

## Chapter 5

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### Peter the Venerable and Secular Friendships

It was the summer of 1133. In a gesture of filial loyalty the abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable (r. 1122–1156), wrote his spiritual father Pope Innocent II to promise whatever aid and succor he could provide. The letter, one of Peter's earliest to him, likely received a warm welcome as Innocent was embroiled in a struggle with Anacletus II for control of the papacy and of Rome.<sup>1</sup> Innocent had been able to retake parts of the papal city with the help of "that friend of justice" Lothar III of Germany, who was making motions to leave after being crowned emperor.<sup>2</sup> The loss of his troops would have left Innocent unsupported against Anacletus's allies and Peter the Venerable pledged aid in response to this threat in three forms: his own diplomatic efforts, the resources of Cluniac monasteries (the *ecclesia cluniacensis*), and the assistance of the "friends of Cluny." About this latter group he promises:

Quoscumque michi et Cluniacensi aeclesiae qualibet amicitia iunctos, reges et principes, nobiles et ignobiles, magnos et pussilos agnoui, hos maiestatis uestrae

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<sup>1</sup> Peter the Venerable and most of his monks were staunch supporters of and at times propagandists for Innocent II; on this, see Mary Stroll, *The Jewish Pope: Ideology and Politics in the Papal Schism of 1130*, Brill's studies in intellectual history, 8 (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1987); see 21–44 for the role of Cluny and xiii–xvii, 1–9 for an excellent summary of historiography on the schism.

<sup>2</sup> The *Vita Norberti archiepiscopi Madgeburgensis* gives Lothar a long list of praiseworthy titles: *Lotarius imperator timens Deum, strenuus belli doctor, praecipuus in armis, providus in consilio terribilis inimicis Dei, iusticiae socius, inimicus iniusticiae*; edited in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, vol. 12, ed. Roger Wilmans (Hanover: Hahn, 1856), 663–706; here 702. This anonymous text was likely composed soon after Norbert's death in 1134 by an individual who was involved in the Roman campaign.

pedibus subdere per me ipsum uise per alios, loquendo, scribendo, mandando, terrendo, mulcendo pro posse non distuli.<sup>3</sup>

[As much as I can, whether by talk or text, by command, flattery or threat, I do not hesitate to subject to the feet of Your Majesty, through myself and through others, anyone—kings or princes, nobles or base-born, the great or the meek—who is joined to myself and to the *ecclesia cluniacensis* in any sort of friendship.]

Peter does not elaborate on the specifics of this aid, but he seems to suggest that a multitude of the laity were readying themselves to serve under Innocent II.

One might wonder if this was an impressive sounding but ultimately empty statement of Peter's personal support. Innocent likely would have understood Peter's words as a clear reference to an informal network of secular elites bound to Peter and to Cluny through ties of political friendship (*amicitia*). Later in the letter, Peter assumes Innocent's familiarity with the discourse of political friendship by equating friends with political allies and highlighting the importance of their loyalty in a time when enemies abound. And he asks Innocent to remember Solomon's injunction, "Recolite quod ait Salomon: Amici sint tibi multi" (May you have many friends: Eccl. 6.5), and then rephrases it saying, "et ideo numquam talibus uos satis abundare credatis" (Do not ever think that you can have enough of them)—making the case as if Innocent might hesitate to accept his offer.<sup>4</sup> Maybe Innocent did hesitate. His other great friend, Lothar, was abandoning him after receiving an imperial coronation and jurisdictional concessions. Perhaps Innocent was anxious about what more he would need to concede in order to get the support of these other 'friends'. He knew that monastic friendships demanded reciprocity and perhaps the favors he would owe were too great for him to return.

In this study, I wish to explore what Peter and Innocent would have thought was being offered in this letter. What did it mean to be friends with Cluny? What purpose did they serve? And who benefitted from this arrangement? As background to these questions, my study will first outline Peter the Venerable's attitude toward secular society and his general thoughts on friendship, showing that Peter welcomed the laity into the cloister and that friendship—a discourse used by Peter predominantly with other monks and churchmen—was also a means to associate lay people with the Cluniac path. The mutual benefits of this form of association are illustrated through the examples of Peter's interaction with

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<sup>3</sup> Peter the Venerable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, ed. Giles Constable, 2 vols., Harvard Historical Studies, 78 (Cambridge, MA: Princeton University Press, 1967), vol. 1, 132, ep. 39. This work is hereafter abbreviated as *Letters*; all references will be to the first volume and all translations into English are my own, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

Raoul I of Vermandois, Alfonso VII of Léon-Castille, and Roger II of Sicily, in which offers of friendship show its potential to define and bind together prince, king and abbot.

### Peter the Venerable and Aristocratic Society

Peter the Venerable claimed a special position for the monastery of Cluny as a celestial citadel and earthly paradise unsullied by contact with the mundane world. During his abbacy, however, the cloisters of the *ecclesia cluniacensis* were neither sealed to the outside world, nor opposed to the wealth of resources nobles controlled.<sup>5</sup> Peter himself shows an ambivalence towards aristocratic society, both appealing to its prestige and also decrying its potential to abuse its power. Understanding how Peter related to secular magnates helps us to appreciate how he positions himself with his secular friends.

Ever since George Duby's study of Cluny's place in the Mâconnais, it has been common to speak of the ties of its monks to Burgundian aristocrats.<sup>6</sup> Barbara Rosenwein and others have convincingly argued that reciprocal exchanges between "the neighbors of St. Peter" and Cluniac monks made the boundary between the monastic and secular worlds porous from the time of Cluny's foundation.<sup>7</sup> Personal relationships between abbots, monks and lay nobles determined how cloister and countryside related to one another until the

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<sup>5</sup> See for example, the glorification of Cluny in Peter's *De miraculis*, book I, chapter 9; edited as *Petri Cluniacensis abbatis, De miraculis libri duo*, ed. Dominique Bouthillier, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis, 83 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> George Duby, *La Société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise*, Bibliothèque générale de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, 35 (Paris: A. Colin, 1953).

<sup>7</sup> For the early history of Cluny's implantation within the aristocracy, see Barbara Rosenwein, *Rhinoceros Bound: Cluny in the Tenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982) and *To be the Neighbor of St. Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property: 909–1049* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989). Rosenwein's conclusions are buttressed in the exhaustive account of Odo of Cluny's life and ideas by Isabelle Rosé, *Construire une société seigneuriale: Itinéraire et ecclésiologie de l'abbé Odon de Cluny (fin du IXe – milieu du Xe siècle)*, Collection d'études médiévales de Nice, 8 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008). For the twelfth and thirteenth century, see Philippe Racinet, "L'Expansion de Cluny sous Hugues 1er de Semur," *Le Gouvernement d'Hugues de Semur à Cluny. Actes du Colloque scientifique international (Cluny, septembre 1988)* (Macon: Buguet-Comptour, 1990): 93–131, and "Le Prieuré clunisien, une composante essentielle du monde aristocratique (xie–xiiiie siècle)," *Die Cluniazenser in ihrem politisch-sozialen Umfeld*, ed. Giles Constable, Gert Melville, and Jörg Oberst. *Vita Regularis*, 7 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1998): 189–212. Dider Méhu provides an exhaustive account of the relations of the monks and burgers of Cluny in *Paix et communautés autour de l'abbaye de Cluny (Xe–XVe siècles)*, Collection d'histoire et d'archéologie médiévales, 9 (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2001).

thirteenth-century.<sup>8</sup> Abbots were chosen from the great aristocratic families linked to Cluny, and the monks predominantly came from the noble class.<sup>9</sup>

Peter's background and the public image he cultivated suggest that he was very typical in this respect. His monks widely acknowledged that Peter came from Cluny's aristocratic network and highlighted this aspect when perpetuating his reputation and, later, his memory. A panegyric poem written and circulated during his lifetime, for example, asks Cluniac monks to revel in Peter's noble heritage:

Plaudite, felices, hilaescite, Cluniacenses,  
 Redditus est vobis moribus alter Hugo.  
 Nobilis ille fuit, magnisque parentibus ortus:  
 Hunc quoque praeclarum reddit origo patrum.  
 Ille super cunctos, quos excolit ac veneratur  
 Gallia Lugduni, nobilitate nitet.  
 Hunc Latiae gentes regum de stirpe potentes,  
 Arverni populi progenuere duces.<sup>10</sup>

[Celebrate and rejoice happy Cluniacs  
 for another Hugh in his *mores* was given to you.  
 Hugh was noble and born of powerful parents;  
 The ancestry of Peter's forefathers also renders him preeminent.  
 Hugh, whom Gaul worshiped and venerated above all,  
 shines with nobility from Lyons.  
 The dukes of the people of Auvergne,  
 that powerful nation born of the kings of Rome, begat Peter.]

