

**The power of the bishop in the Dioceses of Lincoln and  
Cremona (1067-1340): A Study in Comparative History**

**by**

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## Summary

The bishops of the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries were key figures both within the church hierarchy and within state organisation across Europe. In addition to being the primary religious authorities within their dioceses they were also local or national potentates in their own right, judges, feudal lords, warriors and advisers to kings and other rulers. And yet their nature and extent of their local power is often elusive. Moreover the nature of their power changed over time making their role and their authority extremely fluid. One can hardly study the history of the medieval church without understanding how their control was exercised in the diocese, and in the city. This thesis will assess the differences, the shift and the changes in the power of the bishop in the city and the diocese of Lincoln and Cremona from mid 11<sup>th</sup> century to mid 14<sup>th</sup> century. Understanding how their power and their role changed in time is important to understand the role of the church and medieval society as a whole. Lincoln, with the biggest medieval diocese in England and with its unique series of bishops such as Hugh of Wells, Hugh of Avalon, Robert Grosseteste and Oliver Sutton, represents a substantial example to study in order to understand why and how the power of the bishop changed. On the other hand Cremona, with its unique political role during the central medieval centuries and with bishops of the calibre of Oberto and Sicardo, epitomizes the struggle for power and authority the bishops had to face in a communal Italian city. The comparison between the bishop's powers offers us similarities and the differences between the roles and functions of the prelates in the two cities, as indicated by the available evidence and by the questions asked by historians. This study allows me to suggest a broader and more satisfying picture. The thesis uses a series of sources ranging from the bishops' records, registers, and Episcopal Acta, manuscript and parchment sources, the Latin chronicles of the period, as well as architectural evidence.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my family for its support and for having given me the possibility to complete this achievement; Prof Peter Coss for having brilliantly introduced me to British medieval History, for his guidance, his assistance and for having given me the privilege to share his friendship. I would like to thank Dr William Aird for his help and his advice, Angela Coss for her counsel and her priceless suggestion, Dr Panagiota Manti for her constant support and help throughout these years. I would like also to tribute a special thanks to Cardiff University History Department for having given me the opportunity to study medieval history, all the Cardiff University's Art and Social Studies Library staff for their perhaps not visible, but undoubtedly irreplaceable work in finding books and manuscripts, to all my friends who have shared this "adventure" with me and to all the people who directly and indirectly have made this possible. This thesis could have been done even without my contribution, but certainly not without theirs.

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## Lists of abbreviations

### Archives

|       |                                       |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| ASCr  | Archivio di Stato di Cremona          |
| ASDCr | Archivio Storico Diocesano di Cremona |
| ASMi  | Archivio di Stato di Milano           |
| BSCr  | Biblioteca Statale di Cremona         |

### Books

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>AM</i>             | <i>Annales Monastici</i> , ed. Henry Richards Luard, <i>RS</i> , XXXVI, 5 vols. (London: Longman, 1864-1869).                          |
| <i>CC</i>             | <i>Le Carte Cremonesi dei secoli VIII – XII</i> , ed. Ettore Falconi, 4 vols. (Cremona: Biblioteca Statale di Cremona, 1979).          |
| <i>CDC</i>            | <i>Codex Diplomaticus Cremonae</i> , ed. Lorenzo Astegiano, 2 vols. (Turin, 1895).   |
| <i>CPR, Edward I</i>  | <i>Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward I</i> , ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte, 4 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1893-1901).                              |
| <i>CPR, Edward II</i> | <i>Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward II</i> , ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte, 5 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1894-1904).                             |
| <i>DBI</i>            | <i>Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani</i> , ed. Lorenzo Bianconi and Francesco Caglioti, 77 vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia |

- EEA, I* Italiana, 1992).  
*English Episcopal Acta I, Lincoln 1067-1185*, ed. David M. Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1980).
- EEA, IV* *English Episcopal Acta IV, Lincoln 1186-1206*, ed. David M. Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1986).
- EEA, VII* *English Episcopal Acta VII. Hereford 1079 – 1234*, ed. Julia Barrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- EEA, X* *English Episcopal Acta X. Bath and Wells 1061 – 1205*, ed. Frances M.R. Ramsey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- Fasti* *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, or a Calendar of the Principal Ecclesiastical Dignitaries in England and Wales*, Vols. I, II, III, compiled by John Le Neve and by T. Duffus Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854); Vol. IV, compiled by Diana Greenway (London: University of London, 1991). Vol. VIII, compiled by J.S. Barrow (London: University of London, 2002).
- HH* Henry of Huntingdon. *Historia Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by Diana Greenway (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- M. Paris, *Chron. Maj* Matthew Paris. *Matthæi Parisiensis Monachi Sancti Albani Chronica Majora*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, RS, LVII, 7 vols. (London: Longman, 1872-83).
- MGH SS* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum*.
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Henry C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols. (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

*RA*

*Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln*, ed. C. W. Foster and Kathleen Major, Vols. I - IV (Hereford: The Lincoln Record Society, 1931-1948); Vol. IX, ed. Kathleen Major (Durham: Lincoln Record Society, 1968); Vol. X, ed. Kathleen Major (Durham: Lincoln Record Society, 1973).

*RS*

*Rolls series. Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores or Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages.*

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# Introduction

In recent times medieval historians have begun to turn towards comparative history. With very considerable empirical study now undertaken across many specific societies and cultures and questions posed and answered on the basis of individual experiences, the time is opportune for a more comparative approach, not only in terms of broad surveys but also in terms of more specific and more focused undertakings. The great virtue of comparative studies is that they can enable us to understand more profoundly the dynamics of particular societies at particular times by juxtaposing others that are in some ways very similar but at the same time illustrate considerable divergences. This approach should enable us to understand more fully the direction of change in a given place and era.

For this study I have chosen a comparison between an Italian and an English society from the mid eleventh to the mid fourteenth centuries. Italy and England is an appropriate choice because although both countries were subjected to the same broad influences that were common to the medieval world, there are some very obvious differences between the two which will make comparison and contrast especially valuable. The most obvious of these are of course the existence of a centralised state in England as opposed to the politically fractured Italian peninsula and the far greater significance of the city within Italian society, economy and culture. The choice of period is perhaps more arbitrary and the reasons for deciding on these particular centuries will become more apparent shortly. What is important to stress at the outset is the necessity of taking a span of time that on the one hand is manageable in terms of mastering the evidence and on the other of sufficient duration to allow some real understanding of the dynamics of change. Equally it is essential that a comparative study should not be too wide spatially but should cover an area that has some internal coherence, at least administratively and socially. It is obvious that in order to enter into the dynamics of a society we need a point of entry, a means of tearing the fabric aside so that we can enter into the heart of its beliefs and operations. What better point of entry could there be into the Christian societies of the middle ages than through the key figure of the bishop and the *raison d'être* for his operations, the

diocese. My comparison will be between the diocese of Lincoln and the diocese of Cremona.

Cremona and Lincoln have been chosen because they present immediate similarities. As cities they are, of course, the centres of dioceses and therefore the primary sites of episcopal power and authority. Within their respective countries they may both be considered as middle-sized cities in this period, although in absolute terms the Italian city is considerably bigger than the English one. Needless to say, they contain the standard elements that define a city: division of labour, artisan activities, markets, a relatively autonomous political organisation, together with the presence of the bishop, cathedral and cathedral chapter. Their economies were similarly based, mainly on exchange with agricultural communities and river-borne trade. Thus located, the bishops of Cremona and Lincoln were significant figures within their societies but not normally of the highest ecclesiastical rank. Their study on a comparative basis should allow us to see and understand the evolution of episcopal power and authority in political, institutional, social, economic and cultural terms across the long period of growth from the middle of the eleventh century until the mid fourteenth when plague and demographic collapse altered many of the contours of life in the medieval West. The year 1067 is a convenient moment at which to begin since in both cases it saw the appointment of a bishop of more than local significance. Remigius was appointed to the see of Dorchester (later Lincoln) and Arnolfo to that of Cremona. Before turning to these figures, however, we need to set the scene by saying something in general terms of the power of bishops in the West and by outlining the state of the church and the rule of the bishop in each of the two countries around 1067.

Clearly during these centuries the continuous alternation of political leaders in Italy and the severe struggle for power which brought England to the brink of the civil war are not political spin-offs but main factors that have been taken into consideration as the political and social backdrop when studying the evolution of the bishop's power.

The position of the bishop in the history of Christianity has deep and ancient roots. Certainly from the second century AD, the overseer or bishop (*episkopos*), associated with priests and deacons, became the key figure in the local organization of the church, the resident authority in matters of the faith. In the first Christian era

the bishop and the city had formed an inseparable binomial; one term cannot be considered without the other and historically they could barely exist separately<sup>1</sup>. In the Roman world there was one ubiquitous administrative unit, the *civitas* in which the city (the *municipium* or *urbs*) was only a part. With the coming of Christianity there was a completely new relation between the town, the house of the bishop and the “diocese” that was his territory<sup>2</sup>. In the West, following upon the decline of imperial power, the bishop emerged as a powerful leading force. Slowly but steadily he was to become a major figure within European society as a whole<sup>3</sup>. Noblemen who wished to direct their communities turned increasingly to the church and principally to the episcopate. Gregory of Tours has shown us in sixth-century Gaul, for example, how the bishops led in government and administration as the social and political as well as spiritual leaders of the city-territories. They were also among the major champions of the monasteries that were spreading throughout Western Christian society. They played a major role, too, in conjunction with the aristocracy, in the extension of Christian belief outwards from the city to the countryside. In each district there was a mother-church, often founded at a royal estate. “Such a church (the minster in England or the *plebs* or *pieve* in Italy) was a meeting-place for worship and centre for baptism and burial”<sup>4</sup>.

In the Carolingian era the hierarchical nature of ecclesiastical culture meshed perfectly with the king’s or emperor’s needs to politically unify the empire<sup>5</sup>. In the IX century, and even before, the Frankish Empire needed to divide the land into dioceses because the diocese was the perfect land division to control the territory, from the religious and especially from the political and social point of view<sup>6</sup>. It is probably not a coincidence that out of the three great Catholic saints who were the

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<sup>1</sup> Eugenio Dupré Theseider, ‘Vescovi e città nell’Italia precomunale’, in, *Vescovi e Diocesi nel medioevo, sec IX – XIII*, ed. M. Maccarone; G. C. Meeserman; E. Passarin d’Entres; P. Sambin (Padua, 1964), p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Eugenio Dupré Theseider, ‘Vescovi e città nell’Italia precomunale’, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Eric Palazzo, ‘The Image of the Bishop in the Middle Ages’, in, *The Bishop reformed. Studies of Episcopal power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. John S. Ott, Anna Trumbore Jones (Aldershot, 2007), p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Colin Morris. *The papal monarchy. The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford, 1989), p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Giovanni Tabacco, *Egemonie sociali e strutture del potere nel medioevo Italiano*. (Torino, 1979), p. 157.

<sup>6</sup> Cristina La Rocca, ‘La cristianizzazione dei Barbari e la nascita dell’Europa’, *Reti Medievali*, 5 (2004), p. 26.



patrons of the Frankish dynasty two, Martin (of Tours) and Dionysius (Denys) were bishops<sup>7</sup>.

Bishops were one of the lynchpins of the Carolingian policy and cultural renaissance. Their importance was underscored, however, by the Carolingian legislation for the church. As the Carolingian Empire crumbled, the position of bishops continued to evolve. When royal power began to falter the bishop as the main leading figure within lay and religious society, inherited the power previously associated with the lay authority. He started to act as a proper ruler, also administering justice in ecclesiastical courts. A perfect example of this situation could be found, as Greta Austin suggested, in the Reichskirchensystem (“Imperial church system”) where the bishops enjoyed religious and political power with the support of local magnates<sup>8</sup>. Further west and south, as power increasingly devolved, the bishops had one distinct advantage which the lay inheritors of the Carolingian order tended not to share. As Dupré Theseider has stated: “The bishop had a sacramental influence over the population”<sup>9</sup>.

In some respects, as a force for order, the bishops were also a force for conservatism. However, they had also to change with the times. The twilight of Carolingian power had determined a reorganisation and redistribution of powers. Although the pace and extent of change is debated, it can hardly be denied that one of the main consequences of the crumbling of the Carolingian empire was the localisation of power in the hands of lords and magnates and the partial disruption of what had been a centralized, jurisdictional power. Starting from the mid11<sup>th</sup> century, in France, Germany and particularly in the North of Italy local families began to replace the royal or imperial officials, creating and administering their own local jurisdiction and exerting almost absolute power. The most important demonstration of this shift of control was the systematic erection of private castles, or fortified places, a clear symbol of influence power and supremacy<sup>10</sup>. Increasingly the bishops had to deal with not only the consequences of “privatization” but also with the tension created by resurgent lay rulers and by an increasingly directive papacy fired by the movement known as Gregorian Reform.

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<sup>7</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (London, 2009), pp. 324-325.

<sup>8</sup> Greta Austin, ‘Bishops and Religious Law, 900 – 1050’, in, *The Bishop reformed. Studies of Episcopal power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. John S. Ott, Anna Trumbore Jones (Aldershot, 2007), p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> Eugenio Dupré Theseider, ‘Vescovi e città nell’Italia precomunale’, pp. 71 - 72. (My translation).

<sup>10</sup> Colin Morris, *The papal monarchy. The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, p. 50.

What was the situation of the Italian church and its bishops in 1067? The first point to make is that the situation in Italy in the mid XI century was very varied. The 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries was a time of extreme political and religious instability across Europe and this is particularly true for the north of Italy where a series of political breakdowns undermined the stability of the region. It was in these centuries that the type of society which historians call feudal took shape, a world of increasingly private power. The bishops stood for public authority but at the same time much of their power in this feudal world was also feudal. They had indeed their own vassals and “clientele”.

The action of Pope Leo IX from 1049 against simony and married priests paved the way for the movement known as Gregorian Reform; a series of “overlapping initiatives”<sup>11</sup> which had the main aim of reforming the church and especially correcting the behaviour of the ecclesiastics.

In Cremona as well as in the north of Italy more generally the malpractice of simony and concubinage often went together and were followed by the privatization of the church, lay encroachment on religious privileges and bishops’ attempts at increasing their temporal power.

In this undertaking the bishops had been aided from the second half of the tenth century onwards by the emperors who moved toward a genuine promotion of the episcopate. The reason for this was very simple: they supported the civil power of the bishops in order to have a series of faithful, loyal “servants” in their territories. Exemplary from this point of view is the case of Archbishop Aribert of Milan who in the mid XI century accumulated so much political and military power in his hands that he became a threat even to Emperor Conrad II, who was forced to fight and imprison him.

If the case of Bishop Aribert might be seen as quite unusual, what was certainly not unusual was the fact that the bishops governed towns on behalf of kings and emperors but with the implicit approval of the well-off citizens who represented the richest and most powerful families in towns. This implicit support gave them the backing for their interests and for their security. This concentration of powers in the hands of the bishops worked in two different ways in the cities in the north of Italy: powerful bishops, like the bishop of Milan or Pavia, tended to accumulate power in

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<sup>11</sup> Colin Morris, *The papal monarchy. The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, p. 82.

their own hands, preventing the city from developing an autonomous form of government; relatively less powerful bishops tended (or were forced as in Cremona) to transfer some power to local communities, allowing therefore the formation of independent city-government. In either case the bishop was an important referral point for the citizens because in Elisa Occhipinti's words, "it was under his cloak that the new ruling class would take shape"<sup>12</sup>.

The peace and the political stability of the Italian cities ruled by episcopal power was threatened, however, by the continuous struggle between the aristocracy and nobility on one side and the bishops and their clientele on the other. It is not a coincidence that the emperor Conrad II conceded the famous *Constitutio de feudis* in 1037, which gave ample guarantee to the minor nobility over the transmission of their lands to their sons in order to try to settle the fights between factions in cities like Milan or Pavia.

The Italian communal city can therefore be seen not as an achievement in itself but as a side effect of the struggles between the different factions within the walls of the town. If it is true that the citizens needed peace and stability in order to make their activities flourish, it is at the same time true that the citizens were no longer keen to be governed by bishops and by clergy who were often considered religiously unworthy and dishonest or greedy by contemporary political standards.

It is not necessary to share with Elisa Occhipinti the view that the communal Italian city was a stark necessity<sup>13</sup> to agree that it was the only possible solution to end the internal tensions among different classes. What this solution brought about, however was yet another internal division, even more dangerous, between the interests of the church and the interests of the lay aristocracy, a division which in Cremona would explode with great force in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

What by way of comparison was the role of the bishop at the time when Remigius was appointed to the see of Dorchester? Or, to put the same question another way, what part had the bishop played in the society of late Anglo-Saxon England? What had the new Norman rulers inherited?

Bishops played a central role in the development of Christian life and institutions in Anglo-Saxon England as they did elsewhere. And yet, despite the central role of the

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<sup>12</sup> Elisa Occhipinti, *L'Italia dei comuni. Secoli XI-XIII* (Rome, 2000), p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 20.

tenth-century reformers and of Bishop Wulfstan, England was a country where the power of bishops was comparatively weak compared with many parts of continental Europe. This was primarily, although not solely, due to the strength of kingship. Other interests had to be accommodated. Ecclesiastical governance owed its strength in England to its alliance with other local interests. When it came to controlling local churches and supervising local clergy and parish life, bishops before the Norman Conquest do not appear on the whole to have been energetic in the way they were in, for example, contemporary France<sup>14</sup>. As John Blair has pointed out: “With Lanfranc and the next generation of bishops, the growth of canon-law definitions and diocesan administration set the seal on the new order”<sup>15</sup>. Nevertheless, the role of the English bishops and their position in society provided the essential platform from which episcopal authority could take off. The work of Anglophone scholars, in particular Frank Barlow and more recently Mary Frances Giandrea, affords us a clear picture of the functions they exercised.

As the late Frank Barlow emphasized, the dominant tone of the English church, even by the time of the Norman Conquest, was monastic and this was “an aberration from the general pattern of western Christendom”<sup>16</sup>. Although Edward the Confessor had appointed secular clerks, many of them foreigners, the phenomenon of the monk bishop remained very much alive. At the end of his reign there were 14 bishops holding the 17 dioceses and half of them were monks<sup>17</sup>. Similarly the cathedral clergy were either monks or clerks. Bishops were nominated by the king and the alliance between church and state was “probably more intimate than anywhere else in Europe”<sup>18</sup>.

Anglo-Saxon bishops, like all early medieval bishops, regularly exercised power in a variety of ways and the fact that it was normal for ecclesiastics to share the lay culture is proven by “the tract known as the Northumbrian Priest’s Law that fined priests for bringing weapons into the church”<sup>19</sup>. This should not surprise us because many continental bishops were active warriors fighting at the head of their armies

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<sup>14</sup> These points are made strongly by John Blair in: John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), p. 394, p. 422, and pp. 490-97.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 498.

<sup>16</sup> Frank Barlow, *The English Church 1000-1066* (London, 1963; 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1976), p. 65.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 77.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 152.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Frances Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 35.

against other territorial lords for private or “national” reasons. Bishops could be and always were political leaders. Wulfstan, archbishop of York 1002-1023, was a busy statesman as well as pastor and canonist. His political theology is contained in his books. The first, the *Polity* concerns the responsibility of the church’s various members to promote its laws and to lead by example. Another text, the so called *Episcopus* or *Bishop’s Duties*, is a vigorous defence of the participation of bishops in secular justice<sup>20</sup>. Bishops were vital from the point of view of royal power because of the social control they exercised and because they consecrated the king, a practice which raised his status. Because of their functions in this context the bishops could influence policy through their membership of the *witan*<sup>21</sup>.

Apart from the *witan* there were other assemblies where bishops played a major role: the meeting of a public court-shire, hundred or borough court was, in Robin Fleming’s words, a “moment when royal power manifested itself in the localities, since the neighbourhood judgements made there were produced under the aegis of king’s men, his ealdormen, bishops, sheriffs and hundred reeves”<sup>22</sup>. The king’s role in local assemblies was limited to matters that concerned him directly; for everything else local courts almost always operated through local magnates and their followings. So bishops were both the king’s representatives and local magnates themselves and their participation in local assemblies reflects both of these roles<sup>23</sup>.

We do not really know how justice was administered or how the different courts properly worked; what is clear is that the bishop had great power not only in the main assembly but also in the local ones as the running and supervision of justice, at least by archbishop Wulfstan’s day, was considered a pastoral duty of significant importance. Royal writs for example of the reign of Cnut were often sent to diocesan bishops as shire court presidents<sup>24</sup>.

The English church was, at least in structural terms, apolitical. There were no Episcopal dynasties such as flourished on the Continent and a king wise enough could use Episcopal appointments to construct his ecclesiastical support. As members of an international institution, however, bishops were also useful in

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<sup>20</sup> Mary Frances Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 55.

<sup>22</sup> Robin Fleming, *Domesday Book and Law*, p. 28. Quoted in: Mary Frances Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 171.

<sup>23</sup> Mary Frances Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 171.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 169.

representing royal interest abroad, not just with other clerics but with laymen who might be more inclined to trust men of God before the armed men of enemy kings<sup>25</sup>. The bishop's local power was centred on the cathedral. The English cathedral could be monastic or secular. All the people who served the cathedral whether monks or canons, were supposed to live under a rule. Whether monastic or secular the English church was founded for the purpose of saving souls and the cathedral was the epicentre of pastoral activity. Despite the fact that it is not possible to talk about a typical Anglo-Saxon bishopric, in the community the bishop's word was law. He could, however, delegate authority to archdeacons and provosts. Only the bishop ought to ordain a priest who was supposed to be a man highly competent in the matters of faith and canon law. The bishop should confirm adults by using the chrism on the head and reciting a formula. Confirmation was a significant event in a person's life because it was probably one of the few opportunities where an ordinary Christian was in the presence of a bishop. The bishop also consecrated churches, particularly the churches he founded or rebuilt.

The control of territory was another important role which Anglo-Saxon bishops were perfectly able to exercise. John Blair has pointed out, "The basic unit of Anglo-Saxon social organization was the province, region, lathe or small shire, *territories* smaller than later counties and often comparable in scale and extent to hundreds"<sup>26</sup>. This fact, as he himself has admitted<sup>27</sup>, does not authorize us to think about a parallel system of parishes and dioceses, but certainly allows us to assume an early (perhaps rudimentary) form of parochial organisation with "daughter" churches directly linked to the mother churches<sup>28</sup>. This distinction, though not so sharp, is nonetheless important because the parish system of independent churches in charge and control of the pastoral activities in a specific part of the territory, which developed after the 11<sup>th</sup> century, would be much more compact and effective than its predecessor – the Anglo-Saxon scheme of mother churches controlling sub-districts each of them stretching across large and diverse territories<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Mary Frances Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 63.

<sup>26</sup> John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, p. 154.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 154 – 155.

<sup>28</sup> The territories of regionally important churches were based in Ireland on the *tuath* (folk territory) in Brittany on the *plebs* (folk territory). J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 154 – 155.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* p. 426.

It is difficult to convey an adequate picture of the religious situation in the Anglo-Saxon countryside. We commonly refer to these internal ecclesiastical subdivisions as parishes (from Latin *parochiae*), but Blair has shown that, “no genuine surviving Anglo-Saxon documents use the word in this way”<sup>30</sup>; moreover the Normans “who had been referring to the *parochiae* of local churches in Normandy since 1020s almost never did so in England and when they did, they used *parochia* to refer to minsters and mother-parishes”<sup>31</sup>.

Whatever the truth about the parishes might be what is certain is that in the cathedral as well as in the major churches the liturgy of the Mass was celebrated regularly and yearly feasts took place at Christmas, Candlemas and Easter, and there were also occasional celebrations such as the translation of a saint. Together these practices reinforced bonds already created through baptism, confirmation and regular participation in the spiritual life of the church.

Although Bede thought paganism was dead in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Anglo-Saxon society was still riddled with magical practice and fraught with religious traditions usually described as “the cult of idols or sacrifice to demons and folk-magic such as charms and cures which the Anglo-Saxon Church neither suppressed nor probably seriously discouraged”<sup>32</sup>. According to Blair we should speak about two separate cultures, which shared however many common characteristics, two ways of seeing and experiencing the Christian religion. On one side were the leaders’ rules (for instance Aldhelm, Bede, Wilfrid<sup>33</sup>) and on the other the monks and clergy who “drank themselves senseless, or local minster-priests who performed magic for their flocks with Christian amulets and relics”<sup>34</sup>. Lay society was controlled by punishment derived from the Christian idea of sin. All Christians including the bishops were supposed to be humble and express their humility through penance and in their care for the poor. Penance during the middle ages could be public or private, but private penance was probably more common than public penance in Anglo-Saxon period.

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<sup>30</sup> J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 427- 428.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* p. 428.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 167.

<sup>33</sup> **Wilfrid** (sometimes written **Wilfrith**) – c. 634 – c. 709, was an English bishop and Saint Born a Northumbrian nobleman, he entered the religious life as a teenager, studying at Lindisfarne, Canterbury, Gaul and Rome, before returning to Northumbria around 660 to become abbot of a newly founded monastery at Ripon. He was the spokesman for the Roman “party” at the Council of Whitby, gaining fame for his speech advocating the adoption of the Roman practice for figuring the date of Easter. His success led the King’s son, Alfrith, to appoint him to the episcopate.

<sup>34</sup> J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon society*, p. 179.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century the western church in general and the English church in particular were slowly developing in terms of administrative infrastructure. In order to function this structure needed money and it was also part of the Church's doctrine of salvation that the rich could not get to heaven without the poor. Therefore whoever donated land to the church expected the beneficiaries to pray for them. The bulk of Anglo-Saxon Episcopal wealth was acquired during the first several centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period and was primarily the result of benefaction. However, as in the course of the Anglo-Saxon period England became a more rigid society and the socio-economic form of the society shifted using Chris Wichkam's words, "from a peasant-mode society towards a feudal-mode society"<sup>35</sup>, churches came to receive donations and experience full control over the lands they possessed as well as exerting rights and privileges which were once lay prerogatives only. The growth of the economic importance of the church was matched by the increase of its political magnitude and the bishops benefited from this situation, becoming significant economic and political subjects.

An examination of the Domesday Book reveals that the Episcopal Church controlled 8% of the kingdom's landed wealth in 1066. The king was certainly one of the main sources of income for the bishop through gift and endowment. However many other lay men and women in many different ways contributed to the well-being of the prelates, monks and canons creating a tangible link between patrons and community. However, in the tenth and eleventh centuries English bishops, like many other bishops and ecclesiastics on the continent had to deal with the reduction of patronage. In reaction to the competition from the abbots of great Benedictine houses and to the "manorialization" of the English landscape that were changing their patrimony, the bishop maintained and sometimes reinforced their presence and their power in the towns. Indeed many bishops, like their secular counterparts, acquired rights to the profits of justice associated with burgesses and urban properties. The bishop of Dorchester, for instance, was entitled to toll and team as well as sake and soke on his land outside Lincoln. Some lands such as the bishop of Worcester's triple hundred of Oswaldslow were held so freely that the bishop was virtually the

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<sup>35</sup> "In the peasant-mode societies, peasants are mostly independent producers and the local rich and powerful are dominant only over a minority of the peasantry or are partly direct producers themselves; in the feudal-mode societies landlords dominate over peasants and live off the surpluses of dependent tenant cultivators". Chris Wichkam, *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 304-305.



only authority in the area. The acquisition of royal and comital rights doubtless made it more difficult for the laity to distinguish between secular and ecclesiastical authority. The defence of the land in Anglo-Saxon society was a collective responsibility generally based on landholding. Hence bishops were assessed like other landowners for the maintenance of public services, the so-called “*Trinoda necessitas*” a threefold tax including bridge-bote (repairing bridges and roads) burgh-bote (building and maintaining fortifications) and fyrd-bote (serving in the militia, known as the fyrd). These roles were very important communally and territorially, particularly the last two, as they clearly included military responsibility.

In the chapters that follow we will be focusing on the power of the bishops and how it evolved from the middle of the eleventh century to the mid fourteenth. How did the power, the role and the responsibility of the bishop change? Why did the power of the bishop change in the way it did? What do these directions of change tell us about Italian society both in its own right and in comparison with England? In order to try to provide answers to these questions I thought it would be appropriate to divide the span of time considered into three equal periods:

1. From the middle of the XI century until the middle of the XII century
2. From the middle of the XII century until the first half of the XIII century
3. From the middle of the XIII century until mid XIV century.

The sources on which the thesis is based are naturally varied, given the time span covered. They will be examined in detail as they appear in the chapters that follow. However, it is necessary to make certain observations at the outset. For Cremona I have relied, necessarily upon the *Codex Sicardi* accessible in the State Library, the collections of documents included in “Le Carte Cremonesi”, and in “*Codex Diplomaticus Cremonae*”. These have been studied in detail by historians such as Giancarlo Andenna and Valeria Leoni although from a more local or at least Italian perspective, and I have in consequence integrated my findings with theirs. Other sources include medieval texts such as “*Cum orbita solis*”, “*Labentibus annis*”, “*Quonian historiae*”, about St Homobonus. I have studied the research of Daniele Piazzi and Maria Rosa Cortesi, who have depicted the life and deeds of St

Homobonus based on the analysis of these sources, and the 16<sup>th</sup> century documents about his life.

For the diocese of Lincoln we are fortunate in having such detailed sources such as, the rolls and registers of the bishops, “English Episcopal Acta”, the “Registrum Antiquissimum”, “The book of John de Schalby” and the letter of Robert Grosseteste in “*Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*” as well as a wealth of chronicle sources. All of these have, of course, their own strengths and weaknesses. It has to be admitted, however, that the sources for Lincoln allow for a more detailed examination of diocesan administration than is available for Cremona, and that this imposes some limitations. Even so, it is not necessarily easier to penetrate beneath the surface when it comes to matters of motivation and in both cases we need to reconstruct probabilities in the various contexts and to exercise some historical imagination. None the less, the sources are I believe sufficient, both separately and together, to allow for a detailed and informed discussion of the, differing, evolution of the two dioceses.

# PART ONE

From the middle of the XI century  
until the middle of the XII century

# Chapter one

## Cremona: the city under the authority of the bishop.

The northern Italian society of the 11<sup>th</sup> century was a pyramidal social order in which the majority of the people at the bottom were peasants living in the countryside with a few local or regional lords at the top dominating the lives and organizing the work of the rest of the population on behalf of the ultimate *dominus* of the land: the emperor or the king. From the 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries the extension of the countryside with its woods, pastures, marshlands and cultivated areas saw the development and growth of a new reality: the cities. The urban development began as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> century, but exploded, thanks to the increased food supplies and the renewal of trading, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century studding Europe with cities and urban settlements.

This new urban society was a completely different world, linked to but also completely dissimilar from rural society. Urban society needed new political and commercial institutions; it needed different economic and juridical policies from the countryside and especially it needed in Antonio Pini's words "a new (and up till then completely unknown) form of personal and collective freedom"<sup>1</sup>.

Rural society by contrast consisted of farmers and the peasants who enjoyed different social status and different degrees of liberty. Most of the people lived in farms or organized villages where the lord ruled directly one "half" of the farm leaving the other "half" to the direct conduct of the workers and exacting a percentage of the production. We do not have sufficient information to depict the exact conditions of those people, but what we do know is that their conditions of life changed dramatically in the 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. The villages and open farms disappeared rapidly around the 11<sup>th</sup> century and were replaced by fortified villages or

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<sup>1</sup> Antonio Ivan Pini, *Città e corporazioni nel medioevo Italiano* (Bologna, 1986), p. 15. (My translation).

small castles ruled by the local lords who, by offering protection to the farmers, exercised the law and jurisdictional power<sup>2</sup>, creating a series of isles which even the king or the emperor was not able to rule directly, controlling largely by feudal relationships. There are at least two different ways of thinking about this period: the development of all those castles and fortified places can be seen indeed as a feudal revolution or as a mutation in society<sup>3</sup>. Whatever the truth of this might be it is important for our purposes to underline the existence of a series of ecclesiastical seigneuries run by the bishops and cathedral chapters who, just as the lay seigneurs, could extend their feudal and seigniorial rights over territories and the people living there<sup>4</sup>. This continuous overlapping between public and private, lay and religious, created what has been called “reciprocal opposition”<sup>5</sup> between the king and the authority of the bishop who, as any other lay magnate, was deeply involved in the struggle for power.

As long as the period of uncertainty continued the farmers were forced to remain under the protection of the local lord, whether lay or ecclesiastical. However in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when this uncertainty began to subside and eventually fade away, the farmers and the peasants no longer considered the protection of a lord so useful and began to perceive as an intolerable abuse the *corvées* or any other sort of mandatory work on the lands of the lord. Particularly in the 12<sup>th</sup> century peasants began to colonize the flat area of the north of Italy and the area near the mountains and the valleys or establish settlements around rivers and small streams which they could use for watermills and for trading<sup>6</sup>. The city played a major role in this situation as it was in constant need of workers for its developing activities. The city therefore benefited from the peasants’ immigration which provided the work force and the human resources needed to develop artisan and trading activities. In consequence the cities very quickly became a melting pot in which different people with different backgrounds began to share space, jobs, and ideas as well as interests.

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<sup>2</sup> For the feudal system see: Guy Bois, ‘Patrimones ecclésiastique et système féodal aux XI et XII siècles’, in, *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X – XII*, Vol. XIV, (Milan, 1995), pp. 45 – 60.

<sup>3</sup> For the concept of feudal revolution or feudal mutation across IX – X – XI and XII centuries see the debate between T. N. Bisson, Dominique Barthelémy, Timothy Reuter and Chris Wickham in, *Past and Present*, 142 (1994); 152 (1996); 155 (1997) and most recently, T. N. Bisson.

<sup>4</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, ‘La signoria ecclesiastica nell’Italia settentrionale’, In, *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X – XII*, Vol. XIV, (Milan, 1995), pp. 111 – 118.

<sup>5</sup> Giovanni Tabacco, *The struggle for power in medieval Italy* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medioevale* (Turin, 1998/ re-printed 2003), pp. 22-23.

In this fluid political and economic climate it should not come as any surprise that social and political ideas intermingled and overlapped with religious beliefs challenging the established hierarchical order of society and creating opportunities for social advancement and power. Challenging the hierarchical order in a town meant unreservedly to contest the power, the role and the position of the bishop who was the lord of the town. Indeed from 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries the bishops basically seized (or received) political control of each town and its surrounding countryside (*contado*), partly through their role as feudal lords, partly because kings or emperors gave (to) them the administrative and political control of the territory<sup>7</sup>. What kind of power, then, did the bishop enjoy in the 11<sup>th</sup> century Italian town?



**Figure I: Lombardy and Italy**

During the difficult historical phase that followed the end of first millennium almost all the towns in the northern Italy were led by bishops. Europe in the 10<sup>th</sup> and early 11<sup>th</sup> century was a continent studded with bishops or put it in another way, “the history of the church of Europe in the tenth and early eleventh centuries is essentially the history of many local churches in which the dominant role in secular

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<sup>7</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, ‘La centralità urbana della cattedrale nel passato millenio’ in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città*, ed. Dario Cimorelli (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), p.13.

ecclesiastical and religious life was played by the bishops”<sup>8</sup>. Cremona was no exception. Here, as in any other northern Italian city, the bishop had military, economic and, obviously, religious power. The origins of this overlapping between lay and ecclesiastic authority is in the 8<sup>th</sup> century (most probably in 781)<sup>9</sup> when Charlemagne gave to Bishop Stefano the properties of the church of Cremona, exempting them from taxation and putting them under royal protection. The properties of the church as well as the right of exacting taxes from people trading on the River Po were confirmed by Lothar in 841<sup>10</sup> and by his son Louis II ten years later<sup>11</sup>. This seems to have caused a great antagonism between the bishop and the leading sector of the citizens of Cremona, mainly merchants. It became particularly acute in the late tenth century when in 996 the citizens, rich and poor, obtained a diploma from the emperor stating that they could freely use the River Po up to the confluence with the River Adda, that they could use the forests for hunting and that they should have grazing rights<sup>12</sup>. The bishop reacted furiously and the emperor issued three diplomas dated 27 May 996<sup>13</sup>, reaffirming his rights. On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 996 the emperor revoked the concessions given to the citizens of Cremona who, according to him, had obtained those rights from him by using deception<sup>14</sup>, testifying implicitly the simmering antagonism between the bishop and the leading part of the urban population. Towards the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century to his already existing religious and economic power the bishop added political power by acquiring the *potestas* and *districtio*, the public jurisdiction within and without the city. Emperor Otto I in March 973 confirmed the properties of the church of Cremona mentioning for the first time the area around the city in addition to the city itself (*comitato*)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> G. Austin, *Bishops and Religious Law, 900-1050*. (Aldershot, 2007), p. 40.

<sup>9</sup> CC, i, document n 12, p. 34,. See also: Aldo A. Settia, ‘L’età Carolingia e Ottoniana’ in, *Storia di Cremona dall’alto medioevo all’età comunale*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> CC, i, n 8, pp. 24 – 26.

<sup>11</sup> CC, i, n 10, p. 29. See also: Aldo A. Settia, ‘L’età Carolingia e Ottoniana’, p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> Diploma: (22 May, 996). Lorenzo Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del Comune di Cremona fino al 1334’ in, *CDC*, ii, p. 261. See also: CC, i, n 88, pp. 243 – 244.

<sup>13</sup> First diploma: (*Privilegia Episcopii Cremonensis*, o *Codex Sicardi (715 / 730 – 1331)*), (BSCr), Codice Sicardo; Online edition, document n 25, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. Valeria Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. See also: CC, i, n 90, pp. 247 – 248. Second diploma: CC, i, n 91, pp. 249 - 251; Third diploma: CC, i, n 92, pp. 251 – 253.

<sup>14</sup> CDC, i, n 61, p. 40. “*Otto imperator privilegium cremonensibus civibus concessum, die 22 ma, irritum et vanum pronuntiat*”.

<sup>15</sup> CC, i, n 74, pp. 193 – 195. See also: A. Settia, ‘L’età Carolingia e Ottoniana’, p. 64.

These early manifestations of the prerogatives and the power of the bishop in Cremona immediately show how careful we must be in studying his role and his function within society from the mid 11<sup>th</sup> to the mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly because his power or the sum of his powers did not remain constant throughout the period. It is exactly this shifting power that we must focus our attention on.

Unfortunately for our analysis the sources about Cremona are rare and sparse. The main catalogued primary sources of documents for Cremona in the Middle age are:

Codex Diplomaticus Cremonae

Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale – on line<sup>16</sup>

Sicardi episcopi cremonensis Cronica

Privilegia Episcopii Cremonensis - Codex Sicardi<sup>17</sup>

Le Carte Cremonesi dei secoli VIII-XII

Akty Kremony

In Cremona unfortunately most of the manuscripts dating back to the middle age have been lost forever, sold, or stolen. Despite this fact we have different places where the surviving manuscripts are held and conserved; certainly one of the most important for the period concerning our research is the Secret State archive of the

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<sup>16</sup> The *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia medievale*, online version includes the documents of the monasteries S Lorenzo, S. Benedetto, S. Salvatore, S. Giovanni, S. Leonardo Hospital and S. Benedetto Crema. All these documents are in the so called “*Fondo Religione*” in the state archive of Milan, (ASMi).

<sup>17</sup> One of the most important documents is the *Privilegia episcopii* also called *Codex Sicardi* put together by bishop Sicardo (1185-1215). The Codex Sicardi can be described as the *Liber iurium* of the church of Cremona. It belongs at the moment to the State library of Cremona, it contains 160 documents and is one of the rare examples of the *carthularium*, (a list of documents put together) produced by a bishop. The documents dated back between 713/730 to 1331. According to the analyses of Valeria Leoni the original part of the code was organised between 1209 and 1210 and includes about 140 documents dating between 715/730 to 1187. After that in the XIV century some other documents were added and later on beyond XIV century another eight documents were added; the organisers were mainly two notaries Gyrardus and Gyrardus Patitus who together undersigned 149 documents out of 160. The third important notary is Ramundus de la Levata. In the code were copied the majority of the documents coming from kings, popes and emperors that the bishop had in his archive. The codex Sicardi is almost unique in its content, first because it focuses on the political and jurisdictional rights of the episcopacy rather than on the properties like the other codes and second because the documents included in it do not cover the period of the bishop Sicardo, as we would expect but rather the period before him. See: *Privilegia Episcopii Cremonensis, o Codex Sicardi (715 / 730 – 1331)*, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, pp. 54-64. <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].



commune<sup>18</sup>. The state library is another source of manuscripts, including the famous Codex Sicardi. We know through Ettore Falconi<sup>19</sup> that the bishop and the canons had accumulated two archives very rich in documents and parchments but unfortunately a lot of them are lost. The archives were destroyed and pillaged in 1796 by Napoleonic troops<sup>20</sup>. As a result of this and also because of the fact that in the 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries medieval parchments had been recycled and used to bind other documents, most of the material in Cremona has gone; indeed in the Notary State archive we have medieval documents used to cover other documents dating back 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>21</sup>.

Bearing these considerations in mind we start our research<sup>22</sup> with the protagonists themselves: the bishops.

### **Bishops of Cremona: mid XI to mid XII century:**

**Arnolfo**, elected 1067 - d. 1085

**Gualtiero**, elected 1086 - d. 1097

**Vacancy** 1097-1110

**Ugo**, elected 1110 - d. 1117?

**Oberto**, elected 1117 - d. 1162

**Presbitero da Medolago**, elected 1163 - left 1167

**Offredo**, elected 1168 - d. 1185

Our investigation of Cremona begins with Bishop Arnolfo. Indeed what happened to Bishop Arnolfo, elected in 1067<sup>23</sup> and thrown out of the town by his fellow citizens

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<sup>18</sup> The material present in the secret archive of the commune probably has originated in other archives. There are no documents mentioning Cremona's people specifically until 996, however the commune and the citizens of Cremona started to produce documents from XII century onwards and most of them are included in the *Le Carte Cremonesi*. See: CC, i, p. XIII.

<sup>19</sup> CC, i, p. XXI.

<sup>20</sup> Moreover this could well not be the only damage suffered by the archives because it is also possible that after that incident different people, including ecclesiastics, had started to smuggle and sell documents taken from what was left in the archives.

<sup>21</sup> Emilio Giazzi, 'Frammenti di Codice a Cremona, testimonianze per una storia della cultura cittadina', in, *Cremona, una cattedrale una città*, ed. Dario Cimorelli (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), p. 24.

<sup>22</sup> For the history of medieval Cremona, Giancarlo Andenna, François Menant, Marco Gentile and others have subjected the primary sources to thorough investigation. I have revisited all of them checking the interpretations and integrating these with the finding of the earlier historian, Valeria Leoni. I am grateful to Prof. Andenna for telling me about this work.

one year later, is a clear indication of the confused political and religious situation. From the very moment of his election Arnolfo faced problems in his diocese where religious individuals teamed up with lay lords and where political interests often underpinned spiritual reforms. Being the bishop in an 11<sup>th</sup> century northern Italian town meant in fact being a religious and political guide to the people, with an important economic and financial role; but it also meant having one's role and one's position constantly scrutinized and having one's public and private behaviour exposed to public criticism.

Bishop Arnolfo had a stormy relationship with the town and with the "Pataria" movement (Patarenes), a religious faction that fought against "simony" and "nicholaism". Already during the Synods of Goslar in 1019 and of Pavia in 1022, both the emperor, Henry II and the pope, Benedict VIII, in order to reform the immorality of the church and to put an end to the selling of religious prebends, positions and institutions had established some focal points:

- 1) Clerics cannot have concubines or wives
- 2) The bishops cannot have wives or concubines
- 3) The sons and daughters of a cleric and a free woman belong to the church as well as the patrimony relating to them<sup>24</sup>.

In the wake of this and with the backing of the Popes Leo IX, Alexander II and from 1073 Gregory VII, the reform movements in general and the Patarenes in particular<sup>25</sup> demanded that clerics should not cohabit or have sexual relations with women, nor enjoy lay behaviour, nor mix with lay people, because they belonged to God and not to the world<sup>26</sup>. What these popes had in mind primarily was the reinforcement of the

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<sup>23</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', in, *Storia di Cremona, Il trecento, Chiesa e Cultura, VIII - XIV secolo*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2007), p. 43.

<sup>24</sup> Gerd Tellenbach, 'Impero e istituzioni ecclesiastiche locali', in, *Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche della Societas Christiana dei secoli XI – XII, Atti della sesta settimana internazionale di studio. Milano 1 – 7 settembre 1974* (Milan, 1977), pp. 25-26.

<sup>25</sup> The Pataria movement (or Patarenes) belonged to the *κάθάρως* church (*κάθάρως*, in Ancient Greek, pure) which wanted the clergy to return to the poverty of its origins. See: Grado Merlo, 'I movimenti religiosi, le chiese ereticali e gli ordini mendicanti' in, *La Storia 5, Dall'Impero di Carlo Magno al trecento* (Novara, 2007), pp. 719 – 721. About the origins of the name see: Paolo Golinelli, *La Pataria* (Milan, 1984), p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> Maureen C. Miller, 'Religion makes a difference: Clerical and Lay Cultures in the Courts of Northern Italy, 1000 – 1300', *The American Historical Review*, 105, 4 (2000), 1095 – 1130 (p. 1099).

authority of the papacy, but the spin-off effect was to create the conditions for the moralisation of the lower church and for open conflict with the bishops.

In Cremona, in fact, where the Patarenes seem to have had quite a lot of supporters<sup>27</sup> and where the episcopate of Arnolfo was itself regarded an act of simony, the emperor Henry IV having given the diocese to him under the suggestion (and probably the pressure) of the Archbishop of Milan, Guido from Velate<sup>28</sup>, the religious tensions exploded in a very brutal way. For the people following the Pataria movement, “Guido represented the living example of simony”<sup>29</sup> and therefore whoever was with him was against the reform movement. The clergy had lovers and concubines; moreover, they dealt with their ecclesiastical properties by selling and buying them as if they were merchants<sup>30</sup>. Cremona was certainly not the only city where this problem was experienced. In Brescia, for instance, when Bishop Adelmanno, tried to enforce the laws against nicholaism the *clerici* of the diocese beat him almost to death<sup>31</sup>. Furthermore, apart from damaging the image of the church, simony and nicholaism gave rise to the issue of the legitimacy of the sacrament of the Eucharist when administered by unworthy priests,<sup>32</sup> and hence to heresy. The behaviour of the lower clergy inevitably rebounded on the bishop who was the leader of the church in the diocese. If he was unable to stop these vices, as seems to have been the case in Cremona, he was held responsible by the population for the crimes themselves and liable therefore to the same punishment.

We do not have enough documentary evidence to identify exactly the role of Bishop Arnolfo in relation to simony and nicholaism. Robolotti in his history of Cremona<sup>33</sup> clearly identified him as an “imperial bishop” implicitly underlining his political dimension. This judgment together with the fact that he was thrown out of the town with some of the priests and that he was the main target of the people’s anger and

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<sup>27</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’ in, *CDC*, ii, p. 276.

<sup>28</sup> Ugo Gualazzini, *Il populus di Cremona e l’autonomia del comune* (Bologna, 1940), p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> P. Golinelli, *La pataria*, p. 41. See also: Nicolangelo D’Acunto, ‘La pastorale nei secoli centrali del Medioevo. Vescovi e canonici’, in, *A Servizio del Vangelo. Il cammino storico dell’evangelizzazione a Brescia*, ed. G. Andenna (Brescia, 2010), p. 69.

<sup>30</sup> The difference between the first movement of Patarenes and the later developments is examined in: Giorgio Gracco, ‘Gli eretici nella societates Christiana dei secoli XI e XII’, in, *La cristianità dei secoli XI e XII in occidente: coscienza e strutture di una società. Atti della ottava settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 30 giugno – 5 luglio 1980* (Milan, 1983).

<sup>31</sup> Nicolangelo D’Acunto, ‘La pastorale nei secoli centrali del Medioevo. Vescovi e canonici’, p. 70.

<sup>32</sup> Jean Leclercq, ‘Ecclesia Corpus Christi et “ sacramentum fidei’ in, *Chiesa dirto e ordinamento della Societas Christiana nei secoli XI-XII. Atti della nona settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 28 Agosto – 2 settembre 1983* (Milan, 1986), pp. 18 – 22.

<sup>33</sup> Francesco Robolotti, *Storia di Cremona e sua provincia* (Brescia, 1859, 2nd edition 1974), p. 399.

rage leads us to conclude that he did not match the Christian expectations that the faithful wanted from him. It is true that the Patarenes had a political dimension<sup>34</sup> and that by opposing the bishop in this way his leadership of the town could also be challenged. However, in Arnolfo's case what really seems to have mattered was his bad behaviour and the appalling behaviour of his clergy<sup>35</sup>.

Arnolfo managed to return to Cremona in 1069 after negotiation with his rivals<sup>36</sup>. The first thing he did was to increase the number of his vassals. He gave feudal investiture to two cousins, Guglielmo and Valdo from Carugate, to whom he gave the "*districtus*" over the people living in the small village called Offanengo<sup>37</sup>.

The fact that Arnolfo behaved like a feudal lord in trying to re-organize his power and his status within the town should not surprise us, nor the fact that he was helped by the political authority in the restoration of his own authority, because during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries many bishops regained power and authority with the help of kings or feudal lords. What is different here, at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, is that as Violante has written, bishops now faced the new problem of the "spiritual concept of the power and the sacrality of the role of the priests"<sup>38</sup>. Bishops who gave away the land of the church to anyone available and willing to pay in order to become an Episcopal vassal, or bishops dealing with unworthy priests who in turn re-sold the same propriety for their own interest, were not uncommon<sup>39</sup>. What changed at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century was that this behaviour became intolerable in the eyes of the faithful who on one side began to directly fight the bishop and on the other to divert donations from the bishop to the monasteries, breaking the fragile power-balance between the bishop and his supporters.

In Cremona during the 11<sup>th</sup> century lay people, in order to counter the bad behaviour of the bishop and some of the clergy, began to found monasteries: at least five of

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<sup>34</sup> Malcom Barber has underlined that, although some of the Patarenes' leaders came from the higher level of society, there is no doubt that their attacks towards the established church were seen by the dominant elite as attacks on the social and institutional order of the city. Malcom Barber, *The two cities* (London and New York, 2004). p. 87.

<sup>35</sup> François Menant, 'Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI', in, *La Storia di Cremona, dall'alto medioevo all'età comunale*, ed. Giancarlo Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 126.

<sup>36</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 44

<sup>37</sup> *CC*, ii, n 216, pp. 4 - 5. See also: *CDC*, i, n 156, p. 83.

<sup>38</sup> Cinzio Violante, 'Pievi e parrocchie nell'Italia centrosettentrionale durante i secoli XI e XII', in, *Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche della Societas Christiana dei secoli XI - XII* (Milano, 1977), p. 682.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 662-671.

them.<sup>40</sup> Two examples may be allowed to stand for them all. The first is the monastery of St Thomas, founded by Cremoxianus Traseverti and his wife Roza. In 1066 they endowed six priests to the church that they had already founded outside the town's walls and consecrated to the following saints: Thomas the apostle, Nicola the confessor, Dalmazio the martyr, Fruttuoso the confessor and the virgins Agatha and Margerita<sup>41</sup>. The priests had to be good in explaining the Divine Law and they were not allowed to have women<sup>42</sup>. Moreover, in order to be sure that the priests did not dissipate the wealth of the church given to them, the founders forbade them from making any contract or any agreement concerning the land given for their own needs<sup>43</sup>.

To the same monastery were granted also nine perches (or perts) of land in 1069 by a priest called Henrich<sup>44</sup>. Even the priests (or at least some of them) were granting land and benefits to what we might call "reformed institutions"<sup>45</sup>. There were two possible motives here: to reduce the power of the bishop and to reform the customs of the church. It may be that lay people gave land to the monasteries in order to reduce the economic power of the bishop whereas the priests or the clergy donated the land to them in order to undermine the religious role of unworthy bishops. Both clearly contributed substantially to undermining the power of the bishop.

The second example is even more important because it involves the count of Sospiro, Bernardo, and his wife, Berta, who in 1079 decided to found the monastery of San Giovanni near the little stream Pipia, just outside Cremona, a monastery (originally dedicated to the Virgin Mary, St John the evangelist and St Michael the archangel)

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<sup>40</sup> The monasteries are: San Tommaso, San Pietro al Po, San Salvatore, San Giovanni della Pipia, and San Maurizio in Crema

<sup>41</sup> *Carta Iudicati et ordinationis. Cremona 11 April, 1066*, 'document n 1' in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V Leoni, <<http://cdlm.lombardiastorica.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-stommaso/carte>> [accessed 19 May 2008]

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* See also: *CDC*, i, n 140, p. 79.

<sup>43</sup> ...*"et non sit licentiam ad ipsos presbiteros qui in eadem ecclesia ordinate fuerint de suprascriptis casis et rebus territories seu families commutationem precariam facere nisi ad quartume de grano et tercium de vino a parte ipsius ecclesie redendum minus non amplius"*. *Carta Iudicati et ordinationis. Cremona 11 April, 1066*. Online version, 'document n 1', in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <http://cdlm.lombardiastorica.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-stommaso/carte>.

<sup>44</sup> *CDC*, i, n 148, p. 81.

<sup>45</sup> *Breve Investiture. Cremona 8 August, 1091*, 'document n 2', in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.lombardiastorica.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-salvatore/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. Abbot Cristoforo of San Pietro was linked with the Pataria movement as was the monastery of San Salvatore. See: G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 43. See also: L. Astegiano. 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', in *CDC*, ii, p. 277.

that was about this time also placed under the authority of the Apostolic Church. Bernardo is important because from 1075 he was one of the bishop's vassals. In 1079 he decided to forsake Arnolfo and to give lands to the monastery<sup>46</sup>. In the foundation document Bernardo desired the sisters in this monastery to follow the Benedictine rule<sup>47</sup> and, significantly, the abbess was to be consecrated by the bishop only if the bishop were in communion with the Pope<sup>48</sup>. The same Count Bernardo and his wife gave more land to the monastery in 1093, i.e. their part of the castle in Pescarolo, plus the church that was there<sup>49</sup>. Even more important as far as the power of the bishop was concerned is that the vassals of Count Bernardo at the beginning of XII century began giving land to the monastery<sup>50</sup>. This was a major problem for the bishop given that not only his vassals but also his vavasours were giving lands to the reformed institutions. This is a sign that although the bishop was and would remain for another century the absolute leader in the town, his relationship with his fellow citizens was beginning to crack. The new religious climate, the eagerness for political power expressed by some of the aristocratic families and the misbehaviour of the clergy, all contributed to drive a wedge between the bishop and the populace.

From 1077 the bishop was out of the town again, living in castles in the "contado"<sup>51</sup>. It seems that the relationship with the people of Cremona had deteriorated to the extent that Bishop Arnolfo could no longer live in town. The documents of the period attest some kind of anarchy, with priests<sup>52</sup> and deacons<sup>53</sup> in the countryside buying and selling properties, priests selling lands belonging to the church without having the authority of the bishop<sup>54</sup> and lay people donating lands<sup>55</sup> to monasteries that were in opposition to the bishop. Particularly interesting is the document dated 12 December 1074<sup>56</sup> in which the priest of the church of St Michael, Giovanni, gave

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<sup>46</sup> CDC, i, n 171, p. 86.

<sup>47</sup> *Cartula iudicati et ordinationis. Cremona 28 October, 1079*, document n 1, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.lombardiastorica.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sgiovannipipia/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>48</sup> CDC, i, n 169, p. 86. "*Abbatissa accipiat consecracionem ab episcopo Cremonae, si catholicus fuerit*".

<sup>49</sup> CDC, i, n 193, p. 90.

<sup>50</sup> CDC, i, n 4, p. 94.

<sup>51</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del Comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 278.

<sup>52</sup> CC, ii, n 218, (27 March 1075), pp. 9 – 10.

<sup>53</sup> CC, ii, n 219, (3 Jan. 1077), pp. 10 – 12.

<sup>54</sup> *Carta Venditionis*, (Cremona, 18 June 1080). In, CC, ii, n 226, pp. 23 – 24.

<sup>55</sup> *Cartula Offersionis*, (Cremona, 18 June 1080). In, CC, ii, n 227, pp. 25 -27; n 228, pp. 28 – 29.

<sup>56</sup> Valeria Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona* (Milan, 2010), n 59, p. 43.

Adam of St Michael's hospital (belonging to the same church) the possession of half of the church on the understanding that the people in charge of the hospital would use the half of the church for the benefit of the priest of the church and the patients of the hospital. Even in this case the bishop is kept out of the agreement. Moreover when Emperor Henry IV deposed Pope Gregory VII and elected Pope Guiberto, Bishop Arnolfo without a backward glance chose the emperor's side, presumably because he knew that this was the only way to restore his power in Cremona. For this act he was eventually excommunicated by Pope Gregory VII (after 1078)<sup>57</sup> and his vassals freed from their oath of obedience. Arnolfo's episcopacy and power were saved by the two victories which Henry IV achieved in 1080 and 1081 against Countess Matilda who had taken the side of Gregory VII. During these difficult years for the bishops, people turned toward the chapter in giving their donations. This happened in 1080<sup>58</sup> and in 1085<sup>59</sup> just before the end of Arnolfo's episcopacy. As soon as Arnolfo was back in town payback time began for the people following the Pataria movement, some being tortured, exiled and even killed<sup>60</sup>. We do not have the evidence to examine the bishop's behaviour, but it is quite obvious that he ought not have agreed to this kind of treatment. In agreeing to corporal and physical punishment against the people who belonged to Pataria movement, he was behaving as a feudal lord who defends his city and punishes traitors rather than a Christian bishop who should have forgiven people who opposed him and fought against him. Just as Bishop Arnolfo took the side of Henry IV in order to return to Cremona and to regain his power, the emperor put the bishop back in the city because it was convenient for him to have Arnolfo<sup>61</sup> controlling it. It is evident that Arnolfo considered the city of Cremona and its "contado" as his feudal property or as a territory over which he had power, and acted accordingly. The bishops in this period, as we shall see more clearly in the case of Bishop Oberto, were powerful local lords ready to do everything necessary to maintain power within the city and throughout diocese.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, he was not without opposition. Whatever the precise motives of those who opposed him were, it is certainly true that inside the town the

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<sup>57</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', pp. 277 – 278. See also: Paulus Kehr, *Italia Pontificia*, Vol. VI, n 3, (Berlin, 1961), p. 264.

<sup>58</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 61, p. 44.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* n 62, p. 44.

<sup>60</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 47.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 47 - 48.

new bourgeoisie formed by merchants and artisans wanted freedom to trade and to make a profit, best achieved by reducing the bishop's economic power. At least until the mid XII century little could be done in the city without the approval of the bishop. Although the Pataria movement spread among the poor people<sup>62</sup> it was also supported by some minor vassals who were fighting the economic power of the bishop more than his behaviour. Despite the fact that the bishop exerted power over the churches which directly fell under his authority, many churches, especially in the remote part of the countryside, were only theoretically under his control. Most of the time in practice (apart from the collection of tithes) they were ruled by the local lords who appointed the priests and were sometimes able to use their patrimonies<sup>63</sup>.

Even though it is true that some bishops like Arnolfo did not behave according to their religious status, there were economic and political as well as religious reasons why the bishop's power was a perfect target. The bad religious behaviour of the bishop was used to undermine his authority. In analysing the life and the behaviour of the subsequent bishops who ruled the bishopric of Cremona in this first period under investigation we will be able to see more clearly how the economic and the religious powers of the bishop were inextricably intertwined.

After the episcopacy of Arnolfo, in Cremona, Gualtiero was elected as bishop in 1086<sup>64</sup>. We do not have a lot of information about him<sup>65</sup> but we know that the donations towards the reformed monasteries kept flowing during his episcopate. There are documents testifying donations to the monastery of St Peter and St Paul,<sup>66</sup> and donations to the monastery of St Thomas,<sup>67</sup> while other manuscripts attest to some properties being granted to the monastery of St John of Pipia<sup>68</sup>. Despite these facts it does not seem that the revolt against the inappropriate customs of the clergy

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<sup>62</sup> Cinzio Violante, 'I laici nel movimento patarino', in, *I laici nella "Societas Christiana" dei secoli XI e XII. Atti della terza settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 21 – 27 Agosto 1965* (Milano, 1968), p. 615.

<sup>63</sup> François Menant, 'Da Liutprando (962) a Sicardo (1185) "La chiesa in mano ai laici" e la restaurazione dell'autorità episcopale', in, *Diocesi di Cremona*, ed. A. Caprioli, A. Rimordi, L. Vaccaro (Brescia, 1998), p. 46.

<sup>64</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 47.

<sup>65</sup> Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per Regioni: La Lombardia*. Vol. II, part II, (Bergamo, 1932), pp. 70 – 72.

<sup>66</sup> *Cartula Offerisionis*, (Cremona, 11 May 1088). In, *CC*, ii, n 232, pp. 34 -36.

<sup>67</sup> Donation to S. Thomas ecclesiae. In, *CDC*, i, n 172, p. 87.

Donations to the monastery of S. Thomas. In, *CDC*, i, n 175, n 176, n 179, p. 87.

<sup>68</sup> Donation of land. (9 June, 1085). In, *CDC*, i, n 180, p. 87.

Donation of land. (8 July, 1085). In, *CDC*, i, n 181 p. 88. Donation of land. (6 May, 1086). *CDC*, i, n 182, p. 88.



had succeeded, or at least, not succeeded completely, because there is a document clearly telling us that a priest called Negrone had a wife and together they gave some land belonging to the episcopacy to someone else<sup>69</sup>.

In this period the Apostolic See seems to have been quite reluctant to completely endorse Bishop Gualtiero. Probably because of the erratic behaviour of Arnolfo, or more probably because in the struggle between the pope and the emperor Bishop Arnolfo had taken the emperor's side, the pope now wanted to assert control of the situation. In 1088 Urban II confirmed to the archpriest Lorenzo of St. Agatha the possession of the churches of St Valeria in Augia and St Christopher in Campus Macer, but said that the church would be dependent upon the bishops<sup>70</sup>. At the same time, however, the pope wanted the clergy living in the church to be free to ask his help in case of necessity<sup>71</sup>.

It seems that on one hand the Pope wanted the people of Cremona to think that the relationship between the Apostolic See and the bishop was back to normality, but that on the other he did not want to put the clergy living in St. Agatha under the complete authority of the bishop. As a matter of fact Pope Urban II in 1095 took under his protection the church of St Agatha with all its properties and the other churches belonging to it. The document concerned<sup>72</sup> stated more or less what the pope had stated in the previous one given to the church of St Agatha, but there is an important difference. The bishop could consecrate the church and could ordain the clergy, as stated in the document of 1088, but now he was explicitly forbidden to excommunicate the people of this church<sup>73</sup>. Moreover the clergy could not give land to any "*militēs*"<sup>74</sup>.

If the pope felt a need to state this point clearly it is a sign that there remained problems in terms of the land belonging to the church being enfeoffed and given to the lay people.

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<sup>69</sup> *Breve "Investiturae"*. (Cremona, 21 giugno 1088). In, *CC*, ii, n 233, pp. 36 - 38.

<sup>70</sup> *Privilegium*. (Rome, 29 October 1088). In, *CC*, ii, n 234, pp. 38 - 40.

<sup>71</sup> "*Si excommunicationis aut interdictionis vobis molestiam inferre presumpserint, libertas vobis fuerint pro Niceni statuto concilii sedem apostolicam appellare et sic in eius iudicio satisfacere*". *Privilegium*. (Rome, 29 October 1088). In, *CC*, ii, n 234, pp. 38 - 40.

<sup>72</sup> *Privilegium*. (Piacenza, 31 March 1095). In, *CC*, ii, n 237, pp. 44 - 46.

<sup>73</sup> *Privilegium*. (Piacenza, 31 March 1095). "*De cetero nullam episcopus in predicta ecclesia potestatem exerceat neque excommunicandi neque interdicensi aut ad sinodum iudicaria potestate vocandi*". In, *CC*, ii, n 237, pp. 44 - 46.

<sup>74</sup> *Privilegium*. (Piacenza, 31 March 1095). "*Nec ipso nec alicui loci ipsius ministro facultas sit ecclesie bona in feudum militibus vel aliquibus personis secularibus impartiri*". In, *CC*, ii, n 237, pp. 44 - 46.

According to Savio<sup>75</sup>, Bishop Gualtiero had died by 1097, during which time the church of Cremona was almost certainly vacant. The papal document concerned<sup>76</sup> seems to indicate this and to suggest that the pope did not want any future bishop, whoever he might be, to exercise strong authority over this church and to have much power as long as the investiture struggle was at its height.

There is however another fact which demands our attention: the rise of new political and economic forces within the town. We see them at work in the political events that followed. In 1093, the people of Cremona adhered to the “Lega Lombarda” against the Emperor Henry IV and in favour of his son, Conrad, who was turned against his father by the Countess Matilda of Canossa. Conrad II (*rex Italicus 1093-1098*), in October 1097 making probably the most of the Episcopal vacancy, showed his power by giving back to the canons of the cathedral all the properties the bishop had unjustly taken from them<sup>77</sup>. Henry IV defeated Conrad in battle in the same year, an event which impacted upon the power of the bishop. Indeed in 1097/8 when Countess Matilda granted “*Fulcheria Island*”<sup>78</sup> (Fig. II) to the people of Cremona, probably “as a present” to the city for having taken the side of Conrad against the emperor<sup>79</sup>, she gave the land to the church and to the people of Cremona<sup>80</sup> at one and the same time. The citizens of Cremona and the bishop are mentioned as if they were both in charge of the city. If we compare this to the grant of 1040 when Henry III had given the same land to Bishop Ubaldo of Cremona, the difference is striking. The bishop was then the sole recipient<sup>81</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni. La Lombardia*, pp.70 - 72.

<sup>76</sup>As suggested by Giancarlo Andenna, indirect evidence of the fact that the church of Cremona was vacant in 1096/7 lies in the document dated 11th April 1096 (See: *CC*, ii, n 240, pp. 49-50) attesting donations to the canons of the church of Sts Thomas and Antony, built just outside Cremona. In this document the bishop is not mentioned, suggesting that the Episcopal see was vacant. G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 48.

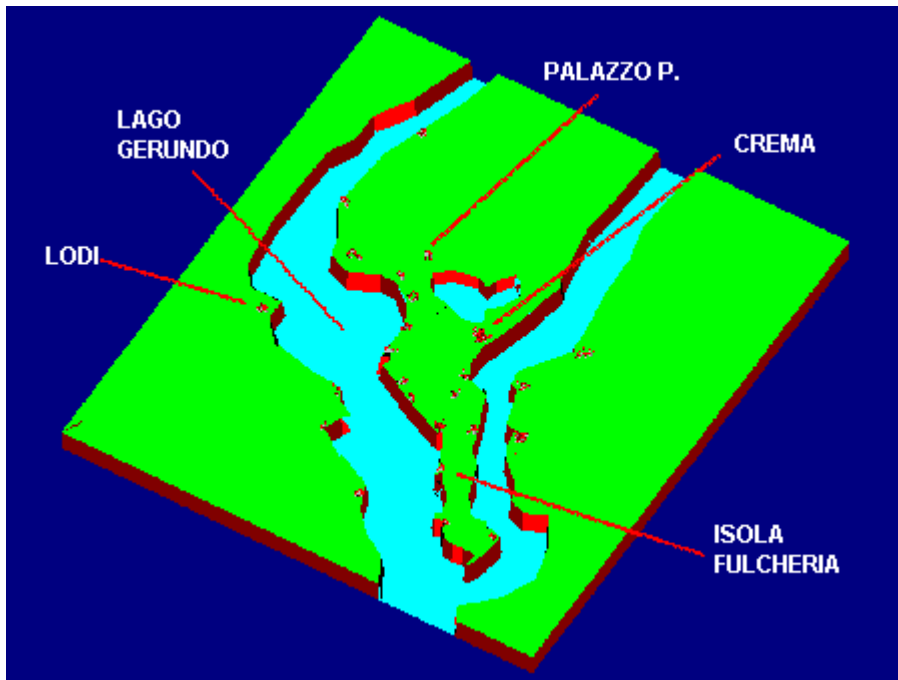
<sup>77</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 65, p. 45. It is this one not the first time an emperor or a king places himself between the bishop and the canons, as already in 1055 Henry III in Mantua confirmed to the canons of the cathedral the properties the bishop had stolen from them. V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 55, p. 40.

<sup>78</sup> This was not an island, but a very important piece of land between the river Adda and the river Serio just outside the city of Crema. This piece of land was very important for the people of Cremona because they could expand their influence away from their city, undertake the conquest of the “contado” and, especially, bring to a halt the expansion of the city of Crema.

<sup>79</sup> François Menant, ‘Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI’, p. 133.

<sup>80</sup> See document, Figure III, p. 28.

<sup>81</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 273. Also: *CC*, i, n 176, pp. 449 – 450.



**Fig. II: Map of “Fulcheria Island”**

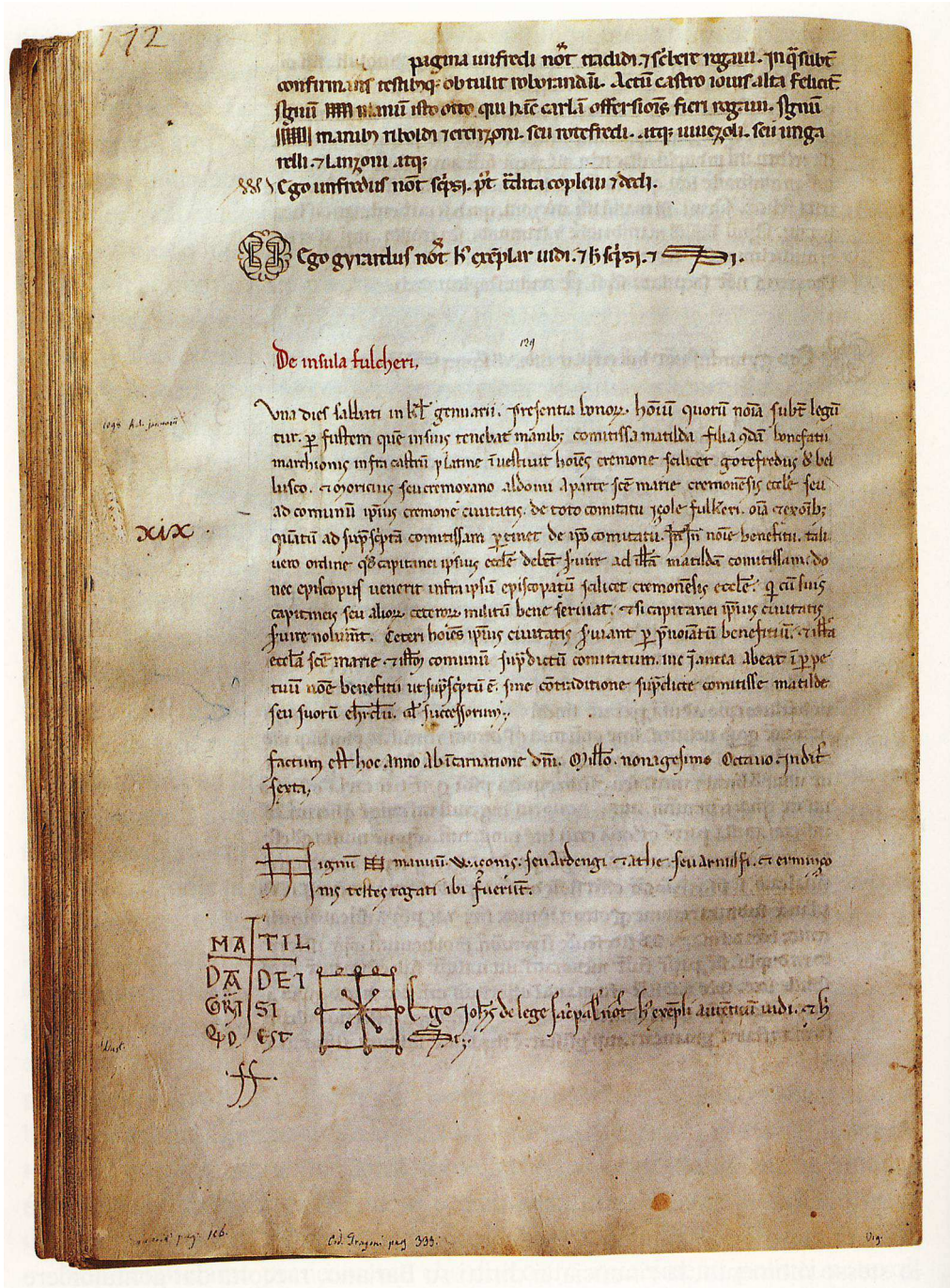


Figure III: Matilda grants Fulcheria Island to the people and the Church of Cremona. Codex Sicardi. Picture taken from: Cremona in età precomunale, il secolo XI.

Moreover if we analyse what Matilda wanted back from the church and the people of Cremona we find further evidence of the power of the bishop. We learn that the Episcopal see is vacant and that the bishop has “capitanei”<sup>82</sup>, i.e. men who held their

<sup>82</sup> **Capitaneo:** According to the feudal law was called “Capitaneo” those who were enfeoffed by the Emperor or the King to a *Beneficium*. These were called “major fiefs” or in Latin “*In Capite*” because they were transmitted to the vassal or vavasours directly with the hands of the lord on their head, “*Caput*” hence the word “Capitanei”. The role of “Capitanei” is very difficult to explain because it identifies some people who owned castles, controlled seigneurial properties, controlled churches and

land directly from him. Three families in particular functioned in this capacity<sup>83</sup>. One characteristic of “capitanei” was to have patronage over a “*pieve*”<sup>84</sup> with its related tithes. Those major vassals had to serve Countess Matilda; should they not want to

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had vassals. (François Menant, ‘Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI’ p. 166). Each of those “Capitanei” had the right to administer law and justice on their properties, plus they had vassals whom they led on the battlefield in the Episcopal Army. Originally those Capitanei were “*secundi milites*” regarding the main authority of the king because they were vassals of the vassals. But when (and if) around the X century one of the counts or the marquis or the bishops managed to acquire more power due to the weakness of the central power, those vavasours became “*primi milites*” or “Capitanei” of those new lords. (Cinzio Violante, ‘Pievi e parrocchie nell’Italia centrosettentrionale durante i secoli XI e XII’, pp. 720-721). Their power was also certainly increased after the “*Constitutio de Feudis*” of 1037, decreed by Emperor, Conrad II; the law gave indeed the possibility of transmitting the land obtained by feudal investiture to someone else, but especially gave the possibility to the son of the owner of the benefit to inherit the land. So the great vassals of the bishop, called “Capitanei” and the minor Episcopal vassals, called “Vavasours” started using the land as their own property.

<sup>83</sup> In Cremona mainly three families were part of the bishop’s entourage and they would be the protagonist of the city life and politics: “Da Dovara”, “Da Ticengo” and “Sommi”.

It is interesting to note that two of three of those families, “Da Dovara” and “Da Ticengo” came from the same part of the diocese and had similar histories.

**The Da Dovara** most likely had come into the diocese of Cremona around 1040 when the bishop of Milan tried to invade Cremona’s land. Then they became vassals of the bishop of Cremona, whose help and influence probably changed the future of the family. The family tree tells us indeed that Oberto Da Dovara, became bishop of Cremona in 1117, Anselmo Da Dovara was president of the Lega Lombarda in 1175 and Isacco Da Dovara was 6 times Podestà in between 1187 and 1221. (See: *CDC*, i, n 46, p. 208). Yet again Buoso Da Dovara in 1244 was Podestà of Lodi and in 1247 Podestà of Reggio Emilia. Great personality among Cremona’s politicians in the XIII century. (Ernst Voltmer, ‘Buoso da Dovara’, in, *DBI*, XLI, (Roma, 1992), pp. 566-569). Egidio Da Dovara brother of the bishop of Cremona, Oberto (See: François Menant, ‘Egidio da Dovara, in, *DBI*, XLI, p. 569). Girardo Da Dovara, son of Isacco received a feudal investiture from the bishop between 1185 and 1215. See: François Menant, ‘Girardo da Dovara’, in, *DBI*, XLI, p. 570.

**The Da Ticengo** family came from the North west side of the diocese. They had properties across the dioceses of Milan, Brescia and Cremona and even for them the ties with the bishop are evident in the person of Oprando the “Gonfaloniere” (Commander in chief of the army) of the church of Cremona in 1097. See: F. Menant, ‘Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI’ p. 171.

**The Sommi** family is another that had a particular story because they were secondary vassals, but in 1042, Alberto, the progenitor of the family received a benefit from the bishop, so he became a direct vassal of the episcopacy. The richness of the family came from the possibility of drawing tithes and the taxes that they had on the navigation of the river Po. See: F. Menant, ‘Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI’, p. 135.

<sup>84</sup> **Pievi:** From X to XIII-XIV centuries there was a severe demographic growth therefore in the countryside quite a few churches and chapels were borne, chapels and churches that could only perform a service on Sunday, but around which people started to gather. From this point onward began the quarrel about tithes because these churches and the private churches were impossible to control by the bishops. Obviously the bishop preferred the formation of “*pieve*” that he could control through appointing a specific person (sometimes a canon from the cathedral) than the private chapel that had different rights that he could not control. (See; Cinzio Violante, ‘Pievi e parrocchie nell’Italia centrosettentrionale durante i secoli XI e XII’, pp. 723 – 724). Following the definition given by Violante, “*Pieve was a baptismal church that had some chapels or minor churches related and dependant from it*”, (C. Violante, ‘Pievi e parrocchie nell’Italia centrosettentrionale durante i secoli XI e XII’ p. 644. My translation) the problem with the chapels of the minor churches was that if a lord had minor churches on its land the tithes of the nucleus of the curia “*democultite*” would go to the private church and the tithes of the rest of the manor would go to the “*pieve*”. This situation according to Violante stopped the formation of the parishes inside the territory of the pievi. (C. Violante, ‘Pievi e parrocchie nell’Italia centrosettentrionale durante i secoli XI e XII’, p. 649).



others in the city had to do it in their place<sup>85</sup>. This suggests that people in the city were trying to match the power of the bishop. Matilda did not say: “if those “capitanei” did not want to serve me, the bishop should send me other “capitanei” but rather other people “from the town” will do it, other people, that is, independent of the bishop and his power. François Menant seems to suggest that after the donation of “Isole Fulkeri”, the Episcopal curia tended to “coalesce” with the people of Cremona<sup>86</sup>. Although they were most probably connected we cannot really “identify” the leading political and economic forces of Cremona with the curia. The commune<sup>87</sup> was basically a sworn pact between *cives*, and was born through what Gualazzini called a “*conjuratio*” of citizens, who opposed the previous authority in Cremona, that is the bishop<sup>88</sup>. It seems likely that the power vacuum in the town encouraged them to take a more ambitious political role, but without turning their backs completely on the main authority. The leading citizens of Cremona neither “coalesced” with the curia, nor destroyed the authority of the Bishop; initially they simply formed a political enclave within the Episcopal power. I do not really think that, at the beginning at least of the commune, the major vassals and the aristocracy had any desire to wipe out the authority of the bishop;<sup>89</sup> rather they sought to reduce his power<sup>90</sup> in order to secure a share in the rule of the town. At the outset the rise of the commune in Cremona looks more like a shift in power than a rupture.

The ones who certainly did not wait for the bishop to come back into power were the canons who were active in 1098 investing one Giovanni and his wife Alberga with a piece of land and asking money and wine as rent<sup>91</sup>. In 1100 we hear of the chapter

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<sup>85</sup> *Breve Investiturae*. (Piacenza, 1 January 1098). “*Tali vero ordine quod capitanei ipsius ecclesie debent servire ad infrascriptam Matildam comitissam donec episcopus venerit infra ipsum episcopatum scilicet Cremonensis ecclesie, qui cum suis capitaneis seu aliorum servire noluerint, ceteri homines ipsius civitatis serviant per nominatum beneficium*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 242, pp. 53 – 54. This date of 1 January 1098, according to what has been stated by Menant in his research should be amended at 26 December 1097, following “Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien”. E. Goez, W. Goez, *MGH*, p. 150.

<sup>86</sup> F. Menant, ‘Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI’, pp. 163-164.

<sup>87</sup> Some examples of the development of the city-states in Italy in: Malcom Barber, *The two cities*, pp. 229-246.

<sup>88</sup> Ugo Gualazzini, Gino Solazzi, Agostino Cavalcabò, *Gli statuti di Cremona del MCCCXXXIX e di Viadana del secolo XIV*, Vol. I, (Milano, 1953), p. 68, note 2.

<sup>89</sup> It is however true that other cities such as Lodi began the communal experience (1107 – 1111) in a more violent way, for instance throwing the bishop and the “Capitanei” out of town. See: Alessandro Caretta, ‘Magistrature e classi a Lodi nel secolo XII’, in, *Popolo e Stato in Italia nell’età di Federico Barbarossa* (Torino, 1970).

<sup>90</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 277.

<sup>91</sup> V. Leoni, ‘Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona’, n 66, pp. 45-46.

receiving a rent worth £4, plus 1/6 of the grain and 1/3 of the wine produced by Pietro and Giovanni for land given to them<sup>92</sup>.

The vacancy in Cremona lasted until 1110. According to Andenna there was present in Verona in 1111 a bishop of Cremona called Ugo from Noceto<sup>93</sup>, who had been elected but not consecrated<sup>94</sup>. Sicardo put the election of the bishop Ugo from Noceto in 1110, so bishop Ugo must have remained elected for seven years up to the election of Bishop Oberto. There are two indirect pieces of evidence that in Cremona there was an elected bishop called Ugo. The first is a later document dated 1156 which speaks of witnesses being questioned in order to establish the feudal relationship between some vassals and bishop Ugo<sup>95</sup>. The second is the *praeceptum* of Henry V, dated 3 June 1114, in which the bishop is conspicuous by not being mentioned. The Emperor gave the people of Cremona free use of the common space on the river Po and free navigation<sup>96</sup>. In this diploma the emperor emphasized their “*usum et antiquam consuetudines*”. Furthermore this diploma reminds us of the one given by Emperor Otto III to the people of Cremona on 22 May 996<sup>97</sup>. In that diploma, issued in Rome, the emperor gave free use of the common space/areas and free use of the rivers for navigation and commerce. On that occasion the bishop had reacted violently and the diploma was negated. In this later case although the bishop was still a military leader and still in charge of the city, he could not do the same thing. In this episode we can see all the difficulties which would affect the bishop in the following decades: he is only elected, and not consecrated; the period is a particularly traumatic one because of the struggle between the popes and the emperors;<sup>98</sup> and of course the commune is getting much stronger. By 1114 the

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<sup>92</sup> V. Leoni, ‘Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona’ n 67, p. 46.

<sup>93</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 52.

<sup>94</sup> *Sicardi episcopi cremonensis cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger, in, *MGH SS*, XXXI, p. 162. L. Astegiano. ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del Comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 282.

<sup>95</sup> (S. Bassano, 3 March 1156). *CC*, ii, n 368, pp. 280 – 284.

<sup>96</sup> *Praeceptum*. (Worms, 3 June 1114). “*proprietate communia vocant, tam que in presenti habent, quam ea que in futuro sunt habituri, a bucca Adde usque ad Ulperla ex utraque Padi fluminis parte et ut a mari usque Papiam secure ac libere [...] et mercandi, secundum usum et antiquam consuetudinem eorum, cum navibus suis facultatem habeant et per totum regnum nostrum Italie secure vadant*”. *CC*, ii, n 262, pp. 89 – 91.

<sup>97</sup> *CC*, i, n 88, pp. 243 – 244, note 41.

<sup>98</sup> Henry V had a struggle with Pope, Pasqual II and he had kept him in captivity for 61 days in order to defeat his will about the investiture of the bishop. In 1111 in the place called “Sette Fratte” took place the agreement between Henry V and Pasqual II in which the Emperor accepted that the Pope could refuse to appoint the bishop if he did not like him, but committed himself to refuse every bishop who had not received in advance the emperor’s investiture. Maria de Matteis, ‘La chiesa verso un modello teocratico, Pasquale II’, in, *La Storia 5, Dall’Impero di Carlo Magno al trecento*. (Novara, 2007), pp. 684 – 686.

commune is definitely in a better position than it had been in 996 when it was only *in nuce*. All these elements contributed to put the bishop in a very weak position. On 19 May 1111 the Emperor Henry V in Verona had also confirmed to the chapter of the cathedral the possessions the bishop had previously taken from them and the offers on the altar of St Imerio<sup>99</sup>. It is the third time in less than 100 years that the emperor or the king reiterated the diploma about the possession of the canons, a sign that some controversies and/or some disputes about the exercise of power were in place between the canons and the bishop. Certainly the case of Bishop Ugo represents more of a fluctuation in the bishop's power than an actual fall or decline, but it is significant for our study to see that already at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the dominion of the prelate was more precarious than it had been before.

The episcopates of Gualtiero and Ugo from Noceto were too short to make any relevant impression on the diocese, and the commune took its first steps exactly during the vacancy of the Episcopal see and in a period in which the bishop lacked power and authority<sup>100</sup>. Indeed the prelates, who followed them in the diocese of Cremona, Bishops Oberto, Medolago and Offredo, although enjoying considerable power, would feel the influence of the commune. Among those prelates Bishop Oberto is particularly significant for our investigation as he reveals the medieval powers enjoyed by an 11<sup>th</sup>-century bishop in charge of city and its territory. Savio dated his election to 28 July 1117<sup>101</sup>, but his consecration took place only in 1118, in Milan where he swore loyalty to that church<sup>102</sup>. During his episcopate we notice the tug of war between the pope and the bishop but also the predominant role of the latter in his territory. For instance the monastery of St Peter continue to receive donations from the people<sup>103</sup>, but the bishop in 1120 obtained from Pope Callistus II the power of consecrating abbots. The monastery that had been opposed to the

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<sup>99</sup> V. Leoni, 'Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona', n 71, p. 47.

<sup>100</sup> François Menant, 'La prima età comunale 1097-1183', in, *La Storia di Cremona, dall'alto medioevo all'età comunale*, (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 198

<sup>101</sup> S. Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per Regioni: La Lombardia*. pp. 74-75.

<sup>102</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo' p. 53.

<sup>103</sup> (25 October 1119), CC, ii, n 275, pp. 111 – 112; (8 – 9 January 1120), CC, ii, n 276, pp. 112 – 114.



bishop during the Pataria movement in the time of Bishop Arnolfo now returned under the mantle of the episcopacy<sup>104</sup>.

However in 1122/3, the same pope gave to the monastery of St Peter<sup>105</sup>, to the canons<sup>106</sup> and to the priests in St Agatha<sup>107</sup>, all the privileges that his predecessor, Paschal II, had previously given to the monastery. Obviously this put Bishop Oberto in an uncomfortable situation. We may wonder why the pope gave both of these grants. We need to bear in mind, however, that Callistus II was the pope who in September 1122 had signed the Agreement of Worms with Emperor Henry V by which they had established their respective duties regarding the investiture of bishops in Italy and in Germany<sup>108</sup>. It is therefore possible that the pope wanted to keep the power of the bishop and the power of the other institutions in the town in balance. It is as though the pope had given something to the bishop with his right hand and taken it back with his left. On the other hand it is at the same time possible to argue that in this very uncertain situation the pope wanted to show that he could support the bishop without making him, for the moment, the absolute lord of the town, preserving the independence of the other institutions there. Whatever the truth might be about these contradictory investitures, the pope crossed the Rubicon two years later and completely endorsed his bishop with two different documents. In the first one, dated 1124, Callistus II gave to Bishop Oberto the temporal possession of the church of Cremona and the right to raise taxes on the city of Cremona and its land in “*comitatus civitatis*”, plus jurisdiction over and around the city for five miles<sup>109</sup>. He also confirmed the rights of the bishop over the abbot of St Laurence<sup>110</sup>. As important was the fact that the pope gave to the bishop control of feudal

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<sup>104</sup> *Pagina concessionis, apud Roncum Veterem*. (23 April, 1120). In, *CC*, ii, n 278, pp. 116 – 117.

<sup>105</sup> “*Calixtus II monasterio S. Petri Cremonae, iura et privilegia et bona omnia (cellam S. Pauli, capellam S. Mariae, S. Michelis e S. Bassiani decimas de Acqualonga et de Castroveteri, etc) confirmat*”. (6 March 1123). In, *CDC*, i, n 54, p. 103.

<sup>106</sup> “*Calixtus II, Canonicis Cremonensibus possessions iura, et privilegia omnia confirmat*”. (6 March 1123). In, *CDC*, i, n 53, p. 103.

<sup>107</sup> About St. Agatha, see: *CC*, ii, n. 282, pp. 121 – 123.

<sup>108</sup> Basically the agreement ratified the fact that in Germany the Emperor had the right to give to the bishop lay privileges and benefits before the spiritual investiture, whereas in Italy the spiritual investiture preceded the feudal one. Here the Emperor renounced his right to “empower” the bishop by giving him the ring and the pastoral stick.

<sup>109</sup> *Pagina constitutionis*. (Laterano, 1 February 1124). “*distinctionem civitatis infra et extra per quinque miliariorum spatia*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 287, pp. 131 – 133. See also: *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 68, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>110</sup> *Pagina constitutionis*. (Laterano, 1 February 1124). “*Et de abbate et monasterio Sancti Laurentii sicut iuste continetur in privilegiis tuis et in preceptis imperatorum*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 287, pp. 131 – 133.

investiture by ecclesiastics: this could no longer be done without asking the bishop and without his approval<sup>111</sup>.

In the second document, also in 1124, Pope Callixtus II regulated the relationship between the bishop and the canons. The bishop was recognised as leader of the clergy and the population<sup>112</sup>. No-one, moreover could become a canon without his approval<sup>113</sup>. In this case the pope gave to Bishop Oberto something he had not given before. These rights and privileges made him unquestionably the most powerful lord in town. This reflects the growing power of the pope over the church. This document also tells us indirectly something about the internal organisation of the church. The bishop has the right to appoint the “*archidiaconum, cantorem et alias personas*” with the approval of the canons. The word *archidiaconus* leads us to think that the church of Cremona had one position in this role, very differently from Lincoln where we have eight archdeacons for the eight archdeaconries. What we see here is the reinforcement of the power of the bishop, as a result of the Gregorian Reform and of the First Lateran Council in 1123<sup>114</sup>. As the pope is the leader of the church, so the bishop has to be the leader of the town. The Gregorian Reform has weakened the bishop on one side and reinforced him on the other. The authority of the pope extended over the bishops and weakened them with regard to the Roman Curia, but at the same time the concept of central authority of the church reinforced the bishop’s power in the diocese. But did the bishop need to be reinforced in his

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<sup>111</sup> *Pagina constitutionis*. (Laterano, 1 February 1124). “*investituras quoque feudorum in tuo episcopatu a presbiteris archpresbiteris seu abbatibus tuis factus de bonis ecclesiarum absque tuo tuorumque predecessorum consilio vel consensus irritas esse sancimus et ne deinceps huiusmodi investiture fiant omnimodo prohibemus*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 287, pp. 131 – 133. See also: *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 68, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>112</sup> *Concordia*. (Laterano, 31 March 1124). “*Pari igitur proportione dignum est episcopum cum paterne caritatis discretione, clerum et populum sibi commissum regere et ipsos ei tamquam capiti proprio cum devotionis humilitate concorditer obedire*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 288, pp. 133 – 135. See also: *Privilegium Calixti Papae*. In, *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 69, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>113</sup> *Concordia*. (Laterano, 31 March 1124). “*ut videlicet nullus in maiori ecclesia constituatur canonicus preter assensum et voluntatem episcopi, qui sicut ecclesie caput est, ita voluntas eius, et ratio debet precedere*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 288, pp. 133 – 135. Also: *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 69, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>114</sup> Luigi Prosdocimi, ‘Gerarchia di norme, strutture ecclesiastiche territoriali e ordinamento delle chiese locali nel <<Decretum Gratiani>>’, in, *Le Istituzioni Ecclesiastiche della Societas Christiana dei secoli XI-XII. Diocesi Pievi e Parrocchie. Atti della sesta settimana internazionale di studio. Milano 1 – 7 settembre 1974* (Milano, 1977), pp. 820 – 823.

diocese? Was his real political and military power changing or evolving in the XII century?

As far as Oberto is concerned his political relationships and his military power in the town were quite strong; a clear sign of this is the investiture he made in 1126 in front of other Episcopal vassals<sup>115</sup>. The investiture in itself was made by using a piece of wood according to the proper feudal traditions, another indication that the bishop was continuing to act as a feudal lord. He asks for power and he acts as a feudal lord. The military power of the bishop was matched, however, by that of the commune which in 1126/7 had been granted 1/3 of the castle of Guastalla, by the *populus* of Piacenza<sup>116</sup>. Between 1118 and 1150 the commune systematically proceeded to create a series of fortified places in the countryside in order to defend the territory, the so called “Borghi Franchi”<sup>117</sup>. The most ancient Italian “Borgo Franco” in fact is the place called Soncino in the “contado” of Cremona. It was founded in 1118<sup>118</sup>; Cremona was particularly interested in this place as it lay on the border between Cremona and Brescia and was also in a strategic position against Crema and Milan. Moreover it was in a very important position in terms of controlling the trade

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<sup>115</sup> “*Obertus, episcopatus S. Crem. Ecclesiae, cum ligno investivit Albertum germanium suum f.q. Alberti de loco Dovara*”. In, *CDC*, i, n 67, p. 105. About, “Da Dovara” family see, note 83 in this chapter.

<sup>116</sup> *CC*, ii, nos. 296, 297, 298, pp. 146 – 152. L. Astegiano, ‘Documenti di Guastalla e Luzzara fino all’anno 1127’, in, *CDC*, ii, pp. 59-63. See also, F. Menant, ‘La prima età comunale 1097 – 1183’, p. 211.

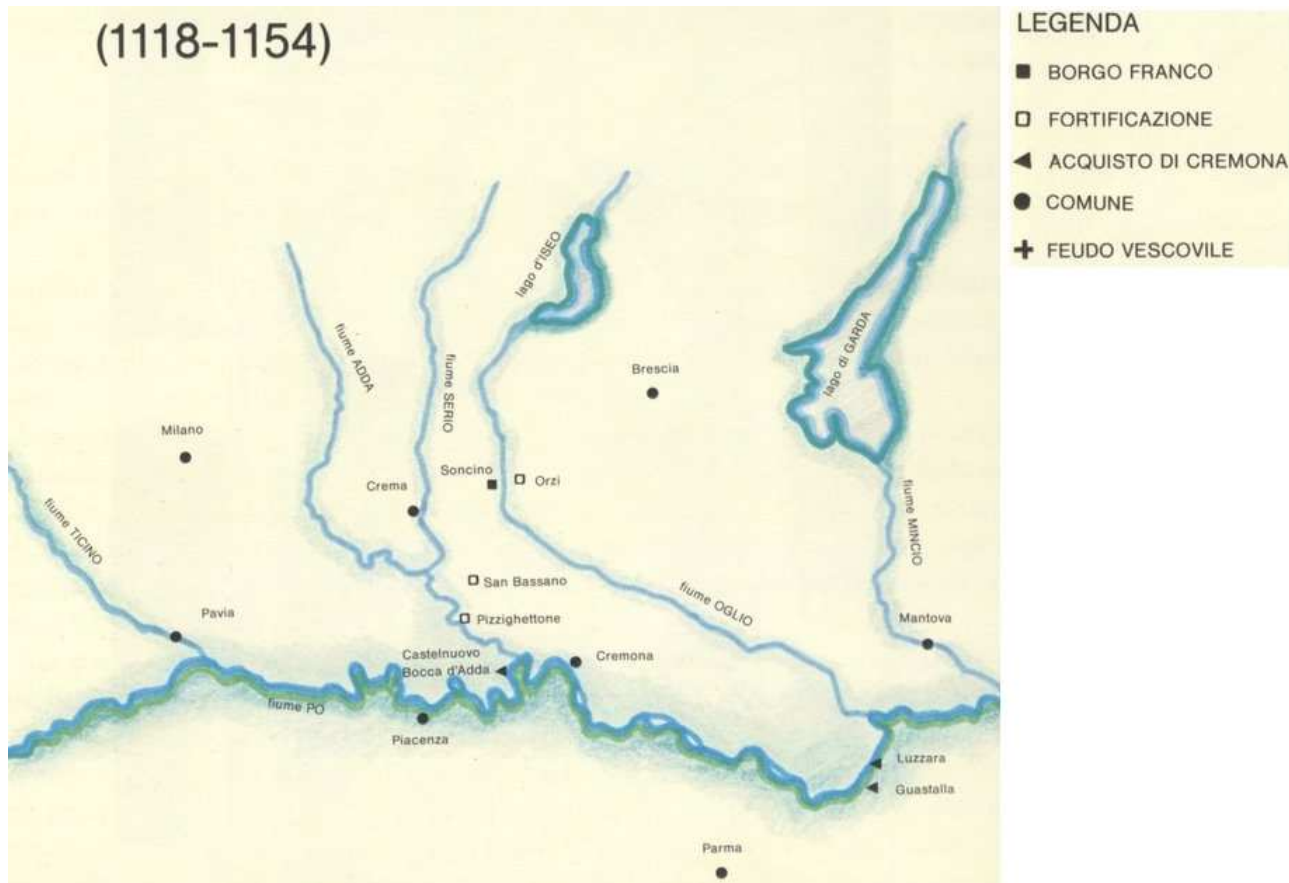
<sup>117</sup> **Borgo Franco** is a place founded by the commune where the commune itself gives to the inhabitants the possibility of cultivating the land and some specific benefits in terms of taxes and jurisdiction. To the people living in Borgo Franco the commune usually asked them to fight for the land belonging to the city. This foundation it is not only an Italian characteristic, between XII and XIV centuries we count at least 2,000 “Freiburg” in Germany, hundreds of “Boroughs” in England and “Bastides” in France. In Italy, in the north of the country, according to Vigliano we have the following figures:

| Region    | Borough |
|-----------|---------|
| Veneto    | 53      |
| Lombardia | 43      |
| Piemonte  | 62      |
| Liguria   | 23      |
| Emilia    | 41      |

Giampiero Vigliano, ‘Borghi Nuovi medioevali in Piemonte’ in, *Popolo e Stato in Italia nell’età di Federico Barbarossa. Relazioni e comunicazioni al XXXIII congresso storico subalpino per la celebrazione dell’VIII centenario della fondazione di Alessandria. Alessandria 6 –7 –8 –9 Ottobre 1986*, (Torino, 1990), pp. 99-100.

