyris in absida orientali posuerat, condidit, donec venerationi eorum locum congruum pararet’. Rudolf, \textit{Miracula sanctorum} c. 3, p. 333.

\textsuperscript{79} Idem, c. 3 and 4, p. 333.

the advent of Christ accompanied by his saints. Appleby concludes: '-(Hrabanus') Ark of the Covenant reliquary symbolized the continuity between old and new dispensations, the gradual expansion of the Church in the interim between the Passion and the Second Advent, and the connection between Fulda and the transcendental end of all historical development'. Being an object in the present, the Ark of the Covenant reliquary thus also referred to past and future. It not only reminded the faithful who beheld it of the meaning of the Passion and of what was still to come, but also reflected the conviction of Fulda's place within this eschatological future.

As with the church on the Ugesberg the Ark of the Covenant reliquary was an exceptional piece of craftsmanship that demanded a firm command of exegesis of its reader to grasp its message. Probably only few understood the higher significance of the reliquary and not only its literal and historical meaning, specifically the elite of highly educated monks who also fully understood the Vita Aegil of Candidus or Hrabanus' De laudibus sanctae crucis, which I have discussed in the former chapter. But Hrabanus did not make the reliquary solely for them. The abbot placed the reliquary behind the main altar in one of the liturgical centres of the church where it was clearly visible to at least the monks who served and celebrated mass there. From the Gesta abbatum that I have quoted above we know that each Palm Sunday the reliquary was carried around in a procession and then must have been visible to the whole community that attended the festivity.

Unfortunately we do not know who precisely had access to the abbey church apart from the monks and the king. As Rudolf in his Miracula sanctorum recorded that the lay people, who had accompanied the procession of relics to Fulda, were given the opportunity to pray in the church at the Johannesberg and on the slope of a hill near the monastery, it seems that the lay population was not allowed to enter the claustrum. But certainly on important feast days such as the dies natalis of Boniface or Palmsunday people from the localities and dependants of the monastery came to the monastery. From the Supplex Libellus we know that many

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81 For extensive argumentation see Appleby, 'The Ark of the Covenant Reliquary', pp. 435-443.
82 Idem, p. 443.
83 The same is probably true of the other reliquary in the abbey church that stood on the position where Boniface once had been buried. This was a quadrangular tower-like construction with images of the saints that the reliquary kept on all four sides of the reliquary. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum c. 14, pp. 339-40.
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people from the neighbouring area visited Fulda on 5 June, the feast day of Boniface. Konrad Lübeck has pointed out that at least in the 810s the martyr's dies natalis was also the day that the monks collected tributes and taxes. In the Vita Leoba Rudolf recorded that also pilgrims from afar came to Fulda. But in the same text the monk enjoined upon his readers that no woman was ever allowed entrance to the monastery with the exception of Leoba, for whom there was a special arrangement because of her relation with Boniface. In the Vita Aegil we can read that many people were present at the dedication of the abbey church in 819. The visitors included bishops, abbots, priests and counts. But it is not clear whether the guests consisted of lay people from the localities and dependents of the monastery too.

It seems therefore that the claustrum of Fulda was well protected and was a place of monks only (at least this is how the monks wished to present it), but that, on certain occasions, the monks opened their doors to people from outside and showed them their treasures that otherwise remained in the seclusion of the abbey church. Even though not everybody would have understood the higher meaning of an object as the Ark of the Covenant reliquary (with the exception of the highly educated such as the bishops of course), the faithful certainly realised that this beautifully decorated reliquary, which contained the relics of fifteen Roman martyrs was of great value and embodied the holy power of the monastery that owned it.

Presumably all wooden reliquaries mentioned in the Miracula sanctorum were intended to evoke respect and awe for the saints and the monastery that controlled their power, though possibly not all were as sophisticated as the one in the abbey church. But Hrabanus worked for different groups and adapted his creations to the needs of the audience he had in mind. He certainly did not write only for the geniuses in his school, but also tried to reach a much wider audience that included the faithful in the localities. Hrabanus therefore carefully selected the places he took the saints to and also brought some of the relics to places that were easily

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86 'Quando autem plures simul advenerint, ut in missa sancti Bonifatii, consolatione undique facta ab his qui cellas provident omnibus refectio praebatur'. Supplex Libellus, c. 14, p. 325.
87 This he has concluded on the basis of the charter material. Konrad Lübeck, Das Bonifatiusgrab zu Fulda (Fulda 1947) p. 106; Kehl, Kult und Nachleben, p. 46.
88 Rudolf, Vita Leoba c. 22-3, pp. 130-1.
89 Candidus, Vita Aegil I c. 15, p. 15; Vita Aegil II c. 17, pp. 55-60.
90 A large part of this crowd had to wait outside the abbey church and was only allowed to witness the translation of the body of Boniface to his new grave. Candidus, Vita Aegil II c. 17, 20-28. It is also unclear whether the people were allowed admission just before the enclosure of the relics in the altars as happened elsewhere or were only permitted to witness the translation of the body of Boniface. D.J. Sheerin, 'Reconstruction of the Fulda ordo used at Fulda 1 November, 819', Revue Bénédictine 92 (1982), pp. 304-16.