The author, Peter of Poitiers (who would later act as secretary and archivist for his abbot), identifies Peter the Venerable with a past Cluniac abbot, Hugh of Semur († 1109), whose aristocratic origins and connection to the Capetian dynasty were well publicized in a series of *vitae* written after his canonization in 1120.<sup>11</sup> Peter the Venerable, likewise, is presented as an aristocrat coming from the line of kings. The author glosses over, however, that his family, the Montboissiers, were of relatively secondary stature among the nobles of Auvergne.<sup>12</sup> The claim to royal

<sup>8</sup> Racinet, "Le Prieuré clunisien," 210–11.

<sup>9</sup> Charles de Miramon, "Embrasser l'état monastique à l'âge adulte (1050–1200). Étude sur la conversion tardive," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 54.4 (1999): 825–49; here 830–32.

<sup>10</sup> Peter of Poitiers, *Panegyricus*, *Patrologia Latina* (Paris: Garnier, 1844–1864), vol. 189, col. 48–57; here 48, 1–7.

<sup>11</sup> Adriaan H. Bredero, "La Canonisation de Saint Hugues et celle de ses devanciers," *Le Gouvernement d'Hughes de Semur*, 154, 168; see also Frank Barlow, "The Canonization and the Early Lives of Hugh I, Abbot of Cluny," *Analecta Bollandiana* 98 (1980): 297–334.

<sup>12</sup> Constable notes that the Montboissiers of Peter's generation, however, became the premier ecclesiastical family of southern Burgundy, Lyonnais and Auvergne—a key source of influence

ancestry, it seems, marks an interest by the author in playing up Peter's nobility; the comparison to Hugh buttresses by association Peter's weak claims to pre-eminence. Peter the Venerable himself must have approved of this characterization, since this description opens a poem which the abbot approved and later defended.<sup>13</sup> This collusion of the two Peters suggests that family and noble stature were key parts of his public identity.

The *Chronicle* of Geoffrey of Vigeois, Hugh of Poitiers' *Chronicle of Vézelay* and the late-medieval *Chronicon cluniacense* all highlight the aristocratic origins of Peter the Venerable in their brief comments on him, suggesting that the information was widely known and repeated, but chief among the texts commemorating Peter's aristocratic background is the *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, written during the abbacy of Stephen of Boulogne (r. 1161–73) by a Cluniac monk Raoul. This text outlines Peter's life and provides a traditional catalogue of hagiographic features (e.g., his virtues, his miracles). Sprinkled within are subtle defences of Peter's abbacy—the legitimacy of his election, the importance of his support for Innocent II, the utility of his monastic reforms—and the text also brings up Peter's contact with secular society several times. It highlights especially how he was beloved by all, saying “Hunc imperatores, reges et principes orbis pio affectu amabant, venerabantur et colebant, et quasi patri et domino adhaerebant” (Emperors, kings and princes of the world loved Peter with pious affection, venerated and respected him, and cleaved to him as they would to a lord and father).<sup>14</sup>

As the *Vita Petri* portrays it, Peter ranked as one of these princes. Raoul bookends his description of Peter's saintly acts with an account of his noble birth at the beginning and a record of his extended family in the end. The first bits of information about Peter are the names of his parents, Maurice and Raingard, whom Raoul identifies vaguely as nobles of Auvergne (now identified by Giles Constable as members of the Montboissier family).<sup>15</sup> The advantages of this

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for expanding the family's noble power in the twelfth century; *Letters*, 2, 234.

<sup>13</sup> It is evident that this poem circulated with some readership, because Peter the Venerable felt it necessary to write a defence of it, *Adversus calumniatores carminum sui Petri Pictaviensis defensio* (PL 189, col. 1005–17) after its poor style won sufficient criticism. The dedication of the *Panegyricus* to Peter the Venerable and the same Peter's defence of the poem suggest strongly that this depiction conformed to a public image of which the abbot approved. These two works deserve further study—no analysis of the two has appeared since Jean Leclercq's brief comments on them in his *Pierre le Vénéralle, Figures Monastiques* (Paris: Éditions de Fontenelle, 1946).

<sup>14</sup> Raoul de Sully, *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, PL 189, col. 15–27; here col. 19C.

<sup>15</sup> For detailed information on Peter's family, see *Letters*, 2, 233–35; Constable's analysis is repeated and updated by Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Ordonner et exclure: Cluny et la société chrétienne face à l'hérésie, au judaïsme et à l'islam, 1000–1500* (Paris: Aubier, 1998), trans. by Graham Robert Edwards, *Order and Exclusion: Cluny and Christendom Face Heresy, Judaism, and Islam (1000–1150)*. *Conjunctions of Religion and Power in the Medieval Past* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 99–100.

ancestry are highlighted immediately by the author. Raoul describes Peter as being specially chosen by St. Peter even before his birth—something revealed to his parents by the aforementioned Abbot Hugh. While pregnant, Raingard had sought the blessing of the Abbot Hugh of Semur, who told her that the baby was intended for the Cluniac cloister.<sup>16</sup> That she was able and willing to have access to Hugh indicates to the audience that her family had ties to the Cluniac orbit and she was important enough to merit the personal attention of its abbot. The final chapter of the *vita* makes the status of the family even more explicit, noting that his great-grandfather had founded a Cluniac dependency, his mother and father both ended their lives in Cluniac houses and his brothers were important ecclesiastical and secular lords.<sup>17</sup> But while the *Vita Petri* may have underscored Peter the Venerable's aristocratic background, it certainly did not suggest that he was beholden to his kin or his class in any way.

Gregory Smith's study of Peter the Venerable's concept of violence indicates that Peter was very wary about the aristocracy's negative potential.<sup>18</sup> In contrast to the picture of a smooth exchange between monastery and nobility put forth by many historians of Cluny, Smith argues that the nobility was a group whose influence and coercive force Peter disparaged. He repeatedly describes their behavior to be base and violent, as in a letter (ca. 1146) to Pope Eugenius III:

Impugnat assidue alter alterum, acunt pene universi in mutuum caedem gladiolus, conspirat frater in fratris interitum, castrorum domini, inferioris nominis milites, burgenses, rustici populi, laicorum omne genus, de illo clamant, quod propheta dei olim pessimo regi Israel locutus est: Vidi uniuersum Israel dispersum in montibus quasi oues non habentes pastorem.<sup>19</sup>

[One is constantly fighting against another; nearly all of them sharpen their swords for mutual slaughter; brother conspires for the death of a brother, all members of the laity—whether lords of castles, knights of lesser distinction, burgers, or peasants—lament what the prophet of God once said to an evil king of Israel: "I saw all Israel scattered in the mountains like sheep who have no shepherd".]

This letter (like many others) dwells on a single theme: the combative and divisive nature of the aristocracy must be brought to obey the pacifying authority of the Church. What the "bad" aristocracy lacked was the mutual love and charity (so abundant among monks!) necessary to unite Christians and Christendom. The solution seemed clear to Peter. Lay magnates needed to be drawn even closer into the bosom of Cluny to be taught to practice its *caritas*.

<sup>16</sup> Raoul de Sully, *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, col. 17B.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 28AB.

<sup>18</sup> Gregory A. Smith, "Sine rege, Sine principe: Peter the Venerable on Violence in Twelfth-Century Burgundy," *Speculum* 77 (2002): 1–33.

<sup>19</sup> *Letters*, 406, ep. 171; this translation modifies the one offered by Smith, "Sine rege," 15.

As his monks expected, Peter the Venerable carefully fulfilled his abbatial duty to mediate the interaction of the world inside and outside the cloister.<sup>20</sup> Dominique Iogna-Prat has convincingly argued that he engaged even more directly with the laity than typical for previous abbots. Traditionally Cluniac ideology was disseminated to secular society through the gift-exchange cycle, which drew in not only the donor, but also his or her wider social network. A noble who entered Cluny as a monk, for example, would often make a donation of land at the time of his conversion, which would be agreed to by his wife and kin, would be witnessed by his friends and could involve the transfer of serfs to Cluniac authority.<sup>21</sup> Such exchanges were often recorded in written charters, which were both a legalistic record of the donation and a written statement of Cluniac eschatology addressed to a lay audience. As Sébastien Barret has shown, this written record was likely only one aspect of a larger oral and ritual display and such occasions of gift-giving or conversion provided an important opportunity for Cluniacs to involve a segment of secular society outside their walls.<sup>22</sup>

Such exchanges continued during Peter's abbacy and were supplemented by additional measures.<sup>23</sup> In Iogna-Prat's judgment, Peter advanced a traditional Cluniac concern with providing monastic hospitality to an ever-increasing number of visitors. This influx of outsiders would have provided Peter and his monks with continuing opportunities to meet with lay persons. Peter also intervened with other churchmen, such as the pope, on behalf of a growing number of lay benefactors. This privilege was also granted to the families of deceased benefactors, since death did not sever a connection with Cluny.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> See Adalbert de Vogüé, *La communauté et l'abbé dans la règle de saint Benoît* (Paris: Desclée, De Brouwer, 1961), trans. by Charles Philippi and Ethel Rae Perkins as *Community and Abbot in the Rule of St. Benedict*. Cistercian Studies, 5, 2 vols. (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1979–1985).

