INTRODUCTION

In 983, Bishop Gebhard II of Constance (r. 979–995) set out to estab-
lish a proprietary monastery not far from his episcopal precinct on the
shore of Lake Constance.[1] Searching for just the right piece of land
for this new community, the bishop and his companions set up camp
in a swamp. Even after the search party was kept awake all night by
the incessant croaking of frogs, the bishop still wondered if the spot
had potential. When he asked what he should call the monastery if he
were to build it there, one of his men, perhaps sardonic after a sleepless
night, suggested the name *Ranunculorum Cella* – the Monastery of Little
Frogs. Evidently not amused, Gebhard responded that he had no inten-
tion of building his community there "if it should be condemned with
such a foul name."[2] And so the search continued. In the end, Gebhard
selected a site just across the Rhine from the city of Constance in
keeping with a consciously constructed parallel with the sacred top-
ography of Rome.[3] The new monastery was the mirror of St. Peter's
basilica in this landscape, and like St. Peter's, oriented with its apse to
the west, a simulacrum that suggested a name much more pleasing to
the bishop: Petershausen, literally the house of Peter. To secure that
land, Gebhard arranged for an exchange with the present owner, the
powerful monastery of Reichenau (f. 724). He endowed the community
with lands from his own inheritance, travelled to Rome to secure relics
and a papal privilege, and presided in person at the consecration in 992.
Even after his death, Gebhard continued to watch over and protect his
beloved monastery, working miracles at his tomb,[4] heroically rescuing

1 An episcopal proprietary monastery is a religious community that was under the
   lordship of a bishop. On the episcopal lordship of monasteries from the ninth to
   the twelfth century, see Susan Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West*
   (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), esp. 418–434.
2 Chronicle of Petershausen (hereafter CP) 1.9.
3 On the efforts of medieval bishops in German cities beyond the Roman *limes* to enhance
   their spiritual prestige through the creation of sacred landscapes that mirrored those
   of Rome or Jerusalem, see Alfred Haverkamp, "Cities as Cultic Centres in Germany
   and Italy During the Early and High Middle Ages," in *Sacred Spaces: Shrine, City, Land*,
   ed. Benjamin Z. Kedar and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky (New York: New York University
   Press, 1998), 172–191.
4 CP 1.55; see also Book 2 of the *Life of Gebhard*.

a drowning monk from a head-first fall into the crypt fountain,[5] and excoriating a monk-priest for his crimes against the community (such as claiming the biggest chalice for himself and filling it to the brim with wine before celebrating the Mass).[6] All of this is the predictable stuff of medieval monastic chronicles.

Historical annals and chronicles abound from German-speaking lands in this period, surely at least partly in response to the ecclesio-political disruptions that devastated the region. Some of the most notable examples come from the pen of Herman of Reichenau (c. 1013–1054), his continuator Berthold (c. 1030–1088), and Bernold of St. Blasien, who together documented events from 1000 to 1100. These Swabian chroniclers offer vital accounts of the shifting and violent landscape of eleventh-century Germany.[7] Beyond Swabia, the eleventh-century Annals of Lambert of Hersfeld (in the medieval Duchy of Franconia) constitute the most important narrative account of political events in the kingdom of Germany in the central Middle Ages. A so-called universal history, Lambert's Annals begin with the creation of the world and move into his own time. This is a particularly important source for the turbulent period between 1056 and 1077 – a source that the Petershausen chronicler himself seems to have had to hand when he compiled his own account of these events in Book Two. Still other chroniclers narrate the story of the conflict between popes and kings and emperors from the papal perspective. The contemporary chronicler Frutolf of Michelsberg provides the most important, sometimes eyewitness, account of many of the same events from the royal perspective, and his work was extended and adapted (including by Ekkehard of Aura) in the twelfth century.

Reaching for continuity amid the rapid religious and social change of the period – a period that for many monastic communities included profound internal change initiated in the name of correction or reform – the Swabian monk-chroniclers of the eleventh and twelfth

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5 CP 3.15

6 CP 3.21

7 I. S. Robinson, trans., *Eleventh-Century Germany: The Swabian Chronicles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008); see also Hans-Werner Goetz, "Die schwäbischen Herzöge in der Wahrnehmung der alemannischen Geschichtsschreiber der Ottonen- und Salierzeit," in *Adel und Königtum im mittelalterlichen Schwaben: Festschrift für Thomas Zotz zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Aldres Bihrer, Mathias Kälble, and Heinz Krieg (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 2009), 127–144.

centuries imagined historical narratives that insisted on connection to the past. At the Hirsau-affiliated monastery of Zwiefalten (f. 1089), the monks Ortlieb (writing between 1135 and 1137) and Berthold (writing between c. 1137 and 1138) cover much of the same territory as the Petershausen chronicler – with similar, albeit drier, accounts of the selection of a site for the monastery, the election of lay advocates, relic translations, as well as an impressive number of donations by noble patrons.[8]

Like Ortlieb and Berthold, or the author of the Chronicle of Ottobeuren (c. 1210), Petershausen's chronicler also sought to bolster the legal and economic welfare of his community by interweaving various charters and privileges – some interpolated or even forged – to suit present and anticipated needs.[9] It is, however, the colorful Ekkehard IV of St. Gall (980/990–1054), author of the *Casus Sancti Galli*, whose work most nearly resembles the CP. Just as will be seen in the case of the anonymous monk-author of the CP, Ekkehard enlivens his narrative of events at St. Gall from 870 to 972 with vivid anecdotes that reflect something of life within the monastery: conflicts between abbots and monks, divine punishment, miracles, abbatial abdications, devastating fires, and extraordinary deaths.[10] Like these other chroniclers, the author of the CP constructed a community identity on the imagined foundation of a shared past, creating cohesion in the present, often drawing on familiar recycled and repurposed tales of contemporary monastic histories.[11]

What truly sets the author of the CP apart from the rest, however, is that he continued the work sporadically for some thirty years, from c. 1136 to c. 1164, shifting from retrospective historian to contemporary witness and critic. He speaks with a clear and often feisty voice, revealing a perspective that shifts over time in response to conditions and events both within the monastery and in the broader religious,

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8 For the Chronicle of Zwiefalten, see COZ and CBZ; for the text of the Chronicle of Ottobeuren, see MGH SS 23: 609–630. To date, there is no English translation of either of these Latin chronicles.