<sup>118</sup> *Beve investiturae et iuramenti*. (Cremona, 19 giugno 1118). In, *CC*, ii, n 273, pp. 106 – 109.

between east and west Lombardy<sup>119</sup>. Other “Borghi Franchi” were Pizzighettone founded as fortification in 1132, and acquiring the status of Borgo Franco in 1169<sup>120</sup>, Castelnuovo Bocca d’Adda bought by Cremona on 9 December 1150 and San Bassano<sup>121</sup>. (See Fig. IV A,B)



**Figure IVA: Maps of Borghi Franchi and fortifications 1118 – 1154. Pictures taken from Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone. p. 18, p. 42.**

<sup>119</sup> F. Menant, ‘La prima età comunale 1097-1183’, p. 212.

<sup>120</sup> Maria Teresa Pavesi – Giuseppina Carubelli, *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone. La nascita di un borgo franco cremonese nel XII secolo* (Casalmorano, 1988), p. 36.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.* p. 19.

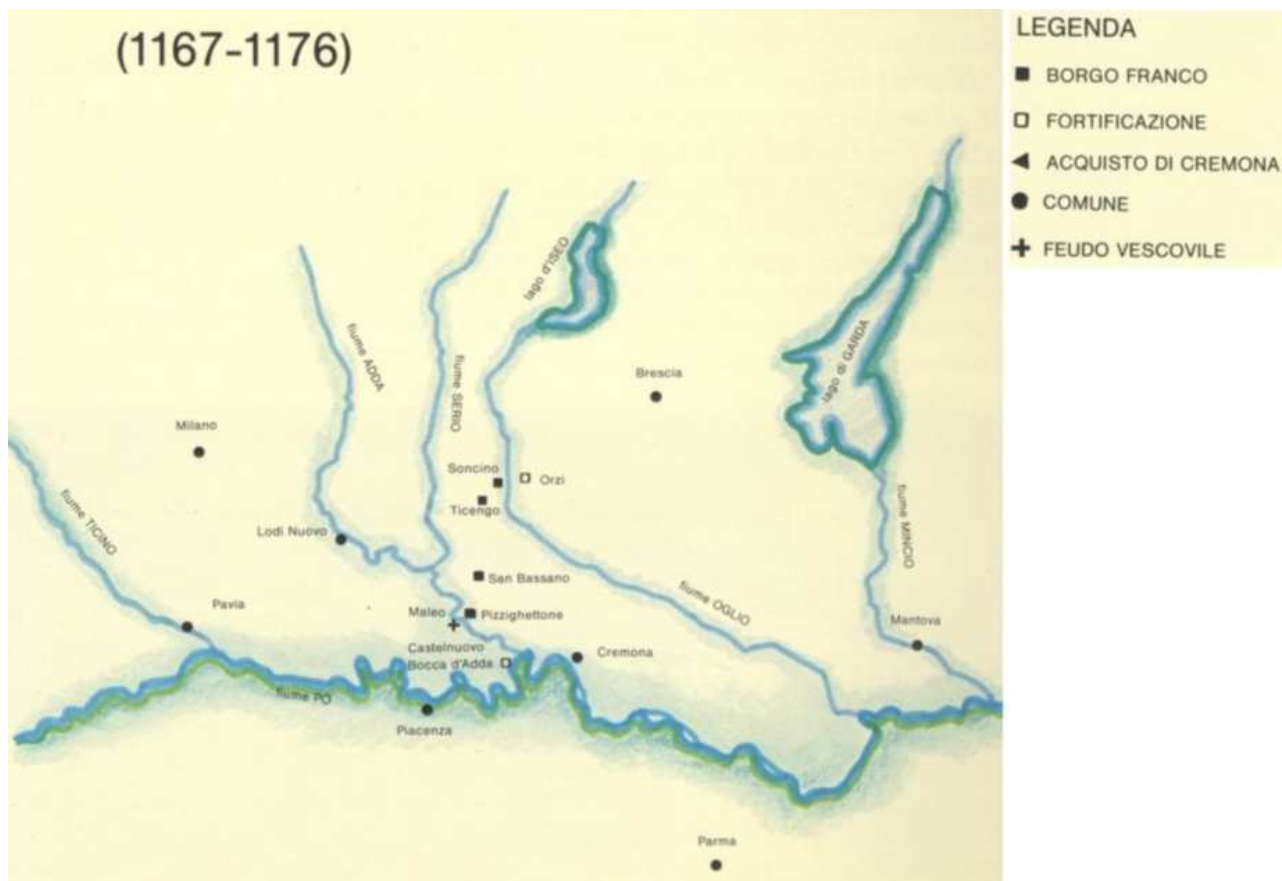


Fig IV B: Maps of Borghi Franchi and fortifications 1167 – 1176. Pictures taken from Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone. p. 18, p.42.

Gualazzini, who has studied the situation of Cremona, saw in the foundation of a Borgo Franco a power shift between the bishop and the *populus*, because with Soncino the *populus* took over from the bishop the defence of the episcopacy<sup>122</sup>. However, although the rising importance of the commune is evident, it is going too far to say that the *populus* replaced the bishop in the defensive organisation of the “contado”, at least not at this period in time. This is for two reasons: First because the city of Cremona, where the *populus* lived and to which Soncino’s people swore loyalty, was not formed by the *populus* only and secondly because, although the *populus* was the “armed wing” of the city, it did not control its political organisation. Moreover, the bishop seems to have been very much independent, so that he could stand for this or that side even in relation to the papacy. In the schism which began in 1130 between the popes Innocent II and Anacletus II he supported Innocent II and Emperor Lothar, so that he had to fight against the metropolitan of Milan, Robaldo,

<sup>122</sup> Ugo Gualazzini, *Dalle prime affermazioni del Populus di Cremona agli statuti della societas populi del 1229* (Milano, 1937) p. 35.

who in the *concilium* of Piacenza in April 1132 had not recognised Innocent II as pope and instead supported Lothar's antagonist Conrad, duke of Swabia, elected king of Italy with the support of Milan in 1128. Innocent II removed the excommunication that the archbishop of Milan had issued against Oberto. The archbishop of Milan responded by attacking the castles on the border between Cremona and Milan and Bishop Oberto was taken prisoner while he was leading his vassals against the invasion<sup>123</sup>. The canons made the most of the troubles that the bishop was facing, obtaining from the emperor Lothar II the right over the altar of St Imerio and the possession of all properties the bishop might have taken unjustly from them<sup>124</sup>.

In this case we have clear evidence of a bishop who leads his vassals on the battlefield exactly like any other feudal lord, and it is clear that during Oberto's time one of the prerogatives of the Italian bishops was indeed military power. We can clearly see Oberto and the archbishop of Milan supporting this or that pope, this or that emperor, and being ready to fight in order to defend their dioceses and their choices. Oberto and Roboaldo belonged to the church, but both of them fought as if they were normal knights or feudal lords who were defending their territories. This is the point at issue. If we detach the military role of the bishop from his religious role, we cannot fully understand why he behaved as he did. The bishop, it is true, was primarily a religious leader and in charge of the diocese, but in the Middle Ages it was basically impossible to achieve religious harmony without having political control of the territory and it was politically impracticable to rule the countryside without the support of the religious structures and institutions<sup>125</sup>. The bishop therefore, who was a proper military commander, defended his diocese from attack whether it be from a count, a duke or even another bishop.

It goes without saying that the religious control of the diocese was of capital importance for the bishop and in particular the control of its churches. This was as vital as the military control because by controlling the churches and the priests administering them he could control pastoral activities within the "contado". In addition to that, for the bishop it was probably even more important to control the

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<sup>123</sup> S. Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per Regioni: La Lombardia*. p. 78. See also: G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 58.

<sup>124</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 81, pp. 51-52.

<sup>125</sup> A fundamental principle whose validity would be demonstrated only too well by the XVI century's *Cuius Regio Eius Religio*.

possessions of the various churches in the “contado” and especially to require the presence of the priest in a diocesan synod where everyone had to pay something to the bishop in order to be there. Did Oberto achieve such religious control of his diocese?

We can give a positive answer to this question. Indeed to have religious power over the churches in the diocese became so important that sometimes the pope had to delegate bishops to act as arbiters between bishops who actually disputed the control of parish churches<sup>126</sup>. In the dispute about the possession of the churches of St Ambrose and St Michael in Cremona, for example between the canons and Bishop Oberto, Innocent II, in a letter dated 14 May 1139, stated that the church of St Ambrose would be ruled by the canons and Bishops Oberto should return to them control of the church of St Michael as well<sup>127</sup>. Oberto obtained subsequently, in 1144, a letter from Pope Lucius II in which the pope confirmed all the possessions that the bishop previously had and gave the church of St Michael to him. In this case the argument was with the canons and the bishop was unwilling to give up his rights and his prerogatives. Just as it was normal for him to have disputes about the possession of this or that land, and to fight in order to impose his rights here and there in the “contado”, it was normal to reduce (or at least to try to reduce) the canons to his control. On 8 March 1144 we have a document in which Pope Celestine II (who would die that day) resolved a quarrel between the bishop and the abbot of the monastery of St Peter<sup>128</sup>. The bishop could not act differently because his role demanded that he be a lord of the town and the “contado” and being a lord meant imposing certain rules, stating certain rights, and behaving accordingly. This document is important because through it we can understand what kind of power the bishop had during this period. In addition to reaffirming his possession of the church of St Michael<sup>129</sup>, the document tells us something of the real power of the bishop in that he controlled the city of Cremona and the court of Sospiro by raising taxes<sup>130</sup>. He also controlled the River Po and all things related to the river such as the right of

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<sup>126</sup> *Notitia Sententiae*. (Cassano D’Adda, 1135 – 1143). In, *CC*, ii, n 310, pp. 171 – 172.

<sup>127</sup> *Constitutio*. (Laterano, 14 May 1139). In, *CC*, ii, n 321, pp. 190 – 192.

<sup>128</sup> (8 March, 1144). See: *CDC*, i, n 125, p. 114.

<sup>129</sup> *Pagina Constitutionis*. (Laterano, 17 Marzo 1144). In, *CC*, ii, n 327, pp. 200 – 204. See also: *Privilegium* Lucio II. (17 March, 1144). In, *CDC*, i, n 126, pp. 114 -115.

<sup>130</sup> *Pagina Constitutionis*. (Laterano, 17 March 1144). “*Scilicet curatura, telonei atque ripatici et portatice de Cremonensi civitate ad publicam functionem pertinuit tam de ipsius civitatis comitatu quam de parte curtis Sexpilas*”. *CC*, ii, n 327, pp. 200 – 204.

fishing, the embankment, the mills and jurisdiction in and around the city for five miles<sup>131</sup>. He controlled various courts in the territory, the possessions of the church. Very importantly, no-one could alienate any possessions of the church without the agreement of the bishop. He also controlled the election of the canons, so that no-one could become a canon without the agreement of the bishop<sup>132</sup>.

Bishop Oberto tried to reorganise the ecclesiastical district of Cremona, claiming that it was within his rights to have obedience from all the people living in the diocese<sup>133</sup>. The leadership of the bishop is made quite clear in reading the letter that Oberto obtained from Pope Eugenius II in 1148. The pope, who was in Cremona on one of his tours in the north of Italy and Europe in order to propose the second crusade and the synods for the reformation of the clerical life, established that the churches of Crema, especially the clergy of St Mary, had to obey to the bishop of Cremona<sup>134</sup>.

The bishop's control of the diocese comes across in the various controversies with other bishops. Cardinal Guido da Somma sorted out (in 1148) a long controversy between Bishop Oberto and Bishop Gerardo of Bergamo over the possession of some churches that lay on the border between the diocese of Cremona and the diocese of Bergamo<sup>135</sup>. In 1145 Cardinal Ariberto sorted out a controversy between Oberto and the abbess of the monastery of St Julia in Brescia, again over the possession of churches<sup>136</sup>. All these controversies reinforce the picture of a bishop who tries constantly to increase his power and to control his diocese. Sometimes in fact he tries to gain power outside his diocese or to control something that does not fall under his direct control.

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<sup>131</sup> *Pagina Constitutionis*. (Laterano, 17 March 1144). “*Ripas et piscarias a Vulpariolo usque in caput Aduæ cum molendinis et cum uniuscuiusque navis solito censu [...] districtionem civitatis infra et extra per .V. miliariorum spatia*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 327, pp. 200 – 204.

<sup>132</sup> *Pagina Constitutionis*. (Laterano, 17 March 1144). “*Ratam manere censemus ut videlicet nullus in maiori ecclesia constituatur canonicus preter assensum et voluntatem episcopi qui, sicut ecclesie, caput est ita voluntas eius et ratio debet precedere*”. In, *CC*, ii, n 327, pp. 200 – 204. See also: Paulus Kehr, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, Italia Pontificia*. Vol. VI, Part I, La Lombardia, (Berlin, 1961), n 14, pp. 266 – 267.

<sup>133</sup> Annamaria Ambrosioni, ‘I rapporti tra Milano e Cremona nella politica territoriale di Federico Barbarossa’, in, *Il Borgo Franco di Castelleone*, ed. Giuseppina Carubelli, Giancarlo Galli, Alda Malfasi, Carlo Pizzamiglio (Cremona, 1990) p. 29.

<sup>134</sup> *Pagina Decreti*. (Cremona, 7 July 1148). *CC*, ii, n 339, pp. 222 – 223. Also: *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 72, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

<sup>135</sup> *Sententia*. (Milano, 12 October 1148). In, *CC*, ii, n 342, pp. 228 – 231.

<sup>136</sup> (29 July 1145). In, *CC*, ii, n 332, pp. 211 – 213.



Of course the religious control exercised by the bishop ought to match his military control of his territory and the “knightly” role of the bishop is evident when we examine the relationship between the bishop and the emperor. During the time of Frederick I the political situation changed a great deal and the emperor trusted Cremona to support him against Milan in September 1155<sup>137</sup>. However, some vassals of Oberto<sup>138</sup> rebelled against him because he took the side of the emperor against Milan; others gave back their land and their benefices to the bishop of Cremona<sup>139</sup>. In 1157 in the Diet of Worms the emperor stated that the people of Cremona could defend themselves against anyone who wanted to re-build a castle between the rivers Adda and Oglio, a strategic location for the cities of Cremona and Milan.<sup>140</sup>

In 1159 Bishop Oberto obtained new vassals, probably because he needed new *militēs*<sup>141</sup>, but unfortunately for him some of his existing vassals rebelled against the episcopacy of Cremona. Some vassals living in places called Fornovo, Mozzanica, Bariano, Castel Gabbiano and Ripalta Guerina / Arpina revolted against him and fled to Crema. So, on 17 May 1159, the emperor stated that if those men did not go back to their land and their houses and did not go to the bishop’s curia to respond for what they had done, the bishop would have a right to take their lands, their goods and everything belonging to them. Interestingly, the emperor supported the bishop in judging them precisely because they had betrayed their lord<sup>142</sup>.

The emperor also gave to Bishop Oberto the allodial properties of the people of Crema in 1159<sup>143</sup>, while, as if to demonstrate his feudal lordship, the bishop, at 70 years of age, was participating in the siege of Crema. We find this in the document about the right of St Michael’s church where it is written: “*Oberti cremonensis*

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<sup>137</sup> CC, ii, n 366, pp. 276 – 278; n 367, pp. 279 – 280.

<sup>138</sup> CC, ii n 368, pp. 280 – 283.

<sup>139</sup> CDC, i, n 168, p. 121.

<sup>140</sup> CC, ii, n 373, pp. 292 – 294.

<sup>141</sup> CC, ii, n 382, pp 307 – 308.

<sup>142</sup> CC, ii, n 385, p. 311-312. The vassals who betrayed Oberto committed a major crime because in a society where there were not a lot of written documents the most important pact was swearing an oath in front of the lord, or in front of the altar or on the relic of some saints; breaking the oath could mean putting all society in jeopardy. See: Giuseppe Cremascoli, ‘Il sacro nella mentalità feudale: temi e testi’, in, *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X-XII* (Milano, 1995), pp. 539-542. See also: Arnold Angenendt, ‘Il santo come patrono, in cielo e sulla terra’ in, *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X-XII*. (Milano, 1995), p. 503.

<sup>143</sup> *In obsidione castri Creme*. In, CC, ii, n 388, pp. 314 -316.

*episcopi, [...] in obsidione Crème, ubi aderat cum imperatore Federico qui obsidebat castrum Crème*”<sup>144</sup>.

The war was resolved in favour of the emperor and the city of Crema surrendered on 27 January 1160. It was destroyed. Milan resisted for two years more but surrendered on 21 February 1162 when its destruction began<sup>145</sup>. Because the bishop took the emperor’s side he was excommunicated by Pope Alexander III in 1160<sup>146</sup>. He was in the emperor’s army and fought for the empire, but more especially for the city of Cremona and for his diocese. Oberto supported the commune despite the fact that it was threatening to take some of his power from him. Indeed the commune of Cremona acquired a *praeceptum* from the emperor in which he declared that the people of Cremona could use the water of the River Po, from Cremona up to the sea, carrying any kind of goods without having to pay taxes<sup>147</sup>. On the other hand Bishop Oberto, who had supported the emperor in his fights, acquired a new diploma, dated 14 February 1160, in which the emperor gave to the church of Cremona the “allodial” properties belonging to the people of Bariano, Fornovo, Mozzanica and Ripalta Guerina. Moreover, the emperor prohibited the people of Caravaggio “*tam maiores quam minores*”, from using and building streets on the episcopal properties in Mozzanica and in Fornovo and from taking water in those two places to water the meadows or to work the mills<sup>148</sup>.

Some month before dying Oberto unified the possessions of the churches of St. Michael and St Gregory in order to have only one church and beside it a presbytery working as a place for the canons and the *prepositus*. He made Octonis the *prepositus*, stating that any future *prepositus* and canons would be ordained by the bishop and submitted to his authority without any intervention of the canons from the cathedral<sup>149</sup>. Oberto died at the end of 1162, but with this last document he seems

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<sup>144</sup> CC, ii, n 389, pp. 316 - 319. See also the document in which Offredo and Alberto respectively archdeacon and *prepositus* of the cathedral gave up the rights the canons had over the church of St Gregory in favour of Ottone, priest of the church of Saint Gregory in Cremona. V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 101, p. 61.

<sup>145</sup> F. Menant, ‘La prima età comunale 1097-1183’, p. 228. See also: G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 67 – 68.

<sup>146</sup> Paulus Kehr, *Italia Pontificia*, Vol. VI, part I, La Lombardia p. 269.

<sup>147</sup> (22 February 1159). See: CC, ii, n 381, pp. 305 – 307.

<sup>148</sup> *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 50, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. See also: CC, ii, n 390, pp. 320 – 321.

<sup>149</sup> V. Leoni, ‘Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona’, n 104, p. 63.

to have tried once again to reaffirm the power of the bishop especially over the canons. The diocese was entrusted in January 1163 to Presbitero da Medolago who made neither a long nor a good impression<sup>150</sup>. This bishop received formal recognition from the emperor in Pavia, on 3 April 1164, when he guaranteed his protection to Presbitero and to the church and gave to the bishop the castle of Maleo and its properties<sup>151</sup>. There exists another diploma, issued the same day, by which the emperor gave him the castle of Piadena and its properties, the fortified place (Motta) of Castelfranco d'Oglio and the curia of Lamo, with the *districtus* related to them. However, its authenticity is uncertain<sup>152</sup>.

In this period the bishop felt powerful enough, militarily and politically speaking, to attempt to bring into his court some vassals who were not directly his, but were secondary vassals<sup>153</sup>. He was accused of not taking care of the property of the church, but using it to create friends and supporters<sup>154</sup> and to create conflict between religious institutions such as the one between the bishop himself and the abbess of the convent of St Saviour. Moreover, his association with the imperial power did not help Presbitero. The emperor's election of Paschal III (Cardinal Guido da Crema) in 1164 was perceived as outrageous<sup>155</sup> by the clergy because unlike Victor IV, who was at least elected by some of the cardinals in Rome, Paschal III was solely elected by the emperor, and so considered illegitimate. The clergy of Cremona in particular and the archdeacon, Offredo, began to think that in order to pacify the situation the bishop should be thrown out of the city<sup>156</sup>. The revolt against Bishop Presbitero da Medolago occurred against the background of changing political alliances. In 1165 or 1166, Cremona opened contact with the anti-imperial cities, Verona, Padua and Venice, and in 1167 made an alliance with Brescia, Bergamo and Mantua against the emperor. Milan joined this alliance and in April 1167 the "Lega Lombarda" was born. In the countryside in the meantime there is documentary evidence suggesting

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<sup>150</sup> Menant studying his family history describes him as: "a schismatic and simoniac bishop". F. Menant, 'Un Lungo duecento: Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte' in, *La Storia di Cremona, dall'alto medioevo all'età comunale*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 333.

<sup>151</sup> CC, iii, n 412, pp. 18 – 19.

<sup>152</sup> CC, iii, n 413, pp. 19 – 21. Probably this diploma is false and it was made at the beginning of XIV century. See: François Menant, 'Cremona in età precomunale: il secolo XI', p.153 note 157.

<sup>153</sup> (3 January 1165). In, *Akty Kremony*, Vol. I, ed. S.A. Anninskii Predislovie – O.A. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenskaya, (Moscow, 1937), n 34, pp. 121 – 124. (3 January 1165).

<sup>154</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 70. See also. F. Menant, 'La prima età comunale', p. 229.

<sup>155</sup> See: Malcom Barber, *The two cities*, p. 99.

<sup>156</sup> Here I have come to the same conclusion as Andenna independently. The sources (that I am aware of) do not state it explicitly.

transactions between local priests and lay people that would indicate the fact that the clergy in the “contado” acted sometimes as if they were independent of the bishop<sup>157</sup>. Evidence against bishop Medolago was presented to Alexander III by the archdeacon and canons. Bishop Medolago was specifically accused of having granted numerous properties belonging to the church to his family members or to his friends and of having stolen many goods from the Episcopal palace<sup>158</sup>. The accusations against Medolago were severe. Although it was considered legitimate for the bishop to use the property of the church in order to raise money, this was acceptable only if he used the money for charitable purposes such as freeing prisoners or helping the poor<sup>159</sup>. As a result he had to leave the city<sup>160</sup>.

This was exactly 100 years after Bishop Arnolfo had been exiled. It is worth comparing the two cases. In Arnolfo’s case the bishop had to leave the town because of his own behaviour and his tolerance of the behaviour of the clergy. In this second case the bishop was also considered to have behaved incorrectly, although not in the same way. He was vulnerable to attack from both clergy and laity on broadly religious grounds precisely because he was more a feudal lord than a religious figure. In an obvious sense he was both, and he could not deny the fact that he had religious duties, but he clearly cared more about ruling the diocese politically than about primarily religious concerns.

Archdeacon Offredo was then elected as the new bishop of Cremona in 1168. On 29 May 1168 Pope Alexander III wrote to him calling him “*Cremonensis electo*” and giving him the churches of Postino and Pagazzano that belonged to the diocese of Pavia<sup>161</sup>, plus the church in Rivolta d’Adda (Church of Ripa Alta Sicca) and the monastery of St Sigismund. The link between the bishop and the people living in the “contado” seems to have remained alive and the bishop received one of his first recorded donations on 26 April 1169 when “Muttu”, citizen of Cremona, gave him a piece of land in the parish of St Emilianus on condition that a church, in honour of St

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<sup>157</sup> (29 May 1163), in, *CC*, iii, n 404, pp. 5 – 7; (29 July 1163), in, *CC*, iii, 405, pp. 8 – 9.

<sup>158</sup> *CDC*, i, n 234, p. 133. G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 70.

<sup>159</sup> Cinzio Violante, ‘I vescovi dell’Italia centro settentrionale e lo sviluppo dell’economia monetaria’, in, *Vescovi e Diocesi in Italia nel medioevo sec IX – XIII*, ed. M. Maccarone; G. C. Meersseman; E. Passarin d’Entres; P. Sambin (Padova, 1964), p. 199.

<sup>160</sup> *CC*, iii, n 430, pp. 45 – 46.

<sup>161</sup> *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 74, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. Also: *CC*, iii, n 433, pp. 50 – 52. P. Kehr, *Italia Pontificia*, Vol. VI, part I, La Lombardia. n 26, p. 269.

Bartholomew, would be built<sup>162</sup>. The same year, probably due to the very fluid political situation the consuls of Cremona were active as well. They gave to the people of Pizzighettone the same rights of the people as Cremona in exchange for the payment of 100 *denarii* and the promise to guard the bridge and the dam on the river Adda<sup>163</sup>.

During Offredo's period, an old issue came to the fore: the struggle between the episcopacy of Cremona and the monastery of Pontida over the taxes of the church of Morengo, a symptom that the control of the churches in the diocese still meant in practice the economic control of their revenues. This problem had been recognised in the sentence issued by the Cardinal Guido da Somma in 1148<sup>164</sup> when the issue had been the churches on the border between the diocese of Cremona and the diocese of Bergamo<sup>165</sup>. By controlling the churches in the diocese the bishop could control their priests and ask them to participate in the Episcopal synod and pay the usual tax to the bishop for this privilege. The arbiter in the case concerning the monastery of Pontida was the bishop of Brescia, Raimondo, who was the delegate of Pope Alexander III. Raimondo issued his verdict in Brescia, on 5 December 1170, stating that the abbot of the monastery of Pontida should give back to the bishop of Cremona the taxes relating to the church of Morengo<sup>166</sup>. On 6 March 1171 Pope Alexander III confirmed this judgment<sup>167</sup>.

The fact that the countryside was not quiet in this period is testified by documentary evidence in which religious institutions and lay people fought over rights and possessions. In 1171 some canons from Cremona delegated by the bishop had to sort out the controversy between the archpriest of the *pieve* of St. Faustinus and the priest of St Michael whether or not the church should be submitted to the *pieve*<sup>168</sup>. Even more interesting is the fact involving the abbot of the monastery of St Peter and the priest of St Agatha against a layman called Anselm. The latter had built a mill on the river *Murbaxio* causing, according to the abbot, some damage to the churches. In this

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<sup>162</sup> CC, iii, n 439, pp. 61 – 63. Another transaction that involved Bishop Offredo is the purchase of the land and a lake in a place called, Lago di Rocca Mairana. (20th April 1172). In, CC, iii, n 471, pp. 116 – 118.

<sup>163</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 109, pp. 64-65.

<sup>164</sup> And confirmed by the pope Alexander III in 1180.

<sup>165</sup> CC, iii, n 573, pp. 293 – 294.

<sup>166</sup> *Codex Sicardi*. On line version, document n 76, in, *Codice Diplomatico della Lombardia Medievale*, ed. V. Leoni, <<http://cdlm.unipv.it/edizioni/cr/cremona-sicardo/carte>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. Also: CC, iii, n 457, pp. 92 – 93.

<sup>167</sup> CC, iii, n 459, pp. 95 – 96.

<sup>168</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 115, p. 66.

case the mediation is given to two podestá, appointed by the consuls of justice of Cremona and not to a religious institution<sup>169</sup>. Another case still involving the abbot of St. Peter against a layman called Negro about a small stream originating in the property of Negro and then running through the property of the monastery, is mediated by two laymen, Bernardo Ferrarius and Ottone Rozonus, symptom of an increasing number of cases where lay and religious prerogatives overlapped<sup>170</sup>.

The relationship between the bishop and the pope was good even when Cremona returned to supporting the Emperor. In 1174 Frederick I was defeated by the army of the “Lega Lombarda” at Legnano, near Milan. This led him eventually to sign a peace with Alexander III at Anagni in 1176 recognising him as a legitimate pope and, putting an end to a schism. The pope had not informed his allies that he wanted to sign a separate peace treaty with the emperor, and when Cremona discovered it the city quickly left the Lega and signed a separate peace with the emperor, ending this experience with the Lega Lombarda. Frederick I confirmed at Pavia on 29 July 1176 all the privileges that Cremona had in relation to its land around the water, the river, the trade, the bridges, the election of the consuls and the administration of justice<sup>171</sup>. What is interesting here is the fact that the emperor gave these privileges to the consuls of Cremona without mentioning the bishop, although when he referred to the privileges outside the city he called the land “*suo episcopatu*”<sup>172</sup>. This could have put Cremona in conflict with the church, but in fact in the following year Pope Alexander signed a stronger and more definite peace with the emperor in Venice. Bishop Offredo, although not entirely inactive<sup>173</sup> seems to have made few important decisions. As Andenna has said, “we can see that we do not have a lot of feudal contracts, as we had with Oberto, because now the commune controlled the military situation of the town so the bishop did not need to have a strong support from his vassals”<sup>174</sup>. This seems to overstate the situation as there is evidence that Bishop

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<sup>169</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 114, p. 66.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* n 131, p. 70.

<sup>171</sup> For the special relation between the Emperor and Cremona see also: *Carta Iuramento* 12-13 December 1176 in which the emperor committed himself to help Cremona against the other cities in Lombardy and promised to commit his son Henry to the same bond as soon as he would be fourteen years old. CC, iii, n 533, pp. 226-229.

<sup>172</sup> CC, iii, n 529, pp. 217 – 220.

<sup>173</sup> CC, iii, n 463, pp.101 – 103.

<sup>174</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 76.

Offredo still had some vassals and acted as a feudal lord. In one document two canons are the representative of the church of Cremona<sup>175</sup> and in another one some of his vassals were represented by his magistrate, and he gave investiture of some lands belonging to the episcopacy of Cremona to the Vinciguerra brothers<sup>176</sup>. Moreover the bishop is involved in a controversy with the abbot of St Laurence about the rights over the church of St Blaise in Cremona, which was sorted out with the mediation of a canon from the cathedral<sup>177</sup>. A very good example of the rights and the duties of the priest in the countryside during Offredo's episcopate is offered by the document dated 1183<sup>178</sup> in which are described the rights and the prerogatives of a priest in the diocese of Cremona. The priest of the church of St Andrew in a place called *Casanova del Morbasco* had the right over the population, the offers, the tenths and the right to give penances, benedictions and burials. The church of St Andrew is submitted to the *pieve* of *Sesto* and this applies as well in the case of special funds contribution which might be requested by the bishop or any other authority.

Nevertheless there is evidence that the role of the bishop was changing. During his time Offredo tried to improve the Episcopal school where the clergy studied<sup>179</sup> the Holy Scriptures and the basic grammar that they needed to work in a world that was getting more and more complex. As we will see with Sicardo later on, the bishop had understood the importance of the Episcopal school and the relationship between the juridical culture that the school could provide and the political power exerted in town<sup>180</sup>.

Bishop Offredo died in October 1185<sup>181</sup>, and with him ended the period in which the power of the bishop was at its strongest. After this period and especially during the episcopacy of Sicardo the role of the bishop changed significantly.

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<sup>175</sup> (26 September 1174). *CC*, iii, n 500, pp. 190 – 193.

<sup>176</sup> (22 June 1176). *CC*, iii, n 527, pp. 211 – 216.

<sup>177</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 133, p. 71.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* n 143, p. 75.

<sup>179</sup> About the Scriptorium and the documents of Cremona see: Simone Manfredini, 'Frammenti liturgici negli archivi cremonesi: ipotesi di uno scrittoio all'ombra della cattedrale', in *Cremona, una cattedrale, una città*, ed. Dario Cimorelli, (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), pp. 50-53. See, also: Emilio Giazzi, 'Frammenti di codice a Cremona: testimonianze per una storia della cultura cittadina', pp. 22-49.

<sup>180</sup> Mariarosa Cortesi, 'Libri, memoria e cultura a Cremona, secoli IX – XIV', in *Storia di Cremona, Il trecento Chiesa e Cultura VIII – XIV secolo*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2007), p. 222.

<sup>181</sup> Francesco Novati, *L'Obituariò della cattedrale di Cremona* (Milano, 1881), pp. 70 – 71.

At the outset of this inquiry we asked a deceptively simple question: what kind of power did the bishop hold? The answer, as we have seen, is that his power was broad-based: it was feudal and territorial, it was military, it was institutional, it was economic, it was diocesan, and it was spiritual. It is possible to separate these components for analytical reasons, despite our limited sources, but to do so threatens to simplify the practice of power. When we examine the actual exercise of power we find these strands strongly intertwined. In addition to their local power, bishops had the intermittent backing of both papal and imperial power, but both of these had their downsides. Imperial power was itself open to challenge, while papal power was double-edged. For Gregory VII, in particular, the pope was endowed with the gift of sanctity by God and so had the right to appoint and remove bishops without judgement being raised against his actions. Moreover he thought that there was no division between the official church and the true Christian church, the first having to correspond to the second, meaning that there was no place for any diversity in faith<sup>182</sup>. It is quite clear that this way of thinking and this way of doing could clash with the local prerogatives of the bishops, reducing them to simple servants, not of God, but of the papacy.

The bishop of Cremona was called upon many times to defend his power and he had many resources with which to do so. Paradoxically, it is these challenges which are most revealing when it comes to understanding the extent and the contours of his power. These challenges came directly from religiously-minded members of the laity and indirectly from the reformed monasteries they founded, and from within local society – from mercantile interests, from the commune, and even from the ranks of the bishop's own vassals and vavasours. Subject to external as well as internal pressures, the power of the bishop was never static. We can observe trends and there are already in this period a few indications that the nature of his power was changing in changing times. Before exploring this further we must look at the situation in the diocese of Lincoln across the same time frame.

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<sup>182</sup> Giovanni Miccoli, *Chiesa Gregoriana. Ricerche sulla riforma del secolo XI* (Roma, 1999), p. 214.



## Chapter two

# Royal servants: The bishop of Lincoln, 1067-1166

### Bishops of Lincoln mid XI to mid XII century

Remigius elected in 1067 (as bishop of Dorchester, Leicester and Lincoln) – d. 1092

Robert Bloet elected in 1093 – d. 1123

Alexander “the magnificent” elected in 1123 – d. 1148

Robert de Chesney elected in 1148 - d. 1166

Specific sources for the study of the bishops of Lincoln in this period are, in addition to chronicles, the *Registrum Antiquissimum* and the *English Episcopal Acta*. The first one is the earliest cartulary of Lincoln Cathedral dating back to the thirteenth century. C. W. Foster’s editions of Volume I and Volume III published in 1931 and 1935 are the critical versions of the texts of the charters. In the original plan it should have covered the period from 1066 to 1235, but further documents had been added extending the period to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The documents illustrate the history of Lincoln secular cathedral church in relation to its organisation and personnel and it is a fundamental source to get an understanding of what the bishop and the cathedral chapter were dealing with. D. Smith’s edition of the *English Episcopal Acta* published from 1980, onwards, is an effort to make readily available collections of Episcopal Acta from the Conquest to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, diocese by diocese. Volumes I and IV, edited by D. Smith (1980-1986), cover the bishop of Lincoln from 1067 to 1206. In the case of Episcopal Acta I the documents span from 1066 to Hugh of Wells in 1235. Other important sources describing bishop’s lives and deeds are *Historia Anglorum* and the *De Contemptu Mundi* from Henry of Huntingdon, as well as the *Vita Sancti Remigii* from Gerald of Wales.

One of the clerics who followed William the Conqueror in his expedition in England in 1066 was Remigius, up to that moment a completely unknown almoner of the abbey of Fécamp. We cannot establish the exact date of his birth, but we can infer it on the basis of his appointment as bishop of Dorchester in 1067. On the assumption that the canonical age of 30 years had been respected, Remigius should have been born in the mid 1030s<sup>1</sup>. As we shall see, he proved to be a good bishop in many respects, but the beginning of his ecclesiastical career in England presents some difficulties. When Wulfwig, bishop of Dorchester, died in 1067, William the Conqueror had his chance to get his hands on an English diocese and he did not let it pass: he appointed Remigius to the see<sup>2</sup>. From the very beginning therefore Remigius owed his career to the king's favour, or better, to the king's pay off. What for? All the main primary sources of the XI-XII centuries which I am aware of<sup>3</sup> are unanimous in saying that Remigius received the bishopric in return for the support he had given to William the Conqueror; moreover John de Schalby's statement that "Remigius had come to England with William for a certain reason"<sup>4</sup> implies that the Fécamp's almoner knew from the beginning what would be the reward should England be conquered. We do not know if Remigius had made an agreement with William before leaving, but what we know is that the majority of William's lay supporters had already given themselves to him in Normandy<sup>5</sup>. Less clear is how Remigius effectively contributed to this expedition and what role he played during the first preliminary phase of the Conquest. Following the Ship List studied by Elisabeth Van Houts we see that Remigius supplied one ship and twenty knights for the military expedition<sup>6</sup>. If we look at her appendix four<sup>7</sup> to the Ship List we find a comparison between the *Infeudationes Militum*, written in 1172, and the Ship List itself. The *Infeudationes Militum* demands our attention because it shows not only

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<sup>1</sup> David Bates, *Bishop Remigius*. (Lincoln, 1992), p. 2. Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii et Vita Sancti Hugonis*. In, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, VII, J.F. Dimock Ed, (London, 1877) pp. XV – XIV.

<sup>2</sup> Bartholomæi de Cotton, *Historia Anglicana*. (London, 1859), p. 399. See also: Sir F. Hill. *Medieval Lincoln*. (Cambridge, 1965), p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Eadamer, William of Malmesbury, Giraldus Cambrensis, all quoted by Sir Francis Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 64. Henry of Huntingdon simply recorded that Remigius was "present" at the battle of Hasting. Henry of Huntingdon. *De Contemptu Mundi*. In, *HH*, pp. 589.

<sup>4</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, ed. and trans. J. H. Srawley, (Lincoln, 1966), p. 21, note 1.

<sup>5</sup> George Garnett, *Conquered England*, (Oxford, 2007) p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> Elisabeth M.C. van Houts, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror' in, *Anglo Norman Studies*, Vol. X, (Woodbridge, 1988) pp. 159 – 183.

<sup>7</sup> E. Van Houts, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror', p. 179, Appendix 4.

the fief and the name of the tenants, but also the number of knights owed to the duke in the year 1172. For the abbey of Fécamp the number of knights owed is ten. Therefore as Van Houts says, “If Remigius provided 20 knights in 1066 he contributed twice as many as Fécamp owed to the duke a century later”<sup>8</sup>. Why should the abbey have given double the knights required from them? The answer provided by Van Houts is that “the duke proposed a minimum contribution to the forthcoming campaign [...] but on the top of his quota each man was free to give more depending on his resources, his inclination and his desire for rewards if the expedition should prove successful”<sup>9</sup>.

We can believe then that Remigius went to England with a precise plan: gaining something in return for his help. Did he also play a prominent military role? Following the argument of J. F. Dimock in his preface to the work of Gerald of Wales, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*,<sup>10</sup> Remigius could easily have been “the leader” or the “manager” of the expeditionary force sent by the abbot of Fécamp. Remigius came to England therefore not as priest or almoner but as leader of the expeditionary force sent by his abbot. This assumption seems to be contradicted by the fact that after 1072, and therefore after having established himself in the diocese of Dorchester, Remigius seems not to have had any direct military duties or any military responsibilities at all<sup>11</sup>. We might therefore assume that after having settled down in Lincoln and despite remaining a lord from a military point of view, he began to be primarily concerned with his religious obligations rather than his military duties.

We note immediately the first parallel between the bishops Arnolfo and Remigius. Both are religious prelates in charge of a city and a diocese, but at the same time feudal lords in the service of a king. Just as Arnolfo relied on the power of Henry IV to exercise power in Cremona, so Remigius owed his power, his role and his diocese to William the Conqueror.

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<sup>8</sup> E. Van Houts, ‘The Ship List of William the Conqueror’, pp. 170-171.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>10</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii et Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. J. F. Dimock pp. XVII-XVIII.

<sup>11</sup> D. Bates. *Bishop Remigius*. p. 12.

After having received the bishopric of Dorchester on Thames in 1067, Remigius made his profession to the English schismatic and pluralist<sup>12</sup> Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Following Stigand's deposition<sup>13</sup> in 1070 Remigius had to make his profession to Lanfranc, as bishop of Dorchester, Leicester and Lincoln<sup>14</sup>. Eadmer tells us that Remigius and Thomas of York followed Archbishop Lanfranc to Rome where he was to receive the *pallium* to which he became entitled by being the Archbishop of Canterbury. Remigius was not considered by the Pope, Alexander II, as rightly raised to the episcopate because, once again, he had bought his bishopric from William as a reward for his services. Remigius did not defend himself, a sign that what the Pope was saying was true, but Lanfranc did and his defence, based on three main pillars, tells us a lot about the quality of the bishops William had chosen for "his church".

What Lanfranc said to the Pope was that:

- 1) "The bishops had a sound basis of knowledge"
- 2) "They were very necessary to the king in his new kingdom"
- 3) "They were outstanding in the art of oratory"<sup>15</sup>

From Lanfranc's statement it is possible to comprehend what was required from a bishop. The first and the third points go without saying because a bishop needed to be a cultivated person in order to explain the Gospel to the faithful and a good orator in order to make it understood. We may note in passing that there was no mention of the personal condition of the bishop as was the case in Italy when the Pataria movement put a lot of pressure on Arnolfo and his clergy in terms of their behaviour. As we will see there were problems in England, too, in relation to nicholaism and

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<sup>12</sup> As he has held Canterbury in plurality with Winchester to which he had been appointed in 1047. On this particular point there is some disagreement. Mary Giandrea has pointed out that Stigand did not get the *Pallium* up to 1058 not because of his plurality but because the exiled Archbishop Robert was still alive. Mary Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 21. For Stigand's appointment to Winchester see: G. Garnett, *Conquered England*, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup> *Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church*, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, Vol. I, A.D. 871 – 1204, Part II 1066-1204, (Oxford, 1981), pp. 573 -574. For his crimes see: Eadmer. *Eadmeri Historia Novorum in Anglia*. ed Martin Rule, (London, 1884), p. 10. See also: Eadmer. *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, (London, 1964), trans. by Geoffrey Bosanquet, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> For his profession see: D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*. pp. 4-5. See also: F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 64.

<sup>15</sup> Eadmer, *Eadmeri Historia Novorum in Anglia*, ed Martin Rule, (London, 1884), pp. 10 – 12. See also: Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, trans. by Geoffrey Bosanquet, pp. 11 – 12.

simony but, apparently, Lanfranc decided not to raise these particular issues. What is particularly interesting is that Lanfranc emphasized the role of the bishop as the king's helper in the new kingdom. How would Remigius and his successors help the king to create his new kingdom?

Pope Alexander II restored Remigius to his position so that he could fulfil his mission in Lincoln: it was what William I was waiting for. William, who had already reinforced Remigius' personal wealth and personal position by giving him houses, manors and properties,<sup>16</sup> needed to be sure that the city was ruled by someone on whom he could rely, and Remigius would not let him down. William the Conqueror was a man who knew exactly what he wanted from his episcopate. Slowly but steadily William replaced bishops or filled vacancies with Normans<sup>17</sup> so that the episcopate became Normanized, although never completely. Moreover as Garnett states, "The Conquest had transformed the King's relations with all bishops and many abbots; it had made them tenants-in-chief<sup>18</sup>. This clearly shows that in England, as happened in Italy, the episcopate actively participated in the construction of the kingdom from a military as well as a religious point of view. Moreover as the king was the person responsible for the vast majority of the Episcopal appointments it is sensible to argue that the episcopate at this stage was dependant on the king's will.

William was keen to support his bishops but as in Italy only up to certain limits. Indeed in one of his writs<sup>19</sup> he stated that Bishop Remigius "Is to be prohibited from claiming new customs within the island of Ely, since he does not wish him to have anything there which his predecessor did not have on the day that King Edward died"<sup>20</sup>. The King of England was a *defensor* of the church or at least this is what he

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<sup>16</sup> "Two manors of Welton (Lincs.) and Sleaford (Lincs.) [...] three churches of his three manors of Kirton in Lindsey, Caistor (Lincs.) and Wellingore (Lincs.) with their lands and tithes [...] tithes and revenues of the two manors and the two churches of St Lawrence and St Martin in Bromswold (Hunts.) [...] manor of Wooburn (Bucks.). Confirmed to Remigius the churches of Bedford, Leighton Buzzard (Bucks.), Buckingham and Aylesbury (Bucks.)." D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, (Oxford, 1998), n 177, Lincoln Cathedral and see, 1072 x 1087, pp. 587-589. See also: D. Owen, 'The English church in eastern England 1066-1100', In, *A History of Lincoln Mynster*, ed. D. Owen (Cambridge, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> One of the consequences of the Conquest was also that in many places the office of sheriff became a private affair of the barons; indeed many families held in the second generation the sheriffdoms given by William I. See: F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, (Cambridge, 1965), p. 97.

<sup>18</sup> G. Garnett, *Conquered England*, p. 58

<sup>19</sup> D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 123, 1081/2 x 1087, pp. 431 – 432.

<sup>20</sup> Again before letting Bishop Remigius consecrate the abbot of Ely: "He wants to learn by means of letters [...] whether Remigius has shown or is able to show that his predecessors consecrated abbots of Ely". D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 126, 1081/2 x 1087, pp. 436 - 437

wanted the pope to perceive. He ordered that, “no bishop or archdeacon shall henceforth hold pleas relating to the Episcopal laws in the hundred court, nor bring any matter which pertains to the cure of souls to the judgement of laymen. Anyone who is called to answer concerning any cause or crime relating to the Episcopal laws shall come to the place which the bishop chooses and names and shall answer there, not according to the law of the hundred court, but to God and his bishop according to the canons and the Episcopal laws. [...] William also forbids any sheriff, reeve, other officer or layman to interfere with Episcopal jurisdiction”<sup>21</sup>.

This famous writ put all religious issues directly under the control of the church, but took nothing away from William’s political control over it. As Henry Loyn said, the bishop was a “man with a double role”<sup>22</sup>, i.e. at national and local level: at the national level because his presence was required at councils, courts and synods; at the local level because he was the centre of his diocese in which he was involved in both religious and non-religious matters. William knew perfectly that even for the best bishop the control of a diocese would prove impossible without having “collaborators” who could actually carry out the orders and the instructions given by the bishop. Therefore, at the council of Windsor in 1070, he ordered that “bishops should appoint archdeacons in their churches”<sup>23</sup>. The King did not need to control everything in the diocese, but he did need to control the bishop and to reinforce his power.

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<sup>21</sup> D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 128, 1071/5 x 1085, pp. 440- 442. See also, *RA*, i, n 1, pp. 1- 2.

<sup>22</sup> H. Loyn, ‘William’s bishops: some further thoughts’, in, *Anglo-Norman Studies*, Vol. X, Allen Brown Ed. (Wolfenboro, 1988), p. 232.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 388-389. See also: *Councils and Synods*, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, Vol. I/ part II, p. 580.



**Fig V: Map of English dioceses in the Middle Ages**

How than did Remigius proceed to fulfil his duties in his diocese? He did this first by appointing people to the various hierarchical positions beginning with his minster church: St Mary. As Sir Francis Hill pointed out, “St Mary was not a cathedral in the modern sense, but was the mother church of its original parish”<sup>24</sup>, and was served by a college of seven canons. Remigius brought in 14 more canons and despite the fact that he was a monk founded a secular chapter<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 77.

<sup>25</sup> D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p. 24.

In theory the main duties in the cathedral, such as the celebration of masses, and the observation of the canonical hours and the general or special worship, should have been the responsibility of the resident canons, but in practice this burden almost always fell on the shoulders of the vicars and the lesser clergy. However an important role from the twelfth century onward was taken up by the chantry priests who, apart from their regular duties of prayers, were also in charge of the minor altars in the cathedral<sup>26</sup>. For the first one hundred years of the cathedral's existence the bishops controlled the appointments to vacancies by retaining in their own hands collations to almost all canonries; moreover by the careful selection of canons who could act as their own clerks and advisers, they influenced and indirectly managed the chapter, making Episcopal interests predominant. Indeed from the analysis undertaken by Dorothy Owen we can see that the customs suggest an even more active role for the bishop in that "he was to take a lead in all the divine offices, always preceding the dean. He was to come in state for his enthronement and at the beginning of his first visitation of the chapter. When he returned to his diocese from a journey abroad he was to be met by all the canons in procession at the west door, from where he escorted them to the high altar, the dean on his right and the next senior dignitary on his left"<sup>27</sup>. However, although the bishop appears to have been predominant over the chapter since the very beginning of its existence, the latter worked to affirm its independence from Episcopal jurisdiction. The relationship between the bishop and the canons was very important because the canons were the people attending the cathedral and were those who were the closest to the bishop. This relationship, however, was never smooth. There was also the organisation of the diocese to consider. As we have noted concerning the council of Windsor in 1070, it was ordered that bishops appoint archdeacons in their dioceses. Remigius duly complied. In 1078 seven archdeacons were appointed to archdeaconries<sup>28</sup>. Richard

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<sup>26</sup> D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, Vol. V, (Lincoln, 1971), p. 44.

<sup>27</sup> D. Owen, 'Historical survey 1091 – 1450', in, *A History of Lincoln Mynster*, ed. D. Owen (Cambridge, 1994), p. 130.

<sup>28</sup> See: *Chronica Minor Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo*. In, *Chronica Johannis de Oxenedes*, ed. Henry Ellis, (London, 1859), p. 414. Remigius appointed Nigellus in Northampton, (*Fasti*, ii, p. 55], Ralph in Leicester (*Fasti*, ii, p. 59), Alured in Buckingham (*Fasti*, ii, p. 67), Osbert in Bedford (*Fasti*, ii, p. 72), Alfred in Oxford (Whilst part of Lincoln) (*Fasti*, ii, p. 64), and Nicholas in Huntingdon (*Fasti*, ii, p. 48) while the archdeaconry of Stow seems to have been created in the twelfth or thirteenth century, the archdeacon appointed for the first time in 1213/4 being William of Thorney or Tornay. R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225*, p. 388. See also: *Fasti*, ii, p. 76.



was appointed archdeacon at Lincoln<sup>29</sup>. Archdeacons were known in Normandy before the Conquest and were duly introduced into England<sup>30</sup>. Remigius was in the van in terms of development. In general, archdeacons in Anglo-Norman England are obscure figures. A large number were royal chaplains. Others were bishops' relatives. Some indeed were both. Others, again, were drawn from the bishops' household clergy. There were also hereditary archdeacons, the best known being Henry of Huntingdon who will appear hereafter. Archdeacons assisted their bishops but also had specific functions: they inducted the clergy instituted by the bishop, they handed over churches granted to religious houses and they reported, or were supposed to report, married clergy to the bishop. Often married themselves, they were not always well suited to the task of reform. They had financial duties, rendering various moneys to the bishop. They also held courts, although early evidence for this is sparse. Late in the reign of Henry I we hear of a court to be held by Robert, archdeacon of Northampton<sup>31</sup>. Archdeacons tended to profit from their offices and many had other sources of income. Many held prebends and this appears to have been the case of Lincoln<sup>32</sup>. The canons elected the bishop but then they were under his authority and owed obedience to him. Moreover the patrimony of the cathedral was under the authority of the canons even though it was managed by the bishop. The life of the cathedral depended on the income it could generate not only in terms of endowments but also in terms of gifts and offers. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the cathedral had many sources of income such as the Pentecostals, paid during the Whitsun processions by each household in the diocese, or in St Hugh's time the "Working Chantry" to provide prayers for the cathedral fabric's benefactors<sup>33</sup>. Until 1200 when the Fabric fund was established<sup>34</sup> the bishop and the cathedral used to form a unique identity with most of the cathedral's revenues as well as grants of land made to both the bishop and St Mary of Lincoln. With the creation of the Fabric Fund the cathedral's estates was basically separated from the so called Common Fund<sup>35</sup> with the former endowed with land given by

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<sup>29</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 42.

<sup>30</sup> For what follows see: Martin Brett, *The English church under Henry I* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 199-211.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* p. 206.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 209.

<sup>33</sup> D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 43.

<sup>35</sup> D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, p. 42. For the separation see: E. U. Crosby, *Bishop and chapter in twelfth century England: a study of the mensa Episcopalis* (Cambridge, 1994).

wealthy individuals or chantries providing daily masses and prayers for the soul of the founder.

In order to begin the organization of his diocese Remigius needed all the resources available in his bishopric<sup>36</sup>. He and his successors depended upon the lands granted to them by kings or barons and for this reason they needed to be linked tightly to the political power. This link and his own possession of political power could be a double-edged sword for the bishop because on one hand it allowed him to realize his projects in his diocese, while on the other hand it diverted him, in the eyes of his flock and his canons, to areas which had nothing to do with religion and his religious role. During Remigius' time, however, given that he established 14 more canons and tried to find ways to support them, there were no reasons for the canons to be in conflict with him. Moreover, despite being powerful, the bishop did not have a connection with the lay power only but was very well connected with the other religious authorities of the diocese through which he made it work. The power of the bishop was not confined within the city walls, but it extended over the diocese as well. In Lincoln he founded the deanery to which he appointed Ralph in 1078<sup>37</sup> and to which would then be appointed Simon Bloet in 1110/1<sup>38</sup>, the latter probably a son of Bishop Robert Bloet<sup>39</sup>. The first precentor was Guerno who enjoyed this preferment about 1078<sup>40</sup>. Reyner was instituted in 1078 as treasurer<sup>41</sup> and Hugh as chancellor in 1092<sup>42</sup>. The first sub-deanery by contrast was most likely to have been created in the twelfth century as the first sub-dean recorded is Humphrey in 1140<sup>43</sup>. Among those dignitaries the dean was the most important. He was elected by the chapter and had the responsibility of admitting new canons, of exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the chapter and especially of taking custody of the

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<sup>36</sup> The origins and the concrete use of these resources is controversial. Whereas Sir Francis Hill stated that William I had given the manor of Welton *in prebendam* to St Mary and that in 1086 five teamlands in Welton belonged to six canons, David Bates has pointed out that although six canons were holding the manor of Welton we do not know whether it had been divided into prebends or whether it was held in common. See: F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 107. D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p. 26.

<sup>37</sup> *Fasti*, ii, pp. 29-30.

<sup>38</sup> Probably appointed again in 1121 and 1123. See: *De Contemptu Mundi*. In, *HH*, pp. 596 – 597, note 33.

<sup>39</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii et Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. J.F. Dimock, p. XXVI, note 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 82.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 87.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* p. 91.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* p. 37.

endowments of vacant prebends<sup>44</sup>. The precentor had to rule and to lead the choir as well as the song school, was responsible for the preaching of sermons and for the chapter's library. The chancellor instead had the responsibility of the theological school and the theological books<sup>45</sup>. The treasurer was in charge of the ornaments of the church such as its light, and its bells. The latter in his duties was usually helped by the Sacrist<sup>46</sup>. The chapter in its entirety established what to do with the income of any prebend after the resignation or death of a prebendary. One of the earliest rules, of the canons was the "division of the Psalter among the canons"; a psalm would belong to a prebend and was to be recited daily. The inscriptions on the canons' stalls in the choir are witness to this attitude<sup>47</sup>. (See fig. VI)



**Figure VI: The Prebend of Stow**

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<sup>44</sup> The prebends would put the dean in a very delicate position when, in Grosseteste's time for instance, the bishop and the chapter found themselves in conflict over Episcopal visits and the appointment of new prebendaries.

<sup>45</sup> He also arranged for the preaching of weekly sermons to the people during Christmas, Easter, All Saints, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Ash Wednesday.

<sup>46</sup> All the information about the roles of the dignitaries within the church comes from: D. Owen, 'Historical survey 1091 – 1450', p. 116.

<sup>47</sup> D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, p. 38.

The history of the diocese of Lincoln takes us back to the diocese of Lindsey that was established when the large diocese of Mercia was divided in the late VII century. When the Danelaw was re-conquered early in the X century this was incorporated into the Midland diocese of Dorchester. This stretched from the Thames to the Humber, and was part of the metropolitan province of Canterbury<sup>48</sup>. In 1072 Remigius followed the writ of William the Conqueror<sup>49</sup> and transferred his see from the town of Dorchester to the town of Lincoln<sup>50</sup>.

The reasons behind this transfer may not have been religious only, or religious at all. The city of Lincoln with a population of around 7,000 people was one of the largest towns in England<sup>51</sup>, and a major trading-centre<sup>52</sup>. Over and above this there were also strong military reasons for the move of the cathedral to the new site. As E.U. Crosby has emphasized, Lincoln was in a strategic position against invasion from the north<sup>53</sup>. The bishop began the construction of his cathedral church in the mid 1070s and in the words of Henry of Huntingdon it was “as good as finished when Remigius came to dedicate it in 1092”<sup>54</sup>. Sadly he died two days before the consecration<sup>55</sup>.

According to the research of Richard Gem, the particular position of the cathedral in the south-east corner of the enclosure of the Roman town probably represents a brilliant solution to the completion of the defensive structure of the town<sup>56</sup>. (Fig. VII). At Lincoln, as at Durham, the cathedral was used to extend and underpin the use of the castle and its walls. Featuring a double mound (instead of a single one as it was usual in the Norman castle),<sup>57</sup> a rectangular tower, square turrets and a range of

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<sup>48</sup> Peter Kidson, ‘Architectural History’, in *A History of Lincoln Mynster*, ed. D. Owen (Cambridge, 1994), p. 14.

<sup>49</sup> D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 177, Lincoln Cathedral and see, 1072, or 1072 x 1087, pp. 587 – 589. See also: D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p. 11. See also, D. Owen, ‘The English church in eastern England 1066-1100’, p. 10. See also: *RA*, i, n 2, pp. 2 - 4.

<sup>50</sup> D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, p. 37.

<sup>51</sup> D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p. 12.

<sup>52</sup> D. Owen, *The English church in eastern England 1066 – 1100*, p. 9.

<sup>53</sup> Everett U. Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter in twelfth-century England. A study of the Mensa Episcopalis*, p. 290.

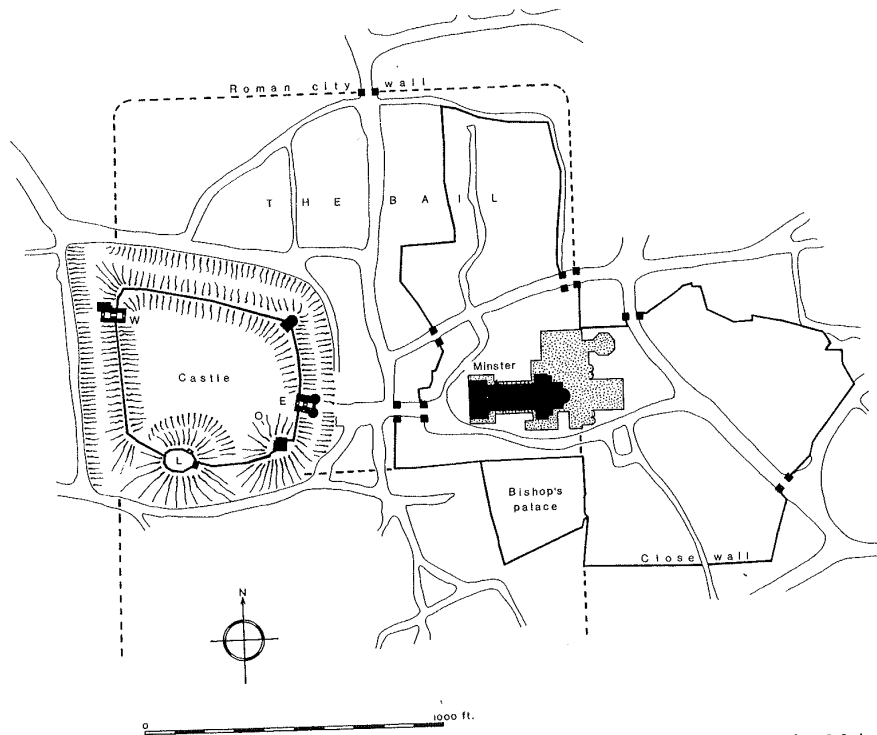
<sup>54</sup> *HH*, pp.417. See also: D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p. 17.

<sup>55</sup> *Annales de Margan*, in, *AM*, i, p. 5. The *Annales of Oseneia* recorded as a date 1093 for the obituary: “*MXCIII, Remigius Lincolniensis episcopus obiit cui succedit Robertus Bloeth*”. See: *Annales de Oseneia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 12. Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houvene*, *RS*, LI, i, ed. William Stubbs, (London, 1868-71), p. 145.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Gem, ‘Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia pulchra, ecclesia fortis’, in, *Medieval art and architecture at Lincoln Cathedral, VIII*. British Archaeological Association. (Leeds, 1986), pp. 25 – 26.

<sup>57</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 84.

galleries or narrow rooms, the castle was the important structure William the Conqueror wanted around 1068.



**Figure VII: Map of Lincoln Minster and the Castle in relation to the Roman walls. Richard Gem, p. 21.**

The military importance of the castle is evident when we consider the insecurity of the late 1060s and 70s. The castle acquires even more significance when we note that it was attached to the shrievalry. When Henry I granted permission to Bishop Robert Bloet to open a door in the castle wall he addressed the writ amongst others to the sheriff<sup>58</sup>. The bishop was doubly linked to the castle in that the bishop owed the service of twenty knights for its garrison<sup>59</sup> and we can see how the castle and the cathedral might be thought of as separate institutions with different roles working together in defence of the town under the power of the bishop.

<sup>58</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 89.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p. 86.





**Figure VIII: Remains of the bishop's palace**





Figure IX: Lincoln Cathedral, façade.





Figure X: Lincoln Cathedral



The research carried out by Richard Gem has brought to light that certainly the cathedral had a defensive role. The west, the north and south sides present mural chambers, giant buttresses and machicolations. Although it is not possible at the moment to establish precisely whether an external structure was superimposed on an existing church or whether a defensive wall and gigantic buttress were built detached from the church, it has been emphasized that, “there can be little doubt that several of these features were part of a defensive system”<sup>60</sup>. (Fig. XI and XII)

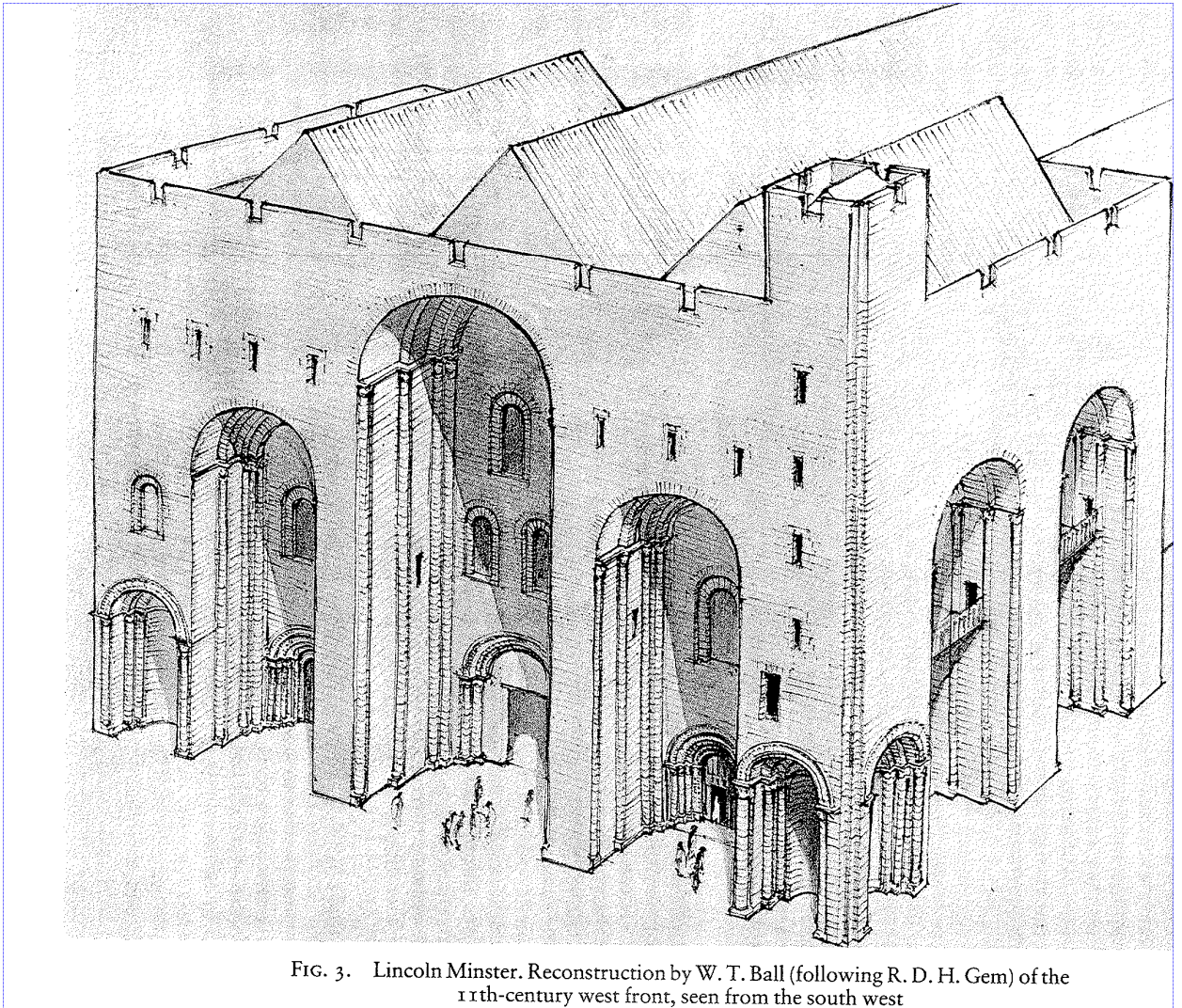


FIG. 3. Lincoln Minster. Reconstruction by W. T. Ball (following R. D. H. Gem) of the 11th-century west front, seen from the south west

**Figure XI: Drawing of the “probable” XI century Lincoln Cathedral. Richard Gem, p. 18.**

<sup>60</sup> R. Gem, ‘Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia pulchra, ecclesia fortis’, pp. 19-20.



**Figure XII: Lincoln Cathedral, west side present façade, incorporating the old façade**

The cathedral was built on the site where another church, most likely that of St Mary Magdalene,<sup>61</sup> had probably stood, as referred to later by John de Schalby. According to the research of Sir Francis Hill, the church of St Mary endowed with lands, was in place before the bishop's seat was moved from Dorchester to Lincoln<sup>62</sup>. Before consecrating his church Remigius needed the king's support once again, this time against Thomas, archbishop of York, who claimed that Lincoln, and therefore the church of St Mary, belonged to the diocese of York<sup>63</sup>. Thomas of Bayeux, chosen as archbishop of York by King William, was not an easy man to deal with. Already in 1070 he had refused to be consecrated in Canterbury by Lanfranc as the latter

<sup>61</sup> *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Sawley, pp. 22 – 23, note 5.

<sup>62</sup> Remigius consequently was claiming that what belong to St Mary and Bishop Wulfing belong to him. (See: F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 67.) In doing that he stood on firm ground because Wulfing of Dorchester had received a confirmation to this effect from the Pope Nicholas II in 1061, i.e. that all the diocese of Lindsey and the church of Stow [co Lincoln] and Newark [co Nottingham] that Ailric archbishop of York had wrongfully seized belonged to the church of Lincoln. (See: *RA*, i, n 247, pp. 168 – 188).

<sup>63</sup> P. Kidson, 'Architectural history', p. 14.

required a “written profession of obedience”<sup>64</sup> and that Canterbury’s religious primacy over England be recognized. He did not give up until 1072 when the situation was sorted out under the authority and the command of Pope Alexander II, who ordered Thomas through his legate Hubert to make a written profession. Among the authorities who signed the diploma<sup>65</sup> was Bishop Remigius who was probably more than happy to defeat his competitor on this matter<sup>66</sup>. Remigius was not able to resolve this situation because he died before the consecration of the cathedral and before he could do anything to secure his rights. It would be an unpleasant legacy for his successor, Bishop Robert Bloet, who would be forced to compromise in order to resolve the situation.

Religion and politics, church and state, were indeed two inseparable and sometimes undistinguishable fields in which all bishops throughout England were forced to move and to operate. The political aspect became predominant in Remigius’ life after the death of William the Conqueror on 9 September 1087 and the subsequent division of his possessions between his sons. Archbishop Lanfranc, following William’s last will, recognised William Rufus as King of England whilst Robert was given Normandy<sup>67</sup>. In Frank Barlow’s opinion William Rufus was a notorious homosexual<sup>68</sup> and a man completely disinterested in spiritual matters, religious problems or even moral issues<sup>69</sup>. William II immediately faced the hostility of the English baronage. The division of the realms was indeed problematic for all those barons who held land on both sides of the Channel. The bishops, including Remigius, being landowners and lords in the country, had to take a position. The fact that the revolt that broke out in 1088 against William II was led by bishop Odo of

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<sup>64</sup> Margaret Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford-New York, 2002), p. 117.

<sup>65</sup> D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 67, 8 April 1072 x 27 May 1072, pp. 307 – 310.

<sup>66</sup> *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, pp. 21 – 22, note 2. Basically Thomas claimed that Lindsey (in which Lincoln stood) “had been converted to Christianity by Paulinus” archbishop of York in the mid VII century and the general issue was made even hazier by the fact that in the wars between the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria, Lindsey had shifted from the one realm to the other. This controversy had not been started by Thomas who could claim that before him the issue had already been raised by Ealdred of York against Bishop Wulfwig, Remigius’s predecessor.

<sup>67</sup> Frank Barlow, *The English Church 1066 – 1154* (New York, 1979), p. 66.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* p. 66. See also: Frank Barlow, *William Rufus* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 102-110. However Emma Mason in a more recent book did not share the same opinion underlying that, “Medieval chronicles, when they discuss King William at all largely transmitted the old monastic anecdotes with their hostile bias”. See: Emma Mason, *William II* (Stroud, 2005), p. 19.

<sup>69</sup> Charles Duggan, ‘From the Conquest to the death of John’, in, *The English church and the papacy in the Middle Ages*, ed. C.H. Lawrence (Stroud, 1965), p. 78.



Bayeux,<sup>70</sup> tells us a great deal about the contradictions within 11<sup>th</sup>-century English society in which the bishops and the clergy in general were completely involved in political affairs. Remigius was accused of treason in 1088, but we do not have evidence to show that he was involved in the plot against William II;<sup>71</sup> what we can certainly say is that William II did not consider Remigius to have been a serious opponent because he confirmed “his right to appoint the abbot of St Mary of Stow”<sup>72</sup> only two years later. Moreover in the same solemn charter William II confirmed his father’s gifts to the church of Lincoln which the Conqueror had ordered Remigius to build<sup>73</sup>. This situation leads us to suppose that the bishops were usually considered much more than simply prelates. The possibility of being involved in the governance of the realm meant indirectly the possibility of sharing power. On the other hand the bishop was obviously in religious control of the diocese. This binary influence, this dual authority over the population who lived under his “dominion”, made him one of the most important gears of the whole society. His relationship with the political power was mainly a subordinate one, because he had to obey the king, but at the same time the king needed him as a member of the ruling class that, considered together as a category, was extremely powerful. There are therefore clear similarities between Lincoln and Cremona. The bishops Arnolfo and Remigius were both in charge of their dioceses and were military leaders in the service of the lord of the land: the German emperor in Italy and the king in England.

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<sup>70</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, Peterborough Manuscript (E)*, ed. Michael Swanton (London, 2000), p. 222.

<sup>71</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, pp. 20-21. See also, D. Bates. *Bishop Remigius*, p. 14.

<sup>72</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 76.

<sup>73</sup> The list is very long and includes: Welton [co Lincoln]; the churches of Saint Laurence and Saint Martin in Lincoln; the churches of the king’s three manors of Wellingore, Kirton [in Lindsey], and Caistor [co Lincoln]; the church of Aylesbury with lands and tithes, namely Stoke, Mandeville, Walton [in Aylesbury] and Buckland and the church of Buckingham with lands and tithes and one carucate in Gawcott, [co Buckingham]; the church of Leighton [Buzzard, co Bedford]; the church of Saint Mary, Bedford and one hide and a mill, plus Sleaford with its appendages; Leighton [Bromswold, co Huntingdon] with five carucates in Huogham, and one carucate in Redbourne [co Lincoln], which village (Leighton) Earl Waltheof, at the request of Remigius, gave to the church of Lincoln; Wooburn [co Buckingham]. The king also confirmed the right of Remigius to appoint the abbot of Saint Mary of Stow, since it was in his episcopal manor. He also granted to the use of the monks the alms which Earl Leofric and Godiva his wife gave to the church of Stow, namely Newark and Fledborough [co Nottingham] and the wapentake of Well excepting the third penny of the shire. He also confirmed his father’s gift of Eynsham with its appendages, namely Milton [near Thame], Rollright, Yarnton and Shifford [co Oxford] and the church of Saint Ebbe. At the end provision is made that the canons of the church which Remigius had begun to found should lead honest and chaste lives. See: *RA*, i, n 3, pp. 4 – 11.

Bishop Remigius died in 1092 and was followed by Bishop Robert Bloet. Bloet who had been appointed king's chancellor by 27 February 1091,<sup>74</sup> was certainly Norman by birth. He came from the baronial family of Ivry and two of his kinsmen were Bishop Hugh of Bayeux and Jean of Rouen. He was another example of the "Normanization" of the episcopate and of the growing power of some "ecclesiastical families" who created the possibility of controlling political power in some areas of England. The bishopric remained vacant for almost a year after the death of Remigius, until 1093 when Robert Bloet was appointed<sup>75</sup>. The reason for this delay was the persistent claim of Archbishop Thomas of York over Lindsey, the northern half of Lincolnshire. Henry of Huntingdon wrote: "William the younger fell sick at Gloucester in the sixth year of his reign and he gave the archbishopric of Canterbury to Anselm the abbot of Bec and the bishopric of Lincoln to Robert Bloet. As soon as he got well he repented of his promises and acted worse than before. Regretting that he had not sold the bishopric of Lincoln when the archbishop of York proffered falsely his claim against Bishop Robert of Bloet for the city of Lincoln and that the district of Lindsey ought to be subject to the archbishopric, the case was only concluded after Robert had pledged £5,000 to the King for the liberty of his church"<sup>76</sup>. The situation was very complicated, but it is evident that the bishopric of Lincoln that had been given to Remigius was now acquired by Bloet<sup>77</sup> for money in a normal transaction between a magnate and his king when confirming power<sup>78</sup>. For the significant episodes of his life we can rely on Henry of Huntingdon who in his *De Contemptu Mundi* described his life as a boy close to the bishop from where

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<sup>74</sup> D. Owen, 'Robert Bloet', in, *ODNB*, vi, p. 236.

<sup>75</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles. Peterborough Manuscript (E)*, ed. Michael Swanton p. 227.

<sup>76</sup> *HH*, pp. 416- 419. See also: M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 33.

<sup>77</sup> What had been paid by the bishop is in dispute because, in the *Annales de Wintonia* there is stated that if the bishop of Lincoln, Robert, wanted to be free from this claim had to pay, not £ 5,000 as said, but £ 3,000 to the king. (See: *Annales de Wintonia*, in, *AM*, ii, p. 37). The charter of William II states that "the king has from his own possessions bought out the claim of the church of York and Thomas its archbishop upon Lincoln, Lindsey and the manors of Stow and Louth and in place of them has given to the church of St Peter at York the possession in perpetuity of the abbey of St German, Selby and the church of St Oswald, Gloucester. Thomas the archbishop and his successor are to hold the abbey of St. German in the same way as the archbishop of Canterbury holds the bishopric of Rochester. In return the archbishop of York with the consent of his clergy abandons his aforesaid claims to the king and to Robert, bishop of Lincoln and his successors". (See: *RA*, i, pp. 11-13). The end of the document states that the king had done this in order to sort out the *calumnie* that had been said against the bishop of Lincoln who was his chancellor, but it is extremely possible that this was a loophole for covering the fact that Robert had paid in order to have his church free from York's claim.

<sup>78</sup> Bloet was then consecrated at Hastings in the chapel of the castle by Archbishop Anselm and seven other bishops on 12 or 22 February 1094. See: *EEA*, I, p. 5.

he could see the splendour in which Bishop Robert Bloet lived<sup>79</sup>. Having been raised up by him and his archdeacon, Henry was probably too close to him to have an objective opinion. For instance he described him as “meek and humble [...] father of the fatherless [...] delight of his men”<sup>80</sup>. William of Malmesbury had a quite different opinion, referring to him as a “genial man even though not in church matters”<sup>81</sup>. Certain kinds of information are available only through Henry of Huntingdon and according to him the bishop met “bitter misfortune before death because towards the end of his life, he who was justice of all England was twice sued by the King before a low-born judge”. He also tells us: “he twice suffered heavy damages and disgrace”<sup>82</sup>. Diana Greenway explains that we do not have any strong evidence for the suits against Bloet<sup>83</sup> and that the expression “justice of all England” means a justice whose authority was not geographically circumscribed<sup>84</sup>. There are obscurities about his life especially if we compare his with those of Italian bishops. As we have seen in Italy the Pataria movement with all its moral implications took its toll on the power of the bishop, forcing unworthy bishops such as Arnolfo or Presbitero da Medolago to resign. If we compare the situation in England we find that in 1102 Archbishop Anselm “held a council in London at Michaelmas in which he forbade English priests from having wives, which had not been prohibited before”<sup>85</sup>. According to John of Worcester, many abbots, both French and English, “were deposed at this council and deprived of their honours, which they had unjustly acquired”<sup>86</sup>. The reasons are given in Eadmer and are mainly two: simony and nicolaism<sup>87</sup>. Eadmer, who gives us a full report of what was discussed there, tells us: “a priest so long as he has illicit association with a woman is not a lawful priest and is not to celebrate Mass and if he does so his Mass is not to be listened to” and that “no archdeacon, priest, deacon or canon may marry or, if already married, retain his

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<sup>79</sup> *De Contemptu Mundi*, in *HH*, pp. 586-587.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* p. 589.

<sup>81</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by David Preest (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 210 – 211.

<sup>82</sup> *De Contemptu Mundi*, in *HH*, pp. 586- 587.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* p. 587, note 7.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* p. 615, note 92.

<sup>85</sup> *HH*, p. 451.

<sup>86</sup> John of Worcester, *The Chronicles of John of Worcester*, Vol. III, ed. P. McGurk (Oxford, 1998), p. 103.

<sup>87</sup> Eadmer, *Eadmeri Historia Novorum in Anglia*, ed. Martin Rule, pp. 141-144. See also: Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, trans. by G. Bosanquet, pp. 149 – 152.

wife”<sup>88</sup>. These statements seem to be quite similar to the stance taken by the Pataria movement in Italy against the unworthy priests or the unworthy bishops. Obviously the problem related to nicolaism and simony was well known throughout Europe, and England’s dioceses were not an exception, but what surprises us is the treatment of Bishop Bloet. Robert seems to have suffered no ill consequences, and this is particularly significant given the fact that he had a son. According to Henry of Huntingdon, Simon, “was the son of Robert our bishop, whom he had fathered while he was chancellor to the great King William. Being brought up appropriately enough in the royal household, and appointed our dean while still a boy he soon advanced in the king’s close friendship and in offices at court. From pride grew envy, from envy hatred slanders, strife, accusations”<sup>89</sup>. Robert Bloet was William Rufus’ chancellor from 1091 to 1094 before being elected bishop of Lincoln<sup>90</sup>. Certainly Bishop Bloet resigned from the position of chancellor when elected to the see of Lincoln; however, he was always very close to both King William II and then King Henry I, bearing the title of judge in the *Curia Regis* and being a local justiciar<sup>91</sup>. Is the “bitter misfortune before death” mentioned by Henry of Huntingdon related perhaps to his son? Unfortunately the sources do not clarify this issue. What the evidence available points out is that Bloet was very well established in the *Curia Regis*. In 1111 he was a member of the Exchequer and in 1119 a justice<sup>92</sup>. It is therefore possible that it was due as much to his political connection as to the fact that the reform movement was not so strong in England that Bishop Bloet remained in charge of his see. According to Andrew Brown<sup>93</sup> it was precisely the power of the episcopacy that prevents the formation of reform and/or heretical groups in England. The control of the territory through the parish system as well as the lack of highly populous towns where reform preachers used to recruit their followers hampered the birth of heretical factions. The relationships between William II and Bloet continued in the usual way, with the King granting properties and rights to him until his own death in 1100. There is a charter given by William II to Thomas of York and all his lieges of Nottinghamshire notifying them that he has given to the church of Lincoln and Bishop Robert I and

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<sup>88</sup> Eadmer, *Eadmeri Historia Novorum in Anglia*, ed. Martin Rule, pp. 141-144. See also: Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, trans. by G. Bosanquet, pp. 149 – 152.

<sup>89</sup> H. of Huntingdon. *Historia Anglorum*. D. Greenway Ed. p. 597.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* p. 596, note 33.

<sup>91</sup> *EEA*, I, p. XXXIII.

<sup>92</sup> D. Owen, ‘Robert Bloet’, in, *ODNB*, vi, p. 236.

<sup>93</sup> Andrew Brown, *Church and society in England, 1000-1500* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 156-160.

his successors the church of Orston [Nottinghamshire] and all that belonged to it in King Edward's time, and the churches of Chesterfield and Ashbourne [Derbyshire] and Mansfield [Nottinghamshire] with the chapels in the berewicks belonging to the four manors<sup>94</sup>. The bishops were becoming increasingly important for the kings, and not surprisingly therefore Henry I and his wife, Queen Matilda, granted properties to the bishop as well. In two different charters<sup>95</sup> they gave the manor of Nettleham [Lincolnshire] and the manor of Tixover<sup>96</sup> [Rutland] to the bishop. In another charter<sup>97</sup> there is a confirmation of possessions. The manor of Nettleham might have caused some problems because it is mentioned twice by the King and the Queen in different documents, both saying that the manor has been given to Bishop Robert Bloet<sup>98</sup>.

That the bishops were an important part of the kingdom's backbone is shown by the fact that when the King found himself in trouble he turned to them. In July 1101 he wrote a charter addressed to Bishop Robert I, "Ranulf Meschin, Osbert the sheriff, Picot son of Colswain and the men of Lincolnshire to confirm the laws, rights and customs that he granted to them when he first received the crown and desiring them to assure by oath that they would defend his realm against all men and especially against Robert count of Normandy, his brother"<sup>99</sup>. This last charter is particularly important because it explicitly states that the bishop, among other dignitaries, was among those the king needed to stay in power. In the chronicle of the abbey of Abingdon, we have six charters issued by Henry I in which Robert Bloet was one of the witnesses<sup>100</sup>, testifying to the closeness between the bishop and the king.

Robert Bloet died on 10 January 1123 at Woodstock while he was "riding and conversing with King Henry"<sup>101</sup>. Henry of Huntingdon praised him as "the Glory of pontiffs for his surviving fame will allow him to live for ever. He was humble in

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<sup>94</sup> This was done on the morrow of the day on which Archbishop Anselm became the king's liege man. See: *RA*, i, n 14, p. 17.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.* n 15, p. 18.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* n 16, p. 18.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* n 45, p. 33. Henry I stated that he gave to St. Mary of Lincoln and Bishop Robert all the churches in the borough of Lincoln within and without which their priests held of the king, with the king retaining any customary payments from the churches.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* n 61, pp. 41 – 42; n 62, p. 42.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* n 73, p. 47.

<sup>100</sup> *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, *RS*, II, ii, ed. Rev. J. Stevenson (London, 1858) p. 76, p. 77, p. 91, p. 94, p. 105, and p. 114.

<sup>101</sup> John of Worcester, *The Chronicles of John of Worcester*, Vol. III, p. 153.



riches; merciful in power; compassionate in revenge”<sup>102</sup>. Dimock by contrast argued that “He was no doubt too much of a courtier, and had his heartstrings too closely tied to royal favour”<sup>103</sup>. It seems that Bloet used his credit with the king to obtain numerous grants and confirmations of lands, churches and privileges for himself and his see. Moreover his authority in the realm was so great that when the king went abroad, Bloet was one of the small groups of administrators who stayed in England, wielding vice-regal powers under the nominal direction of Queen Matilda<sup>104</sup>. Even assuming that Dimock is right, the implication is that it is possible to separate the political activity of the bishop from his religious role. In reality, as we have seen in Cremona, they were so much interwoven that the understanding of the former is impossible without the full comprehension of the latter. In England, as in Italy, religious control of the diocese was impossible without the political control of the territory and the control of the territory was viable only with the support of the king. Bloet was attached to the king as the documents and his life demonstrated, but this behaviour was a consequence of the reality that bishops in this period had to be attached to (or against) the king; they could not be neutral. The case of Thomas Becket indeed would disclose this in its full deadly effects.

After the death of Bishop Robert Bloet the bishopric fell vacant, but at Easter of the same year Henry I gave it to Alexander, almost certainly thanks to the important position in the royal government held by Bishop Roger of Salisbury, his uncle. Alexander was consecrated at Canterbury on 22 July 1123<sup>105</sup>. Throughout his life Bishop Alexander was linked to his kinsmen and to the political power. Alexander was called “the Magnificent”, a nickname given to him by the Roman clergy who wanted to emphasize his pretensions. The fact that he acquired power through the political help of his uncle is indicative that in the kingdom of Henry I the church and the state were almost indistinguishable. Alexander maintained a relevant role in the administration of Henry I and Stephen’s government but without being conspicuous. Henry I had numerous faults but, at least at the beginning, he was convinced that the

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<sup>102</sup>*HH*, p. 471.

<sup>103</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. XXVII.

<sup>104</sup> Bloet is only once, in 1114, reliably recorded as accompanying Henry I to Normandy. D. Owen, ‘Robert Bloet’, in, *ODNB*, vi, p. 236. See also: Gerald of Wales. *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. XXIV.

<sup>105</sup> David Smith, ‘Alexander family. Background and political involvement’, in, *ODNB*, i, p. 646. *Chronicon Thomæ Wykes*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 17.

church should exert its pastoral activity and he was consequently well regarded by the religious authorities inside and outside England<sup>106</sup>.

There are several aspects to the relationship between Henry I and Bishop Alexander. In a document probably dated between 1123 and 1135 the King says that “Alexander shall have in the wapentake of Newark all the franchises customs and rights which his predecessors had”<sup>107</sup>, and in another he orders “all the barons, vavasours and all the lords who had lands within Well wapentake, to come to the pleas and wapentake of Alexander bishop of Lincoln and to do what they owe to him at that wapentake in respect of their lands”<sup>108</sup>. These two documents tell us that the bishop was exercising his role as a magnate and landowner as much as his predecessors had done. Alexander acted as witness in a royal charter of 1124<sup>109</sup>. That the relationship between the king and Bishop Alexander was particular is witnessed by a document in which the king “pardons” the bishop for not having paid 300 marks. The situation is out of the ordinary for a bishop because apparently, at least in the interpretation of Sir Frank Stenton, an unnamed person owed 300 marks to the king and he gave *Holma* to the bishop on the understanding that the bishop would pay the debt to the king; the bishop did not pay but the king pardoned him out of favour<sup>110</sup>. A document, in which the king granted to Alexander a fair lasting four days at the bishop’s castle of Newark<sup>111</sup> shows him exercising economic interests, while another allows him to assign part of the service of his knights of the bishopric of Lincoln to his castle of Newark in order that they may henceforth perform castle-guard there<sup>112</sup>. Here we see him as a military lord in charge of castles and commanding knights. In 1129 Henry I held a council in London in which he forbade the marriage of the clergy. Among other ecclesiastics at the council was Alexander, a sign that he was, at least formally, against unworthy priests and bishops<sup>113</sup>. He was with the king until as late as 1134, when he went to see Henry in Normandy<sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> F. Barlow, *The English Church 1066 – 1154*, pp. 76-78.

<sup>107</sup> *RA*, i, n 22, p. 21.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* n 60, p. 41.

<sup>109</sup> The King confirmed to the abbot and convent of Abingdon the privileges in reference to the hundred of Hormer. See: *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, *RS*, II, ii, ed. Rev. J. Stevenson, p. 164.

<sup>110</sup> *RA*, i, n 69, pp. 44 – 45.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* n 48, p. 34.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* n 35, p. 191.

<sup>113</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, *RS*, LI, i, ed. William Stubbs, p. 184.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* p. 208.

During the civil disturbances that permeated the reign of Stephen, Bishop Alexander as well as Roger, bishop of Salisbury, and Henry, bishop of Winchester, enjoyed first the favours of the king and then fell under his heel. At the beginning King Stephen confirmed the gift which his uncle Henry made to the church of Lincoln<sup>115</sup> commanding that “if anyone had taken anything from the church of Lincoln the day that King Henry was alive and dead (1 December 1135), he must restore it”<sup>116</sup>. Moreover he granted the bishop properties<sup>117</sup> and even released him from various payments<sup>118</sup>. At the same time, however, he supported the canons<sup>119</sup> and his clerks,<sup>120</sup> perhaps as a counterbalance to the power of the bishop.

King Stephen used these bishops to help him obtain power, but he rid himself of them and of all their affiliates in the countryside as soon as possible. Daniel Williams said that “the Normans kings from William the Conqueror to Stephen were shining examples of certain Norman characteristics: they were restless, aggressive, treacherous, partial to favourites and shared a common and ubiquitous vice, avariciousness”<sup>121</sup>. It is also true, as Davies argued, that Stephen acted as he did because, “such concentration of power in the hands of a clerical family was extremely dangerous”<sup>122</sup>. Indeed Waleran under the king’s order and request created an incident which eventually excluded from power Roger of Salisbury, justiciar, his nephew, Alexander, and the bishop of Ely, Nigel, who was the king’s treasurer. Alexander was arrested in 1139 and taken to Oxford or Devizes then to Newark and Sleaford to compel him to surrender his castles<sup>123</sup>. He was accused of treason when he refused to do so. From 1139-40, when the bishops were excluded from power, until 1153-4 when Henry II came to the throne, there was intermittent civil war and this allows us to have a closer look at the power of the bishops<sup>124</sup>.

Stephen’s accession to the throne was almost exclusively achieved thanks to his brother, a bishop, and three other bishops who had key roles in the administration of the state. The most difficult period for King Stephen coincided with what I will call,

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<sup>115</sup> *RA*, i, n 75 p. 48; n 76 p. 49.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* n 96, p. 60.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* n 90, pp. 56 – 57; n 91, p. 57.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* n 84, pp. 52 – 53.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* n 80, pp. 50 – 55; n 83, p. 52; n 94, pp. 58 – 59.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* n 88, p. 55.

<sup>121</sup> D. Williams, *The Peverils and the Essebies 1066-1166: a Study in early Feudal Relationship*, in, *England in the twelfth century*, ed. D. Williams (Woodbridge, 1990), p. 242 – 243.

<sup>122</sup> R.C.H. Davies, *King Stephen 1135 – 1154* (London and New York, 1990), pp. 29-30.

<sup>123</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, *RS*, LI, i, ed. William Stubbs, p. 208.

<sup>124</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 15.

“the political persecution of the bishops”. The king established at the beginning a good relationship with the church, but he probably did not understand how deeply rooted into the fabric of society was the power of the bishops, particularly Roger, Alexander and Nigel. Moreover he seems not to have understood that getting rid of them would mean facing the revolt of all those who had benefited from that power or simply were attached to them for material reasons. Stephen did not lose his power just because of the bishops, but this contributed enormously to his defeat in Lincoln on 2 February 1141 when Robert of Gloucester took him prisoner because he had broken the relationship with the church by imprisoning bishops against whom he had no evidence of crime<sup>125</sup>.

Was King Stephen right in fearing the power of the bishop? Was the so called “clerical family” really dangerous? Obviously as Dorothy Owen has written, “the Episcopal relatives were quite numerous especially when it came down to prebendaries: William archdeacon of Northampton was the nephew of Bishop Alexander and David, archdeacon of Buckingham, was his brother, without mentioning the dean Simon son of Bishop Robert Bloet”<sup>126</sup>. Moreover other relatives could be employed in important position as for instance, Adelmus, who has been the King’s treasurer<sup>127</sup>. So it goes without saying that the episcopal family was quite numerous, but was it also dangerous? Arguably such danger can be exaggerated. Having said that we must not forget that they were military lords with knights and Alexander was not an exception<sup>128</sup>. Moreover they had power of excommunication, a power which Alexander for instance did not hesitate to exert against Robert of Leicester,<sup>129</sup> and they had the backing of probably the most powerful authority of the time, the pope, as testified by the documents addressed by the latter to the bishop<sup>130</sup>. However, for Alexander the relationship between the king and the bishop was based on mutual interests: the king could rely on the bishop for control of territory and in

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<sup>125</sup> R.C.H. Davies, *King Stephen 1135 - 1154*, pp. 50 – 51. For the discussion about the arrest of the bishops and their importance see also: Edmund King, *King Stephen*. (Newhaven and London, 2010), pp. 106-114. For King Stephen’s Reign see also: Paul Dalton, ‘Allegiance and Intelligence in King Stephen’s Reign’, in, *King Stephen’s Reign (1135-1154)*, ed. Paul Dalton, Graeme J. White, (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 80 – 97. See also: Stephen Marritt, ‘Reeds Shaken by the Wind? Bishops in Local and Regional Politics’, in, *King Stephen’s Reign*, ed. Paul Dalton, Graeme J. White, (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 115- 138.

<sup>126</sup> D. Owen, *Historical survey 1091 – 1450*, pp. 129.

<sup>127</sup> “Adelmus nepos Alexandri episcopo per idem tempus thesaurarius Regis fuit”. See: *Chronicon Thomæ Wykes*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 23.

<sup>128</sup> *RA*, i, n 95, pp. 59 – 60; n 77, p. 49.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* n 283, pp. 239 – 241.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* n 248, pp. 188 – 190; n 249, pp. 190 – 193; n 251, pp. 195 – 197.

turn the bishop had strong backing when he needed it. The relationship between the king and the bishop<sup>131</sup> must have been based on solid ground, mutual trust and reciprocal understanding, at least to some degree.

Bishop Alexander was buried on 25 February 1148<sup>132</sup> and his final resting place was the cathedral he had done so much to adorn and preserve<sup>133</sup>. The bishop left to the cathedral a number of works: a Genesis (incomplete), a gospel of St Luke and St John and a book of Job, all glossed, the canonical epistles, an Apocalypse and a volume containing proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles<sup>134</sup>. It may have been due to this emphasis on culture as much as his way of living that a contemporary called him the Magnificent.

Bishop Alexander was followed by Bishop Robert de Chesney. Robert was elected at Westminster in the presence of the king and the Queen on 13 December 1148; he took priest's orders on the 18<sup>th</sup> and was consecrated by Archbishop Theobald on the

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<sup>131</sup> RA, i, n 99, pp. 61 – 62.

<sup>132</sup> HH, p. 751.

<sup>133</sup> About the cathedral there is an obscure episode during Alexander's period as in 1124 he seems to have restored the church of Lincoln which had been destroyed by an accidental fire and built a stone vault. (See: *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, p. 7]. The last information is particularly problematic as Mr Dimock strongly denied the possibility quoted by Giraldus that the church had been gutted by fire in 1124 (See: Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, pp. XXIX – XXX) because according to him there is no evidence about that. Mr Dimock, basing his statements on the authority of Henry of Huntingdon, affirmed that if the fire had ever occurred during this period it was certainly shortly before 1146. [See: HH, pp. 746-749]. This creates another problem that is to say that if the fire was in 1146 and Alexander died in 1148 two years would not have been enough for vaulting the church. On the other hand the studies of Dr Peter Kidson make us think that there is a possibility that the construction of the vault had started maybe around 1125. His main argument is that the vaults of the nave of Durham took five years to build, even though the walls were on a scale fit to support them; at Lincoln to transform Remigius' nave for the purpose would have required something not far short of a total reconstruction. That is why a year around 1125 could be satisfactory as a starting date for the construction (Peter Kidson, 'Architectural history', pp. 22-24). The idea that a possible fire if it occurred could have happened around 1145 is also in the chronicle of Roger of Hoveden (Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, i, ed. William Stubbs, p. 208) in which there is stated that in 1145 the church of Lincoln "was gutted by fire and the church has been rebuilt and appeared more beautiful than when it was made for the first time". (My translation) This would give account of both the fire and the works done after it. Richard Gem [Richard Gem, 'Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia pulchra, ecclesia fortis', pp. 9 – 12] in his analysis stated that both the *Peterborough Chronicle* and the *Louth Park Chronicle* registered the fire in 1141. His captivating hypothesis is that the fire might not have been accidental, but the direct consequence of the war between King Stephen and the Earl of Chester. During the looting of Lincoln which took place after the defeat of the king, the cathedral would have been burned. It is difficult to establish the truth about this fact but it is reasonable to think that some main works were in progress between 1125 and 1148 as testified by almost all the sources available for the period. Two possibilities are then available in my opinion: 1) these main works were a direct consequence of a fire (accidental/arson) which broke out shortly after 1140 or: 2) the works were already in place for a different reason when a fire (accidental / arson) happened disrupting works which were already in hand during this period and which continued after that episode.

<sup>134</sup> David Smith, 'Alexander family. Background and political involm't', in, *ODNB*, i, p. 647.

following day<sup>135</sup>. He was a son of Robert de Chesney and his wife Alice, a minor knightly family of Anglo-Norman extraction with lands in the Midlands. He presumably attended school at either Oxford or Paris as he had the title of “*magister*”<sup>136</sup>. Before being elected Bishop of Lincoln he had been archdeacon of Leicester between 1140<sup>137</sup> and 1146, and indeed Henry of Huntingdon tells us: “He was universally considered worthy of so great honour and with the very joyful approval of king, clergy and people he received pontifical blessing from the archbishop of Canterbury and he was devotedly received by clergy and people at Lincoln at the Lord’s Epiphany (6 January 1149)”<sup>138</sup>. Bishop Robert de Chesney was elected by the chapter of Lincoln despite the fact that other candidates had been eager to fill the vacant see<sup>139</sup>. In particular Henry, bishop of Winchester, wanted it for one of his nephews; only the determination of Pope Eugenius III who instructed Theobald to consecrate Robert de Chesney brought this issue to conclusion.