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accessible, with many people travelling through such as Holzkirchen and Rasdorf, which occupied important positions within the organisation of the monastery. Holzkirchen was at the centre of Fulda's possessions in Lower Francia. Rasdorf was the centre of Fulda's belongings between the river Fulda and the Thuringian forest. Both dependencies were active nuclei in the region, crucial for the administration of the property of Fulda and presumably responsible for the pastoral care in that area, as many of the monks of Fulda who lived there were priests. They were also vital social centres that many people travelled through. Rasdorf lay by the old road from Frankfurt to Leipzig,Holzkirchen along the river Aalbach, an affluent of the Main. With celebratory processions through the countryside Hrabanus announced the arrival of the holy treasures in the East Frankish Empire. Often important feast days were selected to make public the treasures Fulda had obtained, as these were occasions at which already many people were present.

In places as Rasdorf and Holzkirchen, Hrabanus probably reached a larger and different audience than in Fulda itself or the church on the Ugesberg. In the Miracula sanctorum we can read that the arrival of the relics attracted many people from the localities. Amongst the faithful who visited the churches of these dependencies there were many ordinary people, such as farmers and weavers. From a letter of Hrabanus himself we know that kings visited Rasdorf too. In 843, or in 845 at the latest, Louis the German, king of East Francia, and Hrabanus met in Rasdorf. Shortly before that meeting Hrabanus had had to give up the abbacy of Fulda, because he had supported Lothar rather than Louis the German in the succession war of the early 840s. Yet the former abbot of Fulda was still valuable to Louis the German, for Hrabanus was an authoritative and

91 Stengel, Geschichtliche Atlas, p. 47.
92 In a list composed somewhere before 879 the community of Holzkirchen is divided into fratres and scolastici. The list is part of the codex that also holds the annales necrologici and probably had a commemorative function. At the moment the list was made thirty-one priests, thirteen deacons and seven monks without ordination led by a magister and eighteen scolastici lived in Holzkirchen. The presence of both groups and the high percentage of priests among the monks indicate a pastoral and educational role of the community, at least around the middle of the ninth century. See also De Jong, In Samuel's Image, p. 242. Rasdorf was another community listed in the liber vitae of Fulda, divided into monks and scolastici. In the list are fourteen priests, six deacons, five subdeacons and eight monks without ordination, and twenty scolastici. See the edition in Die Klostergemeinschaft von Fulda 1, p. 222. Their list was made somewhere before the late ninth century.
93 As we saw, it was no accident that Deusdona brought the first load of relics to Fulda on the day before the dies natalis of St Boniface and that the relics were disclosed on the feast day itself. The feast in honour of the patron attracted many people. The relics of the saints Januarius and Magnus arrived in Holzkirchen during another important feast attracting many people: Pentecost. See Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum c. 10, p. 336.
94 Idem, c. 12, p. 338.
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prolific bible commentator. In Rasdorpf the two men met to discuss, amongst other things, Sacred Scripture.⁹⁵

Thus, in several ways Hrabanus tried to reach an audience that exceeded the community of monks over which he presided, including bishops, priests, kings, aristocratic families and local farmers. Those who understood the abbot wanted to show that Fulda had a place in the Celestial Jerusalem. To others Hrabanus mainly explained that Fulda had the disposal over many powerful saints, while teaching them in the divine cult. For the abbot’s constructions were also didactic tools with which he instructed the monks and the Christians in the localities in the most important matters of Christian faith. The paintings and tituli showed some of the main episodes of the New Testament: the birth of Christ, Christ as Saviour who opened the doors of his Kingdom for the people and Mary as mother of Christ and explained the role of the saints as intercessors on behalf of the faithful before and on the Day of Judgement. In addition, the tituli on the wooden reliquaries revealed the names of the saints whose relics the structures contained and moved the reader to pay respect to the holy men and women. With the tituli Hrabanus thus also wanted to stimulate the faithful to venerate the saints in a proper way and to elevate them in praise of God.

Being the recipient of the holy treasures Hrabanus of course also used the relics to highlight his own personal merits.⁹⁶ It was believed that saints could reveal whether they approved of the owner or not, or whether they agreed with the place they were brought to.⁹⁷ The presence of the relics of Roman martyrs in Fulda’s churches and the miracles they worked therefore showed the saints’ consent with their transfer to Fulda. Hrabanus was certainly aware of this. He did not hesitate to attach his name to the acquisition of the relics and to explain in his tituli that God had chosen him, to receive these valuables and to bring them to these churches.⁹⁸ On one reliquary for example was written: ‘Hrabanus, servant of Christ, has accepted them with cheers’.⁹⁹ As such Hrabanus used the Roman relics to his greater honour and glory and to enhance his own reputation too, not only that of his monastery.