9 See, for example, CP 1.27 and 2.2, with (possible) interpolations regarding the right of the monastery to elect its advocate.

10 Ekkehard IV of St. Gall, *Casus Sancti Galli*. MGH SS 2: 75–162.

11 On the concept of "imaginative memory," see Amy G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 2–3.

social, and political landscapes in which it was embedded. The CP begins as a narrative of the triumph of reform; men from Hirsau arrive and take charge, and a wonderful new abbot, Theodoric (r. 1086–1116), deftly implements the mandated changes. But this narrative of triumph gradually morphs into a narrative of cultural trauma. Subsequent abbots and monks fail to live up to the promises of the reform and the violence of the surrounding landscape finds its way into the community. The chronicler speaks with unexpected candor, often in the first person, as bishop-proprietors clash with the monks, advocates attack with their men, the cellarer pawns precious liturgical vestments, and a monk steals and hides the silver. The interpretation of frightening dream-visions divides the community. Two of the lay brothers beat the cellarer with clubs when he refuses to provide them with needed supplies. And after God permits the total destruction of the community in a massive fire – a horrifying inversion of the holy flames of Pentecost – the chronicler lays the blame right at the feet of the monks themselves.

The Petershausen chronicler's decision to remain anonymous also distinguishes him from many of his better-known contemporaries. A number of internal clues, however, suggest that this remarkable author may well have been the monk who would become Abbot Gebhard I (r. 1164–1170/1173). His striking level of interest in all things liturgical – from vestments, to books, to processions – suggests that he was the community's cantor, the individual charged with oversight of all aspects of the liturgy as well as the production and keeping of books.[12] Further, as recent studies have demonstrated, it was not uncommon for the cantor to do double duty as community historian.[13] Another clue comes from the often-bewildering parade of Gebhards across the folios of the Chronicle, a reflection of the monastery's long connection to the family of its founding bishop. The chronicler himself claims many of these Gebhards as relatives, noting, for example, a forefather (*avus*) named Gebhard among the monks at Petershausen at the end of the

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12 For a more complete discussion of the identity of the chronicler, see Alison I. Beach, *The Trauma of Monastic Reform: Community and Conflict in Twelfth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 158–162; Alison I. Beach, "Shaping Liturgy, Shaping History: A Cantor-Historian from Twelfth-Century Petershausen," in *Medieval Cantors and Their Craft: Music, Liturgy, and the Shaping of History, 800–1500*, ed. Margot Fassler, Katie Bugyis, and Andrew Krabel (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017), 297–309.

13 Fassler et al., *Medieval Cantors and Their Craft.*

eleventh century[14] and referring several times to his uncle Gebino (a diminutive form of the name Gebhard), a fellow monk at Petershausen who left the community to serve as Abbot of Wagenhausen (r. 1127–1134) and Fischingen (r. c. 1135–1138).[15] Gebhard was indeed a very common name within Gebhard II's family line: the powerful counts of Bregenz, the ruling comital family of the Voralberg from the tenth to the twelfth century.[16] Both a noble lineage of this sort and a familial connection to the founder further support the argument that the chronicler served as cantor, a position that suggests a high status within the monastery and one that often served as a springboard to the abbacy.[17] The timing for this attribution is also right; Gebhard I became abbot in 1164, just when the hand, tone, and style of the CP signal a change of scribe-author. It may be that cantor-historian-turned-abbot Gebhard I finally handed the ever-expanding manuscript over to a continuator, perhaps his successor as cantor, after devoting some thirty years of work to the text.

The Hirsau reform

The pivotal event witnessed in the CP is the arrival in 1086 of a group of outsiders, dispatched from the monastery of Hirsau at the behest of still another Gebhard: Bishop Gebhard III of Constance (r. 1084–1110). The new bishop had himself been a monk at Hirsau, the center of an influential eleventh- and twelfth-century movement for monastic reform.

Hirsau's own roots stretched back to 830, when Bishop Noting of Vercelli and Count Erlafried of Calw founded a small religious community dedicated to St. Aurelius just east of the River Nagold on the northern edge of the Black Forest. This little community would not last; monastic life there soon collapsed and the house was dissolved. The

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14 cf. CP 3.14–3.16.

15 cf. CP 2.17, 3.38, 3.45, 4.32–4.34, and 4.40–4.41.

16 Helmut G. Walther, "Gründungsgeschichte und Tradition im Kloster Petershausen vor Konstanz," *Schriften des Vereins für Geschichte des Bodensees und seiner Umgebung* 96 (1978): 42–43. The CP is an important (although problematic) source for the history of the Bregenzer comital family. See Benedikt Bilgeri, *Bregenz. Geschichte der Stadt. Politik, Verfassung, Wirtschaft* (Vienna and Munich: Verlag Jugend & Volk, 1980), 22–31.