<sup>21</sup> Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion*, 88–89.

<sup>22</sup> Sébastien Barret, "Éléments d'institutionnalité dans les actes originaux du 'fonds de Cluny' de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (Xe–XIe siècles)", *Die Bettelorden im Aufbau. Beiträge zu Institutionalisierungsprozessen im mittelalterlichen Religiosentum*, ed. Gert Melville and Jörg Oberste, *Vita Regularis*, 11 (Münster, Hamburg, and London: Lit. Verlag, 1999), 557–601.

<sup>23</sup> The records of the exchanges during Peter's abbacy are archived in Cluny's cartularies. For charters dating to Peter's abbacy, see *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny*, ed. Bernard and Alexandre Bruel, Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France – Première série. Histoire politique, 6 vols (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1876–1903; Frankfurt/Main 1974), vol. 5, 310–538. These charters and other Burgundian charters can now be searched or downloaded through the *Chartae Burgundiae Medii Aevi* project, at: [http://www.artehis.eu/spip.php?article629&var\\_mode=calcul](http://www.artehis.eu/spip.php?article629&var_mode=calcul) (last accessed on Feb. 19, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> King Alfonso VII of León-Castille, discussed below, provides an example of cross-generational links. For a particularly ghoulish example of the perceived association between Cluny and donor after death, see Raoul de Sully's story (*Vita Petri Venerabilis*, col. 25C) about an unnamed English knight who was visited by the spectre of King Henry of England. As Raoul tells it, Henry asked the knight to warn his "friend and father, Peter" that the monks of St. Pancras should not cease

Under Peter the Venerable, Cluny actively sought to engage outwardly. A feeling of responsibility for the whole Christian world very much underlies Peter the Venerable's ideal of authorship, which allowed him to be a "silent preacher" without leaving the cloister.<sup>25</sup> Iogna-Prat sees Peter's theological treatises as the codification of a desire to consolidate Christian orthodoxy (and thus Christendom) in a Cluniac world-view demonizing the Jewish, Islamic and heretical 'Others'. While this argument has been criticized since the manuscripts of his treatises show little evidence for circulating outside the Cluniac orbit, Iogna-Prat persuasively makes the case that it was Peter's intention.<sup>26</sup>

Gillian Knight suggests that Peter's letters (and later his letter collection) also fulfill this preaching mission—spreading his Cluniac message through the long distance friendship networks that Peter cultivated.<sup>27</sup> Drawing on Julian Haseldine's contention that *amicitia* allowed disagreements to be broached and discussed by monks, Knight sees friendship as a key strategy of Peter the Venerable's diplomatic efforts.<sup>28</sup> With the papal court, with rival abbots, and with recalcitrant bishops, Peter appealed to friendship to resolve conflict.

Though Knight's analysis is limited to Peter's communication with ecclesiastical and monastic figures, her conclusion seems to hold true for secular society as well. Of Peter's seventy correspondents (as extant in his letter collection), thirteen are not churchmen, ranging in status from lawyers to kings. Many letters allowed Peter to speak directly to nobles outside his normal sphere of influence, such as the King of Jerusalem (ep. 82) or John Comnenus, the Byzantine Emperor (ep. 75). Others simply reinforced relationships which had already been established, such as his correspondence with the knight Hugh Catula or the lawyer Dulcian, whom Peter reminded about their unfulfilled vows to enter Cluny. Many more letters to lay individuals were likely written, but have since been lost.<sup>29</sup>

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from saying prayers for his soul. Peter did so and was later visited by Henry's ghost who thanked him for his intercession.

<sup>25</sup> Dominique Iogna-Prat, "L'Impossible silence. Pierre le Vénérable, neuvième abbé de Cluny (1122–1156), et la pastorale du livre," *La Parole du prédicateur (Ve–XVe siècle)*, ed. R. M. Dessi, and M. Lauwers, Centre d'études médiévales de Nice, 1 (Nice: Z'éditions, 1997), 111–52; he also makes this claim throughout *Order and Exclusion*.

<sup>26</sup> See for example the reviews in a special volume of *Early Medieval Europe*, in particular Isabelle Cochelin's "Orders and Exclusions" *Early Medieval Europe* 13.4 (2005): 395–403; here 397–98.

<sup>27</sup> Gillian Knight, "Uses and Abuses of *amicitia*: The Correspondence between Peter the Venerable and Hato of Troyes," *Reading Medieval Studies* 23 (1997): 35–67; here 36–37 and *The Correspondence between Peter the Venerable and Bernard of Clairvaux. A Semantic and Structural Analysis*, Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 1–25.

<sup>28</sup> See Julian Haseldine, "Friendship and Rivalry: the Role of *Amicitia* in Twelfth-Century Monastic Relations," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44.3 (1993): 390–414; here 392–94.

<sup>29</sup> *Letters*, vol. 2, 13–15.

As I argue below, friendship is often referenced as part of the diplomatic exchanges contained in these letters. Peter's letters to lay persons used the discourse of friendship as the basis of his epistolary relationships—whether Peter had met his correspondents or not. They show that Peter counted some of the most influential kings and nobles of Europe as his so-called 'friends,' whom he strove to draw into stronger association with Cluny. Before turning to these letters, however, it is necessary to treat briefly what 'friendship' meant to Peter the Venerable.

### Peter's Models of Friendship

According to his *vita*, Peter the Venerable was beloved to all his monks and "won the affection of all" (*omnium affectus in se provocaret*).<sup>30</sup> The author further notes, "Dilegebat namque fratres intimo cordis fervore, et unumquodque quasi se ipsum" (He loved the brothers with the innermost fervor of his heart and treated them as if his very self).<sup>31</sup> If we take Peter's hagiographer at his word, many of his relationships with his monks could be considered friendships—in the modern sense of friendship as a private emotional bond between individuals. Unlike the modern variety, however, friendships among medieval aristocrats were often used as public expressions of alliance, or demonstrations of membership in a "co-operative union".<sup>32</sup> Lords would routinely enter into sworn friendships that were made concrete through rituals or, beginning in the twelfth century, through written contracts. These relationships were intended to ensure mutual support and to help realize common goals in a society lacking the complex network of institutions that permeates the political culture of current Western society.

While the equation of friendship and alliance was at the basis of medieval friendship practices, a long history of related customs and ideas had raised friendship into a secular and religious ideal by the twelfth century among Europe's lay and clerical elites. Classical conceptions of civic virtue and Christian models of love had converged by Peter's time to establish a lofty definition of friendship, adherence to which was a form of self-validation for those in power. By thinking and acting "friendly", lords (both ecclesiastical and temporal) engaged in specific behavioral patterns and ways of feeling that differentiated them, as C.

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<sup>30</sup> Raoul de Sully, *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, col. 19B.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 19B.

<sup>32</sup> Gerd Althoff, *Verwandte, Freunde und Getreue: zum politischen Stellenwert der Gruppenbindungen im früheren Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), trans. by Christopher Carroll as *Family, Friends and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 67.

Stephen Jaeger has argued, and provided tangible proof of their “moral and class superiority”.<sup>33</sup> Jaeger explains that this form of public “gesture” demanded a grounding in real emotion and could not be empty ceremonial posturing, since to do that would reverse the prestige-giving effect. That is to say, a friendship seen as hypocritical would diminish the status of someone claiming prestige through it. As Jaeger argues, this definition of friendship was equally important in court or cloister.

As a son of the powerful Montboissier family, Peter the Venerable could hardly have avoided a familiarity with the political friendships that arose between lay aristocrats. Peter continued to be involved in the social and political world of his birth and well understood the bonds of co-operation underlying its order. His knowledge of aristocratic friendship, for example, can be seen clearly in a letter (ca. 1140) to his brother Pontius, then abbot of Vézelay.<sup>34</sup> In it he decries Pontius’s lack of concern about their feuding brothers Heraclius, a provost of a college of secular canons in Lyons, and Eustache, a knight and aristocrat. These two had become locked in mutual conflict (*guerra*) of some unspecified nature which led Peter the Venerable to intervene and to establish a peaceful accord between them. “By my, I repeat *my*, effort, care and constant concern,” Peter stresses, “our brothers are now bound in friendship and perpetual alliance by unbreakable oaths” (*Meo, meo inquam, studio, mea cura, mea inquietudine [...] Eracliumque et Eustachium germanos, sacramentis inuiolabilibus in perpetuum foedus amicitiamque iuratos*).<sup>35</sup> This letter not only shows that Peter was well aware of aristocratic practices of friendship, but that he saw an important role for a churchman in defining, establishing and overseeing them.