⁹⁶ See Peter Brown, ‘Relics and social status in the ages of Gregory of Tours’ in: idem, Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity (New York 1982) pp. 222-50, especially pp. 240; idem, ‘Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: A Parting of the Ways’ in: idem, Society and the Holy, pp. 166-95, here, p. 188.
⁹⁷ See for example Einhard’s record of why he moved the relics of SS Marcellinus and Peter from Michelstadt to Mulinheim. Translatio et miracula, liber II.
⁹⁸ For example Hraban Mauri Carmina, nrs. XLV-IX, pp. 212-4.
Relics and political strife

Hrabanus' efforts to enrich the sacred topography of Fulda and its *cellae*, and to stress that his monastery had a place in the eschatological future of the Celestial Jerusalem were part of being a good abbot. Once a monastery was founded, it constantly needed to re-establish itself as a sacred and powerful intercessor on behalf of the faithful. The new acquisition of remains of holy dead was one way of strengthening the sanctity of the place and showing its power, and the power of the person giving the relics. But apart from this, the 830s were a troubled period, both for the monks of Fulda as for the people outside. Conflicts, aristocratic factionalism, crop failures and epidemics contributed to an urgent need for spiritual help. They form the context in which the relic translations also need to be understood.

As I have explained in the previous chapters the monastery of Fulda had experienced some turbulent times under the abbacy of Ratgar. In imitation of Eigel, Hrabanus had done his utmost to rebuild the monastery and with great success. The number of gifts to Fulda rose substantially\(^\text{100}\), bonds of confraternity were renewed\(^\text{101}\), the school of the monastery flourished and attracted many students.\(^\text{102}\) Fulda's star was rising again, but new trouble was on the horizon.

Some twelve years after the Ratgar crisis, in the summer of 829 a conflict broke out. At a synod of Mainz, Gottschalk, a professed monk of Fulda, claimed to have received the tonsure against his will.\(^\text{103}\) This was the beginning of a fierce controversy that would last till Hrabanus' death in 856 between the monk and the abbot, who not only represented the monastery but also felt personally involved as Gottschalk had been his pupil. In short, Hrabanus interpreted Gottschalk's appeal as an attack on the practise of oblation, to him the substance of monasticism. Often accompanied by the granting of the heritage of the concerning child, oblation was not only an important source of monastic recruitment but also a valuable source of income for the monastery (but this Hrabanus

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\(^{101}\) We only know of the prayer association of Reichenau. See Chapter One.

\(^{102}\) For example Walafri d Strabo, Ermanrich of Ellwangen and Lupus of Ferrières. See Chapter Four.

\(^{103}\) *Epistolae Fuldensis fragmenta*, nr. 29, p. 529; Patzold, 'Konflikte im Kloster Fulda', p. 142.
never said aloud). Gottschalk had to appear at another meeting presided over by Louis the Pious. We do not know the outcome of the assembly; only that Gottschalk was given permission to leave Fulda. However, the battle between Hrabanus and Gottschalk continued, though now within a theological setting on account of Gottschalk’s opinion about double predestination, which according to Hrabanus was heretical. The conflict with Gottschalk must have caused uproar within the community of Fulda and also stirred the highest levels of the Frankish church.

On a supra-regional level, another battle was fought. This one, too, involved Hrabanus and his monastery. From roughly 829 onward, with intervals of peace, the members of the Carolingian dynasty and the magnates of the empire, who had become increasingly powerful, struggled continuously for power. After the death of Louis the Pious at the break of summer in 840 his sons continued the battle between themselves over territory and the title of emperor, while the aristocracy tried to get their own deal out of it.

During this conflict Hrabanus and his monastery remained loyal to Louis the Pious. By choosing sides Fulda may have deterred possible benefactors from granting property to Fulda. In 831 the flow of donations stagnated. Perhaps the troubles of the early 830s restrained the landowners from donating their possessions anyway. The political crises of the last decade of the reign of Louis the Pious might also have divided the monastic community itself and have caused discord among the monks.

The conflicts within the community and political troubles outside may well have besmirched the sacredness of the place and tarnished its reputation, thereby creating a need for it to enhance its aura of sacredness. In the Vita Leobae Rudolf told a story that shows us how important a good reputation was for a religious community. The setting of the story is the nunnerie of Bischofsheim at the time Leoba presided over the community. Rudolf narrated that a poor woman, whom the nuns of Bischofsheim had

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104 For a detailed exposition see De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, pp. 77-90, p. 86.
105 As Hrabanus was not satisfied with the outcome of the synod of Mainz, he appealed to the emperor who called a meeting in Worms.
107 In 832 the emperor visited Fulda and Hrabanus expressed his loyalty to the emperor by offering him his commentary on the Book of Kings. In 833 Hrabanus wrote another commentary, on the books of Esther and Judith, for Louis the Pious' wife, Judith. In the same year Ebo of Reims, one of the leaders of the rebels, was imprisoned in the monastery. The fact that Hrabanus was loyal to Louis the Pious is also stressed by Rudolf in the *Miracula sanctorum*, c. 15, p. 340. See also De Jong, 'The empire as ecclesia', pp. 191-226; Wehlt, *Reichsabtei* p. 236.
taken under their care, had become pregnant. When her child was born she threw her baby into a pool near the monastery. The people in the neighbouring village discovered the dead baby and thought that the child was that of one of the nuns. According to Rudolf they yelled: 'Oh, what a chaste community! How admirable is the life of the nuns, who beneath their veils give birth to children...' The nuns could not ignore this severe accusation and took pains to show that their community was indeed sacred and not besmirched. Rudolf described how they constantly prayed and held processions till the truth was disclosed and the reputation of the nuns as holy women was restored.