It seems that Bishop Robert de Chesney did not play a prominent role in the political affairs of the kingdom even though it is undeniable that William de Chesney, Robert’s brother, was one of King Stephen’s helpers and supporters, a fact that surely helped to make Robert more acceptable at the court of Stephen. It is probably not a coincidence either, but the natural consequence of the friendship between William de Chesney and the king, that the latter appointed Robert local justice of Lincoln and Lincolnshire<sup>140</sup>. Having been at Lincoln only from the beginning of 1149, Robert de Chesney spent four years as bishop under the reign of Stephen; the majority of his actions relate therefore to the reign of Henry II. It is merely essential to analyse, even though briefly, the relationship between Henry II and the English church in order to understand how the two main institutions in England, influenced each other.

Henry II was not a cruel or ferocious king, neither did he want to go against the magnates of his reign but he soon realised that some compromises were necessary in

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<sup>135</sup> *EEA, I*, p. 35. According to what stated by Matthew Paris, the bishop was consecrated in 1147: “*Eodem anno (1147) Robertus de Chaisneio archidiaconus Legecestrensis, post Alexandrum creatus est Lincolnensis antistes, per manu Theobaldi archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, post jejunium mensis septimi episcopus consecratus.* M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 183. This date of September 1147 for the consecration is shared and reported also by: John Le Neve in, *Fasti*, ii, p. 8. The recorded instead as date, 1148. See: *Chronicon of Thomæ of Wykes*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 25.

<sup>136</sup> D. Owen, ‘Robert de Chesney’, in, *ODNB*, xi, p. 331.

<sup>137</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 42.

<sup>138</sup> *HH*, pp.753 – 755.

<sup>139</sup> *EEA, I*, p. 35.

<sup>140</sup> D. Owen, ‘Robert de Chesney’, in, *ODNB*, xi, p. 331.

order to rule the country. He needed desperately, “to restore confidence in the government and impartial law and order”<sup>141</sup>. In what way could this be done? How was he to deal with the church in general and the bishops in particular? His famous Constitutions of Clarendon brought about the dispute that would lead eventually to the death of Archbishop Thomas Becket. This episode is very well known<sup>142</sup> and it does not need to be repeated here. However, due to its importance for the understanding of the relations between the King and his bishops, and in order to fully understand the role of the clergy during Henry II’s reign, we need briefly to recall the main facts.

The Constitutions of Clarendon, issued in January 1164, dealt with the most difficult problems in the relationship between crown and church. Among them was the controversial article about the “criminous clerks”. The point at stake was that when a clerk was found guilty of a serious crime he could escape punishment by seeking a judgement in the ecclesiastical courts. These would normally defrock the accused, whereas in the royal courts, by contrast, the same crime was punished with death. How could the King find a median position between these extremes? Henry II therefore demanded that once judged by the ecclesiastical court and defrocked, the defendant could be handed over to the secular court in order to be punished. At the beginning Thomas Becket, supported by the bishops, acrimoniously refused to accept this position<sup>143</sup>. After this immediate refusal Becket had second thoughts and gave a verbal recognition, though he did not affix his seal to the document as required<sup>144</sup>. The support given by bishops to their archbishop seems to show a coherent unity on the part of the English episcopate and a cohesive will in aiming for the same goal. However later on, when Thomas was summoned in October 1164 at Northampton castle to be judged on a charge of contempt of the king, the majority of the English episcopate would turn its back on him: “it is said that Thomas had come to Northampton with almost forty clerks but on that morning when he came to the council for the last time, almost all had deserted him”<sup>145</sup>. The *Annals of Worcester*

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<sup>141</sup> W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (London, 1973), p. 59.

<sup>142</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain 1066-1272* (Harlow, 2011), pp. 74-94.

<sup>143</sup> W. L. Warren, *Henry II*, pp. 473-474.

<sup>144</sup> Michael Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his biographers* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 100.

<sup>145</sup> Michael Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his biographers* p. 137 and p. 155. Thomas left England on 15 October 1164 and went to France to the court of King Louis. When the bishops reached him in

recorded that in the year 1165 various bishops went to Rome in order to pay homage to Pope Alexander, where they did not miss the opportunity of expressing their opinion against Becket: among those there was Robert of Chesney<sup>146</sup>. The bishops, who had been resolute in opposing the king at Clarendon, had taken an ambiguous position in the aftermath of Northampton. On the other side the king had pushed his will against the church but eventually, under the threat of interdict, which would have damaged his power and his on his dominions, was forced to accept the peace of Freteval in 1170<sup>147</sup> and after the murder of Becket the Compromise of Avranches in which the bishops were released from their oath to the Constitutions of Clarendon. The king's attempt to establish a sort of control over the bishops and the English church failed and as Anne Duggan has said: "even if it is true that clause 1 and 3 on jurisdiction over advowson and criminous clerks remained in limbo, it is also true that the king had to step down from his original plan"<sup>148</sup>.

The reason for this is that despite the fact that the king did not want to create another Bishop Roger he could not avoid having clerks around him. First of all he needed the administrative experience of the bishops and indeed he recalled urgently Bishop Nigel, dismissed by Stephen, in his role as a treasurer<sup>149</sup>. Secondly he desperately required the support of the bishops who, apart from being religious authorities and magnates of the country, were also the core of the royal justice. As, Anne Duggan points out: "among the twelve key justices who shaped and administered Henry II's law in the 1170s and 1180s six were clerics"<sup>150</sup>. The control of the country was almost impossible without the help and the "complicity" of the prelates. Obviously not all the bishops had the same role in the kingdom and even though, as Becket's case demonstrated, the episcopate did not necessarily move as a single unit and did not

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November 1164, "Roger of York, Gilbert of London and Hilary of Chichester were already staunch opponents of the archbishop".

<sup>146</sup> *Annales de Wigornia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 381.

<sup>147</sup> Anne J. Duggan, 'Henry II, the English Church and the Papacy 1154 – 1176', in, *Henry II, new interpretations*, ed. C. Harpen-Bill, N. Vincent (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 174.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* p. 177.

<sup>149</sup> W. L. Warren, *The governance of Norman and Angevin England 1086-1272* (London, 1987), p. 99.

<sup>150</sup> Anne Duggan has demonstrated that, "at their head stood three bishops, Richard of Ilchester, bishop of Winchester 1173-88; John of Oxford, bishop of Norwich 1175-1200 and Geoffrey Ridel, bishop of Ely 1174-89; all of them supported by three clerks who became bishops: Huber Walter, bishop of Salisbury 1189-1193 and archbishop of Canterbury 1193-1205; Richard Fitz Nigel, (author of the *Dialogus de Scaccario*) bishop of London 1189-98 and Geoffrey de Lucy who would become bishop of Winchester". See: A. J. Duggan, 'Henry II, the English Church and the Papacy 1154 – 1176', pp. 180-181.



necessarily talk with a single voice, we are on firm ground in saying that without the bishops the country would have been in actual fact paralysed.

In light of this we can affirm that Henry II certainly needed to be in contact with the head of the biggest diocese in Europe. The relationship between Robert de Chesney and Henry II began on the occasion of the coronation of Henry on 19 December 1154 in Westminster Abbey when the bishop attended the ceremony, and it continued early in the new reign with a string of confirmations of episcopal rights and donations from the king to the bishop. Under Henry II, Bishop Robert de Chesney had the opportunity of securing his existing rights<sup>151</sup>, confirming for instance the franchises for the church of Lincoln granted by William the Conqueror<sup>152</sup> and Henry I<sup>153</sup>. Particularly interesting are three writs of Henry II: with the first (1154-1155)<sup>154</sup> “licence was given to Bishop Robert de Chesney, at his request, to have a market in his town of Banbury [Oxfordshire] every Thursday”; with the second writ (1155-1158)<sup>155</sup> “licence was given to the bishop of Lincoln to have a fair in Louth [Lincolnshire] on the octave of Saint Peter and Saint Paul [6 July] which fair should last for eight days”; and with the last one (1155-1158)<sup>156</sup> “Bishop Robert and his successors were given licence to have a yearly fair in their town of Louth beginning on the third Sunday after Easter, and lasting for eight days”.

Henry II also gave to Bishop Chesney and the Church of Lincoln a market in the city of Sleaford stating: *si non nuocerit vicinis mercatis*, that is to say, if does not disturb the neighbouring markets. Interestingly Henry II sent a writ to Lincolnshire’s sheriffs ordering that all foreign merchants had to make their way to Lincoln to deal with their merchandise<sup>157</sup>. In this way he was giving support directly to the city and indirectly to its bishop, although we should also take into consideration that now the city had to pay the Exchequer an annual farm £180 (the farm having been raised from £140) whether the trade was good or bad<sup>158</sup>. We do not really know whether the

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<sup>151</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, pp. 181-182.

<sup>152</sup> *RA*, i, n 143, p. 90.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* n 158, p. 101.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.* n 145, p. 92.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* n 148, p. 94.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.* n 161, p. 103.

<sup>157</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 185.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 185-186.

bishop was involved in this transaction or not, but what is certain is that any increase in the economic power of the city was an advantage to the bishop.

We have a number of documents which attribute to the bishop and the church of Lincoln authority or possession over other churches<sup>159</sup>, confirming to the bishop previous rights over properties or grants or gifts<sup>160</sup>, and documents giving the bishop the power to exact taxes from properties. Some examples of this are: the confirmation to Bishop Robert and the church of Lincoln<sup>161</sup> “of Henry I’s grant of toll in their fairs of Stow”; Henry II’s grant<sup>162</sup> “to the church of Lincoln and its canons to the tithes of all moneys from all his forests in the counties of Northampton, Huntingdon, Buckingham and Oxford”; and the Henry I’s grant, confirmed by Henry II to Bishop Robert, “of the third penny of the wapentake of Stow”<sup>163</sup>. The bishop witnessed a number of Henry II’s early charters, before going with him in 1158 to the north of England. When in 1160 and 1162 Henry II went to Normandy the Bishop was summoned to him<sup>164</sup>.

The span of time in which Robert de Chesney was bishop of Lincoln is significant both economically and politically for the city of Lincoln. In the third quarter of the XII century the city of Lincoln was developing a new status. The research of Sir Francis Hill showed us that by the end of the reign of Henry II Lincoln was one of the only five cities farmed by the burgesses<sup>165</sup>. This was significant because it allowed the community to escape the sheriff’s financial grip. Some boroughs<sup>166</sup> were farmed separately from their counties, but what Lincoln and London did was even more “revolutionary”. London offered money in order to be able to elect its own sheriff and Lincoln did the same to hold the city of the king in chief<sup>167</sup>. By securing the farm of the city the citizens of Lincoln put “their hands” on the royal revenues, in the sense that the toll and taxes instead of being farmed by the sheriff, were now going to the city’s account. It would be interesting for our purposes to know what role the bishop played in this process. He was not the person in charge of the taxes

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<sup>159</sup> *RA*, i, n 139, p. 88; n 140, p. 89; n 141, p. 89.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* n 142, p. 90; n 144, p. 91; n 146, p. 92; n 155, pp. 99-100; n 159, p. 102; n 160, p. 102; n 163, p. 104; n 164, p. 105; n 168, p. 107.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* n 147, p. 93.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.* n 157, p. 101.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* n 165, pp. 105-106.

<sup>164</sup> D. Owen, ‘Robert de Chesney’, in, *ODNB*, xi, p. 331.

<sup>165</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>166</sup> i.e. Winchester, Southampton and Malmesbury.

<sup>167</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, pp. 183-184.

and it is not easy to understand what the relationship between the bishop, the sheriff and the city was. We know that Henry II issued a writ “commanding that the bishop of Lincoln should hold the tenements within the borough and without as freely as any of his predecessors held them in the time of King Henry I, and that the clerks and servants of St Mary of Lincoln should have the lands, customs and franchises which they were wont to have at that time”<sup>168</sup>. This document is dated before 1156, and was therefore at the beginning of Henry II’s reign. It is consequently possible that the citizens were exercising some pressure on the bishop over his possessions and that the latter asked the king to issue a charter to secure them. That there were some issues over the rights of the bishop is also demonstrated by another writ of Henry II, probably issued around 1155/6,<sup>169</sup> in which the King “ordered the justices and sheriffs of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire to cause a recognition to be made by the oath of lawful men as to what rights of justice the predecessor of Bishop Robert II had in the time of Henry I over those who, without their licence, chased or took hares in their warren”.

Robert de Chesney died on 27 December 1166 and was buried in Lincoln Cathedral<sup>170</sup>. His death marks the end of the first period of our analysis.

At this point it is worth stopping to make some general observations. The first is the general relationship between the bishop and the city of Lincoln.

The city of Lincoln acquired some charters of liberty even though the liberties its citizens enjoyed are certainly not comparable to the independence of the citizens of Cremona in the XII century. The fact that the citizens of Lincoln did not clash violently with the bishop over freedom to exercise their activities is due to three main factors:

- 1) The King of England, in contrast to the German emperor in Italy, was completely in control of the territory and did not allow the cities in his reign to acquire too much independence.
- 2) The bishop in Cremona enjoyed more power locally than the bishop in Lincoln and being in control of almost everything in the city he became the

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<sup>168</sup> RA, i, n 105, p. 66.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* n 108, pp. 67-68.

<sup>170</sup> According to the Book of Shalby he died “in the year of our Lord 1167”. See: *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, p. 7.

person whom the citizen needed to fight in order to acquire more liberty and greater profit from their businesses.

- 3) The English episcopacy and English society in general functioned on a national base rather than on a local base as in Cremona. They did not need to be independent from a kingdom they felt was their own realm. In Cremona this feeling was not shared by the population who thought in terms of city rather than on a national scale.

The easy relationship with the citizens of Lincoln, or at least the lack of conflict between bishop and city, was one more dimension of the vital relationship between the bishop and the king. So far we have looked at the power of the bishop very much in terms of this vital relationship. We need however to examine some other influences upon the bishops.

Paramount among these was, of course, the relationship with the papacy. Here there was a major shift. In the words of Martin Brett, “To invoke the authority of Rome in 1100 in England was no easy matter. The pope was a remote figure [...] the invocation of papal authority was neither convenient nor customary except for some formal occasion, such as the consecration of a new archbishop”<sup>171</sup>. After studying papal jurisdiction in England during the reign of Henry I the same writer concludes: “If it was still true that Henry’s clergy in 1135 placed more trust in a royal charter than a papal privilege, or preferred the king’s court to the Pope’s Curia, by then they certainly recognized the alternative and were incomparably better informed on papal affairs than their predecessors in the days of Lanfranc”<sup>172</sup>.

Papal influence had several dimensions. One was the sending of legates. Their authority was largely resisted, however, by both the king and the archbishop of Canterbury. More significant were appeals to Rome not only over the few great causes, such as the primacy issue, but also the beginnings of more humble matters. An unusual one is that of an unnamed clerk who appealed against Engelram, a simoniac clerk of the bishop of Lincoln who had evicted him from his benefice<sup>173</sup>. By 1135 appealing to Rome was recognized in England as an established process,

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<sup>171</sup> M. Brett. *The English Church under Henry I* (Oxford, 1975), p. 34. For what follows see generally chapter 2 of this important work: “The Exercise of Papal jurisdiction in England”.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* p. 62.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51. Unfortunately no source is given.

necessary under some circumstances and not infrequently employed<sup>174</sup>. And then there were papal privileges. Some of these confirmed changes in the structure of the church. One example is the change in the location of sees. There was also the confirmation of appointment of archbishops. In terms of privileges for communities one was “a measure of independence from the authority of the diocesan, a privilege as widely sought as resisted throughout the Western Church”<sup>175</sup>. Such grants were rare indeed in the reign of Henry I. There were other privileges that merely confirmed what had been granted by others.

It should also be noted that an increasing number of bishops and abbots visited the Curia during the reign. Finally it was in the last years of Henry I’s reign that the pope began to appoint local “judges delegate” who would hear cases in England<sup>176</sup>. Thereafter judges delegate played an increasingly significant role. It was appeals and judges delegate that “bound the provinces to Rome and Rome to the provinces”<sup>177</sup>. The situation in the reign of Stephen has been analysed by Keith Stringer<sup>178</sup>. The new king faced an expansionist papacy, a papacy that wanted to free the church from secular control. In its designs on the church in England the papacy threatened the whole *modus vivendi*, the mutual cooperation between king and church that we have been discussing. Despite the attack on the bishops in 1139 there was no major rift, partly because Stephen fought to defend his rights and partly because what the high churchmen wanted above all was stability. Nonetheless the reign saw considerable erosion of royal powers. For one thing the church greatly extended its jurisdiction and appeals to Rome for judicial decisions became more frequent. Although Stephen did resist legates and to some degree legates controlled access to Rome, change was inevitable. By c. 1140 the clergy were largely controlling appointments to major abbeys and from c.1143 appointments to bishoprics. This was in some ways the most devastating and threatening change in the royal position. As far as the bishoprics were concerned, the biggest change came in the types of men appointed. Nineteen of the 34 who held offices during the reign were secular clerks. Moreover the greater majority came not from the royal household but from archdeaconries and major

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<sup>174</sup> M. Brett. *The English Church under Henry I*, p. 57.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* p. 58.

<sup>176</sup> David Carpenter, *The struggle for mastery in Britain* (Oxford, 2003), p. 432.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.* p. 432, quoting Jane Sayers.

<sup>178</sup> Keith J. Stringer, *The Reign of Stephen: kingship, warfare and government in twelfth-century England* (London, 1993), chapter 5.

offices in the cathedrals<sup>179</sup>. What this reflects of course is a decline in royal influence over elections. Some of the clerks had spent time at the schools at Laon and Paris. These and others were aware of major currents in the international church, including the underpinning of the pope's judicial supremacy by canon law (Gratian's *Decretum* was published in c. 1140) and the papacy's position as the fount of reform. Here St Bernard and the Cistercians were particularly significant, given their great popularity in England. All of this increased the clergy's sense of their right vis à vis the crown<sup>180</sup>.

One should not exaggerate. After all, the king and the bishops had a vested interest in standing together. Tellingly, Alexander of Lincoln, despite his treatment by the king, celebrated mass for the royal army before the battle of Lincoln in 1141<sup>181</sup>. On the other hand, the bishops were fully capable of standing behind the archbishop in opposition to the king, as they did in Stephen's reign in resisting the consecration of his son and were to do later initially standing with Becket over the Constitutions of Clarendon. It is no wonder that Henry II felt that he had a lot of ground to make up in terms of his control over the church, even if arguably he over-reacted<sup>182</sup>.

Another dimension was the relationship between bishops and monasteries, once again involving the papacy and the kings. As Janet Burton has pointed out, "The Rule of St. Benedict laid down that the head of a monastery should be elected by the monks from among their number. With pragmatism the *Regularis Concordia* added that royal guidance should be taken"<sup>183</sup>. Soon this guidance came to mean that abbots and bishops were appointed by the king with the result that the majority of the bishops in mid 11<sup>th</sup> century were monks. The kings, especially the Norman ones, were not so keen in allowing complete freedom to the monasteries. A series of revolts against the Conqueror and the Normans made him aware of the danger involved in relying too much on the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical aristocracy. As a consequence William did not allow any free elections at all. He was also persuaded

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<sup>179</sup> Christopher Holdsworth, 'The Church', in, *The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign*, ed. Edmund King (Oxford, 1994), pp 212-13.

<sup>180</sup> K. J. Stringer, *The Reign of King Stephen: kingship, warfare and government in twelfth-century England*, p. 64.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.* p. 67.

<sup>182</sup> The issue has recently been reviewed by Anne J. Duggan, *Henry II, the English church and the papacy, 1154-76*.

<sup>183</sup> Janet Burton, *Monastic and religious orders in Britain 1000-1300* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 14.

(as was Lanfranc) that the English monasteries needed to follow the Norman pattern and therefore he appointed, without elections, almost always foreigners. Rufus continued the same policies and actually declared that abbeys were his property. After the ending of the Investiture conflict, Henry I could no longer invest bishops and abbots with the symbols of their ecclesiastical office, but the monks would usually elect, in his presence, a candidate proposed by the king<sup>184</sup>. In the reign of Stephen after 1139, because of the general anarchy and especially because the office of abbot had little political importance compared to the role of the bishop, the monasteries were freer than Episcopal chapters in terms of the election, so that scholars even talk about free election between 1140 and 1154<sup>185</sup>. Under Henry II there was a reversal of policy even though some permissions for free elections under the presidency of the bishop were asked for and almost always granted by the king. In general, though, the elections had to take place in the king's chapel with royal permission and upon the advice of the Council: that is to say according to the wishes of the king<sup>186</sup>.

The kings kept more than an eye on the development of monasteries throughout the country. For example William notified the archbishop of York that he had granted to the church of St Mary at Stow and the monks, the churches of Newark (Notts.), Fledborough (Notts.), Brampton (Lincs.) and the wapentake of Well (Lincs.), with the sake and soke and toll and team<sup>187</sup>. Moreover in a following charter,<sup>188</sup> "William notified that in addition he had granted to the church of St Mary of Stow the church of Eynsham with the lands it currently possessed at the request of Bishop Remigius, on the condition that an abbot be created there on William's advice, who would deal wisely with the affairs of the churches. The abbey would remain in William's lordship like others in England". For unknown reasons, in 1086, Bishop Remigius had the abbey of Eynsham restored, but then, in 1091, moved the monks from Eynsham to Stow. In a charter dated 1093-1097, William II notified Osbert the sheriff and the barons of Lincolnshire that he had given to Robert I (Bloet) bishop of Lincoln, as long as he lives, the third penny of the wapentake of Stow *ad firmam* for

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<sup>184</sup> Janet Burton, *Monastic and religious orders in Britain 1000-1300*, p. 169.

<sup>185</sup> D. Knowles, *The monastic order in England* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 399.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* p. 399.

<sup>187</sup> D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 276, 1070 x April 1072, pp. 831 – 832.

<sup>188</sup> Even though it was suggested, but not proved to be a forgery. D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 277, 1070 x 1087, pp. 833 – 834.

ten pounds a year by tale<sup>189</sup>. That is probably why Bishop Bloet transferred<sup>190</sup> the monks back to Eynsham, keeping Stow for himself<sup>191</sup>. The influence of the kings over the monasteries was not limited to the election of priors or abbots. The king's right of collecting the revenue of vacant abbeys led slowly but steadily to the gradual separation of the income of the abbot and monks. Religious houses as holders of land were tenants-in-chief of the Crown and this gave the Crown a right to administer abbeys' lands during a vacancy. Therefore, in order to protect themselves and to minimize financial damage when an abbot had died or had been removed from office, the monks began to divide the revenue of the house, a proportion for the abbot and the remainder for the convent. Only the abbot's portion now became subject to seizure by the king<sup>192</sup>.

Another major influence on the power and the role of the bishop was the upsurge in monasticism. Once again the reign of King Stephen was of crucial significance. Christopher Holdsworth has calculated that 171 new monasteries were founded in England during the reign, the highest number of all being in Lincolnshire: no less than 56. An important element in the explanation for this is of course the lack of pre-

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<sup>189</sup> See also: *RA*, i, n 5, p. 13.

<sup>190</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 77.

<sup>191</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii et Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. XXIV. It was probably this fact, related to the creation of the diocese of Ely, that provoked the hatred and the resentment of Giraldus Cambrensis against Bloet, suggested by Mr Dimock. In reality the situation, at least for Ely, appears to have been much more complex than Giraldus portrayed. According to the reconstruction offered by Srawley the Isle of Ely was given to the monastery of Ely by Queen Etheldreda in 673. (See also: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles. The Peterborough Manuscript (E)*, p. 35.) In turn King Edgar and Edward the Confessor had declared the independence of the Isle and Pope Victor II had confirmed this. Indeed Edward the Confessor stated in a charter that "no bishops or lay authority may presume to intrude himself without the license of the abbot and his brethren". (*The book of John de Schalby*, trans. J.H. Srawley, p. 6.) William I confirmed the independence of the Isle in 1080-1, however, he (D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 117, 1071 x 1075, pp. 410 – 417.) sought to ascertain whether the abbot, ought to be consecrated by the bishop of Lincoln or not according to the ancient custom at the time of King Edward. (D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, n 123,124,125,126,127, pp. 431-439.) It was soon obvious that the diocese of Lincoln was too big for a single bishop and this concern was expressed by Anselm archdeacon of Canterbury in a letter to Pope Paschal II. Anselm "with the consent of the king, the bishop and other religious men" thought that, "it was for the good of the Church that it should be divided". (See: *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. J.H. Srawley, pp. 24-25. See: Eadmer, *Eadmeri Historia Novorum in Anglia*, ed. Martin Rule, pp. 195-196. See also: Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, trans. G. Bosanquet. pp. 208 – 210). Therefore the council of London, in 1108, formally created the see of Ely that included the Isle of Ely and the entire county of Cambridge; this decision received the approval of Pope Paschal II. (*Councils and Synods*, Vol. I, part II, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, pp. 694 – 704). In 1109 the king changed Ely from an abbey to a bishopric and appointed Hervey, bishop of Bangor over the see. John of Worcester, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, Vol. III, ed. P. Mc Gurk, p. 103). See also: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* which talks about St Aethelwold chosen by King Edgar. (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicles. The Peterborough Manuscript (E)* p. 115).

<sup>192</sup> J. Burton, *Monastic and religious orders in Britain 1000-1300*, p. 170.



Conquest monasteries in the north of England. But why was monastic foundation so popular at this time in England? There can be no definitive answer but clearly it reflects an increase in spirituality among the laity and support perhaps for at least some of the principles that lay behind papal reform. A striking feature, in contrast to what we saw in the diocese of Cremona, is that anti-clericalism among the laity does not seem to feature, there is no Pataria. Nor does there appear to be monastic foundation as a counter to Episcopal power. On the contrary, the bishops were a crucial factor in the support of lay aspirations. One of the most prominent was, in fact, Alexander of Lincoln<sup>193</sup>.

Lay donors contributed considerably<sup>194</sup>, and it is certainly true that sometimes the donations did not involve the bishop at all, as happened for instance when Roger Musteile gave land to Sixhills for having accepted his two daughters<sup>195</sup>. It is undeniable, however, that the bishop as the supreme religious authority of the diocese had overall responsibility for everything and unless the monastery had an exemption everything needed to pass through his authority and his confirmation. We have a confirmation for example from Bishop Alexander “for the abbot and monks of Bardney of the possession granted by Gilbert de Gant and Walter his son, which included also a chapel and a church and tithes”<sup>196</sup>, which implicitly demonstrated lay possession of churches and chapels and the importance of the tithes related to them. Again we have from Bishop Alexander “confirmation to the monks of Bec of the churches of Weedon and Swyncombe and of other possessions in the diocese given by Miles Crispin and his wife, Maud of Wallingford”<sup>197</sup>, and notification “to archdeacon David of Buckingham of the Episcopal confirmation to the canons regular of Dunstable of the church of [North] Marston, granted to them by Thurstan de Winghes, at the petition of Achard the priest”<sup>198</sup>. Bishop Alexander was also involved in confirmation of the foundation of abbeys as shown for example<sup>199</sup> in the

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<sup>193</sup> A.G. Dyson, ‘The Monastic Patronage of Bishop Alexander of Lincoln’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 26 (1975), pp. 1-24.

<sup>194</sup> *EEA*, I, n 34, p. 22.

<sup>195</sup> F. M. Stenton, *Transcripts of Charters relating to the Gilbertine Houses*. In, *Lincoln Record Society Publications*, vol. 18, p. 17. Quoted in: D. Owen, *Church and society in medieval Lincolnshire*, p. 50.

<sup>196</sup> *EEA*, I, n 17, p. 12. Although at this date it was perfectly legal to grant over tithes as long as he/she did not retain his/her own right to them.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* n 18, p. 13.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* n 25, p. 17.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* n 29, p. 18.

foundation of the Cistercian abbey of Gardendon by earl Robert of Leicester<sup>200</sup>. There are numerous examples from Bishop Robert de Chesney<sup>201</sup>. Looking at these confirmations from a broader perspective there is no way a bishop could have disapproved or withheld his support given the climate of the day. Equally however these grants were not designed as an attack on his power. In this way the situation was different from that prevailing in Cremona.

Many of these monasteries in Lincolnshire belonged to the new monastic orders. Lincolnshire, moreover was the home the Gilbertine order, with its emphasis on provision for religious women. (See: Fig. XIII and XIV). The Gilbertine Order of Canons Regular was founded around 1130 by St Gilbert in Sempringham, Lincolnshire, where Gilbert was a priest<sup>202</sup>. When his father died in 1130, Gilbert became lord of the manor of Sempringham and it was in this period that he founded the Gilbertine Order, by constructing in Sempringham a dwelling and cloister for his nuns. After 1147, an innovation in the order saw the introduction of the regular canons<sup>203</sup>. The Gilbertines now included nuns following the Rule of St Benedict and rigorously enclosed, lay brothers who followed the Cistercian customs, and canons

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<sup>200</sup> The latter was to receive the grant of the lordship of Knighton in exchange for lands in Farthinghoe and Syresham. (*EEA, I*, n 26, p. 40). Eventually Earl Robert (le Bossu) gave the whole manor of Knighton to the abbot and convent of Leicester. See: *RA*, iii, n 871, p. 215, note b.

<sup>201</sup> An example is the confirmation by Robert de Chesney to the church and the monks of St Martin, Aumale, of its possessions in the diocese given by Count Stephen of Aumale and his son, William, in 1156. (*EEA, I*, n 71, pp. 46 – 47). We have general confirmation by Robert de Chesney to the monks of St Mary Belvoir, the monks of Biddlesden (*EEA, I*, pp. 54 – 58), the canons of Bridlington (*EEA, I*, n 88, p. 60) and the canons of Ashby. (*EEA, I*, n 89, p. 60). There is also a confirmation made before the bishop of London according to which the churches of Eynsham and Dunstable agreed over the church of North Marston. The abbot of Eynsham and the prior of Dunstable were jointly to find a priest to serve the church. (*EEA, I*, n 110, p. 72). And again, Robert de Chesney gave a general confirmation to the brethren of Launde of all their possessions in the diocese. (*EEA, I*, n 143, pp. 89 – 90). The bishop confirmed also the grant that Earl Simon and Countess Isabella of Northampton gave to the abbey of St Mary de Pré, Leicester, of the property in Kempston (*EEA, I*, n 145, p. 90); to the same abbey the bishop gave the churches of Barby, Hungerton, Blaby, Bitteswell, Kilworth and South Kilworth. (*EEA, I*, n 149, pp. 91 – 92. For the confirmation to this abbey see also documents in *EEA, I*, 150, 151, 152, 153, p. 92). Bishop Robert de Chesney confirmed the possessions and properties to the monks of Norwich, (*EEA, I*, n 200, p. 125) the canons of St Oswald, Nostell (*EEA, I*, n 201, pp. 125 – 126) and to the nuns of Nun Cothan, (*EEA, I*, n 203, p. 127) witnessing that the religious orders of the diocese were well-supported by the bishop. And again there are two confirmations to Abbot Odo and the monks of Owston (*EEA, I*, n 214, n 215, pp. 134 – 135) the church and the canons being freed by the bishop from the synodals and all customary payments, except Peter's Pence. (*EEA, I*, n 216, p. 136).

<sup>202</sup> After having been in Paris to study theology he became a clerk in the household of Bishop Robert Bloet around 1120, starting a school for boys and girls. In 1123 Bishop Alexander ordained him deacon and then priest though apparently very much against his will. See: David Smith, 'Alexander family. Background and political involvement', in, *ODNB*, i, p. 647.

<sup>203</sup> As the new order had no formal organisation in 1147/8 Gilbert turned to the Cistercians for regulations. The Cistercians refused on the ground that he included women in his order. See: J. Burton, *Monastic and religious orders in Britain 1000-1300*, p. 98.

who followed the Rule of St Augustine<sup>204</sup>. The priory of St. Katherine situated on the outskirts of Lincoln was one of the principal houses of the Gilbertines. John de Schalby tells us that “it was founded by Bishop Robert Chesney and endowed with the prebend of Canwick and churches and lands, this grant being made with the assent of the Chapter and confirmed by Henry II”<sup>205</sup>.

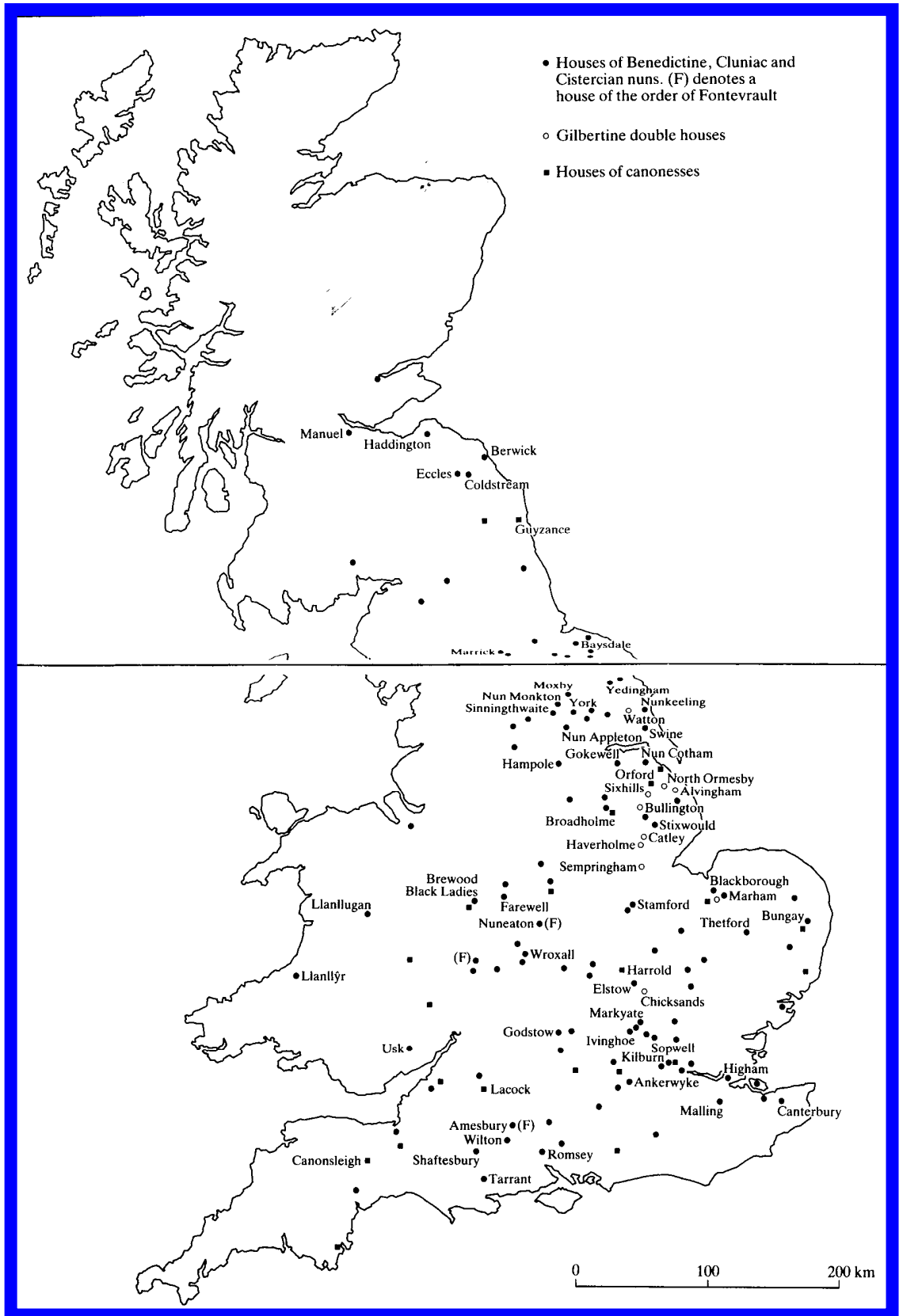
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<sup>204</sup> The order grew in popularity after 1147 especially in Lincolnshire with houses created in the early 1150s at Alvingham, Bullington, Catley, North Ormesby and Sixhills. *Ibid.* p. 99.

<sup>205</sup> *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, p. 25, note 10. *RA*, i, n 194, p. 120. Indeed among the bishop’s documents we find a foundation charter giving not only the prebend of Canwick but also the churches of Newark, Norton, Marton and Newton. This seems to have happened soon after Chesney became bishop of Lincoln. See: *EEA*, I, n 163, p. 97.



**Fig. XIII: Map of the new orders in Britain**



Map XIV: Map of the religious houses for women before 1300

Let us turn now to the diocese. How did the bishop deal with the parishes and the religious houses? We do not have a great deal of specific information on the relationship between the bishops and the parishes of their dioceses for which they were responsible<sup>206</sup>. Where evidence does exist it is most often in relation to religious houses<sup>207</sup>.

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<sup>206</sup> Before the Norman Conquest the diocese was organized around the Minsters. However lay landholders had begun to establish private churches or *Eigenkirchen* which undermined the role of the minsters. This fact originated another problem which would last for the following three centuries. When a lay owner retained control of the right to present clerks to his church, he did not necessarily care about the morality of the clerks he presented; what he cared about was the administration of the sacraments for him and his family. Therefore the clerks often had concubines, regularly got drunk and behaved irreligiously and often were married. Clerical marriage was a big moral problem in itself, but it became even worse for the church when, once married, the priest got used to pass the church he was in charge of to his son, transforming a church property into a private property. The collapse of the minster system in the countryside gave way to the parish system under the authority of the bishop. The word "Parish", Latin, *parocia*, Greek *παροίκία*, indeed means a district of a diocese under the bishop and in the Middle Ages the parish church began to be the centre of popular life all over the country. (Abbot Gasquet, *Parish life in Medieval England* (London, 1909), p. 2.) The system became quite successful during the Middle Ages (in England alone there were almost 8,500 parishes) and by the end of the twelfth century it had been extended over most of the country (N.J.G. Pounds, *A History of the English parish* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 3). At the beginning of the X century bishops certainly encouraged the formation and the development of the parish system because they deemed it was important for the pastoral care and pastoral reform. However later on, particularly in the XII century the bishops became more wary because once appointed the priest needed to be supported spiritually but also economically using the tithes and this fact created sometimes clashes between the bishops and the priests or between the priests themselves. [Andrew Brown. *Church and Society in England 1000-1500*. (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 86-88]. The minster system and the manor had been the basic units of rural society for centuries, but as the manor fragmented, it was the parish that took over as the basic unit of rural society. The parish churches in the countryside became more numerous and bigger in size and shape following the increase of the population and the transformation of the liturgy which required churches with more altars and larger naves. (See: Helen Clark, *The archaeology of Medieval England*, (London, 1984), p. 68.) This meant apart from religious issues which included help for the aged, the sick and the indigent, that upon the parish fell the task of maintaining bridges, roads and everything related to the area covered by the parish. The parish at the end of the XI century was not an isolated monad, but was part of the authoritarian ecclesiastical hierarchy: the parishes were to be included in the rural deaneries which in turn were grouped into archdeaconries and the archdeaconries into a diocese.

<sup>207</sup> A quite clear picture of the situation in the diocese in the mid XII century is given by the document 75 (See: *EEA, I*, p. 51) in which William the priest of Edlesborough has surrendered into the bishop's hands (Robert de Chesney) the *personatus* and cure of the church of Edlesborough and the bishop had conferred it upon John, abbot of Bardney. The abbot and convent are to have the mother church of Edlesborough, Northall whereas William the priest is to have the chapel of Dagnall. Interesting is that the mother church of Edlesborough is to cause divine service to be celebrated three days a week; William also has in free alms for his lifetime one virgate of land, which he acquired for the church. After his death all that he held belonging to Edlesborough church is to be returned to it in its entirety.

We do, however, have some interesting snippets. From the Episcopal Acta we discover that there was a confirmation “for the church of St. John, Godstow of one hundred shillings a year from the tolls of the bishop’s market in Banbury”<sup>208</sup>, the income coming from the market or specifically from the bishop’s market being diverted towards a church in the diocese. We do not have the evidence to support any suggestion that this was normal practice and it seems unlikely that bishops used to do it throughout the country. The church of Godstow had already been the object of an exemption from archidiaconal jurisdiction and of regulation of the election of an abbes<sup>209</sup>. “When the archdeaconry of Lincoln was in the bishop’s hands the Episcopal officials had made inquiry as to whether Peter’s Pence had been paid by the parish of Bardney and whether the officials of his predecessors had exercised any jurisdiction in the parish. Having found that the parish had always been under the jurisdiction of the abbot of Bardney, the bishop confirmed the ancient right to the monastery”<sup>210</sup>.

The relationship between the bishop and the diocese was not just administrative or related to donation and property exchange. In a document of around 1138 we have a “notification to the clergy and laity of Oxfordshire of the bishop’s grant to the church of Eynsham, with the counsel of the chapter of Lincoln, of the pentecostal of Oxfordshire, on account of the distance from the mother church of Lincoln. However, penitents so enjoined and any others who wish may still visit the mother church”<sup>211</sup>. The archdeaconries H and N<sup>212</sup>, on account of remoteness, were allowed by the bishop to pay the Pentecostal to Lincoln cathedral for that year, at a place convenient to the archdeacons. The parishioners would however have their sins remitted in the same way as the other faithful attending the mother church<sup>213</sup>. Again when necessary the bishop could put off payments or suspend taxation. In 1160, for instance, Bishop Robert II “remitted to the clergy and churches throughout the diocese the customary Easter payment which used to be called chrim-money. He

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<sup>208</sup> *EEA, I*, n 35, pp. 23 – 24.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.* n 34, p. 22.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.* n 73, pp. 49 – 50.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.* n 26, p. 17.

<sup>212</sup> Not specified if H and N refer to the names of archdeaconries within the diocese or to the personal names of archdeacons.

<sup>213</sup> *EEA, I*, n 156, pp. 93 – 94.

also abolished the annual pension which the archdeacons paid by the same custom to the bishop and his predecessors”<sup>214</sup>.

It was within the bishop’s rights to supervise the religious houses and the parishes in his diocese. The exceptions to this were the Cluniacs<sup>215</sup> and the Cistercians who were directly under the jurisdiction of the pope. In all other cases the bishop fulfilled his duty by overseeing and confirming the election of abbots or priors, by consecrating monastic churches and, if he was conscientious, by making periodic visitations to all the rest. Here he could rely on the council of Chalcedon which as early as 451 had established the broad principles. Within the evolution of monasticism there were two contradictory movements. On one side the power of the bishop tended to invade the monastic rights in order to obtain partial or total control of the abbeys and of their revenues. On the other the monasteries tried to escape this situation by systematically claiming exemptions through which to disentangle themselves from the authority of the bishop<sup>216</sup>, a situation which seems to mirror the situation in Cremona. In these situations the king himself had sometimes to intervene to bring the ecclesiastics into agreement, as it happened between the Abbot of Peterborough and Bishop Alexander of Lincoln over the parish church of Peterborough. In this case the king supported the bishop in holding his pleas, synod and chapters in these as in the other parish churches<sup>217</sup>. Particularly interesting is the case of the abbey of St. Albans in dispute with the bishop of Lincoln about the Episcopal jurisdiction<sup>218</sup>. Robert de Chesney appealed to both Henry I and Pope Alexander III to regain jurisdiction over the abbey. The pope set up a commission which did not really reach a conclusion; the king on the contrary in 1163 summoned all the parties in front of him in Westminster and decreed that the monastery of St Albans was free from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Lincoln and that the abbey “*shall remain free in my hand as my demesne church*”<sup>219</sup>. The abbot of St Albans “helped” the king reach this conclusion by offering him one hundred pounds in exchange for a favourable

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<sup>214</sup> *EEA, I*, n 77, p. 52.

<sup>215</sup> Although not all the Cluniac houses were exempt from episcopal authority. Indeed only direct daughter houses were exempt.

<sup>216</sup> D. Knowles, *The monastic order in England*, (Cambridge, 1941), p. 570.

<sup>217</sup> *RA, I*, n 52, pp. 35 – 36.

<sup>218</sup> As studied by Anne Duggan the abbey had secured independence from Episcopal jurisdiction in 1156 from Pope Adrian IV. A. J. Duggan, ‘Henry II, the English Church and the Papacy 1154 – 1176’, pp. 164-167.

<sup>219</sup> Anne J. Duggan, ‘Henry II, the English Church and the Papacy 1154 – 1176’, p. 167.



solution of the case for the monastery. The king without a second thought accepted. This case shows that if the political power was keen on taking advantages from the disputed between religious institutions, the latter did not spare means to win jurisdiction over part of the land or as in this situation to acquire independence from the authority of the bishop.

The bishop was entitled to receive maintenance, but in the course of time a number of Benedictine abbeys succeeded in obtaining special privileges which exempted them from Episcopal supervision and placed them directly under the authority of the pope. Even though the privilege was always a rare one before the twelfth century, in England very few Benedictine abbeys gained it<sup>220</sup>. Having once gained exemption the abbey could be inspected only by people appointed from Rome and its abbot had to seek confirmation from the pope, not from the bishop<sup>221</sup>.

Bishops were clearly unhappy about all these exemptions, primarily because they created religious enclaves formally independent from their authority within their dioceses and also because monasteries were the possessors of parish churches, which involved them in pastoral responsibilities which the bishops could not control. It was not easy to obtain an exemption and the Papal Curia usually examined the situation carefully before deciding whether or not this or that monastery should become a Papal *Eigenkloster*<sup>222</sup>. In general the majority of the monasteries did not have such exemption and therefore looked to the bishop as an ecclesiastical superior to whom respect and obedience was owed<sup>223</sup>. In this climate it is not surprising if sometimes the bishop acted as peacemaker. This happened for instance to Bishop Robert de Chesney when he was forced to be a peacemaker between the nuns of Alwingham and the nuns of Legbourne over the mill of “Luthena” in Cockerington<sup>224</sup>.

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<sup>220</sup> i.e. St Albans, St Augustine’s Canterbury, Malmesbury, and Evesham.

<sup>221</sup> C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism* (Harlow, 2001), p. 132.

<sup>222</sup> D. Knowles, *The monastic order in England*, p. 583.

<sup>223</sup> C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 133-134. Indeed in document 303 of the *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, (See: D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*. n 303, 22 May 1075, pp. 902 – 905) “King William I informed future kings, archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, magnates and all the faithful who are under his authority, both clerical and lay, that he has learnt that in many places monks are being oppressed by bishops. Bates proved this diploma to be a forgery, but it is interesting because it is witness to a problem that appears to have been new in the twelfth century”. *Ibid.* n 303, pp. 902-903.

<sup>224</sup> *EEA, I*, n 70, pp. 45- 46. Again the bishop is acting as peacemaker in the agreement made in the bishop’s presence between the abbot and monks of Kirkstead and the Knights Templars over the lands of Nocton and Dunston. (*EEA, I*, n 137 p. 86). Bishop De Chesney through his stewards supported also the hospitals as confirmed by document 112 in which we have a confirmation to the hospital and canons of Elsham of the gift made by the bishop’s steward Walter de Amundeville. (*EEA, I*, pp. 73 - 74). We have indeed in 1166 the confirmation to Prior Walter of the Hospitallers in England to the

In trying to draw some conclusion about the differences and similarities between Italy and England in this first period, two main facts catch our attention: the military political and economic prominence the prelates enjoyed within the two dioceses and the scarce importance some of the bishops seem to have attached to their religious role. Despite all the attacks on his authority the bishop in Italy retained considerable powers in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. In fact given that in addition to his religious leadership the bishop also had military and political power and some vassals directly under his control, we can state that in this period he was probably at the apex of his power.

In both countries the bishops of this period showed remarkable ability in being skilful politicians as well as judges and landlords. In both countries, indeed, political power was strongly related to the church and in turn the bishops were bound to the kings or the emperors who were their ultimate lords. Although the bishop was doubly linked with the political power and political activities, there is a significant difference in this respect between England and Italy. It seems to be clear that in both countries it was impossible for the religious authority to be detached from the king or emperor and in turn impossible for the king or emperor to control his realm without the help of the bishop. However, whereas in England this link between religion and politics was often directed toward national interests, as perceived by the king and/or the church, in Italy the relationship was simply used to exploit local interest or to back up activities limited in scope and range. We can see this clearly in the cases of Henry I and Henry II. Both kings, but for different reasons, addressed the church in its entirety: Henry I requesting help in a moment of difficulty, Henry II trying to claim sovereignty and power over the bishops and the clergy. Even though some bishops took the king's side and others rejected it, the aim of the episcopate tended to be to consider the broader interest as well as the interests of their own diocese. In Italy, on the contrary, we can see different bishops supporting this or that emperor for personal or local interests or in the best-case scenario, as in the case of Oberto, for the interests of the diocese, but never for interests reaching the national

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church of Witney for the support of the poor in their hospital in Winchester. (*EEA, I*, n 133 pp. 82 – 83). The bishop's control of his diocese is shown when the canons of Huntingdon complained that contrary to the papal privilege and Episcopal confirmation, certain persons keep unlicensed schools to the prejudice of the school of Huntingdon. The archdeacon and the rural deans are instructed to suppress them. (*EEA, I*, n 134 p 83 – 84).

scale. It is probably not a coincidence that in Cremona a commune was born against the bishop in a moment of vacancy of the Episcopal See. This could never have happened in England where society was much more compact. In Cremona in this period the interests of the citizens, in the case of the commune, or the interests of the bishop, in the cases of Arnolfo or Medolago, counted more than the interests of the community and eventually the interests of the realm. It would be easy to explain this by saying that in England there was a central government whereas Italy was fragmented, and we should expect nothing else. However, it could be objected that the episcopacy was a “realm” in itself and therefore should have acted in the same way everywhere. To talk too much of the national interests is perhaps a hostage to fortune because of the universal nature of the church. The comparison between England and Italy shows otherwise and this difference could also be partly explained by referring to the actions of the Papacy which, particularly in Italy and especially in order to defeat the emperors in the investiture struggle, supported this or that bishop according to contingency. In this period the Papacy demonstrated towards Cremona and the north of Italy narrow political views and the bishops paid back the papacy in its own coin. Giovanni Tabacco’s view<sup>225</sup> that the power exercised by the bishop over his territory was always more loyal to the Pope than the Emperor, is partly contradicted by the cases of Arnolfo and Oberto, who did not hesitate to take the emperor’s side in the struggle between the two powers. What the papacy in this period did not factor in were the personal ambitions of the bishops (or at least of some of them) and the political and military responsibility they enjoyed in Italy. Vito Fumagalli argued that the emperors, as early as the reign of Otto I, had to recognize the power of the bishops because they could not face it down, even though at the same time they tried to fight against it by putting their lay officials against the bishops<sup>226</sup>. In Cremona both the emperor and the pope simply used the bishops for their convenience, provoking the bishops’ reaction, which materialized in the institution of a firm and solid local power through which the bishop kept both at bay. In England the bishops were used to thinking about the larger context in which they were acting. It is of course undeniable that in England bishops like Remigius, Robert

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<sup>225</sup> Giovanni Tabacco, *Egemonie sociali e strutture del potere nel Medioevo Italiano* (Torino, 1979), p. 160.

<sup>226</sup> Vito Fumagalli, ‘Il potere civile dei vescovi italiani al tempo di Ottone I’, in, *I poteri temporali dei vescovi in Italia e in Germania nel Medioevo*, ed. Guido Mor e Heinrich Schmidinger (Bologna, 1979), p. 77.

Bloet, Alexander and Robert de Chesney acquired their power and exerted it thanks to their political connections, but their role was less prominent from a military point of view even if they travelled with a splendid entourage<sup>227</sup>. In other words: they were powerful lords ready to fight, and they created their own personal authority locally, but it seems that it was easier for the King of England to impose his authority over them than for the emperor of Germany to make himself obeyed in the north of Italy. The situation of the monasteries is another area in which England and Italy presented differences. It is certainly true that in both countries the bishops tried on a regular basis to acquire control over the monasteries for territorial and revenue reasons. However, whereas in Italy this control was directed towards the reform movement and, at least at the beginning, towards halting revolt against the bishop locally, in England it had more of a general nature. The differences between England and Italy at this stage are very important because in time they would lead to very different outcomes in terms of the nature of Episcopal power. Nevertheless the differences should not obscure the similarities. In this first period of our study what is most striking about the role and power of the bishop in Cremona and in Lincoln is its breadth, encompassing political, military, institutional, territorial and spiritual spheres. With these differences and similarities in mind let us turn to the second period.

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<sup>227</sup> M. Brett, *The English Church under Henry I*, p. 74.

# PART TWO

From the middle of the XII century  
until the first half of the XIII  
century

## Chapter three

### The city and the bishop: the era of Sicardo

In order to understand the changes in the role and power of the bishop of Cremona in the second period we must first address the wider Italian context. After the religious reforms of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the political struggles which occupied the bulk of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the 25 years which would lead us to the opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> seemed to represent a sort of armed truce between the cities in the north of Italy. In this space of time, having momentarily settled its external relationships or conflicts, Cremona, as other northern Italian cities, proceeded quickly towards an internal reorganization. From a political point of view the rivalry between the two main protagonists of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the pope and the Emperor, seemed to have come to an end. Indeed the year 1184 saw Pope Lucius III in Verona discussing with the Emperor, Frederic I, the lands that used to belong to Countess Matilda, and looking for an agreement. On the same occasion the Pope, who was worried about the new “reformed” groups, with the decretum “*ab abolendam*” of November 1184 excommunicated those belonging to Pataria movement, the **Valdesi, Catari and Arnaldisti**, showing a strong concern for the religious state of the country and a firm will to retain control of the religious situation in his hands. All these “reformed” groups had chosen voluntary poverty and both Pope Alexander III and Pope Lucius III had accepted this as a choice of life; however the fact that these groups had women preaching the Gospel and in so doing challenging the clergy and its role among the population, had turned the popes completely against them<sup>1</sup>. At the beginning of their evolution these movements had renewed the church but in the 12<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Grado Merlo, ‘I movimenti religiosi, le chiese ereticali e gli ordini mendicanti’, in, *La Storia 5, Dall’Impero di Carlo Magno al trecento*, ed. G. Merlo (Novara, 2007), pp. 726 – 727.

century they became a problem. The Pataria movement and the “Valdesi” challenged the clergy’s Christian values, because they considered all things belonging to the world as bad. Only the spirit, according to them, was pure and deserved to be fortified.

It is easy to understand that this position, once supported and backed by the faithful, could easily have destroyed the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. The Pope, therefore, reacted immediately with excommunication. Obviously the bishop of Cremona being the main religious authority in town had to take account of these problems. In my analysis, recent development forced him to break with the past. He needed to be the shepherd of his flock, and to re-design his position in the new cultural, political and religious climate. In order to do this he needed to begin reconsidering his role within the city and inside the diocese as well.

From the Gregorian reform up to the IV Lateran council of 1215 the Roman Curia paid serious attention to the pastoral church, with special regard to the way the clergy preached to the people. The Popes themselves seemed to be concerned about the priest, called *sacerdos proprius*,<sup>2</sup> and his role and about the religious knowledge of the flock. Indeed, as the research of Enrico Cattaneo has demonstrated, in the passage from Pope Gregory VII to Pope Urban II we have a shift from “the worries for the liturgical unit to the concern about the diocesan unit”<sup>3</sup>. Pope Urban II was concerned to strengthen the religious leadership of the bishop in the diocese, because the bishop was himself responsible for the preaching of priests. In the IV Lateran council, called by Pope Callistus II, the low level of preaching was stressed as well as the lack of theological knowledge by the priests and the low calibre of the clergy in general:<sup>4</sup> a situation that could be ignored no longer. In Italy the 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries had also been a period of a broad reformation of what in general terms has been called “*Societas Christiana*”. The way in which the people in power perceived the church changed throughout the 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and so did the laws. Francesca Sinatti D’Amico has pointed out how, between the *Edictum Regnum Longobardorum*, at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and the *Libri Feudorum* of the 12<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, ‘L’Episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo sino alla conquista veneta’, in, *A Servizio del Vangelo. Il cammino storico dell’evangelizzazione a Brescia*, Vol. I, ed. G. Andenna (Brescia, 2010), p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> Enrico Cattaneo, ‘Azione pastorale e vita liturgica locale nei secoli XI e XII’, in, *Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche della << Societas Christiana >> dei secoli XI – XII. Diocesi Pievi e Parrocchie*, (Milano, 1977), pp. 451 – 452. My translation.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 468 – 473.

century school of Bologna, the concept and the application of the law related to the *Societas Christiana* changed remarkably. In Lombard law for instance the position of the church is undefined because it cannot comprehend the difference between church, *metropolitan* church, “pieve” and chapel<sup>5</sup>. During the Carolingian and Frankish period there emerged on the one hand the will to clarify the position of the church within society especially in relation to the contradictions and overlappings between Lombard and Frankish law<sup>6</sup>, and on the other the awareness that the church was intimately related and connected to other aspects of society<sup>7</sup>. One reason for the necessary evolution was the pragmatic culture of the middle ages and the fact that medieval law and medieval justice could not and did not accept or understand, as Simone Balossino has said, the “abstraction” of Roman law<sup>8</sup>. The bishop as well as the clergy and any other persons related directly or indirectly to the church had to face those problems and had to deal with them in order to create a new middle way between the Roman-church tradition and the new society that was developing during 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Being also a member of the political world, the bishop had to deal with the radical changes which were shaking Italian society in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. If we are going to understand how the bishop adapted we need first to grasp the context. In the north of Italy, as a consequence of the struggles for power between the pope and the emperor and of the struggle between independent cities for dominance and influence, the situation was particularly troubled. In Cremona from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century up to the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the government of the city fluctuated between the government of the consuls and government of the Podestà, but with the administration of the city of Cremona evolving towards a form of personal government led by the figure of the “Podestà”. At the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century the “populus” of Cremona which had grown strong economically through craft and trade<sup>9</sup> began to claim more power and a greater role in deciding the political life of

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<sup>5</sup> Francesca Sinatti D’Amico, ‘Le istituzioni della “Societas Christiana” nei giuristi delle scuole laiche dei secoli XI e XII’, In, *Le Istituzioni ecclesiastiche della Societas Christiana dei secoli XI-XII*. (Milano, 1977), p. 579.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 586 - 587.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 601.

<sup>8</sup> Simone Balossino, ‘Iustitia, lex consuetudo: per un vocabolario della giustizia nei capitolari italiani’ In *Reti Medievali*, 6 (2005), p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ugo Gualazzini, *Il Populus di Cremona e l’autonomia del comune. Ricerche di storia del diritto pubblico medioevale italiano con appendice di testi statutari* (Bologna, 1940). p. 3.



the commune. This claim was reflected in important physical changes in the size of the city. Between 1169 and 1187 a new surrounding wall was begun enclosing within the city a new area called: “Città – Nova”. Up to this time<sup>10</sup> “Città – Nova” had been a suburb with different juridical status<sup>11</sup>. This division was not merely juridical, however. For as long as Città – Nova was not included in the town, the ancient aristocracy that lived in the old part of the city could claim to be the only social class that could properly represent it<sup>12</sup>.

It would not be correct to divide the entire city into two sides, because there were some people belonging to the aristocracy who lived in Città-Nova and vice versa. However politically speaking, Cremona was divided into two factions and the political and economic division between *populus* and the aristocracy was mirrored in their physical separation. The *populus* had its headquarters in “Città – Nova” in St Agatha, whereas the *milites* were in the old part of the city and had St Mary’s cathedral as their headquarters<sup>13</sup>. Both factions sought religious sanction for their power and their choice of “headquarters” was therefore symbolic.



**Fig. XV:** Cremona, Saint Mary Cathedral

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<sup>10</sup> Cremona expanded its area quite early, in fact other cities as Pavia, Bergamo, Novara and Como built new surrounding walls from 1250 to 1280. See: Giancarlo Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medioevale* (Torino, 1998, reprinted 2003), pp. 32 – 33.

<sup>11</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 294.

<sup>12</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, in, *Storia di Cremona dall’alto medioevo all’età comunale* (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 283.

<sup>13</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 294.



**Fig. XVI:** Cremona, Church of Saint Agatha

The city was divided into four districts corresponding to four gates: Ariberti, Natali, Pertusio and St Laurence. It was also divided internally into parishes each of which had a kind of administrative independence expressed through a consul and a district board<sup>14</sup>. The territory, too, was divided into parishes or tithings, but here the situation was more complicated because in the countryside there were free cities, such as Crema, rural communes that could have their own Podestà and councils and “Borghi Franchi”, like Soncino or Castelleone, whose citizens enjoyed the civil status of the citizens of Cremona<sup>15</sup>.

The way in which the north Italian cities achieved their autonomy was different in each case but we can identify some stages that were common to all:

- a) 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries: government of the consuls who belonged to the city aristocracy.
- b) Late 12<sup>th</sup> century: the last stage of the struggle between northern Italian cities and the empire that led to the government of the first citizen called “Podestà”.
- c) Mid-13<sup>th</sup> century: government of the “Podestà” sharing power side by side with the people’s delegates.
- d) 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>16</sup>: seigneurial government as a consequence of the struggle between factions<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 348, note 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 349 - 351.

<sup>16</sup> Elisa Occhipinti, *L’Italia dei comuni. Secoli XI – XIII* (Roma, 2000), p. 21.

Cremona conformed to this general pattern and here we will focus particularly on the second stage which saw, as a corollary, a necessary shift in the bishop's power. In Cremona, as elsewhere, a solution to the struggle between the aristocracy in power and the *populus* was found in replacing the consuls with an external and foreign person, the Podestà<sup>18</sup>. However, this was only a temporary answer as both parties were afraid that this could help the other get power permanently. Moreover the more influential people of both parties did not wish to give power to foreign persons coming from cities that had less developed forms of government than Cremona<sup>19</sup>. Sometimes it happened that the city even elected two different Podestà, one for the old part of the city, and the other for Città – Nova; the Podestà for Città - Nova was elected by the *populus*, organised in a new institution born at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century called “*Societas Populi*”. The troubled situation is underlined by the struggle which followed the election as Podestà of Girardus de Carpenta in 1182<sup>20</sup>. He represented the noble part of the city and this fact unchained the hatred between factions. The *populus* detached itself from the commune, and the Città – Nova elected as Podestà Guazzone di Albrigone dei Guazzoni, in 1184<sup>21</sup>. According to Menant it is paradoxical to think that a Podestà could have brought about the detachment of the *populus*, because the Podestà was by definition called to pacify the city<sup>22</sup>. It can be argued, on the contrary, however that the Podestà could have been the pacifier of the city if he had really represented the whole city, but in this case the first Podestà represented only the old and aristocratic part of the city, which is why the *populus* elected another Podestà. In 1184 there were again two Podestà, the same Guazzone for the *populus*, and Girardo da Dovara elected for the aristocracy,

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<sup>17</sup> In the particular case of Cremona the autonomy of the commune ended in 1334 when the city was taken over by the Visconti.

<sup>18</sup> The supreme magistrate was the Podestà, a foreign person who had different tasks. His main duty during peace time was to administer justice and to coordinate the different political parties of the town in order to give social stability to the city. During war time, he led the army on the battlefield and he had to defend the city (as well as Borghi Franchi) from external and internal enemies.

<sup>19</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311): il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, in, *La Storia di Cremona, dall’alto medioevo al’età comunale*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 295.

<sup>20</sup> Girardus de Carpenta, first Podestà elected in Cremona. L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, in, *CDC*, p. 179. Also: *Annales Cremonenses*. In, *MGH SS*, Tomus XXXI, ed. Holder Egger, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, p. 180.

<sup>22</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311): il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 292.

testifying to the political division of the city. As Dovara was killed during the year 1184, Guazzone remained the only Podestà into 1185. We then find consuls elected under pressure from the imperial legate. The struggle between the government of the consuls and the government of Podestà lasted up to 1230 when Frederic II tried to put order into the situation<sup>23</sup>.

It seems evident from this situation<sup>24</sup> that the politicians were not able to resolve the situation because of the lack of internal unity. The factions represented a division between the “capitanei” and vavasours who belonged to the aristocracy and the families of the *populus* who were enriched by the reclaiming of lands for agriculture near the embankments of the river Po and the strong commercial activities<sup>25</sup>. The city needed a neutral person, someone who was *superpartes*. This person was found in the bishop. Two successive bishops filled this role:

Bishop Sicardo elected in 1185 – d. 1215

Bishop Omobono elected in 1216 – d. 1248

In addition to the sources previously mentioned this chapter is based on the documents included in *Codice Diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona* which includes all the documents available in relation to the cathedral and the cathedral chapter from the IX century to mid XIII century<sup>26</sup>. Important sources of information are also the *Annales Cremonenses* and the *Supplementum Annalium Cremonensium*, both included in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum*, and the research carried out by Lorenzo Astegiano in the *Serie dei rettori di Cremona fino al 1335*. On St Homobonus I have studied the research of Daniele Piazzini who has depicted the life and deeds of Omobono based on the analysis of the medieval texts, “*Cum orbita*

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<sup>23</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311): il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 293.

<sup>24</sup> The case of Cremona is no different from those of other cities in the north of Italy such as Milano, Brescia, Bergamo, where the Podestà arose because it was no longer possible to control the struggles between factions and it was necessary to have a single magistrate. Usually this phase, as in Cremona, happened around 1180 and lasted up to 1220, even though between 1180 and 1200 sometimes we could have alternation between the Podestà and the consuls. See: Massimo Vallerani, ‘L’affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazioni degli assetti istituzionali’, In, *Storia d’Italia VI*, ed. Giuseppe Galasso (Torino, 1998), p. 387.

<sup>25</sup> (Cremona, 11 May 1189), in, *CC*, iv, n 683 pp. 128 – 130. This document is telling us about the existence of some special consuls for the merchants testifying the power of this category at the end of 1190. See also: F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, pp. 288-289.

<sup>26</sup> See: V. Leoni, *Codice Diplomatico della Cattedrale di Cremona*, pp. 11-14.

*solis*”, “*Labentibus annis*”, “*Quonian historiae*”, and 16<sup>th</sup> century documents about his life<sup>27</sup>.

The episcopacy of Sicardo was of great importance in terms of the evolution of the bishop’s power. He was elected before 23 August 1185 by the canons of Cremona<sup>28</sup> after having had experience as *scholasticus* at the cathedral of Magonza<sup>29</sup>. He was a magister in theology and in canon law. According to G. Andenna the canons elected Sicardo because he was very close to the Pope, having been in the Papal Curia for a long time, and because they needed someone to put order into the political situation. The hypothesis that his election represented a change in the policy of the church of Cremona is supported by Emilio Giazzi who considers the recently classified manuscripts of the Archives of Cremona to be parts of the “Bibbia Atlantica”<sup>30</sup>. This is significant because having these kinds of manuscripts in the church during the 12<sup>th</sup> century was a sign that it totally and loyally shared papal policy in terms of religious reform<sup>31</sup>.

As soon as Sicardo was instituted in the cathedral he immediately faced a problem which was indicative of how he would proceed. This was in relation to the castle of Maleo, a legacy from the past, and a problem that was unsolved because the people involved failed to turn up in court<sup>32</sup>. The problem of this feudal investiture reveals an

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<sup>27</sup> I have studied the sources analysed by Daniele Piazzzi whose work I have read with great profit. Although the sources for Bishop Sicardo are relatively limited the interpretation of his episcopate offered here is entirely my own. See: Daniele Piazzzi, *Omobono di Cremona. Biografie dal XIII and XVI secolo* (Cremona, 1991).

<sup>28</sup> For his origins, his provenience and his surname see: L. Astegiano. *Codex Diplomaticus Cremonae*. Vol. II, p. 171, note 3. Ercole Brocchieri, ‘Sicardo di Cremona e la sua opera letteraria’ In, *Annali della biblioteca governativa e libreria civica*, 11, 1 (Cremona, 1958), p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Maria Rosa Cortesi, ‘Libri memoria e cultura a Cremona secoli IX – XIV’. p. 232.

<sup>30</sup> For the Atlantic Bible and its spread in Europe see: Paola Supino Martini, ‘Origine e diffusione della Bibbia Atlantica’, <[http://bibbie.cea.unicas.it/testi/supino.pdf/ExFile\\_view2](http://bibbie.cea.unicas.it/testi/supino.pdf/ExFile_view2)> [accessed 18 November 2010]. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré, ‘Le Bibbie Atlantiche Toscane’, <[http://bibbie.cea.unicas.it/testi/ciardi.pdf/ExFile\\_view2](http://bibbie.cea.unicas.it/testi/ciardi.pdf/ExFile_view2)> [accessed 18 November 2010]. The Atlantic Bibles, so called because of their huge dimensions, were issued during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries and were part of the numerous initiatives that Popes, just before and just after Gregory VII, used to reform the life of the clergy. These codes and manuscripts tried to give the correct interpretation of the Bible, providing a new mean to renew the life of the clergy and at the same time to fight against the growing power that the German emperors wanted to exert within the life of the church.

<sup>31</sup> Emilio Giazzi, ‘Fragmenta codicum, la biblioteca e lo scriptorium presso la cattedrale di Cremona. Codici atlantici per una solenne liturgia’, in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città. La cattedrale di Cremona al centro della vita culturale, politica ed economica, dal Medio Evo all’età moderna*, ed. Dario Cimorelli (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), pp. 76-78.

<sup>32</sup> “...*causam de Malleo inter predictum domnum electum et predictos dominos de Melegnano, quia hodie est die peremptorii quodbdedimus eis et non stat per nos quod nos non finimum causam, set stat per ispos dominos qui non venerunt ad terminum consti<tu>tum et per Alliotum de Curte et*

element of paramount importance in understanding the changing power and role of the bishop. According to medieval right there was a difference between the role of the arbiter and the role of the judge. In general terms an arbiter was elected by two sides in a dispute, while a judge was appointed by the local council,<sup>33</sup> in this case the commune of Cremona. The main difference is that an arbiter could not issue a sentence if one of the two sides that had elected him did not show up, whereas a judge had always the right to issue his sentence. Sicardo could not solve this problem, because one of the two parties did not appear in the court, making him much closer to the limited power of the arbiter than to the absolute of the judge. This contrasts with the preceding period when the bishop could simply issue sentences in his tribunal. Clearly both the ecclesiastical authority and the commune were interested in solving the judicial problems<sup>34</sup>, because justice was one of the main ways in which power was exercised and because both were concerned to have a well-ordered society. Paradoxically enough this desire for a disciplined society was sometimes hampered by the difficulties of the legal system<sup>35</sup>. According to Massimo Vallerani the different local procedures, the changes in medieval justice, the new interpretations of the justice system based on the “*Decretals*” of Innocent III (the canons issued by the Lateran Council IV in 1215), the laws issued by Frederick II against heresy<sup>36</sup> and the struggle between the Podestà and the bishop for primacy in the administration of justice had created a system where religious and lay courts overlapped and where the law was administered by the Podestà and the judges quite empirically.

His role as arbiter is central in the interpretation of the episcopacy of Sicardo offered here. As we examine his various concerns and functions, many of them essentially

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*Martinum de Arzago sotos nostros ad hanc causam conoscendam, qui similiter non venerunt, et libenter finiremus si essent presentes”. Carta Sententiae, (Cremona 28-29 Settembre, 1185), in, CC, iv, n. 633, pp. 18 – 20.*

<sup>33</sup> Massimo Vallerani, *La giustizia pubblica medievale* (Bologna, 2005), p. 23.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 31.

<sup>35</sup> Between the XII and the XIII centuries we have two different patterns of trial that develop contemporaneously:

- 1) The triadic method that foresees three main protagonists: the accuser, the defendant and the judge. In this trial the judge has to fulfil or to try to fulfil the request of the accuser to give satisfaction to him.
- 2) The method of the inquisition that can take place even without the accuser, in which the aim is to punish the accused and in which the judge is looking for the absolute truth.

See: Massimo Vallerani, *La giustizia pubblica medievale*, pp. 76 – 80.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 34 – 37.

intertwined, it is necessary to be constantly aware of this role. It was always in the background, always asserting itself.

If justice represented one crack in the power of late 12<sup>th</sup> century bishops, the religious control of the lay population was another. This had already been under severe scrutiny by the papacy and had received special attention by Stefano di Tournai and Ugucione da Pisa who, commenting on the “*Decretum Gratiani*”, regarded the sacrament of marriage as the proper lay status,<sup>37</sup> and sought a reformation of lay habits and customs. The bishop’s personal interest in pastoral care is witnessed by a letter of Urban III sent on 14 November 1186, the Pope stating that no priest or monk could obtain pastoral care of souls in the diocese without the permission of the bishop<sup>38</sup>.

The bishop’s duties involved a strong relationship with the canons and we find Sicardo willing to find an agreement with them. He prepared his *Constitutiones* for their personal benefit and for the admission of new canons into the group<sup>39</sup>. The bishop wanted to state the supremacy of the episcopacy clearly. In 1179 – 1180 he wrote a “*Summa Canonum*” as a comment of the “*Decretum Gratiani*” in order to make the “*Decretum*” itself accessible to less cultivated people<sup>40</sup>. After the death of Pope Urban III in 1187, the newly elected Gregory VIII confirmed the role and the possessions of the church of Cremona<sup>41</sup>. According to this the bishop could control the election of the canons, and all people belonging to the churches in the diocese had to show obedience to him<sup>42</sup>. However, the canons seem to have had some room for manoeuvre because in three different documents<sup>43</sup> we see them investing lay people with properties and asking for or exchanging rights with private owners.

The bishop also led the editing/compilation of the so called *Codex Sicardi* or the cartulary of the church of Cremona, containing documents dated between 730 and

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<sup>37</sup> Luigi Prosdocimi, ‘Lo stato di vita laicale nel diritto canonico dei secoli XI e XII’, in, *I Laici nella societas Christiana dei secoli XI e XII. Atti della terza settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 21 – 27 Agosto 1965* (Milano, 1968), p. 57.

<sup>38</sup> E. Brocchieri, *Sicario di Cremona e la sua opera letteraria*, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> See: P. F. Kehr, *Papsturkunden in Italien. (Acta Pontificum Romanorum). Reiseberichte zur Italia Pontificia III*, n 10, (Città del Vaticano, 1977) pp. 267 – 269.

<sup>40</sup> E. Brocchieri, *Sicario di Cremona e la sua opera letteraria*, p. 32. See also: Valeria Leoni, ‘Privilegia episcopii Cremonensis’, in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città*, p. 66, note 110.

<sup>41</sup> (2 Novembre 1187). *CC*,iv, n 657, pp. 64 – 69..

<sup>42</sup> P.F. Kehr, *Italia Pontificia*, Vol. VI, part 1, Lombardia, n 46, p. 273.,.

<sup>43</sup> Valeria Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 148, p. 77; n 149, pp. 77-78; n 150, p. 78.

1331<sup>44</sup>. The studies and researches of Valeria Leoni have elucidated the *Codex Sicardi*. The Codex is not unique within its genre as a *liber iurium* or cartulary, but it has some characteristics which are particularly striking. Most of the documents included in it date back to the period before the episcopate of Sicardo and they deal with the process which led to the foundation of the diocese and the administrative, juridical and jurisdictional rights of the bishop. It reflects a period of peace and harmony between the episcopacy and the commune of Cremona<sup>45</sup>. It seems that Sicardo wished to state the rights of the episcopacy in order to underline his role and his position in the new political environment. Moreover the fact that the majority of the documents deal with the territory and the diocese seems to confirm the idea that the bishop wanted a record of the bishop's privileges and prerogatives and at the same time to show the commune how important and fundamental the episcopacy had been in the establishment of the diocese and of the city.

The control of the territory and its religious organisation required the full attention of the bishop. This is testified by the quarrel that Sicardo had with the Abbess of St Julia in Brescia who had built a church on the property of the monastery without asking his permission<sup>46</sup>. In the same way he could exercise power over other old monasteries. In the words of Andenna: "Sicardo with the help of the Papacy has become the leader of his diocese"<sup>47</sup>. This attention towards the diocese was no doubt motivated partly by the need to have direct access to the revenues of the parishes, but it also responded to the need to organise proper pastoral care. All of these strands suggest that in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century the role of the bishop began to shift towards religious rather than military control.

The new role of arbiter that the bishop was slowly carving out for himself included relations with the Emperor, and Sicardo had already had experience of this. Indeed before becoming bishop of Cremona he was appointed as apostolic sub-deacon by Pope Lucius III and was sent in 1183 to Frederick I in order to organize the meeting

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<sup>44</sup> Valeria Leoni, 'Privilegia episcopii Cremonensis', in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>45</sup> Valeria Leoni, 'Privilegia episcopii Cremonensis', in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città*, pp. 54 – 73.

<sup>46</sup> P.F. Kehr, *Italia Pontificia*, Vol. VI, part1, Lombardia, nos 48 – 49, p. 273. The Abbess seems to have been quite used to dispute and quarrells as there is a document dated 1194 which testifies that the Abbess was condemned to give back a house which the monastery detained illegally to its legitimate owner. Valeria Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 166, p. 84.

<sup>47</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 80.



between the emperor and the Pope that took place in 1184 in Verona<sup>48</sup>. He was sent to Germany by Pope Lucius III and subsequently sent by the commune of Cremona to talk to Frederick I again in 1188<sup>49</sup>. The people of Cremona sought the rebuilding of the fortress of Castel Manfredi<sup>50</sup> that the emperor had destroyed two years before. This castle had been built in 1183 to defend the right embankment of the river Serio against Milan. The emperor refused. Consequently Bishop Sicardo called Aliotto da Corte<sup>51</sup> and Guarizzone di Bressanoro<sup>52</sup> who each had one half of the court of Bressanoro<sup>53</sup> which included the place where Castel Manfredi stood and convinced them to give their halves to the church. The “Da Corte” family would succeed to the whole. The cost of this operation was 1200 “inforziati” paid by the bishop but, according to Andenna, with money given by the people of the commune of Cremona<sup>54</sup>. Aliotto, who had himself received feudal investiture by Sicardo, gave, on 7 November 1188, feudal investiture on behalf of the bishop to the Archpriest da Bressanoro who, after eight days, gave the court into the hands of Bishop Sicardo<sup>55</sup>. That the commune of Cremona was involved in this operation is testified by document n 671<sup>56</sup> of the Carte Cremonesi where the Podestà, Gherardo, promised that nobody would interfere or buy anything in the court of Bressanoro without the permission of the bishop or of Aliotto da Corte. An interesting feature of this document is that the Podestà is called “**Dominus comes potestas**”; hitherto it was the bishop who was called “*episcopus et comes*”. It is evident that the commune that

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<sup>48</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 297. See also this text p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p. 297, note 2.

<sup>50</sup> The name Castel Manfredi comes from the name of the Podestà of Cremona Manfredo Fante, of that year. See, M. T. Pavese – G. Carubelli, *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone. La nascita di un borgo franco cremonese nel XII secolo*, p. 51.

<sup>51</sup> CC, iv, n 668, pp. 89 – 96.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* n 667, pp. 88 – 89. Guarizonis de Brexanore probably died in 1189 and is mentioned in the obituary for having expressed a will leaving “*decem libras infortiatorum si ibi iacueri*”; ten pounds to the cathedral if he would be buried there. Valeria Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 158, pp. 81-82.

<sup>53</sup> The court was called in Latin *Brixianorum* because stood on the road for *Brixia*, modern Brescia.

<sup>54</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 81. See: CC, iv, n 668, pp. 89-96. See also: CDC, i, n 460, p. 168. Both the last two documents say: *mille ducente libre infortiatorum*. The bishop promised: *1200 libre infortiatorum* in three year plus, 40 *libre infortiatorum* each year up to the end of the debt.

<sup>55</sup> “*Aliottus de Curte nomine domni Sychardi cremonensis episcopi et episcopii Cremonae, et ipso domno episcopo ratum habente, misit Archipresbiterum de Brixanorio in tenutam de Castro Manfredi [...] transactis octo diebus, mittat infrascriptum domnum episcopum in tenutam de curte et castro Brixanorii*”. In, CC, iv, n 670, pp. 98 – 99.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* n 671, pp. 99 – 100.

controls the city is now beginning to control the “contado”<sup>57</sup>. It seems indeed to emerge from these documents that the commune teamed up with the bishop to get round the emperor’s prohibition to fortify the place. It was subsequently declared that all people living in Castelleone had to swear loyalty to the commune of Cremona and that the commune would fortify the place, create a market and not make the citizens living there pay taxes<sup>58</sup>. Thus the construction of a new castle “Castrum Leonis” led to the foundation of the Borgo Franco of Castelleone<sup>59</sup>. (Fig. XVII)

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<sup>57</sup> The issue of the titles *dominus et comes* given to the bishops at this date is quite controversial and raises more questions than provides answers. According to the research of Andenna, in the X century only the emperor, a king, bishop, or abbot and abbess could be called “*dominus*”. From XI century onward this title was given to lay people as well, to the count or marquis for example when they administered justice in the name of the king. This does not necessarily imply that the bishop had completely lost his power, however it seems to indicate a shift or a change in the power of the laymen and ecclesiastics surrounding the bishop. It is difficult to ascertain if this process was more a shift or a rupture, but certainly in the XII century the title *dominus* was given to religious persons belonging to the chapter of the cathedral, to the other important members of the clergy and to a lord on whom vassals depended, meaning the owner of their land, and also to the consuls of the commune of Cremona. Many of the consuls of the commune had acquired political power by being part of the bishop’s entourage; many others belonged to emerging families who were looking to establish themselves politically in the city. What we can see is that we must consider the consuls of the commune as “*domini*” in the original meaning that is as people who have power and who ruled land or part of the city under the shield of an authority, in this case the commune. G. Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medioevale*, pp. 80-87.

<sup>58</sup> CC, iv, n 672, pp. 101 – 102.

<sup>59</sup> The place is nowadays called Castelleone; name which comes from the second Castel that Bishop Sicardo built there: Castrum Leonis.

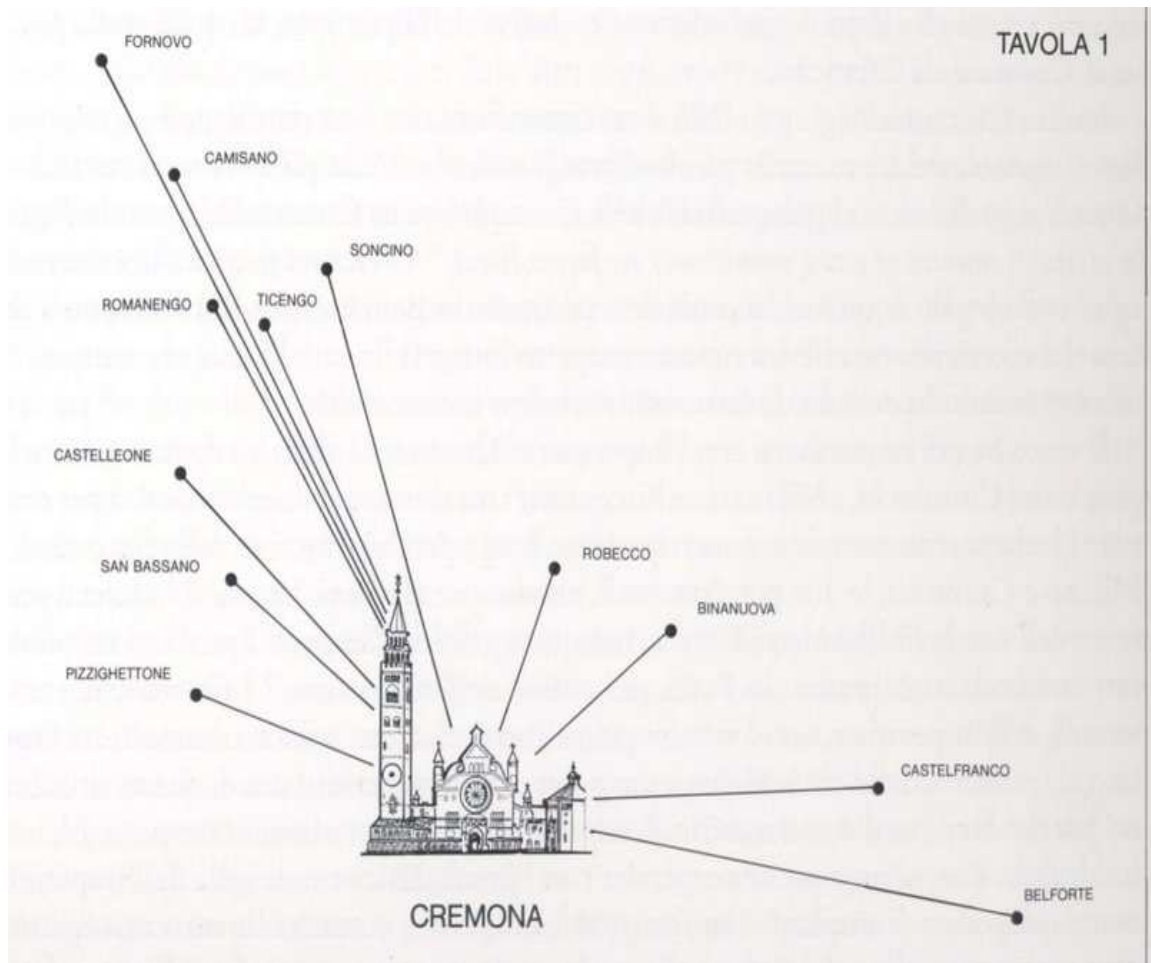


investiture, it was the commune that issued the guarantee. The agreement over Castel Manfredi was concluded on 1 December 1188, when Aliotto (and Guarizzone) surrendered into the hands of the bishop all rights over the court of Bressanoro, Castel Manfredi and the borough of Castelleone<sup>61</sup>. It is easy to see that on this particular occasion the bishop took the part of the commune of Cremona and that the two institutions were working together, a sign of the solid agreement between the commune and the bishop that would continue for at least another 30 years. All of this suggests that the bishop was not frightened by the new institution in the town and that the commune was not concerned about the military power of the bishop, which in any case was declining<sup>62</sup>. Furthermore the commune not only freed the people of Castelleone from paying taxes, but even asked the people living there to swear loyalty to the city. What we see is an increasing mixing of the roles and responsibilities of the bishop and the commune.

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<sup>61</sup> *CC*, iv, n 675, pp. 108 – 111.

<sup>62</sup> *CDC*, i, nos 459 – 466, pp. 168 – 175.



**Fig. XVIII : The Borghi Franchi of Cremona. Picture taken from, *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone*.**

It must be said, however, that during the construction of another fortress, near the Borgo Franco of Soncino, the bishop acted in a very different way. Even in this situation the bishop supported the commune of Cremona, but in this case the bishop wanted a fortress built near the church of Saint Antony in Fornovo. (Fig. XVIII) He kept for the episcopacy the jurisdictional rights over the court, especially in cases such as homicide, adultery, violence and robbery. Moreover he wanted the right to raise taxes from trade, fishing and grazing rights. Here both the bishop and the podestà are called *Comes*<sup>63</sup>. In this case it seems that investiture was made personally by the bishop who reinforced his authority by asking for possession of the fortress.

<sup>63</sup> *Domnus Sycardus Dei gratia Cremonensis comes et episcopus decrevit et constituit hedificare castrum et construere in loco seu curte Fornovi. Quod quidem castrum comes Ghirardus tunc temporis, quando erat potestas civitatis Cremonae, nomine communis Cremonae statuit esse liberum sicut est castrum Soncini. CC, iv, n 685, pp. 131 – 135. See also: Akty Kremony, Vol. I, ed. S.A. Anniskii, n 71, pp. 186 – 188. G. Andenna, 'Le Istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 81.*

The commune declared the castle to be as free as the castle of Soncino. The land belonged to the bishop, who acted as a feudal lord, confirming that his power as a lord still existed but that it was flanked by the authority of commune. The two powers were relying on each other in order to achieve their goals. The difference between this and the previous example is that here the bishop kept rights over justice and some rights over taxes, whereas in the previous example the commune sought the loyalty of the city. The difference could be that in this second case the commune was not concerned about this fortress because it did not see the bishop as a danger. This left the bishop to act freely. On his side the bishop considered the fortress and everything related to it as a possession, a feudal possession, and probably wanted to judge crimes that he thought were related to his Christian duty of pastoral care. He could not do the same with Castelleone most probably because in that case the commune was concerned to safeguard the boundaries of the city territory. Castelleone was on the border between Milan and Cremona and the commune of Cremona was deeply concerned to defend its land against the attack from the “Milanese”. Fornovo was important too, but it was in the area where the commune already had the “Borgo Franco” of Soncino which performed a defensive role. Moreover Fornovo was towards the border between Cremona and Bergamo, a less dangerous city than Milan.

The commune was now the primary institution in terms of defence of the territory now beginning to be identified with the diocese. It was therefore much concerned that people would take its side in case of war. For this reason it waived taxes for those living in Castelleone and asked for their loyalty to the city. Another document, moreover, reinforces the point. Here the Podestà of Cremona asked some lords living in the place called Trigolo to build a tower there<sup>64</sup>. In other cases the podestà himself was directly the owner of lands, castles and boroughs in the countryside, as testified by a document dated 1192<sup>65</sup> in which the land which the castle and the borough of Romanengo were built on were sold to the counsellor of Ugucione, Podestà of Cremona.

The commune of Cremona reached a high point in its power during the period of the destruction of Crema and Milan. This is shown by the buildings and towers raised in the town, and by its level of trade. During the period of the first Lombard League

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<sup>64</sup> CC, iv, n 686, pp. 135 – 136.

<sup>65</sup> Valeria Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 162, p. 83.

Cremona was surely the most important centre in Lombardy. Its power came essentially from trading on the Po, which is why its citizens had fought strongly since the time of the Emperor Otto III to get control over the river. Moreover,<sup>66</sup> there is evidence that Cremona enjoyed some industrial production. Given that in the middle ages there was little difference in the production of goods between city and city or between state and state, every city produced more or less the same things<sup>67</sup>. It was therefore extremely important to be able to control trade in order to secure funds.

Leaving aside the investiture and the construction of the fortress in Fornovo, we can see that, even in relation to military or military related operations, the role of the bishop was primarily that of an arbiter. This is clear when he made peace between the cities of Cremona and Milan in 1191 - 1192<sup>68</sup>. Furthermore, after having come back from the crusade<sup>69</sup>, Sicardo was employed as a legate for the Pope in Lombardy to pacify the cities<sup>70</sup>, a function which once again underlines the fact that his role was not of military commander as Oberto had been but of mediator.

Sicardo received favours from the papacy but he also came under pressure. Innocent III indeed “ordered” him in 1201 to accept as canon Gerald nephew of Girardus de Ripariis as sub-deacon of the cathedral and to give him the prebend the sub-deacon enjoyed<sup>71</sup>. Sicardo also acted as an arbiter in the war between Cremona and Piacenza 1201 – 1202, writing in his “Cronaca”: *Anno Domini MCCII, Inter Cremonenses et Placentinos pacis federa componuntur*<sup>72</sup> even if in consequence of this war the commune obliged not only the people of Piacenza, but also the clergy to pay taxes to it and the Pope issued excommunication against the city<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del Comune di Cremona fino al 1334’ pp. 358 - 360, in particular p. 358, note 2.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* p. 367.

<sup>68</sup> Edward Coleman, ‘Sicard of Cremona as legate of Innocent III in Lombardy’, in, *Innocenzo III urbs et orbis*, Vol. II, ed. Andrea Sommerlechner (Roma, 2003), p. 941.

<sup>69</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 83. See also: *CDC*, ii, p. 297 note 2, underlined the fact that Bishop Sicardo left for the Middle East in 1202 as Papal legate. About Sicardo’s participation to the IV crusade. V. Leoni, ‘Privilegia episcopii Cremonensis’, p. 58, note 50.

<sup>70</sup> *Sycardus Dei gratia cremonensis episcopus et comes et apostolice sedis ad predicandum et faciendum pacem in Lombardia legatus*. In, *CDC*, i, n 111, pp. 215 – 217.

<sup>71</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 188, p. 90.

<sup>72</sup> *Sicardi Episcopi Cremonensis Cronica*. In, *MGH SS*, Tomus XXXI, ed. Holder Egger (Hannover, 1903), p. 177.

<sup>73</sup> *CDC*, i, p. 202, n 5.

In the meantime the chapter showed the ability to operate autonomously in financial terms. This is demonstrated by two documents<sup>74</sup> in which they acquired properties in the diocese without the bishop being involved. However Sicardo was very active on this front, especially in controlling the role and the function of the canons whose number and prebends the bishop wanted to be no more than fifteen<sup>75</sup>. He was active in the countryside too. He tried to regulate the number of canons in the church of Sabbioneta<sup>76</sup> and in the church of St John of the Desert in Grontardo he established rules for the nuns living there<sup>77</sup>. In 1206 Sicardo, with the approval of the canons of the cathedral and the *prepositus* of the “*pieve*” of Arzago, established the number of canons who should dwell in the church of Arzago and in other churches near the *pieve*<sup>78</sup>. The bishop was not an inflexible master. Indeed, on the 21 December 1209 Sicardo obtained the possession of the church of Sts Cosmas and Damian and the church of St Vital<sup>79</sup> in Cremona and on the following day gave to the clerics of those churches the rights to appoint the canons and the prelate attending them, the only obligation being that the prelate must be subsequently confirmed by the bishop<sup>80</sup>.

The economic situation of the diocese was another matter which required the full attention of the bishop. A document testifies that in 1197 he gave to the archpriest of the cathedral, Pietro, part of the tithes and the *honor et districtus* over the *castrum et curtis* of Casulbuttano, specifying that were the canons in the future to sell those rights and those properties, the bishop would have the first option on them. Moreover he established that the right to tithes would not be transferred to anybody apart from the bishop<sup>81</sup>.

The archpriest Pietro and the canons were particularly active between 1203 and 1206, giving and exchanging lands in the diocese with private owners. Their power was reinforced by the fact that in this period Bishop Sicardo was almost certainly away on the Fourth Crusade. The bishop indeed is never mentioned among the witnesses

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<sup>74</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 167 pp. 84-85; n 168, p. 85.

<sup>75</sup> For a comparative example about the cathedral chapter of the city of Brescia see: Nicolangelo D'Acunto, 'La pastorale nei secoli centrali del Medioevo. Vescovi e canonici', pp. 88-93.

<sup>76</sup> Elisabetta Filippini, 'Fragmenta codicum. La Biblioteca e lo scriptorium presso la cattedrale di Cremona. Il vescovo Sicardo ed il suo tempo (1185-1215)', in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città. La cattedrale di Cremona al centro della vita culturale, politica ed economica, dal Medio Evo all'età moderna*, ed. Dario Cimorelli (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), p. 162.

<sup>77</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 163, p. 83.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* n 205, pp. 95-96.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* n 232, p. 104.

<sup>80</sup> This agreement would afterwards be confirmed by another document. See: V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 235, p. 105.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* n 175, p. 87.



about investitures or any other transaction<sup>82</sup>. It is very interesting that<sup>83</sup> *Sanctus Naçarius* was declared to be vassal of the chapter and not, as we would have expected, of the bishop of Cremona. It seems there was or had been some sort of division of estates between the vassals of the bishop and the vassals of the chapter. In another document<sup>84</sup> we come across Balduino *de Salothe* who declared himself to be one of the vassals of Bishop Sicardo receiving with this title some lands in the countryside and some rights over the tithes. The same procedure had been followed<sup>85</sup> when Anselmo, Guido, Guglielmo, Bernardo, Ambrogio and others all enjoying the title of *capitanei* from Casalbuttano, declared themselves to be vassals of Bishop Sicardo and received lands from him as a feudal investiture.

Without doubt one of the most significant “actions” which would categorize the bishop as a “pacifier and arbiter” was the proposal that is called the “Lodo di Sicardo”. This was an agreement to soothe the rivalry and a struggle for power between the Commune, controlled by nobles, and the “*Societas Populi*”. Politically speaking the situation in Cremona was not very different from other cities of the period. There was a single council called the “*credenzia/ credenza*” in addition to the “*arengo*” which was the main town council<sup>86</sup>. The “*credenzia*” was so called because its members were trusted by the city<sup>87</sup>, and it was elected by the “*capitanei*”, vavasours and bourgeoisie, most of whom belonged to the bishop’s entourage or were his vassals<sup>88</sup>.

The members of the Arengo council<sup>89</sup> gathered together either in the bishop’s court, “*Curia Episcopi*”<sup>90</sup>, in the cathedral<sup>91</sup> or on the main square in front of it,<sup>92</sup> a sign of the strong link between those who controlled the commune and the bishop’s

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<sup>82</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, nn 194-203, pp. 92-95.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* n 206, p. 96.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* n 210, p. 97.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* n 224, pp 101-102.

<sup>86</sup> Lorenzo Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 325.

According to Astegiano (p. 325, note 1) the name Arengo comes from Ring because during the Carolingian period there was a circle around the people who were judging.

<sup>87</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 325, note 8.

<sup>88</sup> U. Gualazzini, ‘Il populus di Cremona e l’autonomia del comune’, p. 77.

<sup>89</sup> According to Astegiano they are mentioned for the first time on 18 June 1118. See: L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 325.

<sup>90</sup> (18 June 1118). *CDC*, i, n 36, p. 100.

<sup>91</sup> (8 September, 1180). *CDC*, i, n 361, p. 181,

<sup>92</sup> (9 May 1192), in, *CDC*, I, n 503, p. 181. (11 March 1215), in, *CDC*, i, n 111, p. 215. (13 November 1266), in, *CDC*, i, n 879, p. 339.

entourage. The documents that tell us about the meeting of these councils show that in 1170<sup>93</sup>, and in 1171<sup>94</sup>, for instance, the meetings were in the “*Palatio Cremonae*”, the bishop’s palace. In 1174<sup>95</sup> it was called “*Palatio Episcopii civitatis Cremonae*” and in 1185<sup>96</sup> “*Palatio Cremonae et episcopii*”. In these three documents we can see sketched in brief the evolution of the power of the commune. At the beginning it is as if the palace of the bishop was identified with the city, and vice versa. Then we have the bishop and the city placed at the same level. Finally the place of the meeting is called the palace of the city of Cremona and the bishop, as if the bishop was a guest invited by the leading authority of the town, the commune<sup>97</sup>.