Peter the Venerable never dealt at any length with the subject of friendship, nor does he differentiate whether there are modes of friendship suitable only to the religious or to the secular sphere. Lacking any explicit evidence of this distinction and since we only have indications of his thinking on the subject, we are forced to extrapolate a model of friendship with the laity from his comments to other monks, abbots and bishops. These hints are, however, suggestive of the general rules and responsibilities that Peter the Venerable saw as integral to “true” Christian friendship, and seem applicable to both the secular and sacred world. If Peter was speaking to outsiders with an intent to introduce his Cluniac ideology, presumably he could not say one thing to churchmen and another to the laity without being seen as hypocritical (and thus unworthy of respect and of true friendship).

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<sup>33</sup> C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love. In Search of a Lost Sensibility*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 36.

<sup>34</sup> *Letters*, 232–33, ep. 91.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 233.

For Peter, friendship was a Christian bond grounded in love and charity, which demanded the performance of specific duties (e.g., exchanging favors, reciprocating letters) to provide stability to what was a fluid relationship.<sup>36</sup> Almost without fail, Peter's letters to his friends emphasize the deep and abiding love between him and the recipient. Using language a modern reader would consider Romantic, Peter yearns to speak with his many "beloveds" (*carissime*) and talks of friendship as a relationship which "knows only to love" (*nichilque nisi diligere sciens*).<sup>37</sup> This love is imagined as a spiritual love, arising as it does from a soul's recognition of a kindred spirit.<sup>38</sup> By this Peter did not suggest the maxim that "likes attract", but rather admitted that only pure and virtuous souls are able to perceive and sustain the unanimity (*unanimitas*) and accord (*consensio*) that must exist between friends. For this reason, Peter's letters describe friends as sharing "a single heart" (*simplex cor*) or as "half my soul" (*animae dimidium meae*) and consider the bond of friendship to be "a love derived from a supernal love" (*amor ille a superno amore diriuatus*) or "a vestige of eternal love" (*uestigium amoris eterni*).<sup>39</sup> Peter understood charity to be implicated in the experience of friendship and he expected friendship to act in the service of God and in pursuit of the good.<sup>40</sup>

Peter's explanatory framework for friendship was spiritual but we should be cautious about believing that he naively imagined Christendom to be a society of friends. The bond of charity explained how friendship was possible between people in a world of sin, but did not provide an indication of how people would behave. How people made use of the possibilities afforded by charity/friendship defined what kind of persons they were and determined their reward in the afterlife. In this sense, therefore, Peter views friendship as the product of Christian free will: the possibility for friendship is divinely mandated, but people must

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<sup>36</sup> I provide here only a brief summary of Peter's thought on friendship, something more fully described in my article, "Thoughts on Friendship in the Letters of Peter the Venerable," forthcoming in *Revue Bénédictine* 120.2 (2010).

<sup>37</sup> *Letters*, 9, ep. 5; *nichilque nisi diligere sciens*.

<sup>38</sup> Jaeger (*Ennobling Love*, 14–16) uses the term "non-libidinal" desire to describe this bond. Though these letters are filled with declarations of love between men, I agree with Jaeger's assertion that it is anachronistic to see such language as evidence of homo-eroticism.

<sup>39</sup> *Letters*, vol. 2, ep. 5 and ep. 55. The second quotation is a citation of Horace, *Odes*, I, iii, l. 8.

<sup>40</sup> He criticizes Peter of Poitiers, for instance, for failing to consider the public good: "Never caring to reciprocate any return for our goodwill — what I call a salubrious right of friendship — you seem to live for yourself, to take care for your affairs, but to slight those of others and — what is even worse — of friends." *Letters*, 49, ep. 26: "[C]um te michi semper adherere debere, tam multus amor quo te amplectebam, quam multa utilitas qua te indigebam instanter commoverent subposui tamen uelle meum uoluntati tuae, praeposui salutem tuam necessitati meae, praetuli ocium tuum negotiis meis. Tu autem nullam huic nostrae beniuolentiae uicem reddere curans, quod saluo amicitiae priuilegio dixerim, uideris tibi uidere, tua curare, ea quae sunt aliorum et quod est deterius amicorum uilipendere."

voluntarily subject themselves to its regimen. They did so, Peter believes, by following the obligations and performance of friendship. If friends act without fail, long established friendships will endure without end and continue in Heaven.

Many of Peter's images emphasize the strength of his relationship with his dearest friends. It is an unbreakable cord, a chain and fetters he will never remove and an indestructible shackle.<sup>41</sup> But with these same friends, he also uses metaphors underscoring friendship's transitory nature. Friendship could be a rising and setting sun, finely aging wine, or a fire, sometimes burning bright, sometimes cooling to embers. This last metaphor—first used to warn Hato of Troyes about the necessity of a constant performance of friendship— is particularly evocative of how Peter views the inherent instability of friendship:

Probatio dilectionis, exhibitio est operas. Si ignis est, calet. Si calet, non diu flammam continet. Si diu continuerit, mox ignis esse cessabit.<sup>42</sup>

[*The proof of love is a demonstration in works.* If there is a fire, it provides warmth. If it provides warmth, then it has not burned for long. If it has burned for some time, then soon it will burn itself out.]

In friendship, Peter suggests, constant attention is needed. It demands careful stoking and knowing when to add more fuel for the fire. If too much time is taken between demonstrations of friendship, he implies, the passion of friendship will die.

Peter's letters include a range of possibilities for what constitutes the necessary practices of friendship. They are generally conceived to be tangible favors (such as assistance in episcopal negotiations, judicial help, gifts of land, revenues, or memorial masses) and more immaterial support (such as discussion, debate, advice and consolation). These latter actions dominate Peter's letters on friendship which seek to express the passion and emotion of his love through the written word. A letter to Hato describes this process:

Morem follis habes karissime, qui spiritu quo plenus est, emortuam fere scintillam ignescere, et in immensas quandoque flammam erumpere cogit. Sic spiritus tuus non ut ille aerius sed ut credo diuinus non quidem erga te emoruum ignem pectoris mei, sed diu silentio flando suscitare nititur, et ad uerba solita reuocare molitur.<sup>43</sup>

[You have the manner of a bellows, my beloved, whose breath causes dying embers to ignite and then to erupt into enormous flames. By writing often, as if constantly blowing like a bellows, your spirit (not the airy, but the divine spirit as I see it) labors to rekindle the fire of my heart (certainly not deadened towards you!), and it also

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<sup>41</sup> See ep. 5, 14, 49, 55 and 108.

<sup>42</sup> *Letters*, 10, ep. 5.

<sup>43</sup> *Letters*, 223, ep. 86.

struggles to recall to its customary wordiness the breath of my speech long hooded in silence.]

The good will and pleasant thoughts that arise following a demonstration of friendship lead to a specific way of feeling among strong friends. The more gifts are exchanged and the more love is expressed, the greater is the desire to reciprocate, and thus greater is the mutual bond between friends. Peter assimilates the terminology and theoretical obligations of *amicitia*, therefore, to the medieval processes of gift-giving.<sup>44</sup>

Peter gave friendship both a practical social role and an uplifting spiritual goal, and in understanding it as such, he paralleled contemporary lay and religious models of friendship. In Peter's letters we see evidence of Jaeger's idea that medieval Christian thinkers adhered to an idealized paradigm of friendship. Time and time again Peter differentiates between friends "in name" (also called "false friends" or "friends of Mammon") and "true" or "sincere" friends.<sup>45</sup> This latter type, which Peter the Venerable extols throughout his letters, is limited to the few who are capable of it. This is not to say that Peter restricts the theoretical potential for friendship to lay and ecclesiastical elites. He does admit that true friendship is conceptually possible between all Christians since God's charity has infused them with the ability to love. But only the rare individual was perceived to submit—or was portrayed as adhering—to friendship's demanding regimen.

Despite the abstract theoretical underpinning to Peter's ideas, these ideas had a very concrete function. Key to understanding Peter's depiction of 'true' friendship is to be aware of its ability to establish social differentiation; his discussions and rules for how friends behave allow him to make distinctions in status between individuals. The praise or critique of a friendship was a means for Peter to reward or to humiliate and either was intended to encourage further positive interaction. With his ecclesiastical and monastic friends, Peter praised their gifts of dialogue, advice or love to fan the flames of friendship. With secular friends, Peter saw the exchange of favors in more material terms—the 'love' was only real when backed up by donations or physical support for the Church. This difference, however, does not mean that Peter abandoned his uplifting ideal of spiritual friendship as a soul's recognition of its like. Instead, Peter used the spiritual aspect of friendship as a way to involve lay magnates further in a Cluniac ideology already engrained through the gift-exchange common in the *ecclesia cluniacensis*.