Due to unrest and discord within Fulda and the troubles of the Frankish Empire the people of Hesse might have lost their faith in Fulda as a powerful, operational prayer house. With the help of new relics, i.e. new otherworldly patrons, Hrabanus made clear to the faithful that in the hands of the monks of Fulda the salvation of the believers was guaranteed, that Fulda indeed was a sacred place. As said above, getting the saints was already an achievement, as it was believed that in some sense saints themselves determined where they went.

It seems that Hrabanus' attempts to reinforce the role of the monastery and its saints as intercessors on behalf of the faithful were successful and that people recovered their faith in Fulda. The private charters of Fulda show a rise of gifts to the monastery from 835 onward, the year in which the first relics arrived. Not only did the number of donations increase, there were a couple of churches among the gifts. After a period, in which no churches were donated, suddenly in the summer of 836, two sisters, a certain Gerlinde and Irmindrud, granted the monastery their entire property in Sondheim, including a chapel with two reliquaries and other adornments. Two months later a certain Vodihilt donated amongst other things a church in Nordheim. Both places are

109 Rudolf, Vita Leoba c. 12, p. 127.
111 On the use of relics as political weapons see Julia Smith, "Emending evil ways and praising God's omnipotence": Einhard and the uses of the Roman martyrs' in: Seeing and Believing: Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, eds. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Forthcoming: New York 2003).
112 The number of gifts pro year: 835: 1, 836: 4, 837: 14, 838: 13, 839: 1, 840: 0, 841: 0, 842: 1. See CDF, footnote 109 of this chapter.
113 Under the abbacies of Sturm and Baugulf at least some thirteen churches and four monasteries or monasteriolini were granted to Fulda. At least, that we know of as the gifts are recorded in charters, later inserted in the cartulary. UBF I, nrs. 22, 57, 71, 93, 202, 220, 249, 283, 287, 359, 401, 403, 414, 518 (churches) and 73, 175, 202, 264 (monasteries). Under Ratgar a cleric and some liturgical objects passed into the ownership of Fulda, no churches. CDF, nrs. 274, 363, pp. 138 and 169.
114 'capellam cum duabus capsis et reliquio ornatu.' Idem, nr. 492, p. 218.
115 Idem, nr. 493, p. 218.
near Bischofsheim, another dependency of Fulda not far from the monastery that the relics travelled through.

Shortly after this rise of gifts the number of donations dropped again. The death of Louis the Pious had given a new impetus to the fight over political control between his sons. Hrabanus, who was in favour of one unified empire, sided with Lothar. According to the Abbot, Lothar, being the eldest son of the old Emperor, was most entitled to the imperial crown. However, things did not go, as Hrabanus had wanted them to. Charles the Bald, Lothar and Louis the German divided the Frankish empire into three kingdoms. Fulda fell to the sphere of influence of Louis the German and Hrabanus therefore was compelled to withdraw as abbot of Fulda, since he had supported the wrong man. Thereupon Hrabanus moved to Ugesberg. It was in this period after Hrabanus’ resignation as abbot and before his investiture as archbishop of Mainz in 847 that Rudolf wrote the Miracula sanctorum.

The author

Rudolf, a monk of Fulda, had entered the monastery of Fulda sometime before 812 as a child oblate. Hrabanus Maurus took him under his protection and Rudolf would later become the abbot’s right hand. The first time Rudolf’s name appears in the Fulda sources is as cancellarius of the monastery in 812. In addition to writing charters, Rudolf may have compiled the Fulda cartulary that was composed during the abbacy of Hrabanus. Moreover, Rudolf wrote the vita of Leoba that I have mentioned above around 836. Sometime after 851, when the relics of Alexander were translated to Wildeshausen, he started writing the Translatio S. Alexandri, but his death in 865 prevented him from finishing it. His pupil Meginhard fulfilled this task. Like his master Rudolf seems to have applied himself to exegesis. We know that he wrote a commentary on the Gospel according to St John. Some historians believe Rudolf

116 The first time Rudolf appears as cancellarius is in a Fulda charter of 812. His name can be found in the subscription of charters till 856, though in the period after 822, when he succeeded Hrabanus as head of the monastery’s school, less frequently. Stengel, ‘Urkundenfälschungen’, pp. 27-146.


118 MGH SS 2 (Hanover 1879) pp. 673-81.

119 MGH EE 5, nr. 34, p. 358.
Building a holy city

followed Hrabanus to Mainz (from 849 till 852-3), when the latter had been elevated to the archbishopric, others doubt it. Similar uncertainty prevails concerning Rudolf's share in the Annales Fuldenses. What is clear however is that Rudolf was a respected figure both within the community of Fulda and outside. He was esteemed as wise man, devoted teacher, and was entrusted with tasks such as the relic translations.

The Miracula sanctorum in Fuldenses ecclesias translatorum

As said above, Rudolf probably wrote the Miracula sanctorum sometime between 842 and 847. His work first of all deals with the relics translations to Fulda in the 830s. In his introduction Rudolf explained:

It is my opinion that I should write about the bones of the martyr Alexander and the other saints, whose names will be mentioned [in the Miracula sanctorum] in due time; how, by whom and to which places they were translated; about the signs and miracles through which they have shown their power while on the way, when they were brought, and at the places they are buried, and [it is my opinion that these things] should be saved from oblivion, so that, when a text of the events that have truthfully happened will be written, through these writings about their translation and miracles one is able to know in which places the venerable [bones] are to be found by the faithful.