The close relationship between those belonging to the public organs of government and the bishop and his entourage, make us understand that in the city there was not a great deal of political leeway. It was like a circle and neither the bishop nor the commune could break it; everything was linked. The proof of this continuous overlap is in a document<sup>98</sup> in which Guglielmo, archpriest of the church of Cremona, absolved the consuls of the cathedral from the excommunication launched against them by the archpriest and the clerics of Pontevico. This matter was not of secondary importance if even Pope Innocent III wanted to know and to have a say in the dispute<sup>99</sup>. Moreover even the chapter and the bishop shared common interests, as is testified by a document<sup>100</sup> in which the archdeacon of the cathedral, Negro, representative of the bishop, and the archpriest, representative of the canons, invested Oddone with the right of tithes over some lands *ultra Padum* (other side of the river Po) which belonged  $\frac{3}{4}$  to the bishop and  $\frac{1}{4}$  to the chapter. The same kind of investiture took place in other parts of the diocese where other people were invested with the same formula.

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<sup>93</sup>(19 December 1170). *CDC*, i, n 263, p. 137 – 138.

<sup>94</sup>(26 August, 1171). *CDC*, i, n 268, p. 139.

<sup>95</sup>(8 October, 1174). *CDC*, i, n 311, p. 145.

<sup>96</sup>(4 – 5 April, 1185). *CDC*, i, n 407, p. 159.

<sup>97</sup>Certainly as Carlo Mor has underlined by the end of the XII century and the middle of the XIII we see a rapid growth of communal palaces, detached from the cathedral or the episcopal curia, as happened in Milan, Padua, Vicenza and Verona, indicating a sort of distance between the bishop and the new authority. However in some other cities, such as Cremona, Pavia, Bergamo and Brescia the communal palace was nearby the cathedral, probably symptomatic of a closer link between communal authority and the bishop and most probably the bishops were acting alongside the commune making the communal policy easier. G.C. Mor, ‘Il trattato di Costanza e la vita comunale italiana’, in, *Popolo e Stato in Italia nell’età di Federico Barbarossa*, ed. G.C. Mor (Torino, 1970), pp. 366 – 367.

<sup>98</sup>V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 225, p. 102.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.* n 226, p 102.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.* n 245, p 108.

Socially speaking the situation became worse when the Podestà appeared on the political scene as the substitute of the consuls. After the riot of 1198 over fiscal problems<sup>101</sup> and again in 1200 – 1201 the city experienced once again the presence of two Podestà, Lanfranco di Rogerio and Beltramo di Rivolta, a symptom that the political situation was still extremely fluid. Indeed on 22 October 1200 both podestà gave to Maltraverso de Madelbertis, podestà of Soncino, the feudal possession of the “borgo franco” of Soncino<sup>102</sup>. From the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century the corporation of merchants and artisans who were called “paratici”<sup>103</sup> began to take part in the government of the city<sup>104</sup>. In 1209 there was an explicit struggle for power between the *societas populi* (also called *Pedites*) and the *societas militum*<sup>105</sup>. In 1210 the struggle between two Podestà, Matteo da Correggio from Parma for the old city and Guglielmo Mastalia, from Cremona for Città-Nova, shook the political fabric<sup>106</sup> in Cremona once again<sup>107</sup>. The main problems were that in order to belong to the commune people had to be rich or noble and that members of the popular party were very often not compensated if they incurred damages during war.<sup>108</sup>

The bishop performed the role of *expected* arbiter in this situation and these expectations surely derived both from his sacred aura as representative of the church together with and from the new role that he sought to have within the city. It is also undeniable that bishops like Arnolfo, Oberto and Medolago, because of their personal behaviour, and because of their different status within the city, could not

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<sup>101</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311): Il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 298.

<sup>102</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 185, p 89.

<sup>103</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 296, note 1.

<sup>104</sup> “*Anno domine incarnationis millesimo ducentesimo nono [...] in pallatio novo Cremonae in pleno consilio pulsante ad campanam et coadunato et cridato per civitatem quod omnes credenderii militum et peditum et consules vicinarum et paraticorum et societatum ad eundem devenirent consilium*”. ‘Codice segnato IHS, (Iesus) oppure Investituram 1206-1225’, in, *CDC*, ii, n 426, p. 120. (4 October, 1209).

<sup>105</sup> *Pedites* and *Militum* were names in order to describe the professions in war. The *pedites* fought on foot and the *milites* by using horses. To have a horse and knight’s weapons according to the ideas of that time gave you nobility, because the nobility was not conceivable detached from the idea of fighting riding the horse. See: L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 296.

<sup>106</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Rettori di Cremona’ p. 182.

<sup>107</sup> “*Iudicium et precepta facta per Sycardum episcopum cremonae, pro discordis componendis inter Matheum de Corigia potestatem comunis Cremonae et Guilelmum Mastalium potestaem societatis populi*”. In, *CDC*, i, n 111, p. 215 – 217. See also: M. Vallerani, ‘L’affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazioni degli assetti istituzionali’, p. 401.

<sup>108</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 297.

have acted in this way; the people and the clergy themselves would not have trusted them. With Sicardo things were different and people do seem to have trusted him. We witness a change in the role of the bishop, interested much more in pastoral care and in his religious duties rather than in military power. Certainly he was still involved in politics, although not as much as in the past, and Sicardo was still an influential member of Cremona's political society. Indeed Gualazzini has written: "in the political chaos one authority only remained above the struggles, the bishop Sicardo"<sup>109</sup>.

The "*Societas Populi*" was formed generally by citizens, merchants, artisans and workers and was opposed to the "*Societas Militum*" that was formed by the ancient lay and ecclesiastical nobility, including the families of "capitanei" and vavasours of the bishop. Both these societies became well established in the town. The town was organized by neighbourhood (*vicinie*), a group of *vicinie* forming a district of the city. The districts of the city took their name from the name of the gates<sup>110</sup>. Although there were other specific societies for merchants or other guilds, the "*Societas populi*" was different because it was a strong political actor in city life<sup>111</sup>. The societies that had grown in the cities found their legitimacy after the wars against the Empire and the Emperors, Frederick I and Frederick II. This was because most of the citizens had fought in the communal militia and wanted an institutional organism that would represent their ideas and aspirations<sup>112</sup>.

Very often, as in Cremona, there was no sharp division between the aristocracy and *populus* in the sense that some aristocratic families used the *Societas populi* against other nobles in order to gain power. The result was that most of the cities in the north of Italy were subjected to severe struggles for power<sup>113</sup>. These struggles provoked a sense of insecurity and fear within the city. Consequently Bishop Sicardo sought to soothe the situation, reconnecting the two main parts of city society. He tried to avoid civil war between the two formations and in the document in which he secured

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<sup>109</sup> U. Gualazzini, 'Il *populus* di Cremona e l'autonomia del comune', p. 84.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* p. 82.

<sup>111</sup> F. Menant, 'Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', p. 296.

<sup>112</sup> In many other Italian cities societies shared political power or tried to be involved in the city administration. In Cremona there was the *Societas Populi*, instead in Milan where the city was bigger the *Societes* were three: "Credenza of Saint Ambrogio" for the artisan, "Motta dei vassalli" for the vassals, and organisation of merchants. In Bergamo the *populus* had "compagnia nova". The nobility formed *societas* as well called *societas militum*.

<sup>113</sup> M. Vallerani, 'L'affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazioni degli assetti istituzionali', pp. 388-390.

peace he called himself an arbiter: “*cum itaque dominus Matheus de Corigia potestas Cremonae et dominus Guilielmus Mastalius potestas societatis populi se meo comisissent arbiter*”<sup>114</sup>. Therefore Sicardo proposed in 1210 to guarantee to the *Societas Populi* 1/3 of the administrative offices of the Commune and especially of the committee that elected the consuls and the Podestà<sup>115</sup>.

What Sicardo did was not completely new. Most of the cities in the north of Italy were experimenting with pacification at that time. What was unusual in Cremona was that the bishop risked placing himself in between the factions<sup>116</sup>. He proposed that the taxes be divided according to the economic situation of each family<sup>117</sup>. The commune would have one Podestà, who had the power of justice against criminals, led the army in battle, raised taxes, and had the right to judge everyone. The *societas populi* and the *societas militum* would retain some autonomy but at the same time were part of the authority that elected the Podestà, the most important authority of the commune, and were subordinated to him<sup>118</sup>. In order to help the poor Sicardo founded a tribunal called “*bancum in ecclesia maiori*” consisting of two people from Città – Nova, two people from the old city and a judge (all paid by the commune) who acted for those who could not pay for their trials.

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<sup>114</sup> CDC, i, n 111, p. 216.

<sup>115</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p 292. For the document, see: CDC, i, n 111, p. 216. “*quod populus totius civitatis Cremonae habeat [terciam] partem eorum qui eliguntur ad eligendum consules vel potestates, et eorum qui eliguntur ad emendandum et ordinandum statutum communis [...] et generaliter habeat terciam partem omnium officiorum et honorum tam annalium quam non annalium ad commune pertinentium*”.

<sup>116</sup> In Milan for instance between 1211 and 1214 the city achieved peace between the noble faction and the *populus* without the mediation of the bishop and the reason was that in Milan even the clergy played a part in this dispute. The canons came from the noble and rich families of the city and wished to control the election of the bishop; on the other side the rest of the clergy, both priests and the representatives of the poor clergy, supported the democratic government of the *populus*. The city of Piacenza experienced dispute and fights between factions in 1219 – 1236 and in this case the turmoil was temporarily brought under control with a “Lodo” issued by the Podestà of the city in 1220. However, this attempt was not enough and some years later the papal and imperial legates had to intervene jointly. In Pavia the struggles led to the emperor Frederic II giving power to Bishop Folco in 1220, but he did not succeed and after some months the situation returned to what it had been before. In Brescia internal turmoil was mediated by a local personality. About the city of Milan, see: Storia di Milano, ‘L’età comunale 1152 – 1310. Dalle lotte contro il Barbarossa al primo signore’, in, Storia di Milano, Vol. IV, ed. Giovanni Treccani (Milano, 1955), pp. 170 – 173. About Piacenza see: M. Vallerani, ‘L’affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazioni degli assetti istituzionali’, p. 405. About Pavia, see: *Ibid.* pp 410 – 411. About Brescia, see: *Ibid.* pp 413 – 414.

<sup>117</sup> “*honoris civitatis, facta extimatione super habundantibus rebus per viros discretos de populo et militibus electos*”. In, CDC, i, n 111, p. 216.

<sup>118</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 83. See also: L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 298. See also: M. Vallerani, ‘L’affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazioni degli assetti istituzionali’, pp. 385 - 414.

Sicardo's motives in acting to pacify the city were certainly religious in a sense, but his role was quite political. The consequences certainly were. He did not need, strictly speaking, to expend his influence on pacifying the city in this way. Obviously a pacified city was much better than a city in turmoil, for him as for others, but he could have left it to the commune to resolve the situation. After all, some of those belonging to the *Societas militum* were his vassals. In doing what he did he went, in some respects, against his own interests. When, for instance, Bishop Arnolfo was thrown out of the town he had used his military power to get back. Bishop Presbitero da Medolago had granted lands and benefits in order to secure his power. Bishop Sicardo on the other hand did not use military power to pacify the situation for two reasons: because his military power was no longer strong enough, and because he simply did not want to solve the problem in this way. His reform seems to have been inspired, as Menant said, "from an undeniable knowledge of the political situation, but also from a strong spirit of Christian *"caritas"* that may have been lacking in his predecessors"<sup>119</sup>. What then were the political consequences? Sicardo's intentions were certainly noble as were his ideas of a pacified city. What he did not figure out and factor in was that by proposing a political agreement to two political parties, the *Societas Populi*, and *Societas Militum*, he implicitly portrayed himself as a political subject too. He certainly did not do it voluntarily, but it is clear that as the bishop was the former leader of the town his political proposal towards this or that solution brought his person and his role down from a religious height to a political level. The change in the role and power of the bishop was not just a matter of losing military power but a shift to a different level of city-life control.

Sicardo was also very active from a purely religious perspective. He tried to regulate the devotion of the people towards their saints<sup>120</sup>, but at the same time to put

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<sup>119</sup> F. Menant, 'Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', p. 298. (My translation).

<sup>120</sup> The cult of the Saints in the Christian religion was very important since the IV century because of the intercession that the saint could make for his protected people. This concept started from the Roman right "*patrocinium*" when a man took under his protection some other men. The middle ages simply transformed this real human protection offered by one man to his protected people into the spiritual protection offered by the Saint who, after the death, will have protected his people from heaven. In certain ways, as Aron Gurevič has underlined, the relationship between the Saint and the population reflected the relationship of loyalty and obedience that the population was experiencing during the middle ages. The servant was loyal to his master in the same way as the farmer was loyal toward his protector Saint. See: Aron Gurevič, *Contadini e Santi. Problemi della cultura popolare nel medioevo* (Turin, 1986) p. 66-70; Réginal Grégoire, *Semantica del cielo e della terra nell'esegesi*

emphasis on the proper forms of religious practice. In 1196 he put the relics of Saint Hymerius and of the martyr Archelaus in the main cathedral<sup>121</sup>. Sicardo was perceived as a unifier of society<sup>122</sup>. His role as an arbiter, or better as potential unifier of society, was evident not just in his “Lodo”, but also when he proposed to the public the cult of a new Saint: Homobonus. Sicardo went to Rome, asked the Pope for his canonization and obtained it<sup>123</sup>. The most important fact about Omobono is that he was a member of the *milites* who at some point in his life decided to follow the profession of merchant. In this way he became closer to the *populus* and because of his new profession he understood better the needs of the population.

Both Andenna<sup>124</sup> and Piazzini<sup>125</sup> have stated that: “Sicardo proposed a Saint like Omobono because it was perfect in order to unify the city that was actually divided between *Societas Militum* and *Societas Populi*”. Omobono was, using Gualazzini’s words, the Saint “per eccellenza” because his religiosity balanced the need for reform with the necessity of following orthodoxy<sup>126</sup>. These opinions are certainly valid but perhaps there is something more. Pope Innocent III canonized him on 12/13 January 1199<sup>127</sup> and Omobono became the first non-noble layman to be canonized by Rome. Before this time one could become a saint only by belonging to the *ordo monasticus* or by being a bishop and therefore a *defensor civitatis*. In Cremona not only Omobono, but also Facio a goldsmith, Geraldo da Colonia a pilgrim, and a

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biblica medievale. In, *Cieli e terre nei secoli XI – XII. Atti della tredicesima settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 22 – 26 Agosto 1995* (Milan, 1998); Roberto Paciocco, *Canonizzazioni e culto dei santi nella Christianitas 1198-1302* (Assisi, 2006), pp. 26-29.

<sup>121</sup> E. Brocchieri, ‘Sicardo di Cremona e la sua opera letteraria’, p. 18.

<sup>122</sup> Indeed G. Andenna has stated that: “The bishop embodied the unity of political classes trying to keep the relation between papacy and empire in balance”. G. Andenna, ‘Episcopato cremonese, capitolo cattedrale, papato e impero nel XIII secolo’, in, *Cremona città imperiale*, ed. G. Andenna (Cremona, 1999), p. 162. (My translation).

<sup>123</sup> Daniele Piazzini, *Omobono di Cremona. Biografie dal XIII al XIV secolo* (Cremona, 1991), p. 86.

<sup>124</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 86 – 87. (My translation).

<sup>125</sup> D. Piazzini, ‘I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e di Sant’Omobono’, In, *Diocesi di Cremona*, ed. A. Caprioli; A. Rimoldi, L. Vaccaro (Brescia, 1998), pp. 77 – 78. (My translation).

<sup>126</sup> U. Gualazzini, *Dalle prime affermazioni del populus di Cremona agli statuti della societas populi del 1229* (Milano, 1937), p. 45.

<sup>127</sup> D. Piazzini, ‘I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e di Sant’Omobono’, p. 84. St Homobonus died on 13 November 1197 and canonized less than 2 years later. The Pope considered him suitable for canonization because of his assiduous prayers, because he gave his money to the poor and because he considered him *pacificus vir*.

farmer producing and selling wine, Alberto da Villa d'Ongina, became saints, all coming from the *populous* at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century<sup>128</sup>.

How might we understand this? Central to it is the idea of profit. Increasing urban wealth and the contemporary profit motive provoked a reaction. This included the papal curia following the “*Decretum Gratiani*”, which saw the merchants as “people not pleasing to God”<sup>129</sup>.

In this new spiritual situation sanctity became a personal “adventure”, a personal commitment, a mediation between the interior spiritual tensions and the external society. The canonization of Omobono was extraordinary but understandable in this context. The Pope himself in his Bulla “*Quia pietas*” underlined the fact that Omobono was a very devoted man committed to works of charity, but emphasised that this must be accompanied by an honourable interior life<sup>130</sup>. According to Vauchez, St Homobonus was canonized despite the fact that he was a merchant because he handed over his property to the poor<sup>131</sup>. This concept of sanctity had very probably reached also the people of the “contado” causing them to look at religious leaders, including the bishop, with different eyes. It is therefore possible that Bishop Sicardo was trying to interpret this religious change on the part of the population, one not wholly perceived by the Roman curia, in accordance with his evolving role in the city. Andrew Brown has argued that in the north of Italy where political power was fractured, new saints could spring up undetected by the Episcopal authority<sup>132</sup>. Although this might have happened, it is undeniable that in the case of St. Homobonus, not only was he detected by the bishop, but was “used” to fulfil a political task. Indeed in pursuing the canonization of St. Homobonus, Sicardo had a political motive. Omobono was a linchpin between the *societas militum* and the *societas populi*. There is no doubt that his actions were religious and not political and Sicardo certainly did want to underline his humility and piety. However he used him in order to achieve not a religious but arguably a political aim: the political unification of the town. This would create difficulties for the church of Cremona and the bishops in the following period.

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<sup>128</sup> D. Piazza, ‘I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e di Sant’Omobono’, p. 80.

<sup>129</sup> André Vauchez, *La spiritualità dell’ occidente medioevale* (Milano, 1978), pp. 84 – 86.

<sup>130</sup> D. Piazza, ‘I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e Sant’Omobono’, p. 81.

<sup>131</sup> A. Vauchez, *La spiritualità dell’ occidente medioevale*, pp. 146 – 150.

<sup>132</sup> A. Brown, *Church and Society in England 1000-1500*, p. 66.



During the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, whoever became extremely rich through commerce or artisanal work was considered a public sinner and had to repent for his sins. Part of his public punishment consisted of giving back the money to those from whom he had taken it. As it was not always possible to track down the specific persons, the money often went to hospitals, monasteries and other religious institutions to increase their patrimony<sup>133</sup>. The curious fact is that nothing of this happened to Omobono, who was a rich man, and was not considered a public sinner. He was a lay man and despite his secular activities (which continued throughout his life) he was canonized. This reinforces my belief that Sicardo, and no doubt the Pope as well, was happy to present St Homobonus as a community unifier. While taking nothing away from the Omobono's sanctity or his actions towards the poor of Cremona, they did so essentially for political reasons rather than religious reasons.

Piazzini has underlined that in the hagiographical work "*Historia de vita beati viri nomine Homobonus*" written and issued in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a transcription of the original hagiographical work written in the 1301<sup>134</sup>, Omobono is underlined as a *conversus*, someone who had started from a different point of view but had reached a new form of material and especially spiritual life<sup>135</sup>. It was in the interests of the bishop to support the popular enthusiasm for this, thereby reducing his dependency upon the old feudal orders and broadening his role. His role of an arbiter in town brought the bishop closer to the new spirituality that was growing up. The bishop needed a new figure on whom to focus the popular mind. As Gurevič has said, few of the local populace would have understood the theological thoughts of Johannes Scotus Eriugena, Anselm of Canterbury, Abelard, or the representatives of the school of Chartres. The bishop needed a simple person who at the same time was different from the older saints with a different spiritual status<sup>136</sup>. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century hagiographical work "*Labentibus annis*"<sup>137</sup> we are told that Omobono perceived clearly the vanity of the world and its richness and this pushed him towards prayers

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<sup>133</sup> Gilles Gerard Meersseman, 'I penitenti nei secoli XI e XII', in, *I laici nella societas Christiana dei secoli XI e XII. Atti della terza settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 21 – 27 Agosto 1965* (Milano, 1968), pp. 322 – 326.

<sup>134</sup> D. Piazzini, *Omobono di Cremona. Biografie dal XIII and XVI secolo*, p. 28.

<sup>135</sup> D. Piazzini, 'I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e di Sant'Omobono', p. 81.

<sup>136</sup> A. Gurevič, *Contadini e Santi. Problemi della cultura popolare nel medioevo*, p. 16.

<sup>137</sup> D. Piazzini, 'I tempi del vescovo Sicardo e di Sant'Omobono', p. 82.

and sacrifice. According to Maria Rosa Cortesi<sup>138</sup> the new saints, like Omobono, arose in this period because the church needed to counter newly emerging heresies like that of the Cathars, who also emphasized the corruption and materiality of the world. Omobono was exactly what the church needed. Indeed during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries the idea gained ground that a saint was an intercessor not only for the salvation of souls but also for the forgiveness of sins. Atonement for sins consisted in pilgrimage to the sepulchre of a Saint and the bishop had a particular role here in verifying that the pilgrims who visited the churches were not cheated with false promises or deceived by the sale of fake relics<sup>139</sup>.

In external matters Sicardo proved a powerful force on behalf of his see and his city. On 6 July 1211, he obtained from Innocent III a letter in which the Pope established that the church of Cremona and its clergy should not be subject to the Metropolitan of Milan<sup>140</sup>. This happened because Milan was still supporting the excommunicated emperor,<sup>141</sup> Otto IV, but it also shows Sicardo's very good diplomatic skills. Moreover the Pope gave to him, *ad personam* the jurisdiction of the territory of Crema that had previously belonged to the diocese and bishop of Piacenza. The reason was the same: because Piacenza had links with Milan and emperor Otto IV<sup>142</sup>. Sicardo seems to have been attuned to the aims of Innocent III<sup>143</sup>, especially where the liberties of the church were concerned and his diplomatic successes reflect this. Subsequently Sicardo and the representatives of the commune, after a long discussion, obtained from Frederick II confirmation of everything that had already been granted to the people of Cremona: the island of Fulchery<sup>144</sup>, plus some other

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<sup>138</sup> M. R. Cortesi, 'Libri memoria e cultura a Cremona secoli IX – XIV', p. 207.

<sup>139</sup> R. Paciocco, *Canonizzazioni e culto dei santi nella Christianitas (1198 – 1302)*, pp. 201 – 205.

<sup>140</sup> "*Innocentius III, episcopo et clero cremonensi nunciat excommunicationem Othonis IV, et perpetuo subtrahit Cremonenses ecclesiam ab omni iurisdictione mediolanensis*". In, *CDC*, I, n 125, p. 218.

<sup>141</sup> The emperor Otto IV had been excommunicated on 8 October 1210 because he did not fulfil his promises to the Pope. He had taken Ancona and the reign of Spoleto that the Pope wanted for the church.

<sup>142</sup> *CDC*, i, n 143, p. 220.

<sup>143</sup> Innocent III strongly believed that the Pope was the only one legitimated by God (through the apostle Peter) to be a "*vicarius Christi*", therefore the only legitimate one to exert spiritual and temporal power, unifying the *corpus mysticum* and the *corpus politicum* of the church. The Pope wanted to defend the *libertas* of the church in the north of Italy and at the same time to establish the dominion of the Roman Curia over those dioceses; to achieve both his aims it was essential to control the episcopacy. See: Maria Pia Alberzoni, 'La difesa della libertas ecclesiastica nell'Italia del Nord', In, *Innocenzo III Urbs et Orbis*, Vol. II, ed. A. Sommerlechner (Rome, 2003), pp. 860-862.

<sup>144</sup> "*Berardus archiepiscopus Barensis, parabola Frederici, presentia Sycardi episcopi et apostolici legati et consulum Cremonae, iurat quod dabit et defendet castrum Cremae et insulam Fulcheriam*

rights on the embankments on the river Adda<sup>145</sup>. Moreover the emperor told the bishop of Trento to order the people of Crema to obey the wishes of the commune of Cremona<sup>146</sup>. In obtaining rights for the city of Cremona, the bishop showed that his presence was an important one and that although he lacked military power he was not a secondary figure. This is indirectly confirmed by an episode during the war between Cremona and Milan, which broke out in this period. Cremona sent its consuls to assemble allies in Mantua<sup>147</sup> and Parma<sup>148</sup>. The forces of Cremona and Milan clashed near Castelleone, on 2 June 1213. In this battle, remembered as the battle of the “Bodesine”<sup>149</sup>, Cremona won and seized the “carroccio” of Milan, the symbol of the city. The people of Cremona put this symbol in the cathedral<sup>150</sup>. The cross was given to Negro, archdeacon of the cathedral. The rest of the “carroccio” remained in front of the commune’s palace for ninety years as a symbol of the victory of Cremona over Milan<sup>151</sup>. This is significant because it indicates that although it was the commune who fought, the authority of the bishop over the city was still alive<sup>152</sup>.

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*communi Cremonae, quorum privilegia et omnes concessionis ab ipso rege Cremonae sibus confirmantur*”. In, *CDC*, i, n 154, p. 221.

<sup>145</sup> *CDC*, i, n 164, p. 223. (given to the representative of Cremona).

<sup>146</sup> *Fredericus [...] dixit atque imposuit et precepit D. Frederico tridentino episcopo ut precipiat Cremensibus districte quod debeant stare et obedire preceptis communis Cremonae et stare sub eis sicut ipsi Cremonenses a patre suo acquisiverunt*. In, *CDC*, i, n 164, p. 223. (given to the representative of Cremona).

<sup>147</sup> *CDC*, i, n 171 - 172, p. 224.

<sup>148</sup> *CDC*, i, n 175, p. 224.

<sup>149</sup> The name probably derives from the German language, Boden = land, and See = sea, because it was fought on marshy land.

<sup>150</sup> *CDC*, i, n 180, p. 224.

<sup>151</sup> Andrea Foglia, ‘Cum quodam troncono [...] carozoli. I cimeli della storia comunale della città sulle volte della cattedrale. IV.1. Il carroccio’, in, *Cremona una cattedrale, una città. La cattedrale di Cremona al centro della vita culturale, politica ed economica, dal Medio Evo all’età moderna*, ed. Dario Cimorelli (Cinisello Balsamo, 2007), p. 202.

<sup>152</sup> According to tradition, the people of Cremona were praying in the cathedral for those who were fighting in Castelleone. Cremona’s army won the battle thanks to the intercession and the miraculous intervention of two Saints, Marcellino and Pietro, who appeared on the battlefield and attacked the enemies leading the people of Cremona to victory. Once the battle was over the Saints disappeared taking the shape of two doves. (See pictures 3-4). It is therefore possible that the people of Cremona wanted to thank the Saints for the intervention, so they put the “carroccio” in the cathedral. See: M.T. Pavesi – G. Carubelli, *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone. La nascita di un Borgo Franco Cremonese*, pp. 143 – 144.



**Figure XIX: Cremona, Crypt of the cathedral. “The miracle of Doves”. Picture taken from, *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone*, p. 143.**



**Fig. XX: Cremona church of St. Imerio. The saints Marcellino and Pietro to the battle of Bodesine. Picture taken from: *Da Castel Manfredi a Castelleone*, p. 145.**

The symbol of the victory, the cross, was put in the cathedral, which can be considered the “bishop’s house”, and this was probably because the people still recognised in the bishop, or at least in Sicardo, the most legitimate religious figure in the town. Indeed as Andrea Foglia has stated, the wars fought by the northern Italian cities during the communal era were often identified and perceived as “sacred wars” fought also for the defence of the church; it was obvious that the prizes of victory would be put in the main religious location of the city, the church<sup>153</sup>.

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<sup>153</sup> A. Foglia, ‘Cum quodam troncono [...] carozoli. I cimeli della storia comunale della città sulle volte della cattedrale. IV.1. Il carroccio’, p. 202.

Bishop Sicardo died on 8 June 1215<sup>154</sup>. How do we assess his achievement and his significance? In many respects he could be considered one of the best bishops Cremona had had thus far. Like bishops before him he was a political actor. However these actions were not an end in themselves, as had been the case with the previous bishops. With Sicardo, or rather beginning with Sicardo, such actions were always religiously motivated and directed to persuading the population that the bishop's primary role was as a spiritual father. The bishop was not now the lord ready to defend the city by using his private army of vassals, but rather the main representative of the Christian faith, based on the principle of justice and charity that would increasingly dominate the moral atmosphere of the town. Indeed Bishop Sicardo followed the principle of justice in proposing different taxes for different people; he followed the principle of equity in proposing to give  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the offices to the "*Societas populi*"; he did not treat the canons badly as had happened before, but tried to find an agreement with them<sup>155</sup>; he tried, and in most cases succeeded, in controlling the pastoral care of the diocese<sup>156</sup>.

However, his episcopate was not an unqualified success. His "Lodo" did not really work, not because of him, but because the controversies in town were too great and they soon erupted again. According to the commune's *Cronica* the "Lodo" failed because the *populus* did not accept it, but we have reason to doubt this<sup>157</sup>. The real failure of Sicardo, arguably, is not in having tried to reconcile the city and failed, but rather in turning a religious personage into a political subject. His "Lodo" and his attempt to give more rights to the population are certainly commendable. But they came directly out of political actions rather than religious reform. This would lead in time to the diminution of the figure of the bishop in Cremona.

The canonization of Omobono also had its downside. I have no doubts in thinking that the request of Bishop Sicardo for canonization came from his personal ideas about the new role that saints could have in the world. The saint was not to be, as he

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<sup>154</sup> Fedele Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, Vol. II, La Lombardia, part II, p. 119. See also: Francesco Novati, *L'Obituariò della cattedrale di Cremona* (Milano, 1881), p. 52.

<sup>155</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 88.

<sup>156</sup> He took for instance a good care about simple facts like the border of the parishes. *CDC*, i, nos 176 – 177 – 179 – 182, pp. 224 – 225.

<sup>157</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia del commune di Cremona fino al 1334', pp. 298-299.

was before, an exceptional man removed from the population, but instead a man who lived in the present and at the same time was able to transcend his temporality. But there was also a local and more immediate motive: the role of Omobono as a man belonging to two different “worlds” and two different backgrounds. The request can be seen as the final step in a series of actions by Sicardo to present the church as the house of virtues, those Christian virtues that had been dishonoured by unworthy bishops. However the fact that he thought of Omobono as a political device for the city would contribute to the ruin of the episcopacy in the centuries to come.

Sicardo’s successor was Bishop Omobono elected in July 1216<sup>158</sup>. During this period Cremona suffered very harsh internal political struggles and significant external rivalry with the city of Milan. His episcopate saw the continuation of the trends begun in the time of Sicardo. His election, however, was quite problematic in that the archpriest, Pietro, who was very active as representative of the chapter as we have seen, had been elected before him. However, his election was declared invalid by Pope Innocent III apparently because the canons had not respected the exact procedure and because one of them complained that he was not in Cremona at the moment of the election and could not therefore participate<sup>159</sup>. Between 1200 and 1210 the patrimony of the chapter had been divided into 15 prebends and the number of canons reduced to this number<sup>160</sup>. As most of them were not in Cremona but in other cities studying<sup>161</sup> or attending their religious duties this may have caused problems in the election<sup>162</sup>. Bishop Omobono was elected in June 1216 and

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<sup>158</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Vescovi di Cremona fino al 1335’ in, *CDC*, ii, p. 172. See also: F. Novati, *L’Obituariò della cattedrale di Cremona*, pp. 83 – 84.

<sup>159</sup> See: G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 96 – 97.

<sup>160</sup> F. Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d’Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, p. 113.

<sup>161</sup> During the XIII century the chapter of the cathedral elected the bishop, or better still the cathedral chapter chose the electors: usually they were internal clergy - priests, deacons, sub-deacons and even acolytes - and external clergy, an abbot, a prepositus, a chaplain. The electors voted in the choir of the cathedral in front of the notary. If the Pope agreed to the election, the elect was consecrated by the archbishop of Milan. See: Carla Bertinelli Spotti – M. Teresa Mantovani, *Potere politico e vita religiosa nei secoli XIII – XIV*, In, *Diocesi di Cremona*, ed. A. Caprioli, A. Rimoldi, L. Vaccaro (Brescia, 1998), pp 91-92.

<sup>162</sup> This procedure could be infringed at a different level and the solution often required the involvement of judges external to the diocese. There are for instance two documents dated 1238 which tell us that the abbot of the monastery of St John in Parma had tried to interfere in the election of the bishop of Parma. In order to sort out this interference the bishop of Modena had been dragged into the matter as one of the papal delegates; he ordered the abbot of St John not to interfere any more with the election of the bishop. See: V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 324, p. 132; n 325, p. 133.

consecrated in the autumn by the Pope Honorius III, while archpriest Pietro returned to performing his role for the chapter, renting, selling and buying land in the diocese<sup>163</sup>.

The beginning of the episcopate saw a war between Cremona and Milan<sup>164</sup>. This was because Milan supported the emperor Otto IV of Brunswick while Cremona was with Frederick II and the papacy<sup>165</sup>. The people of Cremona, Piacenza and Parma signed a 10 year peace in January 1218<sup>166</sup> and when Otto IV died in May 1218 there was no longer any reason for war between Cremona and Milan<sup>167</sup>. In the subsequent peace negotiations the people of Cremona were forced to accept the will of Master Nicholas, who was the legate of Frederick II, and Cardinal Ugolino da Ostia who was the representative of the papacy in Lombardy<sup>168</sup>. However the presence of the bishop of Cremona and many others, testifies to this continuing moral authority.

The peace between the cities was made in Lodi, in the cathedral on 2 December 1218, the cities of Milan and Piacenza being on one side and the cities of Parma and Cremona on the other side<sup>169</sup>. The peace was not built on rock, however, because on 20 September 1220, Bishop Omobono and *militēs* from the city of Cremona, who were welcoming the emperor and who were about to take him into Rome, received a letter from the consuls of the city in which they asked the bishop to intercede with the emperor. The people of Cremona were asking the emperor to oblige the people of Milan to respect the pacts over the castle of Crema and Fulcheria Island<sup>170</sup>. Moreover they asked for some rights and privileges over the use of the water of the river Oglio<sup>171</sup> and another small river called Tagliata<sup>172</sup>. When, after this, the Emperor

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<sup>163</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 260, p. 113; n 261, p. 113, n 262, pp. 113-114.

<sup>164</sup> F. Menant, 'Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311): il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', pp. 312 – 315.

<sup>165</sup> Bertinelli Spotti – Mantovani, 'Potere politico e vita religiosa nei secoli XIII – XIV', p. 92.

<sup>166</sup> Die Consuln von Piacenza beschwören einen zehnjährigen Waffenstillstand zwischen Piacenza einerseits, Cremona und Parma andererseits, wobei jenes die Unterstützung Kaiser Otto's, diese König Friederichs vorbehalten. Piacenza 18 Jan. 1218. Document n 933, *Acta Imperi Selecta. Urkunden Deutscher Könige und Kaiser mit einem Anhang von Reichssachen*, ed. John Friedrich Böhmer (Innsbruck, 1870), p. 641

<sup>167</sup> *Acta Imperi Selecta*, n 938, p. 646, 3 October, 1218 – Cremona; 5 October, Parma.

<sup>168</sup> « *Iacobus Taurinensis episcopus et serenissimi domini regis Friderici vicarius et legatus* ». *Ibid.* n 937, p. 646, (3 October 1218). See also *Ibid.* n 939, p. 647; n 940, p. 649, (31 October 1218); n 941, p. 650, (November 1218).

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* n 942, p. 651, (2 December 1218).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* n 944, p. 654, (September 1220).

<sup>171</sup> "De flumine Olii et de ripa a nostra parte". *Ibid.* n 944, p. 654, (September 1220).



Frederick II arrived in Cremona in 1226, he satisfied these needs, again under a request from Bishop Omobono<sup>173</sup>. It seems then that Bishop Omobono was also exercising the role of arbiter. At that time the city of Cremona had just sworn a peace with other cities in Lombardy (or just on the other side of the river Po, like Parma and Piacenza) as the emperor and his legates had asked them to do. Therefore the people of Cremona were not asking the bishop to intercede for them to assuage the emperor's anger. It can only have been that they recognised him as a natural arbiter or at least as a mediator. We should obviously take into consideration the fact that the church "promoted" itself as natural arbiter, but in this case it is evident that the bishop was being called upon to represent the city despite the fact that he was no longer a political or military authority. Indeed when he went to welcome the emperor he went with the *milites* of the commune of Cremona.

The emperor fulfilled what the city had asked but now, as Cremona remained hostile towards Milan, Gregory IX (former Cardinal Ugolino of Ostia) first threatened Cremona that he would put an end to its autonomy as a diocese and place it under the authority of Milan<sup>174</sup>, and then made his threat real in July 1228. The diocese of Cremona was also excommunicated because of its disputes with the abbot of San Sisto for the possession of Guastalla. After this Bishop Omobono, being no longer free to deal with the Pope and the papal authority, no longer wished to take responsibility and began to concentrate on his diocese. Here, too, however he acted as peacemaker<sup>175</sup>.

The situation regarding Luzzara e Guastalla was complicated because for Cremona this court, connecting with the river Po, was really important. We have documents<sup>176</sup> testifying to this long struggle and we can see during Sicardo's time the bishop

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<sup>172</sup> "Item dent operam quod dominus rex faciat privilegium de Taliata". In, *Acta Imperi Selecta*. n 944, p. 654, September 1220

<sup>173</sup> "Venerabilis Cremonensis episcopus, fidelis noster ad presentiam nostre maiestatis accedens nomine et vice communis Cremone, expertorum fidelium nostrorum plura et diversa privilegia Romanorum imperatorum predecessorum nostrum recolende memorie, et nostra etiam nostre celsitudini presentavit, humiliter supplicans et devote, ut privilegia ipsa et que continebatur in eis confirmare in perpetuum de nostra gratia dignarerem". *Ibid.* n 1089, pp. 782 – 786. (Cremona, July 1226).

<sup>174</sup> F. Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, p. 126.

<sup>175</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 102.

<sup>176</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Documenti della lite con l'abate di S. Sisto di Piacenza per Guastalla e Luzzara 1193 – 1227', in, *CDC*, ii, pp. 64 – 87.

defending the ambassador of the bishop of Reggio Emilia who came to Cremona to ask Podestà Cremosano Oldoini for the return of the court of Luzzara and Guastalla to the abbey of S. Sisto<sup>177</sup>. The Podestà wanted to take out his eyes and kill him for trying to secure this court<sup>178</sup>. A representative of the bishop went to Guastalla to give the court back to the abbey of S. Sisto and the “formula” described by Astegiano is fascinating because it shows the representative of the abbey touching the wood of the draw-bridge, the land of the field and the branches of the trees in order to take possession<sup>179</sup>. This was only a formula because the castle and the court remained in the hands of Cremona. However, it is noticeable that another bishop, in this case the bishop of Reggio Emilia, acted, or tried to act, as a peacemaker<sup>180</sup>.

The people of Cremona would never have renounced this court and the harbour connected to it, not even after having been excommunicated three times. As a matter of fact in 1224 Pope Honorius III allowed the canons to celebrate divine services in *submissa voce* although the city was under the interdict<sup>181</sup>. This situation continued until 1227, when Pope Gregory IX put another bishop, this time the bishop of Modena, Guglielmo, in charge as Papal legate and mediator. The bishop of Cremona and the representative of the commune dealt directly with him and after the commune had paid 3000 imperial lires the bishop of Modena, on behalf of the Pope, took possession of the court and gave it to the commune of Cremona<sup>182</sup>.

This particular situation shows us that bishops were the normal peacemakers or mediators in this period. The money was paid by the commune as the commune was

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<sup>177</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Documenti della lite con l’abate di S. Sisto di Piacenza per Guastalla e Luzzara 1193 – 1227’, in, *CDC*, ii, p. 64: document n 4, 1199, 31 August; *CDC*, ii, p. 64: document n 5, 1 September. See also: F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 295.

<sup>178</sup> The bishop of Reggio was involved in this situation because Innocent III had put the bishop in charge, the abbey being under the authority of the Vatican. L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 378.

<sup>179</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 379.

<sup>180</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Documenti della lite con l’abate di S. Sisto di Piacenza per Guastalla e Luzzara 1193 – 1227’, nos 7 – 8, p. 65.

<sup>181</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 273, p. 117.

<sup>182</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Documenti della lite con l’abate di S. Sisto di Piacenza per Guastalla e Luzzara 1193 – 1227’, n 235, (22 October, 1227), p. 85; n 236, (22 October, 1227), p. 86; n 237, (4 November, 1227), p. 86; n 238, (4 November, 1227), p. 86; n 239, (4 November, 1227), p. 86; n 240, (5 November, 1227), p. 86; n 241, (7 November, 1227), p. 86; n 242, (7 November, 1227), p. 86; n 243, (8 November, 1227), p. 86; n 244, (8 November, 1227), p. 86; n 245, (8 November, 1227), p. 86; n 246, (8 November, 1227), p. 86; n 247, (9 November, 1227), p. 86; n 248, (9 November, 1227), p. 86; n 249, (9 November, 1227), p. 87. For all this part and for a little explanation about Sicardo’s life, see also: E. Coleman, ‘Sicard of Cremona as legate of Innocent III in Lombardy’, pp. 938 - 953.

the institution interested in having possession of the court, but the role of mediator was performed by the bishops, a sign that not only in Cremona, but also in other cities the bishop was moving toward this new and in some respects, controversial role. It also tells us that the power of the bishop is decreasing. Through the documents of this dispute we come to know that when the Podestà of Cremona was summoned by the bishop, not only did he refuse to go and confer with the bishop, but he also hit the priest sent to summon him with a stick<sup>183</sup>.

It is worth comparing this situation with that of Bishop Oberto who was also excommunicated but who did not leave his duties. Both a spiritual and a military leader, he simply could not step down from his responsibilities and abandon the city. Omobono on the other hand could take more responsibility for his pastoral duties, even more than Sicardo did, because in a sense he was relieved of his responsibilities as representative of the diocese in front of the Pope. In comparing Oberto and Omobono we can say that power is inversely proportional to the capacity to take care of their diocese. So in terms of the spread of pastoral care the fact that Omobono renounced his duties as a legate was good for the diocese. It might be thought that the greater the power of the bishop the greater was his ability to control the land and to impose his will even in religious terms. In this case it seems to me that it is exactly the contrary. When the bishop had more power he would take less care of the diocese because his military and political duties took him away from the people. We can see this also in the case of Sicardo, even if it is less evident. Omobono had even less power than Sicardo, because the commune was getting stronger but the care that he could give to his diocese was greater than that of his predecessors. This worked up to a certain point, not least because of the bishop's religious aura of respectability, that is to say the people perceived him as a person *superpartes*, someone to look up to, and someone who showed he really cared about his people. It was a question of balance because when the power of the bishop became too weak he would lose control of the city and the "contado" completely, becoming just an instrument in the hands of this or that faction. When this happened people would begin to lose respect

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<sup>183</sup>“*ipse non solum venire distulit [...] etiam quondam presbiterum qui ad eum citandum fuerat destinatus baculo, quem tenebat in manu, dure percussit*”. In, CC, iv, n 841, pp. 443- 444. (24 January 1200).

for him and for his office. This is exactly what would happen to the bishops of the last period.

From a religious point of view Bishop Omobono operated on a different level. He was one of the witnesses for the so called “*Consortium Caritatis*” in which some lay and ecclesiastical people took care of the homeless and especially the people rejected by society because they were sick. Other institutions that we can call “*Consortia*” were: the Consortium of St. Catald<sup>184</sup>, an expression of the movement of Humiliati<sup>185</sup>, the Consortium of Holy Spirit, the Charity of St Michael, and the Consortium of St Francis, to mention only the most important of the period<sup>186</sup>.

From 1228 onward Bishop Omobono took particular care of his diocese, especially over the property of different churches and over the benefits belonging to different parishes<sup>187</sup>. For instance, in 1221 he unified the church of St Andrea di Ronca to the pieve of St Maurizio di Casanova so that the churches would be serviced more regularly and controlled more tightly<sup>188</sup>. He also acted as the administrator of his diocese. We see this in the economic operations made or approved by him, and in his dealings with mendicant orders<sup>189</sup>. He also tightened the links and the relationships with the chapter by investing the archpriest Pietro with the right to the tithes over some lands in Cremona<sup>190</sup>. Omobono made settlement<sup>191</sup> in the city easier for the mendicant orders<sup>192</sup>, for instance the Dominicans<sup>193</sup> who arrived at the church of San Guglielmo in 1227<sup>194</sup>.

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<sup>184</sup> The canons of Saint Cataldo asked specifically to shelter only the people who followed the catholic faith and catholic religion. *CDC*, i, n 336, p. 243.

<sup>185</sup> There is a document dated 1232 in which Marchisio Mariano, belonging to Humiliate brothers, gave Omobono a piece of land with houses in the south-east part of the diocese on the understanding that the bishop would build a hospital on it. V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 303, p 125.

<sup>186</sup> Fiorino Soldi, *La carità di Cremona, sintesi storica delle opera ospitaliere, elemosiniere ed educative dal 960 al 1959* (Cremona, 1959), pp. 37 – 41.

<sup>187</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 102 – 103.

<sup>188</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 269, pp. 115-116.

<sup>189</sup> Giovanni Bronzino, *I documenti di pontefici e legati apostolici nella Biblioteca statale di Cremona 1221 – 1398* (Cremona, 1977), document 2, p. 4.

<sup>190</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 275, p. 117.

<sup>191</sup> G. Bronzino, *I documenti di pontefici e legati apostolici nella biblioteca statale di Cremona 1221 – 1398*, n 5, p. 7. In this document, dated 10 March, 1228, the Pope Gregory IX confirmed to the friars of the Dominican order the possession of the church of Saint Guglielmo with the cloister, the garden, and the kitchen garden given them by the bishop of Cremona.

<sup>192</sup> In the same period it is possible that there were Franciscans in Cremona as well, but there are insufficient documents for us to talk about their foundations. G. Andenna, *Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo*. p. 107.

In order to understand better the influence of the mendicant orders on the population, and the religious spirit of lay people we can look at the last will of Omobono Morisio, a cultivated man of Cremona who made donations to the Confraternity of the “Humiliate brothers of Charity”<sup>195</sup>. They were a form of lay monk who followed the Benedictine rule but adjusted this rule to the spirit of their time, working and taking part in the political activities of the town<sup>196</sup>. In this period<sup>197</sup> more and more people were interested in helping the poor, the homeless and the sick; in fact from the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards we have numerous “civil” hospitals founded by religious or lay people. These hospitals were shelters for the poor and for the pilgrims who passed by Cremona on their way to Rome, but they were also institutions for charity in general. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century we have testimony of fourteen hospitals in Cremona<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> There is an interesting example of the Dominicans and Omobono acting together in a political council at Cremona for the sake of justice. They returned to a banker documents that had been stolen from him. *CDC*, ii, n 80, p. 110.

<sup>194</sup> G. Bronzino, *I documenti di pontefici e legati apostolici nella biblioteca statale di Cremona 1221 – 1398*, documents, n 53, pp. 80 – 81.

<sup>195</sup> *CDC*, i, n 722, pp. 305 – 310. (15 July, 1259).

<sup>196</sup> Bertinelli Spotti Carla – Mantovani Mariateresa, ‘Potere politico e vita religiosa nei secoli XIII-XIV’, p. 108.

<sup>197</sup> After the year 1000 lay rich people interested in committing thier energy and thier lives to religion did not have a real choice apart from being crusaders. Most probably as a reaction to this trend a new form of religion which combined penitence and help to the poor started in the XI century. See: Antonio Rigon, ‘Religiosità dei laici a Cremona al tempo di Federico II’ In, *Cremona città imperiale*, ed. G. Andenna (Cremona, 1996), pp. 194.

<sup>198</sup> The commune did not take part directly in those institutions (even in Milan) probably because they had no wish to deal with the poor and in general with all people who did not have enough money to survive and stayed in town just begging and/or stealing, in fact they were considered a problem for communal society. Instead it was lay people like Omobono Morisio who contributed with significant donations to keeping these hospitals working. Indeed in Milan too there were numerous hospitals testifying to the effort made between XI and XII centuries by lay and religious people in order to open hospital and institutions. They were the symbol of people, “who discovered the love for their fellows after centuries of exclusive love for God”. [G. Gracco, ‘Dalla misericordia della chiesa alla misericordia del principe’, in, *La carità a Milano nei secoli XII – XIV*, ed. Maria Pia Alberzoni e Onorato Grassi (Milano, 1989), p. 35. My translation]. Indeed in the XI century the church was perceived perfect only if it tended to the “*Ecclesia primitivae forma*” directed to the poor, as it was presented by the Act of Apostles. In this context it is worth recalling what Gracco wrote about the Archbishop, Oberto of Milan, who intervned in the controversy over the hospital of Brolo in the city. Wondering why the commune did not intervene, Gracco wrote, “Probably the Archbishop excluded from power in the city looked for his success in a spiritual role, more than in a temporal one” [G. Gracco, ‘Dalla misericordia della chiesa alla misericordia del principe’, p. 38. My translation]. So in Milan as in Cremona the bishop began to look for a new role in the city in order to compensate for what he had lost in the temporal sphere. Only in the XIV century would the public power, the commune or the state, stretch its hands over the hospitals in order to bring them into the public administration because it wanted to administer their resources and donations especially in order to “cleanse” the city of the poor. See also: F. Soldi, *La carità di Cremona, sintesi storica delle opere ospitaliere elemosiniere ed educative dal 960 al 1959*, pp 25 - 31. See also: A. Vauchez, *La spiritualità dell’ occidente medioevale*, p. 92. See also: Fonseca Cosimo Damiano, ‘Forme assistenziali e strutture caritative della chiesa nel medioevo’, in, *Chiesa e Società. Appunti per una*

and a further seven at the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century, the property of the religious orders such as the Gerosolimitan, Benedictine and Humiliate Brothers of Charity<sup>199</sup>.

Bishop Omobono had a good relationship with the mendicant orders, a relationship that was regulated by a specific warning by the Popes, especially Innocent IV, who actually advised the bishop and the mendicant orders to respect each other<sup>200</sup>. Omobono fulfilled the request made by the nuns of the monastery of St Francesco in Cremona and exempted them from any spiritual or temporal obligations asking only one pound of wax, *pro synodo*<sup>201</sup>. Omobono had a good relationship, too, with the canons of the cathedral. In 1247 he signed the “Statutes”, a kind of constitution for the canons. These were made in order to regulate the entire system of canonical life, together with the liturgy in church. There were regulations also about how the canons should talk to lay people, especially women. The latter were absolutely prohibited from going to the canons’ bedrooms, a sign either that this was common or that someone had done this in the past and the bishop wanted to avoid awkward situations. They had also to give money to the poor and to the homeless in general, taken from their benefices<sup>202</sup>. Here, once again, Omobono followed Sicardo. Sicardo had worked on the “prebenda”, on the way in which the canons could enter their community. Now Omobono was working on their behaviour as clerics, in terms of what they could do and what they could not or they should not do. It is yet another piece of evidence that the power of the bishop was shifting towards pastoral care and religious regulation. It should be noted though, that although the bishop had lost political power in the city he retained some feudal power in the countryside and

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*storia delle diocesi lombarde*, ed. A. Caprioli – A. Rimordi – L. Vaccaro (Brescia, 1986), pp. 284 – 286.

<sup>199</sup> Antonio Rigon, ‘Religiosità dei laici a Cremona al tempo di Federico II’, pp. 197 – 198.

<sup>200</sup> G. Bronzino, *I documenti di pontefici e legati apostolici nella biblioteca statale di Cremona 1221 – 1398*, n 12, p. 14, September 1244, Genova, in which the Pope recommended to the Franciscan order to respect the bishops safeguarding all the rules in relation to the appointment and deposition of the priors. Document 17, p. 19, 13 September 1247, (Cremona) in which Innocent IV recommended to archbishops, to bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, archdeacons and all other prelates to welcome kindly the Franciscan friars sent to them to uproot heresies and to help them in their mission.

<sup>201</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 304, pp. 126-127. Omobono was also still fulfilling his role of arbiter as testified by the document in which he pronounced a sentence in the struggle between Moroello procurator *custodum et custodie Cremonensis ecclesie* and Lanfranco *de Comitibus* about the right of the tithes over land in the countryside just outside Cremona. [*Ibid.* n 314, p. 130]. In two other documents the bishop sent two judges delegates to sort out the controversies about the rights of the tithes. [*Ibid.* n 318, p. 131 and n 329, p. 134].

<sup>202</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 112-113. For the Statuti see: *Gli Statuti dei canonici della cattedrale di Cremona del 1247*, ed. Francesco Novati (Milano, 1904).

indeed held fortresses on behalf of the commune<sup>203</sup>. Omobono was paying attention to the morality of his clergy and indeed there is a document where he condemned the priest of St Mary *de Domodei* for fornication<sup>204</sup>.

The wars between the emperor and the papacy created some difficulties for Omobono<sup>205</sup>. He could not avoid the commune putting a specific tax called “fodro” on the clergy and on the priests of the diocese in order to pay for the debts of the commune<sup>206</sup>. Moreover the commune seems to have been very much in charge of the defence of the city as demonstrated by a document in which it exempted the chapter from sending five carts to be used by the emperor<sup>207</sup>. However the bishop managed to get a concession from the emperor, exempting his clergy from another tax called “carriaggio” that he had extended to all churches<sup>208</sup>.

Omobono died in 1248<sup>209</sup>. Looking back over his episcopate we can see that he had been very careful in administering his diocese<sup>210</sup>. He tried successfully to hold a moderate position and to keep the power of the church and the emperor in Cremona in balance. With the death of Omobono an era ended for Cremona in February 1248<sup>211</sup>. Its army was defeated in Vittoria, near Parma by the people of Parma when

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<sup>203</sup> *CDC*, i, n 497, p. 268.

<sup>204</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 323, p. 132.

<sup>205</sup> In 1233 Cremona asked and obtained an imperial Podestà, Tommaso d’Aquino count of Acerra, (L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, p. 185) and this, added to the plans of the emperor for Italy, made Cremona the leading city in the north of Italy. (F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, pp. 315 – 318). The emperor Frederick II paid special attention to Cremona that he called “my favourite city” (L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, p. 300] therefore the people living in Cremona could make the most of this special friendship.

<sup>206</sup> *CDC*, i, n 554, p. 276. (14 December, 1246).

<sup>207</sup> V. Leoni, *Il codice diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 399, p. 153.

<sup>208</sup> *CDC*, i, n 561, p. 277. (21 August, 1247).

<sup>209</sup> According to some theories the bishop of Cremona left the city in 1246 to go to Milan in order to consecrating some altars, Andenna has proved that this cannot be true if we consider that he was unifying the monastery of S. Leonardo with the coenobium of S. Sisto. (*CDC*, i, n 553, p. 276, 28 – 29 October 1246.) He added that not only was not Giroldi a bishop during this period, but also that he came from a family who had supported the emperor so it was impossible that the legate Gregorio da Montelongo had ordered him to go to Milan to consecrate some altars. (G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 114, note 591. See also: Fedele Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d’Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, pp. 128 – 129].

<sup>210</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 115.

<sup>211</sup> In this occasion after Vittoria it seems that 10,000 knights from Cremona decided not to shave and to have their hair cut before having taken the city of Parma and having taken revenge for this defeat. In the same way according to Menant when the Guelph families were exiled, they decided not to have their hair cut before having been back in Cremona. The emperor’s supporters “could shave” because under the lead of Uberto Pelavicino they won nearby Parma in August 1250. F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183 – 1311). Il commune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 321 note 113.

they were laying siege to the city and again in Fossalta in 1249 by the *milites* of Bologna where Enzo, whom Frederick had left as a legate for Lombardy<sup>212</sup>, was captured with 200 knights from Cremona. Some important families (the Amati and the Cavalcabò) were exiled because they were anti imperial. It is at this point we have the names “Cappelletti” (those who have long hair) for the members of the Guelph party and “Barbarasi” (those with short hair and beards) for the emperor’s supporters. The magnificent “epoch” was definitely over for Cremona, and despite the fact that the citizens of Cremona won the battle against Parma in 1250, it was now too late, because the person who contributed more than any other to the success of Cremona<sup>213</sup>, the emperor Frederick II, died in December 1250.

After his death the city of Cremona split into two sides: the nobles, who followed the imperial party, took the name of Ghibeline, and had their base in the old part of the city; and those supporting the church, called Guelph, who belonged to the *populus* and had their base in the Città-nova<sup>214</sup>. The division between *populus* and nobles was not complete, because we can find some nobles in the Guelph party and non nobles in the Ghibeline party. Nevertheless this division was to make life difficult for the bishops who would eventually be crushed between the two.

In this period the Podestà had actually been doing what the bishop used to do in the previous period: that is organizing the town. The economic power of the commune gave him the necessary support to do so, while the majority of the minor vassals either abandoned the bishop or actually fought against him. In this situation the bishops of this period had to define a different role for themselves, one that reflected changes in society. They decided to move with the times and to go with the flow.

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<sup>212</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, p. 187.

<sup>213</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 300.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.* p. 301.



## Chapter four

# The Bishop of Lincoln in a changing World

Bishop Geoffrey elected in 1175 – resigned 1181/2

Walter of Coutances elected in 1183 – left 1184

Hugh of Avalon elected 1186 – d. 1200

William of Blois elected 1203 – d. 1206

Hugh of Wells elected in 1209 – d. 1235

Turning to the diocese of Lincoln in the same period we find that here, too, new possibilities were opening up for its bishops. During the time of the first two, short-term, incumbents, however, relatively little changed. Their behaviour serves to underline the changes that were to take place thereafter.

The primary sources used in this chapter include the monastic chronicles *Annales de Theokesberia* and *Annales de Waverleia*, as well as Matthew Paris *Chronica Majora*. Other primary sources are William of Newburgh's *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* and J.H. Srawley's translation of *The Book of John de Schalby*. For Hugh of Avalon we are fortunate in possessing contemporary sources that go beyond the Episcopal Acta and the narrative chronicles. We have two lives of St Hugh, one written by Gerald of Wales who resided at Lincoln near the end of Hugh's episcopate (1196–99),<sup>1</sup> and the other by Adam of Eynsham who was Hugh's chaplain and remained very close to

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<sup>1</sup> "Giraldus simply reports what he heard or read; there is no sign of invention or exaggeration. For this reason, while there is much that is true in the Life, there is little that is new; the main facts of St Hugh's life and many of the smaller anecdotes are to be found in the other writers who used the same materials". See: Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. LV.

him in the last three years of his life<sup>2</sup>. The latter was written more or less between 1206 and 1212<sup>3</sup> and the former probably around 1214. Not surprisingly Hugh has attracted considerable scholarly interest. In recent times he has been the subject of an essay collection edited by Henry Mayr-Harting,<sup>4</sup> which includes an important essay by Karl Leyser;<sup>5</sup> and of a biography by David Hugh Farmer<sup>6</sup>. With these at hand we can proceed to an analysis.

When Bishop Robert de Chesney died the see remained vacant for more than six years, officially under Henry II's "protection". In reality during this time Richard of Ilchester and Richard de Almaria, respectively archdeacon of Poitiers and precentor of Lincoln, were in charge of the temporalities of the bishopric as royal custodians<sup>7</sup>. Bishop Geoffrey was then elected. We know that Geoffrey was the illegitimate son of Henry II; his date of birth can be inferred from indirect evidence, but probably we are on safe ground in saying that he was born around 1152. According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Geoffrey was barely twenty when elected to Lincoln in 1173 and not even forty when consecrated Archbishop of York in 1191<sup>8</sup>. He had been archdeacon of Lincoln in 1170-71<sup>9</sup> and was also a canon of St Paul's, London. Apart from acting occasionally as papal judge-delegate, the fact that he showed nothing more than a financial interest in these roles tells us a lot about the future bishop of Lincoln. His election was the consequence of his father's pressure. As stated in the *English Episcopal Acta*, in May 1173<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey was elected to Lincoln on Henry II's orders but Pope Alexander III did not confirm him in that office until 1175<sup>11</sup>. Once the papal dispensation had been obtained he was confirmed

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<sup>2</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis. The life of Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, Vol. I, (Oxford 1985), pp. V - XI.

<sup>3</sup> As it is said in the introduction pp. XII – XXII, Adam probably finished the *Magna Vita* with Chapter XVII and then later he revised his work and added the last chapters and in them he speaks about the journey of Hugh's body to Lincoln and the torches about his coffin that remained alight. *Ibid.* pp. XII – XXII.

<sup>4</sup> *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. H. Mayr-Harting (Oxford, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> K. Leyser, 'The Angevin Kings and the Holy Man', in, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting (Oxford, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> David Hugh Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln* (London, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> *EEA*, I, p. XXXVI.

<sup>8</sup> Marie Lovatt, 'Geoffrey', in, *ODNB*, xxi, p. 764.

<sup>9</sup> Le Neve in his report stated that after Robert, who held the office of archdeacon of Lincoln in 1170, Geoffrey Plantagenet from this dignity was elected bishop of the See in 1173. See: *Fasti*, ii, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> In the *Chronica de Hoveden* it is written May 1174. See: Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, William Stubbs, (London, 1868-71), p. 58.

<sup>11</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, ed. W. Stubbs, p. 79.

by Archbishop Richard of Canterbury<sup>12</sup>. The beginnings of the new bishop's episcopate tells us immediately that the relations between the political power and the ecclesiastical power were still tight. The fact that the king put his son into the see of the Lincoln is a symptom of how he saw relations between the state and what he perceived to be his church.

From the late 1160s to the early 1170s, problems crowded in on Henry II. Apart from the murder of Thomas Becket in 1170, he had to fight constantly against the Welsh, the Scots and the Bretons and in 1173 – 74 to fend off a rebellion against his authority which had the purpose of replacing him with his son, Henry the Younger, crowned as co-king in 1170<sup>13</sup>.

Because of the support given to the rebellion by the French king, Henry II was forced into a war in France. He now went to the tomb of Thomas Becket at Canterbury and “barefoot and fasting submitted to a public scourging for the rash words which had caused the martyr's death”<sup>14</sup>. It was clearly an extreme gesture. Although the king was probably not responsible for the death of Becket, he was asking forgiveness whilst at the same time “dividing St Thomas from the rebels' cause”<sup>15</sup> and weakening the insurgents' front. We do not know whether Thomas forgave the king or not, but what is certain is that on 13 July, i.e. after his penitential act, Henry II obtained the victory he was looking for, defeating the Scots at Alnwick and capturing their King, William I. He then went to Normandy and won another victory at Rouen.

The war was now basically over. Henry's victory had been made possible thanks to the help of Bishop Geoffrey who supported his father as much as he could and fought a great campaign across northern England. When he met the king at Huntingdon in 1174, at the end of the war, Henry is said to have exclaimed: “My other sons are the real bastards”<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> *EEA*, I, p. XXXVII.

<sup>13</sup> W. L. Warren, *The governance of Norman and Angevin England 1086-1272* (London, 1987), p. 119.

<sup>14</sup> W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (London, 1973), p. 135.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 135.

<sup>16</sup> Marie Lovatt, ‘Geoffrey’, in, *ODNB*, xxi, p. 764. See also: W. L. Warren, *Henry II*, p. 134.

On 1 August 1175 Geoffrey was solemnly received at Lincoln. Henry II sent him to Tours to study, even though the young bishop was not really interested in the ecclesiastic career. In 1181 Pope Lucius III protested acrimoniously that Geoffrey should either be consecrated or resign<sup>17</sup>. Henry eventually chose the latter course and made his son chancellor instead<sup>18</sup>. As a result he had to go through a double resignation ceremony, one which took place in France in 1181 and the other held at Marlborough in 1182 before the entire English episcopacy<sup>19</sup>. Despite the fact that Geoffrey remained bishop-elect for only a few years, three features of his episcopate stand out:

- 1) His power was totally bound up with that of the king
- 2) Even without adequate religious preparation or adequate religious zeal it was still possible to hold important positions within the church establishment.
- 3) During his episcopate he was busy most of the time with military actions or war deeds.

What these features reveal is that it was still possible to be a “warrior bishop”, and even one unsuited and unprepared in religious terms, without provoking a scandal and without running the risk of losing the bishopric. This, as we will see, was soon to change.

Given that Geoffrey was not in power for long we do not have many Episcopal Acta, but the few we have are quite revealing. In particular we can see the march of appropriation of churches by religious houses. Although this was something of a national trend, it can only have been aided by Geoffrey’s perception of his role. Among many others was “the appropriation of the church of Edkington by the abbot

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<sup>17</sup> For the act of resignation see: “*Epistola Gaufridi Lincolnensis electi de ejusdem episcopatus resignatione*”. In, Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, pp. 254-255.

<sup>18</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, p. 255.

<sup>19</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, pp. 317-318. See also: Marie Lovatt, ‘Geoffrey’, in, *ODNB*, xxi, p. 765. The king had always been very fond of Geoffrey, and the latter proved faithful to him to the very end. The king had also promised to make him Archbishop of York, (Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, p. LXXI) but this had not been to Geoffrey’s liking. He would probably have preferred to play an important political role, but as soon as Richard became king he had Geoffrey elected Archbishop of York, like it or not (Jean Flori, *Richard the Lionheart, King and Knight* (Edinburgh, 1999), p. 80.) Geoffrey was ordained priest and consecrated at Boulogne in 1191.

and convent of Bardney, saving the vicarage assigned to William of Stainby”<sup>20</sup>. It is tempting to see Geoffrey’s acquiescence in this as indicative of a careless attitude towards his diocese. However, it has to be borne in mind that monastic appropriation was very much a feature of the age, and that in the case of Edkington at least we can see the bishop ensuring provision for the care of souls and the sustenance of a vicar, a common action on the part of contemporary bishops<sup>21</sup>. Appropriation apart, we have very little evidence of Geoffrey’s activity in the diocese. There is a grant to “the nuns of Sempringham of the bishop-elect’s mill near the old fort of Sleaford for a rent forty shilling a year”<sup>22</sup>. His apparent inactivity might be thought strange in that in general Geoffrey was considered a good administrator. Perhaps in the end it does reflect his lack of real interest in the fortunes of his vast diocese.

Geoffrey was followed by Bishop Walter of Coutances. According to the information offered in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography he was born in Cornwall, although his family probably originated in Normandy. His brother, Roger Fitz Reinfrid, as a royal servant, introduced him to the king’s household. His studies must have taken him to Paris where he acquired the title of “Magister”. After having been appointed canon of Rouen by 1169 and archdeacon of Oxford in 1173<sup>23</sup> the *Chronica* of Roger of Howden places him in the position of Vice-chancellor in 1177<sup>24</sup>. He was a royal clerk in 1173. He seems to have been attached to both Henry the Younger, the co-king, and Henry II on behalf of whom he was dispatched to the

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<sup>20</sup> *EEA*, I, n 285, p. 177. We note also the appropriation by the canons and nuns of Bullington of the churches of Burgh - le - Marsh, Winthorpe, Prestwold, Ingham, Bullington, Langton, Tetford, Oxcombe, Reston, Torrington, Hameringham and St Aubin, Spridlington. [*Ibid.* n 286, p. 177]. We have the confirmation to the nuns of Godstow of the church of Wycombe, after Peter, the bishop-elect’s brother, resigned the church which King Henry had given him. [*Ibid.* n 288, p. 178]. We have the appropriation to Haverholme priory of a moiety of the church of Dorrington, [*Ibid.* n 290, p. 180] and a mandate to Alexander, canon of Lincoln and vice-archdeacon, to institute the canons of Bullington into corporal possession of the church of St Peter, Burgh - le - Marsh, on the presentation of Eudo of Mumby. [*Ibid.* n 287, p. 178]. We have a mandate to Adam, dean of Titchmarsh, directing him to put St Neot’s priory into possession of the church of Hemington, as Roger the priest has renounced whatever right he had in the church in the presence of the bishop-elect and has given up its key to him. [*Ibid.* n 292, p. 180].

<sup>21</sup> On this issue see: Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society 1066-1272* (Harlow, 2011) pp. 113-4.

<sup>22</sup> *EEA*, I, n 294, p. 182.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph Turner, ‘Walter de Coutances’, in *ODNB*, xiii, p. 712. See also, Jörg Peltzer. *Canon Law, careers and conquest* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 80.

<sup>24</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houvene*, RS, LI, ii, p. 119.

continent for diplomatic missions<sup>25</sup>. Dimock in his analysis added that he was also attached to Richard I's court, but "very little to the diocese of Lincoln"<sup>26</sup>.

His election to the see of Lincoln occurred either on 2 or 8 of May 1183, his ordination as priest occurring later on 11 June. The consecration by the archbishop of Canterbury followed on 3 July 1183<sup>27</sup>. He took part as bishop in the council at Westminster in 1184 that elected Bishop Baldwin as Archbishop of Canterbury even though the council was accused of damaging his see by reducing its resources and leaving it in debt<sup>28</sup>.

During the summer of 1184 Walter was elected archbishop of Rouen<sup>29</sup>, thanks to Henry II's pressure over the cathedral chapter<sup>30</sup>. However the Pope seemed not to have been concerned by that and on 17 November 1184 confirmed this appointment. Now Walter had to choose between Lincoln and Rouen. According to William of Newburgh it was not an easy choice as it was between "a more esteemed, but poorer position to his less esteemed but richer office. Ambition for a higher office triumphed over the love of a higher income"<sup>31</sup>. After he was transferred to Rouen the see of Lincoln remained vacant for two years<sup>32</sup>. Once again we have a bishop who did not really have an impact on the lives of the people of Lincoln nor time to organize himself in the role before his ambition took him away from the see. aware

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<sup>25</sup> Ralph Turner, 'Walter de Coutances', in *ODNB*, xiii, p. 712.

<sup>26</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. XXXIX.

<sup>27</sup> For all the information about Walter the Coutances' election, see: *Fasti*, ii, p. 9. See also: Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, RS, LI, ii, p. 281, note 2. Matthew Paris refers that the election happened in the year 1182. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 318.

<sup>28</sup> Ralph Turner, 'Walter de Coutances', in *ODNB*, xiii, p. 712.

<sup>29</sup> *Annales de Theokesberia*, in, *AM*, i, p. 53. Matthew Paris refers in 1183. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 319.

<sup>30</sup> "He was advanced by way of postulation to the archbishopric of Rouen." *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Sawley, p. 8. Jörg Peltzer advanced the theory that probably the king "suggested" Walter of Coutances because he wanted for his most important continental see a person who he could trust, who was an expert in politics on both side of the Channel and who was, at the same time, known and respected in the diocese of Rouen. Jörg Peltzer, *Canon Law, careers and conquest* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 79-81.

<sup>31</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, Vol. I, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London, 1856), pp. 234-235. Ralph Turner, 'Walter de Coutances', in *ODNB*, xiii, p. 712.

<sup>32</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 9.

His few Acta show the trend of appropriation of churches by monasteries continuing apace<sup>33</sup>. There were numerous confirmations<sup>34</sup>. Sometimes dignities overlapped or were exchanged as is shown by one act where “Bartholomew, already canon of Lincoln, was instituted to the perpetual vicarage of Ripton, on the presentation of Robert, abbot and convent of Ramsey and with the assent of John of Coutances, the parson of the church. An annual pension of one bezant was to be paid by Bartholomew to John. If John ceased to be parson of the church the pension was to be paid to the abbey”<sup>35</sup>.

Parish boundaries were a hot issue even at this stage of the century, given that they affected income. A notification of a settlement was made in the bishop’s presence in relation to a parish boundary supposedly settled during the time of Bishop Alexander. The agreement concerned the churches of St Mary Whaplode and All Saints, Holbeach. In practical terms it states that, “those living between the boundary line and Whaplode church were to pay tithes and offerings to Whaplode and be buried there, those living between the boundary line and Holbeach church were to pay tithes and offerings to Holbeach and be buried there. An exception was made in the case of tithes of the salt-pans of Houtbroke and tithes of the lands of four named parishioners living between the boundary line and Holbeach church, all of which were to be paid to Whaplode church”<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> He confirmed the monks of St Mary, Belvoir, in possession of the church of Aubourn, after inspection of charters of the patron and of Richard of Canterbury, and gave permission to the monks to appropriate the church and to appoint a suitable priest to minister there. (*EEA, I*, n 299, p. 185). He gave permission, too, to the monks of Castle Acre to appropriate the church of St Mary Magdalen, Fleet, granted to them by Bishop Robert de Chesney. [*Ibid.* n 300, p. 186].

<sup>34</sup> “Confirmation to the canons of Dunstable of a moiety of the church of Pattishall, a moiety of the church of Higham and the entire church of Pulloxhill” [*Ibid.* n 304, p. 188]; “confirmation to the church and nuns of St Mary, Godstow, of Bishop Alexander’s grant of one hundred shillings a year from the tolls of Banbury and of the immunities conferred by the same bishop” [*Ibid.* n 305, p. 189]; “general confirmation to the abbey of St Mary de Pré, Leicester, of all its possessions in the diocese and of Bishop Alexander’s ordination touching the church of St. Mary in Leicester Castle” [*Ibid.* n 308, p. 190]; “confirmation for Abbot Edward and the canons of Owston of the churches of North Witham, Tickencote and Burrough on the Hill” [*Ibid.* n 315, p. 194]; “confirmation to St Mary, Belvoir, of the churches given in charters issued by Bishop Robert” [*Ibid.* n 298, p. 184]; confirmation for the monks of Bec at St Neot’s of the churches of Everton, Turvey, Eynesbury and Tempsford” [*Ibid.* n 318, p. 196]; and two confirmations for the nuns of Sempringham [*Ibid.* n 319, p. 197] and the order of Sempringham [*Ibid.* n 320, p. 197] of their possessions granted by Bishop Chesney.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* n 317, p. 195.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* n 302, p. 187.

Although the bishop could be called upon as an arbiter within his diocese the overwhelming impression left by these two bishops is that they largely left their dioceses alone, initiatives – largely towards increasing monastic independence – coming essentially from other parties. But what of the relations between these bishops and the canons of Lincoln? In the *Registrum Antiquissimum*<sup>37</sup> there is a grant by “Richard the dean and the chapter of Lincoln to Ranulf of Bradley of all the land which Humphrey the butler held of them in Glenthams, and of a toft and five bovates of land held by Humphrey in Stow. The land was to be held with the liberties and free customs according to the charters of the king, of Walter bishop of Lincoln and Geoffrey formerly elect of Lincoln”. However, as has been pointed out in *English Episcopal Acta* no royal grant has been traced relating to the Glenthams and Stow land in particular and the reference is more likely to be Henry II’s confirmation to the cathedral chapter<sup>38</sup>. Bishop Robert de Chesney had issued a grant of privileges to the chapter<sup>39</sup> later confirmed by Hugh I and William of Blois. It is therefore probable that these lost charters of Bishop Walter and Bishop Geoffrey were likewise general confirmations of liberties and customs, rather than specifically relating to Humphrey the butler’s land. I would draw out the further implication that at this stage the bishops did not have problems with the canons. In the case of Geoffrey it was largely because he was not a proper head of the diocese, because he was not elected and because he did not want to do it. According to Gerard of Wales he certainly filled his cathedral with masters and brought to the cathedral of Lincoln two great bells. He also worked in order to redeem church ornaments pledged for £ 300 to Aaron of Lincoln, and recovered some diocesan lands<sup>40</sup>. He showed some ability in administering the temporal affairs of the see, but his unsuitability to be a priest, as the future would prove, left the diocese basically stranded and without a spiritual head<sup>41</sup>.

As far as Walter of Coutances is concerned we have no evidence to affirm that he had a poor relationship with the canons of Lincoln or that he did anything to injure the church. At the same time we cannot affirm the contrary either. Perhaps his time

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<sup>37</sup> *RA*, iv, n 1123, p. 18.

<sup>38</sup> *EEA*, I, n 291, p. 180.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* n 161, p. 96.

<sup>40</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Remigii and Vita Sancti Hugonis*, p. XXXIV.

<sup>41</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley p. 26, note 14.



was too short to contemplate making fundamental changes. In his relations with the diocese and with the cathedral chapter he appears in fact quite anonymous.

In 12<sup>th</sup>-century England royal clerks were rewarded systematically with bishoprics and/or other positions within the ecclesiastical hierarchy creating a short-circuit between the power of the king and the counterbalancing power that should have been represented by the church. Nevertheless, England was not immune to the widespread belief that the Church should be changing its course of action. It became hateful to some that clergy should offer money for benefices and did not seem to differ much in their behaviour from those occupying similar rungs in lay society. Although the reform movement failed to gain widespread support in England it was inevitable, with Rome increasingly seeking to direct the fortunes of the church and the calibre of its clergy, that problems in the relations between Church and State would occur<sup>42</sup>.

In 1179, for instance, Pope Alexander III declared clearly that any ecclesiastic who served a lay lord and held a secular office should be deposed immediately. According to W. L. Warren, because of this new form of consciousness some people gave up their positions and their benefices. Among them he cites Geoffrey Plantagenet: "Geoffrey Ridel gave up the chancellorship when he was made bishop of Ely; Henry II's bastard son, Geoffrey Plantagenet, resigned the bishopric of Lincoln when his father put him in Ridel's place and gave up the royal service altogether when he was subsequently made archbishop of York"<sup>43</sup>. Personally I do not think this is the case because apart from the fact that, as Warren himself recognized, many ecclesiastics did not give up anything, in the case of Geoffrey, perhaps more than the call of conscience was the call of ambition, as he had no wish to become a bishop. Geoffrey was not much of a bishop; he was much more a politician or at least a skilful administrator and indirect evidence of this lies in the fact that King Richard forced him to take Holy orders so that he could not become a rival for the throne.

After the short parenthesis represented by Geoffrey Plantagenet and Walter of Coutances the see of Lincoln was occupied by a bishop who would leave a big mark

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<sup>42</sup> W. L. Warren, *King John*, (New Haven, London, 1997), p. 157.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* p. 158.

in the history of the diocese and the church in general: Hugh of Avalon. In the time of St Hugh, as he became, the diocese of Lincoln was subject to the new currents that were affecting the church, allowing bishops who were so-minded to bring new emphases to their role. Hugh of Avalon was born into a Burgundian aristocratic family<sup>44</sup> at Avalon, near Grenoble, in 1140. His education was entrusted to the Augustinian canons at Villarbenoît where he became canon when he was fifteen years old<sup>45</sup>. He had an exceptional charisma because at nineteen years old the whole community asked the bishop of Grenoble to make hi deacon<sup>46</sup>. One year later he assumed for the first time pastoral duties by being appointed deacon to the parish of St Maximin. He joined the Carthusians in the diocese of Grenoble aged 23 (or 25)<sup>47</sup>, and was then promoted to the priesthood<sup>48</sup>. After 10 years he became procurator (bursar) for six years. He made his first big step in life when Henry II in 1179 requested him to be the prior of the new Carthusian foundation of Witham in Somerset<sup>49</sup>. Henry II showed him so much affection that people believed Hugh was his natural son<sup>50</sup>. Henry was obviously very much impressed by the new prior, because he relied on him for everything: his personal spirituality, and all issues concerning the church; he even entrusted him with more general problems in relation to the well being of his kingdom<sup>51</sup>.

As prior of Witham, Hugh frequently rebuked the king for his sins, the worst of them being in connection with the vacant cathedrals and monasteries, which the king's officials seems not to have spared from their greediness. In Hugh's view these actions showed that the king was not exerting his power correctly, but that on the contrary he was abusing his power, particularly in relation to the appointment of bishops and abbots and in drawing revenues of long-vacant bishoprics and abbeys. He added that more than anything else, bad ecclesiastics, priests and prelates were the real cause of problems for the people of God<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 468.

<sup>45</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Hugh of Lincoln', in, *ODNB*, xxviii, p. 621.

<sup>46</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, p. 16.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. VII. In a successive book David Farmer agreed for the previous age, stating 23. See: D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln* (London, 2000), p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, pp. 36 -37.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Hugh of Lincoln', in, *ODNB*, xxviii, p. 621. Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, RS, LI, ii, pp. 308-309. See also: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 468.

<sup>50</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, pp. 68 - 69.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 70 – 71.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p. 71.

The relationship between the bishop and the king was very close because Hugh owed much to Henry and it was Henry who called him to England. Despite this relationship Hugh was extremely strict with regard to his religious duties and he did not compromise, not even for the king; indeed when Geoffrey, the king's chief forester, and a very important official, oppressed the tenants of the church of Lincoln,<sup>53</sup> Hugh had no hesitation in excommunicating him. The foresters were widely regarded as the real tyrants of England, perpetrators of the worst abuses and injustices<sup>54</sup>. When the King queried the excommunication of his forester the bishop answered: "I know that you worked hard to make me a bishop. I am therefore bound to save your soul from the perils which would befall it, if I was not careful to do my clear duty to the church entrusted to my charge. It is essential to excommunicate the oppressor of my church, and still more to refuse those who try to obtain prebends in that church illegally"<sup>55</sup>. He reiterated the same point some time later when one of the canons of Lincoln died. One of the king's officials at court suggested that the benefice could and should go to one of the courtiers. Hugh promptly answered that the canons' benefices were available to those who wanted to serve God and not to help the king financially<sup>56</sup>.

The cause of clashes between the religious and political power was very often the revenues of the monasteries and abbeys or financial issues in general. Aside from the financial aspects, the king's relations with the church were significant in terms of

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<sup>53</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, p. XVII and p. 114.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* p. 114.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 118. About saints' lives we have, of course, to be very careful because most of the time they were stories written for a purpose which deliberately reported things in a favourable light. However A. Vauchez reported that, "The papacy would not embark on an enquiry unless the requests were supported by a sufficient number of petitions from influential persons and local authorities both lay and ecclesiastical", and that, "in the collections of petitions gathered in support of the canonization of St Gilbert of Sempringham in 1200 and St Hugh of Lincoln in 1218, letters from the king and several high lay dignitaries of the kingdom rubbed shoulders with those from the two archbishops, almost all the bishops and also many abbots and priors". A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the later Middle Ages*. (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 40 – 48 and pp. 146-156. Modern discussion of the historicity of saints' lives began with A. Vauchez, *La spiritualité du Moyen Âge occidental VIII-XIII*, (Paris, 1975). On this topic, see also: Robert Bartlett. 'The Hagiography of Angevin England', in, *Thirteenth century England*, Vol. V, ed. P.R.Coss and S.D. Lloyd, (Woodbrige, 1995), pp. 37-52. See also Mary-Ann Stouck, *Medieval Saint: a Reader* (Peterborough, 1999), pp. XV- XXI.

<sup>56</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*. pp. 35 – 36. Henry got upset and summoned the Bishop asking for an explanation and at the beginning the king did not want to talk to Hugh; the Bishop broke the ice by telling Henry how much he resembled his cousin of Falaise, referring, with impudence in his joke to the humble origins of William the Conqueror, illegitimate son of Robert I and Arlette, a tanner's daughter of Falaise.

external appearances. After all, the coronation ceremony and the anointing of the king were matters of crucial political importance. Good relations were important thereafter in terms of social and political stability. Equally, senior churchmen needed a good relationship with their king if they were to succeed in the many negotiations which governed their role. In a sense they were all part of his entourage. Lincoln's bishops of this period did not need to concern themselves so much with the military defence of the city, but they did need to be concerned about their political link with the public authority, given that it could impinge upon the life of the church. The difference between the bishops of Cremona and the bishops of Lincoln lay, as we will see, in the way they chose to exercise that authority.

Hugh of Avalon's conception of his duties was very clear. He wanted to work for the church no matter what. Politics were important but as an accessory to serving his religious role. His adherence to the concept *philosophia ancilla theologiae*, i.e. philosophy must serve theology in order to reach the truth, allows us to consider him the proper predecessor of Robert Grosseteste and to say definitely that what Grosseteste achieved was based on the work undertaken by Hugh of Avalon. Clearly this duty could not be performed without the support of the political power; but while Geoffrey and Walter de Coutances, for different reasons, made compromises, Hugh of Avalon proceeded in a straightforward manner without making any concession: his duty was to save the king's soul along with those of his parishioners, so that the only law he recognized was the law of the church. He could do this, however, precisely because he was in a powerful position in the state. The link between politics and religion was therefore unbreakable; you could not have one without the other.

From Hugh of Avalon onwards, therefore, change begins to be evident, in that religious issues became more significant in their own right for Lincoln's bishops. The bishop was bound to the king, but only conditionally; should the king ask the bishop to deny his religious duties the obedience that the bishop owed to him was void. With Grosseteste we shall see that this concept of obedience to religious values would lead the bishop to disobey not only the king, but also the highest ecclesiastical authority, the Pope, when the latter deviated from the religious task, that is to say when the religious authority elevated other aims above the salvation of souls. Of

course by no means all bishops followed this new pattern, but in the diocese of Lincoln the bishops came to be particularly careful in this regard.

Hugh was inevitably and frequently involved in public affairs: he attended the council of Geddington in February 1188 at which plans were made for the king's crusade. The tragic end of the Second Crusade and the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 had been an alarming wake up call and the papacy decided to act immediately. Henry II himself took the cross as well as Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury. Baldwin died at Acre in 1190 while Henry's death on 6 July 1189 left his vow unfulfilled. On his death Richard I became king<sup>57</sup>. Throughout his reign Richard I fought endlessly and his reign reflects the dominance of war for twelfth-century kings. From 1189 to 1192 he was involved in the Third Crusade after which he was captured and imprisoned in 1193 while he was crossing Germany on his way back to England. Then from 1194 till 1199 he relentlessly fought against Philip Augustus of France in order to defend his lands in France<sup>58</sup>. Because of this the king needed money, particularly in relation to the crusade in which Richard was very keen to participate; therefore everything was sacrificed to raising money for it. Everything, even good government, was for sale: "privileges, lordship, earldoms, sheriffdoms, castles, towns and such like"<sup>59</sup>.

During the absence of the king the people who actually ruled the realm were the justiciars, the most powerful being the bishop of Ely, William Longchamp. The disordered state of England led formally to his deposition by Walter of Coutances under a mandate from the absent king. The deposition originated in William's mistreatment and imprisonment of Geoffrey Plantagenet, archbishop of York. Hugh of Lincoln wasted no time in excommunicating Longchamp and in portraying him as a usurper and a tyrant. In this episode we can clearly see Hugh of Lincoln acting as a proper defender of the church, in contrast to Longchamp who acted patently as the defender of his own interests.

In defence of the church Hugh was prepared to challenge the archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert Walter, who at the Council of Oxford demanded from the

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<sup>57</sup> J. Flori, *Richard the Lionheart, King and Knight*, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> R. Turner – R. Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart, Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189-99* (Harlow, 2005) p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> W. L. Warren, *King John*, p. 38.

assembled clergy, on the king's behalf, 300 knights for overseas duties<sup>60</sup>. Hugh's relations with Richard I were seldom easy, owing to the king's financial exactions which afflicted the clergy as well as the laity. Bishops as tenant in chief of the king were supposed to respond to military need, but it was no longer clear what real duty the bishop should perform. Hugh refused to contribute on the grounds that the church of Lincoln was not bound to such a duty. He was wrong, but he was acting in good faith in saying so. Richard immediately confiscated the temporalities of the See of Lincoln and Hugh was forced to see the king. After having talked to him Hugh managed to mollify him and their relationship returned to normal, Hugh pointing out that he had never betrayed or failed the king<sup>61</sup>.

Peace did not endure, however; this was very much due to the fact that, once again, some courtiers suggested the king should make use of twelve of the canons of Lincoln in order to perform the role of king's representatives in foreign courts at their own expense. Following Hugh's inevitable response, the temporalities were confiscated again. In practice people were afraid to act against the bishop because he was surrounded by an aura of mystique, even of superstition. Adam of Eynesham's *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis* tells us that whoever was under the bishop's excommunication would die a horrible death, as in the case of one woman who pretended to be pregnant and passed off another woman's child as hers<sup>62</sup>. Other miracles are described in the book and all this contributed to create a sense of fear and respect for the bishop of Lincoln. Hugh was in fact on his way to visit the king again when news spread that Richard had been fatally wounded.

Hugh modelled his conduct as bishop on the precepts of Pope Gregory the Great, whose *Pastoral Care* he greatly admired. We can say that his entire life is presented as a constant struggle against carnal lusts. He frequently went back to Witham to refresh himself by reading and by meditation. The fact that the bishop of Lincoln had the largest diocese in England and one of the richest did not necessarily make him a central political figure. His centrality was due more to his strong sense of his mission in the world and of his duty to protect the interests of his church. Before dying he

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<sup>60</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, RS, LI, iv, pp. 40.

<sup>61</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 66 – 67.

<sup>62</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. II, pp. 20 – 27.

obtained permission, both from the archbishop and from the king, for a long pilgrimage that would take him to Grande Chartreuse, Cluny, Cîteaux and Clairvaux<sup>63</sup>: it would be the last of his life. Hugh died in London in the Old Temple on 16 November 1200<sup>64</sup>. The journey to Lincoln where he was buried by the north wall of the chapel of St John the Baptist on 23 November 1200,<sup>65</sup> was followed by thousands of people, lay and clergy and miracles were said to have occurred both during this journey and later on at his tomb<sup>66</sup>. According to Warren, King John seemed to have been very much attached to Hugh. His care and fondness have been demonstrated by his constant presence in the last days of the bishop's life and by his attendance at Hugh's funeral<sup>67</sup>.

Pope Honorius III set up a commission in 1219 to investigate Hugh's sanctity. The bishop and chapter of Lincoln informed the Pope that the archbishop of Canterbury with others including Hugh the chaplain and Theobald, canon of Lincoln, after having carefully analysed the life and the miracles which had occurred during Hugh's life, were on their way to Rome with documentation asking canonization<sup>68</sup>. Bishop Hugh of Avalon was duly canonized by Honorius III in 1220<sup>69</sup>.

Hugh of Avalon had sturdy respect for the rights of the chapter. He refused to accept his election to the see as valid unless it was made in the Lincoln chapter itself. The canons were so impressed to hear this that they elected him with apparent unanimity. Moreover, he showed himself to be extremely respectful of the laws of the church and of the ecclesiastical hierarchy by insisting that he needed the consent of his still lawful superior, the prior of Chartreuse. After the period of settling in, when he had some problems with administrative assistants and clerics,<sup>70</sup> Hugh became increasingly familiar with his chapter, the 56 clerics who attended the service of the church and the mass. These people needed food, clothing, buildings and other services. David Hugh Farmer was able to establish that Hugh's relations with his

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<sup>63</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 89 – 91.

<sup>64</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 468.

<sup>65</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, p. 97.

<sup>66</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, pp. 469 - 473.

<sup>67</sup> W.L. Warren, *King John*, p. 70.

<sup>68</sup> (27 April 1219, 17 February, 1220). See: *The Acta of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, Vol. 88, n 127, ed. D. Smith (Lincoln, 2000), p. 58.

<sup>69</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*. pp. 101-107. M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 58.

<sup>70</sup> *EEA*, IV, p. XXIV.

canons were surprisingly good. In particular it seems that Hugh was very pleased about his re-election by the canons given that he had refused the See. Hugh was particularly interested in the morality of the clergy and the need for them to be cultivated. Even though the background and experience of the canons were very different from his their relationship appears to have been fundamentally sound.

There are letters to his chapter. Particularly interesting is the letter<sup>71</sup> in which he wrote: ‘to my beloved sons in Christ the dean and the chapter of the church of Lincoln [...] we grant to you the dean and to the residentiary canons, and if the dean is absent, to you the sub-dean and to the residentiary canons this right, that by your authority it is in your power to compel all canons who do not keep residence, because they are detained in their prebends, to appoint in their place suitable vicars, and by the common agreement of the resident canons provide them with proper and sufficient maintenance’<sup>72</sup>.

We must admit that the bishop expected those on whom he had conferred the revenues of the canonries of his church to reside at Lincoln. Should it be impossible to fulfil their duty, he asked categorically that all his canons who were not resident should appoint suitable vicars to fill their place<sup>73</sup>. This quite strict attitude was always counterbalanced by a strenuous defence of the chapter, as witnessed by the document “exempting the prebends of the church of Lincoln from all Episcopal rights and demands so that the archdeacons should have no power to demand anything from the prebends or from the churches which belonged to the ‘common’ of Lincoln”<sup>74</sup>. With his clerks, then, Hugh adopted an exceptionally rigorous stance; indeed he refused canonries to distinguished clerics if they would not reside. This, arguably, deprived the diocese of distinguished canons who would have been beneficial for its religious life, but Hugh was categorical about this.

The powers he gave to the chapter of Lincoln were various, but they were mainly related to the administration of justice and to the adherence to Christian principles. Very important here is his mandate to “the archdeacons, deans and other officials of

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<sup>71</sup> *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, p. 10.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>73</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 93, p. 66.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* n 102, pp. 70-71. (1189 – 1193).



the diocese of Lincoln that the dean and chapter of Lincoln have the power of exercising canonical justice against those who detain anything from the Common; and commanding them to execute the sentence of the dean and the chapter. They were not to absolve excommunicates or those placed under interdict except on the authority of the bishop or chapter”<sup>75</sup>. There is also a mandate directed to the archdeacons and other officials operating in the diocese to encourage all the parishioners and the faithful in general within the diocese to attend more regularly the Pentecostal procession<sup>76</sup>. The last mandate reveals indirectly that the real aim of the bishop was the pastoral care in the diocese. The bishop was so intimately related to his divine office and to his duty that his real aim in life was almost exclusively to serve his diocese to be of help to his canons<sup>77</sup>.

His familiarity with canon law and the administration of justice and the ability he showed in treating the chapter were probably the inheritance both of his work as procurator at the Grande Chartreuse as well as of the experience accumulated as prior at Witham. It is probably due to his previous experience that this period witnessed a change in the format of administrative documents; with Hugh the documents became more regular and his successors seem to have followed the same procedure<sup>78</sup>.

Despite all his virtues apparently even Saint Hugh fell into the trap of nepotism. When the dean, Richard Fitz-Neal, left the chapter in 1189, Hugh found it appropriate to replace him with Hamo, his nephew, who had already benefited from his uncle’s generosity by being appointed to the archdeaconry of Leicester. Moreover like his predecessor, Walter of Coutances, he exploited the issue of indulgences, even though most of the work that Hugh had caused to be done in relation to the cathedral had been paid for directly by offerings in money or in kind to the fabric fund<sup>79</sup>. “An indulgence of eight days was instituted for all those who

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<sup>75</sup> *EEA*, IV, n 91, p. 65.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* n 92, p. 66.

<sup>77</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, pp. 10-11.

<sup>78</sup> *EEA*, IV, p. XXVIII.

<sup>79</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 30 - 31.

contributed alms towards the building of the (cathedral) church of St Mary, Lincoln”<sup>80</sup>.

Hugh’s surviving Acta (224 in total) allow us to see how Hugh was keen on expanding and maintaining the cathedral, witness of this fact being that he employed Geoffrey de Noyers, the famous architect, for supervising the work of the choir. However he was also very much concerned about the increase of legal and religious procedures related to the administration of the diocese. One of his actions was therefore to recruit adequate clerks in order to deal with the XII century canon law. Among others, he secured the services of Master Robert of Bedford and Master Roger of Rolleston, two of Archbishop Baldwin’s clerks<sup>81</sup>.

Because of his vast knowledge and no doubt his sense of fairness, there are episodes in his life when he was called upon to bring peace between contenders. There are three particularly important cases<sup>82</sup>:

- 1) The Coventry case where the bishop, Hugh of Nonant, in order to give stability to his diocese that had two chapters - the chapter of Lichfield and the chapter of Coventry - expelled the monks of Coventry. In this case Hugh acted as judge-delegate and the monks were restored in their possessions, even though the diocese continued in the same way as before. Hugh acted in favour of the monks, but without sorting out the issue raised by the bishop.
- 2) The conflict between Geoffrey Plantagenet and his chapter was another matter that Hugh tried to resolve. Geoffrey had been seen as a champion of the church when he was mistreated by William Longchamp, but things came to be seen differently in the quarrel between Geoffrey and his chapter when Geoffrey excommunicated the dean and the treasurer of York because they disobeyed his order. Geoffrey basically wanted the chapter to start the Epiphany Psalter again because he arrived late at the cathedral. Because of this Hugh du Puiset asked the pope to quash Geoffrey’s election. In addition the canons of York went on strike because of the levy of a quarter of their revenues in order to pay for Richard’s ransom. We have a notification by

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<sup>80</sup> *EEA*, IV, n 98, p. 69.

<sup>81</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, ‘Hugh of Lincoln’, in, *ODNB*, xxviii, p. 622.

<sup>82</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 75-83.

Bishop Hugh, Archdeacon Winemer of Northampton and Prior Hugh of Pontefract, delegated by Pope Celestine III to investigate charges made against Archbishop Geoffrey of York in his dispute with the canons of York. They reported that the archbishop was cited to appear before them many times but that he did not do so<sup>83</sup>. There followed publication by the judges-delegate of the papal suspension of Archbishop Geoffrey. The archbishop's spiritual jurisdiction was to be temporarily exercised by the dean of York<sup>84</sup>. We learn that the judges-delegate had already arranged previously for the parties to meet in Rome, and that Bishop Hugh had refused to suspend the archbishop as a result of which the canons of York had appealed to Pope Celestine III. Papal bulls dated 23 December 1195<sup>85</sup> informed Simon de Apulia, dean of York, and the clergy of the province of York that the archbishop has been suspended. Hugh was once again called in and the canons submitted, apart from the dean. However, conflict resurfaced, this time around exactions and confiscations he had made after having obtained the shrievalty of York. Once again Hugh had to settle the case.

- 3) The third great dispute which involved Hugh as judge was the conflict between successive archbishops of Canterbury, specifically Baldwin and Hubert Walter, and the monks of Canterbury. The main problem was that the archbishops wanted to create a new collegiate church, (staffed by secular canons holding prebends) at Hackington in the suburbs of Canterbury. The monks believed that this would bring into existence a rival institution of such eminence that it might easily usurp their own unique situation as the chapter of England's principal metropolitan See and their right to elect the archbishops of Canterbury. Hugh was again appointed and judged in favour of the monks. The building that was under construction was demolished. However, peace did not endure because after Baldwin's death, his successor Hubert Walter brought up the issue once again, simply changing location. This time the threat to the monks was Lambeth instead of Hackington. Hugh was already at the logger-heads with Hubert Walter for other reasons, but he was certainly not happy to do all over again something he had already settled.

