

Peasant Mobility and Settlement.

The Case of the Large Ecclesiastical Carolingian Manors^{*}

1. Introduction

Today the right of people to circulate freely is enshrined in the fundamental liberties of the European Union. Pierre Bonnassie has addressed the mobility topic on an equally positive note in a study of the spread of agriculture in the Early Middle Ages in southern Gaul (the Midi) and the northeastern Iberic Peninsula (Catalonia). In the IXth and Xth centuries, the people who carried out the task of reclaiming abandoned lands and clearing new lands in the framework of the *aprisio* were essentially « young peasant couples, fleeing hunger or servitude, settling on vacant lands (...), breaking the ground with hoe and spade, acquiring title by *aprisio*, and grouping together in communities of three to thirty families to carry out the heaviest labour and to build installations having a collective character (...). By about 940-950, the *ruptura* or great task of breaking the ground was essentially completed. The agricultural space had been conquered, as was the case at approximately the same point in time in northwestern Spain ». As for the expansions that occurred in Spain after the end of the first millennium, in the conquered territories of Lleida and Tortosa in the XIIth century and in the region of Valencia in the next century, their context was very different: these took place in the framework of the manor and at the initiative of the people in power¹.

The explanatory model developed by Pierre Bonnassie insists on the role of the peasantry and its autonomy in the rise of agriculture in the western economy. In the Mediterranean South of France, growth seems to have begun in the VIIth century. This upheaval in the economy appears to have stemmed both from a revival accompanying the end of the major plague pandemic of the VIth century and from the first big breach in the slavery system in the Midi, with massive escapes of slaves in the second half of the VIIth century. Growth « markers » highlight this agricultural

^{*} Publication originale: "Peasant Mobility and Settlement. The Case of the Large Ecclesiastical Carolingian Manors", *Tätigkeitsfelder und Erfahrungshorizonte des Ländlichen Menschen in der Frühmittelalterlichen Grundherrschaft (bis ca.1000). Festschrift für Dieter Hägermann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. B. Kasten, München, 2006 (VSWG-Beihefte, 184), pp. 37-47. © Jean-Pierre Devroey.

¹ P. BONNASSIE, La croissance agricole du Haut Moyen Age dans la Gaule du Midi et le Nord-Est de la péninsule ibérique : chronologie, modalités, limites, in: La croissance agricole du Haut Moyen Age. Chronologie, modalités, géographie (1990), S. 13-35 (Flaran, 10).

expansion: settlement dissemination, population mobility, development of small holdings, the multiplication of peasant tenancies. The phenomenon went hand in hand with the decline of slavery, which disappeared permanently in the countryside around the end of the first millennium. Individual initiative, i.e. the search for land and freedom, was its motor. The search led to the preponderance of peasant smallholdings, created through spontaneous land clearing and the appropriation of vacant land. In the framework of the large land estate, growth led to new models for exploiting the soil, leaving more responsibility to the farmer, through division of manorial lands into small farms and the practice of levying a share of the crop. The agrarian expansion was thus essentially an achievement of the peasantry. Four main features summarise the meridional « model »: predominance of a grouped habitat and scattered lands, autonomy of the small family farm, small size of the demesne and a low level of taxation by the lord, and a role played by money and the circulation of currency.

This model is certainly valid for most meridional regions of the Carolingian Empire, south of the Loire, where, by the way, bipartite *villae*, compulsory labour services, and polyptychs were practically unknown. There the State remained fairly distant and not very connected to the rural world. Deriving revenue from the land appeared to be the military and ecclesiastical local elites' main concern. In other regions such as Brittany, Iceland, Catalonia, or central Germany predominated prosperous autonomous peasant societies, governed mainly by the subsistence logic (*Eigenwirtschaft*)². Such social groups excluded neither slavery (in the framework of the family farm, for instance) nor the existence of a certain social stratification, but their essential axis was the preponderance of a peasantry controlling its own lands, with more or less autonomy and rather loose dependency hierarchies.