An understanding of who these people were, and why they became friends with Cluny opens a window on the political and social use that Peter the Venerable

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<sup>44</sup> See also the contribution to this volume by Stavroula Constantinou who offers an extensive discussion of gift-giving within the realm of friendship.

<sup>45</sup> See ep. 6 and 49,

made of friendship. He used the discourse of friendship to communicate a political theory for proper Christian governance and encouraged nobles to enter into associative friendships with Cluny (i.e., the monastic family and congregation of Cluny). I now turn to considering the nature of these relationships which bound Peter the Venerable in friendship with some of the most powerful figures of twelfth-century Christendom.

### Secular Friendships

The picture we can recreate of the lay ‘friends of Cluny’ during Peter’s abbacy remains fragmentary—unsurprising given the factors hindering any reconstruction of this amorphous network. Peter’s correspondence shows that a wide range of persons—abbots and priors, bishops and clerics, kings and noblemen—were admitted into Peter the Venerable’s friendship circle. More than forty separate groups or individuals are explicitly named as friends; less than one fifth were lay persons. This number should not be used to estimate the number of his lay friendships, however, since the surviving letter collection does not provide a complete record but only a selection of letters designed to promote Peter’s prestige. Letters citing secular friendships, therefore, likely record only the most elite of his amicable associations.

The number of the ‘friends of Cluny’ during Peter the Venerable’s abbacy was likely considerable. Monastic necrologies (lists of the deceased to be memorialized liturgically) suggest that a sizeable population of *amici* was linked with Cluny.<sup>46</sup> While the necrology of Cluny itself has been lost, the necrologies of other houses within the *ecclesia cluniancensis* accord the status of family or friend (*familiares/amici nostri*) to a long list of nobles and other lay persons within the Cluniac orbit.<sup>47</sup> The necrology of Marcigny-sur-Loire (where Peter’s mother Raingard ended her life) endows some men and many women with the status of *amicus noster/ amica nostra* alongside their names.<sup>48</sup> For example, a ‘Judith’ (*Iulitta*), likely the sister of Roger II of Sicily, is memorialized on March 30th as “our friend.”<sup>49</sup> The references to friendship in the necrologies (see the appendix to this article) identify most individuals with these few words or the additional proviso that an office needed

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<sup>46</sup> Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion*, 65–67.

<sup>47</sup> A composite recreation of the Cluniac necrology is provided in the side by side presentation of several necrologies, *Synopse der cluniacensischen Necrologien*, ed. Joachim Wollasch, 2 vols., Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, 39 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1982).

<sup>48</sup> For a history of Marcigny and a discussion of the necrology, see Else Maria Wischermann, *Marcigny-sur-Loire: Gründungs- und Frühgeschichte des ersten Cluniacenserinnenpriorates, 1050–1150*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, 42 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1986).

<sup>49</sup> Wollasch, *Synopse der cluniacensischen Necrologien*, 179; *Iulitta amica nostra*.

be performed for them. There is no clear correlation between special offices being said and friendship, however, since “*officium fiat*” is recorded far more often than whether an individual was an *amicus/amica*.

Beyond their names recorded in a book of memory, almost no details are known about these individuals’ relationships with Cluny. For some others we have slightly more evidence from Peter’s letters. Peter writes to King Sigard I of Norway, called “*nobilissimo regum et nostrae amico*” (the most noble of kings and friend of our society) for his Christian rule, his protection of the Church and his unceasing war against the enemies of Christ’s cross.<sup>50</sup> Count Amadeus III of Savoy (†1148) is addressed as the “*nobilissimo principi et karissimo amico nostro domino Amedeo*” (the most noble prince and most beloved friend of ours” in a letter (1137/1138) urging him to come to peace with his nephew King Louis VII of France. This title was likely earned by the number of monasteries Amadeus patronized.<sup>51</sup> We can only surmise how Sigard and Amadeus came by their status, but three other nobles, Raoul I of Vermandois, Alfonso VII of Léon-Castille and Roger II of Sicily, allow us to establish a more nuanced picture of Peter and his secular friends.

### Raoul I of Vermandois

Sometime after 1152, Peter wrote to all his monks in all the monasteries linked to Cluny in order to record his gratitude for a lifetime of good works done by Count Raoul (Radulphus) I of Vermandois, a member of the royal family and a royal seneschal.<sup>52</sup> The first part of this text retells how Count Raoul made one final grant of land and money as he lay dying, before bringing himself—and his deathbed offering—to the monastic community of Cluny.<sup>53</sup> The second part of the text draws on a source charter no longer extant elsewhere, outlining in detail the nature of Raoul’s gifts and the way they were to be reciprocated with a host of Cluniac prayers and masses. The document records a not unusual occurrence: the deathbed conversion (*ad succurrendum*) of one of Cluny’s patrons earned him liturgical remembrance as a full monk. What is atypical, however, is that Raoul also gained the title of “*magnus amicus et benefactor*” (great friend and benefactor) of Cluny. Understanding why Peter chose to note this allows us to open a window on a social, political and religious relationship existing between a prominent abbot and a powerful noble.

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<sup>50</sup> *Letters*, 140–41, ep. 44.

<sup>51</sup> *Letters*, 199, ep. 68.

<sup>52</sup> *Letters*, 2, 312, n. 9.

<sup>53</sup> *Recueil des chartes de l’abbaye de Cluny*, 5, 123, n°. 4070.

From the first reference to Raoul as a “great friend” at the opening of Peter’s letter, we see that his relationship to Cluny is presented as a facet of Raoul’s identity as basic as his name, station and lineage:

Ego frater Petrus, humilis Cluniacensis abbas, nota facio legentibus ea quae sequuntur. Comes Rodulfus de Perrona, filius Hugonis Magni, fratris Philippi regis Francorum, magnus amicus et benefactor exstitit hujus, in qua omnipotenti Deo servire optamus, sanctae Cluniacensis Ecclesiae. Hic post reliqua bona opera sua, quibus Deum sibi propitiare dum incolumis viveret, laborabat, jam infirmus et morti proximus praecedentibus aliquid majus adjunxit.<sup>54</sup>

[I, brother Peter, the humble abbot of Cluny, make known the following matters to the reader: Count Raoul of Perrone, son of Hugh the Great who himself was the brother of Philip, king of the Franks, stands out as a great friend and benefactor of this, the Holy Cluniac Church, in which we desire to serve God omnipotent. After all his other good works done to appease God when hale and hearty, this man, when sick and at death’s door, added another great offering to his past ones.]

Peter admits a certain parallel between himself, who serves God, and Raoul, who serves under Him through his gifts. This equivalence earns the count a place of respect within the Cluniac pantheon and necrology, as the document subsequently outlines. The reward for Raoul’s good works and his many gifts is spelled out in detail and the text enumerates how often and how many masses were to be said for his soul by each and every monk of the *ecclesia cluniacensis*. Beyond the expected services, however, Peter indicates that Raoul should be gifted with additional commemorations which are “rarely” granted and when offered are only done so to Cluny’s other great friends, namely kings and emperor key to becoming a “great friend” was a proven history of benefaction: founding monasteries, granting revenues for their upkeep, or providing large lump sum payments of silver and gold to a Cluny increasingly desperate to meet its expenses.<sup>55</sup> The characterization of a benefactor as a friend seems normal today, when the term commonly identifies financial donors to arts groups (e.g., friends of the orchestra<sup>56</sup>)

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> For indications of the financial condition of Cluny under Peter’s abbacy, see his *Dispositio rei familiaris* (*Recueil des chartes de l’abbaye de Cluny*, 5, 475–82, no. 4132. On this text, see George Duby, “Le Budget de l’abbaye de Cluny entre 1080 et 1155. Economie domaniale et économie monétaire,” *Annales E.S.C.* 7 (1952): 155–71 and more recently, Denyse Riche, *L’Ordre de Cluny à la fin du Moyen Âge : Le vieux pays clunisien, XIIe–XVe siècle*, Centre Européen de Recherches sur les Congrégations et Ordres Religieux Travaux et Recherches, 13 (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l’Université de Saint-Etienne, 2000), 90–93.

<sup>56</sup> For example, the organization the *Friends of the National Art Centre Orchestra* (Ottawa), defines themselves thusly: “By statute, *Friends of NACO* is an Association; by membership, *Friends* is a community. Through events and activities, *Friends* is a space where music lovers meet, and come to embrace, share and develop a common passion. Founded at the same time as the NAC

and at first glance, this connotation of friend seems typical for the medieval period as well.