17 Felix Heinzer, *Klosterreform und mittelalterliche Buchkultur im deutschen Südwesten* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2008), 389.

impulse for a new founding would come only in the eleventh century, from none less than the great reforming pope Leo IX (r. 1049–1054), who commissioned his nephew, Count Albert of Calw, to revive the community. By 1065, the new house was ready to receive its first new monks, called from the monastery of Einsiedeln (f. 934), some 200 kilometers to the south in modern Switzerland. Troubles continued to plague the community, however, and in 1069 the count found it necessary, allegedly with the full agreement of the monks, to depose Abbot Frederick. It was then that William (c. 1030–1091) was called from the monastery of St. Emmeram in Regensburg to serve as Abbot of Hirsau, although he refused to accept ordination as abbot until 1071 in response to lingering doubts about the legitimacy of Frederick's deposition at the hands of the monastery's lay proprietor.

Almost as soon as the struggle between Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII for control over the investiture of bishops led to a major break between the two in 1076, the monks of Hirsau and its affiliates stepped forward as vigorous supporters of the papal cause, delivering fiery sermons and building a reputation as agitators and rebels.[18] Partly fueled by anti-imperial sentiment among the bishops and some of the nobles of Swabia, the reform gained momentum in the late eleventh century, and the Hirsau-oriented communities that increasingly dotted the landscape of southern Germany functioned as centers of support for the papal cause. Petershausen's papal orientation in the great clashes of the late eleventh and twelfth century was fixed by its bishop-proprietor and their association with the reformers from Hirsau.

But the lay nobles who functioned as monastic advocates (the individuals charged with seeing to a monastery's material welfare in the secular world) were freer to switch sides. A change in allegiance could turn a patron into an adversary, or an advocate into an aggressor. A hostile episcopal patron could also bring disaster – a fact made painfully clear at Petershausen during the episcopacy of Ulrich I. One of the most valuable aspects of the witness of the CP is its frank portrayal of the ways in which the supra-regional and regional violence associated with this protracted struggle played out at the most local level.[19]

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18 On Hirsau monks as anti-imperial preachers, see Phyllis G. Jestice, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 1997), 249–265.

19 See esp. Book Three of the Chronicle.

Enthusiastic medieval and early modern praise for William painted him as a model reformer and Hirsau as a refuge of "true religion" in a broken world. For the Petershausen chronicler, William was a man "pleasing both to God and men because he was extremely learned and most zealous in regular discipline, humble, gentle, a despiser of the world, and a most diligent lover of monks and of all virtue."[20] Almost four centuries later, Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516), Abbot of Sponheim and of St. Jacob in Würzburg, praised William's great learning (including the advanced liberal arts of the quadrivium, and particularly music, mathematics, and astronomy) and his benevolence toward the needy of all sorts. For Trithemius, William was a heroic rescuer of monastic life, a model of spirituality, and the ideal abbot.[21]

Modern scholarship, by contrast, has tended to dismiss the Hirsau reform as merely political – an impression surely reinforced by contemporary representations of rabble-rousing Hirsau monks preaching to crowds of laymen in support of the papal cause. The Hirsau movement is also frequently relegated to the status as a somewhat uninteresting derivative – a "German Cluny" – or criticized as entirely dominated by William's "philistine narrowmindedness," a personality flaw that led to the operation of communities regimented to the point of dictating "proper toilet habits or the time for cutting fingernails."[22] Such impressions, while not entirely wrong, have prevented a full picture of the spiritual dimensions of the movement from coming to the fore, particularly in English- and French-speaking academic circles. The CP enriches our understanding of monasticism within Hirsau's reforming orbit and provides a useful corrective to these rather narrow views of the movement.

What, then, was the Hirsau Reform, and what can be said about its goals and core spiritual ideals? According to the unrelenting rhetoric of praise that emerged from Hirsau's expanding reforming circle, William worked tirelessly to restore apostolic simplicity to monastic life, first locally and then regionally. At the heart of his plan was the goal of securing the freedom (*libertas*) of the monastery from all secular

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20 CP 2.49.

21 Klaus Schreiner, "Hirsau und der Hirsauer Reform. Spiritualität, Lebensform und Sozialprofil einer benediktinischen Erneuerungsbewegung im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert," in *Hirsau. St. Peter und Paul. 1091–1991* (Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss Verlag, 1991), 159.

22 Schreiner, "Hirsau und der Hirsauer Reform," 161.

interference, including the kind of heavy-handed intervention seen in Albert's ousting of Abbot Frederick. In the wake of further struggles with the counts of Calw, William succeeded in securing a royal charter from Henry IV in 1075 that documented Albert's surrender of all of his rights over Hirsau and its possessions, recognized the rights of its abbots as the community's sole administrators, and assured the monks' right to the free election of their abbot in accordance with the Rule of St. Benedict.[23] This document, often called the Hirsau Formulary, was held up as normative within Hirsau's wider reform network. Not long after, William requested a copy of the customs of Cluny from Ulrich of Zell, an old friend from their shared time as students at the monastery of St. Emmeram. Ulrich had been a monk at Cluny since 1061, and the customs that he sent to Hirsau, along with his prefatory letter (*epistola nuncapatoria*), would provide considerable inspiration for the *Constitutiones Hirsaugienses* (Constitutions of Hirsau), which William would compile in the 1080s.[24] Customaries prior to this period had served mainly as inspirational sources, but the Hirsau monks were among the first to impose a written customary on the communities in their widening circle of monasteries.[25] Indeed, the survival of numerous manuscripts containing the *Constitutiones*, many copied at Hirsau itself, suggests strongly that this customary was a primary instrument of reform, and one that was intended to be normative.[26] Armed with manuscripts containing these texts, the monks spread their form of monasticism across the region as well as to places as far away as Admont (Austria) and Moggio (northern Italy), both intervening in previously established monastic houses and founding new ones.[27] By

23 H. E. J Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073–1085* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 255–256. For the text of the diploma, see MGH DD H.IV, 6: 359–362; on lingering questions about the authenticity of this text, see Schreiner, "Hirsau und der Hirsauer Reform," 161.