120 Supposedly he kept up the annals to date from 838 to 863, but not all historians agree on his authorship. For an overview of this discussion see: Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter VI., ed. W. Wattenbach (1991) pp. 671-93; Stengel, 'Urkundenfälschungen', pp. 27-146; idem, 'Rudolf's Anteil an der Fuldaer Annalen' in: Abhandlungen und Untersuchungen, pp. 132-6; and the introduction of Timothy Reuter, The Annals of Fulda (Manchester 1992) pp. 2, 5-9. Research of, for instance, Richard Corradini, who is preparing a new edition of the text, will hopefully shed some light on the tangle of problems that sticks to this text.

121 Hrabanus entrusted him with important tasks such as several translations of relics to the community. Rudolf's students, amongst which there were Ermanrich of Ellwangen, Erkanbert and Meginhard of Fulda also held him in high esteem. Ermanrich of Ellwangen, Vita Siudonis, pp. 154-6; Erkanbert, MGH EE 5, nr. 34, p. 358. Meginhart, Translatio S. Alexandri, p. 674.


123 'De ossibus vero Alexandri martyris et aliorum sanctorum, quorum nomina suis locis dicentur, scribendum esse censeo, qualiter et a quibus vel ad quae loca translata sint, quibusque signis et virtutibus, sive in itinere quo ferebantur in locis quibus condita sunt, floruerint, memoriae mandandum, ut, cum de translatione et miraculis eorum seculum...
In addition to this, Rudolf hoped that his text would encourage his readers to live rightly (recte vivendi), to correct their bad behaviour (emendare) and to praise God.

Rudolf’s introduction to his work is clearly an elaboration of the Translatio et Miracula SS. Marcellini et Petri, written by Einhard in the autumn of 830, and moreover he incorporated citations from his example in the body of the work. To write his account of the relic translations Rudolf relied further upon reports of people, who had watched the procession of the relics and had experienced their miraculous power. He would also have used booklets with miracle stories, perhaps kept by the staff of the places the martyrs were brought to, and of course his own recollections. He himself had witnessed most of what he wrote about.

In the Miracula sanctorum Rudolf recorded exclusively the transfer of the holy dead from Rome to Fulda, but according to Rudolf, Hrabanus had collected many relics of saints from other parts of the world too. Rudolf explained that Hrabanus had placed the relics in the thirty oratoria that he had built during his abbacy. If time and God would allow him, Rudolf would also record the testimonies about the depositions of these relics, the names of these saints and the places they were brought to. But no such work surviving, either Rudolf died before he could accomplish the task he had set himself at the end of the Miracula sanctorum or the manuscript has not withstood the ravages of time.

The Miracula sanctorum is not only about the translation of Roman relics to Fulda under Hrabanus, the text is also intended to honour this abbot. After the introduction of the text Rudolf introduced the hero of his story: Hrabanus, ‘a very religious man, a scholar of the Sacred Scripture.’ This paragraph is the key to a proper understanding of the

veritatem gestorum fuerit sermo prolatus, quibus in locis a fidelibus veneranda debeant inveniri, per haec scripta valeat agnosci.’ Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, p. 329.

To give some examples: Miracula sanctorum, introduction, p. 329 - Translatio et Miracula SS. Marcellini et Petri, introduction p. 239; Miracula c. 5, p. 333 - Translatio, book 1, c. 12, p. 244; Miracula, c. 5, p. 334 - Translatio, book 1, c. 14, p. 245; Miracula, c. 6, p. 334 - Translatio, book 2, c. 8, p. 247. David Appleby in his ‘The Ark of the Covenant Reliquary’, p. 424. n. 19 has come to the same results. Einhard’s Translatio was also a model for many other accounts of relic translations. See Geary, Furta Sacra, pp.143-50.

Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum c. 2, p. 331; c. 3, p. 332; c. 4-8, pp. 333-5; c. 11, pp. 336-7; c. 12, p. 337.

‘Aliorum autem sanctorum reliquias de diversis partibus orbis plurimas congregavit atque in oratorii, quae tempore sui regiminis numero 30 construxerat, et ab episcopis, in quorum diocesi fuerant, dedicari fecerat, honorifico collocavit. De quorum locis et consecrationum auctioribus atque temporibus sanctorumque nominibus, quorum spoliis inlustrantur, si vita comes et divinus favor adfuerit, locis oportunis scire volentibus declarabo’. Idem, c. 14, p. 340. ‘Aliorum autem sanctorum reliquias de diversis partibus orbis’ in my opinion should be understood as other than Rome.