Though infrequently, Peter does use *magnus amicus* elsewhere to indicate Cluny's most liberal benefactors—suggesting that this meaning was understood by his medieval readers. For example, Peter's book of miracle stories retells a dream vision which outlines in quasi-judicial language the specifics of King Alfonso VI's donations to Cluny and their reconfirmation by his successors. At the end of this story-charter, Peter notes that Alfonso VI († 1109) was known across Spain and France as a "Cluniacensis ecclesie magnus amicus" (great friend of the Cluniac church) due to his generosity.<sup>57</sup> In a letter to Henry, Bishop of Winchester, Peter praises him and King Stephen of England for their continuous gifts. In 1135 he describes them as exemplary donors, saying "omnes pene Cluniacensis ouilis amici [...] omnes prouisoires, omnes benefactores in uobis uno confluerint" (all the friends of the Cluniac flock, all its providers, and all its benefactors have come together in you) and as "super uniuersos amicos et benefactores nostros" (standing out above all of Cluny's friends and benefactors).<sup>58</sup> But many benefactors did not earn the name *amicus*. The Empress Matilda, Stephen's rival in claiming the crown of England, for example, was rewarded for her and her father's generosity with liturgical commemoration identical to Raoul's (ca. 1155), but perhaps out of deference to Stephen's position she was not raised to the status of friend.<sup>59</sup>

If the title was unimportant, though, why did Peter emphasize that Raoul was a "great friend and benefactor" not once, but twice in this letter?<sup>60</sup> As argued below, the examples of Alfonso VII and Roger II suggest that Peter does so because being a friend entails more than being a benefactor. Friends needed to meet Peter's standard of true friendship of offering more from the heart and less with the mouth, more through actions and less with words.<sup>61</sup> Though gifts were the means

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Orchestra some 40 years ago, *Friends* has been connecting music and people ever since" (<http://www.friendsofnaco.ca>; last accessed on Feb. 19, 2010).

<sup>57</sup> *De miraculis*, 1: 28, 91. Like Raoul, Alfonso VI was commemorated in all the monasteries of Cluny and a directive sent by Abbot Hugh († 1109) refers to him as a *fidelis amicus* (*Recueil des chartes*, 4, n°. 3442). Alfonso VI and Raoul I of Vermandois are granted an identical list of liturgical services.

<sup>58</sup> *Letters*, 228, ep. 88, and 178, ep. 56. Henry likely passed several years at Cluny in his early life, though it is not clear whether he professed as a monk there before the end of his life; see Ilicia J. Sprey, "Henry of Winchester and the Expansion of Legatine Authority in England," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 91 (1996), 785–805; here 790–91.

<sup>59</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, 5, 532–33, no. 4183. With the exception of a mention that he exchanged "friendly words" with Heloise, Peter the Venerable's extant letters do not reference a single "friendship" with a woman. The repeated citation of women as friends in the Cluniac necrologies (noted in the appendix to this article) suggests that gender was not a barrier to official friendship with Cluny.

<sup>60</sup> The only other charter I have come across which used a similar expression, is a charter granted and recorded by Bishop Bernard of Saintes in 1149 to Geoffrey of Le Loroux, archbishop of Bordeaux, calling him an *amicus . . . ecclesiae cluniacensis*; *ibid.*, 5, 484, no. 4139.

<sup>61</sup> *Letters*, 213, ep. 79. The passage reads as a whole: *Dubitandum erat de uerbis, nisi ea opera*

for powerful magnates to participate in and support the goals of the *ecclesia cluniacensis*, Peter portrayed these gifts as indications of a shared vision of Christian political order—since Cluny’s friendship could not be bought by lucre alone.

### Alfonso VII, King-Emperor of León-Castille

The implication of friendship with aristocratic gift-exchange is further illustrated by Peter the Venerable’s (and therefore Cluny’s) relationship with Alfonso VII (+1158), the grandson of Alfonso VI (whom Peter also called a “great friend of Cluny”). Following the death of Alfonso VI in 1109, the ties of Castilian magnates to the *ecclesia cluniacensis* had lessened and the frequency as well as the size of donations had decreased.<sup>62</sup> Early on in his reign (September 7, 1132), however, Alfonso VII invested Cluny with the sizable gift of the venerable abbey of Sahagún (*Sanctus Facundus*). A charter records his rationale:

Ad hoc divina providentia imperatores et reges terreni regni apicem conscendere permittit, ut servorum Dei de sua abundantia suppleant inopiam et sic per misericordiam quam impenderit, aeternam post temporalem mereantur percipere coronam.<sup>63</sup>

[Divine providence allows emperors and kings to rise to the height of terrestrial kingship in order that they might supplement the poverty of the servants of God from their abundance and thus through the mercy which they disburse, they merit to receive an eternal crown after the temporal crown.]

This grant gave formal juridical and financial authority over a monastery where Cluny had maintained a reforming presence since the time of Alfonso VI.<sup>64</sup> Ten years later a similar donation was made during Peter the Venerable’s journey to Spain in 1142, as evidenced by a charter (July 29, 1142) giving the monastery of San-Pedro-de-Càrdena to Cluny by Alfonso VII. It records an arrangement of

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*praevenissent. Mercatus est amicus animus non nudo affectu amicos, quibus minus in ore, plus in corde, minus in uerbis, plus in rebus indulgere conuevit.*

<sup>62</sup> See Charles J. Bishko “Liturgical Intercession at Cluny for the King-Emperors of León,” *Studia Monastica* 3 (1961): 53–76.

<sup>63</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, 5, 390–91, no. 4038; (dated 7 September, 1132).

<sup>64</sup> Bernard Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065–1109* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 106 and Charles J. Bishko, “Count Henrique of Portugal, Cluny, and the antecedents of the Pacto Sucessório,” *Revista Portuguesa de Historia* 13 (1971): 155–88; here 168–70; rpt. in *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History 600–1300* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984): art. ix. We can perhaps also see in this grant the growing tendency of Cluny under abbot Pontius and under Peter the Venerable to enshrine in juridical language the links between the Abbot of Cluny and the monasteries connected to them.

reciprocity identical in nature between the spiritual authority of Cluny and the temporal power of the king-emperor of Léon-Castile:

Quanto divitiis et possessionibus habundantius quisque videtur affluere, tanto largius de his que possidet et ecclesiis et ueris Dei cultoribus pro salute animæ suæ debet impendere, juxta illud Apostoli: Facite bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei, et illud Salomonis: Divitiæ viri redemptio animæ ipsius sunt.<sup>65</sup>

[The more someone is seen to abound greatly in riches and possessions, the more he should be very generous with what he possesses to churches and the true worshippers of God for the salvation of his soul, as indicated by the words of the Apostle, *Do good to all, but especially to the servants of faith* and those of Solomon, *A man's wealth is the redemption of his soul.*]

The religious preamble segues into a record of exchange common to Cluniac charters: lands and money for Cluny, prayers for Alfonso VII and his parents. Less than a year and a half later, Alfonso further strengthens the bond between himself and Cluny by repeating almost identical words and very similar conditions in a grant of the abbey of San-Vicente-de-Salamanca to Cluny (October 29, 1143).<sup>66</sup> All these donations repeat the message that Alfonso shared a similar vision of Christian political society with Peter and with Cluny.<sup>67</sup> These texts all claim that the king made the donations because he *already* conceived of his obligations to the Church along these lines. Ostensibly it was Alfonso, not Peter, that requested such exchanges. This charter, like the one recording Raoul's gifts, therefore contains both legal niceties, but also contains an ideological message of union between monastery and magnate.

The context for these grants, however, suggests the nuance of Peter's relationship with Cluny's secular friends. In the time between these two major donations, Peter the Venerable speaks very favorably of Alfonso VII in a plaintive letter (mid-1143) to Innocent II:

Imperator Hispanus, magnus Christiani populi princeps, devotus maiestati vestrae filius, licet apud pietatem vestram multum possit et posse debeat, tamen quia inter modernos reges praecipuus amicus et benefactor Cluniacensis ecclesiae est, me ad praesens mediatorem et apud vos intercessorem elegit.<sup>68</sup>

[Though the emperor of Spain, that great prince of the Christian people, a devoted son of your majesty, is very able and should be able to come before Your Piety, he has

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<sup>65</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, 5, 423–24, no. 4072; (dated 29 July, 1142).

<sup>66</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, 5, 428–29, no. 4076 (dated 29 October, 1143).

<sup>67</sup> Charles J. Bishko, "Peter the Venerable's Journey to Spain," *Petrus Venerabilis, 1156–1956*, *Studia Anselmiana*, 40 (Rome: Herder, 1956), 163–75; here 170–71; rpt. in *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History*, art. xii.

<sup>68</sup> *Letters*, 265, ep. 103.

chosen me to come as a mediator and intercessor, since he is a friend and benefactor of the Cluniac Church extraordinary among today's kings.]

On Alfonso's behalf, Peter attempts to influence Innocent II's judgement on the disputed election of the archbishopric of Compostela. He argues that Alfonso's candidate, Bishop Berengar of Salamanca, was the most worthy candidate who should be allowed to take up his crosier. Peter begs for his pope's favor, and requests that he respect justice, since Berengar was elected canonically and was a virtuous man, unlike the disputant who, as Peter describes it, was driven by lucre.