24 Isabelle Cochelin, "Customaries as Inspirational Sources," in *Consuetudines et Regulae: Sources for Monastic Life in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period*, ed. Carolyn Marino Malone and Clark Maines, Disciplina Monastica 10 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014), 41. For an edition of the Constitutions of Hirsau, see CCM 15, ed. Candida Elvert and Pius Engelbert.

25 Cochelin, "Customaries as Inspirational Sources," 35; Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 24–25.

26 Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 14–15, 46–48.

27 This account of the history of Hirsau and the reforming work of William is based on Klaus Schreiner, *Gemeinsam Leben: Spiritualität, Lebens- und Verfassungsformen klösterlicher Gemeinschaften in Kirche und Gesellschaft des Mittelalters*, ed. Mirko

the time the movement lost its momentum around the middle of the twelfth century, the total number of communities with connections to Hirsau was well over 100.[28] Beginning in 1086 under Abbot Theodoric, and continuing to a lesser extent under Abbot Conrad, Petershausen's own influence expanded through a series of initiatives to reform extant communities and to found new ones. Some of these endeavors, as the CP shows, were more successful than others.[29]

The reformers called for the strict observance of the Rule of St. Benedict, with liturgical, communal, and individual life further governed by the regulations set forth in the written customs of Hirsau. The religious life, properly lived according to the Hirsau reformers, required – at least as an ideal – a radical retreat from the secular world into a life oriented toward the love of God and one's fellow monks in accordance with the Rule of St Benedict.[30] William's *Constitutiones* did, as some critics have noted, regulate nearly all aspects of daily life – from the reception and training of novices, to the details of the daily monastic liturgy, to the specifics of funerals and the office for the dead, and just about everything in between (including rules for proper hygiene).[31] It is important to note, however, that in some places the arriving reformers were quite tolerant of the persistence of some local custom.[32]

The reforming agenda associated with Hirsau indeed aligned quite neatly with contemporary Church politics. While there had been calls for reform from clerical circles since the Carolingian era, that rhetoric

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Breitenstein and Gert Melville (Berlin and Münster: LIT Verlag, 2013). Earlier studies of Hirsau include Hermann Jakobs, *Die Hirsauer. Ihre Ausbreitung und Rechtsstellung im Zeitalter des Investiturstreites*, Kölner historische Abhandlungen 4 (Cologne and Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1961).

28 A definitive list of Hirsau-affiliated monasteries remains a *desideratum*. Jakobs, *Die Hirsauer* provides a starting point, but a critical evaluation of the sources is required before any reliable count is possible; for the perils of identifying "reform filiations" along the model of Kassius Hallinger's Gorze-Kluny, using Petershausen as an example of a "mother house," see Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 93–115.

29 These expansions, with all of their problems, failings, and reversals, are detailed in CP 3.24–3.27 (Andelsbuch/Mehrerau), CP 3.27, 4.20, and 4.40 (Wagenhausen), CP 3.33 and 3.37 (Kastl), CP 3.38 and 3.40 (Neresheim), and 4.40–4.41 (Fischingen).

30 Schreiner, "Hirsau und der Hirsauer Reform," 164–165.

31 Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 25.

32 On this tolerance and its potential repercussions for local liturgical practice, see Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 26.

sharpened and intensified in the eleventh century.[33] As the so-called Gregorian reformers insisted on a clear distinction between the lay and ecclesiastical spheres, the Hirsau reformers sought freedom from lay interference in the operation of monasteries. In both contexts, the ritual of investiture, in which a priest, bishop, or abbot was bestowed with the ring and staff that symbolized his office, became a flashpoint.[34] The ritual act of conferring the ring and staff was freighted from both sides, for as Maureen Miller puts it, "everyone recognized that power over ecclesiastical appointments meant power over the church."[35] The conflict between lay nobles, who were determined to establish or maintain control over the churches and monasteries in their territories, and the advocates of reform, who were determined to free the Church from them, crystalized around the symbolic process of investiture, and conflict and even violence ensued. Further, the drive of eleventh-century Church reformers to sharpen the distinction between the clerical and lay spheres, rooted in concerns about the pollution of the Church through clerical sexuality and simony, was mirrored in the calls of the Hirsau reformers for full separation from the secular world, as seen in attempts at enforcing strict claustration for both sexes. The Petershausen chronicler contrasted the spiritual safety of the "port" of Hirsau monastic life with the "shipwreck" of the broader (unreformed) church at the time.[36]

The Hirsau reformers also responded to new waves of lay piety, sometimes expressed in lay interest in retreat, at least partial, from the world. William made space at Hirsau for a new kind of religious man – the

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33 Maureen C. Miller, "Reform, Clerical Culture, and Politics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); on monastic reform in south Germany in the eleventh century, see the useful overview in T. J. H. McCarthy, *Music, Scholasticism and Reform: Salian Germany, 1024–1125* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 11–42; on monastic reform more broadly, see Steven Vanderputten, "Monastic Reform in the Early Tenth to Twelfth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, ed. Alison I. Beach and Isabelle Cochelin, 599–617 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

34 The classic work on the investiture crisis in English remains Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988). For an introduction geared toward students, see Maureen C. Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005).