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<sup>83</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 214 A, p. 142. (1195).

<sup>84</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 214C, p. 143. (1196).

<sup>85</sup> *EEA, IV*, p. 143.

The case went again in favour of the monks but was only finally resolved after the death of Hugh.

In all three cases the situation was settled with a fundamental contribution from Hugh that helped the contenders to reach an agreement. What is noticeable is that most of the time the settlement was in favour of the status quo ante. In this sense Hugh cannot be considered an innovator; on the contrary, we see him as a strenuous protector and defender of tradition. The conservativeness of Hugh of Lincoln has never been taken into proper consideration probably because of the great job he did in organising the diocese and because of his well-deserved high reputation in church matters. In all of the three cases mentioned he went for the practical solution, or for the quietest one if we prefer. In these cases he took the side of the monks, and this is not surprising having been a monk himself, but the side of the monks also represented the conservative side. He does not seem to have taken any action, for instance, against the dean of Lincoln who did not submit.

Other evidence of this attitude can be seen in the composition of the dispute between the bishop and the order of Sempringham. This disagreement originated between “the bishop and the chapter of Lincoln on the one hand and Roger the master of the order of Sempringham and the canons of the hospital of St Katharine’s outside Lincoln on the other, whereby the canons were placed in corporal possession of the churches of Marton and Newton on Trent”<sup>86</sup>. In order to explain this behaviour I would suggest that Hugh needed to go for a practical situation because it was only through peace and quiet that he could conduct his work for the church. Given that his main goal was pastoral care, he needed to have a pacified church and a pacified diocese in order to function. Peace and quiet could have been achieved only by maintaining the status quo, not by revolutionising the situation. Hugh almost always decided in favour of the present order.

One area where Hugh can certainly not be seen as conservative is in the essential contribution he made towards organizing Episcopal visitations in his diocese. Grosseteste was only able to do what he did because of the vital work carried out by

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<sup>86</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 109, p. 76. (1186 – 1200).

St Hugh. When Hugh of Avalon was elected he immediately realized that in the diocese he needed to act high-handedly, not by desire, but because the diocese had been left stranded for some years under the pontificates of Geoffrey and Walter of Coutances. He had been many years in Carthusian monasteries and this undoubtedly coloured his attitudes. Some of the Carthusian settlements in England had religious or political factors behind their foundations; however, Witham had very unique origins. After the murder of Archbishop Becket, part of Henry II's atonement included a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As in 1175 the king had not complied, for his complete reconciliation his penance was changed into something more feasible: the foundation of monasteries. Witham stood as an atonement for the king's wrongdoing<sup>87</sup>. However, the king did not keep his promises and as a result Hugh and another brother, Gerard, went to see the king. Gerard rebuked the king heavily and behind Gerard's outburst was the idea that the money donated to a monastery would help the salvation of the donor. Hugh calmly tried to work on the king's forbearance; his strategy paid off and the king came to send money regularly to Witham<sup>88</sup>. This episode shows clearly the determination and the shrewdness of the future bishop of Lincoln, but also underlines the fact that the life and prosperity of the monasteries and abbeys of England were strongly linked to the favour of the kings.

The bishop confirmed to the monastery and monks of Eynsham all its churches in the diocese of Lincoln<sup>89</sup>. When the bishop confirmed to them the chapel of Cassington with all the offerings for the use of monks, he specified that, when Master Nicholas who was living there, should die, there would be a vicarage of five marks and the monks would be able to assign it to the priests who served the chapel. It is interesting that the chapels mentioned by name - Eynsham, Cassington and Yarnton - and the churches of South Stoke and Charlbury were to be free, as of old, from all episcopal burdens and only pay Peter's Pence<sup>90</sup>.

When the bishop granted permission to the abbot and canons of Osney that they might, "build a chapel in front of the gate of their curia at their own expense so that divine service may be celebrated there for their household servants and guests and

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<sup>87</sup> Douie-Farmer, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, Vol. I, p. XXIV.

<sup>88</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 18 – 19.

<sup>89</sup> *EEA*, IV, n 60, p. 45. (September 1189).

<sup>90</sup> *EEA*, IV, n 60, p. 46. (November 1197 – 1200).

for parishioners living within the confines of the abbey, he declared the chapel to be free of the payment of synodals and to enjoy all the immunities which the abbey enjoyed”<sup>91</sup>.

Another document concerns Ramsey abbey and the pensions to be paid to it by churches of the diocese of Lincoln, namely Elton, Therfield, Cranfield and St Andrew (the latter paying in wax). These pensions and other revenues were to be employed in keeping the monastery roofs in repair and on lights and other necessities<sup>92</sup>. There are numerous confirmations to nuns and monks of pensions coming from the possession of churches<sup>93</sup>.

The bishops in general were judges when disputes arose between religious houses. For instance we have a judgement by “Bishop Hugh, Roger of Rolleston, dean of Lincoln, and Raymond archdeacon of Leicester, acting upon a mandate of Pope Celestine III in respect of a dispute between the monks of St Fromond and Master S. of Stamford and Master R. of Stapleford over the church of St John, Stamford”<sup>94</sup>. There were also exchanges between priors. We have a confirmation of an “exchange between the prior and canons of Merton and the prior and monks of St Fromond. The prior and canons of Merton exchanged their church of Caen in Normandy for tithes of Stamford castle, a pension of two silver marks from the church of All Saints, Stamford, the Stamford churches of St John, St Paul, St Michael and St George and the churches of Saxby and Bonby in Lindsey”<sup>95</sup>.

The diocese needed attention, too, not only because it was the largest in area and population (with York), but also because Hugh needed to organize what he considered was his main purpose: pastoral care. As it was clear that a single man, however special, could not take care of the whole diocese, Bishop Hugh decided to delegate authority while keeping for himself the overall supervision of his officials. There is no doubt that his intention was to use the canonries for the benefit of the

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<sup>91</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 147, p. 98. (1189 – 1193).

<sup>92</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 157, pp. 104-105. (1189 – 1190).

<sup>93</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 3, p. 2, 1197; n 11, p. 8, September 1192; n 4, p. 3, 1192 ; n 5, p. 3. (1186).

<sup>94</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 166, p. 110. (1195 -1198).

<sup>95</sup> *EEA, IV*, p. 111. (1186 – 1200).

diocese<sup>96</sup>. The appointment of the right person was also one of the biggest concerns for Hugh, but once appointed a priest could count on the bishop's support.

Surviving documentation shows Hugh involved in the *minutiae* of diocesan business. We see the institution of "Hugh Peverel to the church of Hardwick, and of Richard<sup>97</sup>, the priest, to the perpetual vicarage of Hardwick, on the presentation of Hugh Peverel, the parson of the church, with the consent of the prior and convent of Bermondsey and Henry de New Market, the patrons. Richard was to hold the vicarage for life, possessing the tithes of corn, all small tithes and all the altar offerings and paying to Hugh a pension of thirty shillings". The position of vicars in the diocese was determined by custom<sup>98</sup>. During the institution of William de Bubbenhil to the perpetual vicarage of Saddington we know that the vicar was responsible for paying the Episcopal customs<sup>99</sup>.

As we have seen, Hugh acted as a papal judge-delegate. However, relations between bishops and the pope were not confined to disputes alone. Hugh sought advice from the Roman Curia and shared concerns about the religious situation of his diocese. For instance, in late September 1191<sup>100</sup> he sought advice following the confession of Earl William de Roumare that "after his separation from his first wife on grounds of consanguinity he had developed 'a scruple of conscience' about the situation". The pope replied that the earl should do penance but not leave his second wife. A similar case where the bishop sought the advice of Pope Celestine III involved a man called John who, although married to Alice, committed adultery with a woman called Maxilla. John subsequently lived with Maxilla in adultery during his first wife's

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<sup>96</sup> D. H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, p. 29.

<sup>97</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 22, p. 17. (September 1186).

<sup>98</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 43, p. 34. (September 1186).

<sup>99</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 55, p. 43, September 1186. The possessor of a church had to provide an income for the priest serving it [*Ibid.* n 26, p. 22, September 1189]. The prior and canons of Bridlington had the bishop's confirmation of the church of Goxhill, the priory possessing the church saving a portion of the proceeds to the value of six marks a year for the priest serving there. This probably explains why there were some disputes in the bishop's presence between the abbot and monks of Bardney and Gerard of Howell about the church of Howell and a moiety of the church of Claypole. By his judgement the right of presentation of incumbents to these churches should belong to Gerard and the abbot and convent receive an annual pension of twenty shilling from the churches, ten shillings from each and nothing more. Gerard and his heirs could not confer these churches on any other religious houses. *Ibid.* n 17, p. 14, March 1195.

<sup>100</sup> *EEA, IV*, n 40 A, p. 32.

lifetime and then after Alice's death they continued living together and had 10 sons<sup>101</sup>.

Bishop Hugh of Avalon had clear ideas about how people should behave in religious matters. A particular episode relates to the community of nuns at Godstow in Berkshire where Hugh suppressed the incipient cult of Henry II's dead mistress, fair Rosamund. Her shrine was discovered there when Hugh made an Episcopal visitation in 1191, shortly after the king's death. He noticed the candlelit tomb with its silk covering in front of the high altar. The nuns explained that they honoured Rosamund as a benefactor, but Hugh insisted that she was a harlot who must be reburied outside the abbey church<sup>102</sup>. According to Hugh this woman had lived a bad life and therefore she did not deserve to be buried in the church. This would be a lesson to other women to lead chaste lives. For him there was no compromise and in this we see a clear link with the future bishop, Robert Grosseteste.

Hugh of Avalon died on 16 November 1200, but no new bishop was elected for over two years. King John first tried to impose his own appointee, but was unable to force his choice on the cathedral chapter. John then left the see vacant and secured the revenues of the see for himself, a fact not lost on contemporaries. Eventually the cathedral chapter was allowed to perform an election and Master William of Blois was elected about 6 July 1203<sup>103</sup>. His work shows that he was a local man and that he kept local people around him<sup>104</sup>. He was also a learned man and of kindly disposition. He came to Lincoln after having served Bishop Hugh du Puiset of Durham, subsequently becoming sub-dean, then precenter of the cathedral. He died around 10/11 May and was buried in the cathedral. After him the church was kept vacant for another two years and a half<sup>105</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> *EEA*, IV, n 40 B, p. 33. (December 1192).

<sup>102</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, RS, LI, iii, p. 167. See also: M.T. Clanchy, *England and its rulers, 1066-1307*, (Totowa, 2006), p. 270. According to Ranulph Higden, the nuns reburied Rosamund in the chapter house with the inscription: *+Hic iacet in tumba rosa mundi non rosa mundal Non redolet sed olet quae redolere solet*. (*Polychronicon*, ed. J.R Lumby, in RS 41.8 (1883), p. 54; cf D. Ganz. "The Building of Godstow Nunnery", *Oxoniensia* 37 (1972), p. 151).

<sup>103</sup> He was consecrated on 24 August 1203 at Canterbury by the bishop of London as the archbishop of Canterbury was ill. *Annales de Waverleia*, in, *AM*, ii, p. 255.

<sup>104</sup> *EEA*, IV, p. XXVII.

<sup>105</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 9. See also: *Annales de Wigornia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 394. See also: M. Paris, *Chron. Ma*, ii, p. 495. See also: *Annales de Margan*, in, *AM*, i, p. 28.



The relationship between King John and the church was quite close as many of John's officials and servants were in clerical orders. The archbishop of Canterbury himself was chancellor from 1199 to 1205. The king found it extremely useful to employ clergy, for the cost of maintaining them could be reduced by giving them parish churches: the incumbent took the bulk of the revenues and a curate did the work. If the king had no parishes in his gift available a canonry or an archdeaconry could often be found. Many bishops were recruited from the ranks of royal clerks. Canon law stated clearly that whenever a see fell vacant, the chapter should freely elect the successor. The election was, of course subjected to papal approval and if everything was in order and no disputes arose, the person would be appointed. The procedure, at least in theory, seemed to be quite straightforward, but in reality, what really happened was that the king usually succeeded in getting whoever he wished elected<sup>106</sup>. This system had been practised for years, surrounded by complaints, disagreements, and even bitter fighting, but was generally accepted by all parties<sup>107</sup>. The disputed election of Stephen Langton to the see of Canterbury broke this balance, and led to the interdict over England.

The period when King John was fighting the Pope over Langton saw the election of Hugh of Wells to the see of Lincoln, as the successor to William of Blois. Hugh of Wells came from the city which shared his name. We have no evidence about the date of his birth; however, his career probably began under Bishop Reginal Fitzjocelin of Bath between 1174 and 1191<sup>108</sup>. At Bath he continued to serve under Bishop Savaric for some time<sup>109</sup>. The *Annales de Margan* recorded him as one of the canons of Wells cathedral in 1199 or 1200<sup>110</sup>. If his life it is veiled in mystery his schooling is not much clearer, as we cannot establish whether or not he had any university education<sup>111</sup>. He may have been a relative of Walter and Hugh of Wells,

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<sup>106</sup> W. L. Warren, *King John*, p. 159.

<sup>107</sup> Jörg Peltzer has underlied how during the election of Walter of Coutances it was normal and even necessary to look for the *consensus* of the King in the election. However in 1205/7 canonists no longer thought this was the case, in fact many canonists did not consider the king's role in the election necessary. Jörg Peltzer, *Canon Law, careers and conquest* (Cambridge, 2008), p 81.

<sup>108</sup> *EEA*, X, pp. XLVII – LIV.

<sup>109</sup> *EEA*, X, p. LVIII.

<sup>110</sup> *Annales de Margan*, in, *AM*, i, p. 29.

<sup>111</sup> David Smith, 'Hugh of Wells', in, *ODNB*, lviii, p. 61.

both canons of Lincoln<sup>112</sup>; what is certain is that his life becomes easier to trace after 1199 when he was brought into King John's chancery with the archdeacon of Wells, Simon, later bishop of Chichester<sup>113</sup>.

It seems that he had served the king well because during this period he began to make progress in life. According to the Acta of Hugh of Wells he acquired prebends of Lincoln and St Paul's, London, and the archdeaconry of Wells<sup>114</sup>. His election to the see of Lincoln presented him with some difficulties as, although he was regularly elected according to the standard procedure some time before 12 April 1209, there was a suspicion that the king had extended his long hand over the chapter and had favoured his election<sup>115</sup>. An inquiry was quickly set up but Hugh was soon cleared of any allegation over his election and over his "allegedly" less than blameless private life. At this juncture he severed his relationship with King John, at the time excommunicated. Matthew Paris recorded that he was confirmed and consecrated by Langton at Melun on 20 December<sup>116</sup>. The king wasted no time and seized the revenues of the see of Lincoln<sup>117</sup> and the bishop remained abroad until July 1213<sup>118</sup> when the papal interdict on England was lifted.

His active episcopate dates from the temporalities of his see being restored on 20 July 1213. Once in England Hugh became involved in national and continental events. His presence is recorded when the king issued Magna Carta and also at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. He does not seem to have put forward any particular political issues, although he strenuously supported the other English bishops in their claim that the barons were not guaranteeing the peace of the realm. His tenure of the see was marked by transition and innovation in the sphere of episcopal government. From the time of Hugh of Wells, Lincoln episcopal acta are regularly dated.

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<sup>112</sup>*The Acta of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, p. XXVIII.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXVIII.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXIX. He acted in a similar capacity in the diocese of Bath and Glastonbury during the 1205 - 6's vacancy

<sup>115</sup> John de Schalby said that he was chancellor of the King, supported in his statement by Matthew Paris who called Hugh, *regis cancellarius*. (M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 526.) Srawley informed us that "Hugh of Wells is frequently mentioned in documents of John's reign, but only as the king's clerk. Chancellor therefore appears to be a mistake for clerk". *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by J.H. Srawley, p. 11 and p. 27, note 18.

<sup>116</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*. n 1, p. 3. See also: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 528.

<sup>117</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 528

<sup>118</sup> *Annales de Bermundeseia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 453.

In the meantime King John died, on 18 October 1216 at Newark Castle held by the bishop of Lincoln. His eldest son Henry, aged nine, was brought to Gloucester and crowned in the abbey there on 28 October by the bishop of Winchester and the Papal Legate Gualo<sup>119</sup>. Power was taken by William Marshal, earl of Pembroke, as regent. The death of King John deprived his opponents of the personal cause of their rebellion. Instead of a tyrant they were resisting a helpless boy, who was entitled to his inheritance as any other heir. Furthermore he had the official backing of the new pope, Honorius III; and the papal legate, Gualo, within a month of John's death set his seal along with the Marshal's to the revised text of Magna Carta. The papal legate turned the war against Prince Louis into a Holy war, considering the enemy as infidels to be given no quarter<sup>120</sup>. The battle of Lincoln castle, strenuously defended, where the citizens were loyal to Louis, was the beginning of Louis's defeat and Henry III's "official" reign. This battle, called Lincoln Fair because of the looting that took place after the battle itself<sup>121</sup>, demonstrated how ecclesiastics could be intimately part of this or that side and how they could turn in favour of or against the political power. The clerics and ecclesiastics who had teamed up with Louis were suspended and Matthew Paris insists that the bishop of Lincoln, Hugh, had to pay a considerable amount of money, namely £1,000 to the Pope and £100 to the papal legate, in order to have his bishopric back. However this might be doubted given that in no other monastic chronicles is there mention of the bishop of Lincoln having to pay any sum of money to the king<sup>122</sup>.

After King John submitted to Pope Innocent III, and the Legation of Gualo during Henry III's minority, the papacy gained a remarkable position within the country and particularly withing the government. Legates, officials and other clergies nominated by the Papal Curia began to flock to England and to obtain prebends and grants paid out of English benefices. At least in theory some of these officials were preachers and/or nuncios dispatched to England in order to help the faithful to familiarize

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<sup>119</sup> W.L. Warren, *King John*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>120</sup> Thomas F. Tout, 'The Fair of Lincoln and the "histoire de Guillaume le Merechal"', in, *The English Historical review*, 18.70 (1903), p. 246, note 31.

<sup>121</sup> *Annales de Theokesberia*, in, *AM*, i, p. 63; *Annales de Wigornia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 408; *Annales de Wintonia*, in, *AM*, ii, p. 83, and p. 287. Only in *Annales de Wintonia* is mentioned that the churches were robbed.

<sup>122</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 32.

themselves with the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council. In reality what happened was that most of the papal officials were not preachers at all and were completely disinterested in any kind of reform; they were simply relatives of cardinals or even of the Pope, who exploited the English benefices. The situation was completely unacceptable to many lay and ecclesiastic people<sup>123</sup>. The papacy, on the other hand, had never played a more important and constructive role in English history than during the minority of Henry III. It therefore tried to exploit its position within English borders<sup>124</sup>. The way in which things were resolved during the episcopate of Hugh de Wells are exemplified by several documents. One is a recital of a mandate of the legate, Pandulph, dated at Reading on 3 June, “informing the bishop that he has conferred the church of Charwelton, formerly held by Ulian steward of the abbot of Westminster, on his own clerk, Master Bernard, and requesting the latter’s induction, saving the right of the true patron of the church”<sup>125</sup>. Here we have an example of what will become the norm in the near future. It will become a systematic procedure that would later lead Grosseteste to open rebellion against the papacy.

Another interesting document is the “institution of Peter *nepos* of Romanus cardinal deacon of St Angelus, to the church of Wardley, with the consent of the prior and convent of Launde, the patrons. The bishop had been obliged to pay Peter ten marks a year until he could be provided with an ecclesiastical benefice equivalent in value or better. Peter was to pay to the prior the customary annual pension of one mark”<sup>126</sup>. This is but one example of benefice-holding by the relatives of the cardinals, especially Italians. Another example of the same kind is the notification that “following a mandate of Pope Honorius III that Master Guy de Aricio should receive twenty marks sterling each year from the bishop’s chamber until he should be provided with a more profitable ecclesiastical benefice, the bishop had instituted him to the church of Moreton Pinkney, with the assent of the patrons, the prior and convent of Canons Ashby”<sup>127</sup>. These are just few examples of what was going on in terms of the relationship between the bishop and the Roman Curia. Hugh of Wells

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<sup>123</sup> M.T.Clanchy, *England and its rulers 1066 – 1307*, p. 231.

<sup>124</sup> D. Carpenter, *The minority of Henry III* (London, 1990) p. 397-398.

<sup>125</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, n 158, ed. D. Smith, p. 74. (7 June 1221).

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* n 211, p. 101. (19 December 1223).

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.* n 267 and 268, p. 126.

certainly cannot be accused of having been soft in his job, because he set up, basically from nothing, the system of the diocesan visitations, but on this particular matter he did not seem to have been particularly reactive.

All the indications are that Hugh of Wells was a man with a remarkable talent for administration. He was active in public life during the royal minority of Henry III and afterwards. In 1218-19 he headed the names of the justices on eyre for Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and was again employed as an itinerant justice in 1226. He was one of the English ambassadors engaged in negotiation with Louis VIII. He was also active in the proceedings leading to the canonization of his predecessor, Hugh of Avalon, in 1219-20. The bishop could not escape his duties toward the king and part of his duties was to act as royal justice; this does not imply and especially does not mean that he was doing this in order to achieve position or because he expected some personal reward. He was doing it because he needed the backing of the political power in order to have a free hand in his diocese.

Hugh of Wells has been considered a “hard-hitting” bishop because of his attitude of having things done his way. During his episcopate he introduced episcopal registration at Lincoln very much on the lines of his experience in the royal chancery. Bishop Hugh had, apart from his palace at Lincoln, residences at Stow Park, Buckden, Fingest, Kilsby, Dorchester, Cropredy, Spaldwick, Nettleham and Lyddington (all within the diocese), castles at Sleaford, Banbury and Newark on Trent and a London residence at the Old Temple, Holborn<sup>128</sup>.

The situation of the chapter had not changed in the sense that the number of canons had not been increased and there is no evidence to suggest any changes in its role. As far as the authentic power of the chapter is concerned, we cannot be so sure. One interesting document settles a dispute between Abbot Hugh and the convent of St Edmund and Master Robert of Greveley, rector of the church of Wainfleet. The dispute was about a chapel within the parish and about forty sesters of salt that the

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<sup>128</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln, 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, p. XXX.

monks expected to be paid to them by the church. The case was eventually settled by the abbot of Dereham on Pope Honorius III's instructions. "With the assent of Roger the dean and the chapter of Lincoln the bishop ordained that the monks of St Edmunds should receive the forty sesters of salt each year from the rector of the church of Wainfleet"<sup>129</sup>. This formula 'with the assent of the chapter of Lincoln' occurs on other occasions;<sup>130</sup> it is as if the canons of Lincoln had more power than they had had in the past, or at least that the bishop wanted to consult them before taking action.

We see this across a range of activities. "A grant was made with the assent of Roger the dean and the chapter of Lincoln to the cathedral church of Lincoln of a perpetual render of one hundred shillings from the church of Kilsby, five marks from the church of Fingest and ten marks from the church of Asfordby in augmentation of the maintenance of the clerks of the choir by whom the office of the Virgin Mary was celebrated in the church of Lincoln"<sup>131</sup>. Yet another grant was made "with the assent of Roger the dean and the chapter of Lincoln to the canons of Lincoln in augmentation of their common of an annual render of thirty marks from the church of Nettleham, forty marks from the church of Gosberton. This arrangement was to take effect at the next vacancies of the churches and the pensions were to be paid each year in four instalments by their respective parsons"<sup>132</sup>. In a dispute between Robert, archdeacon of Huntingdon, canon of the prebend of Brampton, and Walter son of Robert, knight, the bishop granted licence "to Walter to built a chapel for himself at the place called Harthey and to have a chantry there for himself and his heirs"<sup>133</sup>.

The archdeacon of Northampton, his official and all deans, parsons, vicars and chaplains of the archdeaconry, were notified that "with the assent of William the dean and the chapter of Lincoln, the bishop had given permission to Bishop Richard and the chapter of Salisbury to send collectors throughout the archdeaconry seeking contributions towards the fabric of the new cathedral at Salisbury. The bishop also

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<sup>129</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln, 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 60, p. 28. (1217).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* n 28, n 29, p. 17; n 31, p. 18; n 32, n 34, p. 19.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* n 134, p. 61. (29 March 1220).

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.* n 135, p. 62. (29 March 1220).

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.* n 177, p. 81. (25 December 1221).

granted an indulgence of twenty days to all those of the Lincoln diocese and others whose diocesan bishop should approve who contribute”<sup>134</sup>. In this case we have a bishop seeking for alms in another diocese which is not something that happened every day. The resources of the diocese were usually used within the diocese itself, and indeed in the case of bridges to repair or a chapel to build or some work to do to the cathedral the alms were usually collected in the place where the work would take place. In this case the Bishop of Salisbury had permission to collect alms in another diocese. There is no particular explanation of why this happened but two points stand out; bishops were still exploiting the system of alms in order to finance their activities, and bishops could make agreements between each other and by that extend their activities in this respect to another diocese<sup>135</sup>.

We have a dispensation for a sub-dean, pursuant to letters of Pope Gregory IX dated at the Lateran 16 March 1231, to Master Alexander of Michaelstow, sub-deacon, “to proceed to holy orders and to receive a benefice, notwithstanding a defect of birth in that he is the son of a sub-deacon. However, he is not to be promoted to the Episcopal dignity without special licence of the pope. The dispensation was issued by the bishop on the testimony of Hugh, bishop of Ely, Walter, treasurer of Lincoln, John, then archdeacon of Bedford, and others”<sup>136</sup>. This case indicates that the movement for the moral probity of the church and the fight against concubinage was not working perfectly, the surprising aspect being that the cleric concerned could still have become bishop under papal authorisation. There were still pressures within the clerical establishment that were working against reform.

Matthew Paris described Hugh of Wells as (a bishop) *monachorum persecutor canonicorum et omnium malleus religiosorum*<sup>137</sup>. Whether this is true or not is

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<sup>134</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln, 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 225, p 107. (2 October 1224).

<sup>135</sup> A range of further diocesan activities is revealed. There is a grant with the assent of the dean and chapter of Lincoln, to Peter of Kirmond of fifteen marks in the name of a prebend of Lincoln, to be received by Peter from the render of the archdeaconry of Lincoln until the bishop provides for him in the church of Lincoln. When this is done the fifteen marks reverts to the bishop. *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 234 p 113. (28 September 1225).

<sup>136</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln, 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 358, p. 169. (27 December 1231).

<sup>137</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 306.

debatable; however it does not seem that Hugh of Wells was ever particularly unfriendly to his canons or a persecutor of his own clergy<sup>138</sup>.

After his return to England, presumably diocesan duties took up much of his time. The see of Lincoln had in effect been without a pastor for over seven years<sup>139</sup>. It has been suggested<sup>140</sup> that Matthew's bitterness and unfavourable account might come from the fact that Hugh forced the abbey of St Albans into an agreement over the prior's appointments to the abbey's dependencies in the diocese of Lincoln. This may well have generated a hostile attitude towards the bishop. We have evidence that in 1224 the bishop with other bishops and an abbot were in the chapter house at Worcester trying to settle differences between the bishop and the chapter<sup>141</sup>. It is also true that in 1227/8 Hugh deposed the abbot of Eynsham (probably Adam II) apparently because he had dissipated the abbey's finances;<sup>142</sup> this may have reinforced the conviction that the bishop was merciless against the clergy. There is evidence for his visitation of religious houses from 1220 onwards, and towards the end of his episcopate he was employing his officials to conduct such visitations in his name. Although very active and concerned about his diocese, he does not seem to have visited the parishes at all. It was Robert Grosseteste who was to carry out diocesan visitation methodically<sup>143</sup>. However Grosseteste was able to rely on the work of his predecessors. Hugh of Avalon, in particular, had tightened up the relations between the cathedral and the parishes.

A remarkable number of documents testify to the systematic use of indulgences for practical works in the church or for the repair of infrastructures. For instance there were several indulgences announced for all those who contributed towards the construction and repair of Thrapston bridge. The indulgences were for 10 days

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<sup>138</sup> There are numerous confirmations to monastic houses. We have a confirmation for the possession of the monks of Colchester, as well as the confirmation for the monks of Crowland of the church of Langtoft, saving a perpetual vicarage. We also have documents confirming the properties of the canons, this time the canons of Newnham, to which were confirmed the property of churches and the related tithes. We have a confirmation of the previous possessions of Peterborough abbey and all the tithes from the abbatial demesne. We have a confirmation of the possessions of the Abbey of St Evroul of all its possessions in the diocese of Lincoln. *EEA, IV*, n 229, p. 150, (1203-1206); *EEA, IV*, n 233, p. 153, (1203-1206); *EEA, IV*, n 264, pp. 168-169; n 265, p. 169; n 266, pp. 169-170; *EEA, IV*, n 279, p. 175; n 280, p. 176; n 281, p. 176; n 282, pp. 176-177; *EEA, IV* n 286, pp. 179-181.

<sup>139</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, p. XXX.

<sup>140</sup> David Smith, 'Hugh of Wells', in, *ODNB*, lviii, p. 62.

<sup>141</sup> *Annales de Wigornia*, in, *AM*, iv, pp. 416-417.

<sup>142</sup> *Annales de Theokesberia*, in, *AM*, i, p. 70.

<sup>143</sup> David Smith, 'Hugh of Wells', in, *ODNB*, lviii, p. 62.



remission from purgatory and were to be in operation for three years; the collection of the alms was closely regulated<sup>144</sup>. Indulgences were also issued for the benefit of monasteries, 10 days for example “for all those visited the monastery of Luffield on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary to pray and contribute alms”,<sup>145</sup> “thirteen days for all those who visited York Minster on the day of the commemoration of St William, archbishop of York”,<sup>146</sup> “thirteen days for all those of the Lincoln diocese, and others whose diocesan bishops approve, who visit and contribute alms to the monastery of St Augustine, Daventry”,<sup>147</sup> “twenty days for all those who contribute alms towards the construction and repair of All Saints church, Northampton”,<sup>148</sup> and “twenty days for all those of the Lincoln diocese and others, whose diocesan bishops shall approve, who contribute alms towards the construction and repair of St Mary’s church, Ketton”<sup>149</sup>.

Through these documents we understand that in this period alms became more and more a method of sorting out all the practical problems of the diocese: building new churches and monasteries, repairing the existent ones, building a chapel, erecting bridges, and opening up new roads all tapped into the generosity of the parishioners and/or the munificence of landlords. The use of alms in this way intensified during the course of the twelfth century, a consequence of the development of the parochial system. We must also wonder if there is a relationship between the systematic use of the alms and the setting up of the Episcopal visitation. Usually when the bishop travelled all the expenses were on the parish that accommodated him and his retinue. But clearly in order to travel throughout the diocese the bishop needed roads and bridges, so it is possible that there was a direct link between the diocesan visitation and the systematic use of alms in this period. Giving to the church could also be a contentious issue, as when the bishop excommunicated ten burgesses of Dunstable for refusing offerings in the church during the rites of marriage and burial. Here he

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<sup>144</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 13, p. 11, (1213 – 1214); *Ibid.* n 220, p. 105. (2 August 1214).

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* n 249, p. 120. (11 June 1226).

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* n 252, p. 121. (5 July 1226).

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* n 291, p. 135. (11 July 1228).

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* n 363, p. 172. (14 February 1232).

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* n 376, p. 177. (9 August 1232).

was backing the prior in a quarrel with citizens<sup>150</sup>. Income had to be guarded and even fought for.

The bishop's authority was also exercised by his subordinates; for instance, "Master Reginald of Chester, the bishop's Official, when he was abroad, had made an ordination respecting the church of Alford and the chapel of Rigsby on the bishop's authority"<sup>151</sup>. It is interesting to learn that this authority could be exercised from abroad. Another document tells us about the division between a mother church and its chapels, with the bishop's confirmation of the "arrangements made between Ralph de Trumbleville and Alice his wife, on the one hand, and Robert le Flemeng, patron and parson of the church of Polebrook on the other. Ralph and Alice had founded a hospital with a chapel at Armston in the Polebrook parish. A chaplain is to serve the chapel for ever and he and the brethren of the hospital will wear a religious habit of russet with a figure of a staff in red cloth on the breast. A bell in the chapel will summon the brethren who will receive the sacraments from the chaplain. Servants of the hospital who are not lay-brothers and any others resorting there will receive the sacraments at the mother church like other parishioners"<sup>152</sup>.

Hugh died at Stow Park on 7 February 1235 and he was buried on 10 February in Lincoln cathedral<sup>153</sup>. His testament dated 1 June 1233<sup>154</sup> is a counter to his "alleged" hatred towards his canons or his clergy. In fact he donated generously to his household and to many religious houses, as well as to the fabric of Lincoln cathedral<sup>155</sup>.

It can be argued that with Hugh of Wells the relationship between the bishop of Lincoln and his diocese changed. The national dimension to the bishop's role faded somewhat as he concentrated more on his control of his diocese. The link with the

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<sup>150</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, pp. 110-111.

<sup>151</sup> The perpetual vicar was to have all the land, the church and chapel with meadows, pastures and turbaries and all other appurtenances and liberties, except half a manse at Alford which the canons of the hospital outside Lincoln had for making a barn to store the garb tithes of the church and chapel which they were granted *in proprios usus*. See: *The Acta of Hugh of Wells Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith, n 105, p. 50. (1219).

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* n 370, p. 174. (13 April 1232).

<sup>153</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, iii, p. 306.

<sup>154</sup> The second recorded, the first being in November 1212.

<sup>155</sup> David Smith, 'Hugh of Wells', in, *ODNB*, lviii, p. 63.

political power at the centre of the state was less evident and the local and regional dimensions more so. In this sense the bishops of Lincoln became more like the bishops of Cremona, concentrating on their diocese.

We need to pause for a moment to consider the situation in England after the Fourth Lateran Council. During the years 1208-13, because of the interdict laid on the country, the majority of Sees were vacant and services had either been performed at irregular intervals or celebrated secretly in private houses. Clearly the prime task of the bishops after the interdict was to give new life to the church in England<sup>156</sup>. Moreover the Fourth Lateran Council imposed new obligations on the laity and hence on the clergy: the twenty-first decree for example imposed confession for all Christians, male and female, at least once a year<sup>157</sup>. Despite the work carried out by bishops like Hugh of Wells considerable problems remained, not least in terms of morality and ignorance among the clergy. Despite the foundations laid by St Hugh and by Hugh of Wells there remained a great deal for Robert Grossetese to do as the very paradigm of the pastoral bishop. To him we must now turn.

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<sup>156</sup> Marion Gibbs-Jane Lang, *Bishops and reform, 1215-1272* (London, 1964), p. 94.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.* p. 97.

# Chapter five

## Robert Grosseteste

Robert Grosseteste, bishop from 1235 to 1253, was one of the most important bishops not only of Lincoln but of England if not the whole of Europe. He was a scientist, a theologian and a man of unparalleled breadth of intellectual interests. The sources for his life and work are very considerable and total coverage would be beyond the reach of a single thesis on Lincoln and Cremona. I have relied here on Matthew Paris and other monastic chronicles of the time as primary sources and in terms of secondary work on the major studies of D.A. Callus, R.W. Southern and J. McEvoy as well as on the series of essays included in a recent book edited by Jack P. Cunningham.

Grosseteste's significance for the See of Lincoln was immense. In order to understand this, however, we need to look at his relationship with contemporary powers, including the pope and the king, as well as his activities as bishop. However transcendent a figure he may be this should not be taken out of the context of his time. In particular his work and thought needs also to be examined against the background of the Fourth Lateran Council and in relation to papal and royal power as well as in the specific context of the diocese of Lincoln. Grosseteste's early life and career contain many uncertainties and have occasioned much debate. In order to concentrate on the issues that most concern us I have reluctantly relegated a discussion of these issues to an appendix<sup>1</sup>. Suffice it to say that he was undoubtedly of humble birth and that he taught and had probably been educated at Oxford. In the words of W.A. Pantin, Robert Grosseteste is "an outstanding example of a very important type of thirteenth-century bishop, namely schoolman-bishop, the man who

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I.

first made his name in the schools and as a result was promoted to a bishopric”<sup>2</sup>. This type of bishop emerged as a spin off effect of the rise and development of the universities as well as the spreading of the ideas of the Lateran Council of 1215. The main difference between the thirteenth-century bishop and his predecessors is that in earlier centuries the predominant type had been the monk-bishop, the man who had been called out from a life of contemplation to a life of action, for instance Anselm. The new type was a man called out from a life of study to a life of action. This formation can be seen in Grosseteste’s theories about the function and the mission of the Church and also about the role of the church in relation to the papacy, and to the State. The main cultural environment surrounding Grosseteste was the scholastic one. In Europe, particularly where all the schools trained the students in order to become masters, the scholastic thought and formation was the dominant one. The duties of a medieval master in theology were: *legere, disputare, praedicare* (to teach, to hold disputations, to preach). In particular *legere* meant to interpret the Scriptures. In medieval universities the Bible was the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end of the whole theological course<sup>3</sup>. However in England, scholastic thoughts and ideas were viewed with a little bit of suspicion particularly by those who did not think that scholastic theology, basically a problem-solving theology aiming to solve the problems of secular society, should replace the theology of worship which had been in place in the early Middle Ages. On the other hand it seems to be almost certain now that the first reviewers and commentators of Aristotle’s scientific works were all English<sup>4</sup>. Among those scholars who set out on a cultural journey in Europe, we have Adelard of Bath<sup>5</sup>, Daniel of Morley and especially Alfred of Shareshill,<sup>6</sup> a

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<sup>2</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste’s relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, in, *Robert Grosseteste scholar and bishop. Essays in commemoration of the seventh century of his death*, ed. D.A. Callus (Published 1953, reprinted 1969), p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’ In, *Robert Grosseteste scholar and bishop. Essays in commemoration of the seventh century of his death*, ed. D.A. Callus (Published 1953, reprinted 1969), p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Etienne Gilson, *La filosofia nel medioevo* (Firenze, 1994), p. 659.

<sup>5</sup> Adelard of Bath with his books (for instance: *Questiones naturales* and *De eodem et diverso*) is one of the first scholars who acted as a “mediator” between Arabic knowledge and philosophy and European culture. See: E. Gilson, *La filosofia nel medioevo*, pp. 357-358.

<sup>6</sup> Alfred of Shareshill also known as Alfredus Angelicus, wrote some important scientific treatises like *De motu cordis* (On the movement of the Heart) in which the soul governs the body with the mediation of the heart, a text that probably was known by Grosseteste. His role is extremely important because of his interpretation of Aristotle’s scientific works, so much so that Etienne Gilson considered him “the oldest commentator we know about of Aristotle’s scientific works”. E. Gilson, *La filosofia nel medioevo*, pp. 659-660.

contemporary of Grosseteste, who all benefited from the great cultural growth which was developing on the continent and who re-imported into England on their return a new methodology for studying Latin, Greek and Arabic texts. It is therefore extremely possible that Grosseteste as a scholar and as a lecturer in the University came across these ideas through this cultural exchange. Indeed in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries the English and the French cultures were in many ways very close. Moreover the Cistercian movement was Anglo-French in its origins and some of the greatest masters of the school of Chartres like John of Salisbury were English. It is therefore extremely likely that a French influence held sway over the English schools.

For five years after 1225 Grosseteste was a leading lecturer in the secular schools of the University. Then after 1230 he abandoned this position to become lecturer to the community of Franciscans outside the city walls, a change of life which culminated in 1232 when he renounced all his sources of income (including his archdeaconry of Leicester and his parish of Abbotsley) except his prebend at Lincoln<sup>7</sup>. On 11 November 1229 the Dominican preacher Brother Jordan of Saxony had preached a sermon to the masters in Oxford calling for a renewal of pastoral commitment. Grosseteste was much moved by this sermon and began divesting himself of various offices and sources of income. He did not become a Franciscan because he considered that working for one's living represented a higher way of life than begging. Callus tells us that, "the building of the schools for the Franciscans was completed about 1229-30 and from that time until his elevation to the See of Lincoln on 25 or 27 March 1235 Grosseteste lectured to the Franciscans"<sup>8</sup>. During these years he wrote four small but remarkably original theological works: *De decem mandatis* (On the ten commandments), *De cessatione legalium* (On the end of the Old Testament), *Hexaëmeron* (On the six days of creation) and the Commentary of the epistle of the Galatians<sup>9</sup>. Once again, however for reasons of space it is not possible to discuss Grosseteste's writings in the main body of the text<sup>10</sup>. I have,

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<sup>7</sup> Richard W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1986), p. 170.

<sup>8</sup> D.A. Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar', p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Richard W. Southern, 'Robert of Grosseteste', in, *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 81.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix II.

however, taken account of my general awareness of these in the discussion that follows.

While it is certainly true that Robert Grosseteste developed his own theology and an original idea of the necessity of redemption, his philosophy and theology owed a massive debt to great thinkers like Augustine and Anselm in whose traditions he developed his thoughts. We must also take into consideration that the scholastic ideas and impetus in the early twelfth century were directed to finding clear solutions to real questions about marriage, baptism and the Eucharist,<sup>11</sup> themes that could not be easily overlooked by anyone (not least Grosseteste) who cared about the care of the souls. Although as McEvoy has said the fundamental Parisian scholastic methodology of “recording such discussions and writing them up for circulation as *questiones* was evidently not yet in vogue in the Oxford of this day”<sup>12</sup>, Grosseteste by being a master in the University would certainly have known how *legere* (to read), *disputare* (to dispute) and *praedicare* (preach/teach). He had a widespread range of interests from philosophy to sciences, but it is beyond doubt<sup>13</sup>, that the main emphasis was towards the importance of preaching and study of theology. Straddling the line between tradition and innovation, between orthodoxy and heresy, Grosseteste’s cultural contribution and of course his actions must be seen and considered against this intellectual background.

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<sup>11</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 2000), p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 30.

## 5.1 Grosseteste's activities as a bishop

Hugh of Wells died on 7 February 1235 and the cathedral canons after long altercation about his successor unanimously chose Robert Grosseteste on 25 March. He was then approved by Henry III, the temporalities being restored on 16 April<sup>14</sup>. The election followed the correct procedure<sup>15</sup>. According to Marion Gibbs and Jane Lang in the period between 1215 and 1273 more than 40 elections out of 76 were held without any particular problems and without intervention by the papal curia or lay magnates<sup>16</sup>, however there were still a large proportion of bishops' elections to show that the pope, king, magnates, bishops and metropolitan all influenced the will of the cathedral clergy in their election. Grosseteste was consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury on 17 June 1235. The monks of Canterbury in Grosseteste's case claimed that he should be consecrated in Canterbury, but the archbishop for unknown reasons preferred the consecration to take place elsewhere<sup>17</sup>. At all events, Grosseteste's consecration took place at the mutually convenient Benedictine abbey of Reading<sup>18</sup>. He made it clear immediately that he wanted to enforce discipline among the laity (against gluttony, and drunkenness) and among the clergy (i.e. fitness to perform pastoral duties)<sup>19</sup>.

At the beginning of his episcopate a strange episode took place which defined his episcopate. His friend, William Raleigh, treasurer of Exeter Cathedral, had written to

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<sup>14</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> "When a See was vacant proctors of the chapter were chosen and sent to the king to plead for the licence to elect according to the custom of England. The resident canons then fixed the day for celebrating the election, and the canons held a general chapter. Once elected, the consent of the elect was asked. If he accepted the election was immediately published. A covering letter to the king was drawn up at the same time, begging his assent to the election on behalf of the chapter. The assent of the king was to be obtained before approaching the archbishop. If all the negotiations were concluded successfully the ceremonies of deliverance of temporalities, confirmation and consecration by the archbishop or his deputy and installation, followed". Marion Gibbs and Jane Lang, *Bishops and reform, 1215-1272*, p. 64-65.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 69-70.

<sup>17</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, RS, XXV, ed. Henry R. Luard (London, 1861), p. xxxvii.

<sup>18</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 252. See the letter number 12, written probably in 1235 to Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, in which Grosseteste explained how for the sake of peace it would be better for him to be consecrated in Canterbury. *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, RS, XXV, ed. H.R. Luard, Letter n 12, pp. 54-56.

<sup>19</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 249.



him, probably in 1235, to ask him to institute a mere boy, still learning his letters, one William de Grana, to the cure of souls and had expressed indignation at the bishop's refusal. The bishop wrote a friendly letter<sup>20</sup> to him stating the grounds of his refusal, i.e. the grave risk for the souls being committed to his charge because the boy was too young and too ignorant. Towards the end of the letter Grosseteste stated that because he did not want William Raleigh to think him ungrateful or that he had forgotten the favours that he has received, he is willing to give the boy ten marks per year until he gets a benefice<sup>21</sup>. Grosseteste would always be against the appointment of unworthy candidates or the misuse of money belonging to the church. In this case he wished to avoid spoiling his friendship with William, but he may also have wanted to give the boy the opportunity of growing up to be a worthy candidate for the cure of souls. In the case of the institution of the prior of Kyme on the other hand, he rejected the presentee of Philip de Kyme as unfit for the post without making concessions of any sort, stating once again that the only thing that mattered was the cure of souls and that the person to be appointed be good, honest and religious<sup>22</sup>. Nonetheless we do see the "human" side of Grosseteste, a man who is not just law-abiding and a follower of rules, but also a man ready to make "concessions" for his friends.

Within a few weeks of his consecration the first of a series of problems arose: did children out of wedlock and then legitimized in Canon Law by the later marriage of their parents have the right to succeed to secular estates?<sup>23</sup> According to the secular law, they were not eligible to succeed to hereditary parental estates. Pope Alexander III had made it clear in 1175 that the marriage of the parents entirely legitimized their premarital children. The situation soon reached a stalemate. The bishops adopted the easiest solution in order to avoid any trouble: they agreed on a formula according to which they would make no judgement about "legitimacy" or

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<sup>20</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 17, pp. 63 – 65.

<sup>21</sup> "*decem marcas annuas de camera nostra donec per me vel per alium in uberiori beneficio ecclesiastico vel alio eidem fuerit provisum*". *Ibid.* Letter n 17, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* Letter n 30, pp. 116 – 117. See also: J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', in, *Robert Grosseteste scholar and bishop. Essays in commemoration of the seventh century of his death*, ed. D.A. Callus (Published 1953, reprinted 1969), p. 159.

<sup>23</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 252.

“illegitimacy”, but simply stated the date of the parents’ wedding and the date when the claimant to the property had been born, leaving the question of succession to be settled by the secular court. Basically they washed their hands of the matter, the practical effect being that the old secular rule of succession would continue to be effective. Grosseteste refused to co-operate in this evasion and insisted on stating explicitly that a claimant born to parents who were married after his birth was legitimate without further qualification. He therefore wrote a 20 page letter to William of Raleigh<sup>24</sup>, one of the king’s intimate legal counsellors, explaining to him how this compromise was contrary to the Bible and to reason, as well as to canon law and ancient customs. I think that we have here one of the first examples of the thoughts of Bishop Grosseteste. It seems to me that he properly and truly adhered to his religious role in standing in defence of the innocent and the defenceless. Moreover it should be noted that Grosseteste was not prejudicially against the church or the pope but was orientated in favour of the people, and of the cure and salvation of souls. In defending the innocent and the poor Grosseteste was following the footsteps of his predecessor, Hugh of Wells, with whom he had been closely associated. We have a charter of Bishop Hugh, witnessed by Robert Grosseteste when he was archdeacon of Leicester, in which he issued statutes after his visitation of Peterborough abbey. The statutes are concerned with the rules of obedience, use of prebends and the prohibition of usury, i.e. abbots acquiring money from the Jews under usury<sup>25</sup>. His close association with Bishop Hugh and with the University of Oxford, together with his great reputation, help to explain the action of the Lincoln chapter in electing him bishop.

It was a choice that the Lincoln chapter with hindsight would very much regret in the future. From the outset we can see, *in nuce*, the continuity between Grosseteste, Hugh of Wells and Hugh of Avalon before him. Both “Hughs” attempted to set up diocesan visitations and to regulate the life of the clergy and the chapter. To the dean and chapter Robert wrote, in 1236 or 1237, prohibiting the Feast of Fools, *festum stultorum*,<sup>26</sup> held on 1 January and old customs which had degenerated into an

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<sup>24</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 253 – 254.

<sup>25</sup> *The Acta of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, David Smith, pp. 160-161.

<sup>26</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 32, pp. 118-119.

irreverent and licentious orgy “hateful to God<sup>27</sup>”. For Grosseteste it was absolutely execrable to profane *Circumcisionis Domini venerandam solennitatem*<sup>28</sup>, and other religious ceremonies. Already then, in 1236 -1237, we see that there were problems between the chapter and the bishop and that they were more related to the practice of religion than to any other matter.

Subsequently, in a letter to Robert Hayles,<sup>29</sup> archdeacon of Lincoln, Grosseteste prepared the way for his coming visitation. He gave precise instructions. He wished to preach to all the clergy of the diocese. Therefore, the archdeacon must assemble the clergy together in a place and at a time that the bishop would decide. Grosseteste also made it clear that he wanted the unconsecrated churches to be ready because the council of London of 1237 had ordered that they must be consecrated within two years<sup>30</sup>. At the end of the letter he gave advice in relation to clergy who had committed incontinence. John Srawley stressed that such visitations should be a normal part of a diocesan bishop’s duty as had been strikingly illustrated by the saintly bishop of Worcester, Wulfstan, in the eleventh century, whose thorough visitation of his diocese is described in the *Vita Wulfstani* of William of Malmesbury. Unfortunately, as the bishops were getting busier and busier with the affairs of state they too often delegated to the archdeacons or other clergy, these diocesan visits<sup>31</sup>. The Fourth Lateran Council attempted to remedy this situation by clarifying that the bishops could claim the “procurations” only if they made the visit personally without delegating it to others.

In the course of the visitation of his diocese Grosseteste was faced squarely with the problem of the chapter of his cathedral church. A cathedral chapter was in its origin a body of clergy closely associated with the bishop and forming his council. However in the course of time and especially in a huge diocese such as Lincoln where the bishop was constantly absent from the cathedral city, the chapter came to acquire an independence of its own. As the endowments of the cathedral body in lands and churches grew, the bishops had conferred on their chapters considerable privileges

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<sup>27</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 150.

<sup>28</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 32, p. 118.

<sup>29</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 150. See also: *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 50, pp. 146-147.

<sup>30</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 50, pp. 146 -147.

<sup>31</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 150.

and powers. Thus Bishop Chesney had granted in a charter in 1160 an exemption for the prebends of the church of Lincoln from all episcopal rights and demands. As Srawley has said, “in the large diocese of Lincoln with some fifty-five prebends and other manors with their churches forming part of the *Communa* or common property of the canons, this involved a serious limitation of the bishop’s exercise of jurisdiction and pastoral care”<sup>32</sup>. Grosseteste knew that without full control over his own chapter it would be impossible to set up a proper plan for the cure of the souls. Moreover if the bishop were not obeyed by his own chapter and by his own clergy how would he have been credible in the eyes of the people living in his diocese? According to Matthew Paris, Grosseteste became the persecutor of his own clergy, the people who made him bishop, because he wanted something (the right to control the chapter) that was not customary. Was this really the truth? Probably not. In reality the chapter, led by the dean, was afraid of losing its independence. The chapter refused to completely surrender to the bishop’s authority but they agreed on arbiters: Bishop Walter of Worcester, his archdeacon William Scott, and the archdeacon of Sudbury. Unfortunately they failed to reach an agreement and the entire issue arrived before the Pope<sup>33</sup>. The dispute was so bitter and what was at stake so important for both sides that the chapter produced false evidence about the history of the church of Lincoln during the reign of William Rufus<sup>34</sup>. We do not know whether they had something to hide in terms of moral behaviour. What was primarily at stake however was the control of the prebends and therefore the economic freedom of the chapter.

Grosseteste was fighting “a personal but also general war” given that it was clear that he could not improve the pastoral care or the cure of souls in his diocese if his right of canonical visitation was denied him. He therefore wrote to Pope Gregory IX<sup>35</sup> requesting his help. Unfortunately, Grosseteste complained, the chapter was opposing him in every possible way. On 17 January 1239 the Pope issued a mandate to the Bishop and Archdeacon of Worcester and the Abbot of Evesham bidding them to admonish the dean and the chapter to obey their bishop. On 23 January he issued a

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<sup>32</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 171.

<sup>33</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, pp. 528 – 529.

<sup>34</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, pp. 154 -156.

<sup>35</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 77, pp. 248-249.

licence to Grosseteste to exercise his office in regard to the visitation of the chapter of Lincoln<sup>36</sup>. From a letter of Grosseteste<sup>37</sup> written about November 1239 to the legate Otto we learn that the Pope had dismissed the proctor of the dean and chapter without agreeing to their requests. Grosseteste had made two proposals that the chapter had rejected. They offered a third one about which Grosseteste was seeking the cardinal's opinion. In spite of the Pope's support for Grosseteste his disagreement with the dean and chapter was to continue for six more years<sup>38</sup>. A letter written in 1239 to the dean, William de Tournay, and the chapter, using the expression *dilectis in Christo filiis Willelmo et capitulo*<sup>39</sup>, he asked them to show him where he had erred so that he might amend it<sup>40</sup>. Grosseteste was clearly trying to find a compromise with the chapter. He did not want to relinquish his right, but he was also keen to avoid a sharp confrontation that would damage the image and the role of the church in the eyes of the parishioners.

In another letter<sup>41</sup>, written in November 1239 to his proctor in Rome, we learn that the situation had degenerated: the dean, precentor and sub-dean had all been suspended and barred from entering the church. On 7 September he had given notice to the dean and chapter that he would visit the chapter. However early in October the dean summoned the chapter and sent messages to the other cathedral chapters. They thought the solution would be to appeal to the Pope. On the day appointed for the visitation Grosseteste found no one in the church. The chapter and the dean met him in London. Grosseteste, although keen for a compromise solution, found that all the chapters of England were against him as a result of these messages. Grosseteste asked who would make a sentence *in offensionem omnium capitulorum Angliæ*<sup>42</sup>. Finally they agreed to the third proposal, that before Christmas they would send to the Pope to ask his consent to submit the matter to the Bishop of Worcester (Walter Cantilupe) and the archdeacons of Worcester and Sudbury in order to resolve the situation. In another letter<sup>43</sup> Grosseteste asked the Pope to accept and to back up the

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<sup>36</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 172.

<sup>37</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 82, pp. 262-264.

<sup>38</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 172.

<sup>39</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 71, pp 199 – 203.

<sup>40</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 172.

<sup>41</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 80, pp. 253- 260.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* Letter 80, p. 257.

<sup>43</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 81, pp. 260 – 261.

proposal in order to settle the quarrel with the chapter and to have peace within the church. It was not until 24 April 1240 that the Pope delegated to Walter and the Archdeacon of Worcester, with of course the full agreement of the parties, the responsibility of bringing an end to the dispute. Despite these efforts the controversy continued until the Council of Lyons in 1245<sup>44</sup>. Grosseteste departed for Rome on 18 November 1244 and so did the dean of Lincoln<sup>45</sup>. The papal decision arrived on 25 August. The Pope taking into consideration the rights of both sides had decided that, “The members of the chapter are to show canonical obedience and reverence to the bishop and his successors, but are not to be required to take an oath to that effect”<sup>46</sup>.

It is clear that Grosseteste envisaged the church as a hierarchical organisation. The chapter, being under the authority of the bishop, must obey this rule. What is important to stress is that Grosseteste did not want absolute control over the chapter for himself or because he thought of the bishop as “king”. He wanted the chapter to obey his rules because his rules were the laws of the church and all ecclesiastics should be under them. The Pope, on the other hand, seems to have respected the rights of the bishop but without at the same time disappointing too much the chapter by putting the canons completely under the authority of the bishop. It was a sort of medieval *divide et impera* policy which would safeguard the power of the papacy but which would not contribute to easing the situation in Lincoln. It was a judgement reminiscent of popes’ dualism in Italy. During the clash with his chapter, Grosseteste alienated the church of Aylesbury from the deanery of Lincoln and gave it to Master Robert de Marsh, provoking further problems and hard feelings<sup>47</sup>. Grosseteste finally won his cause against the chapter receiving a long letter from Innocent IV in which the Pope gave him the right to visit the chapter and establishing his rule in visiting the canons<sup>48</sup>. We cannot establish whether this was precisely why Matthew Paris said of Grosseteste that *canonicos suos, scilicet Lincolnienis, multum vexavit*<sup>49</sup>, but there is every likelihood that it was.

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<sup>44</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 175.

<sup>45</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, p. 390.

<sup>46</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 176.

<sup>47</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, p. 425.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 497-501.

<sup>49</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 419.

One point over which Grosseteste was certainly “at cross purposes with his contemporaries”, including the chapter, was his attitude towards prebends in cathedral chapters<sup>50</sup>. It was probably not a coincidence that he fought his hardest battles over the appointment to prebends, which included the rejection of the Pope’s nephew in 1253<sup>51</sup>. Grosseteste objected to unsuitable candidates as endangering souls. Pantin wondered how, “Even the most ill-qualified alien could in practice jeopardize souls”<sup>52</sup>. The explanation surely is that putting people who did not want to be ecclesiastics into a position to perform ecclesiastic duties would definitely endanger the cure of the soul because they would not give the right example, would neglect religious practice, would not teach according to the Bible, and would not, in one word, be religious men. This is what Grosseteste was concerned about. For Grosseteste the only definition of a good ecclesiastic was one who served and did God’s work. That is what he wanted from his clergy. Obviously this was not to free him from obedience to his superiors, because he had never denied that the church was a hierarchical organisation. Even on this point, however, nothing is superior to the law of God and to His teaching. Under normal circumstances Grosseteste obeyed his superiors, but when the Pope (even the Pope) contradicted the rules and the laws of God, he did not follow him, because for Grosseteste there was nothing superior to the law of God. We should not consider him an heretic. His point was more related to his specific time and to the practice of giving benefices and the prebends to unworthy candidates. However it is certainly undeniable that in his action there is the germ of a rebellion against an established system that used prebends and other benefices for practical and sometimes political interests. As has been said, “he was probably the most fervent and thoroughgoing papalist among medieval English writers”<sup>53</sup>. As sometimes happened in the history of the church, here was a man who called the church, the entire church, back to its duty. I do not want to make any direct comparison but it seems to me that in England he played the same role as that played in Italy by St. Francis. It is not a coincidence that he was very closely related to the Franciscans and that he lectured for them for some years in Oxford. While Francis

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<sup>50</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste’s relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, pp. 182-183.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* p. 183.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p. 183. See also: Kathleen Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages* (Manchester-New York, 1967).

<sup>53</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste’s relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, p. 183.

was more orientated towards preaching and setting up groups of people who could convert the populace, Grosseteste was more orientated towards showing them respect for the rules and for the love for God. It is not a coincidence, however, that both men worked by example, from themselves and from their followers.

The salvation and the cure of souls was intimately related to the control of the chapter but even more to the religious organisation of the parishes in the countryside. At the time of the fourth Lateran Council in 1215 the situation in the parish churches needed reforming. Priests often did not accept control from their superiors and had forgotten their duties and their holy calling; moreover “they had wives and concubines; they spent their times in the taverns and put off their clerical attire”<sup>54</sup>. Since the foundation of the parishes the priest had always had two responsibilities: the responsibility for pastoral care and responsibility towards the local lord as the person in control of the area where his parish lay<sup>55</sup>. Being responsible for a parish meant at least two things:

- 1) Having a living, or benefice, which entitled the rector to a certain amount of land and gave him the power to collect tithes
- 2) Having the cure of souls which meant the spiritual jurisdiction over the people entrusted to him but which also meant that he could take from them, “he and he alone”<sup>56</sup> voluntary offerings or fees.

As always some of the rectors in charge of the parishes in the 13<sup>th</sup> century were very rich, while others were not. Given the fact that some parishes were held in plurality the cure of the souls was dependent upon the conscience of the rector: some of them were responsible people who visited the parish regularly, others were not and neglected their responsibilities, as Grosseteste soon realised. In the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries many lay men founded and endowed parish churches as well as gave land to the monasteries. When towards the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the amount of land and alms directed towards the monasteries began to decrease the monasteries began to

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<sup>54</sup> M. Gibbs and J. Lang, *Bishops and reform, 1215-1272*, p. 95.

<sup>55</sup> John Moorman, *The church life in England in the thirteenth century* (Cambridge, 1955), p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* p. 110.



use the more profitable system of appropriation in which a lay patron, “instead of appointing a man as rector would hand over all his rights to a monastery which thereupon became rector”<sup>57</sup>. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century at least half the parish churches of England had been appropriated, and the majority of them had gone to religious houses.

How the people perceived the role of the church in society is difficult to ascertain but following John Moorman it seems that attendance at church services during the 13<sup>th</sup> century was not great, especially by the richer parishioners. Not all those who attended the church were exactly faithful, “staying in the church jangling and chatting or lolling up against the church’s pillars talking about the best ale or staring at the women in there”<sup>58</sup>. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century people could still be superstitious, adoring trees, plants, rocks etc, but on the other hand the church did not help ignorant people to follow the celebration of mass in which lay men and women could basically only watch. Towards the end of the century the situation improved in the parishes thanks to the efforts of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, but also to the hundreds of priests of the parish churches who, apart from praying, followed Grosseteste’s orders and taught the children how to pray and what prayers to recite<sup>59</sup>. The importance of the work Robert Grosseteste did in the Lincoln diocese can be summed up by using the words of Matthias Hassenauer who affirmed that: “All his interest is centred round the revival of a real Christian life in all Christian communities, from the leading group of the bishop through the cloisters and their leaders down to the provincial parish with the ordinary faithful”<sup>60</sup>. Grosseteste, like his immediate predecessors, was the kind of bishop who did not deny his responsibilities and his duties, but went around in the diocese checking the faith of his parishioners, dedicating churches<sup>61</sup> and paying attention to the religious life of his flock. He was bishop of the largest diocese in England, with eight archdeaconries and nearly two thousand parishes, an immense task conferred upon a single man. He was responsible for the whole area of the counties of Lincoln, Huntingdon,

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<sup>57</sup> J. Moorman, *The church life in England in the thirteenth century*, pp. 38-42.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 69- 71.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p. 81.

<sup>60</sup> Matthias Hassenauer, ‘The impact of Grosseteste’s pastoral care on vernacular religious literature: La lumière as lais’, in, *Robert Grosseteste: new perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout, 1995), p. 377.

<sup>61</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, iii, p. 317.

Northampton, Leicester, Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford and Rutland, together with the greater part of Hertfordshire. Each archdeaconry was divided for purposes of ecclesiastical administration and disciplines into deaneries<sup>62</sup>.

The disorders of the time and the lack of effective administration in the shires had presented serious problems to church leaders and with these problems Hugh of Wells had already had to deal, especially as they affected the clergy. Clearly Grosseteste knew that in order to have the people taught to a high level in the Christian religion and in Christian practices he needed good teachers, that is to say, good priests. He made extensive use of capable teachers to assist him in the work of his diocese. Particularly important were the new Orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans. However, as Srawley showed Grosseteste had to write many letters in order to secure the services of the friars<sup>63</sup>.

Grosseteste knew that if he wanted to improve the situation in the diocese he could not rely on his clergy alone, but needed to go round the diocese himself. He therefore began to perambulate, archdeaconry by archdeaconry, requiring the clergy of each deanery to bring people to have their children confirmed, and to hear the word of God. He was accompanied by a small group of Franciscan and Dominican friars. He was also active in regulating the discipline of the monastic houses in his diocese that were not exempt from his jurisdiction. He deposed no less than seven abbots and four priors<sup>64</sup> as a result of his first visitation. Grosseteste certainly was not alone among contemporary bishops in these pastoral activities, but he was outstanding in the rigour of his measures. During his perambulations he also dedicated churches, as Matthew Paris reported with regard to the churches of Ramsey, Peterborough and

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<sup>62</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 235. Archdeaconries:

- *Lincoln* (Lincolnshire except for the West Riding of Lindsey); 23 deaneries, about 500 parishes
- *Huntingdon* (Huntingdonshire and part of Hertfordshire); 5 deaneries in Hunts. with about 100 parishes; 4 deaneries in Herts with 68 parishes.
- *Northampton* (Northamptonshire); 10 deaneries with about 250 parishes
- *Leicester* (Leicestershire with Rutland); 7 deaneries in Leics. With 203 parishes; 1 deanery in Rutland with 44 parishes
- *Oxford* (Oxfordshire); 9 deaneries with 265 parishes
- *Buckingham* (Buckinghamshire); 8 deaneries with 186 parishes
- *Bedford* (Bedfordshire); 6 deaneries with 222 parishes
- *Stow* (West Riding of Lindsey); 4 deaneries with about 100 parishes

<sup>63</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln' p. 147.

<sup>64</sup> Richard W Southern, 'Robert of Grosseteste', in, *ODNB*, p. 82.

Sawtre<sup>65</sup>. Grosseteste believed that in order to transmit knowledge well, the clergy must be very well versed in both theology and languages<sup>66</sup>. That is why the prebends had to be given to suitable candidates for these were in a position to become bishops, then cardinals and even Popes.

In Southern's view, as bishop of Lincoln Grosseteste ruled far more effectively than the king ever could about one-fifth of the whole population of England<sup>67</sup>. I think it would be more appropriate to say that Grosseteste was more directly in control. In this respect his relations with the Franciscans and also the Dominicans were very important<sup>68</sup>. In a letter to the provincial Prior of the Dominicans, probably written in 1242, he complains of delay in sending two Dominicans to help him and asks that they should not be changed so frequently<sup>69</sup>. Soon after his consecration in 1235 Grosseteste wrote to Alardus the Provincial Prior of the Friars Preachers (the Dominicans) asking that John of St Giles and Geoffrey de Clive might be with him for at least a year<sup>70</sup>. It has sometimes been suggested that his relationship with the Friars Minor was always stronger than that with the Dominicans<sup>71</sup>. We can assume from this letter, however, that Grosseteste did trust the Dominicans for the cure of souls and wanted to have them in order to help with his parishioners and with his clergy. Indeed in a second letter to Alardus, written in the same year, he hoped that a third person skilled in Canon and Civil Law could be sent to help him<sup>72</sup>. In a letter to John of St. Giles he asks him to come as soon as possible because he needs him to help preach and to support him in dispensing the bread of the word of life<sup>73</sup>. These three letters demonstrate once more that Grosseteste had in mind the salvation of his

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<sup>65</sup> *multae aliae ecclesiae per totam Angliam*. M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 517.

<sup>66</sup> Matthias Hessenauer, 'The impact of Grosseteste's pastoral care on vernacular religious literature: La lumière as lais', p. 379.

<sup>67</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 237.

<sup>68</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 51 – 61. For the relation with the Franciscans, see: Servus Gieben, 'Robert Grosseteste and the evolution of the Franciscan Order', in, *Robert Grosseteste: new perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout, 1995), p. 216, note 3.

<sup>69</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', pp. 147-148. See also: *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolae*, Letter 100, pp. 304-305.

<sup>70</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 148. See: *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolae*, Letter 14, pp. 59 – 60.

<sup>71</sup> In this letter we can see that Grosseteste required two Dominicans for *salutem animae meae et gregis mihi* (For the good health (vigor) of my soul and my flock, (*Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolae*, Letter 14, p. 60) and he called the two Friars *veraces consiliatores et efficaces coadjutores*. (Good advisors and helpers. *Ibid.* Letter 14, p. 60). (My translations)

<sup>72</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolae*, Letter 15, p. 61.

<sup>73</sup> "erogando pane verbi divini". *Ibid.* Letter 16, p. 62.

flock more than anything else. In another letter, this time to the Prior General of the Dominicans, Jordan, reminding him of their friendly relations in Oxford, he asked again for the help of John of St. Giles and explained the needs of the Lincoln diocese as the largest in England. He needed help in preaching the word of God, in hearing confessions and dealing with penitents. In 1237 he turned to the Minister General of the Franciscans, Friar Helias, for two or four friars to be with him to supplement his own deficiencies<sup>74</sup>.

John of St Giles and Adam Marsh were both very important in Grosseteste's career. The former as an adviser, the latter because of his Oxford education<sup>75</sup>.

As Srawley has said, as archdeacon of Leicester, Grosseteste had been required to carry out the Articles of Enquiry which Hugh of Wells had ordered the archdeacons to deal with, and with the knowledge thus acquired he was prepared to face many of the current abuses. In his letter to the archdeacons in 1236<sup>76</sup> he refers to some of the undesirable social customs of parish life. He told them<sup>77</sup> that the king has forbidden selling and buying things during the fair of Northampton in either the cemetery or the church of All Saints, and that the archdeacons should be sure that no goods were be exposed in sacred places. This implies of course signs that there were markets in sacred places. Further undesirable customs are expressed in another letter:<sup>78</sup> the drinking bouts (*scotales*), the abuses attending the night vigils and the funeral feasts at the exequies of the dead, games in churchyards, clandestine marriages, and a warning to mothers and nurses that could be dangerous to take their children in bed with them during the night as they could suffocate the babies. He also deals with the corrupt custom of priests who required Easter offerings to be made at the time when Mass was being celebrated, a source of scandal suggesting that only those who brought offerings were entitled to receive the Sacrament<sup>79</sup>. Grosseteste considered the diocese of Lincoln to be his personal mission. His theory of redemption entailed the tangible collaboration of the clergy in pastoral care. Suzanne Paul, in her dissertation on Grosseteste's sermons, states that: "As both bishop and scholar,

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* Letter 41, pp. 133 – 134.

<sup>75</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 148.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p. 149.

<sup>77</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 21, pp. 71 – 72.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* Letter 22, pp. 72 – 76.

<sup>79</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, p. xxxviii.

Grosseteste was closely involved in the work of pastoral reform inspired by the Fourth Lateran Council. He reflected on his personal and practical response to his Episcopal responsibilities in a *Memorandum* delivered to Pope Innocent IV in Lyons in 1250”:

*After I became a bishop, I reflected that I was both a bishop and a pastor of souls, and that it was necessary to look after the sheep, committed to me with all diligence, just as scripture instructs and commands, so that the blood of my sheep would not be on my hands, at the Last Judgment.*

*Thus, during my episcopacy I began to make a circuit through every rural deanery, ordering the clergy of each deanery to gather together at a certain day and place and forewarning the people to be present at the same day and place with their children who needed to be confirmed and to hear the word of God and to confess. When the clergy and people had gathered, as often as not I myself expounded the word of God to the clergy and a friar preacher or friar minor preached to the people. Afterwards four friars would hear confessions and enjoin penances. And after confirming children on that and the following day, my clergy and I would attend to investigating, correcting, and reforming abuses in accordance with the duties of visitation<sup>80</sup>.*

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<sup>80</sup> Ego post meam in episcopum creationem consideravi me episcopum esse et pastorem animarum, et necesse habere ne sanguis ovium in districto iudicio de manu mea requiratur omni diligentia sicut disponit et precipit scriptura oves michi commissas visitare. Unde episcopatum meum cepi circuire per singulos decanatus rurales, faciens clerum cuiuscunque decanatus per ordinem certis die et loco convocari, et populum premuniri ut eisdem die et loco adessent cum parvulis confirmandis, ad audiendum verbuni dei et confitendum. Congregatis autem clero et populo, egomet ut pluries proponebam verbum dei clero, et aliquis frater predicator auf minor populo. Et quatuor fratres consequenter audiebant confessions et iniungebant pentientias. Et confirmatis pueris eodem die et sequente, continue ego cum clericis meis intendebamus inquisitionibus, correctionibus, et reformationibus secundum quod pertinet ad officium inquisitionis'. See : Suzanne Paul, *An edition and study of Selected Sermons of Robert Grosseteste*, Vol. I, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Leeds, 2002), p. 6.

She adds that: “Grosseteste's personal preaching to his clergy was supplemented by diocesan statutes, which were issued c. 1239. In the very first chapter, the statutes specify”:

*every single pastor of souls and each parish priest ought to know the decalogue, that is the ten commandments of the Mosaic law, and he should frequently preach and explain them to the people entrusted to him. He should also know the seven deadly sins and similarly preach to his people about how to avoid them.*<sup>81</sup>

McEvoy and Southern, though often divided, agreed in saying that Grosseteste was a man of tradition and that almost all that Grosseteste wrote, whether as regent master or as bishop, was pastorally motivated<sup>82</sup>. S. H. Thomson thought that 129 sermons could be ascribed to Grosseteste, but recently it had been suggested that only about 40 complete items, plus 19 summarized and 33 fragments or sermon notes could be clearly identified<sup>83</sup>. Despite this it goes without saying that his renown as a preacher was great, not only among contemporaries such as Matthew Paris, but throughout the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, when collections of his sermons were still circulating in England<sup>84</sup>. Several writings by Grosseteste concern confession and reconciliation, reconciliation with God being the first step towards salvation. One book is the *Templum Dei*, which survives in many copies. Goering who dated it before 1225 spoke about the book as the best example of how Grosseteste linked the art of

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<sup>81</sup> 'unusquisque pastor animarum et quilibet sacerdos parochialis sciat decalogum, id est, decem mandata legis mosaice, eademque populo sibi subiecto frequenter predicet et exponat. Sciat quoque que sunt septem criminalia, eademque similiter populo predicet fugienda': Councils and Synods, p. 268. Grosseteste also composed a treatise and a sermon on the decalogue which confirm its important place in his conception of pastoral knowledge; see, *De Decem Mandatis*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King, (London, 1987). Suzanne Paul. *An edition and study of Selected Sermons of Robert Grosseteste*, Vol. I, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 141. See also: R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 237.

<sup>83</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 141. See also: Suzanne Paul, *An edition and study of Selected Sermons of Robert Grosseteste*, Vol. I.

<sup>84</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 142.

medicine with the role of the priest, defining with a splendid metaphor, the priest as the doctor of the soul<sup>85</sup>. Grosseteste produced many other works on penance probably the most important of them being *Deus est*, written with the intention of culturally and theologically support the priests<sup>86</sup>.

Grosseteste's writing also included a confessional formulary, aimed at the penitent. The purpose was for the penitent to understand how to deeply examine and understand his sins, in order to be able to confess them in a proper way and to remedy to his wrongdoing<sup>87</sup>. Another writing on confession ascribing to Grosseteste is "*Perambulavit Iudas*"<sup>88</sup>. Goering affirmed that this treatise was probably written "at the request of an abbot or prior"<sup>89</sup>. What is important to note is that Grosseteste wanted to go deeply into the idea of sin in order to analyse it, as he did in the treatise *Notus in Iudea Deus* testifying his interest in the practice of confession<sup>90</sup>.

Bishop Grosseteste also composed a set of constitutions written for his own parochial clergy; they were very popular in England for at least 200 years after his death<sup>91</sup>. What Grosseteste wanted was the laity to obey their ecclesiastics, to enforce the practice of confession and especially to weed out the worst vices that were hampering the good practice within the Church<sup>92</sup>. Needless to say, Grosseteste's actions and deeds were not an isolated example by a single bishop, but part of a more general plan that concerned Europe. Two popes, Honorius III and Gregory IX, had shown deep concern for the condition of the English Church. Honorius had ordered,

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<sup>85</sup> Joseph Goering, 'When and where did Grosseteste study theology?' In, *Robert Grosseteste: new perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout, 1995), p. 32. See also: Richard C. Dales, 'Robert Grosseteste on the soul's care for the body', in, *Robert Grosseteste: new perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout, 1995), pp. 313 – 316.

<sup>86</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 142.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* p. 143.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 143-144. See also: Matthias Hessenauer, 'For a larger Audience. Grosseteste's *Perambulavit Iudas* in Anglo Norman', in, *Robert Grosseteste. His thought and its impact*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham, (Toronto, 2012), pp. 259-313.

<sup>89</sup> Joseph Goering, 'When and where did Grosseteste study theology?', p. 33.

<sup>90</sup> According to Goering a chronology of Grosseteste's penitential and confessional writings would be:

*De modo confitenti et paenitentias* (before *Templum Dei*)

*Templum Dei* ( 1219 – 1225)

*Perambulavit Iudas -Speculum confessionis-* (Before 1235)

*Deus est* (after 1235)

*Notus in Iudea Deus* (after 1235)

See: Joseph Goering. *When and where did Grosseteste study theology?* p. 29.

<sup>91</sup> J. McEvoy. *Robert Grosseteste*. p. 144.

<sup>92</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 242.

“Stephen Langton to make a visitation of his province”<sup>93</sup>; Gregory IX, “had ordered suffragans of Canterbury to visit, correct, and reform the clergy both regular and secular in their diocese”<sup>94</sup>. Nonetheless I think it is undeniable that the system of diocesan visitations was born and evolved mainly thanks to the work and the commitment of Robert Grosseteste.

Grosseteste’s regularity in visiting his diocese and the strictness of his inquiries probably made him famous throughout England. One of the best descriptions of his procedure is given in the *Propositio de visitatione dioceseis suae*<sup>95</sup>. Inquiries are to be made about the administration of the parishes and necessary corrective measures given<sup>96</sup>. According to Srawley at some period, and probably between the years 1240 – 3, he issued his series of constitutions for the better ordering of parishes. These included decrees of the Lateran Council of 1215 and of the Legatine Council of London and some of the papal rescripts which Grosseteste had received<sup>97</sup>. Indeed the Fourth Lateran Council had made confession an annual obligation for all Christians, enhancing the practice dramatically<sup>98</sup>. Obviously the main concern was with the clergy, specifically clerical marriage and the strict continence that was required of them. All rectors and vicars were to keep residence in their benefices, unless dispensation had been given<sup>99</sup>. Throughout Grosseteste’s episcopate he kept the parochial clergy under severe scrutiny. Nevertheless it seems that even in 1250 he felt that the standard of the people was low thanks to the poor example of their priests<sup>100</sup>.

In the diocese special attention had to be given to the monasteries, for a long time the sacred heart of Christianity. Hugh of Avalon and Hugh of Wells had already started the visitation of the monasteries, but the problem Grosseteste was facing was to make this more regular and indeed a permanent practice. It is true that he was particularly praiseworthy where he found rules respected, but it is also true that he

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<sup>93</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 150.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* p. 150.

<sup>95</sup> Henricus Wharton, *Anglia Sacra, sive collectio historiarum*, Vol. II, (London, 1691), p. 347.

<sup>96</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 151.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* p. 152.

<sup>98</sup> John R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 84.

<sup>99</sup> J.H. Srawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 152.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* p. 153.



did not tolerate abuses<sup>101</sup>. Grosseteste's intervention in the affairs of the great abbey of Bardney in Lincolnshire, with the excommunication and the deposition of the abbot, shows his determination<sup>102</sup>. The main issue appears to have been indebtedness and felony. After a discussion with the archdeacon of Lincoln, Thomas Wallensis, Grosseteste excommunicated the abbot. After having sent visitors to check the situation and satisfied himself of its seriousness he decided to depose the abbot. In doing so, however, he faced the anger of the Cathedral chapter of Canterbury which thought he had violated their privileges; the monks therefore excommunicated him<sup>103</sup>. The quarrel ended up in Rome where the Pope asked the chapter of Canterbury to withdraw the sentence of excommunication<sup>104</sup>. Another quarrel happened when the convent of Peterborough appealed to Grosseteste against the excesses of their abbot; the bishop did not waste time and was about to take action when the abbot resigned,<sup>105</sup> making redundant any further action. In this case the bishop showed not only his concern but also his promptness in acting upon situations that he considered detrimental to religious practice. During one of his visitations Grosseteste showed severity and strictness, according to Matthew Paris, in checking the monks of Ramsey in their rooms<sup>106</sup>. His severe inspections are also testified in another passage of the *Chronica Majora*<sup>107</sup> where the clergy who were not respecting the issue of continence were punished by having their benefices removed. Grosseteste knew perfectly that the best way to make himself heard was to hit the clergy hard, especially in their benefices which were their main income. In doing so and in replacing them Grosseteste showed that evil would not be tolerated under his episcopate<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 154.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 154 – 155.

<sup>103</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, iv, pp. 245 – 248.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 247-248.

<sup>105</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, v, p. 84.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 226 – 227.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 256 – 257.

<sup>108</sup> Another example is the quarrel between Grosseteste and the abbot of Westminster Richard in 1241 to whom, according to Matthew Paris, the bishop had already given enough benefices in relation to the church of Ashwell. The bishop had given the church to another person, Nicholas, but the abbot fought against this decision bitterly. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, iv, p. 151.

Not everyone agreed with Grosseteste's methods and strictness and indeed the severity of his visitations provoked a protest from Alan de Cestreham, abbot of Leicester, who accused him of having "a heart of iron and lacking in kindliness"<sup>109</sup>. Most of the time, we must admit the protests were driven by economy rather than religion. Indeed the problems connected with patronage had also troubled the mind of Grosseteste's predecessor, Hugh of Wells. What really concerned Grosseteste was pastoral care. If a parish church "fell into the hands" of a monastery then the pastoral duty could easily be neglected because what the monasteries were really after was a "pension", a fixed payment from the incumbent payable to the monastery or alternatively a percentage of the yearly income. There were also problems with lay patronage with the added aggravation that secular concerns could intrude on the operation of canon law.

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<sup>109</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste, Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 155.

## 5.2 Grosseteste's relationship with contemporary leaders

As a man of action with such fundamentalist views it was inevitable that Grosseteste should clash with both pope and king. Grosseteste lived at a time when on one side scholastic ideas were at their peak and on the other the papacy from Alexander III to Innocent IV was trying to reinforce papal government and implement religious life through a series of general Councils in 1179, 1215 and 1245<sup>110</sup>. The church tried to give a more rigid order to its institutions. Moreover the world in which Grosseteste was living was a rigidly organized one and he grew up with a hierarchical concept of authority both in religious and secular life. He relied on his main concept of hierarchy and for him, as for the majority of the ecclesiastics, the Pope was the pinnacle of the ecclesiastical hierarchical pyramid, the person under whom all clergy operated.

Grosseteste was fond of comparing the Pope and the hierarchy in general to Old Testament figures. He also thought of the bishop of Rome as the sun, the source of life and power in the universe. For Grosseteste, the universe is not a chaotic disorder, but something that works “according to rational and natural laws, which are analogous to moral and spiritual laws”<sup>111</sup>. The Pope is the leader and as a leader can exert the *plenitudo potestatis* which exists for the purpose of edification; consequently any act which tends to the ruin of souls cannot be considered an exercise of a *plenitudo potestatis*. From this assumption comes Grosseteste's belief that if the Pope, or anyone else, should command anything contrary to Divine law, then “it will be wrong to obey and, actually, one must refuse to obey”<sup>112</sup>. But this is not because Grosseteste wanted to establish another way of believing or another creed<sup>113</sup>; it is the Pope who by issuing a law against the faith betrays the religion, the faithful and eventually his own role. Grosseteste would have been more than happy to remain silent over of the problems of the benefices, but had he done so, he himself

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<sup>110</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 4. See: Christopher. N. L. Brooke, ‘Gregorian Reform in action: clerical marriage in England 1050 – 1200’, in, *Cambridge historical journal*, 12.1 (1956), pp. 1-21.

<sup>111</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, p. 188.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190 – 191.

<sup>113</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolae*, p. XIV.

would have been unfair toward his chapter, his clergy and his parishioners to whom he had always preached that the most important thing is the respect of the law of God and of the commandments. In his view anyone who acts or commands contrary to Christ's will is playing the part of Antichrist.

What he has in mind, as Pantin said, is a moral, not a doctrinal failure and he does not envisage the possibility of the papacy or the Church erring in doctrine<sup>114</sup>. The fundamental problem was that "while the Church's teaching might have been protected against error by the power of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the same could not be said of clergy, who, on the contrary, often made themselves known for their abuses more than for their virtues"<sup>115</sup>. For Grosseteste a papal command is invalid when contrary to Divine law, and he who abuses a privilege, deserves to forfeit it<sup>116</sup>. According to Pantin, this doctrine of forfeiture led Grosseteste to see an unlawful command as a temporary aberration which deprives the superior's command of validity, but without permanently destroying the superior's authority. This is very different from what Wyclif would think and say, i.e. that popes and prelates doing so permanently lost their authority<sup>117</sup>.

The pope could exert control and authority over an English prelate through taxation and papal provisions. In relation to taxation, of course, Grosseteste could not refuse to support the papacy, although he very often protested about the methods used and especially about the sums involved. However he also opposed the use of these

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<sup>114</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 192.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* p. 191.

<sup>116</sup> According to what St Thomas Aquinas said in the first article of the *Questio* 104, no one is bound to obey anyone else, because no-one should go against God's disposition (or order) of things. However, in the same article there is a precept saying "*obedite praepositis vestris*", clearly commanding you to obey your prelates, because it is simply right in human matters that superiors have influence over inferiors. The main point at stake here was whether or not the subjects were bound to obey their superiors on all points. To this St Thomas replied that they were, because the superiors (for instance the clergy) are the mediators between men and God, so as representatives of God they must be obeyed in all matters unless their commands contradict those of God. In this last case no obedience is given because, according to the *Summa Theologiae*, we are not bound to obey men but God alone when it concerns interior life. St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae*. Pars Secunda secundae, *Questio* 104, *articuli* 1- 6. In, *Summa Theologiae*. Vol. 41, ed. T. C. O'Brien (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 47 – 73.

<sup>117</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', pp. 191-192. For the interconnection between Grosseteste and Wyclif and the influence Grosseteste had on some Wyclif's writings, see: Anne Hudson, 'Wyclif and the Grosseteste legacy at Oxford Greyfriars', in, *Robert Grosseteste. His thought and its impact*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham (Toronto, 2012), pp. 201-216.

resources for aiding the king, as he did in the Council of 1244<sup>118</sup>. Papal provision was the exercise of the Pope's right of appointment to benefices<sup>119</sup>, great or small, and it was essentially a spin-off effect of centralization applied to ecclesiastical appointments. The practice of exploiting the prebendal system began in the XII century and had noble origins: it was a request to some ecclesiastics to provide with a benefice or cathedral preferment a clerk whom the Pope wished to help<sup>120</sup>. Unfortunately Pope Innocent IV extended this practice because of his struggle with the Emperor Frederick II. The controversy between the Church and the Empire forced the papacy to draw on all possible source of income, so the Pope saw in this system of provisions something particularly useful for him to exploit. In itself provision was not necessarily an evil; indeed many good bishops like Pecham and Fizeaux, owed their promotion to this arrangement. However this was not always the case and Grosseteste would never accept the appointment of unsuitable clerks to benefices<sup>121</sup>. This is the sticking point: because the Pope asked people to fill vacancies with his own candidates who came straight from the Roman curia, these sometimes did not care at all about the diocese and, especially, did not live there<sup>122</sup>. It became also immediately clear, as Pantin reminded us, that "Eigenkirche, lords who have founded and endowed churches and monasteries would not endure to see these defrauded, impoverished and made ineffective on account of papal provisions and papal exactions"<sup>123</sup>.

Certainly Grosseteste recognized the papal plenitude of power; in his letter to Cardinal Otto in 1238 he shows that he had begun to have serious doubts as to the manner of its exercise. In this case Grosseteste had some doubt about appointing the son of an earl because he was too young and not in holy orders. His metaphor is the Shepherd and the sheep. Indeed he hopes that a vicar could be appointed and that the son of the earl could find the way to sustain himself without exploiting a benefice like this<sup>124</sup>. There is another letter to Cardinal Otto, probably written between 1237

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<sup>118</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 192.

<sup>119</sup> See also: Malcom Barber, *The two cities*, p 107.

<sup>120</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', pp.159 – 160.

<sup>121</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 193.

<sup>122</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, pp. 31-32.

<sup>123</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 195.

<sup>124</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistola*, Letter 52, pp. 151 -154.

and 1240,<sup>125</sup> over the cardinal's desire for a prebend for his clerk Atto. Although Grosseteste did not refuse on the spot, he thought Atto not suitable because he already had a prebend with the cure of souls and he could not have another one without dispensation; moreover he feared that he himself could be accused of favouritism. Although Atto was probably not the best person for this post, eventually Grosseteste gave the final judgment to him. Similar considerations about the use of benefices are included in a letter to Walter Grey, Archbishop of York, in 1245<sup>126</sup>. Grosseteste, in principle at least, had nothing against foreigners although some of them could barely speak English. His resentment came from the fact that most of them longed for the position with the only aim being profit. Grosseteste was quite genuinely concerned about what spiritual effect this or that appointment would have for the community and for the diocese<sup>127</sup>. Indeed he has always insisted that provisions were to be given only to candidates who wanted to take care of the cure of the soul.

Of course the papacy touched the life of the English Church in many different ways, particularly with the appointment to ecclesiastical offices, of bishops, rectors of parish churches, etc. In principle the bishop was freely elected by the cathedral chapter as established by law (with all the exceptions we have seen), but what sometimes happened in the 13<sup>th</sup> century was that popes used canon law, or the opportunity offered by canon law, to support papal candidates against those the popes considered undesirable bishops or simply against those who were the so-called "royal candidates"<sup>128</sup>. There was the issue of judges delegate. It is undoubtedly true that the papal curia and papal law were extremely complex and C. H. Lawrence is certainly right in affirming that "the most astonishing achievement of medieval papalism was the great fabric of law and legal administration which it erected. This achievement would not have been possible without the practice of delegating jurisdiction. The Judges delegate was a vital part of the judicial system of the

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<sup>125</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter 74, pp. 241 – 243.

<sup>126</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 163.

<sup>127</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 196.

<sup>128</sup> C.H. Lawrence, 'The Thirteenth century', In, *The English century and the papacy in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. H. Lawrence (Stroud, 1965) p. 145.

medieval Church; they brought papal justice within the geographical and financial reach of every man”<sup>129</sup>. Grosseteste, however, did not want the bishops or the clergy in general to be involved with something that did not directly concern their religious roles. In Grosseteste’s view of the church the clergy had only one primary target and job: the cure of souls. In principle he had no objection, to the use of parochial revenues for non-parochial purposes but he demanded that all who received this income should be able to preach and administer the sacraments<sup>130</sup>. One class of person in his diocese aroused Grosseteste’s deepest animosity: clerks who held parochial benefices while engaged in secular government<sup>131</sup>. There was an incident as early as 1236 when the king issued a mandate to the Abbot of Ramsey requiring him to act as an itinerant judge along with others in the counties of Buckingham and Bedford<sup>132</sup>. Grosseteste wrote to archbishop Edmund<sup>133</sup> showing that this was contrary to scripture and to canons of the Church. Indeed canon 12 of the Lateran council of 1179 specifically forbade clerks from undertaking secular jurisdiction under princes or other secular persons or, even worse, from becoming justiciar<sup>134</sup>. Here we note a major shift from the position of the medieval bishops who had preceded Grosseteste. No one had ever thought that a medieval bishop should not involve himself in lay matters. Indeed bishops were the backbone of the state and the main helpers of the king in establishing its role. Grosseteste clearly wanted to divide what belongs to God from what belongs to Caesar. On this point it is important to be very clear. Grosseteste was not against clergy being involved in ecclesiastical administrative matters. He was against ecclesiastics who took part in secular matters, who mixed the law of God with the law of men.

The papacy could hold sway over the English clergy also through the appointment to smaller benefices. Although the situation is unclear, we can see that from Innocent III (1160-1216) to Innocent IV (1243 – 1254) the practice grew out of all proportion. The problem was so large that Alexander IV (1254-1261) in the *Execrabilis* in 1255 had to call off many benefices already conferred by his predecessors because in

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<sup>129</sup> C.H. Lawrence, ‘The Thirteenth century’, p. 141.

<sup>130</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 273.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* p. 266.

<sup>132</sup> J.H. Sawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, p. 165.

<sup>133</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistola*, Letter 27, pp. 105- 108.

<sup>134</sup> J.H. Sawley, ‘Grosseteste’s Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln’, pp. 165-166.

some churches “the number of expectants exceeded the total number of prebends that the Church possessed”<sup>135</sup>. As Lawrence reports, in 1231-2 a Yorkshire knight named Robert Tweng organized bands of soldiers who attacked Italians on the roads, while the English delegation at the Council of Lyons in 1245 vehemently protested against “The Italians, whose number is now infinite” who had been provided to English benefices and in some churches “Italian succeeds Italian”<sup>136</sup>. It goes without saying that most Italians came from the Curia and that the pope through appointments to benefices was behaving exactly in the same way as any other lord who conferred possessions and privileges in order to obtain support<sup>137</sup>. The disturbances were eventually quelled but the resentment of the country continued until the Act of Provisors,<sup>138</sup> passed in 1351, which was intended to bring these appointments to an end.

For Grosseteste when a Pope used papal powers over local churches for family enrichment or the promotion of unworthy relatives then he betrayed his office and lost his authority as Pope as well as his moral authority as a father of the faithful or the Shepherd of God’s flock. However given Grosseteste’s loyalty to the church it is extremely unlikely that he ever envisaged a situation of such fundamental papal corruption as would justify an antipapal movement at large. Grosseteste’s opposition to Innocent IV was based on the narrower ground of the pope’s betrayal of his pastoral office in the interests of family or administrative expediency. This is what he said when he went to Lyons in 1245 at the time of general council, determined to get papal support for imposing limits on the power of members of his chapter. Grosseteste did not get much from this nor from the second council that took place in 1250, but he did discover the venality of the papal curia<sup>139</sup> in conferring benefices on relatives or members of the curia, regardless of their abilities in performing the pastoral duties attached to their benefices. He described these people as false pastors and antichrist and limbs of Satan masquerading as angels of light<sup>140</sup>. The papal misuse of spiritual offices for private and/or family ends was creating a serious

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<sup>135</sup> C.H. Lawrence, ‘The Thirteenth century’, pp. 147 - 148.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* p. 149.

<sup>138</sup> J. Moorman, *The church life in England in the thirteenth century*, p. 10.

<sup>139</sup> Andrew Brown, *The church and society in England 1000-1500* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 50.

<sup>140</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 257.



problem in the spiritual administration of the dioceses, but inexplicably the pope did not realize it. Indeed Innocent IV's reaction was "to suspend him by sending his instruction about presentations in the diocese of Lincoln to his own agent and to the archdeacon of Canterbury"<sup>141</sup>. In 1245 Grosseteste wanted to sort out once and for all the dispute with the canons of Lincoln. In the second visit his anger was directed towards the papal privileges which *de facto* exempted communities from episcopal control. On Friday 13 May 1250 Grosseteste, with Richard Gravesend his archdeacon of Oxford at the time, addressed the pope and the cardinals<sup>142</sup>.

The main issues were:

- "exemptions from his pastoral visitation based on real or pretended papal privileges
- limitations imposed mainly by secular authority, but with papal connivance, on his power to investigate the sins of his flock
- opportunities for avoiding Episcopal judgement by appeals from one court to another
- subtleties of legal procedure which prolonged every kind of opposition to Episcopal action
- and especially the entrusting of pastoral care to men who were unable and unwilling to carry out their duties"<sup>143</sup>.

Just how much Grosseteste cared about the situation of the benefices is shown in 1252 when he ordered that *volentes aut nolentes*<sup>144</sup> all the people who had received a benefice in the diocese should take priests' orders<sup>145</sup> and when he uttered his famous words: "As an obedient son, I do not obey, I contradict, I rebel"<sup>146</sup>, with which he

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<sup>141</sup> Richard W. Southern, 'Robert of Grosseteste', in, *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 84.

<sup>142</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 276.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* p. 277.

<sup>144</sup> Willingly or unwillingly.

<sup>145</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 279.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* p. 389.

refused a canonry in Lincoln cathedral to a nephew of Pope Innocent IV, Frederick di Lavagna. Given that Grosseteste was one of the most versatile minds in his age and also one of the staunchest supporters of the papacy, this statement has appeared to some researchers as too sharp, so much so that it seemed to justify the blunt reaction of the Pope. In order to understand Grosseteste's outburst we must not forget that in his diocesan administration Grosseteste was confronted with the problem arising from the exercise by the Pope or his agents of the claim "to provide incumbents for English benefices"<sup>147</sup>. The extensive use of provisions and the abuse of them by papal agents led to protest from English representatives and had induced the Pope to agree to limit the number of English benefices to be given away, though this concession had been rendered inoperative by the insertion of the clause *non obstante*<sup>148</sup>. It was this which provoked Grosseteste's famous protest at the Council of Lyons in 1250 and led finally to his refusal to obey the Pope's mandate in 1253 to admit his nephew, Frederick de Lavagna, a mere boy, to a canonry in Lincoln<sup>149</sup>. The papacy did not take into consideration Grosseteste's claims but simply kicked the can down the road issuing laws in order to block the procedure exploited by the papacy but at the same time giving the incumbents proposed by the pope the legal loophole to go round it, creating *de facto* a society in which nothing would ever change.

Let us now turn to his relations with the king.

According to Pantin, in Grosseteste's theory of the relations of Church and State, the fundamental doctrine is the superiority of the spiritual over the temporal power. He believed that "the two swords, spiritual and material, both belong to the Church, the spiritual to be wielded directly by the Church, the temporal to be wielded by the hand and ministry of temporal princes, but at the disposition of the princes of the Church. Whatever authority temporal princes have from God, they receive it through the Church"<sup>150</sup>. When Grosseteste, in 1245 or early 1246, wrote to the king he set out

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<sup>147</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 159.

<sup>148</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 390.

<sup>149</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 163.

<sup>150</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 197.

his theory of kingship<sup>151</sup>, saying that there were after all two powers, spiritual and temporal, and these were meant to help each other no to oppose each other.