Given the timing of Alfonso's grants to Cluny, it may appear that the grant of San-Pedro-de-Cárdena is a 'down payment' for Peter's future intercession. Charles Bishko interprets Peter's trip to Spain in this way—a result of Alfonso's need to ensure that his man was installed as the ecclesiastical lord in an area where he was extending his influence but faced opposition.<sup>69</sup> The use of the term *amicus*, however, cautions against seeing this exchange as some sort of simple trade of land for diplomacy. The term reminds Innocent that Alfonso VII had already shown himself well disposed to Cluny and its reform program, and that his forefathers ranked among Cluny's supporters. Elsewhere, Peter's letters to popes and bishops show that he often used a public declaration of friendship as a form of medieval character reference. To accept to be named or to name oneself as a friend of a man searching for an ecclesiastical position, was to vouch for his Christian nature and virtuous behavior.<sup>70</sup> By this statement, Peter makes the claim that he is not a hired gun for Alfonso, but rather an individual taking care for the sake of common charity. And since Peter's letter, buttressed by that of other prominent churchmen, convinced Innocent that Berengar was a worthy candidate, he must have been persuasive.<sup>71</sup>

From this episode, we glimpse how Peter subsumes Alfonso's behavior into the discourse of friendship. He portrays him to Innocent as one bound by the obligations of friendship and uses this image to persuade Innocent that Alfonso was acting in the interests of the Church. But Peter did not make an empty rhetorical claim. He had strong "proof of friendship" that Alfonso was a like-minded supporter of the Church. To be thought to accept Alfonso as friend for self-interest (thereby acting the "friend of Mammon") would acknowledge Peter's hypocrisy and would destroy his credibility, not only with Innocent, but with any learned audience of the letter.

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<sup>69</sup> Bishko, "Peter the Venerable's Journey to Spain," 170–71.

<sup>70</sup> See for example, ep. 79, 85, 89, and 166.

<sup>71</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, for example, also wrote to Innocent II in support of Berengar (see Bishko, "Peter the Venerable's Journey to Spain," 172).

## Roger II, King of Sicily

A letter (1139/1141) to Peter's "domino et amicus" (lord and friend) Roger II, the king of Sicily (†1154) further suggests how gifts alone did not justify a rank among Cluny's great friends.<sup>72</sup> Peter the Venerable concedes that reports of Roger's benevolent rule "first impelled me to love you and also urged me to admit you to the ranks of the greatest friends and benefactors of the Cluniac church, that is, the great Roman, French, English and Spanish kings".<sup>73</sup> This praise of Roger is not unlike what was offered to Stephen, Alfonso or Raoul, and points to the origin of friendship in a common Christian outlook. But how is it that Roger became one of Cluny's "great friends" when he had not made a single donation to Cluny? Roger, it should be remembered, had been an ardent supporter of the antipope Anacletus II, was excommunicated by Innocent II in April 1139 and had captured and imprisoned Innocent II a few months later. The transformation of Roger's position reveals that Peter's use of friendship was not just a reward for past behavior, but also a prize to be offered when looking to the future.

Peter opens the letter declaring that he embraces Roger with the arms of true love, even if one had never laid eyes on the other. He announces that he came to know about Roger's sincere love for Cluny from the testimony of a Cluniac monk Geoffrey who was the prior of San Maria de Gimmara, the only Cluniac house in Sicily and who was making overtures to Cluny on Roger's behalf.<sup>74</sup> The nature of Roger's proposals is left unstated by Peter, but almost certainly they related to the truce forced on Innocent II by Roger (25 July, 1139). The letter is filled with praise for Roger's peace-making and communicates Peter's anxiety about the tenuousness of the current peace. This political alliance is likely the explanation for why Peter extends his friendship to Roger. As with Alfonso VII, Peter welcomed this secular leader's request for diplomacy as part of the cycle of friendship.

The letter's central theme repeats the ideology recorded in Alfonso VII's charters: God permits temporal kings to rule as His intermediaries so long as their power is marshaled to undertake the will of God. This Roger does, Peter praises, by creating a lasting peace in an area (Sicily, Apulia and Calabria) historically wracked by conflict and disorder. Roger is therefore an exemplar of Christian kingship which evokes Peter's recognition of shared charity. Peter offers his friendship, the proof of which he then outlines in detail:

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<sup>72</sup> *Letters*, 230, ep. 90; *domino et amicus Rogerio*.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 231, ep. 90; *Ista [...] ut inter magnos reges Romanos dico, Francos, Anglos, Hispanos, maximos Cluniacensis aeclesiae amicos et benefactores, uos quoque admitterem coegerunt*.

<sup>74</sup> This house was founded by Roger's sister Judith. For the charter of donation, see *Recueil des chartes*, 5, 165–71, no. 3815.

Ea de causa iam ex multo tempore pro pace, pro honore, pro salute vestra et apud deum precatorem, et apud homines praedicatorem me constitui, et ad idem agendum tam de nostris quam de alienis quos potui attraxi. Testis est horum conscientia mea, testis Romanus cancellarius, testis et ipse dominus papa, quem Pisis quam Romae quem intra Gallias constitutum, praesens uerbis, absens litteris de pace uestra sepe conueni, et ne inimicis uestris uestram pacem eiusque perturbatoribus crederet, et rogauit et monui. Quod licet diu dilatatum, sed nunc tandem ad effectum perductum, nos et omnes quicumque audire potuerunt pacis amatores laetificat, et ad gratiarum actiones deo persoluendas inuitat.<sup>75</sup>

[For this reason, already now for a long time I have proven myself a supplicant before God and a preacher to men out of concern for peace, for honor, for your salvation, and I have marshaled both my countrymen and foreigners to do the same. My conscience is witness to this, as is the Roman chancellor [Haimeric] and the lord Pope [Innocent II] himself, recognized in Pisa, Roma and throughout France. I often bring up your peace to him, with words spoken when together, with letters when apart. I have asked and urged him not to believe your enemies and the disturbers of your peace. This, though delayed for some time, has now finally had an effect. This delights us and all lovers of peace—namely, everyone who hears about this— and incites us to make demonstrations of thanks to God.]

The sincerity of his offer of friendship is demonstrated, Peter claims, by his longstanding diplomacy on Roger's behalf. And Peter next verbalizes his expectation of a return for his benevolence. Future donations (or "demonstrations of thanks") by Roger would rebalance Peter's favor.

Peter's letter, however, does not offer only a single tit-for-tat exchange, but a continuing relationship. He expresses his hope that Roger's potential donations would allow the spread of Cluniac monasteries in his lands, which would, in turn, bring further returns to Roger in the form of social and religious solidarity. Peter suggests that increasing the number of Cluniac monks in Sicily would multiply the ardor for religion in Roger's kingdom—a kingdom which once was a safe haven for the Saracens. Their example would establish the Christian unity, he argues, key to a firm loyalty to Roger's Christian kingship. An allusion to the book of Sirach (4.10) reminds Roger about the political value of this strategy, since a king relying on his power alone "cum cecederit non habet subleuantem" (does not have someone to support him when he falls).<sup>76</sup> By working for orthodoxy and by spreading word of Roger's renown, Cluny's monks and its friendship provided

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<sup>75</sup> *Letters*, 231, ep. 90.

<sup>76</sup> *Letters*, 232, ep. 90.

avenues for Roger to strengthen his kingdom.<sup>77</sup> Through this exchange king and cloister would be bound together by ever tighter bonds of mutual support.

Peter's letter can be viewed as an outline of the conditions for Peter/Cluny to support Roger in pursuing peace with Innocent. As Peter portrays the situation, if Roger sincerely wanted a lasting peace with Innocent through Cluny, then he would have to want to be its friend. Peter implicitly demands that Roger adhere to what was expected of a friend and explicitly underlines that Roger could not be just a typical noble, but virtue incarnate, another Solomon, a fervent defender of the peace. Peter also enjoins Roger to engage in the exchange of benevolence (e.g. gifts) that characterized friendship. There is nothing particularly unique about this depiction, as Peter's other letters demonstrate this presentation to be *topoic*.<sup>78</sup> Recalling Odo of Cluny's depiction of Gerald of Aurillac as a monkish warrior, Roger is glorified for his civilized Christian nature and his friendship with Cluny.<sup>79</sup> The glorifying portrait is designed to aggrandize Roger, but also to communicate Peter's civilizing message: support Cluny or risk being publicized as an uncharitable aristocrat.