35 Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict*, 16.

36 CP 2.28 and 2.48.

bearded brother (*frater barbatus*). These were adult converts (sometimes called *conversi* in contemporary sources), drawn primarily from the nobility, whom Karl Leyser considered to be "Hirsau's most startling innovation."[37] The bearded brothers lived in parallel with the choir monks, participating in some aspects of the liturgy while focusing on the manual labor that was needed to buffer the monks from the world outside the monastery. According to Bernold of St. Blasien, the more noble these men had been in the world, "the more they desired to be employed in the more contemptible offices." "Those who were formerly counts or margraves in the world," he continued, "now considered it the greatest delight to serve the brethren in the kitchen or the mill or to graze their pigs in the field."[38] That the CP includes accounts of two violent attacks on the monks by the monastery's bearded brothers suggests, however, that these men were not as content with their menial lot as Bernold claimed.[39] These men could also take charge of the less lowly business of running the monastic community, including managing its more worldly affairs, playing a sort of hinge role between monastery and the world beyond.

Hirsau spirituality was also notable for its strikingly positive assessment of female spiritual potential, influenced by the thinking of contemporary theologians and biblical exegetes such as Rupert of Deutz (d. 1129) and Gerhoch of Reichersberg (d. 1169). Rupert went so far as to argue that, while women differed from men in physical sex, they were equal spiritually. "For the substance of woman differs in no way from the substance of man except for sex," he argued, "since she is not less rational, nor is she less at liberty to aspire to similitude with the Creator, as was already stated above where scripture, speaking of this creation, says: *Male*, it says, *and female he created them*."[40] The

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37 Karl Leyser, "The German Aristocracy from the Ninth to the Early Twelfth Century. A Historical and Cultural Sketch," *Past & Present* 41 (1968): 45.

38 MGH SS 5: 439; CBSB, 272. There were also unfree servants at Petershausen and other contemporary monastic communities, but there is no evidence for the interaction between these and the noble bearded brothers who engaged in menial manual labor within the community, like the bearded brother Lanzalin, who worked as assistant to the gardener (CP A.15). More research is needed into this underexplored social space within Hirsau-affiliated monasteries.

39 CP 4.11 and 5.7.

40 Rupert of Deutz, Commentary on Genesis 2: 1603–1609. CC:CM 21: 226; trans. Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 66.

CP's strong defense of dual-sex monasticism, rooted in the presence of women among the disciples in the Gospels, is often cited in secondary literature as an example of this sort of positive attitude toward the spiritual potential of women.[41]

Many monasteries associated with Hirsau housed women alone, while others, like Petershausen, combined men and women, quartered separately, under a single abbot. Some communities, including Zwiefalten and Admont, also organized sub-communities of lay sisters (*conversae*), although there is no clear evidence for their presence at Petershausen. Women of the high nobility could certainly also enhance the social prestige and economic stability of a monastic community. While Petershausen's chronicler claimed no such bragging rights, Ortlieb of Zwiefalten proudly noted that his community was home to a multitude of highly noble women – women who "shone more brightly than the stars according to worldly nobility, but even more brightly and dazzlingly according to religion."[42] Such high-status women continued to work their connections and marshal family wealth on behalf of their communities, so that while the logistics of preventing contact between the sexes in double monasteries were complex and often fraught, many houses went out of their way to attract high-status women.

Another key characteristic of Hirsau-oriented monasticism was the intensification of the liturgy, a set of rituals for which the details, as noted above, had been worked out at Hirsau itself and transmitted in manuscripts in the hands of the arriving reformers. At Petershausen, this increased emphasis on liturgy was also visible in the addition of chapels and in the extension of spaces of liturgy to accommodate more singers and longer processions.[43] The Petershausen chronicler identifies sixteen new liturgical books acquired for the monastery during the abbacy of Theodoric, the first reformer from Hirsau.[44] When monks were sent from Petershausen to populate the newly founded community of Fischingen, they brought with them at least eight service books, probably copied at Petershausen following models with origins

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41 cf. CP P.9.

42 COZ, 88.

43 For such expansions in the wake of the reform, during the abbacy of the Theodoric, see CP 1.21, 3.12, 3.13.

44 CP 3.49.

at Hirsau itself.[45] The production of books, wherever it was carried out, required not only work space and materials, but also highly trained women and men to do the copying.

The Hirsau reform, like its initiator William, was indeed profoundly bookish, a characteristic also clearly reflected in the remains of book collections from a number of affiliated communities.[46] Contemporary library lists and a number of extraordinary book collections that survive attest to communities in which the study of the Bible was a center-point of spiritual life. The most striking example is the monastery of Admont, a community that came into Hirsau's orbit in 1115, from which more than 200 twelfth-century books, many of which were geared toward biblical interpretation, have survived.[47] The twelfth-century list of Zwiefalten's collections suggests a similar scope and focus on biblical study.[48] A book inventory from mid-twelfth-century Lippoldsberg (Lower Saxony), originally colonized by women from Schaffhausen (an influential node in the expanding Hirsau network located close to Lake Constance in modern Switzerland) shows that the women there owned a remarkable variety of texts, many of which would have been used for the study and exegesis of the Bible.[49] Surviving letters that the nuns of Admont exchanged with regional experts in biblical exegesis, including Gerhoch of Reichersberg, attest to the active use of such books; the women of Admont read, studied, copied, and exchanged manuscripts, reaching out for guidance beyond the community when they had unanswered questions. In the mid-twelfth century, Abbot Irimbert (r. 1137–1165) added books containing his own biblical sermon-commentaries on several Old Testament books

45 On books as conduits of the Hirsau reform, see Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 45–48.

46 Increased book production, while characteristic of Hirsau communities in the wake of reform, was not unique to this particular reforming context. See Raymund Kottje, "Klosterbibliotheken und monastische Kultur in der zweiten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 80 (1969): 145–162.