Building a holy city

Miracula sanctorum. Rudolf described how Hrabanus devoted all his time to the study of God’s law, the preservation of the orthodoxy of the Christian faith, the monastic discipline and the progress of his students. Whenever he could Hrabanus instructed others or he nourished himself on the Divine Scriptures. ‘His mind was always devoted to ordering those things which pertain to the divine cult’\(^{128}\), Rudolf wrote. Hrabanus’ work included the building of churches and the decoration of the abbey church with verse inscriptions, various precious metals and costly cloth.\(^{129}\) Rudolf ended his account of the translations with a list of titles of works that Hrabanus had written so far, most exegetical work written for a vast network of kings, queens, bishops and abbots, all friends.\(^{130}\) This list of Hrabanus’ work seems an odd way to end an account of relic translations. What did Hrabanus’ biblical commentaries and pastoral writing have in common with the relic translations? What did his teaching and intellectual concerns have to do with the building of churches? But besides recording the relic translations Rudolf had also wanted to show in the Miracula sanctorum that Hrabanus was a teacher of the divine knowledge in all respects, through different means and for diverse audiences; exegesis, the teaching of the Sacred Scripture, pastoral care, the gathering of relics, building churches and writing inscriptions were all aimed at edification.

Rudolf’s audience

Rudolf wrote the Miracula sanctorum for his fellow-brethren. In the introduction to the Miracula sanctorum Rudolf explained that he had wanted to write about ‘the virtues and miracles, which God considered worthy to happen through his saints in the present day, of whom the holy relics that were brought to our region, are brought out today for the faithful for their well-being (meaning both health and salvation).’\(^{131}\) That Rudolf wrote for the monks of Fulda is also clear from his selection of the stories he inserted in the Miracula sanctorum, for example the miracles that saint Alexander had worked in Kempraten, a place near Zürich. To anyone outside the community of Fulda Rudolf’s story about Alexander and Kempraten would have been rather meaningless and isolated in relation to the rest of the narrative. For in the continuation of his account of Deusdona’s journey to Fulda Rudolf never mentioned the names of the


\(^{129}\) Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 1, p. 330.


\(^{131}\) ‘virtutes et miracula, quae Deus per sanctos suos modernis temporibus facere dignatus est, quorum sacri cineres regionem nostram inlati cotidie fidelibus causa salutis existunt’. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, p. 329.
saints whose relics the trader carried with him (until the trader handed them over to the abbot), nor did he insert other miracle stories in his account of Deudsana’s expedition. But any monk from Fulda, who knew that Deudsana had donated the remaining relics of St Alexander to the monastery, immediately understood that the miracles that Rudolf described were a taste of what was in store for them. Thus Rudolf appears to have taken it for granted that his audience, because they were monks of Fulda, knew the names of the saints who were venerated in the monastery and whose relics lay in its churches.

Perhaps Rudolf wrote even solely for the monks in the mother convent and the satellite churches nearby. These places were relatively cut off from the other regions where Fulda owned estates and therefore had not witnessed the processions through the countryside and the miracles that the saints had worked on the way to Fulda. Rudolf had experienced a lot of the events that he had written about himself and in the Miracula sanctorum he wanted to explain to those who had not, how the relics had arrived in Fulda. Moreover, he wanted to show that the saints were authentic and powerful. The impression that the audience of the Miracula sanctorum like the one of the Vita Aegil, was restricted to the community of Fulda is confirmed by the manuscript tradition. The Miracula sanctorum is not transmitted to us in any manuscript other than the one that disappeared in the Thirty Years war.132

Even though the Miracula sanctorum’s direct audience were Fulda monks, Rudolf might have intended the miracle stories it contained to spread beyond the confines of the monastic community. As we have seen Rudolf hoped to stimulate the veneration of the saints ‘by the faithful in these places’, meaning probably not only the monks of Fulda but also the local population, living near the monastery’s dependencies where the relics were brought to. Another indication for this might be the fact that the main characters of the miracle stories that Rudolf inserted in the Miracula sanctorum were laymen and women. Possibly, the Miracula sanctorum were intended to serve the monks in their pastoral duties, presenting ‘raw material that might be adapted or elaborated according to the needs of a particular occasion or audience’, as David Appleby has suggested.133

133 Appleby, ‘The Ark of the Covenant reliquary’, p. 430. Rudolf’s miracles stories not only demonstrate the almighty power of God, but most of all teach how to treat a saint and how to approach him or her. They were focussed on the dignity of saints, dealing with purity and impurity of mind and actions when a saint was venerated. See for example Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum, c. 2, p. 331.
Rudolf's intentions

Rudolf wrote the *Miracula sanctorum* to chronicle the arrival of new patrons in Fulda and the incorporation of these saints within the monastery's network of churches and *cellae* for posterity and to make them part of Fulda's collective memory. Again and again Rudolf very precisely recorded the timing of the events: the day on which the relics arrived in the community, the official day of their elevation in Fulda, the departure time of the procession (always after Matins and Mass), incorporating them in the sanctoral and temporal cycle of liturgy. In addition to this, Rudolf carefully wrote down the names of the places where the processions halted, where the relics were kept and venerated and where they were finally buried. Rudolf's precision with regard to time and space was not extraordinary compared to other *translationes*. One of Rudolf's aims was to keep the remembrance of the arrival of the new patrons in Fulda alive and kindle devotion to them. His detailed record of the names of the saints, their translation and the dates and places of their deposition served this aim; the *Miracula sanctorum* was a mnemonic for *memoria* and veneration. In this sense the *Miracula sanctorum* was thus complementary to the work Hrabanus had done for the cults of the saints. Rudolf not only recorded the incorporation of new saints, his text was also an important part of this process. Putting the events into a memorable narrative rooted in the familiar landscape was part of the transformation of the new saints into patrons of Fulda or one of its dependencies. They were integrated within Fulda's community and its literary tradition.