The evidence from Roger II's reign indicates that Peter was correct in identifying Roger's deep concern for maintaining an image as a Christian leader. Hubert Houben's account of Roger II shows that he labored to enshrine and popularize an image of himself as a Christian ruler (e.g., governing in accordance with Christian ideas of justice, supporting the Church, encouraging Christian intellectuals) in art, architecture and literature.<sup>80</sup> One example of this campaign is a history of his reign commissioned by Roger from a Benedictine abbot, Alexander of Teleso (+1143), which praises Roger's Christian majesty and emphasizes his extreme hatred for liars, hypocrites and flatterers.<sup>81</sup> Such a concern with

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<sup>77</sup> The practical tone of Peter's argument is repeated in subsequent letters. The reciprocal role of king and Cluny is again explored in ep. 131 (*Letters*, 330–33) where Peter emphasizes the utility of donating to Cluny, where gifts will not be spent on the monks, but will be multiplied in direct charity. Peter unabashedly characterizes Cluny as playing an important role in the earthly world and acting as a treasury for all Christians (monks or otherwise).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. ep. 75 to the Byzantine Emperor John Comnenus or ep. 82 to the King of Jerusalem. Peter addresses King Sigard of Norway in almost identical terms: "So greatly do you submit the pride of kings most affectionately to the sweet yoke of Christ ...." *Letters*, ep. 44, 141; [*Q*]ualiter regium fastum suavi Christi iugo affectuosissime subieceritis.

<sup>79</sup> On the civilizing undertone in Odo's *Vita Gerardi*, cf. Stuart Airlie, "The Anxiety of Sanctity: St Gerald of Aurillac and his Maker," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 43 (1992), 372–95.

<sup>80</sup> Hubert Houben, *Roger II di Sicilia: un sovrano tra Oriente und Occidente*. Centro europeo di studi normanni, 8 (Roma: Editori Laterza, 1999), trans. by Graham A. Loud and Diane Milburn as *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*. Cambridge Medieval Textbooks (Cambridge: University Press, 2002), 113–34.

<sup>81</sup> *Alexandri Telesini abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, ed. L. De Nava, Historical Commentary by D. Clementi. Fonti per la storia d'Italia pubblicati dall'Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 112 (Rome: Istituto Palazzo Borromini, 1991), IV, 3–4, 82–3, cited in Houben, *Roger*

disseminating a popular conception of himself as above reproach is what Peter may have been appealing to with his offer of sincere friendship.

Perhaps Peter was also encouraged by the knowledge that the women in Roger's life had already shown themselves to be important supporters of Cluny. Roger's first wife Elvira was the daughter of Alfonso VI of Léon-Castille and may have played a role in urging Roger to link himself to a powerful monastery traditionally allied with her family. Judith, Roger's sister, had already linked herself to Cluny by granting that the Sicilian monastery of San Maria de Gimmara be filled with Cluniac monks.

There is no indication, however, that Roger ever responded favorably to Peter's suggestions.<sup>82</sup> The peace agreement between Innocent and Roger languished due to the opposition of Roman cardinals, and successive popes remained antagonistic to Roger.<sup>83</sup> Nor do any letters from Roger survive to indicate whether Peter's strategy was successful in binding him to Cluny. Peter did send two subsequent letters to him (the first dating from 1146 and the second from soon after) enjoining Roger to act in line with the model of kingship outlined in his initial letter in 1139. The 1146 letter implores Roger's generosity and outlines a king's responsibility to dispense his largesse to the poor brothers of Cluny. The later epistle enjoins Roger to reach a peace with the Emperor Conrad III and offers himself as a mediator. That Peter could ask or offer such services hints at a continued relationship between Roger and Cluny, whether real or claimed. While the first letter no longer makes mention of Roger as a friend, the second remarks that Cluny still commemorated Roger alongside its other "friends and benefactors", allowing Peter to continue to make requests, long after Cluny's initial utility for Roger had faded into the past.<sup>84</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I return to Peter's offer of assistance to Innocent II. Peter's letter did not bring with it the necessary martial force to sustain Innocent in Rome. In fact, nobody came to help and soon after receiving Peter's letter, he fled Rome for northern Italy—then traveling on to France—where secular and ecclesiastical

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*Il of Sicily*, 177.

<sup>82</sup> *Letters*, 2, 160, note to ep. 90; Lynn White, *Latin Monasticism in Norman Sicily*, Mediaeval Academy of America Monographs, 13 (Cambridge, Mass: Medieval Academy of America, 1938), 56.

<sup>83</sup> Ian S. Robinson, "The Papacy, 1122–1198," *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick and David Abulafia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 317–83; here, 376.

<sup>84</sup> *Letters*, 394–95, ep. 162.

lords, of whom Peter was one, sheltered and aided him. If we are to trust the *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, however, Peter is the hero of the story. In this account, Peter had himself raced to Rome, bringing horses with him to ferry Innocent to France.<sup>85</sup> Not only did Peter shepherd Innocent to Cluny, but he then welcomed and celebrated him with such solemnity that, according to the author Raoul, the rest of the Gallican Church immediately recognized Innocent as the rightful claimant. In turn, a love for Peter compelled the French king, and then the kings of England, Spain and Germany to follow suit and to ensure unity throughout Christendom.<sup>86</sup> Peter the Venerable was indisputably a key supporter and propagandist on Innocent's behalf, but Raoul's depiction almost comically overemphasizes Peter's role and the influence he had over the lay supporters of Cluny. Innocent II, though elected irregularly and only rarely in Rome, did succeed in becoming the universally recognized claimant to the papacy largely because of his superior ability at controlling public opinion.<sup>87</sup> Ultimately it was not lances or swords which settled the papal schism, but the protracted negotiations between the various camps, the successful propaganda campaigns waged by Innocent's supporters and the death of Anacletus II. The 'soft power' wielded by Peter the Venerable, and others like him, succeeded in breaking the impasse and unifying the Roman Church under a single pontiff.

This sort of diplomatic power was the purpose of Peter's and Cluny's friendships: to help overcome divisiveness and to associate everybody under Christian harmonious accord. To be a friend of Cluny was to participate in a system of power reinforcing the existing collaboration of the castle and the monastery. Monks and nobles alike saw value in creating links between their worlds: Alfonso was able to lend weight to his ecclesiastical negotiations by Peter's intervention while Cluny was provided with further resources to continue their monastic mission; Peter sought to solidify the peace between Roger and the papacy, while Roger could portray himself as a holy Christian king. Friendship gave lords and monks an ability to negotiate such mutually beneficial exchanges without appearing mercenary. By subsuming such exchanges under the mantle of friendship, moreover, both groups engaged in a form of public behavior which reinforced their elite status as the inheritors of the ancient art of *amicitia*.

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<sup>85</sup> *Vita Petri Venerabilis*, col. 20.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 21A.

<sup>87</sup> Mary Stroll, *The Jewish Pope*, 169–78.



5.5	Rotbertus amicus	Longpont	251
6.5	Obiit Osanna uxor Michaelis de Gaurie que dedit conuentui unam peciam uinee apud Castriis in territorio, quod dicitur <...> con pro se et pro marito suo pro anniuersariis amicorum. Officium fiat.	Longpont	253
6.6	UUaldrada amica nostra	Marcigny	315
9.6	Eustachius amicus noster	SMdC	321
10.6	Stephanus amicus qui dedit XI solidos, officium	St. Martial II	323
11.6	Burchardus sacerdos amicus	Marcigny	325
19.6	Obiit Arenborga amica nostra	Marcigny	340
21.6	Maroardus amicus	Marcigny	345
24.6	Berchardis amica	Marcigny	351
13.7	Alonnus sacerdos amicus	Marcigny	389
22.7	Gertrudis amica nostra	Marcigny	407
28.7	Uldricus tricenarius de Crecei amicus	Marcigny	419
14.9	Balfredus sacerdos amicus	Marcigny	515
20.9	Ermengardis amica nostra	Marcigny	527
29.10	Beatrix amica nostra	Marcigny	605
30.10	Dalmatius amicus noster, officium fiat	SMdC, St. Martial I, II	607
1.11	Ancilla amica nostra	Marcigny	611
26.11	Emma amica nostra	Marcigny	661
20.12	Emmo presbiter amicus noster	Marcigny	709
27.12	Berchildis amica nostra	Marcigny	723

### Monachi

18.1	Lizelinus amicus	Marcigny	36
18.1	Margareta amici nostri, officium pro ipsis	Marcigny	39
22.5	Hugo de Lupidomibus succentor Belvacensis monachus ad succurrendum, qui dedit priori centum libras Turonenses in utilitatem ecclesie conuertendas. Et conuentui centum libras Turonenses ad emendam redditus pro pitancia conuentus,		

pro quo concessimus eidem missam  
specialem defunctorum, celebrandam  
pro remedio anime sue et auunculi sui  
prioris Balduini et fratrum suorum et  
patris et matris et omnium amicorum  
suorum ad altare Sancte Margarete,  
scribendam singulis ebdomadis, sabbato,  
in tabula. Officium fiat, capa in choro. SMdC