These theories would be tested in the 13<sup>th</sup> century mainly in one way: the overlapping between the ecclesiastical and secular courts. To Grosseteste the Church's jurisdiction dealt with the peace of the sinner, and no-one, not even the king had the right to interfere with it. In the letter to the archbishop of Canterbury in 1239 he dealt with the encroachment on the Church's rights and liberties<sup>152</sup>. The king, by appointing abbots as itinerant justices, was contravening canon law and thus abbots and any other ecclesiastics performing this duty were guilty of sin. This was because by doing so they were considering the law of the king more important than Divine law, a position unacceptable for Grosseteste. Instead everything is under or must be under the judgement of the church<sup>153</sup>. Grosseteste was expressing the same opinion he expressed about the power of the Pope but in a different way. The king, as representative of the lay power, cannot appoint abbots to a role which is not for abbots. He refers not only to the vexed problem of the king's appointment of abbots and other ecclesiastical persons to the office of justiciar, but also to ecclesiastics submitting to lay tribunals, and the fact that the king does not want ecclesiastical judges to take action in causes which are known to be purely ecclesiastical<sup>154</sup>. This brought the bishop in contention with the common law. In 1249 the sheriff of Lincoln asked the bishop why lay persons of his diocese should take an oath when they clearly did not want to do so. The king wrote to the sheriff of Hertfordshire directing him not to allow any laymen to appear before the bishop to answer any inquiries on oath. To Grosseteste this action appeared to be an interference with the rights and liberties of the Church,<sup>155</sup> and rightly so from his point of view. That the situation was quite tense is also revealed by an incident that happened in 1250. According to Matthew Paris<sup>156</sup>, a clerk in Rutland had been deprived of his benefice for incontinence. He was excommunicated by the bishop. When the sheriff refused to imprison him because they were friends, the bishop excommunicated him as well.

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<sup>151</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistolæ*, Letter 124, pp. 348 -351.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* Letter 72, pp. 205 – 234.

<sup>153</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 200.

<sup>154</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 167.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* p. 165.

<sup>156</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, v, pp. 109-110.

The king was furious and appealed to Pope Innocent IV, receiving from him a letter forbidding the summoning of the king's bailiff before the ecclesiastical courts in secular matters<sup>157</sup>. As recalled by Pantin all these violations of the rights and liberties of the Church were made worse by the fact that the English Church's freedom was guaranteed by the Great Charter under pain of excommunication pronounced in the Council of Oxford 1222<sup>158</sup> and again at Westminster in 1237<sup>159</sup>. Another clash between the king and Grosseteste was over the inquisition. Grosseteste set up an inquisition in his diocese to investigate the sins of laymen. This was immediately prohibited by Henry III in 1252 as he considered it as a harassment of the poor and an insult for good Christians, given that people would be forced to give evidence on oath about others' sins<sup>160</sup>. Of course the king was not concerned about the rights of the people but rather about the fact that this could have represented a serious precedent and a serious threat to his power as well as for the temporal duties of his subjects.

The clashes between the bishop and the lay authority were numerous and severe. In a letter addressed to the cardinal legate, Otto, in 1239<sup>161</sup> he begged him to intervene to prevent the abbot of Croyland becoming an itinerant justice. Srawley reminds us that in 1245 he refused to admit Robert Passelew to the church of St Peter, on the grounds that he was a forest judge<sup>162</sup>. In this case Grosseteste was being consistent because already in 1244, when Archbishop Boniface protested vehemently against the election of Passelew to the See of Chichester, it was Robert Grosseteste who questioned him with *arduis questionibus* and quashed his election<sup>163</sup>. Henry III was eventually in dispute himself with Grosseteste over his refusal to approve the appointment of Robert Passelew to a church in Northampton which came within Grosseteste's jurisdiction<sup>164</sup>. However, hearing that the king was annoyed with him he wrote<sup>165</sup> to Henry asking pardon and promising to amend his wrongdoing (if any),

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<sup>157</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 109-111. See also: J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 164.

<sup>158</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter 72, pp. 230 -31.

<sup>159</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 201.

<sup>160</sup> M.T. Clanchy, *England and its rulers, 1066-1307*, (Totowa, 2006) p. 215.

<sup>161</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter 82, pp. 262 – 264.

<sup>162</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', p. 167.

<sup>163</sup> M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, iv, pp. 401 – 402.

<sup>164</sup> M.T. Clanchy, *England and its rulers, 1066-1307*, pp. 212 – 214.

<sup>165</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter 125, p 351 – 353.

appealing to the king's clemency in the hope that the matter might be resolved<sup>166</sup>. Grosseteste was not always against the king and sometimes he could also be on his side. Consequently Matthew Paris seems to have conceived the idea that Grosseteste and Walter de Cantilupe were the only bishops able to speak out to the king<sup>167</sup>.

On the other side Henry III considered himself a restorer of the authority and dignity of the English crown. For him the king was God's vicar, in charge of the realm, which of course included cleric and lay. On the other side stood Grosseteste who defended the jurisdiction of the clergy, supported by the decrees of the Lateran Council of 1215, "over the souls of all Christians whether kings or peasants"<sup>168</sup>. Grosseteste was certainly concerned for England and for the role of the episcopate in the British Isles, but also for the state of the church in general. Indeed in 1241 he met other English bishops (from Canterbury, Norwich and Carlisle among others)<sup>169</sup> in order to discuss the state of the church and to find appropriate measures to amend the situation. It goes without saying that the state of the church and the situation in England involved a continuous confrontation with the king for a whole host of reasons. Robert Grosseteste was not the kind of person who could make things easier, playing down the situation or lowering the bar of his moral standards, for anybody not even for the king. When in 1244 the king injured the bishop of Winchester he wasted no time in going with the bishop of Worcester and the bishop of Herford to find the king and rebuke him for what he had done. The king retaliated by involving the papal curia, complicating and exacerbating the entire issue. In response Grosseteste threatened to put the king's chapel under interdict<sup>170</sup>. The relations between the king and Grosseteste were not smooth, and the clashes between them were not confined to the ecclesiastical and secular jurisdiction only, but involved the prebends as well. In 1240 they came into conflict over the appointment to the church of Thame in Oxfordshire. Let us use it as an example<sup>171</sup> to better understand the position of Robert Grosseteste. According to Matthew Paris<sup>172</sup> the king had assigned the prebend of Thame in the cathedral of Lincoln to John Mansel,

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<sup>166</sup> J.H. Sawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', pp. 167 – 168.

<sup>167</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, vii, p. XXVIII.

<sup>168</sup> M.T. Clanchy, *England and its rulers, 1066-1307*, p. 214.

<sup>169</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, pp. 173 – 174.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286 and p. 294.

<sup>171</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 158.

<sup>172</sup> Full narration of this episode in: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, pp. 152-154.

who was the king's councillor and one of the most powerful ecclesiastics of the time,<sup>173</sup> declaring that this was based on a papal provision. At the same time, however, Grosseteste had assigned it to Simon of London, the penitentiary of the Bishop of Durham. When Grosseteste sent William, archdeacon of Huntingdon, and John of Basingstoke, archdeacon of Leicester, to the king, they immediately argued that the bishop of Lincoln was exempted from providing anything to anyone unless there was a special mention of that privilege and that in the specific case of John of Mansel they had not seen such a privilege. The bishop was ready to give to John Mansel a benefice equally rich or even richer, but threatened anathema on him and on all the invaders of the dignity of the church unless he backed off. When he heard that, John immediately said he would resign the benefice. The king feared that the bishop would go into voluntary exile as threatened and launch the anathema and so a compromise was reached. Simon of London had the prebend of Thame and John Mansel the church of Madistone. Eventually, after "a discussion between the bishop's emissaries and the king", Mansel "had the good sense" to resign the prebend and the king presented him to the living of Madistone<sup>174</sup>. This is how Srawley commented about the decision to Mansel to resign but I think we can also draw a couple of other points.

- 1) The bishop of Lincoln seems to have been exempted by the Apostolic See from giving prebends to anyone unless differently advised by the See itself, and Grosseteste had the faculty to use this privilege as he liked. This should have been the perfect situation for Grosseteste because he could assign the prebend to whomever he wanted. In this case, though, he seems to have chosen Simon of London against the candidate proposed by the king. Why didn't he accept John Mansel? He was an ecclesiastic. He was rich, this is true, but not necessarily because of that evil and unworthy; on the contrary Matthew Paris defined him *prudens et fidelis*, prudent and loyal. I think by appointing Simon of London Grosseteste wanted to state the superiority of the church over the king in assigning a prebend and wanted to state clearly that this was a church matter and not something concerning the king. But if

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<sup>173</sup> *Adae de Marisco Epistolae*, In, *Monumenta Franciscana*, RS, IV, Vol. I, ed. J.S. Brewer and Richard Howlett (London, 1858-82), p. 186, note 1.

<sup>174</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', pp. 163 – 164.

this is the case, did he not act as the people he was rebuking? Did he not commit the same sin as the Pope by appointing someone whom he liked instead of someone who was worthy to be appointed? The second possibility is that Mansell was really faithful and loyal, but to the king and not to the church; this would justify the fact that Grosseteste could not run the risk of having someone appointed to the prebend who did not respect the rules of the church, or even worse who was more loyal to the king than to the bishop. Whatever is the case what is certain is that this case sharpened the division between the church and the state.

- 2) The second point stems from the fact that once John had heard Grosseteste's reaction he was very frightened. This might lend weight to the theory that Grosseteste was really a persecutor of the canons, or that at least he was a very determined man who knew what he wanted. This point is very controversial because I think that he did not persecute the monks or the canons. He wanted to put before them their responsibility in belonging to the church.

Another interesting episode between the king and the bishop of Lincoln occurred around 1252, according to Matthew Paris,<sup>175</sup> and concerned the church of Flamstead near St Albans. The dispute, originated over the right to appoint, between the queen who had put her chaplain in charge of the church and the king who reacted by revoking the queen's decision and giving the church to his clerk Hurtold. According to Matthew Paris the queen had the right to give the church and involved Grosseteste in this matter. As usual Grosseteste wasted no time, excommunicated Hurtold and put the church under interdict. As we can see even in this case, despite the fact that one of the protagonists was the king, Grosseteste was not impressed, excommunicated the king's candidate and laid the interdict over the church. It seems clear that Grosseteste preferred not to have any services rather than give the church to someone against the rights and the proper procedures. In this case we should wonder what really pushed Grosseteste to act in that way. If he was so concerned about the cure of the souls he should have accepted the candidate

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<sup>175</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 298 -299.

proposed by the king, sparing the interdict. Can we see this episode as the victory of methodology over substance? Or better: did Grosseteste become a victim of his own principles? I think the only possible explanation is that in this case Grosseteste wanted to make a stand in favour of the legal right of the queen in order to be fair, but that fairness in this case went against his own principle because by defending the queen he laid an interdict on the church damaging the cure of souls, basically contrary to what had always been his guiding principle.

The relationship between Grosseteste and Henry III was not as warm as that between his predecessor St Hugh and Henry II or Richard I. On the contrary Grosseteste was very close to Simon de Montfort and his wife, Eleanor of Leicester,<sup>176</sup> and this relationship is also revealing. One of the very first contacts between the two men occurred in 1231 when Simon de Montfort, as lord of Leicester, expelled the town's Jewish community. They moved to Winchester where they were given a friendly reception by Margaret de Quincy, countess of Winchester. Grosseteste wrote her a long letter complaining about her reception of the Jews and urging that although they should not be put to death they should not be encouraged to oppress Christians through usury<sup>177</sup>.

This situation opens up a more profound question about Grosseteste's anti-Semitism. In the letter<sup>178</sup> written probably around 1244 and directed to his archdeacons, Grosseteste reminds everybody that interaction or living together between the Jews and the Christian must be avoided as far as possible<sup>179</sup>. This seems to be almost a racial statement, but as David Wasserstein reminds us the problem between Grosseteste and the Jews "is not so simple"<sup>180</sup>. Particularly interesting is the question of whether Grosseteste was or was not interested in Hebrew culture and more specifically in English Christian Hebrew scholarship. According to David Wasserstein it should be possible to link Grosseteste to a group of manuscripts

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<sup>176</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 204.

<sup>177</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter V, pp. 33-38. Richard W. Southern, 'Robert of Grosseteste', in *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 82.

<sup>178</sup> *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter CVII, p 317 – 318. David Wasserstein, 'Grosseteste, the Jews and medieval Christian Hebraism' in *Robert Grosseteste. New perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. J. McEvoy Ed. (Turnhout, 1995), p. 357.

<sup>179</sup> *cohabitationem Christianorum cum Judæis quantum vobis possibile est impedire curetis*. See: *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis epistolæ*, Letter CVII, p 317 - 318.

<sup>180</sup> David Wasserstein 'Grosseteste, the Jews and medieval Christian Hebraism', pp. 358-359.



collectively called *Superscriptio Lincolniensis*, a series of texts clearly written with the intention of explaining the advantages that Jewish learning could offer to the Christian world in order to get closer to an understanding of the biblical texts. Whether or not Grosseteste was linked to these texts is difficult to say and certainly we cannot prove that he wrote a prologue to them<sup>181</sup>. Were it be demonstrated that he was, this could lead us to say that he had Hebrew interests and that maybe he did not consider the Jews a serious threat. However, whatever the truth might be, what we should be extremely clear about is that Grosseteste might have used Hebrew culture, but only and always to pursue his main issue which was the spread and the defence of the Christian faith. The same I think cannot be said about Simon de Montfort who was responsible on 7 April 1264 for the massacre and plundering of the London Jews. Given that Montfort and his army needed money they probably saw in the Jews an easy target; however, this still would and could not explain the atrocity for which they were responsible<sup>182</sup>.

In January 1238 Montfort had married Eleanor, the king's sister, who was a widow of William Marshal<sup>183</sup>. This event, which would change Montfort's position entirely,<sup>184</sup> unchained the hatred of Richard, earl of Cornwall. In this hatred he involved also John, earl of Lincoln, because apparently he helped Montfort and was involved in a union between his daughter and the son of the earl of Gloucester, Richard de Clare. What is more interesting is that in the same passage Matthew Paris tells us that it was hoped that Richard of Cornwall was the liberator of the land from the Romans as well as from other people born outside the country<sup>185</sup>. This could be a sign that there was hostility against the foreigners, not just related to the prebends, but in more general terms. Was Grosseteste's battle against the prebends enjoyed by foreigners just part of a more general battle against foreigners tout court? We do not know. What we know is that there was a feeling against the foreigners who exploited some benefices and that Grosseteste, for different reasons, was equally against them.

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<sup>181</sup> David Wasserstein 'Grosseteste, the Jews and medieval Christian Hebraism', pp. 362 – 364.

<sup>182</sup> John Robert Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 268.

<sup>183</sup> Eleanor had married in 1216 William Marshal. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, ii, p. 661.

<sup>184</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 471. John R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 21.

<sup>185</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, pp. 475 - 476. *sperabatur certissime tunc, quod ipse comes Ricardus esset liberaturus terram tam a Romanorum quam aliorum alienigenarum.*

In 1238 Montfort went to Rome in order to bribe the curia over his marriage. When he came back to England<sup>186</sup> he was received with great joy by the king<sup>187</sup> but not by Grosseteste, who rebuked him terribly because of the 500 marks extorted from a Leicester burgess. Grosseteste's scold was supported by a "catena of biblical quotations on the need for mercy and the punishment reserved for those who preyed on the poor, and ending with the demand that he should be an example of clemency and mildness and not a master of cruelty"<sup>188</sup>. Montfort's cruelty seems to have appeared also during his period in France in 1247-48 as Governor of Gascony. His brutal methods eventually provoked the king's reaction and he was tried for oppression in England. The Gascons, led by the archbishop of Bordeaux<sup>189</sup>, alleged that he had acted with brutality having extorted money, and arrested people. Montfort's reply was that he had been commissioned by the king to put down traitors, so he did. On trial Montfort had one great advantage: he had the backing of the magnates<sup>190</sup> and among them the earls of Gloucester and Hereford, while Henry and the Gascons appear to have been isolated. The nobles of France offered him the Regency of the kingdom,<sup>191</sup> and to be one of the guardians of France during the absence of King Louis<sup>192</sup> but he refused and preferred to make peace with Henry III, according to Matthew Paris, in obedience to the exhortations of the dying Grosseteste<sup>193</sup>.

This last fact tells us that Montfort was certainly heavily under the influence of Robert Grosseteste. Indeed, according to John Maddicott, Eleanor and Simon came to share a circle of religious friends that included, Adam Marsh and Robert Grosseteste<sup>194</sup>. There is therefore more than a mere possibility that Montfort and his wife were strongly under the influence of Grosseteste and like-minded people who

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<sup>186</sup> He was looking for a papal dispensation for his marriage because when William Marshal died his wife had sworn perpetual chastity. Montfort obtained from the pope the dispensation for his marriage, carried out by the papal legate in England, Otho. M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 487.

<sup>187</sup> "magno gaudio". *Ibid.* p. 498.

<sup>188</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 99. *Roberti Grosseteste. Episcopi quondam Lincolnensis epistole*, Letter 48, pp. 141 – 143. Grosseteste is saying to Montfort not to punish one of Montfort's burghers in Leicester from whom Montfort had taken 500 marks beyond his fault.

<sup>189</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 287-295.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* p. 289.

<sup>191</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, pp. 86-87, and 106 – 124. M. Paris. *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 366 and p. 415.

<sup>192</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 371-372.

<sup>193</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 416. See also: J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 80.

<sup>194</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 40

“shaped his political ideas and outlook”<sup>195</sup>. First among these friends was definitely Robert Grosseteste. As we have seen the two men became acquainted in 1231 when Montfort acquired the lordship of Leicester, and Grosseteste was its archdeacon. Grosseteste, must have been around sixty when he first met the twenty-three year old Montfort in 1231 and his age could have easily exerted a sway over Montfort.

According to Maddicott, Montfort was very religious: he repeated his prayers, by day and night he wore a hair shirt. He was frugal and temperate in food, drink and clothing. “He had been instructed in all good teaching by Robert Grosseteste, whom he cherished with heartfelt affection and whose wholesome advice he followed in many things”<sup>196</sup>. It is certainly curious and probably not a coincidence, as Maddicott reminded us, that Montfort bound himself to a crusade whose funds had been raised by Grosseteste and Cantilupe in 1247. This was only one of the projects which Grosseteste contemplated to be executed with Montfort for “the liberation of souls”<sup>197</sup>. Of course the best known period in Simon de Montfort’s life began in 1258 when he and other leading magnates initiated a reform movement which would first give him an important political position and then lead him to the defeat at Evesham in 1265. The movement marked the coalescence of the general and local resentments of clergy, gentry and baronage with the particular and private grievances of some members of the higher nobility. The reform movement of 1258 “was the most radical assault yet made on the prerogatives of the Crown”<sup>198</sup>, with political direction largely transferred from the king to the council. The political side of the reform movement was by no means Montfort’s enterprise alone, but in the contribution the movement made towards moral reforms I claim we can identify the influence of Grosseteste. As Maddicott underlined: “In his *Rules* written for the countess of Lincoln in 1241 and in the *Statuta* which he drew up for the government of his own household he had laid down lines of conduct for ministers which were to be echoed in the reforming period”<sup>199</sup>. Certainly the strength, the support, the experience given to the movement by people such as Walter de Cantilupe, John de Cheam, bishop of Glasgow, Henry Sandwich, bishop of London, Richard de

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<sup>195</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 79.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* p. 88.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* p. 98.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* p. 151

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* p. 167.

Mepham archdeacon of Oxford and Thomas de Cantilupe contributed enormously to reinforce the idea that what was being achieved was not just human enterprise but also a mission “Divinely” driven. Maddicott has shown us that some of these men were also connected by other ties. Indeed they had held their first livings in the diocese of Lincoln during Grosseteste’s episcopacy. Sandwich had been rector of Helpringham, Lincolnshire 1227-1262; Cheam rector of Bucknell, Oxfordshire 1242-1264; Thomas de Cantilupe rector of Wintringham, Lincolnshire 1245 and Bulwick, Northamptonshire from 1246-7<sup>200</sup>. Most probably they did not want to prevent foreign clerks from gaining benefices nor did they wish to expel them from the country but certainly, like Grosseteste, they did not like to see the papal provision to English benefices systematically abused by foreigners who jeopardized the cure of the souls. The cure of the souls in Grosseteste’s eyes was paramount to a good cleric<sup>201</sup>.

Grosseteste was certainly a close friend of Simon, and maybe also his spiritual director as it was to him that Simon entrusted the education of two of his sons. Therefore Pantin wonders how far Grosseteste shared in or influenced Simon’s political views<sup>202</sup>. The response he provided is, however, another question more than an answer as he said that while “Montfort was much interested in ecclesiastical reform, what is less clear is how Grosseteste, on his side, was interested in political reform and what part he would have been prepared to play, if he had lived in the baronial plan of reform”<sup>203</sup>. My personal answer based on a study of the documents, is that it seems certain that Grosseteste influenced Simon de Montfort in many ways and that Montfort himself saw Grosseteste as his master and his spiritual guide. Grosseteste might have been interested in political reforms but only as long as they bore the church’s spirit and they were related to the cure of souls which was, I believe, the guiding principle that Grosseteste had throughout his life.

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<sup>200</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort*, p. 251.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>202</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste’s relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, p. 205.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

### 5.3 Final comments

On the death of Grosseteste, Matthew Paris talks about miracles at his tomb<sup>204</sup> and tells that he appeared to Innocent IV giving him a deadly blow with his pastoral staff<sup>205</sup>. This may be fanciful but we do need to take into consideration some features of the description<sup>206</sup>. Paris had a good source in that he acquired his information from Grosseteste's physician and friend, John of St Giles, who attended him in his last illness<sup>207</sup>. Moreover it is interesting to note that in the final scene Matthew Paris does not describe Grosseteste as persecutor of the monks as he did previously, but he calls him, *praelatorum correptor, monachorum correptor, presbiterorum director clericorum instructor*. Paris does, however, call him *Romanorum malleus et contemptor*<sup>208</sup>. It is possible that this is due to the recent quarrel with the pope or because of the number of Italians and other foreigners in England exploiting benefices. In this respect then, Paris did not change his opinion. As clearly stated by Southern, his own monastery had almost nothing to fear from the bishop's pastoral care. A hundred, no less, papal privileges of recent date and unparalleled particularity protected St Albans, while other monasteries were less protected<sup>209</sup>. Matthew Paris was at the beginning suspicious about Grosseteste because he considered him a bishop who wanted to keep the canons of Lincoln and also the religious communities in his diocese under a tight rein<sup>210</sup> even though his community was not the only one touched by the severity of Grosseteste who deposed no less than eleven heads for irregularities<sup>211</sup>. But Paris gradually became aware of other sides to Grosseteste's character; he recorded his ability as a mediator as well as his

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<sup>204</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 419, 490.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.* p. 429.

<sup>206</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 291.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* p. 292.

<sup>208</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 407.

<sup>209</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 7

<sup>210</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 226.

<sup>211</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, pp. 143-144.

absolute trust in the idea of Divine justice mirrored in the correct use of human justice<sup>212</sup>.

Grosseteste died at Bucken on 9 October 1253<sup>213</sup>. On his death-bed he formally provided a definition of heresy, as a choice made contrary to the Holy Scriptures openly declared and stubbornly maintained. To give the care of souls to anyone chosen for human ends, whether of family or politics, was contrary to Holy Scripture; to announce this choice openly in a formal document, and to defend this choice by suspension, excommunication or war against those who resist was to fulfil all the conditions of heresy<sup>214</sup>. Southern argued that: “At his death, Grosseteste had failed. As a man of action, he had set himself against the system of legal compromises on which papal government was based, and the system had been too strong for him. As a scientific observer of causes and predictor of consequences he had come to believe that the end of the world was at hand. As a theologian he had raised contemporary tendencies to equate orthodoxy of the Bible with the authority of the sentences. Duns Scotus had access to all Grosseteste’s literary remains, and it is clear that he had looked at them with care but without admiration”<sup>215</sup>. This is the sharp judgement of Southern with which I totally agree, but Robert Grosseteste stood for what he believed to be correct and fair in the same way as his first master, Jesus, had done 13 centuries earlier. Grosseteste did not become the main representative of the church in England, but on the contrary, had several fights with the king and in the end even the Pope suspended him. However it is exactly because of that, that we can consider Grosseteste one of the main representatives of the church’s values, and of the Christian values that had been forgotten by the rest of the prelates. I dare to say that in a certain way he performed in England the same role performed by St Francis of Assisi in Italy.

Grosseteste constituted the watershed between two different ways of thinking and between two different ways of acting. Before Grosseteste, apart from some sporadic

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<sup>212</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 8-9. See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 325-6 Grosseteste’s intervention in October 1252, to prevent the payment of a papally supported subsidy to the king for the crusade. See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 377-8, and pp. 395-400, the excommunication of breakers of Magna Charta. See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 355, affirming that, the Pope, Innocent IV, has impoverished the church.

<sup>213</sup> R.W. Southern, ‘Robert of Grosseteste’, *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 85.

<sup>214</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 292.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* p. 296.

and sometimes incoherent attempts at refusing the status quo, only Saint Hugh properly tried to establish a division between religious and political values. With Grosseteste this division came to fulfilment because he excluded from his sphere of action what retrospectively we can call the main source of troubles: compromise. Before Grosseteste society was an endless compromise between political and religious power; no doubt about it. In order to assert that, we have only to analyse the battles fought by Grosseteste: he did not want abbots to act as judges delegate and he did not want religious people to be mixed up with political power; he did not want the Pope or any other prelates to divert religious resources by giving away prebends to relatives and he implicitly stated the principle of honesty as the basis on which religious values should be built; he did not want unsuitable candidates to fill religious positions, regardless of who they were, and he recognised that the only authority for the clergy (and therefore within the church) should be the morals, ethics and principles of the Christian religion. All these issues were established in England with the fundamental help of Bishop Robert Grosseteste whose example was followed by his successors in the diocese of Lincoln and elsewhere in England. As Pantin stressed “there is no doubt that some of the candidates he rejected were scandalous by any standard, and their patrons irresponsible. But some of those whose presentations or advancement he opposed were certainly not monsters of iniquity especially because they included men like William Raleigh, the judge who became bishop of Norwich, Hugh Pateshull, later bishop of Coventry, Master John Blund, one of the leading Aristotelian scholars of the day, and the chancellor Ralph Neville, bishop of Chichester”<sup>216</sup>. The difference is that these men were not ready to sacrifice everything for the cure of souls, they were not able to lose their state-ties in the name of God as Grosseteste was.

Where Grosseteste showed his originality was in seeing this system of exploitation as one of the root causes of spiritual inefficiency. Pastoral care is the most important thing and cannot be reduced to an accessory. In Southern’s view, for Grosseteste only the best brains and energy available were good enough for the work of saving souls. I personally do not think that Grosseteste was particularly concerned about having the best brains, because the people abovementioned were indeed good brains.

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<sup>216</sup> W.A. Pantin, ‘Grosseteste’s relations with the Papacy and the Crown’, p. 181.

Moreover if we look at the past in the diocese of Lincoln, the bishopric had had very good brains, like Bishop Geoffrey for instance, who had undoubtedly been a good administrator, but undeniably a bad bishop. The real problem for Grosseteste was that the cure of the soul must precede everything else, and all the energy of the ecclesiastics must be devoted to this aim. There is no other possibility than working for God in Grosseteste's view, which in turn implies giving up other responsibilities in relation to the world. That is what Robert Grosseteste wanted from everybody; from the rector of the humble parish up to the great and rich cardinal of the papal curia. Among his measures were those directed towards helping the clergy to develop a clearer idea of what constituted a good religious life. This included:

- 1) The observance of the commandments
- 2) Attention during the Divine office as well as attention to the meaning of the words
- 3) The need for all pastors to pray regularly and read the Holy Scripture because only by understanding the Scriptures may they give satisfaction to any who demand a reason concerning hope and faith.
- 4) The need for parish priests to be ready by day or night to visit the sick when required to do so.<sup>217</sup>

As Srawley said, Grosseteste's ideal conception of the pastoral life was expressed in his "sermon" at the Council of Lyons in 1250: "The pastoral charge does not consist merely in administering the sacraments, saying the canonical hours, celebrating masses, but in the truthful teaching of the living truth it consists also in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, covering the naked, receiving the guests, visiting the sick and those in prison, especially those who belong to the parish"<sup>218</sup>. Grosseteste was clearly fighting a very difficult battle here because of the pervasive influence of the papacy upon the parish life of the English Church.

Grosseteste regarded himself as responsible for every soul: those of the laymen as well as those of the clergy of his diocese. In his parochial visitation he used to preach to the clergy while having a Friar teaching and instructing the people. His inquiry

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<sup>217</sup> J.H. Srawley, 'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', pp. 168 – 169.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.* p. 170.



involved the conduct of the clergy as well as the private morals of laymen about their sins, particularly incontinence. As Pantin stressed this was the new canonical procedure of *inquisition* introduced by Pope Innocent III, but the fact that Grosseteste put laymen on oath in order to ascertain whether or not others were sinners was not welcomed by the king and by other lords<sup>219</sup>. The regular visitation of both parishes and monasteries was one of the most important features of the reform programme set in motion by the Lateran Council of 1215, but by making laymen swear an oath to the clergy the church was on its way to acquiring much more than a simple power to commit the laymen to confession. In swearing an oath the layman implicitly recognised his loyalty and fidelity to an institution that was not only separated from the political power of the state, but was sometimes in contention with it. I do not have enough evidence to claim that Grosseteste's visitations aimed at the clear division between church and state, but I think it is clear that one of the results of his sharp and restless diocesan visitation was the perception that State and Church were no longer a single monolith or better that the interests of the church and the state were walking two different paths.

In his Episcopal visitations Grosseteste was indeed explicit. To visit all these deaneries and parishes he must have taken at least a year, and probably more. "His visitation as he describes it, and as the surviving documents fitfully reveal, was a mixture of royal eyre, sheriff's tour and itinerant preaching mission"<sup>220</sup>. Grosseteste was prepared to entrust parishes to men engaged in ecclesiastical administration provided that they were priests and especially that they had the ability to perform pastoral duties, by teaching and by giving examples of good Christian life<sup>221</sup>. This is I think his main legacy: he created a system in which there was no possibility of misunderstanding or equivocating. With Grosseteste and his episcopate religious practice, moral standards, the religious rules and especially the Christian faith probably reached (in Lincoln but in England as well) one of its supreme religious peaks<sup>222</sup>.

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<sup>219</sup> W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', p. 202.

<sup>220</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 258 – 259.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>222</sup> A. Brown, *Church and society in England 1000-1500*, p. 47.

If we now try to draw a comparison between Grosseteste and his main counterpart in Cremona we find some important distinctions. Sicardo and Grosseteste were important bishops in their own cities with many similarities but also with some important differences. It is beyond doubt that both bishops cared deeply about the religious life of their parishioners and that both were irreprehensible religious men and leading examples for the population. There is, however, a major divergence dividing Sicardo and Grosseteste, which would influence and eventually differentiate the behaviour of the bishops in the two cities after them. The difference between the two is represented by the way they chose to defend and promote the Christian faith: Sicardo chose a political path, Grosseteste a religious one. Both tried to achieve a moral order for the people, but whereas Grosseteste wanted to reach this aim by changing the internal life of the individual, Sicardo expected to teach the moral order to the people by establishing a moral order within the city. There is no doubt that Sicardo was a good man, that he was an educated man and a scholar. His actions within the city of Cremona were mainly directed to helping the poor and to pacifying the city, but he expected political actions and the political stability of the city to help the Christian faith and possibly boost religious values. Sicardo wanted to create a moral order within the consciences of the people by establishing political and social order in society. In other words he wanted the “universal” to reverberate on the “single” and the general to be absorbed by the individual.

Grosseteste operated exactly in the opposite way. He knew perfectly well that in order to achieve religious aims people needed to act religiously not politically, which is why he was not shy in rebuking or going against the king if the latter broke the religious rules. Above all he knew that it was the individual who needs to give example to the rest of society<sup>223</sup>. The bishop, in particular, needed to lead by example; not a political example or a social example but a religious example. It is the singular contribution of the individual which forms the general and it is the example of the personal interior moral order which can generate the external social order.

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<sup>223</sup> What Søren Kierkegaard would insist on 500 years later.

Sicardo proposed his *Lodo* to pacify the city and he pursued the canonisation of Omobono for social reasons. Grosseteste rebelled against the papal prebends for religious reasons, he quarrelled with the canons of the respect for religious procedures and he disputed with kings and nobles in order to establish the pre-eminence of religion over politics. This is the main difference between them. Their actions would influence and condition the role and the future of the bishop in their cities: in Lincoln the example of Grosseteste would lead to a positive emulation of his faith; in Cremona the extreme attempts of Sicardo would prove devastating for the political power and even the religious role of the bishop in the city.

In Grosseteste's view a bishop was unconditionally subordinate to the pope in only one respect: in his geographical limitation. Once appointed within the area assigned to him his authority and responsibility like that of the pope himself came from God. The Pope had the general pastoral responsibility for the whole Church; a bishop had an equally God-given pastoral responsibility for his diocese<sup>224</sup>. This is what Grosseteste thought about his role within the diocese. His first concern was not political or military; it had always been religious, no matter what. On the contrary in Italy even the best bishops like Sicardo, always operated and functioned in the shade of the social and political environment in which they were living. These different methodologies Grosseteste and Sicardo had in acting and interpreting their role as bishops would create two divergent outcomes for Cremona and Lincoln in the XIV century.

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<sup>224</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 263.

# PART THREE

**From the middle of the XIII century  
until the first half of the XIV century.**

# Chapter six

## Cremona: The city without the bishop

### a. The challenges facing the Bishop

After the period of Bishops Sicardo and Omobono there were problems in the election of new bishops. According to the research of Carla Bertinelli Spotti and Maria Teresa Mantovani, by the 13<sup>th</sup> century the privilege of electing the bishops had passed from the clergy and the population to the canons<sup>1</sup>; indeed between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> century the principle of popular election had been “overcome” by the will of a narrow number of people<sup>2</sup>. The election of the bishop in this way and the long period of vacancy after the death of Bishop Omobono helped to cast a black shadow over the Episcopal system and increased the distrust of the people. The political struggle inside the city also greatly influenced the elections, causing in the end the exclusion, as we will see, of even the local clergy who were unable to hold a safe position between the two main forces of the period: the Pope and the emperor.

Very important sources for this period are the documents in relation to the canons, included in the “*Codice Diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*”. The documents range from papal privileges, to appointments, to feudal investitures as well as to the role the chapter had in this period. Particularly relevant is the span of time between the election of Giovannibuono dei Giroldi in 1249 and that of Cacciaconte in 1260, because it depicts the situation of the diocese where there is a bishop elected but refused by the Pope. Very important is the research carried out by Lorenzo

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<sup>1</sup> Bertinelli Spotti – Mantovani, ‘Potere Politico e vita religiosa nei secoli XIII – XIV’, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, ‘Episcopato Cremonese, capitolo cattedrale, papato e impero nel XIII secolo’, in, *Cremona città Imperiale*, ed. G. Andenna (Cremona, 1999), p. 161.

Astegiano about the civic and religious history of Cremona in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century. As secondary sources fundamental are the publications of François Menant about the political situation of the time, the studies of Giancarlo Andenna on the Lombard ecclesiastical institutions and the episcopacy of Cremona in the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries, and those of Elisabetta Filippini about the religious houses in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The 13<sup>th</sup> century featured the influx of the mendicant orders. In attracting the attention of the people both in town and in the “contado”, they contributed to the bishop losing his religious monopoly and his sacred aura<sup>3</sup>. Inside Cremona the monasteries were also affected by the fast rise of the Dominicans and Franciscans. The monastery of Saint Lorenz had economic difficulties at the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century, as did that of Saint Thomas and Saint Peter at Po<sup>4</sup>. At the beginning of the XIV century the monasteries of Cremona, like those of northern Italy in general, were facing a period of crisis. This was due to the different perception people began to develop of the monastic role within society, seen now as inactive compared to the life that the mendicant orders were proposing. These preached poverty in order to follow the evangelical commandment of Christ. Moreover they recommended a simple spirituality that was very successful among the population, especially the bourgeoisie. Consequently a lot of people supported them with donations of lands and houses or properties. Even the bishop, despite the fact that “his church” was not poor, was challenged. Although the properties given to the mendicant orders formally belonged to the Pope, he usually gave them back to the orders for their needs increasing in this way their wealth and the strength of their communities. Another factor that increased the popularity of the mendicant orders up to at least the time of Pope Urban IV in 1261<sup>5</sup> was their association with indulgencies, plenary or temporarily, which induced the people to turn their devotion (and their money) towards them. Luigi Prosdocimi has suggested that the papacy supported the mendicant orders because, like itself, they were hierarchical organisations and

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<sup>3</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Episcopato Cremonese, capitolo cattedrale, papato e impero nel XIII secolo’, pp. 161 – 162.

<sup>4</sup> Elisabetta Filippini, ‘Gli ordini religiosi tra vita ecclesiastica e impegno caritativo nel secolo XIV’, In, *Il trecento. Chiesa e cultura, VIII – XIV secolo*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 170.

<sup>5</sup> Roberto Paciocco, *Canonizzazione e culto dei Santi nella Christianitas, 1198 – 1302* (Assisi, 2006), p. 210.

therefore easy to control. Their role in active preaching was essential for the re-organisation of ecclesiastical society foreseen by the papacy<sup>6</sup>.

In this period, therefore, the mendicant orders, the Dominicans, Franciscans and Carmelites, found specific space inside the social fabric of the city<sup>7</sup>. They became involved in arguments with the bishops and the local clergy, however, in the countryside as well as in the city. The reasons for these controversies were mainly twofold:

- a) the preaching that mendicant orders were undertaking
- b) the donations that they attracted.

The problem was worse for the monks because they depended upon donations and support. In the new spiritual climate, however, recruitment was affected and donations were diverted toward the mendicant orders, perceived by the population as closer to the poor and the sick. The old rents obtained by the monks were no longer enough, partly because the farmers did not always pay the rent, but also because the inflation of the time meant that monasteries were often forced to get mortgages on their houses or property in order to survive. There were other religious experiences at the time, too, such as those of the “Umiliati”, a fraternity<sup>8</sup> that proposed a sort of living together for men and women sharing prayers and their labour. Basically people in this community made their living by doing manual jobs in agriculture or trade. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries there were also many lay communities or associations who were willing to take care of the sick, the pilgrims, the poor and the lonely. In this they competed with religious communities such as the “Antoniani”<sup>9</sup> who took care of people who were affected by specific illnesses.

This period, therefore, is a watershed between the old monasticism and the new mendicant orders that were more in contact with the population. As the bishops were for the most part elected by the Pope or by a small group of people they, by contrast,

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<sup>6</sup> Luigi Prosdocimi, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dell’Italia settentrionale durante il medioevo e all’inizio dell’età moderna’, in, *Istituzioni, Cultura e Società in Italia e in Polonia, sec XIII-XIX*, ed. Damiano Cosimo Fonseca (Galatina, 1979), pp. 27.

<sup>7</sup> Elisabetta Filippini, ‘Gli ordini religiosi tra vita ecclesiastica e impegno caritativo nel secolo XIV’, pp. 184 - 187.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 180 - 181.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 183.

tended to lose contact with the people and were perceived as an alien element in the town. The trust of the population was very important in the middle ages where most relationships between people were based on confidence. Following this decline, the bishops became increasingly the expression of different factions led by this and that family, who were struggling to control the town and no longer represented the expression of the whole community.

The analysis of this last period will be focused on the changing power of the bishop. In this third period, as we shall see, by being part of these factions, the bishop lost his influence over the town as *superpartes*. Often not elected by canons but appointed by the Pope in his endless fight against the emperor, the bishop became implicitly a secondary figure<sup>10</sup>. He could not take important political decisions in the town and he could only administer as best he could the ecclesiastical benefices and the patrimony of the diocese. It is true that he still had some military followers as a result of reasserting his rule over the feudal investitures, but his power was too weak to be able to control the town. All he could do if he wanted to keep some power was to belong to a faction.

## b. The bishop in crisis: steady descent through the power of faction

### **The Election and Nomination of Bishops 1249-1349**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Giovanibuono dei Giroldi elected by the canons | 1249 – d. 1262 |
| Giovanibuono refused by the Pope (Innocent IV) | 1249           |

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<sup>10</sup> The emperors did not have much influence on the election of the bishop in Cremona in the late 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. On the contrary it was the papacy that tried to influence them. (On the role of the papacy in electing bishops of Cremona, see especially: G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p 95.) The struggles for the episcopacy in general in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries incentivized Roman centralisation, particularly in the period from Innocent IV to Boniface VIII, whose pontificates conveyed the idea that the only one who really had the right to elect the bishops was indeed the Pope.



|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Bernerio Sommi nominated by the Pope (Innocent IV)              | 1249 – d. 1260   |
| Giovannibuono dei Giroldi confirmed by the canons               | 1260             |
| Giovannibuono again refused by the Pope (Alexander IV)          | 1260             |
| Cacciaconte elected by the Pope (Alexander IV)                  | 1260 – d. 1288   |
| Ponzino Ponzone   | 1289 – d. 1290   |
| Vacancy   | 1291 – 1295      |
| Emanuele Sescalco elected by the Pope (Boniface VIII)<br>1295/6 | 1295 – left      |
| Guiscardo di Persico  | 1296 – d. 1296   |
| Rainerio di Casole elected by the Pope (Boniface VIII)          | 1296 – d. 1312   |
| Egidiolo Bonseri/Egidio Madelberti both elected                 | 1312             |
| Egidiolo Bonseri confirmed                                      | 1314 – d. 1323   |
| See declared vacant   | 1322             |
| Egidio Madelberti dismissed by the Pope                         | 1325/6           |
| Friar Ugolino elected   | 1327             |
| Ugolino dismissed by the Anti-Pope Niccolo V                    | 1329             |
| Friar Dondino elected   | 1329             |
| Friar Ugolino regained the episcopacy                           | 1331 – d. 1349   |
| Ugolino de Addenheriis elected by the Pope (Clement VI)         | 1349 – d. 1361/2 |

In order to understand how the power of the bishop steadily declined, we have little choice but to trace the narrative of events between 1249 and 1349, pausing for analysis and reflection.

## From Giovannibuono to Cacciaconte

The history of the bishops of Cremona in this last period is particularly difficult to unravel, because in the 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> century the conduct and personal deeds of the bishops merged and became intertwined as never before with the political situation of the town. After Bishop Omobono the canons elected the archdeacon Giovannibuono dei Girolidi in 1249<sup>11</sup>. As a canon he had been involved in a dispute concerning the reformation of the monastery of S Giovanni della Pipia<sup>12</sup>. However it seems that this fact did not prevent the other canons from seeing in him a suitable candidate for the See. Some more serious problems in this respect came from his background, in particular the Ghibeline tradition of his family, which was very close to the Emperor Frederick II<sup>13</sup>. The emperor seemed to have taken his and his family services into special consideration given that as has Andenna suggested, he had absolved the major Church of Cremona from the service of supplying his troops with a certain number of carts<sup>14</sup>. With this background it was more than obvious that Innocent IV would not accept his election as bishop<sup>15</sup>. The Pope could quote a law, issued by himself, which said that the canons of the cathedrals of cities that were in any way supporting the emperor, were not allowed to elect their bishops by themselves<sup>16</sup>. The Pope ordered his legate, Gregorio da Montelongo, on 29 July 1249, to elect a bishop in Cremona who would defend the catholic faith and ecclesiastical liberties<sup>17</sup>. The chief of the Guelph party in the city, Ottolino Sommi, had a brother called, Bernerio Sommi, who was a canon. On 29 July 1249 the Pope asked for the dismissal of Girolidi<sup>18</sup> and the election of Bernerio<sup>19</sup>. In this case two features stand out:

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<sup>11</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei vescovi di Cremona fino al 1335', in, *CDC*, ii, p. 172.

<sup>12</sup> *CDC*, i, n 508, p. 269.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* n 508, p 269.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* n 566, p. 277. See G. Andenna, 'Le Istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', pp. 115.

<sup>15</sup> Despite the fact that the Pope came from the Ghibeline family of Fieschi, he would not give up the fight with Frederick II even though the emperor himself made some attempts to pacify the situation and to avoid excommunication.

<sup>16</sup> Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, (Bergamo, 1932), p. 129.

<sup>17</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 302.

<sup>18</sup> *CDC*, ii, p. 172. Savio Fedele, 'Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni', p. 129.

<sup>19</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei vescovi di Cremona fino al 1335', pp. 172 – 173.

- 1) The Pope took control of the election of the bishop, not because he thought the elect was unworthy, but for merely political reasons, that is to say that the policy of the papacy had to be applied in the diocese.
- 2) The election of a bishop with a particular brief and from high in the Guelph party meant that he was no longer a figure *superpartes*. It is clear that from now on there were Ghibeline bishops and Guelph bishops, rather than bishops who were above the factions as in previous periods: religious office began to be perceived increasingly as an extension of local politics.

By acting in this way the Pope reduced the bishop to a puppet in the hands of this or that faction. I believe this is one of the reasons why the population began to detach the role of the bishop from the person who was performing it. Even if the bishop was a good person his faction or his family would eventually control the political scenario of the town. Consequently people began to see the bishop as a rather abstract figure and paid little attention to the specific actions he performed.

The Guelph party lost power in 1249 and the city of Cremona fell under the authority of Uberto Pallavicino<sup>20</sup>, elected Podestà by the Ghibeline party of the city. This choice could not have been worst for the Pope given that Pallavicino was one of the staunchest supporters of Frederick II<sup>21</sup>. As a result of this situation we have a bishop *in pectore*, Bernerio Sommi, who could not take possession of his diocese, and Giovannibuono Girolidi who had to administer the Diocese simply bearing a title of archdeacon and procurator although, at least nominally, fully in charge of the spiritual matters and well-being of the city and the diocese<sup>22</sup>. In other words it was as if the Episcopal See was vacant.

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<sup>20</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 302. About Pallavicino, see: L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335', p. 189. Year 1254.

<sup>21</sup> In 1250 Pallavicino attacked with his army formed primarily by "Barbarasi" (This name comes from the fact of having shaved their hair and their beards; instead the supporters of the church were called Cappelletti because they had long hair. See: L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 302, note 8.) his Guelph opponents in Piadena where the Amati and Sommi families, who were outside the town, had gathered themselves (See: François Menant, 'Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', p. 323) and then became lord of Cremona. (See: L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 302).

<sup>22</sup> CDC, ii, p. 173. Savio Fedele, 'Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni', pp. 129 – 131.

From 1249 until 1260 we have a series of documents attesting most of the deeds of Giovannibuono within the diocese. The role he is performing resembles the role of a bishop but there are a lot of documents which seem to cast a shadow over his authority. We know for instance that Giovannibuono has the title *generalis procurator in spiritualibus et temporalibus episcopii et ecclesiae cremonensis*<sup>23</sup> and that he is in charge of the properties of the church of Cremona<sup>24</sup>. However at the same time we have a document<sup>25</sup> in which Giovannibuono, *Archidiaconus* Nicola, *Archipresbiter* and Orlando *cantor cremonenses*, are giving some lands to Egidio, asking him to pay a sum of money to the cathedral chapter. The document shows that Giovannibuono did have the faculty to buy, sell or rent the land, but also that two other members of the chapter are with him as if they needed to confirm his authority for doing so. There is a document<sup>26</sup> in which Giovannibuono is pronouncing a sentence settling the controversy which had arisen between Giraldo Faroldus on one side and the church of San Cataldo on the other, which seem to confirm that he had the authority of a bishop. At the same time in the document 444<sup>27</sup> dated March 1254 the canons of the cathedral acted alone in relation to a donation to the monastery of “S Giovanni della Pipia” because they claimed this lay within their rights when: *episcopo absente vel vacante in civitate Cremonae*. Again we have a document<sup>28</sup> in which a visit is requested to check the behaviour of the *prepositus*, Imbaldo of the church of Sant Pietro in the diocese of Cremona. We would expect the bishop to go and inspect the situation, particularly in relation to an allegation made by a beautiful girl with two children who has been found *in claustris seu casamentis ipsius ecclesie et adherentibus ad ipsam ecclesiam*. On the contrary the visit is carried out by Leonardo one of the *maxionariis*<sup>29</sup> of the cathedral under the authority of *dominus* Nicola, *archipresbiterus*. It seems to emerge from these documents that Giovannibuono was performing the role of the bishop, but without having the complete authority enjoyed by his predecessors.

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<sup>23</sup> V. Leoni, *Il Codice Diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 424, p. 161. (4 April, 1251).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* n 450, p. 169. (January, 1255); *ibid.* n 456, p. 171. (13 October, 1255).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* n 422, p. 160. (19 March, 1251).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* n 485, pp. 179 – 180. (9, November, 1257).

<sup>27</sup> V. Leoni, *Il Codice Diplomatico della cattedrale di Cremona*, n 444, pp. 167-168.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* n. 481, p. 178.

<sup>29</sup> The *maxionarius* was a member of the clergy. He was one of the auxiliary canons who had the primary role of helping and assisting the regular canons of the cathedral in their religious or practical work.

Bernerio Sommi was outside the city of Cremona because Count Pallavicino had thrown him and his family members out, together with the Cavalcabò family whose possessions were confiscated<sup>30</sup>. His economic situation was not very good, which is why Pope Alexander IV, in 1257, allowed him to obtain a mortgage by using the properties of the Episcopal See<sup>31</sup>. Bernerio Sommi died in 1260, probably before 4 March when Giovannibuono Giroldi called himself bishop<sup>32</sup>, and renewed to those members of the Sommi family who had remained in town and followed the count Pallavicino their investiture of some Episcopal fiefs. Only after 1260, did Giovannibuono Giroldi, calling himself *electus*, try to bring peace to the town.

Probably feeling that he had to demonstrate his qualities to his fellow citizens, Giovannibuono began to administer the city and his administration was quite efficient. He built a new bishop's palace, opened new shops in the town, paid off the debts of the Episcopate and opened a new hospital in a place called Valverde<sup>33</sup>. Nonetheless it was Pallavicino who was ruling Cremona, with the help of Buoso da Dovara, the Podestá, and who had a crucial role in handling the economy and organizing the political action that the town had to undertake<sup>34</sup>. Despite the fact that the Guelph party had been annihilated, the policy of Pallavicino and Dovara was a relatively quiet one and they tried to pacify the city. Pallavicino seems to have wanted to replace the role that the bishop had exerted in previous years. Lorenzo Astegiano tells us that the "Gabella Magna" is first recorded in 1254. This council was formed by 40 people, 10 people from every gate<sup>35</sup>. Its role was to provide the maintenance of the walls, harbours, bridges, and to surface the streets, and supervise trade<sup>36</sup>. The Palace "Città – Nova" was built in front of the church of Saint Agatha

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<sup>30</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 303.

<sup>31</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', pp. 116-117.

<sup>32</sup> CDC, ii, p. 172. *Ioannesbonus episcopus Cremonae investivit aliquos de Summo de feudo avito et proavito quod ab episcopo tenebant.*

<sup>33</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', p. 305.

<sup>34</sup> François Menant, 'Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', p. 324.

<sup>35</sup> Lorenzo Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', pp. 367 – 368.

<sup>36</sup> "*Provisio gaballae super amplificatione et manutentione portus Padi et viae ipsum portum ex sententia 5 sapientum*". L. Astegiano, 'Codice C. Provvisio della Gabella Magna 1295 – 1310', in, CDC, ii, n. 48, (26 February 1298), p. 148.

during 1256 and soon became the symbol of the political power of the people (popolo).



**Figure XXI: Cremona, Palazzo Cittanova**



**Figure XXII: Cremona, Palazzo Cittanova, frontal view.**

There is of course a clear similarity between the role exerted by the bishop in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries and the role exerted in the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries by the commune or the Podestà in relation to public works and taxes. It is clear now that the commune has taken over these powers from the bishop. However, the differences are equally stark: the bishop of the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries was also the spiritual father of the people living in Cremona; Pallavicino seemed to care only about his personal power. F.

Menant used a very apt expression when he said that “Under the pastoral stick of Pallavicino life was not a paradise”<sup>37</sup>, underpinning the view offered here that he was playing the role of the bishop while lacking the moral authority and the charisma. Obviously Pallavicino who had absolute dominion over the city of Cremona, and over other cities and places in the north of Italy, could not let the church be independent. However dominant, his power was nonetheless very fragile, and was subject to different contingencies. It would collapse when Charles of Anjou arrived in the north of Italy<sup>38</sup>. How careful Pallavicino was in monitoring the situation is testified by the fact that when in the 1250s and 1260s the *religio verbatorum* spread in the north of Italy, with hundreds of people flocking through the towns celebrating God and publicly asking for forgiveness, he immediately hampered the movement in the fear that it could offset the balance of his power. He had dozen of crosses erected on the embankment of the River Po to show the people what would be the consequences for those joining the movement<sup>39</sup>.

After the death of Bernerio Sommi, the canons again elected Giovannibuono dei Giroldi, and the abbot of the monastery of Cava (who was allowed to confirm the election when the Episcopal See of Milan was vacant)<sup>40</sup> duly confirmed the election. Nonetheless, Alexander IV, elected as bishop Cacciaconte from Asciano, near Siena<sup>41</sup>. Nevertheless, the people of Cremona would not give up their rights. Despite the fact that Cremona was under Pallavicino the “popolo” still had strong economic power<sup>42</sup>. The Pope suspended the archdeacon and the chapter of the cathedral from the administration of its property and called them, all of them, to a papal tribunal, twice. The legates of the canons and the archdeacon did not turn up for the second trial and the Pope instructed the bishop of Parma to excommunicate them all<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 325.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p. 326.

<sup>39</sup> G. Andenna, ‘L’episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo sino alla conquista veneta’, In, *A Servizio del vangelo. Il cammino storico dell’evangelizzazione a Brescia*, Vol I, ed. G. Andenna (Brescia, 2010), pp. 144-145.

<sup>40</sup> *CDC*, ii, p. 173.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 173. See also: *Acta Imperi Selecta*, ed. J. Friedrich Böhmer (Innsbruck, 1870), n 974, p. 679. F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 323.

<sup>42</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, p. 303.

<sup>43</sup> *Acta Imperi Selecta*, ed. J. Friedrich Böhmer, n 974, p. 680.

Bishop Cacciaconte, who was actually nominated by the Pope in order to gain control of the administration of the properties of the See, tried to “use” Giovannibuono Giroldi by giving him the title of vicar for temporal matters<sup>44</sup>. Giroldi died in 1262 and Cacciaconte, perhaps as a sort of compensation, gave the role of the vicar to Giroldi’s nephew, a canon whose name was also Giovannibuono. Giroldi’s nephew acted in this capacity up to 1265<sup>45</sup>. In a document dated 27 March 1263 Giovannibuono is called “*canonicus Cremonensis et generalis vicarius episcopi et episcopii Cremonensis in spiritualibus et temporalibus, auctoritate*”<sup>46</sup>.

The situation changed quickly when Charles of Anjou arrived in Lombardy<sup>47</sup> in 1265 and gathered around him most of the Guelph parties in Lombardy. In this situation the Giroldi family lost its power and Bishop Cacciaconte gave up the administration to Friar Gaspare<sup>48</sup>. Soon after, the power of Pallavicino himself became unstable and Buoso da Dovara<sup>49</sup> made secret agreements with the Roman Curia and with the Giroldi family. Cacciaconte did not in fact come to Cremona but he created as vicar the prior of Saint Cataldo, Giovanni, in 1266<sup>50</sup>. In the same year the papal legates arrived in Cremona and asked both Bouso and Pallavicino to obey the church. Ironically the Roman curia was in effect proposing the church in Cremona as the mediator between the factions. Clement IV instructed his legate to remove the excommunication if the Ghibeline people allowed the clergy to have their prebends<sup>51</sup>. It is very interesting to note here the attitude of the Roman Curia. It had excommunicated the chapter of the cathedral and had not allowed them to use their prebends, but now permitted them to use their properties under political blackmail. This is one of the examples that shows how the Popes could impinge upon the religious stability of the diocese. The Guelph party, after some difficulties and

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<sup>44</sup> CDC, ii, p. 174.

<sup>45</sup> CDC, i, n. 853, p. 335.

<sup>46</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le Istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 119, note 628. *Akty Kremony*, Vol. II, ed. V. Rutemburg, E. Skrzynskaia (Moscow-Leningrad, 1961), n. 34, pp 111 – 112.

<sup>47</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, p. 327.

<sup>48</sup> CDC, i, n 792, p. 324.

<sup>49</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, pp. 308 – 309. F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, pp. 326 – 327.

<sup>50</sup> CDC, i, n. 871, pp. 337 – 338.

<sup>51</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le Istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 119.



betrayals<sup>52</sup>, took power in Cremona and on 13 November the legates removed the excommunication<sup>53</sup>. This is yet another example of how the power of the bishop had greatly diminished; the bishop himself is now the expression of the dominant political faction and under the Episcopal cloak there are only fights and struggles for political power and for the economic control of the prebends in the diocese. Even the pope and the Roman Curia tended to line up with this or that candidate according to the political faction they were in or to which they belonged.

The bishop in this period tried to fill the gaps by appointing vicars, probably with the aim of keeping the diocese on a steady course. In 1266 Bishop Cacciaconte gave the role of vicar to the prior of Saint Cataldo, Giovanni, but between the end of 1267 and the beginning of 1268 he appointed as vicar for spiritual matters the canon Ponzio Ponzzone<sup>54</sup>. Ponzio Ponzzone ruled the diocese from a spiritual point of view up to 1282. Another “assistant” of the bishop was Friar Gaspare who is mentioned as a vicar for economic matters in documents dated 29 May 1272<sup>55</sup>. An interesting feature which characterizes this period of religious turbulence and political instability is the creation of another “Consortium”. After Cremona had been ruled by the Guelph party for almost three years the “Consortium of peace and faith” was founded, a politico–religious institution whose rules were approved by Clement IV in 1267<sup>56</sup>. At the core of the “Consortium” were Dominicans and Franciscans, who would fight against heresy. What is interesting is that whoever took part in the Consortium had to obey the prior of the Dominicans and not the bishop. No political decisions could be made without the agreement of either the Dominican prior or the Franciscan guardian<sup>57</sup>. Not only was the bishop not involved in the “Consortium” but he had actually been excluded. At this point in the defence of the faith and of the Roman Church, the Pope trusted more in the mendicant orders than in the bishop. There could be no surer sign that the political and religious power of the bishop was declining. No other consortium could be created unless subordinated to this one; it

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<sup>52</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, pp. 308 – 310.

<sup>53</sup> *CDC*, i, n. 879, p. 339.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* n. 895, p. 344.

<sup>55</sup> *Akty Kremomy*, Vol. II, ed. V. Rutemburg, E. Skrzynskaia (Moscow, 1961), n. 41, n. 42, n. 43, n. 44, n. 45, pp. 120 – 121.

<sup>56</sup> (Viterbo 31 March, 1267). *Acta Imperi Selecta*, ed. J. Friedrich Böhmer n. 984, p. 686.

<sup>57</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, pp. 329 – 330.

was now the main authority for seeking out and judging heresy and for deciding what was heretical<sup>58</sup>. This encapsulates perfectly the bishop's new position; it provided him with only a kind of temporary power in a sense that, voluntarily or involuntarily, he must link his destiny with the political authority of the town and in doing so detach himself from the population that no longer understood his role. There is a striking comparison between the "Consortium Caritatis" of Omobono's period where lay and ecclesiastical people took care of the homeless and the sick under the surveillance of the bishop, and this "Consortium of peace and faith" where the bishop is not even involved. Communal institutions were now under the control of the Consortium, many heretics were killed and most of the Ghibeline families, like the Dovara, left the city<sup>59</sup>. In 1270, however, the Consortium was deprived of power by the "popolo" who elected what was called the "capitaneus of the populus"<sup>60</sup>. The "popolo" living in Città- Nova made agreements with the "popolo" living in the old part of the city in order to prevent the nobles from re-taking power<sup>61</sup>. Now the "popolo" began to think as a class, with the same needs and the same problems, more than as people rooted in one area of the city or another as in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This was, of course, an almost universal phenomenon in communal Italy. It too contributed to the weakening of power of the bishop, because the "popolo" was less disposed now to be guided by a bishop who was invariably one of the main representatives of the old aristocracy.

The disintegration of the authority of the bishop had therefore four main consequences:

- 1) The commune, which had already developed an autonomous authority, detached itself almost completely from the power and the authority of the bishop, who was more and more perceived as a simple religious appendage to the political institutions in town.

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<sup>58</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', pp. 310 - 311.

<sup>59</sup> F. Menant, 'Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', pp. 329 - 330.

<sup>60</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334', pp. 314 - 316.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* p. 316.

- 2) The figure of the bishop who had struggled in the previous centuries to defend the city militarily (like Oberto) or to pacify it socially (like Sicardo), no longer existed.
- 3) The attempts made by various Popes in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century to acquire religious and social control over the diocese of Cremona contributed to the weakening of the power of the bishop, paradoxically depriving the diocese of its religious guide.
- 4) Finally, the bishops began to think of themselves not as feudal lords of the city, not as military heads of the “contado”, not as religious leaders of the diocese, but as simple administrators of the Church; symptomatically they began to use vicars more systematically than ever before in both spiritual and temporal matters.

In 1284 Bishop Cacciaconte finally arrived in town. He made some feudal investitures and renewed old ones<sup>62</sup> and in general his relationship with the canons was good<sup>63</sup>. In this period we see on the positive side, the construction of the Dominican church<sup>64</sup> and on the negative side, a quarrel between Bishop Cacciaconte and the archdeacon, Emanuele da Sescalco<sup>65</sup>, because the latter had too many prebends<sup>66</sup>. A court case began on 30 August 1286<sup>67</sup>. Bishop Cacciaconte died on 16 July 1288<sup>68</sup> and Archdeacon Guglielmo di Tayolis was then in charge for religious matters<sup>69</sup>.

Politically speaking the city seems to have been peaceful for some time. After the deaths of Manfred in 1266 and Conrad in 1268, Cremona witnessed the triumph of the “Comune di Popolo”. Between 1270 and 1311 it was dominated by the “popolo” and the Guelph party. This alliance could be perceived a strange one, but it was in

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<sup>62</sup> CDC, i, n 1037, p. 371, 31 July 1284 (taxes); CDC, i, n 1017, p. 370, 5 March 1284 (investiture).

<sup>63</sup> CDC, i, n 982, p. 366.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* n 1040, pp. 371 – 372.

<sup>65</sup> Emanuele da Sescalco had obtained, at a date not possible to determine, the office of archdeacon in Cremona. F. Novati, *Ancora d'un vescovo cremonese semiconosciuto, Emanuele da Sescalco. Archivio Storico Lombardo*. Anno XXXVII, Fascicolo XXVI, (Milano, 1910). p. 416.

<sup>66</sup> F. Novati, ‘Ancora d'un vescovo cremonese semiconosciuto, Emanuele da Sescalco’, in, *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 37. 26 (1910), pp. 416 -417.

<sup>67</sup> F. Novati, ‘Ancora d'un vescovo cremonese semiconosciuto, Emanuele da Sescalco’, p. 416. See also: Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, p. 137.

<sup>68</sup> Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, pp. 137 – 138.

<sup>69</sup> CDC, i, n 1111, p. 383. (18 September 1291).

fact almost perfect. There was some overlap in the administration of power. According to the main description that we have<sup>70</sup> two new councils were created: the council of “campanella” mentioned in 1282 and the council of “caravan” 1298. In this period the political structure of the commune of Cremona comprised the following:

- 1) Communal Council “Credenza”
- 2) Council of “campanella” (restricted communal council)
- 3) Council of the “popolo”
- 4) Council of “Caravana”
- 5) Council of the Podestà

This made political activity in Cremona much more complex. The “popolo” extended its power over the communal institutions by creating the two new councils. However, as Menant has argued, this very complexity created a division of power that allowed Cremona to remain independent from seigneurial dominion up to 1334<sup>71</sup>. (The only city to do so in Lombardy).

### **From Ponzone to Ugolino**

After Bishop Cacciaconte the canons chose Ponzio Ponzone in April 1289<sup>72</sup>. We do not know whether or not his election was also determined by political factors; what is certain is that the city was now under the strict control of the Guelph party and that the Ponzone family had a primary role within this party. Unfortunately he did not have time to do much as he died in 1290<sup>73</sup>. The Episcopal See was vacant up to 1291 when the new archdeacon, Guglielmo di Tayolis, acted as “*yconomus* and defender of the church of Cremona *sede episcopali vacante*”<sup>74</sup> and the see remained vacant up

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<sup>70</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Ricerche sulla storia civile del comune di Cremona fino al 1334’, pp. 319 – 325.

<sup>71</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte’, pp. 335 – 337.

<sup>72</sup> *Akty Kremony*, Vol. II, ed. V. Rutemburg, E. Skrzynskaia, pp. 131 – 132. We have a document dated 6 April 1289 in which the bishop “*episcopus episcopii sui nomine*” gave piece of land to Raffinum.

<sup>73</sup> Novati Francesco, *L’Obituariò della cattedrale di Cremona*, (Milano, 1881), p. 58.

<sup>74</sup> *CDC*, i, n 1111, p. 383. (20 January 1291).

to 1295. In this year we note the presence in Rome of Bishop Emanuele Sescalco<sup>75</sup> perhaps elected by Pope Boniface VIII.

Sescalco could not take possession of his diocese, however, as he had already a reputation for corruption (not only in Cremona),<sup>76</sup> not in religious matters, but as a person who did not pay his debts. He had already been at a court with Bishop Cacciaconte. It seems quite obvious that with this background the people of Cremona would not want him. What remains unclear is why Boniface VIII elected a man like him as bishop. We can argue that the Pope chose someone close to him in order to retain control over the diocese. Boniface VIII was an impervious character. However, Sescalco did not affect the city in any way and in 1295 or 1296 he went to Holland to the Abbey of Audard where he died on 1 October 1298<sup>77</sup>. In consequence the canons elected Guiscardo di Persico in 1296, who died suddenly in Rome later in the same year in unclear circumstances. In this strange situation the Pope elected (as was his right according to ecclesiastical law) his chaplain and a canon of Volterra, Rainerio di Casole,<sup>78</sup> who had the reputation of being a very skilful and experienced administrator<sup>79</sup>. In 1297 he went to Cremona. The diocese was now completely under the control of the Pope<sup>80</sup>.

Undoubtedly Bishop Rainerio did not want to relinquish his feudal connections and he gave investiture to people belonging to the Dovara family who swore loyalty to him<sup>81</sup>. This reminds us of the old feudal behaviour of bishops during the first period, but in reality it was merely a confirmation of the feudal investitures that had already been made by bishops to the Dovara family. The bishop no longer enjoyed military

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<sup>75</sup> Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, p. 141.

<sup>76</sup> Francesco Novati, 'Un vescovo cremonese semiconosciuto. Sant'Emanuele', in, *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 4<sup>th</sup> series, 36.11 (1909), pp. 167 – 172.

<sup>77</sup> F. Novati, 'Un vescovo cremonese semiconosciuto. Sant'Emanuele', p. 169.

<sup>78</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', pp. 124-125.

<sup>79</sup> The bishop was consecrated between 27 July 1296 and 30 August 1297 (See: Savio Fedele, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia dalle origini al 1300 descritti per regioni*, p. 144) because we have a document dated 27 July 1296 (See: *Akty Kremony*, Vol. II, ed. V. Rutemburg, E. Skrzynskaia, n. 57, pp. 140 – 141) in which he is called "*Dei gratia Cremonensis electi*", and another one dated 30 – August 1297 (See: *Ibid.* n.58, pp. 141 – 144) in which he is called "*domini episcopi et comitis*".

<sup>80</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 125.

<sup>81</sup> "*Raynerius, episcopus Crem et comes investit Conradum Ordinis militiae Beatae Mariae Virginis Gloriosae, Conradum olim D. Osberti, Moroelum, Miravalum, Franceschinum et Ugozonum et Hectorem de Domo Dovarensium de sup feudo antique et avito, et iuramentum fidelitatis recipit (V 1221, 11 feb; 1284, 5 mar)*". See: *CDC*, i, n 1145, p. 391.

power. The bishop appointed the archpriest of Genivolta as “*vicar in omni-  
temporalibus*”<sup>82</sup> giving him the power to confirm or to renew feudal investitures,  
although sometimes the bishop was present to do this himself, as he did in Sesto on 1  
June, 1290<sup>83</sup>. The bishop then confirmed feudal investitures, and what is especially  
interesting in my view is that “*Raynerius episcopus et comes, nomine episcopii et  
comitatu cum anulo aureo investit honorifice per feudum, tamquam de feudo  
antiquo, consules et massarios et vicinos sexti*”. It seems that the bishop had given  
feudal investiture by using a golden ring instead of “*per fustem*”, that is to say, by  
using something like a stick that he has in his hand. This might reflect some changes  
in feudal procedures or in feudal investitures in general, but it could be that this  
specific investiture was different because it was related to the power of a bishop as a  
bishop: i.e. as the bishop was no longer a proper feudal lord and could not use a  
proper investiture formula. Consequently he had to use his power as a member of the  
church using the symbol of his Episcopal power: the ring.

In 1298 Bishop Rainerio called a synod at which were present the canons of the  
cathedral, abbots, priors of the monasteries and clergy from the diocese. It seems that  
some laymen and clergy had illegally taken possession of properties and benefices  
belonging to the church. At the synod the bishop affirmed that ecclesiastics could not  
devote themselves to lay professions nor carry weapons like knives or swords<sup>84</sup>. It  
seems likely, therefore, that they were doing precisely these things. This is, in my  
view another point which clearly marks the difference between the bishop of this  
period and those who had preceded them. During Sicardo’s time a lay person like  
Omobono could devote himself to ecclesiastical issues, like prayers, helping the  
poor, sheltering the homeless, taking care of the sick; through these actions he  
became a Saint. Now, by contrast, “ecclesiastical people” could not devote  
themselves to the lay professions. It seems that through these new rules the bishop  
wanted to create a distance between the ecclesiastical world and the lay world.  
Sicardo had worked to close this gap in order to unify the society in which he lived,  
troubled as it was by struggles and wars between different parts of society. Bishop  
Rainerio, on the other hand, wanted to prevent clergy from being involved with lay

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<sup>82</sup> *CDC*, i, n 1150, p. 393.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* n 1114, p. 394.

<sup>84</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 126.

workers, or at least with some lay professions. He kept this vision of society to the end of his life in December 1312<sup>85</sup>.

From a political point of view the city was not quite as stable as might appear at first sight. From 1277 up to the arrival in Italy of Emperor Henry VII in 1311, in Cremona, politically speaking, a very important role had been played by the Cavalcabò family, one of the most important and powerful families in the north of Italy. In this period the commune of Cremona and Marquises Cavalcabò I, Marquise Cavalcabò II, and his son Marquise Guglielmo, had interrelated interests that led both parties to need each other<sup>86</sup>. This situation was complicated by the fact that the Guelph party was not unified and this would become apparent when Henry VII arrived in Italy<sup>87</sup>. The emperor's ambassadors were sent to Cremona to advise the citizens to receive him with honour, to promise obedience and loyalty and to offer him food and shelter<sup>88</sup>. He entered Italy on 20 October 1310 and Milan on 23 December 1310<sup>89</sup>; Guido della Torre (a powerful lord in Milan) tried to fight but was defeated and had to flee to Cremona<sup>90</sup>. In Cremona, where there were preparations to resist him<sup>91</sup>, there were two parties inside the Guelph faction: one led by Guglielmo Cavalcabò, who did not want dialogue with the emperor, and the other led by his father-in-law, Supramonte Amati, who instead wanted agreement. As the Cavalcabò family had had a powerful economic relationship with the entire commune<sup>92</sup> of Cremona for years, their ideas triumphed. As a result the Emperor excluded Cremona from the cities which enjoyed his favour and his protections. Cremona rebelled against him sustained by the city of Florence<sup>93</sup>. Henry VII entered Cremona

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<sup>85</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', pp. 126-127.

<sup>86</sup> François Menant, 'Un lungo duecento 1183-1311: il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lotte di parte', pp. 353 – 355.

<sup>87</sup> Agostino Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322* (Cremona, 1937), p. 14.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 14 – 15.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 23 – 24.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 32 - 33.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.

<sup>92</sup> *CDC*, ii, nos, 123 – 124, p. 18.

<sup>93</sup> Here the great poet, Dante Alighieri, enters briefly the city's history (See: Arnaldo Monti, *Le lettere di Dante. Testo, versione, commento e appendici* (Milano, 1921), p. 93). He had been exiled by the city of Florence and he tried to convince the emperor to destroy that city and not Cremona. (See: A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*. p. 43).

on 26 April 1311<sup>94</sup>, and the major Guelph families such as Cavalcabò and della Torre left<sup>95</sup>. Even the emperor could not avoid being involved in factions, and ironically he imprisoned Supramonte Amati, the one who actually wanted to reach an agreement with him. The city lost most of its privileges and some kind of independence was given to the “contado”, especially to the “Borghi Franchi”, Pizzighettone and Soncino<sup>96</sup>. Much more important from our point of view is the fact that the emperor sent out of the city Bishop Rainerio (a former chaplain of Boniface VIII it will be recalled) who was evidently perceived to be a member of the Guelph party<sup>97</sup>.

Agostino Cavalcabò<sup>98</sup> has underlined the fact that in this situation the bishop should have been very useful. On the contrary the emperor’s decision shows in fact just how deeply the bishop was perceived to be related to the factions. No longer *superpartes* and embodying the spiritual aspect of the city, the bishop was either Guelph or Ghibeline. He was no longer perceived as an arbiter, but as a party in the struggle. When his faction or his family lost power, the bishop was forced to leave the city with his followers. This might look the same as the cases of Bishop Arnolfo or Bishop Presbitero, but comparison can easily mislead. Arnolfo and Presbitero lost their personal reputations as bishops, but the figure of the bishop itself was safe. In this last period, however, the sacred aura that had surrounded the bishop was in jeopardy because for the population he was no longer a neutral figure. Now, when a bishop is thrown out of the town, he is likely to lose also the control of pastoral care over the diocese and over the city. We can therefore say that the bishop has changed from his original role of “*defensor civitatis*” into a very different figure, into almost an inconvenient person who is useful only if he can guarantee some advantages to his faction or his followers. We have to ask whether this decline was determined by behaviour of the bishops themselves or whether the power loss was more a consequence of external factors. In this last period their power in fact fluctuated; it

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<sup>94</sup> Marco Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, in, *Il trecento chiesa e cultura, VIII-XIV secolo*, ed. G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), p. 262.

<sup>95</sup> Storia di Milano, *La Signoria dei Visconti 1310 – 1392*, in, *Storia di Milano*, Vol V, ed Giovanni Treccani (Milano, 1995), pp. 62 – 64.

<sup>96</sup> *CDC*, ii, n 138, p. 20.

<sup>97</sup> Marco Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 263.

<sup>98</sup> A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l’autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*, p. 50.



went up and down according to the different bishops who were in power and according to the different factions to which the bishop belonged. It is however undeniable that his figure is no longer surrounded by the mystic aura of the *defensor* of the city and that it was no longer surrounded by respect as it had been in the case of Bishop Sicardo or from fear, as it had been in the case of Bishop Oberto.

1312 saw the formation of a Guelph alliance under the authority of important cities such as Bologna and Florence, and Giberto da Correggio, one of the most important allies of Henry VII, shifted from the imperial to the papal side. It may be that he had been bought by the Guelph party, but it has been suggested<sup>99</sup> that he did this because the emperor had put Pallavicino<sup>100</sup> in charge of Cremona instead of him. As a result Guglielmo Cavalcabò re-gained Cremona in 1312 and the imperial faction had to leave the town. Cavalcabò tried immediately to punish that part of “contado” that had supported the emperor, but during the battle of Soncino on 16 March 1312 he was killed and the Guelph party suffered severe losses. After his death the Guelphs were split between the followers of Giacomo Cavalcabò, Guglielmo’s brother, and Ponzino Ponzone and in this situation the city was taken by Giberto da Correggio<sup>101</sup>. Even Correggio had major problems when Parma shifted toward the imperial side, because he found himself incapable of controlling the situation. Moreover Bishop Rainerio died in December 1312 and during the election of the new bishop, this division was reproduced amongst the canons<sup>102</sup>; six canons voted for Egidio Bonseri, one of themselves, and four of them voted for Egidio Madelberti, a “cantore”. The canons were accused of having voted for Bonseri only because of his family connections and Bonseri himself was said to lack ecclesiastical preparation<sup>103</sup>. Menant has stated<sup>104</sup> that Bonseri came from an old family and that his election was determined by the vote of the “Ghibelline faction” of the chapter. It seems that the struggle for power between political factions which was affecting the bishop’s role

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<sup>99</sup> Marco Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 264.

<sup>100</sup> L. Astegiano, ‘Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335’, p. 205.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* p. 206.

<sup>102</sup> Giorgio Chittolini, ‘I beni terrieri del capitolo della cattedrale di Cremona fra XIII e XIV secolo’, in, *Nuova Rivista storica*, 49.3- 4 (1965), pp. 255 - 56.

<sup>103</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 128 – 129. See also in the same text, appendice.

<sup>104</sup> F. Menant, ‘Un lungo duecento (1183-1311). Il comune fra maturità istituzionale e lote di parte’, p. 334.

had eventually reached the chapter and that even the canons were no longer a unitary body. In the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries the chapter became a centre of political and social power<sup>105</sup> and the vote of the canons in this case confirms this trend. After the election both sides proclaimed as elected the person for whom it had voted. Bishop Madelberti was allied with the Cavalcabò family, while the family of Bishop Bonseri was allied with the Ponzone family<sup>106</sup>. As a result of this confused situation, in 1313 the city came under the authority of King Robert of Anjou, who had the leadership of the Guelph party in the whole of Italy, but was controlled by the *milites* of Giberto de Correggio, his ally<sup>107</sup>. In this situation what could a Madelberti or a Bonseri offer the city compared to an Oberto or a Sicardo? In the new mechanism the bishop was only a gear not an engine, and this, in my view, contributed to weakening his position in the town. Even the chapter of the cathedral was very different from what it had been during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Henry VII died on 24 August 1313; towards the end of the year the city fell completely into the hands of Robert of Anjou. During this period we see pacts or agreement between the citizens<sup>108</sup> and Hugh of Baux, the King's ambassador<sup>109</sup>. In Cremona a dualism persisted between Commune and "popolo" under the authority of the king<sup>110</sup> with the church taking the side of the Commune, that is to say the noble and aristocratic part of the population<sup>111</sup>. These pacts involved severe punishments against the Ghibelines<sup>112</sup>, who were actually excluded from power<sup>113</sup> and most of their goods were returned to members of the Guelph faction<sup>114</sup>. Particularly interesting seems to be article 7 in the Codex Diplomaticus where it is written: "[...] *quod domini vicarius et capitaneus consules et anziani et dominus executor,*

<sup>105</sup> G. Chittolini, 'I beni terrieri del capitolo della cattedrale di Cremona fra XIII e XIV secolo', p. 254.

<sup>106</sup> Marco Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 265. See also: Giancarlo Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p.129.

<sup>107</sup> Agostino Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*, pp. 96 - 98. Ugo Gualazzini, *Il populus di Cremona e l'autonomia del comune. Ricerche di storia del diritto pubblico medioevale italiano* (Bologna, 1940), pp 255 - 256.

<sup>108</sup> CDC, ii, n 170 p. 26, rubr 1.

<sup>109</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335', p. 207.

<sup>110</sup> This period saw new statutes for the city. A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*, p. 106.

<sup>111</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 266.

<sup>112</sup> CDC, ii, p. 28, rubr. 7.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 34 – 35, rubr. 36.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* p. 38, rubr. 54.

*consules collegiorum cum prioribus ipsorum collegiorum et paraticum teneantur et debeant procurare quod si quae discordiae sunt inter aliquos civitatis Cremonae, qui sint de parte ecclesiae, ad pacem et concordiam reducantur*<sup>115</sup>. It is now the city's officials and institutions and not the bishop that secure social peace, the church being perceived and identified with noble interests. The city was ruled by Giacomo Cavalcabò in 1315, and the Ponzone family and its followers left the town and went to the Borghi Franchi of Pizzighettone and Soncino. We therefore find divisions inside the Guelph party, with the Guelphs in the city called "Cappelletti" and the Guelphs outside called "Maltraversi", and the imperial party of "Troncaciuffi or Barbarasi" separated from them<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> *CDC*, ii, p. 28, rubr. 8.

<sup>116</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 268.



**Fig. XXIII: Museum of Cremona. Symbol of Barbarasi. Picture taken from: A. Cavalcabò *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia*.**

In 1316 Giacomo Cavalcabò attacked Brescia and after his victory over that the city the bishop of Brescia, Federico Maggi, left the town,<sup>117</sup> a symptom that in Brescia, too, the bishop's authority was linked to faction and faced a crisis. In 1316 power in Cremona passed back to Giberto da Correggio<sup>118</sup>, but soon afterwards he lost power

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<sup>117</sup> A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*. p. 118. For the episode about Federico Maggi Bishop of Brescia see: G. Andenna. 'L'episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo sino alla conquista veneta', in, *A Servizio del vangelo. Il cammino storico dell'evangelizzazione a Brescia*, Vol. I, ed. G. Andenna (Brescia, 2010), pp. 179-181.

<sup>118</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335', p. 207.

in both Parma and in Cremona, the latter returning to the struggle between factions<sup>119</sup>. A sort of institutional compromise resulted by which the Guelph party elected the podestà, and the Ghibeline party elected the captain of the “popolo”<sup>120</sup>. Meanwhile, Bishop Bonseri was confirmed by two abbots, those of Saint Thomas and Saint Peter, so that Madelberti had to appeal to Clement V. The Pope accepted his appeal, but he died in April 1314 and the trial was suspended until the election of John XXII, when Bonseri became bishop. Bishop Bonseri acted as “*electus et confirmatus*” and Madelberti remained in the Papal Curia to sort out his own situation<sup>121</sup>.

In 1317 Cavalcabò came back to town with a massive army and the Ponzone family had once again to leave. In order to secure his power, he threw out all representatives of the Ghibeline families together with Bishop Bonseri, who went to Soncino. Around the same time Pope John XXII sent to Lombardy two legates: the Franciscan Bertrand de la Tour, and the Dominican Bernard Gui<sup>122</sup>. In this complete confusion yet another bishop had been thrown out of the town by a political authority. Those who held power were able to do so without being too worried over the consequences in terms of reaction from the population of the city. Why was this so? It cannot have been for lack of interest in the Christian faith. The presence of the relics to the “old” saints as well as the canonization of new Saints such as St Homobonus and Facio show that the people of Cremona, like those of other cities, really needed this contact with the supernatural and the help of their religion<sup>123</sup>. The problem, as we have seen, was that the bishops had linked themselves to the factions that were struggling for power and were trapped inside this war. Moreover their hands were tied by a Roman Curia that wanted to retain control of every diocese, especially in the north of Italy.

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<sup>119</sup> A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*, p. 127.

<sup>120</sup> M. Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 268.

<sup>121</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp 130.

<sup>122</sup> M. Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 269.

<sup>123</sup> Maria Rosa Cortesi has said that the bishops “imported” relics because they wanted to provide for the population new intercessors, being conscious of the importance that the Saints had among the population. (Maria Rosa Cortesi, ‘Libri memoria e cultura a Cremona secolo IX – XIV’, p. 200). Moreover it is not questionable that in a society, where science had not yet spread its wings, the power of what could not be controlled by the human mind was extremely important and respected. Marco Gentile pointed out that at the battle of Soncino, Cavalcabò did not want to attack because, “the stars were not in favour”. (See: M. Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 264.

The bishop was penalized by the Curia's behaviour and in this period also by the behaviour of his own chapter, which in many cases did not safeguard and protect his authority and his role. In this scenario it was inevitable that the bishop became a secondary figure for the population. Whether he was in town, or outside the town, whether he had been thrown out of the city or not, does not seem to have affected them.

The two friars sent by the Pope tried to pacify the situation between Ponzone and Cavalcabò, although the bishop remained in Soncino. Meanwhile in 1318 Ponzone attacked Cremona with the help of the Visconti Family<sup>124</sup> and re-gained the city, throwing out Cavalcabò. In 1319 the Guelph army, led by Giberto da Correggio, Giacomo Cavalcabò and King Robert of Anjou, moved towards Cremona and defeated the Ghibelines. This meant that the city passed under the authority of Robert of Anjou once again. However, Visconti did not give up and attacked Cremona again in 1320. Giacomo Cavalcabò was killed on 29 November 1321 and the Visconti<sup>125</sup> returned possession of the city to the imperial party in 1322<sup>126</sup>. During this time the Pope called Egidio Bonseri to Avignon to investigate the claim that he was unable to run the diocese because he was insufficiently educated, and with him those who had confirmed his election<sup>127</sup>. As they did not turn up, the episcopal see remained vacant. In Avignon, Madelberti gathered prebends, such as those of precentor of Cremona, canon in the same church, canon of Losanna church and canon of Chichester.

According to Andenna's reconstruction, on 18 July 1318, John XXII appointed Egidio Madelberti as bishop of Cremona, probably because he wanted the diocese directly under the authority of a bishop or directly related to him, in order to challenge the power of Visconti and the Ghibelines in the north of Italy. However, because of the unstable political situation, given that Cremona was ruled by Visconti and Ghibeline groups, in September 1318 the Pope postponed giving over the diocese to him for some years. From Avignon Madelberti called himself:

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<sup>124</sup> A. Cavalcabò, *Le ultime lotte del comune di Cremona per l'autonomia. Note di storia Lombarda dal 1310 al 1322*, p. 148.

<sup>125</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 271.

<sup>126</sup> L. Astegiano, 'Serie dei Rettori di Cremona fino al 1335', p. 47, and p. 209.

<sup>127</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 131.

*“pensione divina electus Cremonensis”*<sup>128</sup>. He appointed as vicar Friar Andrea of San Sillo, who was a prior of the Umiliati in the church of Saint Pelagia. After the conquest of the city by Cavalcabò in November 1319 the vicar could begin to do his job and Bishop Madelberti could even go to Cremona. However, he remained in Avignon and was still there in 1320, the Pope giving him another year. On 1321 Madelberti was given another year but this time the “deadline” was Easter 1323. Meanwhile in 1322 the city had been conquered again by Galeazzo Visconti, so that Madelberti could no longer go there. After Easter 1323 Madelberti received another delay, in 1324 yet another delay, up to Easter 1325. This time the Pope had really had enough and ordered a cardinal to dismiss the bishop. Madelberti resigned from his position and renounced all his prebends, dominion and administration over the diocese of Cremona. The Pope pointed out, however, that this situation was not the bishop’s fault alone but was also because the city of Cremona had rebelled against the Roman church and the Roma Curia. Although Madelberti did not go to there he tried from the Papal Curia to help the Guelphs and families in Cremona by granting them prebends<sup>129</sup>. This underlines once again the factional nature of the bishop’s role. A bishop could obviously not turn his back to his family members and his group, but by acting in this way he implicitly became a Guelph or Ghibeline; what he turned his back on, in effect, was the independence of the church. Once elected he became, willingly or unwillingly, an instrument of power for the people who had facilitated or promoted his election. He became a symbol of Guelph or Ghibeline power.

The political situation changed again in 1327 when Louis the Bavarian was crowned king of Italy in Milan, and dismissed its legitimate archbishop. In Cremona meanwhile the pope elected Friar Ugolino as the new bishop<sup>130</sup> on 21 March 1327. The Pope ordered the canons to obey their bishop and the episcopal vassals to swear loyalty to him as usual<sup>131</sup>. There were new political problems for Cremona because

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<sup>128</sup> Enrico Sanclemente, *Series Critico Chronologica Episcoporum Cremonensium sub auspiciis praestantissimi antistitis* (Cremona, 1814), p. 287.

<sup>129</sup> For the situation and the deeds concerning Madelberti in Avignon I have followed the research of Giancarlo Andenna. Giancarlo Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, pp. 131-136.

<sup>130</sup> On July 1326, Madelberti was still indicated as *“Electus Cremonensis”* but due to the fact that in 1323 Bonseri had died, the Pope was now free to elect someone else.

<sup>131</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 137.

Louis (disparagingly called the Bavarian) arrived in Lombardy claiming the imperial inheritance and with it the loyalty and obedience from the cities in the north of Italy. In Cremona he supported the marquis Manfredino Pallavicino, son of Oberto Pallavicino<sup>132</sup>, and Ponzino Ponzone<sup>133</sup>. The relationship with the Visconti family was a continually up-and-down. At the beginning he trusted them. He then put Galeazzo Visconti in jail for betrayal in 1327 and after seven months released him. He died in 1328. In the meantime the emperor had deposed Pope John XXII and elected in 1328 the Anti-Pope Nicolas V, who consecrated Giovanni Visconti cardinal and apostolic legate in Lombardy<sup>134</sup>. Meanwhile, Bishop Ugolino asked the Pope to be consecrated by any bishop in the diocese and not by the archbishop of Milan. The Pope agreed but in the confused situation Bishop Ugolino was dismissed by the Anti-Pope, and a new bishop, Friar Dondino, was elected on January 1329<sup>135</sup>. Louis the Bavarian entered Cremona, but could not completely defeat the Guelph party. However his supporters were betrayed by Visconti who made an agreement with Pope John XXII in Avignon. The Pope removed his excommunication and in 1329 the emperor had to go back to Germany without having obtained what he came for.

### **The end of the independent commune**

The Visconti came back to Cremona. The Visconti family left some bishops who had followed the emperor in their diocese and Dondino was one of them<sup>136</sup>. In Cremona Azzone Visconti acquired power as lord of the town and Giovanni Visconti acquired administrative control. In 1330 the political situation quickly changed again. King John of Bohemia, son of the emperor Henry VII, arrived in Italy, claiming to be allied to John XXII<sup>137</sup>. In King John's army we find Friar Ugolino and the abbots of San Lorenzo and San Tommaso. Bishop Dondino was captured and imprisoned in

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<sup>132</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 272-273.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.* p. 273

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 273-274.

<sup>135</sup> E. Filippini, 'Gli ordini religiosi tra vita ecclesiastica e impegno caritativo', p. 170.

<sup>136</sup> Giannina Biscaro, 'Le relazioni dei Visconti di Milano con la chiesa Giovanni ed Azzone', in, *Archivio Storico Lombardo*. 5th series, 44.1 (Milano 1919), pp. 152 - 153 .

<sup>137</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', pp. 274-275.



Piacenza at least up to 1332<sup>138</sup>. King John soon found himself lord of various towns in Lombardy because his arrival unchained the reaction of the Guelph party in the north of Italy<sup>139</sup>. When Friar Ugolino regained the episcopate in 1331 he asked King John, now lord of Cremona, for the prebends of the church and the king agreed<sup>140</sup>. The bishop attempted immediately to pacify the town especially the different groups inside the episcopacy. The Ghibeline members inside the church asked to be freed from excommunication<sup>141</sup>.

Here we have a new dimension: both bishops were friars. As we have seen the power of the bishop had been put in jeopardy by the mendicant orders. Now we see two friars fighting each other according to the lord they followed. The implication becomes even worse when we think that the usual Franciscan attitude (and in part also the Dominican) was to pacify the cities from the “*scandalon*”, that is to say, moral failing and especially public disorder<sup>142</sup>. In this case, on the contrary even the two friars, once elected to the episcopate, were sucked into the power game by the political whirlpool which had blown over the city in the last century.

The city remained under the authority of John of Bohemia up to 1333 and the bishop, the Dominican Friar Ugolino, began to administer the diocese. Bishop Ugolino, having once acquired power, began to give feudal investiture. With friar Ugolino the people who had been loyal to the church acquired or confirmed their power. In parchment n 59, dated 18 August 1331, Giovanni Bergamasco declared himself to be vassal of the “*Mensa Vescovile*” of Cremona<sup>143</sup>. One of the biggest investitures was on 29 August 1332, when the Dovara family went to the bishop’s palace for investiture<sup>144</sup>.

King John of Bohemia was defeated near Ferrara by a coalition of Visconti, Scaligeri and Estensi in 1333 and went back to Germany, leaving in Cremona Ponzino Ponzone. The Visconti family regained Soncino and Pizzighettone and, in 1334,

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<sup>138</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 139.

<sup>139</sup> M. Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, p. 275.

<sup>140</sup> *CDC*, ii, n 268 p. 53, 26 February 1331; n 269, p. 53, 6 March 1331.

<sup>141</sup> *CDC*, ii, n 276, p. 55.

<sup>142</sup> Giacomo Todeschini, ‘Guardiani della soglia. I Frati Minori come garanti del perimetro sociale (XIII secolo)’, in, *Reti medievali*, 8, (2007), p. 2.

<sup>143</sup> ASDCr, *Mensa Vescovile*, *Parchment n 59*, 18 August 1331.

Cited in Andenna.

<sup>144</sup> *CDC*, ii, n 282 and n 283 p. 55.

entered Cremona, where Azzone Visconti was declared lord of the city<sup>145</sup>. The autonomy of the commune was definitely over<sup>146</sup>. Azzone Visconti devoted himself immediately to pacifying the city. He also revised the city's borders with Mantua and Bergamo, reformed the statutes and made some further political revisions<sup>147</sup>. The lord of the town placed himself between the universal power represented by the empire and the local power represented by commune, despite the fact that as a lord, technically speaking, his authority derived from the commune<sup>148</sup>.

Meanwhile the bishop was active in the countryside and in 1334 he made an agreement with rural communities, particularly Crotta, relating to the investiture of the lands belonging to the Episcopate<sup>149</sup>. The same happened with the people living in Sesto, in March 1344, and for the lands between Genivolta and Soncino which were rented to an entrepreneur coming from Parma and Piacenza. Bishop Ugolino also controlled the nomination of the clergy who had responsibility for institutions open to lay people. He dismissed the clergy who would not submit to the bishop's authority<sup>150</sup>. Bishop Ugolino also regained some possessions of the bishopric in the south part of the Diocese of Cremona that the bishop had previously given to the feudal family of Gonzaga, because the latter failed to pay taxes<sup>151</sup>.

After the death of Azzone in 1339, power in the city was taken by Luchino and Giovanni Visconti, who devoted themselves to revising the political constitution of the town. The councils that already existed were left more or less alive even though power was strongly in Visconti's hands<sup>152</sup>. Under their power the local authorities multiplied but were not really useful or efficacious. During this period the Arengo also survived, but the only power that remained in its hands was the "*translatio*

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<sup>145</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 276.

<sup>146</sup> U. Gualazzini, 'Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell'età Visconteo-Sforzesca', in, *Studi parmensi*, Anno XX, (Milano, 1978), p. 12.

<sup>147</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', p. 276.

<sup>148</sup> U. Gualazzini, 'Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell'età Visconteo-Sforzesca', p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 145

<sup>150</sup> *CDC*, ii, n. 286, p. 56. (1 February 1333).

<sup>151</sup> Mirella Montanari, *Cronotassi dei vescovi di Cremona nel secolo XIV*, in, *I vescovi dell'Italia settentrionale nel basso medioevo*, ed. Piero Malocchi e Mirella Montanari (Pavia, 2002), p. 16.

<sup>152</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', pp. 277 – 279 See also: U. Gualazzini, 'Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell'età Visconteo-Sforzesca', pp. 15 – 20.

*dominie*” in other words it just legitimated the shift of power between one lord and another<sup>153</sup>.

During Luchino and Giovanni Visconti’s time there were 3 main councils:

- 1) Arengo
- 2) Council of 400
- 3) Council of 200

The council of 400 usually elected 16 *sapientes* (who dealt with communal life) who in turn elected two or three people in every “vicinia” (division of the district or Neighbourhood) who elected the council of 200<sup>154</sup>. It was a very complicated system where everything was interconnected; for instance, the decisions taken by the 16 *sapientes* need to be approved by the council of 200. The city of Cremona was divided into gates and “vicinie (districts)” that had different roles. The gates were used for fiscal and juridical matters *intra* and *extra moenia* (i.e. in the contado as well), whereas the “vicinie” were limited to the city and to the district around the walls and were used for controlling commercial activities, to discipline and regulate military service, to control the artisanal production etc. The councils in Cremona changed gradually after 1339<sup>155</sup>.

Between 1344 – 46 controversies arose between the bishop and the canons relating to their respective roles in the town. In 1342 the canons, quoting former letters and documents given to them by Pope Urban III (*Effectum, Iuxta postulantibus* in 1187) and subsequently confirmed by Pope Lucius II, asked for some specific items from the bishop, some involving economic matters and others liturgical customs, like the fact that the bishop had to celebrate the service in the cathedral at the main religious festivity. Again in 1346 the bishop was in controversy with the canons over the election of clergy to take care of the cathedral<sup>156</sup>. What seems to be important here is

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<sup>153</sup> U. Gualazzini, ‘Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nel’età Visconteo-Sforzesca’, p. 19.

<sup>154</sup> U. Gualazzini, ‘Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nel’età Visconteo-Sforzesca’ p. 23.

<sup>155</sup> The council of “Caravana” for instance was no longer a real council after 1339 but simply, as Gualazzini said, “a council where members were declared able to do specific jobs for the city”. *Ibid.* p. 25.

<sup>156</sup> G. Andenna, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall’età Longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo’, p. 149.

that the bishop took for himself every right and most of the power that he could, and consequently he had lost contact with the people of his diocese. For most of the time he delegated jobs to his vicars. According to the canons of the cathedral the bishop had stolen some of their powers from them.

In 1349 while the Black Death was threatening the countryside and the cities in Lombardy<sup>157</sup> Pope Clement VI appointed as a bishop of Cremona a young boy from Parma, who was also a canon of Lincoln, called Ugolino de Addengeriis.

In 1349 Luchino Visconti had died and in Cremona there then followed a revision of statutes of the city<sup>158</sup>; basically the previous statutes were modified and other rules and laws added<sup>159</sup>. At the beginning Giovanni Visconti had not wanted to strangle the city; he let the city administer itself. He had control over the city through the Podestà, who was one of his men. He did not abolish the council of Caravana nor the council of 400 at that moment. But soon after, in the year 1351, Cremona faced one of its most important political moments when Giovanni Visconti (who was also Archbishop of Milan) abolished the council of 400 and the council of 200, two of the most important councils in town, and reduced the number of *sapientes* from 16 to 12. He created at the same time a council of 152 members in order to replace the two councils he had suppressed<sup>160</sup>. According to Marco Gentile<sup>161</sup>, this reform aimed to divide the city into three main factions: “Maltraversi, Ghibeline and Guelph, led respectively by the Ponzone, Pallavicino, and Cavalcabò families”<sup>162</sup>. Ugo Gualazzini on the other hand has underlined that the council of 152 represented the claims of the three main classes of Cremona: *divites, mediocres, paupers*. That is

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<sup>157</sup> G. Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medioevale* (Torino, 1998), pp. 42–43.