Alongside to making the saints Fulda's own Rudolf also justified the transfer of the holy bodies from Rome to Fulda and showed their authenticity by putting a lot of stress on the miracles the saints worked. Maybe it was enough for Rudolf and his public that God showed his power through these saints in front of a big audience, as a sign of justification that the translations were part of His divine plan. Rudolf knew that most relics were stolen. He had to explain their removal from Rome, where they had been originally buried, to Fulda, with which the saints historically were not connected. In his introduction he stated that if the saints had not shown their *virtus* through miracles - in other words, if God had not revealed his approval - the Christian people would certainly have lost their faith. In other words, God approved of their removal from Rome; it would not have happened if He had not wanted it. The miracles worked by saints whose relics were carried to Fulda also showed that it concerned authentic saints.

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Moreover, the *Miracula sanctorum* is written to honour Hrabanus Maurus. In the text Rudolf referred to Hrabanus' activities as abbot and singled out Hrabanus' contributions to the cults of saints in Fulda. The monk reminded his audience of the wealth, both spiritual and material, which the saints and had brought the community of Fulda. Rudolf recorded Hrabanus' efforts to promote their cult in detail (the churches, the decorations; he even included the *tituli* the abbot had written) in order that the monks remembered not only the saints whose remains rested in the churches of Fulda, but also the man who had brought them thither. By pointing to the popularity of the saints amongst the lay population and their devout veneration of the martyrs Rudolf wanted to stress the importance of the relics for the monastery of Fulda. The relics enhanced the sacredness of its churches, attracted many people and hence increased the income and reputation of the monastery. The monks owed this to Hrabanus, Rudolf emphasised. After the example of Einhard's *Translatio et Miracula SS. Marcellini et Petri* Rudolf probably wanted to ensure that Hrabanus would have his own translation story and that the monks would not forget to remember Hrabanus, who by then had retired to the Ugesberg, in their prayers. Possibly his *Miracula sanctorum* was also an attempt to influence the opinions of the monks in favour of Hrabanus. There is, however, no evidence that the monks of Fulda had turned against their abbot. Hrabanus seems to have given up the abbacy while keeping fine relations with Fulda and its new abbot, Hatto, a friend of Hrabanus.135

A representation of Fulda

In the *Miracula sanctorum* Rudolf only recorded miracles that happened in places in the regions around Fulda, never those in the immediate vicinity of the monastery.136 Partly this can be explained, as said above, from the involvement of the lay population in the stories. From childhood Rudolf had internalised the monastic code of behaviour, including the separation between monks and the lay people.137 Rudolf's perception of the monastery of Fulda and therefore his description of the monastery in relation to its surroundings in the *Vita Leobae* and the *Miracula sanctorum* was dominated by the frame of reference of the cloister. Within Fulda's

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135 De Jong, 'The empire as ecclesia', p. 209. Or perhaps with Hrabanus' departure, the position of the monk, who as the abbot's right hand-man had carried out several duties for the monastery, had changed in the community now Hrabanus was gone and did Rudolf finally find the time to write it.

136 Apart from in Kempraten also in Solnhofen, Holzkirchen, Truhtmuntiga, Hasareodt, Hammelburg, Lihtolvesbah and Hurodleichesberg.

network of *cellae* and churches Rudolf depicted the mother convent as a centre of sacredness and purity. In all the churches around the monastery people from both sexes were allowed entrance to the Holy of Holiest, namely the place where the altar stood on which or before which the relics usually were placed. Here the faithful offered their gifts to the saints or lay down their beloved ones, whom they hoped that the saints would cure.\(^{138}\)

But never were the faithful allowed entrance in the mother convent. As stated above Rudolf explained that the people from the localities had the opportunity to pray either in the church of the Johannesberg or on the slope of a hill near Fulda. Only monks accompanied the relics on the last part of the journey to the abbey church. Moreover, in his *Vita Leobae* Rudolf had made clear that the mother convent was a restricted area.\(^{139}\)

Leoba in fact was the only woman who had ever been granted permission to pray in the monastery. Leoba owed this privilege to her special bond with Boniface. But the nun had had to follow strict regulations, Rudolf stressed. While Leoba visited the monastery, the rest of her company stayed behind in a cell near the monastery. She was only allowed to visit during daylight and then had to be accompanied by a senior nun.\(^{140}\)

Rudolf wrote the *Miracula sanctorum* about the same time that Candidus wrote his *Vita Aegil*. Both texts show different views of one and the same monastery. Contrary to Candidus, but also Eigel, who responded to debates about monasticism held both inside the monastery and at ecclesiastical meetings, Rudolf shaped the self-representation of the monastery with relics from Rome and did not concentrate on the behaviour of the monks inside the monastery. Rudolf, as it were, widened the perspective to include the power of the saints and extended the depiction of Fulda to embrace its dependencies. The *Vita Sturmi* and the *Vita Aegil* are about abbots and monks; in the *Miracula sanctorum* lay people also figure prominently, as they were important to show the power of the saints. Whereas Eigel and Candidus defined Fulda as a community balancing between the demands of society and inner spiritual life; Rudolf depicted the monastery as a node in a sacred network of churches and *cellae*.