47 Alison I. Beach, *Women as Scribes: Book Production and Monastic Reform in Twelfth-Century Bavaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

48 Constant Mews, "Monastic Educational Culture Revisited: The Witness of Zwiefalten and the Hirsau Reform," in *Medieval Monastic Education*, ed. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), 182–197.

49 Julie Hotchin, "Women's Reading and Monastic Reform in Twelfth-Century Germany: The Library of the Nuns of Lippoldsberg," in *Manuscripts and Monastic Culture: Reform and Renewal in Twelfth-Century Germany*, ed. Alison I. Beach (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 153.

to Admont's library, relying on the women of the community to serve as his copyists and editors.[50] The exceptional visibility of Admont's female scribes, as well as of those from Wessobrunn and Zwiefalten, reflects both the importance of literacy – and particularly the ability to copy books – within reformed communities and the fact that women could be fully engaged in that literate culture, both as consumers (as devotional readers and hearers) and as producers (as scribes and exegetes in their own right).[51]

The social landscape of medieval Swabia

The Chronicle also provides a fascinating window on the social structure of this region of Germany in the high Middle Ages, from the unfree inhabitants of lands owned by the monastery to the women and men of the highest nobility. The chronicler's imaginative genealogy places its founder Gebhard II in the illustrious line of Charlemagne, claiming that it was the great emperor himself who had granted Gebhard's ancestors lands in Alemania, including, staking an ancient claim to the contemporary family seat in Bregenz.[52] The attention that he pays to the most powerful comital family in the region – including several vivid accounts of the doings of Countess Bertha of Bregenz – adds further weight to the argument that this family held personal interest for him.[53] The folios of the CP are also populated by lesser men – the up-and-coming nobles of twelfth-century Swabia. We encounter less powerful counts maneuvering for control of monasteries, moving from the now-prohibited role of lay proprietors into their newly negotiated role as advocates.[54]

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50 Shannon M. T. Li, "Irimbert of Admont and His Scriptural Commentaries: Exegeting Salvation History in the Twelfth Century" (PhD Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2017).

51 On Zwiefalten's female scribe Mathilda of Neuffen, see Alison I. Beach, " 'Mathild de Niphin' and the Female Scribes of Twelfth-Century Zwiefalten," in *Nuns' Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Hull Dialogue*, ed. Veronica M. O'Mara, Patricia Stoop, and Virginia Blanton, 33–50 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013).

52 Josef Zösmair, "Geschichte Rudolfs des letzten der alten Grafen von Bregenz (1097–1160)," *Schriften des Vereins für Geschichte des Bodensees und seiner Umgebung* 44 (1915): 25.

53 On Bertha of Bregenz, see CP 3.26 and 4.11. Her involvement also was notably omitted from CP 5.7.

54 On monastic advocates, see Jonathan Lyon, "Noble Lineages, Hausklöster and Monastic Advocacy in the Twelfth Century," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 123 (2015): 1–29.

While the CP has long attracted considerable attention among German-speaking scholars for this inventive genealogy, those below the ranks of comital families have gone largely unnoticed. Here we meet the ministerials, men of the lower nobility, a knightly class of mostly unfree origins. Although technically servile, ministerials at this time held an important place as the upper knightly class. In a complex evolution spanning particularly the tenth through the thirteenth centuries, ministerials in southern Germany largely displaced the lower nobility before being subsumed in turn into the increasingly privileged class of knights, which was also of mostly servile origin.[55]

The majority of the lay population of Swabia at this time was, of course, neither noble nor knightly. The majority were free commoners on the one hand and unfree individuals of various conditions on the other.[56] Among the free commoners who continued to comprise the majority of the population in most of southern Germany, we find the usual division between a majority of rural peasants and a minority of urban burghers engaged in various occupations. It is the latter that the CP most often mentions, which is not surprising given Petershausen's close proximity to Constance. As for the servile population, the social reality in southern Germany had become quite complex by the twelfth century, featuring a number of distinct gradations of servitude. Many monastic *familiae* included variously among their ranks ministerials,

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55 On ministerials, see John B. Freed, *Noble Bondsmen: Ministerial Marriages in the Archdiocese of Salzburg, 1100–1343* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), esp. 2–4, 50–54.

56 The dimensions of medieval unfreedoms is a matter of active and lively discussion among historians of medieval slavery and has been the subject of a number of recent conferences, including thematic threads at the Twenty-Third International Medieval Congress (Leeds, UK, 2016) and the Ninety-Third Annual Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America (Atlanta, GA, 2018), as well as a dedicated conference hosted by Binghamton University entitled "Medieval Unfreedoms: Slavery, Servitude, and Trafficking in Humans before the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade" (Binghamton, NY, 2018). The model of Swabian society presented in this introduction is derived principally from an examination of contemporary *libri traditionum* in neighboring Bavaria, with which the Chronicle of Petershausen seems to accord. See Samuel S. Sutherland, "Mancipia Dei: Slavery, Servitude, and the Church in Bavaria, 975–1225" (PhD Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2017). For other recent and forthcoming contributions to the discussion of medieval slavery and unfreedom, see Alice Rio, *Slavery After Rome, 500–1100* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Reuven Amitai and Christoph Cluse, eds., *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 ce)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); and Thomas J. Macmaster, ed., *A Cultural History of Slavery and Human Trafficking in the Pre-Modern Era (500–1450),* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, forthcoming).

other privileged *servi* not of ministerial rank, *censuales*, *coloni*, serfs, and some slaves.

