Religious Franks: Religion and Power in the Frankish Kingdoms: Studies in Honour of Mayke de Jong. Edited by Rob Meens, Dorine van Espelo, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen, Janneke Raaijmakers, Irene van Renswoude and Carine van Rhijn. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2016. xxv + 559 pp. £75 (hardback); £32.50 (paperback); £90 (ebook). ISBN 978 07190 9763 8 (hardback); 978 15261 1854 7 (paperback); 978 17849 9795 3 (ebook).

The publication of a *Festschrift* for such a prodigious scholar as Mayke de Jong is a cause for celebration for all who have studied any aspect of the themes on which her research has touched. Yet, as the editors note in their preface to this vast tome, ‘Mayke has no real liking... for the traditional *Festschrift*’ (p. ix) due to its usually miscellaneous nature. Thus, in order to provide Mayke with a fitting tribute, the editors have aimed to produce a volume with a tight, coherent theme. All twenty five contributions relate directly in some way to the lessons Mayke has bestowed over the course of her career. While most focus – understandably – on the Carolingian world, there are a number of contributions that address the Roman and Merovingian precedents for Carolingian attitudes, and one that demonstrates the use of the Carolingian legacy in the Salian period, giving the collection a fully early medieval scope. I am unable to provide a comprehensive review of every contribution here, but fortunately the cohesion of the volume is furthered by its subdivision into five thematic sections, upon which the rest of this review will concentrate. For a full list of contents the reader should consult the publisher’s website.

After a thorough and enlightening Introduction by long-time collaborator Rosamond McKitterick, the first section of the volume, ‘Defining Royal Authority’, goes straight to the heart of Mayke’s conception of the Carolingian state as *ecclesia* by providing four case-studies for how the ruler was theorised as *rex et sacerdos*. Two of the chapters address the

topic of the Adoptionist controversy, while the other two return to the long-debated issue of the Franks as a chosen people. Rather than simply re-stating the current consensus, the latter focus on particular elements to highlight the ambivalence of this *topos*. The chapters on Adoptionism will be particularly welcomed by those who have previously struggled to grasp the nuances of this sometimes opaque heresy, with Rutger Kramer giving us a much-needed summary of the controversy accompanied by a thorough analysis of how the Carolingian court dealt with the problem.

The second and longest section of the volume, 'Royal Power in Action: *correctio*', is the most diverse. Although this does not harm the section's cohesion, it is worth noting that while *correctio* is evident in some form or another in all eight chapters, 'royal power' is not always directly addressed. One of those in which it does feature heavily is Robert Flierman's reconsideration of the context of Charlemagne's *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, which makes a solid argument for seeing the production of the document as a response to the events of 792-3 (Charlemagne's *annus horribilis*). The remaining chapters of this section address a wide variety of issues relating to Carolingian *correctio* and *emendatio*, from the hitherto understudied compendium in which Alcuin sent to Charlemagne the apocryphal correspondence between St Paul and Seneca and the alleged correspondence of Alexander and the king of the Brahmins of India, to the ironic scribal errors contained in early manuscripts of the *Admonitio generalis* – some more forgivable than others.

Unsurprisingly, the Rule of Benedict features heavily in section three, 'Monastic powerhouses and centres of learning'. Yet the contributions by Albrecht Diem and Sven Meeder highlight just how far from the centre both Benedict and his original monastery of Monte Cassino actually were geographically and psychologically. Nevertheless, all the chapters of this section support arguments previously made by Mayke de Jong and others about the centrality of monasticism to the conception of Carolingian society. This section also

reminds us that not only were monasteries vital nodes in Carolingian social, political and economic networks, they also presented prisons and retreats for the (once) mighty. One is left with the sense that these contradictions were never fully resolved, but produced some of the most dynamic debates of the eighth, ninth and even tenth centuries.

Section four, 'Powerful bishops' continues the theme of addressing the conception of society as *ecclesia*, providing the reader with a selection of studies about bishops generally and about careers of specific individuals. Particularly useful in the former group are Jinty Nelson's reconsideration of Charlemagne's bishops, demonstrating that they were not necessarily a cohesive group, and Philippe Depreux's analysis of just how much the events at Attigny in 822 changed the nature of the role of bishops in leading society. As with the previous section on monasticism, the contributions in this section confirm just how important churchmen were to Carolingian society.

These findings are continued in the final and shortest section, 'Franks and Rome'. If the contradictions inherent in the role of monasticism in Carolingian society were never fully resolved, then the three contributions in this section remind us that this was even more the case for the relationship between the Frankish ruling dynasty and the popes of Rome. The importance of Rome was far from stable in the Carolingian period, yet decisions made by popes on Frankish issues would affect the status of the papacy and Catholicism for centuries, even if – as Tom Noble's article in particular reminds us – such decisions were often made on an ad hoc basis.

As with any edited volume, not all of the articles here will be of interest to every reader, although this volume certainly deserves to be read from cover to cover. Indeed, *Religious Franks* should be considered a must-read for anyone with an interest in the relationship between the secular and the spiritual in the Early Middle Ages, especially those who have taken on board Mayke's enduring lesson that we should not distinguish between the

two. The immense bibliography the contributors have amassed – coming in at 70 pages – is a resource on these topics in its own right. In fact, the authors who have contributed to this volume must be particularly praised for the clarity and lucidity with which they present some often very obscure and esoteric topics. A tome of nearly 600 pages can appear a daunting prospect, but the contributors made reading it nothing less than an intellectually stimulating pleasure which I hope many more scholars will experience.

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