But while showing a different perspective and representation of the monastery, in his *Miracula sanctorum* Rudolf also responded to the existing perceptions of Fulda as we have seen them in the *Vita Sturmi* and *Vita Aegil*. Rudolf started his introduction with the following outline of Fulda in relation to the outside world:

\(^{139}\) Hen, *'Milites Christi'* , pp. 17-31.
\(^{140}\) Rudolf, *Vita Leobae* c. 19, pp. 129-30. Also Smith, *'Women at the tomb'* , pp. 163-80; Schulenburg, *'Gender, celibacy'* , pp. 353-76.
Building a holy city

In a certain part of Germany, where the Franks live who are called the eastern ones, there is a certain place named after the neighbouring river that is called the Fulda, situated in the mountain pass, which in that time was called 'Bochonia' by the inhabitants of the regions, where in 744, ten years before he died, the holy martyr Boniface, sent by the Apostolic See and consecrated bishop of the church of Mainz, at the command of Carloman, king of the Franks, and under authority of the highest bishop Zacharias of the holy Apostolic See founded a monastery, because it was isolated and remote from the numerousness of the people.141

Rudolf clearly outlined the locus of his narrative: geographically, politically and religiously. As in the Vita Sturmi and Vita Aegil the Carolingians, Boniface, the solitude, and Rome form the substance with which Rudolf delineated Fulda. Yet, Rudolf concentrated on one theme in particular. His Miracula sanctorum is about the way in which the monks of Fulda associated themselves with Rome around a hundred years after Boniface’s death. It shows how on a spiritual level this holy city was rebuilt in Hesse with the use of relics.

Conclusion

The Miracula sanctorum describes how Hrabanus created this holy city in and around the monastery. Rudolf showed that in Fulda and its cellae, where God and his saints were venerated, the monks lived and worked in close proximity to their Lord. His Miracula sanctorum is about the marking and making of the Fulda community.142 In addition to this, the Miracula sanctorum is part of the process of integrating new saints within Fulda’s sacred network of churches and extending it. Rudolf carefully described the stages of the procession, the arrival and the reception, as this was part of the whole transformation. The saints were strangers. They had to become saints of Fulda. They were also stolen from Roman catacombs, so Rudolf had to justify their removal.

141 'In ea parte Germaniae, quam Franci qui dicuntur orientalis inhabitant, locus est ex nomine vicini fluminis Fulda vocatus, situs in saltu magno, qui moderno tempore ab incolis illarum regionum Bochonia appellatur, quem sanctus Bonifacius martyr, legatus in Germaniam ab apostolica sede directus et episcopus Magontiacensi ecclesiae ordinatus, quia secretus erat et a populari frequentia valde remotus, impetravit a Karlmanno rege Francorum, et cum auctoritate Zachariae sanctae sedis apostolicae summi pontificis monasterium in eo constituit monachorum anno ante passionem suam decimo, qui fuit ab incarnatione dominica 744 annus'. Rudolf, Miracula sanctorum c. 1, pp. 329-30.
This chapter has focused on Hrabanus' activities as relic collector who orchestrated space and time to demonstrate Fulda's place in salvation history and to raise the faithful in praise of God, his material being image, written word, and remains of holy dead. The abbot not only instructed his own monks in the holy way of life but also busied himself to teach other groups such as the faithful in the regions, to which Fulda through its network of churches and estates had access, and the set of befriended bishops, abbots and kings who asked for his biblical commentaries and other kinds of exposés on church matters.

Through the abbot's preoccupation with remains of holy dead I have studied the monastery of Fulda from a perspective different from that of the former chapter, namely as a place of holy power, power which not only encompassed the mother convent but also embraced its dependencies. With the help of relics of Roman martyrs, reliquaries, tituli, architecture and paintings Hrabanus Maurus on a spiritual level had built a holy city within the existing network of churches in and around Fulda. To Hrabanus, saints were the living stones with which the celestial Jerusalem was built. With their relics the abbot had built an image of the heavenly city. The relics of the saints were the portae caeli through which earth and heaven were connected. Hrabanus had gathered them from all over the world including Rome. Through the remains of these holy dead Fulda was part of the divine ecclesia and brought from the periphery into the orbit of the church of the Apostles. At the same time, Hrabanus with the help of relics defined the territory of Fulda's sphere of influence and created places of veneration and Christian learning. Of course Fulda was only one of many religious communities that left its mark on the landscape in which the monastery was active. Therefore it was important for both Hrabanus and Rudolf to show that Fulda was the most sacred place in the region, which not only had many relics of saints, but also of saints all over the world, including Rome, the source of authority and orthodoxy par excellence. By transferring part of the relics to some of Fulda's dependencies Hrabanus also strengthened the sacredness and power of the holy monastery in the countryside in which it was active. At the same time Hrabanus seems to have used the relics to tie the

143 'quia dicuntur lapides vivi, hoc est sancti, qui ad coelestem constructionem habiles sunt'. 'While they are called living stones, that is the saints, while they are fit for the heavenly construction [meaning the celestial Jerusalem]' Hrabanus Maurus, De Universo, c. 3 p. 561A.
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dependencies where he placed the holy treasures closer to the mother convent.