Some churches and monasteries in Swabia and Bavaria accumulated large networks of *censuales* through donations by lay commoners and nobles of serfs or slaves who were elevated into this improved status in the process, supplemented by periodic self-donations of formerly free members of society. These *censuales*, or tributary freedmen as they appear in the CP, were contrasted in monastic cartularies both with free and with servile conditions, existing somewhere in between. They held a sort of contingent freedom, permitted to live and work where and how they pleased provided that they and all their posterity made annual, individual payments to the church or monastery to which they belonged. If any should fail to pay, as happened at least occasionally, they would default into "daily servitude" or slavery.[57]

Coloni, who lived on lands owned by their lords with limited obligations of periodic dues in kind, had formerly possessed a similar kind of ambiguous freedom, but came by the twelfth century to be largely assimilated with the growing ranks of *servi manentes*, or serfs. These serfs of a more generic variety existed in a newer and less tightly defined class, similarly tied to the land of their lords on individual tenancies. While classed as unfree laborers, the labor obligations and regular dues of serfs were defined and limited by custom. Slaves, unlike serfs, were considered chattel property to be bought, sold, traded, or donated independently of land or even family and could be put to work in virtually any capacity without limitation. In the cartularies of neighboring Bavaria, the terms *servus cottidianus* or *servus praebendarius* were often (although not consistently) used to distinguish these slaves from serfs, who were still for the most part called by the old Latin terms for slaves that had since become quite flexible: *servus, famulus, ancilla*, or *mancipium*.[58]

Each of these groups – ministerials, *censuales*, *coloni*, serfs, and slaves – feature in the CP at various points. A number of the charters in the

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57 On *censuales*, see Stefan Esders, *Die Formierung der Zensualität: Zur kirchlichen Transformation des spätrömischen Patronatswesens im früheren Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2010); Knut Schulz, "Zum Problem zur Zensualität im Hochmittelalter," in *Beiträge zur Wirtschats- und Sozialgeschichte des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Herbert Helbig zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Knut Schulz (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1976), 86–127; Philippe Dollinger, *L'évolution des classes rurales en Bavière, depuis la fin de l'époque carolingienne jusqu'au milieu du XIIIe siècle.* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1949). As of yet the class of *censuales* in southern Germany has received little attention in English literature.

58 Sutherland, "Mancipia Dei."

Chronicle mention unfree laborers, probably serfs, transferred along with their land. Other narrative accounts of donations and endowments are more varied. In the early years of the monastery, Bishop Gebhard II donated variously ministerials, knights, and serfs tied to specific lands, as well as servants to dwell in the monastery whose condition maps comfortably onto that of the *servi cottidiani* described in Bavarian cartularies, and others would donate additional individuals of various conditions in the years to come.[59] Domestic servants appear sporadically and in passing throughout the CP as the chronicler, while narrating some anecdote, deigns to mention the existence of the usually invisible servants living and working at the monastery or in the household of the bishop.[60] These offhand comments and unusually colorful anecdotes interspersed throughout the CP that mention these women and men are particularly valuable for the study of monastic servants, slaves, and other *familiares*, offering a lens into the social condition of servile classes quite different from and fruitfully complementary to the rich cartulary evidence of neighboring Bavaria.

The manuscript and its makers: University of Heidelberg, *Codex Salemitani* IX 42a

The CP survives in a single copy, preserved within a manuscript now owned by the University of Heidelberg. The medieval books from Petershausen that survived until its dissolution under Napoleon in 1803 were moved briefly to the nearby Cistercian monastery of Salem. When Salem was secularized in its turn later that year, the 442 manuscripts of the combined collection fell to the Margraviate of Baden (elevated in that same year to an Electorate). In 1827, Grand Duke Louis I of Baden (1763–1830) sold the entire collection to the University of Heidelberg.[61]

The text of the CP is one of two codicologically and paleographically distinct components that comprise *Codex Salemitani* IX 42a, both produced at Petershausen during the twelfth century.[62] The first codicological

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59 CP 1.11, 1.32, 1.34, 1.35, 3.26, 4.5; *Life of Gebhard* 1.19, 1.20

60 See, for example, CP 2.5, 2.20, 3.21, 4.22.

61 Wilfried Werner, *Die mittelalterlichen nichtliturgischen Handschriften des Zisterzienserklosters Salem* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2000), LVII.

62 For a full description of the manuscript and its contents, see Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 254–259.

unit, quires 1–4 (ff. 1r–34v), was copied by a single scribe into uniform gatherings of four bifolia. All of these texts, with the exception of a florilegium on ff. 20r–34v, are connected to Petershausen's patron saints, Gebhard II and Gregory the Great. That the various texts in this section of the manuscript flow together across the gatherings suggests that they were originally conceived and produced as a single unit that was likely used for performing the office on the feast days of these two figures so central to the community.