<sup>158</sup> U. Gualazzini, ‘Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell’età Visconteo-Sforzesca’, p. 31.

<sup>159</sup> See: U. Gualazzini, G. Solazzi, A. Cavalcabò, *Gli statuti di Cremona del MCCCXXXIX e di Viadana del secolo XIV* (Milano, 1953).

<sup>160</sup> M. Gentile, ‘Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)’, pp. 280 – 281.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

<sup>162</sup> See also: Giorgio Chittolini, ‘La crisi delle libertà comunali e le origini dello stato territoriale’, in, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado, secoli XIV e XV*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Milano, 1979), pp. 3 – 35.

why in the town there was little defiance when the archbishop suppressed the councils<sup>163</sup>.

The new Bishop Ugolino was soon in contention with the canons. This lasted from February 1353 through to 1354. It arose because the bishop wished to put the canons' works under his control. They claimed that they had a Papal exemption. However the bishop's vicar did not find this exemption in their documents, and so the canons were excommunicated by Ugolino. He did this without asking advice from the Pope. The canons therefore made an immediate appeal. The bishop however could no longer prove the "*consuetudines*" allowing him to visit the canons wherever he wanted and to put them under his control, and was consequently defeated. The excommunication was removed, and the bishop had to pay 200 florins<sup>164</sup>.

All attempts by the bishop to increase his power failed. Any power he actually had was overly dependent upon the political situation, which as we have seen was very changeable. Indeed, on 5 October 1354, Giovanni Visconti died leaving his nephews dealing with the political situation of the town. The bishop was not inactive. He improved the cult of Saint Omobono by translating his relics, particularly his head, from the church of Sant' Egidio, to the cathedral<sup>165</sup>. According to the research of Elisabetta Filippini, the bishop founded a consortium (confraternity) called St Homobonus whose lay members had to model their lives on the Saint. In particular it was underlined that the people belonging to this consortium should have very strong faith and be merciless against any sort of heresy, following the example of St Homobonus, and shape their lives on his<sup>166</sup>. Unfortunately Cremona now fell into the hands of Bernabò, one of the nephews of Giovanni Visconti of Milan. This meant a new form of authoritarianism<sup>167</sup>. During this period Visconti dominion shifted from

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<sup>163</sup> U. Gualazzini, 'Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell'età Visconteo-Sforzesca', p. 36.

<sup>164</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo', p. 157, note 859.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* p. 158.

<sup>166</sup> E. Filippini, 'Gli ordini religiosi tra vita ecclesiastica e impegno caritativo nel secolo XIV', p. 182.

<sup>167</sup> On one hand Bernabò delegated some powers to other people, but significantly he reformed the statutes and abolished the council of 152, replacing it by the council of 200 that was no longer the council of the city but the council of the lord: "*Consilium ducentorum quod domini domini Bernabovis Vicecomitis, domini generali Mediolani, Cremonae, et hominum terre cremonensis*" (U. Gualazzini, 'Gli organi assembleari e collegiali del commune di Cremona nell'età Visconteo-

the city toward the more difficult regional dominion and this passage was accompanied by new regulations and a new interpretation of power<sup>168</sup>. In 1355 Bernabò, in trying to expand his dominion towards south Lombardy and Emilia Romagna headed for a war first against the anti-Visconti league and then against the city of Bologna. In order to sustain his wars he began to make the clergy pay taxes unleashing the Pope's reaction<sup>169</sup>. But the church, too, (the papal tithes amount to 10% of clerical property) was not soft with the clergy and made the ecclesiastics pay taxes including indeed the bishop. Ugolino clashed with the Pope, over this issue. In this situation Bishop Ugolino found himself between the devil and the deep blue sea. He was caught between those systems of taxation and he could not cope with them. The bishop was abandoned by everyone. He did not have the necessary support in Cremona, or even supported network and he hanged himself, probably during 1361<sup>170</sup>.

Almost exactly 300 years after Bishop Arnolfo had been thrown out of Cremona because he would not reform the customs of the church, a bishop hanged himself because he just could not cope with the problems that he had. The event is unique. Never before was a bishop so lonely as to take the decision to hang himself; never before was his power so weak as to not allow him an escape route from a difficult situation. How is it possible that from being almost an absolute lord during the 11<sup>th</sup> century the bishop ended in this way? There are many explanations as I have tried to show in this chapter. My understanding is that the bishop was on a descending parabola with little opportunity to halt this accelerating fall. The political situations that he had to face were just too strong for him. The political powers had new

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Sforzesca', p. 43). It is very interesting to note that, as Gualazzini did, rebellion against the lord meant rebellion against the commune, whereas rebellion against the commune was not punished as rebellion against the lord (*Ibid.* 43 – 44). Everything was now under the control of the lord and, even though there were 12 *sapientes* who were in charge of communal life and also for extraordinary situations, every decision taken by them had to be approved by the lord. The lord elected the Podestà and for the administration of justice he had judges. The Podestà was formally in charge for six months but Bernabò could do whatever he wanted: extend or reduce his mandate. ( See: V. Leoni, 'Fonti legislative e istituzioni cittadine in età viscontea', In, *Il trecento chiesa e cultura, VIII-XIV secolo*, ed G. Andenna (Azzano San Paolo, 2004), pp 313).

<sup>168</sup> M. Gentile, 'Dal comune cittadino allo stato regionale: la vicenda politica (1311 – 1402)', pp. 283 – 284.

<sup>169</sup> G. Andenna, 'Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche dall'età longobarda alla fine del XIV secolo' p. 158.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* p. 159. Enrico Sanclemente says 1362. (See: Enrico Sanclemente, *Series Critico Chronologica Episcoporum Cremonensium sub auspiciis praenstantissimi antistitis*, p. 138). Bernabò himself will be forced to delegate some powers to the factions of Guelph and Ghibeline in 1378 because he could not cope with the internal situation.

powerful armies and a new concept of politics to put on the scale. The papacy and the emperors contributed to the situation by effectively excluding a strong role for the bishop. For the inhabitants of Cremona the bishop was no longer indispensable.

Now the bishop was absolutely alone and his control was practically limited to the contado. The different lords of the city, and sometimes even the papacy, failed to put their trust in him. I have not produced any judgement on the bishops personally because power was largely out of their hands. The story of the bishops of this period in some respect reflects the story of the city in general. It was conquered, lost and regained by different lords who “trusted” different bishops. It is true that every emperor tried to be linked with the bishop, but only in a superficial way. With political power effectively in the hands of a lord, a family, or their representatives, the bishop was confined to solving local controversies and to some minor involvement in city life. He could no longer make decisions which could change the political, social or even religious life of the city. This parabola can be perceived as the victory of politics over religion. The power and the intransigence of some Popes helped to undermine the power of the bishops. The papacy had the clear intention of stretching its hands over the dioceses in the north of Italy in order to combat the imperial power; but by appointing, refusing or removing bishops, the papacy contributed to weakening their power and especially their moral authority. The only resource still available to the bishop was being part of a faction. It is very difficult to disentangle how much the bishop needed the faction and how much it was the faction which enjoyed having a bishop in its retinue. Certainly what the bishops and the Popes of this period could not see, or perhaps did not want to see, was that the close link between politics and religion which had allowed the city to flourish and thrive in previous centuries, had become a mortal embrace which determined the end of the independence of the bishop in Cremona.

# Chapter seven

## Lincoln: The legacy of Grosseteste

A comparison between Cremona and Lincoln reveals that the bishops' behaviour and role in the two dioceses now diverged profoundly. At Cremona the diminished prelate all but lost diocesan power to his canons. At Lincoln by contrast for at least 70 years following the death of Robert Grosseteste both the chapter and the bishops themselves seem to have been aware that they functioned in the wake of a quite remarkable figure and were conscious of his legacy. Indeed, attempts were made at Lincoln to secure his canonization<sup>1</sup>. The prelates who followed Robert Grosseteste in the See of Lincoln are as follows:

|                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Henry of Lexin(g)ton | elected 1253 – d. Aug. 1258 |
| Richard Gravesend    | elected 1258 – d. Dec. 1279 |
| Oliver Sutton        | elected 1280 – d. Nov. 1299 |
| John Dalderby        | elected 1300 – d. Jan 1320  |

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<sup>1</sup> The canonization of Robert Grosseteste has always been a controversial issue. Matthew Paris dates the miracles at Lincoln's cathedral immediately after Grosseteste's death in 1253, (See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 419) and again in 1255 he refers to "*De Miraculis...ad tumbam beati Roberti episcopi Lincolnensis*" (See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 490). Following the research of Erik Kemp, (Erik W. Kemp, 'Attempted Canonization of Robert Grosseteste', in, *Robert Grosseteste scholar and bishop. Essay in commemoration of the seventh century of his death*, ed. D. A. Callus, appendix II, pp. 241 – 246) we know that at least three attempts had been made to seek Grosseteste's canonization. The first one between 1254 and 1261 by Nicholas Grecus, the second during the period of Oliver Sutton just after 1280 by canon Simon de Worth, and the third one in 1307 made by Bishop Dalderby. All failed. More recently, at the beginning of 2012, Jack P. Cunningham, currently theology lecturer at Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln wrote to the Vatican asking the pope to canonise Robert Grosseteste. According to him because of Grosseteste's opposition to Pope Innocent IV, the Lincoln prelate has been associated with an Anti-Papist Movement and therefore not been considered for canonisation. As I am writing Dr Cunningham is still awaiting for a response from the Vatican. For more information, see: < <http://www.bishopg.ac.uk>. > See also: *Robert Grosseteste. His thought and its impact*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham, preface pp. XI-XIV.



|                 |                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Henry Mansfield | elected 1320 - (refused) Feb. 1320 |
| Antony Bek      | elected 1320 - (quashed) Feb. 1320 |
| Henry Burghersh | elected 1320 – d. Dec. 1340        |

Before we discuss the bishops themselves it is necessary to say something of the sources on which the discussion will be based. The evidence comes mainly from their Episcopal registers as well as from general sources of the time, as analysed and studied by scholars. Naturally some bishops are more documented than others, because of the length of their episcopacy and/or because of what they have achieved in their diocese.

Bishop Henry of Lexin(g)ton was in charge of the See only for four years and consequently there is not a great deal of material available. Amongst the accessible documentation, very important are the 16 documents of the *Registrum Antiquissimum* edited by C. W. Foster in 1933<sup>2</sup>, and Volumes V and VI of the *Chronica Majora* by Matthew Paris<sup>3</sup> which provide us with some details about his personal life. Further information has been provided by William Page in the *Victoria History of the County of Lincoln*<sup>4</sup>, by the entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography<sup>5</sup> as well as by the excellent work of John Le Neve in *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*<sup>6</sup>.

Certainly better documented are the life and deeds of Richard Gravesend whose episcopate stretched over 20 years, from 1258 to 1279. His important register covers his Episcopal visitations particularly after 1269, divided archdeaconry by archdeaconry, and it has been analysed and printed in *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend, diocesis Lincolnensis* by F. N. Davies with additions by C.W Foster and A. Hamilton

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<sup>2</sup> RA, ii.

<sup>3</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*

<sup>4</sup> William Page, *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln* (London, 1906).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Stacey, 'Henry of Lexington', in, *ODNB*, xxxiii, pp. 682-683.

<sup>6</sup> *Fasti*, iv.

Thompson<sup>7</sup>. Important narrative sources are in the collection known as *Annales Monastici*.

Bishop Sutton, elected in 1280, is especially significant in that in so many ways he followed Grosseteste's example. His copious registers have been studied, catalogued and printed by R.M.T. Hill in 8 volumes. Volumes I, II, III and VIII, containing documentation according to archdeaconries, are particularly important for an understanding of the bishop's work in the diocese<sup>8</sup>. Another extremely helpful source is, *The book of John de Schalby* edited by H. Srawley. Its prominence lies in the fact that John de Schalby was a canon of Lincoln who was registrar to Bishop Oliver Sutton for eighteen years, living in his house. He continued to hold "a not unimportant post" here (probably as a registrar) under Bishop Dalderby. We know that he held in succession the prebends of Bedford Major, Welton Beckhall, and Dunham, during the years 1299-1333. The flow of information continues to come from monastic chronicles<sup>9</sup>. Two nineteenth-century editions are especially valuable: Bartholomæi de Cotton *Historia Anglicana*, edited by Thomas Riley, published in 1863 and *Flores Historiarum* a Latin chronicle compiled by various persons and first printed as a single manuscript by Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1567. It was edited by Henry Richards Luard and published for the Roll series in 1890. These need to be supplemented by the Chancery rolls and by secondary literature.

For John de Dalderby who succeeded Oliver Sutton we have his registers and evidence in the *Registrum Antiquissimum* edited by C.W. Foster. Dalderby's registers have been extensively studied by Clubley Clifford whose PhD thesis, *John De Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln 1300-1320*, written in 1965, is invaluable for the study of the life and deeds of the bishop<sup>10</sup>. Dalderby's registers remain

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<sup>7</sup> Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend, Episcopi Lincolniensis. A.D. MCCLVIII –MCCLXXIX, ed. F.N. Davis, C.W. Foster and A. Hamilton Thompson. Issued by The Lincoln Record Society 1925.

<sup>8</sup> R. Hill's very full introduction to Vol. III has been extremely useful for this thesis. For the most part I have cited this rather than continuous references to the text itself.

<sup>9</sup> Such as: *Annales de Waverleia*, *Annales de Wigornia*, and the *Chronicon Vulgo Dictum, Chronicon Thomæ Wykes 1066-1289*, in, *AM*.

<sup>10</sup> Clubley Clifford, *John de Dalderby bishop of Lincoln 1300-1320*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Hull University, 1965).

unpublished<sup>11</sup>. However, Dalderby's memoranda do contain usable and important information. Still useful is the study by Rev. Preb. Wickenden, *John De Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-20*, published in the *Archaeological Journal* in 1883. The entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography and in *Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanæ* are also useful. The political context is revealed once again in the Chancery rolls and the chronicles<sup>12</sup>. Given that Dalderby was involved with the University of Oxford (even though not as much as his predecessors) we can draw on the *Medieval Archives of the University of Oxford*. Vol. I. edited by H.E. Salter.

The last bishop to be analysed is Henry Burghersh. He represents a change in the See of Lincoln because of his strong ties with the political power. Information comes especially from his registers, edited in two volumes by Nicholas Bennet. Bennet studied Burghersh as the main subject of his PhD thesis, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, where he explored Burghersh's actions in his diocese and in relation to political power<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> They are available in microfilms (reel 3 and reel 4) but unfortunately some parts are illegible. See: The Episcopal registers, Reel 3 and Reel 4. Dorothy Owen, David Smith Ed. Harvester microform, (Brighton, 1984).

<sup>12</sup> See: *Continuatio Chronicarum, Robertus de Avesbury, De Gestis mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii, Adæ Murimuth* (Edward Maunde Thompson Edition) as well as *the Chronicle of Lanercost 1315-1321*, published in *English Historical documents* Vol. III, edited by Harry Rothwell (London, 1975).

<sup>13</sup> Important to grasp the connection between the bishop and Edward II are: *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, (edited by Edward Maunde Thompson in 1889) and from the same scholar the *Continuatio Chronicarum, Robertus de Avesbury*. Another helpful volume to shed light on the period between Edward II and Edward III was, *De Gestis mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii, Adæ Murimuth Fædera Conventiones Literæ et cujuscunque generis Acta Publica inter Reges Angliæ* by Thomas Rymer.

## Origins and careers

Who were the bishops? What were their origins and what prior connection did they have with the See of Lincoln? It is particularly important to understand their connections with the canons who were the closest collaborators and sometimes the most dangerous opponents of the bishops.

Grosseteste was followed by Bishop Henry of Lexington<sup>14</sup>. According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography in the period between 1212 and 1214 he held the church of Stapleford in Nottinghamshire, before becoming a canon in Southwell, Nottinghamshire and then moving to Salisbury where he became treasurer probably in 1241<sup>15</sup>. In the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* he is first mentioned as Henry treasurer of Salisbury on 13 January 1239 and is last mention in the same position on 14 October 1245<sup>16</sup>. When he became dean of Lincoln Cathedral, he gave up his position in Salisbury and had appeared as dean for the first time in official documents before January 1246<sup>17</sup>. His election to the see of Lincoln is recorded on 30 December 1253 despite the fact that the king “prayed” the chapter to elect another candidate, specifically the bishop of Hereford. The chapter refused not only because he was a foreigner who could not speak English but also because they considered him a bad bishop<sup>18</sup>. According to Matthew Paris the chapter of Lincoln did not want a bishop who had a bad reputation in terms of the cure of the souls and who would put political concerns before the needs of his flock. The election was confirmed on 28

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<sup>14</sup> There are some inconsistencies in the spelling as, *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* spelled his name without “g” and therefore Lexington as well as in the index of the *Chronica Majora*; other sources however as “History of Lincolnshire” by William Page spelled it with “g”. By crossing information and data I have made sure that whatever the spelling was the sources I used referred to the same person.

<sup>15</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iv, p. 416.

<sup>16</sup> *Fasti*, iv, p. 22.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 422. The bishop of Hereford in that period was Peter of Acquablanca, a noble from Savoy who actually was involved in the attempt of Henry III to acquire the kingdom of Sicily. Because of his attempts to raise money for this aim he became unpopular with both the clergy and the barons. Moreover he was not reliable in the cure of souls because he did not really care about his diocese. In this detail we can see that the bishop, by being a royal servant, had to be involved in the political affairs of the kingdom and as a consequence to leave out his duties in the diocese. The political affairs of the kingdom could therefore damage the bishop’s reputation.

March 1254 by archbishop Boniface of Canterbury<sup>19</sup> who consecrated Lexington on 17 May at Lambeth<sup>20</sup>. The temporalities had been restored on 1 April. His five-year episcopate was famous almost only because of the murder of an eight-year-old boy, named Hugh, who it was believed had been crucified by the Jews after having been tortured and made to suffer the passion of Christ<sup>21</sup>. The body was recovered and handed over to the canons of the Lincoln cathedral who buried him in the cathedral itself. This fact unleashed hatred against the Jews and according to the chronicles some were saved from certain death in London by a group of Franciscans<sup>22</sup> and others by the Dominicans<sup>23</sup>. Bishop Henry died on 8 August 1258 in his manor in Netlinton<sup>24</sup> without having changed much in his diocese and in his city<sup>25</sup>.

Richard Gravesend succeeded Henry Lexington to the see of Lincoln. He started his ecclesiastical career as treasurer of Hereford Cathedral<sup>26</sup>, most probably around 1239<sup>27</sup>. Then by 16 June 1250 (and most probably by 1249) he was archdeacon of Oxford<sup>28</sup>. Matthew Paris records that the archdeacons of Lincoln, Oxford and Bedford travelled with Grosseteste to the council of Lyon in 1250. It is therefore reasonable to suppose the archdeacon of Oxford was Richard of Gravesend, though we cannot be sure about that as there is no name given in the source<sup>29</sup>. By August

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<sup>19</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, v, p. 431.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* p. 442.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 516-519. See also F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, pp. 217- 238. The theme of the murdered child is a widespread one and first appeared in England in the story of William of Norwich, an English boy whose death in 1144 was at the time attributed to the Jewish community established in Norwich. William's story was narrated by Thomas of Monmouth, a monk from the Norwich Benedictine abbey. See: Thomas of Monmouth, *The Life and Miracles of William of Norwich*, ed. Augustus Jessopp, James Montague (Cambridge, 1896), p. XI; pp. XL- LXXIX.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 546.

<sup>23</sup> *Annales de Burton*, in, *AM*, i, pp. 340 – 348, for the Dominicans see: *AM*, i, p. 346.

<sup>24</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, v, p. 712.

<sup>25</sup> His heirs were his nephews Oliver of Sutton later bishop of Lincoln and Richard of Markham, the sons of his sisters Elizabeth and Cecily. See: Robert Stacey, 'Henry of Lexington', in, *ODNB*, xxxiii, pp. 682 – 683.

<sup>26</sup> J. Le Neve recorded that: "First occurred as treasurer of Hereford in the episcopate of Bishop Ralph of Maidstone (who was presumably responsible for his appointment) in two charters which cannot be earlier than 19 December 1237 or later than 17 December 1239, the date when Ralph became a Franciscan joining the order in Oxford". *Fasti*, viii, p. 19.

<sup>27</sup> "He was still treasurer on 14 October 1242 when he received a safe conduct from Henry III, issued at Bordeaux, for him to travel to England". See: *Fasti*, viii, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Richard de Gravesend, See: <<http://british-history.ac.uk-bishops-Lincoln>>, [accessed 20 May 2010]

<sup>29</sup> The passage states: *Præterea de prelatiis, Lincolnienſis, Londonienſis et Wigornienſis epiſcopi , et cum illis de epiſcopatu Lincolnienſis Oxoniienſis et Bedfordenſis archidiaconi, et multi alii clerici*. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, v, pp. 96-97.

1254 he was Dean of Lincoln, where he founded the deanery house<sup>30</sup>. After having been in the service of John, cardinal of San Lorenzo in Lucina, in 1254<sup>31</sup>, he became Bishop of Lincoln in September 1258<sup>32</sup> and was consecrated in November by Archbishop Boniface in Canterbury<sup>33</sup>.

Bishop Oliver Sutton, the successor of Gravesend, came from Sutton-on-Trent. He was born in 1219, the son of Rowland Sutton, and Alice<sup>34</sup> of Lexinton<sup>35</sup>. He grew up in a family of small property-owners. According to the ODNB in his youth he often used his mother's surname, probably due to the fact that his mother's family was more prestigious than his father's. However, we cannot establish if the canon of Lincoln recorded in 1259 as Oliver Lexinton could be identified with Oliver Sutton<sup>36</sup>. He was holding the living of Shelford as a sub-deacon in 1244<sup>37</sup>. As far as we know, Oliver went up to the University of Oxford when he was a very young man and spent the first half of his adult life there. He studied under Adam Marsh. He became a regent-master in arts and studied canon and civil law<sup>38</sup>. His stay in Oxford was guaranteed by various benefices, as it was a common and quite legitimate practice at the time to use the emoluments of a living as a kind of fellowship to maintain a scholar at the university. In 1249 the prior and convent of Shelford presented him to a moiety of Westborough in the diocese of Lincoln, a living which

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<sup>30</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 31.

<sup>31</sup> Roy Martin Haines, 'Richard of Gravesend', in, *ODNB*, xxiii, pp. 402 – 403.

<sup>32</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 11. See: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 719.

<sup>33</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 721.

<sup>34</sup> Alice's four brothers, all occupied positions either within the church or within the King's court.

<sup>35</sup> Even in the case of Bishop Sutton, because of his family, there are some inconsistencies about the surname Lexinton, because some sources like *The Victoria History of the county of Lincoln* called Alice's family Lexington whereas *The Oxford Dictionary of National History* called it Lexinton.

<sup>36</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*. Vol. III, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill (Hereford, 1952), p. XIV. Henry of Lexinton became bishop of Lincoln in 1254; Hill gives the basic facts: Stephen was successively Abbot of Savigny and Abbot of Clairvaux; Robert of Lexinton another brother became successively an itinerant justice and a justice in the Court of Common Pleas and John was Chancellor and Steward of the Household to King Henry III. On John's death, without issue, the manor of Aston together with that of Theydon Mount in Essex, passed to his brother Henry Bishop of Lincoln and from him to William Sutton and Richard of Markham, the sons of the two sisters of the Lexinton family, Alice wife of Rowland of Sutton and Cecily wife of William of Markham. Rowland and Alice of Sutton had several children; certainly two of them were Robert and William, another two (although it is difficult to prove) were almost certainly Oliver, bishop of Lincoln and Stephen, canon of York.

<sup>37</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*. Vol. III, Rosalind M.T. Hill Ed. p. XVI.

<sup>38</sup> Regent in arts and master were synonyms at the time and they were used in some schools, such as Oxford and Paris, to qualify as a teacher. When employed by a school or University the master needed to pass through a compulsory period of regency that usually lasted for a couple of years or more depending on the school. During this span of time he had to deliver lectures required by the University. See: *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by, H. Srawley (Lincoln, 1966), p. 28, note 24.

he held until 1270<sup>39</sup>. According to his register<sup>40</sup>, in 1270 he obtained the prebend of Milton Manor and five years later, on 30 June 1275, was raised to the deaconry<sup>41</sup>. Oliver seems to have been popular as dean with his colleagues in the chapter, for when Gravesend died he was chosen unanimously, *per via inspirationis*<sup>42</sup>, as the new bishop<sup>43</sup>.

John Dalderby came from a family which had property in the village of Dalderby, situated nearby Horncastle in Lincolnshire, where he seems to have been remembered as a “sweet and gentle boy”<sup>44</sup>. The date of his birth is unrecorded but, taking into consideration that the minimum age for holding a benefice was 24 and that he was instituted at Horncastle in 1269, Clubley Clifford suggests that he was born around 1245<sup>45</sup>. He studied at the University of Oxford, proceeding to the degree of Master of Arts before 1269, and was subsequently incepted as doctor of theology. He was remembered by John de Schalby (who worked with him as a registrar almost all the period of his episcopate)<sup>46</sup> as a distinguished scholar, “a bright gem of knowledge”<sup>47</sup>. It was a common practice at the time to use ecclesiastical benefices to fund academic studies: Sutton was one of those who benefited from this custom. His studies at the University were made possible thanks to the family living of Dalderby the rectory of Heather in Leicestershire (1271) and the archdeaconry of

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<sup>39</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XVII.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* p. XVII.

<sup>41</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 31.

<sup>42</sup> According to what is stated by Srawley, there were four different ways to elect a bishop:

- 1) “By way of inspiration, or *per inspirationem spiritus sancti*”: this meant that the bishop was elected without discussion and unanimously, as was, for instance, the election of Oliver Sutton.
- 2) “By way of scrutiny or *per viam scrutini*”, when the votes expressed by the electors were collected by the so called “scrutatores” who subsequently had to pronounce the final result, as in the elections of John Dalderby and Antony Bek.
- 3) “By way of postulation or *per viam postulationis*”. Usually in this case the person chosen was already a bishop in charge of another see. If the person chosen accepted, then the King and the Pope had to approve and ratify the decision of the electors before he could formally enter his new diocese.
- 4) There was also the possibility that the election was a sort of compromise, hence the name “*per viam compromissi*”. This basically meant that some of the electors were given the authority to choose the bishop. See: *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by, H. Srawley, p. 26 note 15.

<sup>43</sup> *Annales de Waverleia*, in, *AM*, ii, p. 392. Also: *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 282. He was consecrated by Archbishop Pecham on St. Dunstan’s day, 19 May 1280 and enthroned on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, September 8, in the same year.

<sup>44</sup> Clubley Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Hull, 1965), p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12.

<sup>47</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley, p. 17.

Carmarthen<sup>48</sup>. According to Rev. Joseph Wickenden he was canon of St Davids as well as archdeacon of Carmarthen in 1283<sup>49</sup>, although we have no evidence of his work as archdeacon. By 1291 he had become chancellor of Lincoln<sup>50</sup>. Following the death of Oliver Sutton in 1299, Dalderby was elected bishop of Lincoln on 15<sup>51</sup> or 18<sup>52</sup> (or even the 20)<sup>53</sup> January 1300. The royal assent was given to his election 7 March following. He was confirmed by the archbishop of Canterbury 17 March and the temporalities were restored to him the next day<sup>54</sup>. He was consecrated at Canterbury on 12 June<sup>55</sup>.

The next Bishop elected in Lincoln was Antony Bek, but the story of this bishop and the election itself is very complicated to tell Bek was born on 4 August 1279. Antony Bek seems to have been very active in the University of Oxford where in 1314 he performed the role of proctor of the University during its argument with the Dominicans and in 1315 he was recorded as doctor of theology<sup>56</sup>. According to Le Neve he obtained the prebend of Thorngate on 10 June 1313<sup>57</sup> from bishop Dalderby, but resigned it three years later for that of North Kelsey and the

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<sup>48</sup> Nicholas Bennett, 'Dalderby John', in, *ODNB*, xiv, p. 925.

<sup>49</sup> Rev. Joseph Wickenden, 'John de Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-20' in, *Archaeological journal*, 40 (1883), p. 215. See also: Clubleby Clifford. *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*. p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> Rev. Joseph Wickenden. *John de Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-20*, *Archaeological journal*, Vol. 40, (London, 1883), p. 215. According to John Le Neve, he became chancellor in 1293. See: *Fasti*, ii, p. 92.

<sup>51</sup> Clubleby Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*. p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 12. According to Le Neve, he was elected on 18 January. See also: *CPR, Edward II*, ii, p. 269.

<sup>53</sup> Rev. Joseph Wickenden, *John de Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-20*, p. 215, note 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 12.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13. See also: *Annales de Wigornia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 545.

<sup>56</sup> The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography described briefly the family history: The Bek family is principally noteworthy for having produced four bishops in two generations in the reigns of Edward I and Edward III. According to the brief family history added to the register of the Gilbertine priory at Alvingham in the late thirteenth century, the estates had been divided among four younger sons at the end of the previous century after the death of the eldest son, Hugh Bek on crusade. Of the family of Henry Bek of Eresby two grandsons became bishops, Thomas ( I ) Bek bishop of St David's and Antony ( I ) bishop of Durham. Of the descendants of Henry Bek's brother, Walter Bek of Lusby, two great-grandsons were bishops, Thomas ( II ) Bek, bishop of Lincoln and Antony ( II ) Bek bishop of Norwich and is the latter the bishop we are dealing with in our case. David Walker, 'Bek family', in *ODNB*, iv, p. 861.

<sup>57</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 222.



chancellorship<sup>58</sup>. Subsequently on 3 February 1320 he was elected to the see of Lincoln.

Henry Burghersh<sup>59</sup> was born in 1292 and came from a lesser baronial family. He was son of Lord Robert Burghersh and Maud, daughter of Guncelin Badlesmere<sup>60</sup>. The ODNB states that Thomas Cobham, Bishop of Worcester from 1317 to 1327, noted in 1320 that Henry Burghersh had studied in many universities, for upwards of fifteen years. (This would suggest that he had started his education around 1304.) It is possible that Henry had spent some time in Oxford University, but there is no direct evidence of it. His studies were financed in part from the income of the church of Whitstable, Kent, to which he was instituted in 1311. By 1319 he had attained the degree of magister and had embarked on the study of civil and canon law at the University of Angers<sup>61</sup>. Burghersh did not come from a poor family, but his career was formed and shaped thanks to the support offered to him by his uncle Sir Bartholomew Badlesmere, who was in the king's inner circle. It was probably thanks to his uncle that he became king's clerk and obtained, in 1316<sup>62</sup> the prebend of Riccall in York diocese.

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<sup>58</sup> In 1316 collated both dignities. In 1329 was made dean of the Cathedral. The royal assent was given to his election as bishop of Lincoln 20 Feb. 1319-20; in 1336 he became bishop of Norwich. *Fasti*, ii, p. 92 and p. 196.

<sup>59</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 14.

<sup>60</sup> He had a large family, ten siblings although in 1332 he had only one surviving brother, Bartholomew and three surviving sisters Katherine, Margareth and Joan. See: Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of York, 1989), Vol. I, p. 21. See also: Nicholas Bennett, 'Burghersh Henry', in *ODNB*, viii, p. 800.

<sup>61</sup> *The registers of bishop Henry Burghersh 1320 – 1342*, Vol. I, ed. Nicholas Bennet, (Woodbridge, 1999), p. XI.

<sup>62</sup> *Fasti*, iii, p. 209. See also: Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, pp. 26 – 27.

## Relations with the Cathedral Chapter

Before looking in detail at the work of these bishops within their diocese, it is necessary to examine their relationship with the cathedral chapter. Grosseteste himself had laid great store by this, for without a good relationship at the centre and a properly functioning cathedral chapter the bishop's effectiveness within his diocese would have been severely limited. We have little information about Bishop Lexington's relation with the chapter. What we know is that he wrote a letter when he was a dean to the archdeacon of Bedford, John de Crachale, about the quarrel between the chapter of Lincoln and Archbishop Boniface of Canterbury<sup>63</sup>. The archbishop threatened the chapter with excommunication if they opposed his jurisdiction at Lincoln, *sede vacante*<sup>64</sup>. Eventually Lexington responded suggesting that two good men could be sent to Lincoln to sort out the controversy and to pronounce their judgement before the festivity of John the Baptist. He specified that should these two pronounce judgement in favour of the chapter and the archdeacon, the chapter would not wish the archbishop to use his authority to overrule the decision. If their decision were not pronounced before the festivity of John the Baptist both sides would be free to reserve their position<sup>65</sup>. This case seems to prove that Bishop Lexington did not really want to change anything. In the words of William Page: "His voice was on this occasion conspicuous only by its absence"<sup>66</sup>.

Bishop Gravesend was away from the diocese on state business much of the time. He had many manor houses where he liked to spend some time resting after his various journeys through the diocese. These facts helped undoubtedly his relationship with the dean and chapter as they would not have felt themselves to be under the bishop's vigilant eyes<sup>67</sup>. Indeed he was apparently on good terms with his chapter<sup>68</sup>. Through an undated ordinance we learn that the bishop tried to regulate the general situation of the choristers, who until that time lodged with the residentiary canons. Dorothy

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<sup>63</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, vi, p. 264.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p. 265.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 265 -267.

<sup>66</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page Ed. (London, 1906), p. 30.

<sup>67</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, ed. F.N. Davies- C.W. Foster- A. Hamilton Thompson (Lincoln, 1925), p. XV.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXXIV.

Owen explained that before Gravesend's period the boys singing in the choir lived quite precariously being dependent on the generosity of the members of the chapter. Gravesend encouraged the chapter to give them more secure revenues, namely the rectory of Ashby Puerorum and part of that of Hilbaldstow<sup>69</sup>. According to William Page, "the bishop was gratefully remembered for his benefactions to the cathedral church of Lincoln"; indeed among other sources of income he secured for the see the patronage of the churches of Sutton, Aylesby, Greetham and Little Bytham. The bishop did not forget the dean and in order to strengthen his position (and possibly to make him more independent from the chapter) he confirmed his jurisdiction over the city of Lincoln and its surrounding areas including prebendal churches, religious houses and hospitals<sup>70</sup>. According to John de Schalby, "he appropriated several churches to his chapter and obtained the advowsons of several churches for himself and his successors"<sup>71</sup>. And for the maintenance of the choristers he assigned both pensions and other sources of income. During his episcopacy the dean and the chapter finally reached an agreement with the archbishop of Canterbury after a long period of dispute which had lasted since Lexington's time. The formal agreement over the jurisdiction over the churches and the diocese of Lincoln during an episcopal vacancy was approved on 22 May 1261. The archbishop of Canterbury and the Dean R. de Mariscis agreed that:

whenever in future it happens that the See of Lincoln falls vacant by the death or cession of the bishop or by any other chance, the dean and chapter of Lincoln shall nominate three or four canons within two or three days after the chapter have been informed that the See is vacant, and these names shall be sent as quickly as possible by a letter from them to the Lord Archbishop, if he is in the province, or to his Official, if the archbishop is absent from the province. Of these the Lord Archbishop

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<sup>69</sup> Roy Martin Haines, 'Richard of Gravesend', in, *ODNB*, xxiii, pp. 402- 403. The bishop also established that the number of the choir-boys should be twelve, of whom two should be thurifers and that they should live in community under the surveillance and guide of a master. See: *RA*, ii, nos 429 - 430, pp. 137-138. See also: D. Owen, 'Historical survey, 1091 - 1450', in, *A History of Lincoln Mynster*, ed. D. Owen (Cambridge, 1994), p. 134.

<sup>70</sup> *The Victoria History of the County of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 31.

<sup>71</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley, pp. 12 - 13.

shall choose one, and make and appoint him Official of Lincoln, to exercise jurisdiction in the city or diocese of Lincoln during the whole time of vacancy<sup>72</sup>.

Gravesend was particularly effective in his efforts<sup>73</sup> to help the chapter after he became bishop. He, like his predecessor Henry of Lexington, granted a series of indulgences between 1257 and 1266 to all who went to hear the sermons preached by members of the cathedral foundation, who contributed to the cathedral fabric found or performed other “manual alms”<sup>74</sup>. An indulgence granted by Richard Gravesend remitted twenty days of penance on 14 April 1259<sup>75</sup>, and another forty days granted on 26 April 1264<sup>76</sup>. In order to break the vicious circle of non-resident incumbencies, the bishop provided vicarages in some of the prebendal churches<sup>77</sup>. Gravesend employed a number of the canons of his cathedral church in his household, who seem to have moved with him from place to place<sup>78</sup>.

Like Gravesend before him Sutton sought to maintain a good relationship with the Dean and the Chapter. Bishop Gravesend had given to them the power to appropriate the church of Tathwell when Master Rolandinus the rector should die or resign. On his death Sutton gave letters confirming this right provided that they should set up a vicarage<sup>79</sup>. Bishop Oliver was remembered as “a notable benefactor to his cathedral”<sup>80</sup>, and we have no reason to think he was not on friendly terms with his canons. We have a document stating that after the church of Ashby (of which the Chapter of Lincoln was patron) had remained vacant for six months [...] the Bishop appropriated it to the use of the choir-boys and arranged that a vicar should

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<sup>72</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley, p. 13.

<sup>73</sup> The fact that he was cautious in his role and in the responsibilities which it encompassed is testified by a letter of Adam Marsh, without date, addressed to Master Richard of Gravesend, who had asked him for advice about accepting a cure of souls for which an apostolic dispensation was necessary. See: *RA*, ii, p. VII.

<sup>74</sup> The indulgences are from bishop Henry of Lexington: “Indulgence granted by Henry Lexington remitted twenty days of the penance enjoined upon those who being penitent and confessed shall go to hear the sermons of members of the church of Lincoln and shall say the Lord’s Prayer and the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin three times for holy Church and the land of England”. See: *RA*, ii, n 406, p. 121.

<sup>75</sup> *RA*, ii, n 408, p. 122.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* n 409, p. 123.

<sup>77</sup> D. Owen, ‘Historical survey 1091 – 1450’, p. 134.

<sup>78</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolnensis*, ed. F.N. Davies- C.W. Foster- A. Hamilton Thompson, p. XXXIII.

<sup>79</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. 126.

<sup>80</sup> Rosalind Hill, ‘Oliver Sutton’, in, *ODNB*, liii, p. 400.

henceforward be presented by the chapter and receive a stipend, 30 November, 1289<sup>81</sup>.

Bishop Dalderby, must have appreciated the work of his predecessor because one of his first acts after having been elected was to commemorate his memory by issuing an indulgence of forty days to whoever would pray for the soul of Sutton at his tomb<sup>82</sup>. Another indulgence, dated 17 March 1305, granted forty days of enjoined penance to “all his parishioners and to all others whose diocesan ratified the indulgence, who being penitent and confessed shall come now or hereafter to the cathedral church of Lincoln for the sake of devotion, or shall contribute to the fabric fund by gift or legacy”<sup>83</sup>. It seems therefore that Bishop Dalderby followed in the footsteps of his predecessor encouraging people to pray and therefore to be linked to the religious life of the diocese and at the same time to contribute to the maintenance of the cathedral’s needs. His relations with the chapter were good even though in 1310 a dispute arose over jurisdiction between the chapter and the dean. Martival, at the time dean of the chapter, claimed that he had the right to exert jurisdiction over the cathedral without reference to the chapter<sup>84</sup>. Against this the chapter cited the ancient custom according to which there is only one head of the chapter: the bishop, not the dean. Therefore to give “absolute” power to the dean would mean to put two heads on a body which would be against nature. Dalderby appointed a commission of local and foreign deans and prebendaries to sort out the dispute. The commission pronounced against Martival with a verdict called the *Laudum* or *Award of Dalderby*<sup>85</sup>, judging that the dean should act in cases of correction and in putting prebendaries in possession of their prebends, but that the bishop had himself the right to interpret the Statutes should anything seem to be obscure or wrong. In general terms Dalderby was very respectful of the power of the chapter to which he always left the last word over the admission of canons<sup>86</sup> and to whose jurisdiction he transferred some churches<sup>87</sup>. According to John de Schalby, “he united three

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<sup>81</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. 129.

<sup>82</sup> Rosalind Hill, ‘Oliver Sutton’, in, *ODNB*, liii, p. 401.

<sup>83</sup> *RA*, ii, pp. 131-132.

<sup>84</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 55.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* p.57.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* p. 97.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* p.109. See also: Archives Office Lincoln, *The Episcopal Registers. John De Dalderby*, Reel 3, Folio 69, ed. Dorothy Owen and David Smith. Harvester Microform, (Brighton, 1984).

parochial churches to the church of Lincoln". From the churches of Normanby and Rushden the vicars would obtain a fixed amount of money every year<sup>88</sup>. He also acquired for the poor clerks annual pensions of two marks from the monasteries of the Order of the Premonstratensians<sup>89</sup>.

D. Owen was able to establish the position that chapter administration and liturgical practice had reached by the early fourteenth century. Offering at the shrines came twice a year, on the morrow of St Denys and at Pentecost, "The offerings were to be divided among the twelve canons keeping the Great Residence, the Keeper of the Altar of St Peter, two other canons, the priest celebrating at the Shrine of St Hugh, with his chaplain, deacon, sub-deacon and eight singers, the two principal shrine-keepers with their chaplain and clerks, the day keeper of the shrine and head, with his clerk, the two night keepers, the vicars choral, four clerks, the choirboys, the Succentor, the Sacrist and his clerk, the Clerk of the Common, the Chapter Clerk, the Clerk of the Fabric, the Masters of the Grammar and Song Schools, the master masons and carpenters, two thurifers, the organ-blower, the door-keeper of the Close, the candle-lighter, the sweeper, the bell-ringer and the candle-maker"<sup>90</sup>. All in all at least 100 people are mentioned in the list that Owen compiled.

The Lincoln chapter and the body of prebendaries attached to it were almost certainly created before the end of the XII century. As D. Owen has explained we do not have any reason to doubt that the first version of the customs was drawn up in 1214, and that, at least for this period, neither the bishop nor any other religious authority formulated any statutes<sup>91</sup>. By the time of Gravesend, however, all aspect of ritual life were already in place and it was then that the customs were first written down<sup>92</sup>. Every non-resident prebendary was obliged to provide and maintain a vicar to serve in his place<sup>93</sup>. Oliver Sutton knew that the vicars needed spiritual support

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<sup>88</sup> "From the church of Normanby five marks, and from the church Rushden.....marks". See: *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by, H. Srawley p. 17.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.

<sup>90</sup> D. Owen, 'Historical survey, 1091 – 1450', p. 137.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 137-138.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* p. 141.

<sup>93</sup> There were numerous vicars before the beginning of the XIII century. The chaplains, who performed the role of vicar before this position was created, "occur in the witness lists of cathedral charters in the first half of the century but it was two grants by St Hugh which for the first time enjoined upon all non-resident prebendaries the duty of providing a vicar to serve their place and at

but also material aid. Therefore in order to consolidate their role and facilitate their jobs, in 1280 he gave them the control of a Hospital just outside the city of Lincoln, and in 1293 provided them with a place for a proper dwelling<sup>94</sup>.

Bishop John Dalderby during his episcopate allowed the “appropriation<sup>95</sup> of the church of Bottersford (of the patronage of the Dean, and Chapter) to the common use of the canons actually residing in the church of Lincoln, reserving to the bishop power to ordain a fitting portion of the revenues of the church for the support of a perpetual vicar who would be instituted on the presentation of the dean and chapter”<sup>96</sup>. On 16 April 1306 the bishop released to “the Dean and Chapter ten shilling of yearly rent which they were wont to pay in respect of lands and tenements given to them by Bishop Oliver for a chantry and his yearly obit in the church of Lincoln”<sup>97</sup>.

Antony Bek did not have time to do anything in the diocese of Lincoln although as dean he did have a dispute over tithes and jurisdiction. A document cites the dismissal of the case concerning Antony Bek, dean of Lincoln, “by the commissioner of the archbishop of York in respect of the rights of the dean and chapter to tithes in Kneeton”<sup>98</sup>. The archbishop of York, during his visit to Nottingham on 23 April 1331, declared that the dean and chapter of Lincoln did not have rights over the tithes in Kneeton; however, he confirmed to them the tithes of the church of Orston, Mansfield and those of the chapel of Skegby<sup>99</sup>. In 1330 there is a memorandum that at “his request the chapter had assigned to dean Antony Bek certain houses adjoining

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the same time laid on the chapter the obligation to select and approve the men chosen”. D. Owen, ‘Historical survey, 1091 – 1450’, p. 148.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148.

<sup>95</sup> 4 March 1305. *RA*, ii, p. 224.

<sup>96</sup> There is indeed an ordination by Dalderby of a vicarage in the church of Bottesford which has been appropriated to the Dean and Chapter. “The vicar shall have for his manse part of the plot on the north side of the church which belongs to the chapter [...] he shall also have half a bovate of the demesne land belonging to the chapter, with rights in common, also the tithes of fallen branches and curtilages and also the profit and issue under the name of altarage, except the tithe of wool which together with the tithes of sheaves and hay [...] the chapter shall pay to the vicar one hundred shilling a year. Further the vicar shall maintain a sufficient clerk ministering in the church and by a chaplain to be maintained by him at his own cost bear the charge of a chantry to be made in the chapel of Ashby. He shall also pay procurations, synodals and the other ordinary charges belonging to the church, except the building [...]. The chapter shall provide and repair the books and ornaments of the church for this turn and thereafter the vicar shall provide and repair them at his own cost”. 12 May 1310. See: *RA*, ii, pp. 235-236

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* p. 306

<sup>98</sup> *RA*, iii, p. 307.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* p. 307.

his own houses, that they might be annexed to his own houses within the Close, for his habitation”<sup>100</sup>. There is, in short, ample evidence that the hard but just line taken by Grosseteste had born fruit and that relations between the bishop and the chapter had been governed by mutual respect, allowing the former to concentrate on the affairs of the diocese.

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<sup>100</sup> *RA*, iii, p. 324.



## The bishop in his Diocese

The shortness of Henry of Lexington's episcopate meant that he had little time to make an impact upon his diocese<sup>101</sup>. This was not true of his successor, Richard Gravesend. In spite of the fact that political affairs divorced him from his diocese, Gravesend showed considerable activity as a diocesan bishop. The last seven years of his life were spent almost entirely within his diocese and, even during the earlier years from 1259 onwards, his itinerary shows that he spent some of his time yearly within its limits, save during the periods when he was altogether absent from England. When away he made provision for others to act in his place. For example we know<sup>102</sup> that in 1260-1 in the election to the abbacy of Humberstayn, Henry de Sandwyco<sup>103</sup> and John de Maydenestan<sup>104</sup> acted for him. Again<sup>105</sup> we know that in March 1266/7 the election to the abbacy of Bardney was examined by Master Alan of York and Sir John de Withington<sup>106</sup> in the absence of the bishop abroad. In February 1269 when Robert Gerlaund had been presented to the vicariate of Packington by Coventry Priory the institution was made by Master John de Undele in the bishop's absence abroad<sup>107</sup>. The bishop visited the diocese in 1265, in June and July 1268 and again in September 1275<sup>108</sup>. He also visited his monasteries and the Chronicle of Osney recorded his presence at the dedication of the abbey's main

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<sup>101</sup> One of the 16 documents we found in the *Registrum Antiquissimum* about Bishop Lexington testifies the poverty of some convents during the period of Lexington's episcopacy: it is a notification by the bishop that, "he has ordained that the abbot and convent of Owston, at their request on account of their poverty, shall retain the church of Slawston which is of their patronage, to their own uses". See: *RA*, ii, n 392, p. 103. (29 March 1258).

<sup>102</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, ed. F.N. Davies- C.W. Foster- A. Hamilton Thompson, p 9.

<sup>103</sup> Henry de Sandwyco, canon of Lincoln in 1260 and archdeacon of Oxford in 1259. *Ibid.* p. XXXVII.

<sup>104</sup> John de Maydenestan, canon of Lincoln in 1260, archdeacon of Oxford in 1273 and dean of Lincoln in 1273 or 1274. *Ibid.* p. XXXIV and p. XXXVII.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* p. 23.

<sup>106</sup> John de Withington, canon of Lincoln in 1260, prebendar of Lafford by 1283. *Ibid.* p. XXXVII.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 149-150.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* p. XVII.

altar on the 17 June 1269<sup>109</sup>. He visited also the priory of Dunstable<sup>110</sup> on two occasions, in 1274 by means of a coadjutor and in person in 1275<sup>111</sup>.

In the thirteenth century the gentry became heavily involved in parish life and they started burying their bodies in local churches rather than monasteries. Alongside this and the endowment of chantries we record a deep transformation of the church interior and space, which was, in Peter Coss' words, "revolutionized"<sup>112</sup>. Moreover from the twelfth to the fifteenth century parishioners increased their rights and their expectations, in terms of pastoral care and ecclesiastical reforms<sup>113</sup>, forcing bishops to act on the morality and education of the clergy. Indeed between 1219 and 1268 nearly all English dioceses held synods to create statutes<sup>114</sup>. As the lay patrons had assumed an increasing importance within the parish churches, often their images were put inside the church alongside saints' images and the clergy were "warmly suggested" to pray for their benefactors<sup>115</sup>. In the church at Carlton Scroop for instance there are stained glass windows which represent in figures the lord facing the priest during what seems to be a presentation to the church<sup>116</sup>. The clergy as well as the bishop were well aware that the parish had many purposes, and that one of those was to provide the livelihood of its rector and the financial support for the clergy<sup>117</sup>.

The papacy in the XIII century tried to make sure that parishioners received appropriated guidance by their pastors. The Council of Lyon in 1274 issued the constitution *Licet canon* which basically ratified and extended the articles already contained in *Quum in cunctis* from Alexander III. Chapter III of the latter required that benefices should be conferred solely on capable individuals who should reside there and exercise personally the cure of souls. Here it was added that the rector of a parish must be twenty-fifth year of age and have both suitable knowledge and the

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<sup>109</sup> *Annales de Oseneia*, in, *AM*, iv, p. 227.

<sup>110</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, pp. 264 -266.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* p. 268.

<sup>112</sup> Peter Coss, *The foundations of Gentry Life* (Oxford, 2010), p. 164.

<sup>113</sup> Katherine French, *People of the Parish. Community life in a late medieval English diocese* (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 27.

<sup>114</sup> Gibbs and Lang, *Bishops and reform*, (London, 1934), pp. 94-104.

<sup>115</sup> Peter Coss, *The foundations of Gentry Life*, p. 165.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* p. 181.

<sup>117</sup> Robert Swanson, 'Standards of Livings: Parochial Revenues in Pre-Reformation England', in, *Religious belief and Ecclesiastical Careers in Late Medieval England*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 1991), p. 151.

required moral and religious attitude to receive the priest's order within a year of institution. Failure to do so would mean being deprived of the benefices. Basically "the new constitution, while annulling retrospectively all institutions of persons under age, emphasized the necessary conditions of knowledge, character and sufficient age"<sup>118</sup>. This seems implicitly to recall all the rules Grosseteste wanted to be put in place for the diocese in order to have the best candidates to appoint for the cure of souls. Although present in Gravesend's register, this kind of enforcement of the institution is well seen in the register of the bishop who followed Gravesend, Bishop Oliver Sutton. In his registers we find many men re-presented either because they were under age or because they did not become priest within a year of their institution.

Bishop Gravesend had been quite careful about his diocese as long as he could travel and sustain the necessary journey from one archdeaconry to another. In 1275 Archbishop Peckham insisted on appointing a coadjutor on the grounds of Gravesend's infirmity, but this seems to have been only temporary. From 1272 Gravesend dedicated his time to his diocese, in particular to the situation of the chaplains, their maintenance and their dwellings<sup>119</sup>. Bishop Gravesend's register allows us to witness, archdeaconry by archdeaconry who was instituted and where. We learn moreover about elections quashed, elections disputed, and of men who were instituted before their canonical age. In fact there is remarkable continuity in these respects across the period of study here.

By examining these issues we can more readily understand the direction in which the bishops steered the diocese after the period of Grosseteste, who did so much to implement religious values and to enhance the moral standards among Lincoln's clergy and especially the priests who administered the sacraments to the faithful. Considering all the data collected, it is possible to draw some conclusion about the situation in the diocese of Lincoln during Gravesend's episcopate. Out of the documentation available from Bishop Gravesend, across the seven archdeacons of Lincoln, Stow Northampton, Leicester, Huntingdon, Oxford and Buckingham we find that the number of disputed presentations amounts to 64, of elections quashed to

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<sup>118</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolnensis*, ed. F.N. Davies- C.W. Foster- A. Hamilton Thompson, p. XXVIII

<sup>119</sup> Roy Martin Haines, 'Richard of Gravesend', in, *ODNB*, xxiii, p. 402- 403.

nine, and of people refused or troubled as they had not become priest after one year of institution to ten. In other words 2.6% of the recorded presentations were disputed, 0.41% of elections were quashed and 0.46% of men did not become priest within the year of their appointments. The lowness of these figures indicates that Gravesend did not have to deal with a situation which was particularly problematic, even though, as the relationship with the chapter testifies, Gravesend generally used his authority cautiously. None the less, he wanted to have the religious rules and principles applied and respected even if he was not especially fastidious about it<sup>120</sup>.

The corresponding figures are higher for Bishop Sutton, although only a small minority of entries in his Registers deal with difficulties. There were 55 elections quashed, 85 presentations disputed, and 95 cases of candidates who did not become priest within a year. Transforming these numbers into percentages we find 2.7% for the elections quashed, 4.1% for the presentations disputed and 4.7% for the candidate who did not become priest within a year of institution. Compared with Gravesend the percentages are double and in particular the percentage of people who did not become priest within a year of institution is four times higher. This would seem to testify to the absolute commitment of Oliver Sutton to follow the law painstakingly and to his desire to control what happened in his diocese, taking responsibility for appointment upon himself.

A fundamental part of the life of the bishop was to make appointments in the diocese, particularly to religious houses, parish churches and chantries. Generally the candidate could be confirmed in his appointment in one of two ways: either before

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<sup>120</sup> The cases of the elections quashed are important and emblematic at the same time. Let some examples stand for them all. In the archdeaconry of Bedford for instance the cases explain on one side the power of the bishop and on the other one of the problems of the clergy. In the first case, Brother William le Franceys, canon of the house, elected to the priory of Newnham has had his election examined by J. de Lyndes. The election had been quashed by the bishop as contrary to the forms of the Council. The bishop however by his own authority appointed the prior the person chosen by the Convent, July 1264. (See: *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolnensis*. p. 191). In the second entry, Brother Peter Foliot appointed by the bishop on the death of Brother Simon de Colesden with the licence of *domina* Christiana de Furnivale, to the priory of Bissemmed. The election of Peter Ratelesden was quashed on the ground of the ignorance of the elect, September 1265. (See: *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolnensis*. p. 192). In the archdeaconry of Huntingdon we have a case of an ecclesiastic removed because of his behaviour. Indeed Robert de Weston is presented to the rectory of S. Trinitatis, Trocking by Sir Robert, son of Brian de Troking on deprivation of Robert on account of irregularities. (See: *Ibid.* p. 168.) The other cases of elections quashed are as follows: Archdeaconry of Stow, (*Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolnensis*. p. 97); Arch. of Northampton, (*Ibid.* p. 100); Arch. of Leicester, (*Ibid.* p. 149); Arch. of Buckingham, (*Ibid.* pp. 236, 247, 249).

the bishop after the election in cases involving independent houses, or presentation for a daughter-house<sup>121</sup>.

Although some of them relied heavily on wealthy families, benefactors or other institutions for their sustenance<sup>122</sup>, the majority of the religious houses had at their disposal considerable resources and properties so that they involuntarily attracted the attention of local magnates or kings eager to exploit them<sup>123</sup>. In light of this it was vital for Sutton to keep them on a tight rein, by appointing the right person and especially by showing that he was the head of the diocese. Indeed when the Convent of Nun Coton elected as prioress Anne of Barney, she appeared before the bishop at Thornton on 29 September 1282 for confirmation. He declared “the election invalid for technical faults”<sup>124</sup>, but “appointed Anne as prioress upon his own responsibility and ordered her installation”<sup>125</sup>. Sutton seems to have been careful in following the rules as in the case of William of Warwick, for instance, “a sub-deacon, who was presented by the Master of the Templars in England to the church of Mininsby, vacant because William, the last incumbent, had disobeyed the decrees of the Council of Lyon”<sup>126</sup>.

These examples testify also to the importance of the law in Sutton’s episcopate. Sutton was meticulous in his use of the official records of his See, which he caused to be examined whenever any doubt arose about a presentation, so much so that careless patrons were sharply checked<sup>127</sup>. For instance Walter, a monk of Bec,

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<sup>121</sup> R. Hill explains the process: “The elect had to bring with him two to five fellow-members of his community to act as witnesses to the validity of the proceedings. When an election was to be confirmed the bishop examined the witnesses and caused their statements to be written down and made public. If he found that everything was in order, he then gave his official approval to the proceeding and ordered the new abbot or prior to be installed. If however the election were found to have been carried out wrongly, although in good faith, he declared it null and void and reserved to himself the right of making an appointment”. *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*. Vol. I, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill (Hereford, 1948), pp. XXIII – XXIV

<sup>122</sup> John Moorman, *Church life in England in the thirteenth century* (Cambridge, 1955), pp. 350-351.

<sup>123</sup> Andrew Brown, *Church and society in England, 1000-1500* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 124-126.

<sup>124</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill, p. 31.

<sup>125</sup> Or again the case of Isolde of Beelsby, “sub-prioress of Stainfield, to be prioress in succession to Katherine of Dunham who had died. Licence to elect was obtained from Eleanor the Queen-Mother as guardian of John de Percy. The Bishop declared the election invalid for technical faults, but appointed Isolde as prioress upon his own responsibility”. Buckingham, 25 November 1283. *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 49.

<sup>126</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>127</sup> In particular abbots who presented priors to subordinate houses and tried repeatedly to encroach on the bishop’s right. *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, pp. XIX- XX.

appeared before him at Liddington on 25 September 1290, with letters patent of his Abbot presenting him to the Priory of Wilsford. Bishop Sutton protested about the phrasing and the language of the letters, insisting that this was against the bishop's rights and requiring Walter to renounce them. It is significant that the bishop, rather than directing his anger against Walter, complained against the abbot of Bec, who was culpable of not knowing the correct procedure that should be followed in this case. Eventually the bishop sent the abbot a correctly worded letter of presentation<sup>128</sup>. The bishop considered the election of John of Bratoft as prior of Humberstone Abbey invalid despite the fact that the right to elect and the procedure were followed correctly; subsequently he appointed John on his own responsibility on 8 June 1289<sup>129</sup>. In this last case it seems that the bishop was even superior to the law itself, as the procedure had been followed correctly. It seems that in this case he wanted to state his superiority, probably to re-affirm his authority in a period when the authority of the bishops in general was being attacked from every corner. In other cases the bishop would consider the election valid, trusting his clergy, as happened for the Newstead priory whose prior Thomas was confirmed by the bishop without holding an examination since one of his clergy had handed in a favourable report (21 July 1287)<sup>130</sup>, or invalidating the election as in the case of Nicholas of Swarby, prior of Kyme Priory, because the election had not been carried out, as Nicholas claimed,

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.* p. 142. Other examples of appointments to religious houses include: a document appearing to be part of the ordinance of Bishop Sutton, setting up in the church of Melton Mowbray, which was appropriated to the prior and Convent of Lewes, a perpetual vicarage. "The vicar is to maintain two chaplains at his own expense. The Prior and the Convent are to have the lands belonging to the church, the greater tithes and the tithe of lambs; the vicar is to have the lesser tithes, the alterage and a manse. The prior and Convent are to repair the chancel and pay all extraordinary expenses as well as thirteen marks annually to Lincoln Cathedral and two marks to the Archdeacon of Leicester. The vicar is to pay the procurations and maintain the books, vestments and the church furnishing. On 14 August 1286, the prior took the oath of obedience under protest, and it was agreed that if this proved to be contrary to Cluniac privileges it should be declared null and void. We come also to know that if there was no agreement the bishop would retain control". *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*. Vol. VIII, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 31-32. "Agnes of Clivenden, sub-prioress of Marlow elected *per viam scrutinii* to the office of prioress. License to elect obtained from Gilbert earl of Gloucester, patron. The bishop in consideration of the poverty of the house committed the examination to Masters Richard of St Frideswide Archdeacon of Buckingham and Jocelyn of Kirmington. Election quashed because the prioress-elect had performed duties before confirmation (but through simplicity not malice), but a second election allowed. Agnes was confirmed in office". 4 Dec. 1290. *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill, p. 126.

<sup>129</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 120.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* p. 99.

by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but by conspiracy among the electors (11 February, 1291)<sup>131</sup>.

Disputes among patrons about the right of presentation occurred frequently and, unless the parties were willing to compromise, these disputes were settled in the royal courts<sup>132</sup>. If the person appointed to the church had not been ordained priest within a year of his institution the bishop would take action to have it cancelled<sup>133</sup>. Sometimes even an abbot and convent could take action against candidates who did not take orders<sup>134</sup>. In the archdeaconry of Lincoln alone during the 19 years of Sutton's episcopate there are 41 cases<sup>135</sup> in which the candidate designated for the

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<sup>131</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. 151.

<sup>132</sup> The usual scheme of the presentation includes a master or a convent or an abbot or anyone who has the right to present a candidate to a moiety or a church or to a position which is opposed by somebody who wants to claim this right. For instance: in 1281 John of Helmond has been presented by Sir John son of John of Rippinghale to the third part of the church of Rippinghale. The right of presentation was disputed by Sir John's mother Amabel in the king's court. A royal writ directed the bishop to accept Sir John's candidate (Lincoln July 1281). In the case of the presentation opposed we can see that out of **28 presentations** only once did the person who challenged the right of presentation win and even in that case then the person resigned so the other candidate took over. See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 14. Other cases are represented by: Master Hugh of Thurgarton, chaplain presented by the prior and Convent of Thurgarton to the church of Cold Hanworth, vacant. The presentation was opposed by Maud Peche who presented another candidate. The prior established his right of presentation against Maud in the king's court and a royal writ directed the bishop to accept his candidate (Northampton, 3 June 1283). See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 44. For the institution of a rector to the church of Gedney we have a multiple opposition: the abbot and Convent of Crowland presented John Pykard, priest. The presentation was disputed by Sir Robert de Ros, knight and his wife Erneburga, Sir Robert Le Burgilun, knight, Robert son of Simon Constable and Sir Eustace de La Hacche, knight, who presented other candidates. The case went to the King's court and a writ following an assize of darrein presentment, 9 October 1299, directed the bishop to accept the candidate of Robert de Ros. Subsequently Robert de Ros revoked his presentation of his candidate in favour of John Pykard, who was therefore instituted (11 October 1299). See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. 246.

<sup>133</sup> One example is given by Thomas of Prestwold re-presented to the church of Scot Willioughby vacant because the said Thomas did not become priest within a year of institution. (Eynsham 2 February 1281). See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 10. Another example is Master John of Melton re-presented by the Prior and Convent of Launde to the church of Ab Kettleby vacant because the said John had not been ordained priest within a year of institution. (London May 15, 1281) See: *Ibid.* p. 12. Another similar example is provided by the church of Potter Hanworth, vacant because the Oliver d' Eyncurt had failed to be ordained priest within a year of his institution (18 May 1295). *Ibid.* p. 198.

<sup>134</sup> William de Helingey in the diocese of Norwich had been provided by the bishop to the church of Michael Major, vacant, of which the patrons were the Abbot and Convent of Crowland. One year later the abbot and convent of Crowland hearing that he had not taken major orders and that he was not at the time resident, presented another candidate, Simon of Glinton, priest. As William once summoned did not produce any satisfactory excuses the church was declared vacant. (9 October, 1283). See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 48.

<sup>135</sup> Archdeaconry of Lincoln 41 cases; Arch. of Stow 9 cases, and 1 presentation under age; Arch. of Northampton 14; Arch of Leicester 8; Arch. of Huntingdon 6; Arch of Bedford 9 cases and 4 presentations under age; Arch. of Buckingham 4; Arch. of Oxford 4.

parish or a moiety of the parish was not instituted because he did not become priest within the year of institution. This tells us that Bishop Sutton was very concerned about applying the canon law correctly. However the number of churches vacated because of this situation and some special cases seem to clash with the strict enforcement of the law. Take the case of Master Ralph of Halton: he was re-presented the first time to the church of Halton near Boligbroke on 17 March 1283 because he failed to become a priest within a year of institution<sup>136</sup>. The same happened on 24 January 1289<sup>137</sup> and on 9 May 1291<sup>138</sup>, i.e. the same person failed to become priest in the same church three times, and three times was re-presented. We do not know why this person failed to become a priest, but what emerges from the document is that the meshes of the ecclesiastical net were not so fine and it was possible for someone to slip through them. In this particular case the presenter was Sir Richard of Halton. It cannot be without significance that the surname of the presenter, the surname of the candidate and the name of the church are the same. Was Ralph enjoying the benefits of the living? This does not represent the norm but it is significant that in a century when the law was generally enforced situations like this emerge so clearly.

Bishop Sutton himself seems to have been guilty of some favouritism if not open nepotism. We know that in the archdeaconry of Northampton quite a few people called Sutton or Lexington (most probably the bishop's relatives) benefited from positions given by him. On 10 May 1281 Robert of Sutton, sub-deacon, "was presented by the Provincial Prior of the Hospitallers to the church of Stoke Dry"<sup>139</sup>. Bishop Oliver had three brothers, Robert, William and Stephen, who was canon of York and archdeacon of Northampton<sup>140</sup>. The same Robert, still called sub-deacon, is probably the one presented to the church of Thornhaugh<sup>141</sup>. Elias of Sutton, chaplain, was presented by William of Trussell to the church of Marston Trussell<sup>142</sup>. From the Register of Bishop Sutton we know that, "Oliver Sutton, sub-deacon, was presented

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<sup>136</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. I, p. 39.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* p. 154.

<sup>139</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill (Hereford, 1950), p. 10.

<sup>140</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XV.

<sup>141</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. 14.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.* p. 16.



by Sir Stephen of Sutton canon of York as guardian of Richard the heir of Sir Robert of Sutton, knight, to the church of Aston le Walls, vacant by the resignation of the said Stephen of Sutton. Since Oliver was under age when presented, Stephen of Sutton had custody of the church for about four years”<sup>143</sup>. Aston-le Walls was the place when William, another son of Rowland and Alice, had previously acquired a manor. Oliver of Sutton has been re-presented to Aston Le Walls by Stephen of Sutton archdeacon of Northampton, because “Oliver has not been ordained a priest within a year of his institution”<sup>144</sup>. And again, Master Ralph Patrick, a clerk in minor orders, “was presented by Richard of Sutton to the church of Aston Le Walls, vacant because Oliver of Sutton had been instituted to the church of Churchill”<sup>145</sup>.

Some candidates lost their prebends of churches because they failed to become priest within a year of institution, but sometimes the priest chose another path of life. Thomas called Le Engleys, a clerk in minor orders, “was presented to the church of Shelton, vacant because Sewal, the last rector, had married. An inquiry was held into Thomas’s character by the official of the bishop of Carlisle in whose diocese he was born”<sup>146</sup>. Eudo of Papworth, chaplain, “was presented to the vicarage of Ampthill, vacant because Simon had been deprived for non-residence”<sup>147</sup>, while Robert Blauncfrunt, chaplain “was presented to the vicarage of Roxton, vacant because Augustine the last vicar had joined the Franciscans”<sup>148</sup>. In other cases as in the archdeaconry of Oxford, some members of the clergy resigned because they joined the Dominicans, probably due to the presence of the Friars in Oxford<sup>149</sup>.

Other documents testify to the bishop’s regular control. Walter of Drayton was presented by William of Kirkby, patron, to the office of prior of Bradley. The bishop immediately set up an inquiry to discover why the normal election procedure had not been followed. Walter in his defence produced two main reasons: the right of the

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<sup>143</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. 41.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* p. 47.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p. 98.

<sup>146</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, pp. 99-100.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* p. 104.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

<sup>149</sup> Roger le Mareschal clerk in minor orders, was presented by Roger, bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, and Walter Douville to the church of Tackley, vacant by the resignation of Master Stephen of Codnor to become a Dominican. (March 17, 1291). See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, p. 173. Master Hugh of Thurlby clerk in minor orders was presented by the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham to the mediety of Lower Heyford vacant by the resignation of Simon of Wells to become a Dominican. (September 22, 1291). *Ibid.* p. 176.

patron to present the candidate and also the right of the canons to follow a free election subject to his consent. The bishop questioned the two canons and then declared Walter elected on 10 July 1290<sup>150</sup>. We can see in other archdeaconries that a licence to elect was to be obtained by the patron, whoever he was<sup>151</sup>. We know that when a benefice remained vacant for over six months the bishop had the right to collate<sup>152</sup>. Sutton acted in this way several times<sup>153</sup>.

An interesting case occurred at St Leonard's Hospital in Northampton where John of Tutbury chaplain was presented by the mayor and the burgesses of Northampton in August 1282. The bishop remonstrated about the fact that the chaplain had been appointed without diocesan authority. In order to retain his rights Sutton made clear that in future the appointment would proceed according to the bishop's rights and on the recommendation of the mayor and the burgesses<sup>154</sup>. In this case, however, the institution did not work because on 28 February 1283 Ralph of Norton, chaplain, "was presented by the mayor and burgesses of Northampton, with the consent of the Prior and Convent of St Andrew's and of the vicar of Hardingstone, because John of Tutbury had been deprived for bad conduct"<sup>155</sup>. We should probably assume that the consent of the bishop had also been obtained although there is no mention whatsoever of this. The bishop was very careful about hospitals, holding inquiries if necessary; when Robert of Bedford, brother of St Leonard's Hospital was nominated by the brethren as master without consulting the patron, Richard Dieudonné, the bishop ordered an immediate enquiry. The investigation found that the right of nomination belonged not to Richard, but to the brethren. The bishop, apparently

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<sup>150</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, p. 46.

<sup>151</sup> Ernald prior of Fineshade elected or postulated to the office of abbot of Owston. Licence to elect was obtained from the King as patron. William of Somerby provided by the bishop to the office of prior of Launde, vacant. Licence to elect was obtained from Sir Ralph Basset, patron. *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, p. 42.

<sup>152</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. XIII.

<sup>153</sup> For example at Rushton All Saints where the patrons had failed to make a presentation within six months. William Tathwell, clerk, collated by Bishop Sutton to the church of All Saints. (See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. 66). The same happened at Braunston (*Ibid.* p.70), Easton Mauduit (*Ibid.* p. 72), Barby (*ibid.* p. 88), Easton Neston (*Ibid.* p. 100), Stoke Doyle (*ibid.* p. 7), Plumpton (*Ibid.* p. 141), and Corby (*Ibid.* p. 143).

<sup>154</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. 20.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* p. 26.

satisfied by his examination, accepted that the custody of the hospital should be given to Robert and that he should come to the bishop to be properly instituted<sup>156</sup>.

The records of Northampton archdeaconry give accounts of the purpose and business of private chapels. The most important step in setting up a chapel was to obtain permission from the bishop<sup>157</sup>, something that was not an easy task, for a simple reason. Basically the chapel could attract the faithful, therefore implicitly diverting the offerings usually directed to the parish. According to Hill very strict rules applied to chapels, which could not have, for instance, a belfry. A chantry was different, however, in that it did not necessarily require the construction of a building like a chapel. The chantry was simply a duty to celebrate Mass for the souls of the dead, to which ecclesiastics and clergy in general were appointed<sup>158</sup>.

We are able to examine in detail the work of this remarkably conscientious bishop. It has been said by Rosalind Hill that “Oliver Sutton was different from S. Hugh on one side and Robert Grosseteste on the other in wisdom and statesmanship”<sup>159</sup>. This might be true. It is undeniable, however, that he had a distinct advantage: he followed these two great bishops and could therefore benefit from what they had done in the diocese. Moreover, he had few connections from a political point of view nor did he look for them. He had a legally-orientated mind. His aptitude for hard work and his Christian generosity towards the poor were certainly characteristics which help him to be considered one of the great bishops of Lincoln. The procedure he usually followed when travelling around the diocese was to stay at each house for

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<sup>156</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. VIII, p. 114.

<sup>157</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. XIV-XV, and also pp. 120-129.

<sup>158</sup> Some examples are represented by: John of Hales chaplain presented by William Trussell to the moiety (cantaria in capella de Merston) of the portion assigned for the support of two chaplains in a chantry in the chapel of St. Mary at Marston Trussell. Instituted on 5 August 1282. (See: *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. II, p. 23). About this we have another note saying that William son of Elias of Marston presented by William Trussell to that portion in the chapel of Marston Trussell which John of Hales had resigned. Ordained sub-deacon and instituted at Brampton near Huntingdon, 18 December 1283. Note that there were two chaplains, who lived in one house and had a communal provision of six marks of annual rent and one carucate of land. One was to say a Mass of the Blessed Virgin each day and the other to say Mass on behalf of the ancestors of the patron of the chapel. (*Ibid.* p. 33). The chapel could have also a good income as is demonstrated by a document. Robert of Swayfield chaplain presented by Edmund Earl of Cornwall to the chapel of Oakham castle vacant; an inquisition held by the official of the archdeacon of Northampton proved that the income included fifty shillings paid by the earl, two and a half marks from the market of Oakham and other payments, together with a suitable house. 20 September 1286. (*Ibid.* p. 57).

<sup>159</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XXII.

a week or so, sometimes (in the winter) for as long as seven weeks. At other times he would remain for several days at one of the wealthier religious houses of the diocese such as Newstead-by-Stamford, Osney or St Mary de Pré at Leicester. When travelling a bishop was entitled to claim hospitality for himself and thirty horsemen. He needed, of course, to have an armed escort and his work required a number of assistants<sup>160</sup>. In 1209 his armed escort was led by the marshal, Sir John of Bayton, described as a learned esquire (*armiger literatus*)<sup>161</sup>.

His main help came from his archdeacons. Archbishop Peckham in his statutes, promulgated at the Council of Reading in 1279<sup>162</sup>, assumed that archdeacons would hold synods four times a year and that all the clergy of the district would be present. He seems to have suspected that some laymen attended the synods, since he ordered the archdeacons to exclude them in order to prevent scandal before announcing the penalties which were to be imposed upon clerics who kept *focariae* or concubines<sup>163</sup>. Of the chapters held by rural deans we know little, except that such assemblies certainly met<sup>164</sup>. Rural deans were mainly priests to whom many tasks were entrusted by bishops. Their roles ranged from the enforcement of religious discipline (including sentences of excommunication), to making sure that the parishioners under judgement appeared before the bishop<sup>165</sup>. Sutton seemed to have relied heavily on rural deans and commissaries throughout his episcopate<sup>166</sup>. Most of these men were his personal friends. He seems to have been on good terms with the senior clergy of his diocese, and with many members of the cathedral chapter, although in 1298 he complained that papal provisions were filling the prebends with foreigners who were worse than useless to the church. Here we have a direct echo of Robert Grosseteste.

Sutton issued a large number of indulgences and ratified many which had been granted by other bishops. Indulgences at this time were not confined, however, to those who would perform the service of praying for the dead; the remission of a

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<sup>160</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XXVI.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXVII.

<sup>162</sup> *Councils and synods with other documents relating to the English church*. Vol. II, part II, 1265-1313, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (Oxford 1964), pp. 828-857.

<sup>163</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XXX.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXX.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXXI.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXXII

period of penance was often offered to those who would contribute financially to the repair of a bridge, the rebuilding of a church or the extension of Lincoln cathedral<sup>167</sup>. It is extremely unlikely that anyone at the time would have been shocked by this system and this practice<sup>168</sup>. Moreover the indulgences linked the practice of praying with the concept of Christian “*Caritas*”. No doubt some people within the church exploited the system, promising paradise to everybody ready to pay, but the reality is that through this system the bishop was able to contribute to the religious life of his flock in the countryside and at the same time to perform social actions directed to preserving roads, bridges, causeways and buildings.

The bishop might be asked to testify to almost anything – good conduct, proper ordination, the validity of a marriage, legitimate birth, sanity, absolution from a sentence of excommunication, the good faith of a convert from Jewry or the fact that executors had performed their duties properly. He obtained the information on which he based his testimonial either from a responsible member of the clergy such as an archdeacon or a rural dean, or from a sworn body of trustworthy neighbours who could swear to such facts as the celebration of a particular marriage, according to custom, at the church door. It was of course the responsibility of a bishop to maintain good order and discipline among the clergy and laity of his diocese<sup>169</sup>.

During his perambulations within the diocese the bishop had many responsibilities<sup>170</sup>. The first one was of course to check the good conduct of his parishioners and his clergy in terms of religious behaviour; however, he also had many practical things to take care of. He needed to check the state of the church, and that everything, including books, vestments and wax candles, was in good condition and in good order<sup>171</sup>. The conduct of the priests in the parish was a major concern. We know that some priests did not act responsibly: Geoffrey Russel from Etton, in Northamptonshire, for example, married a woman from Pinchbeck<sup>172</sup>. However, in general priests behaved as befitted their positions. Once a priest was old or ill, depending on the situation, the bishop would either appoint a coadjutor (most of the

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<sup>167</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XXXVI

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXXVII.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* p. XXXVII.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* p. LIII

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* p. LIV.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* p. LIII- LVI

time a young chaplain eager to succeed to the benefice)<sup>173</sup> or ask the old priest if he wished to enter a religious house for the remaining period of his life.

John de Schalby reported that Sutton seemed to have found a Solomonic solution to punish the sinners and at the same time to support and subsidize the poor. He established that all the money obtained from the fines paid by fornicators or other sort of common delinquents should go either to religious communities, like the nuns or the mendicant brethren, or be given to the poor of the parish by the sinners themselves. It seems also that he was just and fair to the people on his manors. There the bishop had always aided and helped the poor and never oppressed others with exactions<sup>174</sup>.

Sutton's attitude to his diocese was that of a thoroughly benevolent conservative. There is no doubt that he followed the example set by Bishop Grosseteste, devoting himself to his diocese and to his flock<sup>175</sup>. In the words of Rosalind Hill: "He stood for the good old traditions laid down by his predecessors, and he was intensely suspicious of new *formulae* and unprecedented actions. He refused to accept any election or appointment of the head of a religious house unless the minute points of canon law had been meticulously observed and he always questioned a letter which did not agree with the accepted formula"<sup>176</sup>. Sutton was certainly influenced by Grosseteste in establishing moral standards, and in choosing the right priests as well as in having the sacraments respected in the diocese. His fastidiousness about the law, however, was not derived from Grosseteste, who was not so meticulous about canon law. For Grosseteste canon law was certainly important, but his real aim was to save the souls of the faithful, not to create a system in which the most important things were the rules. He applied the rules as a means to an end. With Sutton this was almost reversed. He quashed many more elections than Gravesend did. It is also possible that Sutton, due to his legal training, saw in this procedure the only way to ensure good and reliable candidates, but it seems to me that in doing so he gave much more importance to the rules than to the people. In this we can see a possible shift between Grosseteste and Sutton; on one side we have the religious law and the

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<sup>173</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. LV.

<sup>174</sup> *The book of John de Schalby*, trans. by, H. Srawley. p. 14

<sup>175</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 32.

<sup>176</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. LXVI.

respect of the canon law as the means through which a prelate might take care of and save the people; on the other we can see the people being rigorously judged by the law. I do not doubt that Sutton was a very good bishop and in a sense he was also the natural outcome of Grosseteste's experience and example, but I think we can see here one main difference between the two; for Grosseteste the canon law was the means and concern for the people was the aim, while for Sutton (as it appears) upholding the law was the aim and the people the means through which one judged whether the law was good or not. We cannot justify in any other way why Sutton followed so meticulously the legal procedure of quashing dozens of elections. At first one might assume that he quashed the elections because he considered the candidates unworthy. However, this is not case, as most of the time he quashed the election and then appointed the same candidate on his own responsibility, meaning that the candidate did after all deserve the post. I think he believed in the possibility of converting and saving people through the application of the law and was therefore very careful in improving it. Grosseteste on the other hand used examples taken from the Scriptures and the law to reinforce the concepts contained therein. This trend could also explain the strictness of Bishop Burghersh who came after Sutton; both were cultivated and educated bishops who studied at University and who could not conceive of religious practice detached from the law. Unlike Grosseteste (who studied as well, but in a different way and in a different period) they were not scripture-orientated but they were law-orientated; they believed in respect for the law as the ultimate principle by which to save the souls of their flock. The studies followed by the bishops open up another problem which has already been encountered here, the problem of the relationship between the diocese and the University.

Because of the large number of its scholars and the complexity of its structure the University of Oxford presented Sutton with a problem far greater than that raised by any single religious house. For the chancellor and the regent-masters the University was one of those great ecclesiastical corporations which stood for the most part outside diocesan jurisdiction, although they were prepared to make use of the bishop when they found it convenient to do so. The University did not like submitting to visitation, it objected to the idea that individual masters could appeal directly to the

bishop over the head of the chancellor's court, and it fought hard and in the end successfully, against the bishop's claim that he had the right to appoint a chancellor after he had received a recommendation from the Great Congregation<sup>177</sup>. A dispute between the bishop and the chancellor over who had the right of visitation and correction of a member of the university led, eventually, to Sutton having to offer some concessions. He made it clear, however, that such rights could be revoked by him at will<sup>178</sup>. After all, the University statute of 1214 had described the chancellor as the man "whom the bishop shall set up there in charge of the scholars". In fact the members of the Great Congregation were prepared to recognize the bishop's authority if it could be useful to them as in their petition of 1317. Sutton made it clear that he considered it his business to see that the rules of canon law were kept, and to forbid anyone to deviate from them. An interesting episode saw, as a protagonist in 1288, William of Kingscote<sup>179</sup>, who refused to appear before the bishop as chancellor. His view was that having been elected by the University all he needed to do was to send messengers to Sutton asking for confirmation. The bishop categorically refused to accept this because by analogy he could never agree to institute an abbot or prior who refused to appear before him in person<sup>180</sup>. Kingscote was accepted eventually as chancellor. Clearly the masters of Oxford were trying to attack the bishop's position: they wanted to set themselves free from the guardianship of the bishop and to make clear that they were in charge of the election of the chancellor. In Bishop Sutton they faced a formidable adversary<sup>181</sup> with a bright legal mind, who did not intend to lose control of the University<sup>182</sup>.

The dispute dragged on until the end of 13<sup>th</sup> century when Roger of Martival in 1293 was elected according to the University but nominated according to Sutton. However in 1294 Roger of Weasenham was simply declared to have been elected by the University. Sutton vehemently protested adding that, when "Robert Grosseteste of blessed memory had held this office the existing bishop of Lincoln (Hugh of Wells)

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<sup>177</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. LXVII.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* pp. LXVIII-LXIX

<sup>179</sup> *Chronicon Vulgo Dictum Chronicon Thomæ Wykes, 1066 – 1289*. In, *AM*, iv, pp. 317 – 318.

<sup>180</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. LXXI.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.* p. LXXII.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* p. LXXIII.



would not suffer him even to be called chancellor but only master of the school”<sup>183</sup>. Invoking Grosseteste clearly had great resonance. This seems to be another point at which Sutton demonstrates his extreme interest in the law. We may argue that it was within his rights to deal with the University of Oxford and that if he wanted to retain control over the masters he needed to do what he did and claim what he claimed. Arguably, however, Sutton should have considered what was best for the diocese rather than being stuck in a sterile discussion as to whether or not the bishop had the power to nominate the chancellor. In this case I suggest that once again we see the interest that Sutton demonstrated towards the law, but it is the law as a concept in itself rather than the law as a means to improve his diocese. This does not mean that Sutton was a bad bishop; but it indicates that he relied significantly on the power given him by the law rather than the moral authority given as bishop.

Could we therefore see in this behaviour a decline in the power of the bishop? It is possible to argue this, but I would talk rather of a period of calm after the Grosseteste typhoon. Grosseteste was a cyclone and he broke every possible boundary: he fought against the high church, the pope and the cardinals, he fought against the lower church, the priests and abbots, he fought against the king, he fought against the local lords when they did not respect his religion. Sutton and, in general, all the bishops who followed Grosseteste could not pretend that he had not existed, and they needed to follow his example. But by not being Grosseteste and by not having his authority, or perhaps his faith, they needed a back-up that underpinned their role. Where could they find this independent back-up for which they were looking? Certainly not in politics, because politics, although a very good buttress in some respects, was not independent. Every bishop involved in politics paid the price for it. The only independent help could come from the law, and this is where Bishop Sutton looked. I do not think it is a coincidence that, after Grosseteste, Sutton has been considered one of the best bishops of Lincoln. Gravesend before Sutton and Burghersh after him looked for help in the political sphere, and failed to achieve results.

As a diocesan Sutton showed himself to be especially careful, just and humane. Before licensing a private chapel or chantry for example he always investigated the

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<sup>183</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, pp. LXXIV- LXXVII.

relevant details and took care in issuing testimonials and dispensations. Sutton's biographer and registrar, John Schalby, who worked closely with him for nineteen years, praised him as a man particularly charitable towards the poor and careful of the welfare of the serfs on his estate, and quoted his confessor as saying, after the bishop's death, "I cannot deny that he was a man most just, most steadfast and most pure"<sup>184</sup>. The testimony of John de Schalby, canon of Lincoln and registrar of Bishop Sutton for nineteen years is especially reliable, given that he lived in his household<sup>185</sup>. An intelligent and critical man, John had worked closely with him travelling round the diocese, copying documents, checking the registers and appearing as witness to many of the bishop's official acts<sup>186</sup>. Oliver Sutton died peacefully at his manor of Nettleham on 13 November 1299, to be succeeded by John Dalderby.

The episcopacy of Dalderby reveals very much the same concerns. This being so and given that the bishop has been the subject of a doctoral thesis, only a part of his diocesan work need be given here. As with the bishops before him, the administration of the diocese was a task beyond the possibility of a single man and therefore he needed to delegate some duties. We see the situation clearly in Dalderby's time. The bishop employed a significant number of adjutants who could perform some of his duties<sup>187</sup>.

According to his itinerary, the bishop seems to have travelled up and down his diocese many times, particularly in the first years of his episcopate when his health allowed him to do so. Later on in his episcopate he reduced the number of visitations and after November 1319 until his death he did not leave the bishop's manor in Stow

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<sup>184</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley. p. 16.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

<sup>186</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, pp. XXII- XXIII.

<sup>187</sup> Among the bishop's entourage we can record John de Schalby, registrar, Thomas de Louth, Chancellor ( See: C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 14), assisted by a body of clerks, Hugh de Normanton steward (*Ibid.* p. 16), John de Neville who was in charge of the financial affairs of the bishop (*Ibid.* p. 18), the bishop's chamberlain, sequestrators in cases where benefices fell vacant (*Ibid.* p. 44), penitentiaries to assist him in the spiritual work (*Ibid.* p. 46), and some laymen (*Ibid.* p. 32). All these people together with the proctors and the advocates employed by the diocese both in Lincoln and in the Papal curia in Rome, and the normal maintenance of the religious buildings, cost a great deal of money which usually came from an annual payment made by the different archdeaconries in the diocese. When this money was not enough the bishop needed to resort to loans. (*Ibid.* pp. 29-31).

Park<sup>188</sup>. Dalderby performed his bishop's duty relentlessly, although sometimes he had to send suffragans into the archdeaconries when he was busy, or ill, or unable to carry out his obligations, such as consecrations, dedications and reconciliations of churches, consecrations of altars and even to confer first tonsure on men. Unfortunately, as the analysis of Clubley Clifford has indicated, no specific records of Dalderby's visitations have survived. However his continuous travelling in the diocese and the data available referring directly or indirectly to visitations<sup>189</sup> in the Registers seem to indicate that Dalderby held quite regular episcopal visitations in the diocese. The "sins" the bishop was persecuting were the same as those his predecessors were after: plurality, cases for correction, incontinence<sup>190</sup> (See Fig. XXIV), clerks living with concubines<sup>191</sup>, people assaulting clerks, sorcery, divinations and various others misdeeds. Of course the people that he sent around the diocese were sometimes not welcomed by the "sinners"<sup>192</sup>, but the bishop was absolutely determined to crack down on the bad behaviour of the clergy and also to raise the bar of lay morality. He seems to have been particularly strict against pluralism<sup>193</sup>, non-resident canons, and most especially with candidates who did not become priests within a year of their institution to their benefices, so much so that his successor, Bishop Burghersh no longer had to deal with this last problem.

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<sup>188</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, pp. 188 – 209, for the bishop's itinerary.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 67-69.

<sup>190</sup> Archives Office Lincoln, *The Episcopal Registers. John De Dalderby*, Reel 4, Folio 169, ed. Dorothy Owen and David Smith. Harvester Microform, (Brighton, 1984).

<sup>191</sup> Under archbishop Anselm the Synod of Westminster in 1102 had allowed clerks in lower orders to marry but without having then the possibility of proceeding in the other higher orders.

<sup>192</sup> Clubley Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 70.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 98-99.



Unfortunately the list of ordinations is by no means complete and the registers which survive are partly illegible<sup>194</sup>. However there are in the register of institutions several cases of people being rejected because of their lack of learning or their failure to become priest within a year, as there are indeed cases of presentation disputed. It is my firm belief that these three factors abovementioned must have worked against those who thought of benefices in the church as secure havens and shelters while living a comfortable life. If a benefice fell vacant, either because the rector was absent for too long<sup>195</sup> or because the incumbent moved or died, the bishop immediately appointed sequestrators to retain its revenues until a new beneficiary was instituted<sup>196</sup>.

Dalderby visited houses praising virtues and crushing vices. In Marlow, as soon as he discovered that the nuns were very poor, he issued an indulgence to whoever would give money to support them<sup>197</sup>. In other cases, as at Markyate, where he discovered moral disorder, Dalderby read the statutes in the convent in front of the nuns. In this case however, the nuns threw the statutes after him declaring that they would not obey such rules<sup>198</sup>. In an extreme case of apostasy where a nun called Agnes left St Michael's convent, Dalderby ordered her to be looked for, threatening excommunication against anyone giving shelter or helping her in any way. In such cases, once found he ordered them to be confined to their cells with chains attached to their legs<sup>199</sup>.

The procedures and corrections carried out by Dalderby were directed to stimulating the faith as well as to halting wrong behaviour. A large number of licences were given to Franciscans and Dominicans to act as preachers and confessors, and indeed to Augustinians and Carmelites. Dalderby seems to have felt a special affection for the friars as many of them, particularly Franciscans and Dominicans, acted as his penitentiaries and were given powers normally in the hands of the bishops to deal

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<sup>194</sup> Clubleby Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, Appendix B, pp. 210-223.

<sup>195</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p.102.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* p.106.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* p.124.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* p.125

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* p. 128. See also: *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 34. Of course the same applied to the friars who left their convents who were to be arrested, imprisoned and excommunicated if accused of apostasy. *Ibid.* p. 136

with cases of assault on clerks<sup>200</sup>. The link between the living and the death through the indulgences was one of his methods to invigorate the faith in his diocese and at the same time repair buildings, bridges and churches. Dalderby for instance granted an indulgence in 1307 to all who contributed to the building of the great central tower at Lincoln<sup>201</sup>.

Another matter the bishop was not happy about was the continuous absence of archdeacons. It is probably not a coincidence that Dalderby preferred doctors of theology<sup>202</sup> for these positions. He laid stress on the provision of an educated clergy, refusing to admit to benefices clerks of insufficient learning<sup>203</sup> and granting leave of absence to incumbents for study. This is certainly a legacy of Robert Grosseteste, who influenced all the bishops who followed him. Indeed Clifford affirmed that Dalderby had for Grosseteste a “high regard, since when he himself became bishop he revived the attempts which had been made for his canonisation”<sup>204</sup>.

The University of Oxford continued to raise problems<sup>205</sup>. Already as chancellor of Lincoln Dalderby had been sent to Oxford to try to sort out the continuous brawls between students and townsfolk. The situation escalated dangerously in 1299 when a clerk had been killed in one of these fights, others were injured and some fled the city<sup>206</sup>. The University continued to see itself as an independent institution. However Dalderby did not follow Sutton in his intransigence. In the case of Chancellor M. James Cobham, who did not go to present himself to the bishop of Lincoln on the grounds that this would interrupt the teaching, Dalderby demonstrated his powers of mediation by granting the confirmation as a “special favour”<sup>207</sup>.

After 1315 Bishop Dalderby’s health began to falter and the bishop was forced more and more to delegate tasks and duties to coadjutors. He died at his Lincolnshire

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<sup>200</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, pp. 119-121.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid* pp121-122.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*. pp. 42-43.

<sup>203</sup> William de Millington, chaplain, was not admitted because of an “intolerable lack in learning” Dalderby presented Andrew de Barton in his place. *Ibid*. p. 95.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid*. p. 2.

<sup>205</sup> For the history of the University of Oxford, see: Gillian R. Evans. *The University of Oxford: a new History*. (London, 2010).

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid*. p 7.

<sup>207</sup> Archives Office Lincoln, *The Episcopal Registers. John De Dalderby*, Reel 4, Folio 6, ed. Dorothy Owen and David Smith. Harvester Microform, (Brighton, 1984).

manor of Stow Park on 12 January 1320 and was buried in the south transept of the cathedral<sup>208</sup>. John de Schalby remembered him as “an eloquent man, given to meditation and most devout, an excellent preacher of the word of God”<sup>209</sup>. Apparently, immediately after his death, many miracles happened thanks to the bishop’s intercession and prayers; based on these reports, in 1327 and 1328 there were attempts to have the bishop canonized. However the petition of canonization presented in 1327 by Edward II and supported by other bishops met with a refusal<sup>210</sup>. Clubley Clifford reports that on 14 May 1322 Robert de Normanton had swallowed a bone which stuck in his throat. He ran the risk of dying until he called upon the help of God through the merits of the late bishop. He immediately vomited the bone<sup>211</sup>. In another case a nun who had a stroke in 1322 which had bereft her of speech, sense and movement recovered after having made a vow to visit Dalderby’s tomb if she recovered<sup>212</sup>. Despite these “miracles” the attempts at canonization were unsuccessful; however, like Bishop Robert Grosseteste before him, Dalderby was venerated in Lincoln as a saint with numerous pilgrims coming to pray on his tomb<sup>213</sup>.

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<sup>208</sup> Nicholas Bennett, ‘Dalderby John’, in, *ODNB*, xiv, p. 925.

<sup>209</sup> *The Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley. pp. 17 - 18.

<sup>210</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 36.

<sup>211</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p.179.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.* p. 180.

<sup>213</sup> The Victoria history of Lincoln claimed that even during Dalderby’s episcopate the Roman curia and the Pope kept on exploiting the prebends of the Lincoln chapter and the Lincoln diocese. (See: *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 36.) To this attitude is probably due the appointment to the deanery of Lincoln in 1306 of Reymund de la Goth a Roman cardinal and dean of St Paul, London. See: *Fasti*, ii, p. 32.

## Politics and Royal Service

For Robert Grosseteste, a bishop devoting himself to royal service was anathema. As we have seen, he favoured some aspects of reform in the realm and had reformist associations, but he was not himself politically active. To have been so would, in his eyes, have been a diversion from the cure of souls. How did his successors behave in this respect?

Let us begin with Richard Gravesend. His consecration took place on 2 or 3 November 1258<sup>214</sup> and immediately afterwards he went to France accompanied by Walter de Cantilupe, bishop of Worcester, and the earls of Leicester and Gloucester<sup>215</sup>. We have little of Gravesend's itinerary until spring of 1263; what we know is that he did not tour within the diocese until after his consecration, being away from England on state business<sup>216</sup>. According to Matthew Paris, he was appointed plenipotentiary to the conference arranged in Cambrai between Henry III and Louis IX as one of the king's ambassadors<sup>217</sup>. The See of Lincoln was committed to Master Robert Marsh, archdeacon of Oxford, who succeeded Gravesend as dean and was acting as his vice-regent in April 1259<sup>218</sup>. Being involved in state matters, the bishop had to rely on vicars. This is one of the main consequences of the double role taken on by the bishop in this period. As a result he was not solely responsible for what really happened within the boundaries of the diocese. A bishop deeply involved in lay matters gained power in one respect but lost it in another. Even in Lincoln, therefore, it is difficult to avoid seeing politics and political involvement as a negative in terms of the bishop's religious duties.

His expedition in France was not very successful, but a treaty of peace was signed between England and France in May 1259 and Gravesend is recorded as a witness to various royal charters in the English court in Paris on 20, 23 and 24 December. As

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<sup>214</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, p. 721.

<sup>215</sup> Roy Martin Haines, 'Richard of Gravesend', *ODNB*, xxiii, pp. 402-403.

<sup>216</sup> *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. VIII. See also: *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 211.

<sup>217</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 720-721.

<sup>218</sup> *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. VIII. See also: *Fasti*, ii, p. 31.



stated in the introduction to the *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend*<sup>219</sup> it is therefore difficult to explain the charter dated 17 August 1259 in favour of the dean and the chapter of Lincoln given at Buckden. It had probably been issued by his chancellor. Gravesend's activities in this respect underline the importance of what Grosseteste has said; whoever wants to be a good ecclesiastic needs to be devoted to his role full time. As William Page pointed out "the barons' wars which occupied much of his rule left him with scant leisure for the care of his diocese"<sup>220</sup>. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in being a bishop and at the same time a king's messenger, but one cannot take care of the flock if one is abroad taking care of the business of the state. It is not a coincidence that all the bishops who would be remembered as good bishops after Grosseteste, either did not take full part in the administration of the state or if they did, made sure that the diocese and the people in the diocese came first.