The Chronicle itself comprises the second codicological unit, consisting of nine quires (5–13) that are mainly the work of the chronicler himself.[63] The underlying physical structure of this section of the manuscript offers a wealth of evidence for the process of compiling the text. The chronicler copied the text on folios 35r–83v into uniform gatherings of four bifolia. In this section of the text, completed in 1136, he looks back on the long history of the monastery, first imagining the deep family history of Petershausen's founder and culminating with a vivid account of the translation of his relics and his canonization in 1134. Throughout the following twenty-three years (1136–1159), he continued to add material, appending new parchment as needed to make space for additional anecdotes and accounts of current events within the monastery. Both the hiatus in adding new material and the wear evident on the last folio of quire 8 correspond with the catastrophic fire that destroyed much of the monastery in 1159. Quire 8 ends with the chronicler's account of the fire, and much of the text has been rubbed away, suggesting its last folio (90v) was exposed to the difficult living and working conditions experienced in the wake of the fire. It would not be until c. 1164 that a new voice and hand would continue the work, followed by minor continuators, down to the final twelfth-century entry in 1179.

That two early modern visitors to Petershausen – the German scholar Hermann von der Hardt (1660–1746) and theologian, historian, and scholar of music and liturgy Martin Gerbert (1720–1793), Abbot of St. Blasien in the Black Forest – were shown the book with great ceremony during their visits to the monastery suggests the community's continued reverence for the CP, even well into the early modern period.[64]

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63 For a full account of differing opinions regarding the identification of the Chronicle as the autograph of its author-compiler, see Beach, *Trauma of Monastic Reform*, 14–16.

64 The university is now in the process of digitizing its manuscript collections. *Codex Salemitani* IX 42a: https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.605; *Codex Salemitani* IX 9 (a fifteenth-century manuscript containing the earliest extant version of the

About this translation

This translation relies on the Latin editions of the Chronicle published by Otto Abel and Ludwig Weiland[65] and Otto Feger.[66] With two reliable modern printings of the Latin, it seemed to us unnecessary to retranscribe the text from the manuscript. In cases in which the reading in these editions was ambiguous or appeared questionable, we turned for clarification or correction to the original manuscript. While the chronicler was clearly a competent writer of Latin, he was no great stylist; we have tried to strike a balance between respecting his distinctive authorial voice, along with several of his less-appealing habits (such as the frequent repetition of particular phrases), and producing a readable and enjoyable translation. We have kept quite close to the text, avoiding aggressive colloquializing, while again striving for readability. One major change that we have made is to abandon the conventional numbering of the various books in order to reflect more clearly the chronicler's own intentions and authorial process. To minimize confusion, we have included the book and chapter numbers in Abel and Weiland (1868) and Feger (1956) in parentheses following our revised numbers. There is also a concordance of book and chapter numbers in Appendix 2.

Contemporary marginal and interlinear additions of more than three words are given in square brackets. Passages that have been erased, struck out, or otherwise damaged are given in curly brackets. Where possible, we have anglicized proper names for ease of reading following the *Dictionary of Medieval Names from European Sources*.[67] The original forms of names that have been anglicized are given in parentheses in the index. It should be noted that some personal names are spelled in two or three different ways in the original text as the chronicler himself was not consistent in his transliteration of Germanic names. Our decision to index the standardized form followed by the original, including all variants that appear in the text, seemed the best way to reduce confusion on the part of the reader while also preserving some sense of the variation. For the names of places, we have generally used the

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twelfth-century *Life of St. Gebhard*): https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.7328 (Date of last access: 22 December 2019).

65 Abel and Weiland (1868).

66 Feger (1956).

67 http://dmnes.org (Date of last access: 22 December 2019).

forms and identifications given in Feger (1956). Our translations of the chronicler's passages from the Bible are taken from the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate, with occasional interventions to modernize the language. We have retained the Latin for words that lack satisfactory English translations (e.g., *pagus*, *custos*); these are given in italics.

Our annotations to the text are geared toward English readers. Our intention has been to offer vital context for readers of the CP rather than to provide exhaustive bibliography on particular topics or events. We have made our best effort to identify known figures, and their life or regnal dates are given in parentheses at their first appearance in the text. If no dates are provided, they are unknown. Here again, we relied in many cases on the footnotes in Feger (1956), making updates and corrections where needed. Historical background for certain events and concepts is also provided, as well as commentary on passages that may be confusing or misleading. We have tried, when possible, to provide suggestions for further reading in English in the footnotes, but any student or scholar with a serious interest in the political, social, or religious landscapes of medieval Swabia will need to engage the extensive literature in German.

This translation began modestly, in an informal medieval Latin reading group at the Ohio State University in the spring of 2013. Over good Belgian ale (particular thanks here to Kyle Shimoda), the group took a first shot at translating the Preface, and although we have since thoroughly revised the fruits of that initial effort, we are grateful for the impetus to prepare a formal translation of the entire text. We have also benefited from the generous advice and warm encouragement of many colleagues. Chuck Atkinson, Patrick Geary, Drew Jones, Lori Kruckenberg, and Andreas Odenthal all offered their expert assistance with the translation of the sometimes-baffling language of charters, chirographs, and various things liturgical. We owe particular thanks to Carin Ruff for checking our translation and sparing us from any number of errors (those that remain are, of course, our own), and to Giles Constable, who has been an enthusiastic supporter of the project from the start, insisting that this fascinating and lesser-known twelfth-century chronicle was worthy of a standalone translation into English. Alison's year as a member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in 2013–2014 offered an ideal setting for long and invaluable conversations with Giles about the images of monasticism that were emerging from the text, as well as time

and space to focus without distraction on the translation. Finally, we would be remiss not to thank the chronicler himself, whoever he was, for sharing Petershausen's experiences as a community in the wake of reform. His is a voice that we have come to know well as he has variously fascinated, frustrated, and amused us over the years. We dedicate this translation to him, with the hope that we have done justice to his voice and to the monastic experience that it reveals.