Gravesend probably spent the Easter of 1260 in Lincoln<sup>221</sup>, but he was soon ready to go abroad again, this time on business of his church. He was still absent in February 1261-2, when the diocese and everything related to its administration was committed to Master John of Maidstone. He must have gone to the Roman court at Viterbo, probably in the period between the death of Alexander IV and the election of Urban IV in 1261<sup>222</sup>. In this case we might claim that his church called him to do his duty, but if this duty was not related to diocesan matters it was wrong in the terms Grosseteste had taught.

He was associated with the leading prelates of the baronial party<sup>223</sup>. Although from 1260 the bishop had linked himself with Montfort and his rebellion, in 1263 he and the bishops of London and of Coventry and Lichfield had the difficult task of trying to reconcile the two sides<sup>224</sup>. These duties, however, did not take all of his time. During 1262-3, in obedience to a papal mandate, he was investigating appropriated

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<sup>219</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, pp. VIII-IX

<sup>220</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 30.

<sup>221</sup> *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. IX

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* p. IX.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.* p. X.

<sup>224</sup> Roy Martin Haines, 'Richard of Gravesend', *ODNB*, xxiii, pp. 402- 403.

churches in his diocese and the titles by which the religious bodies of his diocese owned their properties<sup>225</sup>.

We know that he was at Canterbury with the king in September and that in December 1264 he was appointed, with the archbishop of York and the bishop of London, to examine the complaints of plunder submitted by the clergy of the realm. He attended the parliament of 1264-5<sup>226</sup>. Gravesend paid dearly for his “political” involvement because after the battle of Evesham in 1265 he was suspended for supporting the rebellion<sup>227</sup>. On 1 December 1265 the legate denounced the bishops of London, Lincoln, Winchester, Worcester and Chichester as traitors. Gravesend, who did not appear in person to seek absolution from the pope, was suspended from his office and his benefices<sup>228</sup>. After having made his peace with the king, however, he continued doing his duties in the diocese, no doubt because the action of the papal legate had been seen as extremely unpopular and damaging. In 1266 Gravesend had to seek absolution from his excommunication and according to the Monastic Chronicles he obtained what he was requesting by giving *ingens pecunia*<sup>229</sup> to the pope. He was absent from England on unknown business between December 1270 and March 1272. He was not at the Council of Lyons in 1274 but he was probably present at Reading in 1279 at Archbishop Pecham’s council. The political career of the bishop came to an end with the downfall of the baronial party. After 1272 it seems that he tried to take care of his diocese even though his health began to fail<sup>230</sup>.

Oliver Sutton was deeply devoted to his diocese which he hardly ever left except when summoned to convocation or parliament. After he became bishop he never held office in the royal household or left England, though he maintained a permanent proctor at the papal curia. As a bishop, however, he could not avoid responding to the king’s demands. In 1291, together with the bishop of Winchester, he acted as a

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<sup>225</sup> *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. VIII. See also: *Annales de Oseneia*, in, *AM*, iv, pp. 132-133.

<sup>226</sup> *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. XI.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.* p. XI. Richard de Gravesend, Henry de Sandwich, Walter de Cantilupe and Roger de Longespee. See: *Annales de Waverleia*, in, *AM*, ii, p. 366.

<sup>228</sup> *Rotuli Richardi Gravesend Episcopi Lincolniensis*, p. XII. See also: *Annales de Oseneia*, in, *AM*, iv, pp. 180-181. *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, pp. 240-241.

<sup>229</sup> A lot of money. See: *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 247.

<sup>230</sup> Archbishop Kilwardby, whose consecration probably Gravesend witnessed, gave him a coadjutor because he could no longer do his job. *Ibid.* p. 268.

collector of the papal tenth for the crusade<sup>231</sup>. In 1294 he took a leading part in opposing Edward I's demand for a war tax of all clerical temporalities. Two years later he followed Archbishop Winchelsey in resisting royal demands for a clerical subsidy. As result his temporalities were confiscated in 1297.

Towards the end of the XIII century Edward's relationship with the church was very tense. His wars in France demanded substantial and continuous resources. In 1294 he turned to the Church: he asked one half of the clerical temporalities as war tax. Sutton refused to obey and tried to encourage the clergy (at the time very much confused without clear guidance and instructions from above as the see of Canterbury was vacant) to resist this demand. His action bore fruit and the clergy offered the king the payment of one-fifth of their temporalities if he would revoke the Statute of Mortmain. In February 1296, following the bull *Clericis Laicos* in which Boniface VIII forbade the clergy to pay taxes to lay persons, the English clergy did not want to contribute to an aid of one-fifth granted by Parliament in the autumn 1296. However they found themselves in an awkward situation: obedience to their religious authority or obedience to their king<sup>232</sup>. Oliver Sutton clearly did not wish to contribute and was ready to lose of all his lands and goods<sup>233</sup>. Against his will his friends negotiated with the sheriff of Lincoln who seized the appropriate amount of money and restored all the rest of the episcopal possessions. The affair ended with a general reconciliation between the king and the clergy in the summer of 1297.

Some bishops were primarily administrators whose diocesan responsibilities came second to the royal curia. Sutton was not one of these. He did what was required of him by the king. However he does not seem to have had any desire for political power and influence, unlike those who occupied important positions in the king's

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<sup>231</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XVIII. See also: *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 367. As a result the county of Lincoln was divided (for taxation purposes) into "two archdeaconries and twenty-nine deaneries, the archdeaconry of Lincoln containing twenty three deaneries and that of Stow containing four". According to the monastic chronicles in doing this he made a big mistake because he taxed the prebendal churches of the cathedral too much. *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, pp. 33-34. See also: *Annales de Oseneia*, in, *AM*, iv, pp. 332 – 333.

<sup>232</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XIX.

<sup>233</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, p. 407

inner circle and many others who were the king's personal advisors<sup>234</sup>. This might be a coincidence but Sutton, who was not interested in politics and actually tried to follow literally what Grosseteste had done before him, was one of the most successful bishops in the diocese in the period I have taken under investigation.

Dalderby played even less part in national affairs. He considered that his role lay rather in his diocese as the shepherd of his flock. However Francis Hill suggested that he helped his diocese in having the liberties which had been forfeited in 1290 restored by Edward I<sup>235</sup>. As William Page said "he gave of his best for his diocese"<sup>236</sup>. Dalderby, in contrast to Sutton who summoned six vicars because they did not pay the fifteenth of the value to the king<sup>237</sup>, opposed such measures threatening excommunication to archdeacons who would carry out such taxation in his diocese; moreover the archdeacons were to tell him the names of those who disobeyed his orders<sup>238</sup>. He was not totally excluded from the political power of the nation and particularly from the powerful influence of the king and the queen of England. Rev. Wickenden drew attention to some letters written mostly in French addressed to the bishop by Margaret, queen of Edward I, and by the Prince of Wales<sup>239</sup> commending various clerks, chaplains of theirs, to the good offices of the bishop, praying for their preferment in his diocese<sup>240</sup>. The relationship between Dalderby and Edward II after 1307 was probably complicated. On the one hand the bishop was clearly loyal to the church against any of the king's misdeeds; on the other he was certainly keen on defending the realm by collecting money for the king in order to fend off the aggression of foreign forces. On 16 July 1313 the king asked him for 500 marks as a loan for the war against the Scots<sup>241</sup> and again on 16 of October 1314 the king declared that some citizens of Lincoln, including the bishop, had bound themselves by recognisance in the Chancery, at the king's request, to the

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<sup>234</sup> *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, Vol. III, p. XXIV.

<sup>235</sup> F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 240. See also: C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 48.

<sup>236</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 34.

<sup>237</sup> *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in, *AM*, iii, pp. 304-305.

<sup>238</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>239</sup> Rev. Joseph Wickenden, *John de Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-20*, p. 216

<sup>240</sup> For instance on 8 October 1305, the king granted to John de Drokenesford, one of his clerks, the prebend of Nassington in the church of St. Mary Lincoln as it was vacant ( See: *CPR, Edward I*, iv, p. 380), but it took the bishop a month to institute it. (See: C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 50).

<sup>241</sup> C. Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 52.

sum of 900 marks for the same reason<sup>242</sup>. In general terms the bishop's attitude was clear. He did not want to become involved in political issues unless it was strictly necessary or the realm was in danger. As Clifford wrote, "He had no interest in affairs of state, and he preferred to concentrate upon his duties as the father in God of the people of his diocese"<sup>243</sup>. On the other hand the Patent Rolls of Edward II reveal that the bishop was not keen on giving up his rights to the king. On the 27 April 1314 there is a notification of the revocation of the presentation of Walter de Dodenham, king's chaplain, to the church of Fennistanton in the diocese of Lincoln. The king made a presentation, but the presentation did not belong to him and was therefore revoked<sup>244</sup>. Again on 24 April 1315 the Bishop of Lincoln complained to the king that certain tenants of his manor of Banbury were plotting to defraud him of the liberties which he and his predecessors had enjoyed<sup>245</sup>.

However, the relationship between the See of Lincoln and royal service was to change after the death of John Dalderby.

## **The Episcopate of Henry Burghersh**

John Dalderby was one of the last bishops elected freely by the chapter and one of the few who gained the bishopric without being massively involved in service to the Crown.

The choice of the chapter had fallen first on their dean Henry Mansfield<sup>246</sup>, but he had refused. Edward II confirmed Bek's election on the 20 but Archbishop Walter Reynolds, apparently aware that the Pope had reserved the see, demurred. At the same time Edward advanced the cause of Henry Burghersh in the papal curia and he

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<sup>242</sup> *CPR, Edward II*, ii, p. 189.

<sup>243</sup> Clubleby Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, p. 53.

<sup>244</sup> *CPR, Edward II*, ii, p. 105.

<sup>245</sup> *CPR, Edward II*, ii, p. 321.

<sup>246</sup> Henry Mansfield elected dean of Lincoln on 15 December 1315. *Fasti*, ii, p. 32

was duly provided<sup>247</sup>. He received the temporalities 5 August 1320 having been previously consecrated at Boulogne on 20 July 1320<sup>248</sup>. Therefore Henry Burghersh, twenty-nine years old (i.e. below canonical age) was elected and the election of Antony Bek hastily quashed and set aside<sup>249</sup>. According to the *Continuation Chronicarum*, Henry Burghersh was elected through his uncle, Sir Bartholomew Badlesmere, who was in Rome on a mission for the king; he spent the king's money without obtaining anything good for the king but according to this report, he paid the Pope in order to have his nephew appointed<sup>250</sup>. Therefore the beginning of the episcopate of Burghersh is marked by bribery; in effect by simony. On this occasion neither the King nor the Pope regarded the religious reputation of the prelate as of the first priority.

The contemporary chronicles seem unanimous in severely condemning this appointment. Dark hints were made of a pecuniary transaction. At the same time the new bishop was held to be unsuitable for the position: it was said that he was too young<sup>251</sup> and inexperienced for such high office.<sup>252</sup> However it is also true that episcopal appointments by papal provision on the nomination of the crown were becoming the norm by this time<sup>253</sup>. In the first decade of the XIV century the Papacy had already started to fill with its own candidates (or relatives) the vacancies in the Cathedral Body. Indeed Srawley stressed that the Chapter Acts at Lincoln show that Clement V between 1305 and 1309 used this method extensively, probably more than thirty times<sup>254</sup>. Obviously the common view was that since kings and other lords had endowed the Church for the spiritual benefit of the English parishioners, papal provisions to foreigners misused these resources<sup>255</sup>. However, according to the

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<sup>247</sup> Apparently the Pope gave the See of Lincoln to Henry Burghersh under the pressure of his uncle the powerful Lord Badlesmere who went to Avignon asking the pope to bestow the vacant see on his nephew. See: *Flores Historiarum*, RS, LXXXV, Vol. III, ed. Henry Richards Luard (London, 1890), pp. 191-192.

<sup>248</sup> *Fasti*, ii, p. 14. Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 29.

<sup>249</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 36

<sup>250</sup> *Continuatio Chronicarum, Robertus de Avesbury. De Gestis mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii, Adæ Murimuth*, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (London 1889), p. 31.

<sup>251</sup> About Burghersh's age when elected to the See of Lincoln, see: Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, pp. 22-23.

<sup>252</sup> Nicholas Bennett, 'Burghersh Henry', *ODNB*, viii, p 800.

<sup>253</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. XII

<sup>254</sup> *Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley, p. 29, note 32.

<sup>255</sup> May McKisack, *The fourteenth century 1307-1399* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 272-273.

*Continuatio Chronicarum*, in turning against the king, Burghersh committed a despicable act, given that it was to the former that he very much owed his position and his promotion<sup>256</sup>. Indeed the king had already tried to promote him to the bishopric of Winchester<sup>257</sup>, but not being successful he supported him for the bishopric of Lincoln<sup>258</sup>.

Despite the betrayal of Badlesmere, who turned his back on the king in 1321, in following Thomas of Lancaster, Burghersh was still among those bishops who tried to facilitate a reconciliation between the king and the people opposing him<sup>259</sup>. However the king was not impressed by Burghersh's attempt to intercede in order to pacify the realm. In fact he became more and more persuaded that the bishop, along with his uncle, was now one of his numerous enemies and demanded the Pope dismiss him from the see of Lincoln. One of the king's first actions in 1322 was to deprive the bishop of his temporalities. According to Srawley, however, the Pope refused to deprive Burghersh<sup>260</sup>. It does not seem that the bishop was very much concerned with the situation, being instead involved in diocesan business; nor was he particularly hostile towards the king. As Nicholas Bennet has stressed on the 24 of May he ordered his archdeacons and other officials to pray for the peace of the church and for the king and his family<sup>261</sup>.

What happened in 1322 was a complete disaster for Burghersh: the king had taken his temporalities and had imprisoned and killed his uncle<sup>262</sup>. The breach between Edward II and Burghersh was not to be healed. Geoffrey Baker maintained that Burghersh was involved in an attempt to remove and replace the king, but does not seem to provide evidence for this allegation<sup>263</sup>. We can understand that the king was

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<sup>256</sup> *Continuatio Chronicarum*, Robertus de Avesbury. *De Gestis mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii, Adæ Murimuth*, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson, p 31. "quem rex postmodum invenit ingratum".

<sup>257</sup> *Fædera Conventiones Literæ et cujuscunque generis Acta Publica inter Reges Angliæ*, Vol. II, part I, A.D. 1319, An 13, Edw. II, ed. Thomas Rymer (London, 1704-35), p. 411.

<sup>258</sup> Whose appointment is confirmed by the papal bull. See: *Fædera*, Vol. II, A.D 1320, An 13 Edw. II, p. 425.

<sup>259</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p 67.

<sup>260</sup> *Book of John de Schalby*, trans. by H. Srawley, p. 30, note 33.

<sup>261</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 66.

<sup>262</sup> Nicholas Bennet, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*. Vol. I, p. XII

<sup>263</sup> *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (Oxford, 1889), p. 19.

displeased with Burghersh because of his relationship with Badlesmere, but of course Burghersh also had ground for complaining at having had his temporalities removed (and with them his ability to govern the diocese). Burghersh's own movements during this period are shown by his registers to have been almost entirely within his diocese, where he was engaged in its administration: on 9 September at Stow Park; at Luttherworth on the 13<sup>th</sup>; at Banbury on 3 of October; at Daventry 7 of October; at Banbury 5<sup>th</sup> of October; at Lungwardine 19 November<sup>264</sup>.

In 1324 the temporalities were restored to him but the king made immediately clear that the presentations to benefices were reserved to the crown. The dispute over the presentations was not to be settled until the end of the reign and this according to Nicholas Bennett is the main fact "which prevented the resumption of the friendship between the king and the bishop"<sup>265</sup>. Once again a bishop's involvement in politics compromised the administration of the diocese and the religious life of the parishioners.

Queen Isabella and Mortimer landed on 24 September 1326 on the River Orwell with a mercenary army to overthrow the king and seize the power, the bishop promptly moved to his castle at Banbury in Oxfordshire and then to Daventry, further north. This does not suggest he was in a rush to join the invading force, nor that the bishop unconditionally wanted to commit himself to the cause of the rebels. In light of these events Bennet states "this was a reaction of a man who had learned from the traumatic events of 1322 the dangers of becoming involved in the politics of Edward II's reign"<sup>266</sup>. According to Geoffrey Baker he gave support to Isabel and Mortimer alongside the bishops of Hereford, Dublin and Ely<sup>267</sup> and so thought the author of the *Continuatio Chronicarum*<sup>268</sup>. Whatever the truth may be about his

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<sup>264</sup> Nichols Bennet, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 22.

<sup>265</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 79

<sup>266</sup> See the full movements of Burghersh in: Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, pp. 86 - 88

<sup>267</sup> *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. Edward M. Thompson, p. 21.

<sup>268</sup> *Continuatio Chronicarum*, ed. Edward M. Thompson, pp. 46 - 47.



initial hesitation it is certain that after October he decided to give support to the invaders and be part of the new regime<sup>269</sup>.

The initial hesitation was then replaced by what appeared to be a more convinced support for Isabella and Mortimer after the king's deposition<sup>270</sup>. In March 1327 the bishop became treasurer of the Exchequer and in May of the following year he was appointed chancellor<sup>271</sup>. As a result of being treasurer first and then chancellor he spent most of his time away from the diocese of Lincoln, busy with other matters related to the state. As Nicholas Bennet wrote, "These periods of absence inevitably affected the degree of attention which Burghersh could give to diocesan affairs"<sup>272</sup>. It was said that Burghersh was present with Mortimer when the surprise attack took place at Nottingham Castle on the night of 19 October 1330 and that he was arrested like Mortimer. Bennet has demonstrated that this story is incorrect<sup>273</sup>.

Edward III was more politically adept than his father, and chose to remain on good terms with those whom he thought could be beneficial to his reign and his power. In the period between 1329 and his appointment as a treasurer in 1334 Henry could pay attention to his diocese<sup>274</sup>. Less than four years later, however, on 1 August 1334, he was once more appointed treasurer and held this post until 24 March 1337<sup>275</sup>. Then Burghersh together with the earls of Salisbury and Huntingdon undertook diplomatic mission to Valenciennes in order to turn the rulers of the Low Countries and Rhine valley against the king of France<sup>276</sup>. This mission took him abroad where he remained most of his time until his death in 1340. According to the profile in the Dictionary of National Biography and the information available through Nicholas Bennet, Henry Burghersh was a very good administrator having been in government

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<sup>269</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 88.

<sup>270</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. XIII.

<sup>271</sup> Nicholas Bennett, 'Burghersh Henry', *ODNB*, viii, p. 801.

<sup>272</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. 92.

<sup>273</sup> The bishop was not replaced as chancellor until 28 November. The Bishop of Winchester, John Stratford took over, so if he had been arrested probably the king would have relieved him of the Great Seal, and also the bishop register's tells us that he was at liberty throughout this period. Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, pp. 95-96.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 96 -98.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.* p. 98

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.* p. 101.

both under Mortimer and under Edward III. The evidence suggests that he was also an efficient administrator of his diocese<sup>277</sup>. But he was more of a politician than a bishop<sup>278</sup>. He died in Ghent on 4 December 1340<sup>279</sup>. William Page reports a story referring to his avarice and cupidity: “while on a political mission and after his death his spirit doomed to walk up and down his park at Tynghurst which he had enclosed to the injury of the poor, appeared to one of his followers and besought him to go to the canons of Lincoln and ask them to make restitution for these former wrongs”<sup>280</sup>.

When actively functioning as a bishop, Henry Burghersh spent a great deal of time travelling within his enormous diocese<sup>281</sup>. Between 1320-1327 and 1330-1334 the diocese was his main concern and he devoted a great deal of time to its care, following in the footsteps of two of his precursors, Gravesend and Sutton particularly the latter; like them he acted in accordance with Grosseteste’s rules. The bishop had many residencies that were appropriately located as resting places during his perambulations through the diocese<sup>282</sup>. Bennet demonstrated Burghersh used vicars general seven times, sometimes even if he was not away<sup>283</sup>. We do not know why he appointed vicars<sup>284</sup> when he was in the diocese<sup>285</sup>, but this might have been because he was busy with other problems unrelated to the administration of the

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<sup>277</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. p. 37.

<sup>278</sup> Nicholas Bennett, ‘Burghersh Henry’, *ODNB*, viii, p. 802.

<sup>279</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. XIII

<sup>280</sup> *The Victoria History of The county of Lincoln*, ed. William Page, p. 37, note 4.

<sup>281</sup> The See of Lincoln was divided into eight archdeaconries further subdivided in 75 rural deaneries and approximately 1928 parochial benefices, far more than any other medieval English diocese.

Nicholas Bennett, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. XIV.

<sup>282</sup> During the period 1327- 8 and 1334 – 1337 when he was treasurer his residence was mainly at York, moreover from 1337 until his death in 1340 he was overseas taking care of the state business leaving his diocese to the vicar-general for the diocesan affairs, Simon Islip who would be the future archbishop of Canterbury. Nicholas Bennett, *The registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, p. XIV.

<sup>283</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, pp. 32 – 34.

<sup>284</sup> “In the first instance the vicar-general was the deputy who, for all acts for which Episcopal orders were not necessary to the agent, was appointed by the bishop when he left his diocese for a short period. On his return the appointment was cancelled, to be renewed or bestowed upon someone else on the next similar occasion. In the fifteenth century anyway the temporary vicar general was gradually superseded by the permanent vicar-general chosen from the member of the cathedral chapter”. Hamilton Thompson, *The English clergy and their organization in the later Middle Ages*. (Oxford, 1966), pp. 46-47.

<sup>285</sup> “The vicar-general was empowered to receive the oath of obedience from the incumbents of beneficed whom he instituted, to issue dispensations for non-residence, to summon and hold diocesan synods, to collect and receive Peter’s pence and all sum of money due to the bishop, to absolve and reconcile persons excommunicated, to examine, discuss and terminated elections of heads of religious houses”. Hamilton Thompson, *The English clergy and their organization in the later Middle Ages*. p. 47

diocese<sup>286</sup>. His action amply demonstrates the force of Grosseteste's conviction that it is impossible to be a good ecclesiastic without having as the primary concern the cure of the souls.

Duties such as the confirmation of children, ordinations, the consecration of churches and altars, and the reconciliation of churches which had been polluted by the shedding of blood, were deeds which could be done by the bishop only<sup>287</sup>. Then there was episcopal visitation of the diocese, which in theory should have happened every three years<sup>288</sup>.

The power of the bishop to correct abuses or errors was personified by the court of consistory and the court of audience. The first was held by the bishop's official and was held monthly; the second was less organised and was held in front of the bishop or even in front of the chancellor. In addition to that Burghersh used commissaries in order to hear specific cases or even cases already heard by the courts. It is interesting to note that in 1320 – 1330 the judicial commissions heard 41 matrimonial cases<sup>289</sup>. The power of the sequestrator was also increased during the XIV century in the diocese of Lincoln and especially under Burghersh's episcopate; to the sequestrator was given the power of correction and of testamentary jurisdiction<sup>290</sup>.

The duties carried out by the bishop of Lincoln during Burghersh's time were quite considerable: institution of clergy to benefices; collation of benefices; letters dimissory to candidates from Lincoln diocese seeking ordination from another bishop; the granting of beneficed clergy of dispensation to study and other licenses for absence; the confirmation or quashing of the election of the heads of religious houses; visitation of religious houses within the diocese; the execution of royal and papal mandates; hearing confession and granting of absolution in cases reserved to the bishop<sup>291</sup>.

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<sup>286</sup> "The vicar-general in fact, while the bishop was present in his diocese, was frequently in request for the execution of business which the bishop was hindered from directing in person". Hamilton Thompson, *The English clergy and their organization in the later Middle Ages*, p. 48.

<sup>287</sup> Nicholas Bennett, *The beneficed clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Episcopate of Henry Burghersh*, p. 35.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 35 – 41.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 42-45.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.* p. 50.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 31 – 32.

Despite the reservations we have made there is no doubt that Henry Burghersh was active in his diocese, even if intermittently. His register reveals the same concerns as those of his predecessors<sup>292</sup>. Burghersh's Register tells us that the situation had changed remarkably in relation to candidates who did or did not become priest within a year of institution. The number was zero.

From the death of Grosseteste until the election of Henry Burghersh a singular pattern can be seen. The cathedral chapter was largely able to have the major say in who was elected to the see. Their choice most often fell on their dean and occasionally on their chancellor. Some of these men had been archdeacons. All of them had experience of cathedral administration. Some of them were highly educated Oxford University men. All were in a position to carry forward the tradition of Robert Grosseteste. However, by the time of Henry Burghersh the particular legacy of Grosseteste would seem to have run its course and the see of Lincoln came to operate like most others in the realm, with some of the bishops active both in their diocese and in royal service. However, the lesson taught by Grosseteste seems to have kept its authority as the bishops who achieved the most in this last period were those who strictly devoted themselves to the diocese and to their Christian duties only.

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<sup>292</sup> There is, for example the certificate of John de Bekyngham archdeacon of Stow that Frederick Odilii(e) rector of Mininsby has failed to comply with a monition to reside on his benefice. Now in accordance with a commission of Bishop Burghersh the commissary has cited the said Frederick to appear and on his refusal to do so has deprived him of the benefice and has instituted Thomas de Berneston to the same. Lincoln 3 April 1337. Nicholas Bennett, *The Register of Bishop Henry Burghersh*, Vol. I, n 530, p. 67.

# Conclusion

It is time now to draw out our major findings. In order to underline the differences and the similarities which have emerged in this study, I think it is appropriate to mirror the chronological pattern adopted in the thesis. Clearly the power of the bishop changed a great deal in relation to external factors, as well as internal ones, including the deeds, actions and personal choices made by the bishops themselves. In analysing the variation and the fluctuation of the bishop's power it is therefore indispensable to take into consideration both the dimensions to their power and the influences upon that power.

## **From the mid XI century to the mid XII century**

It has been shown that in Lincoln and Cremona the bishops of this first period enjoyed, broadly speaking the same range of powers, that is to say military, social, political, economic and religious. The same is essentially true of the influences and restrictions that impinged upon that power in terms of control over the city and over the diocese. These were: political authority, papal interference, the reform movements and the territorial limits of the diocese.

In Cremona the political struggle between the pope and the emperor in the 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries generated a political fluidity which allowed different forces to emerge and to contest the bishop's authority. At the same time the religious revival which sprang from the Gregorian reform left no place for any diversity within the faith, and therefore for bishops' autonomy. None the less the power the bishop enjoyed was almost absolute, the perfect example being Bishop Oberto in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. He was the political leader of the city with the power to deal personally both with the German Emperor and with any other political leader. He was the *defensor civitatis*,

the commander of the army for the city and the contado. He was spiritually in charge of the diocese and chapter and responsible for cathedral life. Although the pope on one side and the emperor (and the commune) on the other were a potential threat to his power, his behaviour and his actions received the backing of the community, who certainly saw in him, as head of the church, the natural head of the city. The political forces were not the only problem troubling the bishop's mind. Merchants, artisans, local economic associations, and his own vassals relentlessly worked to undermine his leadership, trying to gain space for economic and social independence.

Oberto represents the epitome of the bishop in his role as leader: the leader of the city whose actions were directed towards unifying the city under his mantle and under his command. In his case it might seem therefore that his military and political roles were preponderant over the religious one, but this conclusion would be misleading. Oberto was a bishop who was the head of the city because he delivered what the people expected from a leader: economic prosperity, political security, military protection and religious guidance. The latter is particularly vital and one might wonder why his personal military actions and his deeds in the emperor's army did not sully his status or cast a black shadow over his religious role. The answer is of course that these were actions which fell to him as the military and political leader of the town and were considered to be perfectly normal by contemporaries.

By contrast other bishops such as Arnolfo or Gualtiero, who enjoyed all the powers attributed to the bishop of this period and who received political backing from the lay authority, had a stormy relationship with the town and in particular with the Patarenes and other reform movements. Their ways of conducting the diocese and especially their unscrupulous private lives and sometimes immoral actions were not considered appropriate by some of the faithful: because of failure to tackle concubinage and simony, or in Gualtiero's case, ostensibly, for stealing sacred objects and money from the church. Consequently they were thrown out of the town. In these cases we can see external factors being intertwined with the bishops' attitude towards the diocese and their personal behaviour. I think it is important to notice that in the case of Arnolfo and Gualtiero what really mattered was the fact that they did not comply with the behaviour that the citizens expected from them as representatives of the political elite as well as of the church. This is an important

point to be underlined. The bishops of this period in Cremona enjoyed almost absolute power; however, their personal behaviour could still compromise and impinge upon it. This is the patent sign that in Cremona in the 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the role of the bishop is linked to his person and to his actions. Clearly the support of the emperor and the backing of the pope were important factors, but it seems that a bishop at this time needed to be a political leader and a good religious guide for the citizens. The stability of his power appears to have been directly proportional to his level of adherence to the political and religious rules which shaped his double role of political and religious leader.

In Lincoln the situation was quite similar even though it presents some differences. The arrival of William the Conqueror in England in 1066 brought about political and religious changes. From a purely political point of view the Norman Conquest was more similar to a fresh lick of paint on an old wall as, at least during the first years, the deep-rooted Anglo-Saxon aristocracy continued to have a strong role within the country. As far as the church was concerned, however, the situation was remarkably different. Almost all the bishops who were elected in Lincoln from 1066 to the mid XII century owed their position, directly or indirectly, to the lay power, and the Norman kings wasted no time in showing their plans for the English church. What they had foreseen for the country was simply the Normanization of the English episcopate. What qualities did the English bishops need to have in order to fulfil their positions? According to Lanfranc's explanation to Pope Alexander II in 1070, they needed to be very knowledgeable, to be good in the art of oratory and, especially, to be helpful to the king in shaping his new kingdom.

Remigius, the first post Conquest bishop of Lincoln, came from France with William the Conqueror and was immediately rewarded by his leader: he was appointed to the diocese of Dorchester in 1067. The power Remigius enjoyed was, of course, religious, as well as political, economic and military. Although this last characteristic seems to be less prominent in the Lincoln episcopacy than in Italy<sup>1</sup>, Remigius was certainly a key component in William's state architecture, from a military and

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<sup>1</sup> Remigius seems not to have had any military role after 1072.

jurisdictional perspective. The bishop of Lincoln also enjoyed economic power, partly because of his personal wealth and properties, and partly because of the king's donations. From a religious perspective Remigius was the head of the chapter and the person responsible for the religious life of the diocese. Despite the fact that his relationship with the chapter was never particularly easy, through the canons and through the appointments of archdeacons, he managed to establish the organization of his diocese.

In England as in Italy religion and politics seem to have been the two key components of episcopal life during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Robert Bloet who succeeded Remigius and Alexander (the third bishop of Lincoln) both owed their power and their positions to connections to the king. This should not surprise us because in England, as in Italy, religious control of the diocese was possible only through an agreement with the political power, that is to say, through connections to the king. What it is perhaps more surprising is the fact that in Lincoln the bishops did not have to deal with the reform movements and justify their personal deeds and actions as they did in Cremona. Robert Bloet, for instance, suffered no ill consequences from the fact that he fathered a son before becoming a bishop. The fact that the bishop exerted a strict religious control over the diocese<sup>2</sup>, and kept a tight rein on the parish churches through his archdeacons, may have helped to prevent the formation of any hostile reform movements. In addition we need to note that the bishops, once attached to the king, received his backing and his support, so that a revolt against a bishop would implicitly mean a revolt against the king.

The bishops occupied important positions within the king's entourage. Robert Bloet, and Robert de Chesney, who followed Alexander to the see, were both involved in administering the justice, Bloet in the *Curia Regis* and Chesney as local justice for Lincoln and Lincolnshire. On the one hand this tightened the links between bishops, creating a unified body. On the other hand, however, it could lead to violent clashes between political and religious authority, as happened in Thomas Becket's case. Even so the Becket episode demonstrates that the English episcopate was not a completely monolithic unit, and indicates that without the bishops the king could not rule the country. The English episcopate in general worked on a national basis rather

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<sup>2</sup> A. Brown, *Church and Society in England, 1000-1500*, pp. 156-160.



than a local one as in Cremona. This situation, together with the fact that the English king was much more powerful and much more in control of his territory than the German emperor was in Italy, helped to determine the different outcome for the two bishoprics. In Cremona the bishops were very powerful locally, but their power was simply used to exploit local interest or to back up activities limited in scope and range. In Lincoln, by contrast, we witness the development of a form of episcopacy where the bishops were less powerful locally, but were part of a political and social system which gave them a national dimension.

In the first period under investigation, however, what particularly catches our attention is that the bishops in Lincoln and Cremona enjoyed a similar range of powers<sup>3</sup>. In both cities the prelates showed themselves to be skilful politicians as well as judges and landlords. Some of the differences can certainly be explained by referring to external factors, the Papacy supporting this or that bishop according to contingency, and the German emperors trying to establish their personal control over the communes. However, other differences which have emerged in the role and the behaviour of the bishops in Lincoln and Cremona can be explained only by factoring in the personal ambitions of the bishops (or at least of some of them) and the political and military responsibility that they enjoyed intrinsically in Italy. In Cremona the bishop needed to be a strong political and (especially) military leader in order to keep at bay not only the pope and the emperor but also the entire cohort of internal enemies who worked against his power. In England this was not strictly necessary, partly because the cities did not enjoy the same political and military independence, or indeed wealth, and partly because the bishop himself, by not being so powerful locally, did not have constantly to fend off enemy attacks on his position. This situation is mirrored in the foundation of monasteries, where England and Italy diverged quite profoundly. It is clear that in both countries the bishops attempted to acquire control over the monasteries for territorial and economic reasons, but it is also undeniable that in Italy this control was directed towards the reform movement and, at least at the beginning, towards halting revolt against the

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<sup>3</sup> We should also note here that what brings them together is that they were all traditional 11<sup>th</sup> century bishops developing into reforming 12<sup>th</sup> century bishops.

bishop locally, whereas in England it seems to have been more related to the need to control and regulate the faith in the countryside.

The differences between England and Italy at this stage are clearly important. Nevertheless in this first period of our study what emerges most particularly are the similarities in the role and the power of the bishop in Cremona and in Lincoln.

### **From the mid XII century to the mid XIII century**

The second period of our investigation provides the key to the future development of the role of the bishop in both cities.

In Cremona the second part of the 12<sup>th</sup> century saw the bishop undergoing change in his own position and at the same time proposing changes and reforms within the city. In the second and third quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the popes themselves began to be concerned on one hand about the role and the religious knowledge of the priests, and on the other about the Christian attitude of the parishioners. The fight against the heretical movements and the popes' demand for a steadier control over diocesan life, both contributed to increase the pressure on the bishop and on his power. With Bishop Sicardo (and also Bishop Omobono after him) the attention of the bishop was drawn towards the religious side of city life. Of course the new bishop's duties involved a strong, and to some extent a new, relationship with the canons, for whom Sicardo wrote the "*Constitutiones*" and with whom he always tried to be in agreement. The diocese also required the full attention of the bishop as is testified by his involvement in local issues concerning parishes and monasteries.

At the same time the political situation of the city had changed enormously with military and political control of Cremona in the hands of the most powerful families of the town. In particular Cremona saw a very fierce struggle between the two main factions which dominated city life and aimed to control the commune: the aristocracy and the *popolo*. The bishop had to change his role in this new scenario;

he needed to carve out a new role for himself in order to avoid being crushed between these two new forces struggling for power.

Sicardo (who was probably one of the best bishops Cremona had ever had) was very different from his predecessors and his episcopate represents a turning point. He still enjoyed some economic authority alongside his religious power, but he had lost the military might that had belonged to the bishops of the previous period, and he was no longer the main political actor in town. In the city the bishop now presented himself as a neutral person, a person *superpartes* who could pacify the city and quell the struggles which were tearing it apart. The new role Sicardo carved out for the bishop seems to be that of a person more aware of his religious dimension, less preoccupied with his political role.

Two main acts confirm Sicardo's new position in town: his proposal of the so-called "Lodo of Sicardo", the basic agreement to soothe the rivalry between the *Societas populi* and the *Societas militum*, and the canonization of Omobono Tucenghi. The "Lodo" has been considered Sicardo's attempt to pacify the city which was on the verge of a civil war. In doing that he demonstrated his genuine concern for the city and especially his apprehension for the citizens. Moreover, by proposing himself as mediator between the leading political forces, he implicitly acknowledged a new role as arbiter in the city's disputes. However, by placing himself as a mediator between two political factions, he involuntarily became (or returned to being) a political subject too, but this time lacking the military power and the political weight his predecessors used to enjoy. The case of Omobono's canonization confirmed this fact. Sicardo proposed Omobono because the latter enjoyed the "double" social background indispensable to present him as the city unifier and at the same time was a model of Christian virtues necessary to link the city to the new role the bishop had taken on. There is no doubt that Sicardo's action was religiously motivated and that in proposing Omobono he wanted to emphasize his humility as well as underline his devoutness; however, it is also indisputable that by presenting Omobono to the city he used a religious means to achieve a political aim. From a wider perspective Omobono was canonized because in this period the church desperately needed a new type of saint coming from the "popolo" in order to deal with the new pauperism coming from movements like the Valdesi; none the less by using a religious model

as a linchpin between two political factions, Sicardo transformed Omobono (and himself) into a political player.

Bishop Omobono, who followed in Sicardo's footsteps, paid a great deal of attention to the diocese as well as to the canons. One of his main concerns was the morality of the clergy, because in his view they needed to provide an example for the faithful and behave appropriately, especially in relation to simony and nicholaism. He used the same approach towards the canons, regulating their numbers, their prebends and especially their behaviour as clerics. He organized the "*Statutes*" in order to discipline their lives and to regulate the canonical liturgy. Bishop Omobono had a good relationship with the mendicant orders, the newly emerging religious force in town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; he tried to establish a relationship based on mutual respect and to help them find locations in the town. Omobono was also very active in supporting the *Consortia*, through which lay and ecclesiastical people took care of the sick, the homeless and in general of people in need. Although a very good and devoted bishop, Omobono did take the diocese of Cremona forward limiting his role to its administration.

In Lincoln matters turned out differently. The political situation was very troubled in England after 1160-70, with Henry II constantly busy fighting wars in Britain and in France or fending off rebellion against his authority. As in the previous period, the first two bishops elected, Geoffrey and Walter of Coutances, owed their power to the king, but they were not particularly interested in developing diocesan life: Geoffrey because he did not want to be a bishop, and Walter because he remained in charge of the diocese for too short a time. In England in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and into the 13<sup>th</sup> century royal clerks were regularly rewarded with bishoprics and other ecclesiastical positions creating a dangerous situation in which the diocese of Lincoln could be left unattended, with the consequence, among others, that monastic independence increased.

In the diocese of Lincoln, however, things changed a great deal when Hugh of Avalon (in time St Hugh) was elected. Educated by Augustinian canons and subsequently trained by Carthusian monks, Hugh represented a completely new type

of bishop. His primary concern was the religious life of his flock and to this he was ready and willing to sacrifice everything. The relationship between the bishop and the king was very close. Hugh knew it was Henry II who had called him to England and that he owed his position to him, as his predecessors had. Despite this Hugh was very strict with regard to his religious duties and as regards his role as a bishop. His conception of his duties was extremely clear. He wanted to work for the church, no matter what, because for him the most important thing was the salvation of the souls of those people entrusted to him. Of course the bishop of Lincoln (as with the English bishops in general) knew that he would not be able to implement reforms unless he had royal support. However, politics, although important and even useful, was nothing more than an accessory for Hugh. Politics for him was a means, not an end. He made no compromises, not even for the king, whom he rebuked tirelessly and remorselessly each time he failed to respect religious laws or impinged upon church liberties. According to Hugh of Avalon the bishop was bound to the king but only on certain conditions. The bishop could not break religious laws or deny his religious duties in order to obey the king; were the king to issue an order against religious laws the bishop's obedience would be automatically void. This attitude, combined with the work he carried out in organizing Episcopal visitations, and his sturdy respect for the canons (whom he expected to perform their religious duties without exception) has earned him the title of "true predecessor" of Robert Grosseteste.

Robert Grosseteste achieved so much in his diocese partly thanks to the work accomplished and performed by St Hugh. Grosseteste, a scholar-bishop who lived during the consolidation of papal government from Alexander III to Innocent IV and grew up in a scholastic environment, dug the final furrow between politics and religion. The main issues concerning Grosseteste were candidates who were unworthy to be appointed to religious benefices and the misuse of money belonging to the church. In his "crusade" against what he thought to be the problems of his time, he spared no-one. His scolding and his reproaches reached his canons, other bishops, lay or ecclesiastical lords, kings and eventually the Pope.

Grosseteste considered the church to be a hierarchically organized institution in which he owed obedience to his superiors and expected to be obeyed by his lower-

grade colleagues. Like St Hugh before him he saw the church as being structured around the concept of religious trustworthiness. Whoever belonged to the church needed to be aware of the fact that he/she was responsible before God for the cure of souls, and everything must be devoted, and if necessary sacrificed, to this aim. This partly explains his quarrel with his chapter when they refused to be inspected and organized. He wanted to make them understand that they were not a self-regulating body within the church but that, on the contrary, they needed to show adherence to Christian laws by showing humility, respect, and obedience. This attitude also accounts for his quarrel with the king or any other lay lord who wanted to exploit religious benefices by appointing candidates who were not suitable for the positions or did not wish to respect the church's values. For Grosseteste the only definition of a good ecclesiastic was one who served God by following His commandments. Clearly in order to improve the situation in the diocese, given its dimensions, he needed, in addition to his own perambulations, to rely on archdeacons, priests, friars, abbots and ecclesiastics in general whose faith and devotion had to be absolutely spotless. That is the reason why he was so reluctant to appoint to benefices anyone who fell short. The most sensational of all was, of course, his refusal to appoint to a benefice Frederick di Lavagna, Innocent IV's nephew, and the subsequent attack he launched in 1253 against the papal Curia in Rome where he called the pope and the cardinals there 'Antichrist' and 'limbs of Satan'. In his view, the pope in issuing laws or performing actions against the faith, betrayed religion, the faith and even the role Christ bestowed upon him.

The king did not escape his scolding either when he tried to assign benefices to his own clerks, or when he appointed abbots and other ecclesiastics as itinerant justices. Grosseteste wanted to make a clear division between religion and politics, and in some cases, as in the dispute for the prebend of Thame<sup>4</sup>, argued for the superiority of the church over the king. With this background it is easy to understand that his relationship with Henry III was not particularly smooth, given also his friendship with de Montfort; however, there is nothing to suggest that Grosseteste was ever interested in implementing political change in England.

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter five, pp. 216-217

The irony of the situation is that Hugh of Avalon and Robert Grosseteste were able to be effective in the stance they took, even against the king, because of the relative stability of the realm provided by the centralized state. With the popes at a distance there were no other contenders for their power. They had therefore, considerable advantages over Sicardo and Omobono. All four men were acting according to their religious beliefs. Sicardo did not enjoy the same freedom of action. In proposing himself to the city as the new pacifier he exploited his religious aura and his religious position to quell social unrest. At the same time, in seeking the canonization of Omobono, he used his religious power and his religious background, in order to achieve an essential political aim: the social and political pacification of Cremona. In doing that he absorbed religion into politics. Hugh of Avalon acted, and was able to act, in exactly the opposite way. He knew that he needed the king in order to achieve his goals, but he used his limited political power in order to attain a religious goal: the salvation of souls. Hugh was part of the political entourage only because it could not be otherwise, but he worked the political system in order to reach a series of religious objectives, both in the city of Lincoln and in the diocese. Grosseteste did not simply follow Hugh of Avalon, but took his religious attitude to the extreme, considering not only the king's orders, but also the pope's, unsuitable if directed against religious law. Moreover it seems to be clear that what Grosseteste wanted to achieve was a radical change in the ecclesiastics' attitude towards their roles. He wanted them to be aware of their responsibilities and he wanted them to be examples for the faithful. This implies a change in the internal lives of the individuals. In contrast Sicardo, by proposing his political changes, expected the life of the people to be changed by the external social and political order imposed upon the city. Sicardo certainly aimed for a moral and religious order within the consciences of the faithful, but he tried to establish it through external political and social means. Perhaps he lacked the resources to do otherwise.

## **From the mid XIII century to the mid XIV century**

In the last period of our analysis we see the full consequences of the development that took place in the middle period. In Cremona the bishop's power underwent a massive change. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the honour of electing a bishop shifted from the hands of the clergy to those of the canons, whose decisions were very often bypassed by the popes' intrusion or by political contingencies. These facts, combined with periods of vacancy contributed enormously to the weakening of the power of the bishop during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Moreover the 13<sup>th</sup> century saw the influx of the mendicant orders, mainly Dominicans and Franciscans, who, by preaching poverty and recommending a simple spirituality, gained not only the support of a vast sector of society but also succeeded in attracting to their houses lands, money and donations. The traditional monasticism was the first victim of this new trend. The second was the bishops, especially those elected by the pope, who were perceived as a foreign element in the town. Their power was challenged and weakened.

In this period the bishop became part of the city's political factions. He had already lost his military and much of his political power in the previous period. Now, through being part of the factions struggling for power, he would also lose his religious aura and his influence over the population. He would no longer be perceived as a person *superpartes*. This situation is revealed in three main cases which epitomized the fall of the bishop's power. In 1249 Giovannibuono dei Giroldi, elected in a regular manner by the canons, saw his election quashed by Innocent IV and his see given to Bernerio Sommi, simply because Giovannibuono had a strong Ghibeline background whereas Sommi was supported by a Guelph family network. By quashing this election for clearly political reasons the Pope introduced for the very first time in Cremona the concept of a good or bad "political bishop", a bishop who can be accepted or refused not because of his religious virtues or faults but according to his political orientation. This element in the decline of the bishop was certainly amplified by the political struggle Cremona was experiencing, with two, sometimes three, factions fighting to gain power. The devastating consequence of



this situation was that when the Guelph party lost power in 1249/50 the bishop *in pectore* Bernerio could not join his diocese, and the elected, but not confirmed Giovannibuono acted as a bishop without having the authority even in the religious sphere enjoyed by his predecessors. Giovannibuono was in a similar situation again when Bernerio died. This time he was confirmed by two abbots, but another Pope, Alexander IV, refused to accept him, preferring the more “politically reliable” Cacciaconte from Asciano.

In 1297 Pope Boniface VIII elected Rainerio di Casole. Given that the political situation seemed to be quiet, Rainerio began to organize his diocese, appointing vicars and calling synods. The situation deteriorated dramatically, however, when the Emperor Henry VII entered Cremona in 1311. He exiled all the representatives of the Guelph families together with the bishop who was evidently perceived to be too close to the Pope and to the Guelph party. The election to the see in the following year of two candidates, Egidio Bonseri and Egidio Madelberti, respectively affiliated with the Ghibeline and Guelph families, exacerbated an already tense situation, and simply confirmed that the bishop was no longer now a person respected by the citizens as a body, but was merely a bishop belonging to this or that faction. Although eventually Bonseri was confirmed by two abbots, those of St Thomas and St Peter, when the Guelph party returned in 1317 he had to leave.

To some extent the religious role of the bishop in town seems to have been replaced by that of the mendicant orders, as is testified by the foundation of the “*Consortium of peace and faith*” led mainly by Dominicans and Franciscans. This *Consortium* was peculiar because, although one of its specific tasks was to fight heresy, the bishop was excluded from it. The situation is different from the “*Consortium Caritatis*” of Omobono’s period when the bishop was completely involved and acted alongside lay people.

However, even the friars, when elected to the see, seemed to lose their sway over the population and to become part of the factional struggles. In 1327 the Pope elected Friar Ugolino to the see. Meanwhile the Emperor Louis IV arrived in Italy to claim his imperial inheritance. One of the very first things the emperor did was to depose

the pope, John XXII and to elect the anti-pope, Nicolas V, who in 1329 dismissed Friar Ugolino and elected in his place Friar Dondino. Not even the friars, usually considered to be outside of the political game and well respected by the population, could slow down the decline in power, role and reputation of the bishop in Cremona.

The power of the bishop in this period reached rock bottom with the election of Ugolino de Addengheris, a mere boy from the city of Parma. The bishop tried to carry out his tasks within the city and his obligations towards the diocese. A quarrel with the canons is recorded as well as some failed attempts to restore his feudal and political power. The bishop was now a lonely person and a lonely figure. Indeed in 1361 when he found himself compelled to make his clergy pay taxes to both the lay power represented by the Visconti family and the pope he was unable to sort out the situation and hanged himself in the bishop's house.

Many factors contributed to this tragic outcome. The bishop was basically excluded now from the main decisions in relation to city life. Political power was effectively in the hands of two different factions which used and abused the figure of the bishop as it pleased them. The papacy, by appointing and/or removing bishops, significantly contributed to diminishing their importance and their role while undermining their prestige and their moral authority in town. However, I claim that the collapse of the bishop's power was also self-inflicted and was determined by Sicardo's attempt to use religious means to produce a socio-political result. This action, no matter what his intention, effectively turned religion into politics and created the final crack in the bishop's defences. Those forces in the town opposed to episcopal power had the opportunity to reduce it to a minimum, once and for all.

In Lincoln the bishops inherited a different legacy: that of Grosseteste. The four who followed him were: Gravesend, Sutton, Dalderby and Burghersh<sup>5</sup>.

In Lincoln, the bishops retained their religious power, were respected by the population and were orientated towards their diocese. However, a more subtle

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<sup>5</sup> Bishop Lexington, Bek and Mansfield either did not take possession of the see or stayed in charge for too short a time to be representative.

division can be seen between what we might call “religious bishops” and “state bishops”.

Sutton, in particular, perpetuated Grosseteste’s legacy without compromises. He had no political connections nor did he look for them. In consequence he spent all his energies and efforts in his relentless travelling around the diocese, in his actions to maintain the moral quality of the clergy, in clamping down on adultery and fornication. Dalderby too, basically played no part in national affairs, and devoted much of his time to the diocese trying to crush vices and moral disorder, reducing his political obligations to the minimum in order to avoid being accused of treason.

It has certainly not escaped notice that, unlike Sutton and Dalderby, Bishop Gravesend and especially Bishop Burghersh did have political connections and did look for a role in state business. Gravesend, although not a corrupt or immoral bishop, had his diocesan activities severely limited by this. Moreover his “alleged” involvement in the conflict between de Montfort and the king determined his suspension by the papal legate. Bishop Burghersh’s case gives more support to this proposed division. He had strong political connections, and he owed his see to his uncle and to the Pope. His involvement with Lancaster’s rebellion, his appointment as chancellor and treasurer, and his state diplomatic missions are all elements which detached him from his diocese and from his religious duties. Despite the fact that he was not a dishonest person nor a bad cleric, his close attachment to the political sphere demonstrates that even in Lincoln putting politics before religion could spell disaster for a bishop. Gravesend and Burghersh both paid dearly, at a personal and religious level, for their too close political involvement.

In this thesis I have chosen to concentrate on two bishoprics, one in Italy and one in England. In a sense the history of every diocese is unique. There were factors that were specific to Lincoln and to Cremona, not least in the personalities and actions of particular bishops. However, there is no reason to suppose that either was entirely atypical and their histories surely reflect the general conditions that prevailed in England and in northern Italy respectively. Whilst little was predetermined the internal and external factors affecting the church in England, in Italy and indeed both created a range of possible effects, the exact permutation of which was peculiar to

each diocese. Only a broader study of the bishops and their churches in England and Italy could bring out the full pattern. I hope, however, that in this thesis I have brought out at least some of the flavour of what can be observed through a comparative study.

# Appendices

## Appendix I – The early life and career of Robert Grosseteste.

It is very difficult to disentangle facts from legend during Grosseteste's early years, partly because of the paucity of the sources, partly because Grosseteste was a man of extraordinary culture who engaged very different aspects of human knowledge. The surname Grosseteste was not completely unknown at the time; we have a record of Master Richard Grosseteste who was Archdeacon of Wiltshire and of Ralph Grosseteste who was appointed a papal judge-delegate by Pope Innocent III. We cannot demonstrate at the moment whether they were relatives of Grosseteste or not, but what is certain is that he had a sister Juetta, a nun. Contemporary authority is, however, unanimous in asserting that Robert Grosseteste was of lowly origin<sup>1</sup> and Southern added that Grosseteste did not have family connections and that he was of humble, "perhaps very humble, birth"<sup>2</sup> or to use the words of J. Murray, the editor and commentator on Grosseteste's *Chateau D'Amour*, "il était d'origine très humble"<sup>3</sup>.

The exact date of his birth is uncertain. It is generally stated that he was born between 1170-75 but, Callus who thought Grosseteste was already a master in arts not later than 1190 (and assuming that he was then in his twenties at the least), advanced the date of his birth to 1168 or thereabout<sup>4</sup>. According to McEvoy he was born in the village called Stow in the county of Suffolk in the diocese of Norwich. Probably his native langue was Anglo-Norman and the best argument in favour of this is the fact that his poem *Château d'Amour* was written in this language<sup>5</sup>. As Southern pointed out there are three Stows in Suffolk:

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<sup>1</sup> D.A. Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar', p. 2. See also: M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Le Chateau D'Amour de Robert Grosseteste, évêque de Lincoln*, ed. Jean Murray (Paris, 1918), p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> D.A. Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar', pp. 2-3.

<sup>5</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 1982), p. 20 – 21. See also: *Le Chateau D'Amour de Robert Grosseteste, évêque de Lincoln*, ed. J. Murray. Although probably Grosseteste was an Anglo-Norman native speaker we do not really know how much, how frequently and in which context Grosseteste would use this language as Anglo-Norman was far from being a vernacular in almost universal use in the England of about 1200, being a language that the majority of the inhabitants of the island were incapable of speaking and understanding. For the use of the language in Grosseteste's

Stow Market, Stow Langtoft and West Stow, all near Bury St Edmunds. The last two especially should draw our attention because they were both villages owned by the monks of Bury St Edmunds, and we know that Grosseteste had a good relationship with them in the last period of his life and career<sup>6</sup>.

Grosseteste's life and deeds until he became bishop of Lincoln are veiled in mystery and surrounded by uncertainty; some parts of his life have been revealed, some others (particularly where he studied and where he was during the interdict over England) still remain obscure. Richard of Bardney, who gives us the only consistent account of Grosseteste's education we possess, told the story of Grosseteste's career until a date around 1220 or thereabouts. Grosseteste was brought up in total poverty by his widowed mother. After her death Grosseteste went to Lincoln where, after an initial rejection, he became friend with the mayor. Then he went to school in Lincoln and made great progress in grammar probably in the old Grammar school which was part of the original foundation of the cathedral<sup>7</sup>. Bardney sometimes embellished his story with some completely made up details; however, it is undeniable that the name of the place where he was born and the first part of his life are known only through this source. Although his origins were recognized as remarkably humble as he said, it cannot be true that as a boy he begged at the door of the mayor of Lincoln because there was no mayor until about 1205<sup>8</sup> or about 1206<sup>9</sup>. Whatever is the truth about Grosseteste's patrons or supporters we can be sure that Grosseteste received his first education in Lincoln. Bardney also tells us that he went to the school of Cambridge to study logic and rhetoric. Later he began to be known for his scientific knowledge. Apparently the bishop of Salisbury sent him to Rome on his behalf, a journey which he achieved in a single night on his marvellous horse<sup>10</sup>. The magic horse

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writing see also: M. Hessenauer, For a larger Audience. Grosseteste's Perambulavit Iudas in Anglo-Norman, in *Robert Grosseteste, his thought and its impact*, ed. Jack Cunningham, (Toronto, 2012), pp. 259-313.

<sup>6</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 77.

<sup>7</sup> Clubley Clifford, *John de Dalderby Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Hull, 1965), p. 81.

<sup>8</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Sir F. Hill. *Medieval Lincoln*. pp. 194-195. This story it is complicated because according to Southern "the first mayor, Adam of Wigford had long been a wealthy citizen of the town, and among other charitable acts he is known to have supported a handicapped child in his household". (R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 77). Southern quoted Hill, (*Ibid.* p. 77, note 29) but the name quoted in Hill (F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p. 111), is only Adam and not Adam of Wigford. F. Hill talked about a dumb boy of Wigford who recovered his speech and who was a pensioner of Adam the mayor and Reimbald the rich.

<sup>10</sup> H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. II, p. 331 c 17. Very interesting is the fact that a similar story (i.e. of a holy man transported by an evil spirit from the region of Burgundy to Rome in three hours) is told by William of Auvergne, who was master of the University of Paris around 1220 and then from 1228 until his death in 1249 bishop of the city. For the possible connection between Grosseteste and

aside, Richard of Bardney<sup>11</sup> tells us that in his youth Grosseteste was very good in school, particularly in grammar and much better than his peers: *Grammaticæ præcepta capit, superando coævus*<sup>12</sup> and that he went from Lincoln to Cambridge where schools for higher studies were beginning to flourish in the 1180s<sup>13</sup>. After this point Grosseteste's personal life gets intertwined with his career and to this we must now turn.

## Career

In the period between 1189 and April 1192 his name is one of the many who witnesses a charter of Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, confirming the possessions of the monks of St Andrew in Northampton<sup>14</sup>. He has the title of Master and this for Southern means that "he had reached a standard of proficiency which entitled him to teach"<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand as J. Goering points out, although from this charter we conclude that he is a Magister we do not know, "where he studied and what he might teach"<sup>16</sup>. In 1196 or thereabout he joined the household of William de Vere, Bishop of Hereford. It is reckoned that this move was made possible by the intervention of Gerald of Wales who was studying in Lincoln in 1194 -1195 and, having met Grosseteste and having been significantly impressed by him, testified to his wide knowledge of the liberal arts, medicine and law by writing a letter recommending him to William de Vere, bishop of Hereford<sup>17</sup>. We can deduce from a letter of Gerald of Wales that Robert was in the bishop's household not later than 1198: "He is praised not only for his remarkable proficiency in the liberal arts and abundant knowledge of literature,

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William of Auvergne, see: Raymond James Long, 'Between idolatry and science. The Magical Arts in the Grosseteste school', in, *Robert Grosseteste. His thought and its impact*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham, pp. 167- 171, and p. 172, note 27.

<sup>11</sup> Bardney, Richard (*fl.* 1485/6–1519), Benedictine monk and author. Bardney was the author of verse lives of Robert Grosseteste and of Little St Hugh of Lincoln in 1503. The volume was utterly destroyed in the Ashburnham House fire of 1731, but substantial extracts from the life of Grosseteste were published in Henry Wharton's *Anglia sacra* (1691). Wharton had a low opinion of Bardney's work; he shortened the life by changing, eliminating or weeding out what he described as 'grosser fables and inane flourishes' (H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*. Vol. II, p. xvii), and stated that he was only publishing the residue because he could find nothing better. R. W. Southern in 1986 gave cogent reasons for believing that although he contaminated it with fables Bardney had nevertheless faithfully transmitted the essentials of a much earlier source, perhaps a life of Grosseteste prepared to support efforts to secure his canonization between about 1260 and 1310. Although it is notably lacking in names and dates, his work has the particular value of providing a plausible account of Grosseteste's deeply obscure early years, with many details not found in any other source; for Southern it is 'the only substantial medieval biography of Grosseteste'. R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. II, p. 330, c 15.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 330 c 16.

<sup>14</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 63-64.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 64.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Goering, 'When and where did Grosseteste study theology?', in, *Robert Grosseteste: New Perspectives on his thought and scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout, 1995), p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 65.

but also for his dexterity in handling various affairs and determination of causes and in securing and preserving bodily health<sup>18</sup>. During his time in Hereford Grosseteste wrote on chronology, astrology, astronomy and comets, all of them subjects common “to several scholars in the cathedral ambience of Hereford”<sup>19</sup>. He also wrote about the principles of natural science and he wrote the first of all Medieval Latin commentaries on Aristotle’s “Posterior Analytics” that was probably completed about 1220.

There is sufficient evidence that Robert quickly became an active administrator in the diocese of Hereford. He is found from 1196-1198 witnessing several of the bishop’s charters<sup>20</sup>. On Christmas Eve 1198 when Bishop William, who was his patron, died, Grosseteste found himself without a source of income and without a benefice. As a result, we lose trace of him. Like many other ecclesiastics, he was probably in exile in France as England fell under papal interdict<sup>21</sup>. This is also known from his personal reminiscences or at least it is what Matthew Paris tells us<sup>22</sup>. Thereafter he appeared twice in charters: the first before 1216 when he acted with the archdeacon of Salop and the rural dean of Sapey (border between Herefordshire and Worcestershire) in a case concerning the monks of Worcester and the second in or before the same year when he and Hugh Foliot, archdeacon of Shropshire, acting as papal judges-delegate, trying to settle a dispute between the monks of Worcester and a small local landowner<sup>23</sup>. According to the editor of *Episcopal Acta* (following Southern) it was probably Hugh who helped Grosseteste in his years of difficulty following William de Vere’s death<sup>24</sup>, even though as Julia Barrow reminds

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<sup>18</sup> D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 4. Probably Grosseteste did not enter William’s household until 1195 (*EEA*, VII, p. LVIII.) and in this we can also follow the explanation given in the *Episcopal Acta* where it is stated that: “William de Vere gave positions in his household to young *magistri* including the young Robert Grosseteste” (*EEA*, VII, pp. XLIV – XLV).

<sup>19</sup> Richard Southern, ‘Robert of Grosseteste’, in, *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> Grosseteste is a witness in the following charters: **Charter 207**, Grant to St Guthlac’s of the mill in front of their gate, 1195-1198. (*EEA*, VII, pp. 152-153). **Charter 208**, Settlement of the case between St Guthlac’s and Brecon priory concerning the tithes of demesne of Herbert de Furchis in Bodenham, with the consent of the abbots of St Peter, 1195-1198. (*Ibid.* pp. 153-155). **Charter 209**, Institution of Prior Henry of St Guthlac’s, Hereford in the church of Holme Lacy, 1195-1198. (*Ibid.* pp. 155-156). Then two charters to which Grosseteste could have been a witness; **Charter 228**, Licence of appropriation issued to much Wenlock priory in respect of the church of Ditton priors, to take effect after the death of Master Nicholas of Hampton, the then vicar, 1195-1198. (*Ibid.* pp. 169-170). **Charter 237**, Licence to Tintern abbey to appropriate the church of Woolaston, 1190 -1198. (*Ibid.* pp. 175 -176). In both last charters Grosseteste if him, has been called “*Magistro Roberto*” which would be plausible for Grosseteste.

<sup>21</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 66.

<sup>22</sup> J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’, p. 21, note 13. See, M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, v, pp. 404 – 406.

<sup>23</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 65-66. See: J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’, p. 20.

<sup>24</sup> *EEA*, VII, p. XLIX.



us, “references to Hugh over the next thirty-five years are plentiful, but they shed little light on his activities”<sup>25</sup>.

Grosseteste re-emerges from obscurity when Hugh Foliot, who had been archdeacon of Shropshire since the 1190s, became bishop of Hereford in October 1219<sup>26</sup>. He is witness to a charter which has been dated between 1219 and 1229, from the time that Thomas Foliot became precentor (not long before 1223) and when Robert Grosseteste became archdeacon of Leicester (before 19 December 1229)<sup>27</sup>. We cannot prove whether Grosseteste left Hereford on the death of William de Vere, 24 December 1198 or whether he remained there, but it is more likely, as Callus assumes, that he went to Oxford to teach in the arts school of which we have traces since 1209. If this were so, it would mean that Grosseteste’s career at Oxford would have been interrupted from 1209 until 1214<sup>28</sup> due to the exile and scattering of the teachers and masters<sup>29</sup>.

The fact that he re-appeared under Hugh Foliot, bishop of Hereford made Southern suggests that this “lends weight to the possibility that after the death of Bishop de Vere he joined the household of the archdeacon of Shropshire”<sup>30</sup>. On the other hand McEvoy thinks that Grosseteste left England for Paris or more generally for France, and his ideas are supported by two other authors: N. M. Schulman and J. Goering. Schulman challenged Southern’s theory arguing that the name in Hugh Folio’s recollection (dated 1213-1216) could easily be attributed to some other “Master R”<sup>31</sup> and that there is no evidence that Grosseteste was in Shropshire in 1220 or earlier because the royal justice was looking for him in 1219 and failed to find him<sup>32</sup>. Schulman’s main thesis is that Grosseteste was in Paris where, according to the documents of the church of Saint-Opportune, he was married and he had three children. This would explain why Grosseteste remained *clericus* until 1225 and

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<sup>25</sup> *EEA*, VII, pp. XLVIII – XLIX.

<sup>26</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 67. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, iii, p. 56.

<sup>27</sup> *EEA*, VII, charter 334, p. 262.

<sup>28</sup> D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 5. “The dispersion following *the suspendium clericorum 1209 – 14* though it coincided with the time of the Interdict under which England was placed, is not to be confused with it”.

<sup>29</sup> In Richard of Bardney we have this account of Grosseteste’s studies in Oxford in which among other knowledge about animals, and orthiculture he: *invenit voces quibus allevare solebat agrorum morbos, subsidiumque dabat.* (H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. II, p. 332, c 19). Richard of Bardney like Gerald of Wales clearly mentions Grosseteste’s interests in medicine affirming that he had the ability to cure people. (J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’ p. 18, note 2. See also: R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 78).

<sup>30</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 68.

<sup>31</sup> N. M. Schulman, ‘Husband, father, bishop? Grosseteste in Paris’, *Speculum, Medieval Academy of America*, 72, 2 (1997) p. 332.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 333, note 19.

why he advanced so slowly in his ecclesiastical career<sup>33</sup>. Schulman assumes that after the death of his wife Grosseteste was able to return to his church life and career without clashing with religious rules about marriage. Although fascinating and very well structured, the theory proposed by Schulman lacks supporting evidence<sup>34</sup>. Nonetheless this idea that Grosseteste was in Paris found support from Joseph Goering who re-affirmed that “documentary evidence of his offices and activities before becoming bishop of Lincoln is sporadic”<sup>35</sup>. According to Bardney, Grosseteste began to study theology at the same time that he became a priest and received a Lincoln prebend after 1225<sup>36</sup>. On 25 April 1225 the Episcopal register of Hugh of Wells, bishop of Lincoln, reports that the bishop had given the rectory of Abbotsley (in the county of Huntingdon, midway between Bedford and Cambridge) to Master Robert Grosseteste<sup>37</sup> who was a deacon at the time. Richard of Bardney says that Grosseteste’s first benefice was Clifton, a village about ten miles from the parish of Abbotsley. Southern’s researches show that the presentation to Clifton was very much disputed by different claimants in the first three decades of the thirteenth century and it may be that even Grosseteste attempted to acquire this benefice and failed. In short “the bishop of Lincoln gave Grosseteste his first benefice: perhaps Clifton which failed, then Abbotsley”<sup>38</sup>.

At this point we need to clarify as much as possible the chronology of Grosseteste’s presence and study in Oxford which is a very controversial point. According to J. Goering there is no record of Grosseteste in Oxford before 1225<sup>39</sup>. By 1230, however, he was not only a famous theologian but was also familiar with some of the latest teaching in arts and theology at Paris in 1220s<sup>40</sup>. Grosseteste was certainly a scientist before being a theologian, but when and where did he change the course of his studies? According to the only statement we have, that of Richard of Bardney, the king’s favour and influence re-oriented his studies: “He was the king’s friend; he sat at his table among his friends and he became the keeper of his secret seal”<sup>41</sup>. This statement, however, raises more questions than it

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<sup>33</sup> According to Schulman, Grosseteste’s wife died in 1224. (N. M. Schulman, ‘Husband, father, bishop? Grosseteste in Paris’, pp. 334 – 339.) See also documents in Appendix to the same article.

<sup>34</sup> Moreover this theory, if followed, would implicitly entail the assumption that Grosseteste after the death of his wife would come back to England abandoning his children to their destiny.

<sup>35</sup> Joseph Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’, p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. II, pp. 333-4, c. 21, c. 22. See also: J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’, pp. 22 -23

<sup>37</sup> R.W. Southern, ‘Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe’, p. 69. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 302, note 1.

<sup>38</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 79.

<sup>39</sup> J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’, p. 42.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 34-35.

<sup>41</sup> H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. II, p. 334, c 22, c 23.

provides answers for. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century as Southern explained, the two names, secretary and keeper of the privy seal were both used and convey “a relationship with the king ill-defined, ill-documented, standing outside the normal routines of administration”<sup>42</sup>. We do not really know whether or not the turning-point in Grosseteste’s career was his friendship with the young king. So, when did he go to Oxford?<sup>43</sup>

After the interdict the papal-legate had laid down that the masters of Oxford<sup>44</sup> should have a chancellor appointed annually by the bishop of Lincoln. The masters, however, soon began to seek a voice in the appointment. About 1228 – 30 they chose Grosseteste as their chancellor without an Episcopal nomination. The bishop rejected this infringement but evidently felt sufficient respect for Grosseteste to allow him to perform the duties of chancellor for a year. This incident is known only because in 1295, when the situation was repeated, Bishop Oliver Sutton recalled Grosseteste’s illicit nomination under his predecessor, Hugh of Wells, and ordered the record of it to be entered in his register as confirmation of his right to choose the chancellor of the university annually. Before this time Robert had been master of the scholars<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 81.

<sup>43</sup> As stated before, according to Callus there are traces of Grosseteste since 1209, according to Goering and Southern not before 1225 and according to McEvoy in 1214.

<sup>44</sup> (The University was closed 1210 – 1214).

<sup>45</sup> Oliver Sutton (1280 – 99) Grosseteste’s successor in the See of Lincoln attested: *Beatus Robertus quondam episcopus Lincolnensis, qui huiusmodi officium gessit dum in Universitate predicta regebat, in principio creationis sue in episcopum, dixit, proximum predecessorem suum episcopum Lincolnensem non permisisse quod idem Robertus vocaretur cancellarius, sed magister scholarum*. D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 7. Blessed Robert Grosseteste once bishop of Lincoln, who had this office when he was regent of the before mentioned University, (Oxford) at the beginning of his episcopate said that his predecessor (Hugh of Wells) when he was bishop of Lincoln did not want him to be called chancellor but master of the scholars/students.

In McEvoy’s hypothesis (J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 26 – 29) Grosseteste was regent of the University already in 1214 and in order to demonstrate that he said that the sentence “at the beginning of his episcopate” does not refer to Grosseteste, but refers to Hugh the Wells and therefore at the beginning of Hugh’s episcopate in 1214 Grosseteste was master of the schools. I agree that is more likely that Grosseteste was in this office in 1214 or thereabouts than in 1235, but personally I do not think that the Latin sentence could work in the way McEvoy explained to us. Indeed usually in Latin the possessives *suus –a-um* refers to the subject of the sentence in which they are used. Had they wanted to refer to another part of the sentence, for instance the object, they should have used *eius – eorum – earum* genitives of the personal pronouns *is-ea-id*. In this case, according to me, Grosseteste should be the term *sue* refers to. I think therefore that the best explanation would be: [...] at the beginning of his episcopate Grosseteste said that his predecessor (Hugh of Wells) when he was bishop of Lincoln (and therefore in between 1209-1235, but he got the See only in 1214 because of the interdict) did not want him to be called chancellor but master of the scholars/students.

However Callus suggested that Bishop Sutton’s statement contains at least two formal information:

1) “Grosseteste filled the office of chancellor while he was regent in the University”

Southern believed that in the first five years after 1225 Grosseteste was a theological lecturer in the secular schools of the university and that his great knowledge and preparation paved the way for his success and brought him to the highest position among masters<sup>46</sup>. By 1230, he concluded, Grosseteste “was certainly the most distinguished master of the schools in Oxford”<sup>47</sup>. In Southern’s reconstruction, from 1225 until 1235 Grosseteste’s life was closely associated with Oxford. Certainly by 1225 he had completed most of his scientific writing. In the years that followed he devoted himself to the Bible and to the study of the fathers<sup>48</sup>. Even then it worth remembering that it is only “on 23 June 1234 that we have a precisely dated and unambiguous official document which connects him with the Oxford schools”<sup>49</sup>. The document in question is a royal mandate stating that Grosseteste, Master Bacon OP and the chancellor of the University were in charge of the arrest of all prostitutes who remained in Oxford, contravening a direct royal order to the contrary<sup>50</sup>.

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- 2) “Just after he became bishop Grosseteste declared that his immediate predecessor in the See of Lincoln (Hugh of Wells) had not allowed him to assume the title of chancellor, but of master of the school” (D.A. Callus. *Robert Grosseteste as Scholar*. pp. 7 – 8).

According to the analysis of J. Goering (J. Goering, ‘When and where did Grosseteste study theology?’ p. 49) we have no explanation of Hugh’s reasons behind this statement, if not the fact that in that period Grosseteste was only a master of arts and the Bishop of Lincoln might have had reservations about the title borne by Grosseteste. It is also true that in a document drawn up by the Bishop of Lincoln dated 4 August 1214 (*Medieval archives of the University of Oxford*. Vol. I, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford, 1920), p. 8, ref P XII, 4 Aug, 1214) there seems to have been some uncertainty about the title of the chancellor; his predecessor was called magister *scholarum*, but in this deed we have **cancellario scolarum** Oxon. As the chancellorship was certainly instituted by the Cardinal Legate, Nicholas, Bishop of Tusculum in 1214 after the return to Oxford of masters and scholars (D.A. Callus. *Robert Grosseteste as Scholar*. p. 8), Callus argued that there was an archdeacon, but not a chancellor and obviously “if the office itself had not yet come into existence, it is not easily conceivable that there could arise a controversy about the title” (*Ibid.* pp. 8 – 9). Following the same trail Callus recognized that if the bishop refused to recognize the title this could show a period of uncertainty or transition “when the status of chancellor was not yet definitely settled, in all probability on the occasion of the first appointment to the new office, that is, sometime after 1214”. By 1221 both office and title were recognized. A letter of Pope Honorius III on 30 March 1221, addressed to the Chancellor of Oxford, *cancellario*, and other judges delegate bear witness to this fact. The conclusion then would be that Grosseteste’s presidency over the school must be placed not earlier than 1214 nor later than 1221 (*Ibid.* p. 9. See also: J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 26 – 29). We do not know when Robert Grosseteste ceased to be chancellor, but we know that Ralph of Maidstone was chancellor in 1231. (D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 9).

<sup>46</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 71.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. 72.

<sup>48</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 70.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p. 71.

<sup>50</sup> Grosseteste in 1229 was appointed archdeacon of Leicester. From the Acta of Hugh of Wells we know also that when Grosseteste was archdeacon of Leicester, therefore after 1229, he was a witness for the confirmation made for the prior and monks of the conventual church of St Andrew, Rochester of the church of Haddenham and 15 chapels of Cuddington and Kingsay. *The Acta of Hugh of Wells 1209-1235*, ed. D. Smith. (Lincoln, 2000), pp. 163-165.

This controversy about when and where Grosseteste was during these years is not idle speculation but has an enormous importance in determining whether or not Grosseteste was educated in England or was a product of the European Scholastic culture. Did he gain his mastership in theology in Paris or take his degree at Oxford? At this point it is worth recalling the charter of 1189-1192<sup>51</sup> in which Grosseteste had the title of Master. By Southern's analysis this would make Grosseteste a master aged twenty-one or twenty-two; possible for a master from a local school but certainly not for a master who had spent years studying in Paris<sup>52</sup> as Goering and McEvoy seem to claim. An important detail which is better not to forget comes from Matthew Paris who considered Grosseteste before 1230/5 a man *primis annis scolis educatus*<sup>53</sup>, *honestus et religiosus atque in lege divina sufficienter eruditus*<sup>54</sup> ("sufficiently learned in religion [or religious matter]"). I do not want to draw any firm conclusion, but it seems strange to me that a man educated in Paris, as McEvoy and other scholars would lead us to think, would have been considered only "sufficiently educated in religious matters" when for *eruditus* Matthew Paris denotes always people extremely expert and skilful in what they are doing<sup>55</sup>.

Robert's knowledge of and familiarity with the course of theological studies at Paris, his popularity among a number of Frenchmen and the reference by Matthew Paris to his presence in France, led McEvoy to conclude that Grosseteste was educated in Paris<sup>56</sup>. However as recognised by Goering himself, none of this proves "incontrovertibly"<sup>57</sup> that Grosseteste was there. In this period in England there were two possible courses of action:

- To study briefly in England and then go to Europe to follow the lessons of well-known masters, scholars and philosophers.
- To stay in England and accept what was available in the parochial or cathedral schools in the country.

Of course there can be no doubt that an European education was preferable. Most important English scholars of the period followed this pattern: men like Gerald of Wales Stephen Langton, William de Montibus and Alexander of Nequam. Those who did not have

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<sup>51</sup> See notes 14-15.

<sup>52</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 64.

<sup>53</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 306.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* p. 306, note 4.

<sup>55</sup> *Petrus Wintoniensis episcopus in opera martio eruditus*. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 18. *Magister tamen Walterus [...] in divina pagina eleganter eruditus*. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 177. *Henricus de Trulevilla, in expeditionibus vir expertus and eruditus*. M. Paris, *Chron. Maj*, iii, p. 624.

<sup>56</sup> J. McEvoy, *The philosophy of Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 6-7.

<sup>57</sup> J. Goering, 'When and where did Grosseteste study theology?', p. 37.

money had two choices: looking for a patron and/or parochial benefices<sup>58</sup>. Otherwise they had to stay in England. Although economically<sup>59</sup> important and culturally prestigious, the XII-century cathedral schools and even the University/Studium<sup>60</sup> of Oxford could not match the level of the continental schools and universities, particularly the University of Paris and the Italian cathedral school of Milan<sup>61</sup>. However this does not mean that English schools did not have great masters and especially that Grosseteste could not have learnt a great deal by staying in England. The school of Oxford dated back to 1100 and could boast as masters names as famous as Theobald of Etampes, master of religious subjects, Master John Blund, lecturer on Aristotle, and the abovementioned Master Alexander of Nequam, Aristotelian and scientist of nature.

## Appendix II – Robert Grosseteste’s Scholastic and Theological works

Given the great production of Grosseteste in different fields I make no attempt at providing a complete chronology of Grosseteste’s works and thoughts; I merely wish to underline some basic points that are useful for our purpose and our discussion in this dissertation. Grosseteste’s works were catalogued by S. H. Thomson in 1940 with great accuracy<sup>62</sup>. Following this other scholars, such as Callus, McEvoy and Southern, have tried to classify and date Grosseteste’s works, dividing his scientific works from his theological ones.

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<sup>58</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 54.

<sup>59</sup> The school of Oxford in time became important from the cultural but also from the economic point of view. The bishop of Lincoln was in charge of the school, and had to make sure that the situation in town remained firmly under the control of the episcopacy. The townspeople also benefited from the school because of the numerous students present in town, and so did the king. Henry III for instance in two documents dated May 1248 and June 1255 granted privileges to the University [*Medieval archives of the University of Oxford*. Vol. I, pp. 19-21. Document n 10 E. 2 May 29, 1248, p. 18-19; Document n 11, E. 8, June 18, 1255. Vol. I, pp. 19 -21]. Indeed in 1256 Henry III issued a document stating that for the future the rent of the houses occupied by scholars was to be re-assessed every five years. [*Medieval archives of the University of Oxford*. Vol. I, p. 21. Document n 12, E. 6, February 10, 1256].

<sup>60</sup> The school at Oxford in the twelfth century included theological and legal studies, but we are not in the position to state when Oxford school grew into a *studium generale*. D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, pp. 6-7.

<sup>61</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 57.

<sup>62</sup> J. McEvoy, *The philosophy of Robert Grosseteste*, appendix A, pp. 455-456.

Without forgetting the importance of Grosseteste as a scientist, which is undeniable<sup>63</sup>, I will focus on those of his theological works which are the most important for my dissertation<sup>64</sup>.

His theology directly influenced his practices in his diocese. According to Southern Grosseteste's greatest discovery was that, "nature and supernatural are one in the broader sense that the physical objects of our sense perceptions, the general laws of nature, the

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<sup>63</sup> McEvoy for instance wrote this passage in the introduction to his book: "I have suggested that without Grosseteste there might not have been a notable mathematical-scientific tradition at Oxford". J. McEvoy, *The Philosophy of Robert Grosseteste*, p. 19.

<sup>64</sup> The main assumption, to which everybody seems to agree, although with caveats, is that Grosseteste's works fall into two different periods of time:

- 1) The first period from the time of his mastership in arts to his election in Lincoln, 1235, includes his commentaries on Aristotle and on the Bible.
- 2) The second period from 1235 to his death in 1253, includes his Greek works (See: D.A. Callus. *Robert Grosseteste as Scholar*. p. 12).

Even that Grosseteste was a scientist before he was a theologian scarcely needs to be argued; the main problems start when there is an attempt to date his major works because this has a direct effect of the reconstruction of his life, where he was and what he has or has not studied. Because of this controversy it is useful to mention what two of the main scholars who had studied Grosseteste think about his scientific works. Southern argued that, not only some, but most of his scientific writings belong to the thirty years before 1225. According to the calculation of Prof McEvoy (J. McEvoy, *The philosophy of Robert Grosseteste*), instead the following works that are some of the scientific works of Grosseteste and that contain the two Commentaries on Aristotle are to be assigned to the period from 1225 – 1233

|         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1225-8  | De Luce                           |
| 1225-30 | Computus correctorius             |
| 1226-8  | De Fluxu et refluxu maris         |
| 1228-30 | Commentary on Posterior Analytics |
| 1228-32 | Commentary on Physics             |
| 1230    | De Differentiis localibus         |
|         | De Motu supercaelestium           |
|         | De Lineis                         |
|         | De Natura locorum                 |
| 1230-3  | De Iride                          |
|         | De Colore                         |
|         | De Calore solis                   |
|         | De Operationibus solis            |

According to Southern, Grosseteste learned and taught theology between 1225 and 1235. McEvoy prefers to think that he taught theology at Oxford for about twenty years but that this material including the notes and the publication that he might have used in his teaching has disappeared. (J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 2000), p. 112).

symbolic meanings of every creature, the purposes of the Creator, and the nature of God are all parts of a single field of knowledge. All created things are mirrors which reflect the Creator<sup>65</sup>. Grosseteste followed the line of the masters who came before him using as the main methodology the observations of the facts in science as well as in theology. If we applied this scheme to theology is clear that the observation of the facts could come not only from the Bible but also from the Creation because God had spoken through His words but also through His creatures. In order to understand how God had spoken, he needed to study Greek,<sup>66</sup> the language of the Bible, because reading a text through Latin translation meant going away from the truth. To put this in McEvoy's words: "to read the New Testament in Greek, as St Jerome had done, to go behind the Vulgate and to study likewise the Septuagint version of the Old Testament: this was the ideal and the goal that moved Grosseteste to take up, at an unusually advanced age, the serious study of Greek"<sup>67</sup>. Although his reading included the majority of the most famous theologians like Peter Lombard and the Arabic philosophy of Avicenna, Algazel and Averroes<sup>68</sup> Grosseteste taught essentially from and for the Bible, using the Sacred text as the only term of reference for his books and eventually for his preaching.

In Grosseteste we have a fundamental link between science (basically nature) and religion. Grosseteste attributed a very special role to light which he considered in his *De luce seu de inchoatione formarum*, the first thing God had created. The light represents the beginning of everything in his cosmological thought. It is the expansion and the spread of light at the beginning of the time which dragged the matter determining the creation of the universe and the world; it is the light which constitutes the firmament whose light reverberates on the world; finally it is the light which is the mediator in human life between the soul and the body because through the light the soul can act upon and control the human body<sup>69</sup>. The theory of the interior enlightenment is taken from Augustine who perceived this as the only way to come to know God understood as the full reality or *essentia*<sup>70</sup>. This concept was expanded by Anselm who talked about two ways of knowing: faith and reason. First and foremost one needs to believe in the mystery of faith and then one can discuss it with the reason. One cannot understand in order to believe, but one needs to believe in order to

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<sup>65</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 216. Dictum n 60.

<sup>66</sup> And in part also Hebrew even though we do not have evidence about that.

<sup>67</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 114.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* 123.

<sup>69</sup> E. Gilson, *La filosofia nel medioevo*, pp. 565-570.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 154-156.



understand. Grosseteste would go one step further, applying this concept to theology and considering that knowledge must be developed based on the biblical revelation. Indeed as Southern stressed, Grosseteste is not a theologian who considers Redemption as the central theme, he is essentially a theologian of Creation<sup>71</sup>, and his theology is Trinitarian, and Christocentric<sup>72</sup>. Let us try to understand why. Creation is the revelation of God, who as a Creator, cannot be inside his own creation, He being greater than it. At the same time the Incarnation cannot have been the simple effect of the original sin as in Anselm, otherwise (for the principle of Aristotle saying than the cause is bigger than the effect) Jesus would be a simple consequence and smaller in importance and role than the original sin. *Ergo* for Grosseteste the Incarnation is a necessary event, the achievement of the work started with Creation. This was Grosseteste's most original theological idea<sup>73</sup>. As Southern reconstructed it, assuming that the maximum of human potentiality is the possible union with God: "This union did not take place at the moment of Creation, the union was the highest plan of God's design for the universe from the beginning"<sup>74</sup>. It was not the sin of the first man which caused the union of God and Man in Christ, this just gave Him the role of the Saviour of humanity. The union between God and man has been made possible because it was potentially there since the beginning of time. This revolutionary concept is a fundamental departure from the Aristotelic way of thinking because, as Callus reminded us, "for Aristotle potentially is neither bare nothingness nor mere privation of a given perfection, it is true capacity really existing in the subject, but in itself is purely passive without any actuality whatever; for Grosseteste a thing is actually, if it has reached its full completion, whereas it is only potentially, if it has not yet acquired the completion which it is possible to have"<sup>75</sup>. Grosseteste before, during and after his lecturing in the University had the time and the strength to develop these concepts, but it was when he held the position as a lector for about four years, from 1231 until 1235 that he wrote his four, "fundamentally original theological works: *De decem mandatis* (on the ten commandments), *De cessatione legalium* (On the end of the Old Testament), *Hexaëmeron* (On the six days of creation) and commentary on the epistle of the Galatians"<sup>76</sup>; moreover he wrote the translation from Greek of the Testament of the twelve Patriarchs, probably in

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<sup>71</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 219 – 220.

<sup>72</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 124.

<sup>73</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 221-222.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* p. 220.

<sup>75</sup> D.A. Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar', p.24.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Southern, 'Robert of Grosseteste', *ODNB*, xxiv, p. 81.

1242. Some of these texts are particularly revealing of his way of thinking and of his religious thoughts.

By 1230 Grosseteste had already taught many courses on the Psalms<sup>77</sup> and his idea of theology had improved considerably. The *Hexaëmeron* is studied by modern scholars more than any other of Grosseteste's Biblical work, his study of Greek is more serious and his commentary illustrates his reception of new ideas on cosmology<sup>78</sup>. The *Hexaëmeron* was probably written in 1235,<sup>79</sup> perhaps around 1230-32<sup>80</sup>. In Southern's hypothesis, Grosseteste went back to the Greek sources<sup>81</sup> to get closer to a full understanding of the work. Indeed McEvoy stressed that in this text "the interest in the sun for instance is not just astronomical, but also physical and, of course, metaphysical"<sup>82</sup>. His new style in his theological works has been described by Southern as "scientific and symbolic in method, Greek in sympathy"<sup>83</sup>. Following his ideas of creation we come to know that for Grosseteste every object in the universe is a symbol of spiritual truth. However, Grosseteste thought that knowledge in itself could not be the ultimate value, but it must have been preceded and be followed by a lively experience: a theory put into practice. This would be exactly what he would apply to his pastoral doctrine. Of course the best example he could propose to his flock was the one of Jesus, but in order to do that Grosseteste needed to solve the main problem of his theology: The Incarnation. McEvoy explains that for Grosseteste (in the third part of the *De cessatione legalium*) when God becomes man, "the chain of being is turned back into a perfect circle to include the whole of reality, both divine and created"<sup>84</sup>. However, the *De cessatione Legalium* is basically a manual of theology written probably between 1232 and 1235<sup>85</sup> and widely read during Grosseteste's lifetime, most likely by well-educated Christian clerics. This could suggest that the *De Cessatione Legalium*<sup>86</sup> might also have been written for the evangelization of the people. A more

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<sup>77</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, p. 205.

<sup>78</sup> Beryl Smalley, 'The Biblical scholar', in *Robert Grosseteste scholar and Bishop. Essay in commemoration of the seventh century of his death*, ed. D.A. Callus (Oxford, 1969), p. 79.

<sup>79</sup> James McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's writings on Nature and Natural Philosophy', *Speculum, Medieval Academy of America*, 58, 3 (1983), p. 618.

<sup>80</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 191, 205.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* p. 207.

<sup>82</sup> J. McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's writings on Nature and Natural Philosophy' *Speculum, Medieval Academy of America*, 58, 3 (1983), p. 618.

<sup>83</sup> R.W. Southern. *Robert Grosseteste. The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp. 206.

<sup>84</sup> J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*. pp. 127-130.

<sup>85</sup> Beryl Smalley thinks he was written between, 1239 and 1243. See: B. Smalley, 'The Biblical scholar' p. 82.

<sup>86</sup> See also: Mark Elliot, 'Robert Grosseteste, the Jews and De Cessatione Legalium', in *Robert Grosseteste. His thought and its impact*, ed Jack P. Cunningham (Toronto, 2012), pp. 314-326.

careful reading discloses the fact that Grosseteste was not fascinated by the mentality of the Judeo-Christian “in the apostolic era”<sup>87</sup>. In the text Grosseteste analyses unwritten, natural law versus written, positive law in the light of the Scriptures. He criticizes the ceremonial aspects of Mosaic law practised by early Christians. Observation of these laws became heretical after the death of Christ. He also vigorously defends the Christian faith. It seems to be clear that in this text Grosseteste defended the God-man-Christ as the conclusion of the Creation adding that Christ had died on the cross voluntarily; he was not forced by any external sources. This text shows evidence that Grosseteste believed that on one side there was the need to go back to the Judaic-Greek origin of the Biblical text and to reading the original sources and on the other that the guidance of souls (*regimen animarum*) was the art of arts. The same can be said about the text *The Testament of the twelve Patriarchs*. Matthew Paris tells us that Grosseteste, when Bishop of Lincoln, translated the *testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* from Greek into Latin, “in support of the Christian faith and for the greater confounding of the Jews”<sup>88</sup>. Matthew Paris recorded that this translation, in 1242, was made by Grosseteste translated with the help of Nicholas clerk of St Albans and especially that Grosseteste was *vir in Latino et Græco peritissimus*<sup>89</sup>. In Matthew Paris there is a twofold attack on the Jews; first in saying that the twelve patriarchs’ testament remained secret because of the envy of the Jews, as it contained the prophecy of salvation operated by Jesus Christ, and second because the *tractatus* was produced *ad majorem Judeorum confusionem* (in order to confuse the Jews). It seems therefore that Matthew Paris shared with Grosseteste the anti-Jewish feeling of the time within the church and this will help us to acquit Grosseteste from the accusation of being especially fiercely anti-Semitic. However Matthew Paris’ statement gave us another important hint. The same author who in 1230 considered Grosseteste *primis annis scolis educatus*<sup>90</sup> now, in 1242, when he recorded this translation considered Grosseteste *vir in Latino et Græco peritissimus*. This would lend weight to the possibility, as suggested by Southern, that Grosseteste studied and taught Greek in Oxford from 1225 onward, a period during which he was improving his biblical knowledge as well as his linguistic knowledge in Greek and maybe Hebrew. Callus has underlined that certainly “he devoted the last extremely busy years of his episcopate to translating Aristotle or texts that went under his name”<sup>91</sup>. In order to do so, he must have improved his Greek before then, and given the

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<sup>87</sup> B. Smalley, ‘The Biblical scholar’, p. 81.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* p. 81.

<sup>89</sup> M. Paris, *Chron. Maj.* iv, pp. 232-233.

<sup>90</sup> See note 54.

<sup>91</sup> D.A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar’, p. 62.

amount of work during his episcopacy and the travelling he did throughout the diocese, the only possible period during which he could have improved his Greek is the Oxford period or shortly after. *The Decem mandatis*, probably written around 1230, is a text that Grosseteste used in order to demonstrate that the most important thing of all is pastoral care and what is related to it. The commandments are vital, particularly the one saying, "Love thy neighbour as thyself". Once again Grosseteste explained his analyses on the basis of the Scriptures, which are for him, as for the Fathers of the church, the only source he considered valuable and the only authority to be used.

# Appendix III

## List of Popes and Bishops

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| BISHOPS OF CREMONA                             | BISHOPS OF LINCOLN   | POPES  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | <b>Alexander II</b> (1061-73)<br>opposed by <b>Honorius II</b><br>Anti Pope (1061-1072)  |
| <b>Arnolfo</b> , elected 1067 - d.<br>1085     | <b>Remigius</b> , elected (1067 as<br>bishop of Dorchester,<br>Leicester and Lincoln – d.<br>1092) |  |
|  |  | <b>Gregory VII</b> (1073 – 85),<br>opposed by <b>Clement III</b><br>Anti Pope (1080-1100)  |
| <b>Gualtiero</b> , elected (1086 – d.<br>1097) |  | <b>Victor III</b> (1086-87)  |
|  |  | <b>Urban II</b> (1088-99)  |
|  | <b>Robert Bloet</b> elected (1093<br>– d. 1123)  |  |
| <b>Vacancy</b> (1097-1110)                     |  |  |
|  |  | <b>Paschal II</b> , (1099-1118),<br>opposed by <b>Theodoric</b><br>(1100), <b>Aleric</b> (1102) and<br><b>Sylvester IV</b> (1105-1111)<br>Anti Popes |
| <b>Ugo</b> elected (1110 – d.<br>1117?)        |  |  |
| <b>Oberto</b> elected (1117 – d.<br>1162)      |  |  |

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**Gelasius II** (1118-19)  
opposed by **Gregory VIII**  
Anti Pope 1118

**Callixtus II** (1119-24)

**Alexander “the  
magnificent”**, elected (1123  
– d. 1148)

**Honorius II** (1124-30),  
opposed by **Celestine II**  
Anti Pope (1124).

**Innocent II** (1130-43)  
opposed by **Anacletus II**  
(1130-1138) and Gregory  
Conti, **Victor IV** (1138),  
Anti Popes

**Celestine II** (1143-44)

**Lucius II** (1144-45)

**Eugene III** (1145-53)

**Robert de Chesney** elected  
(1148 - d. 1166)

**Anastasius IV** (1153-54)

**Adrian IV** (1154-59)

**Alexander III** (1159-81),  
opposed by Octavius **Victor**  
**IV** (1159-64),

**Presbitero da Medolago**  
elected (1163 – left 1167)

**Paschal III** (1165-68) Anti  
Pope

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|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Offredo</b> elected (1168 – d. 1185)                 | <b>Callixtus III</b> (1168-77) Anti Pope |
| <b>Bishop Geoffrey</b> elected (1175 – resigned 1181/2) | <b>Innocent III</b> (1178-80), Anti Pope |
| <b>Walter of Coutances</b> elected (1183 – left 1184)   | <b>Lucius III</b> (1181-85)              |
| <b>Sicardo</b> elected in (1185 – d. 1215)              | <b>Urban III</b> (1185-87)               |
| <b>Hugh of Avalon</b> elected 1186 – d. 1200            | <b>Gregory VIII</b> (1187)               |
| <b>William of Blois</b> elected (1203 – d. 1206)        | <b>Clement III</b> (1187-91)             |
| <b>Hugh of Wells</b> elected (1209 – d. 1235)           | <b>Celestine III</b> (1191-98)           |
| <b>Omobono</b> elected (1216 – d. 1248)                 | <b>Innocent III</b> (1198-1216)          |
| <b>Robert Grosseteste</b> elected (1235 – d. 1253)      | <b>Honorius III</b> (1216-27)            |
|   | <b>Gregory IX</b> (1227-41)              |
|   | <b>Celestine IV</b> (1241)               |

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**Innocent IV** (1243-54)

**Giovannibuono dei Giroldi**

elected (1249 – d. 1262)

**Giovannibuono** refused

(1249)

**Bernerio Sommi** nominated

by Innocent IV (1249 – d.

1260)

**Henry of Lexin(g)ton**

elected (1253 – d. 1258)

**Alexander IV** (1254-61)

**Richard Gravesend** elected

(1258 – d. 1279)

**Giovannibuono dei Giroldi**

confirmed (1260)

**Giovannibuono**, refused by

Alexander IV (1260)

**Cacciaconte** elected by

Alexander IV (1260 – d.

1288)

**Urban IV** (1261-64)

**Clement IV** (1265-68)

**Gregory X** (1271-76)

**Innocent V** (1276)

**Adrian V** (1276)

**John XXI** (1276-77)

**Nicholas III** (1277-80)

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**Oliver Sutton** elected (1280  
– d. 1299)

**Martin IV** (1281-85)

**Honorius IV** (1285-87)

**Nicholas IV** (1288-92)

**Ponzino Ponzone** elected  
(1289 – d. 1290)

**Vacancy** 1291 – 1295

**Celestine V** (1294)

**Boniface VIII** (1294-1303)

**Emanuele Sescalco** elected  
by Boniface VIII (1295 – left  
1295/6)

**Guiscardo di Persico**  
elected (1296 – d. 1296)

**Rainerio di Casole** elected  
by Boniface VIII (1296 – d.  
1312)

**John Dalderby** elected  
(1300 – d. 1320)

**Benedict XI** (1303-04)

**Clement V** (1305-14)

**Egidiolo Bonseri, Egidio  
Madelberti** both elected  
(1312)

**Egidiolo Bonseri** confirmed

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(1314 – d. 1323)

**John XXII** (1316-34)

**Henry Mansfield** elected  
(1320 - he refused, 1320)

**Antony Bek** elected (1320 -  
quashed Feb. 1320)

**Henry Burghersh** elected  
(1320 – d. 1340)

**See declared vacant** (1322)

**Egidio Madelberti**  
dismissed (1325/6)

**Ugolino** elected (1327)

**Nicholas V** (1328-1330)  
Anti Pope.

**Ugolino** dismissed by Anti-  
Pope Nicholas V (1329)

**Dondino** elected (1329)

**Ugolino** regained the  
episcopate (1331 – d. 1349)

**Benedict XII** (1334-42)

**Clement VI** (1342-1352)

**Ugolino de Addenheriis**  
elected by Clement VI (1349  
– d. 1361/2)

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