On the basis of the ideas of Adriaan Verhulst, medievalists focusing on rural areas in northwestern Europe stress the driving role of the king and of the magnates (lay and ecclesiastical) in agrarian expansion. Long viewed as a rigid and inefficient system, the great estate now appears as a dynamic, evolving structure. This model of

² C. WICKHAM, Problems of comparing rural societies in early medieval Western Europe, in: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 6th. ser., 2 (1992), S. 221-246. ID., Rural Society in Carolingian Europe, in: The New Cambridge Medieval History, Bd. 2, c.700-c.900, hg. R. MCKITTERICK (1995), S. 510-537.

manorial expansion stresses three determining factors: a powerful revival of the elites' demand for consumer goods; in rural areas, the growing predominance of the small family farm in the framework of the manor, and the ability of the major landowners to direct men, organise the agricultural space, and secure for themselves much of the generated wealth³.

This opposition of models probably reflects a real geographic differentiation. In summary, Henri Pirenne's intuition of a deep fracture between the Mediterranean world and the Frankish lands around the year 600, imagined in *Mahomet et Charlemagne*, appears fully valid. Yet if a distance appears between northern and southern Gaul at that time, this is not linked to a brutal contraction of the western economy but to the separate development of economies having turned towards very different markets and organisational models.

Addressing the topic of peasant mobility in the framework of the manor appears to me an interesting way to revisit these models. I wish to conduct this research today by presenting a few files of texts taken from two of the most famous manorial inventories of the IXth century, the polyptychs of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (823/828) and Saint-Remi of Rheims (after March 847).

³ Classical view: A. VERHULST, La diversité du régime domanial entre Loire et Rhin à l'époque carolingienne, in: Villa-Curtis-Grangia. Landwirtschaft zwischen Loire und Rhein von der Römerzeit zum Hochmittelalter, hg. W. JANSSEN, D. LOHRMANN (1983), S. 133 and, lastly, Id., The Carolingian Economy (2002).

2. Who is free to move about?

A first answer seems obvious. Only a free man can choose his dwelling and leave it as he wishes. A slave is part of the family estate. He cannot move away without his master's permission. At the end of the XIth century Irnerius of Bologna († c.1140), commenting on the *Digeste* in a gloss devoted to the *coloni* or *ascriptiti* (literally the « enrolled ones » or « those who have received a plot ») drew his pupils' attention to the fact that these were not « serfs of a single person, but of a glebe »⁴. In this we recognise the classic definition of the colonate, which had probably spread to Gaul through practice rather than through learned law. Originally the word *colonus* meant simply « labourer », then it acquired a second meaning: « tenant farmer », and a third at the start of the IVth century, « slave of the glebe »⁵. From the Vth century onward, this amputation of freedom to move about meant that *coloni* could not be ordained deacons⁶.

What was really the remaining scope of personal freedom for a *colonus* in western society in the Early Middle Ages? Was the old notion of « servitude of the glebe », as Marc Bloch believed, a legal formula without posterity up to the XIth century?

A rare fragment of manorial custom saved in one of the addenda to the polyptych of Saint-Remi of Rheims shows how a freeman managing a farm under a hereditary tenure could be released from that tenure: « Lastly, should there be some freeman who, by reason of poverty, is unable to hold a *mansus* or part of a *mansus*, he must prove this with the testimony of seven of his peers. After he has provided proof, he will be required to work three days for his lord in the harvest period, during which time he will receive provender. Otherwise he will give for this reason one denier and a half»⁷. The fragment of custom inserted into the description of Nanteuil-la-Forêt (France, Marne) specifically concerns a manor having recently become part of the estate of the Abbey, where we have evidence of systematic colonisation. The manor

⁴ Quoted by M. BLOCH, *Serfs de la glèbe*, *Revue historique* (1921), reprinted in ID., *Rois et serfs et autres écrits sur le servage* (1996), S. 363.

⁵ In classical Latin, *gleba* means « cultivated soil, lump of earth ». M. FINLEY, *Esclavage antique et idéologie moderne* (1979), S. 197.

⁶ Letter from pope Gelasius I, *Regesta pontificum romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post christum natum 1198*, hg. P. JAFFÉ (1885), Bd. 1, N. 658.

⁷ Le polyptyque et les listes de cens de l'abbaye de Saint-Remi de Reims (IX^e-XI^e siècles), hg. J.-P. DEVROEY (1984), n° 11, S. 74 (*Travaux de l'Académie Nationale de Reims*, Bd. 163): *Denique si fuerit aliquis ingenuus qui propter paupertatem mansum vel partem quanlibet mansi tenere non possit, debet hoc probare a septem suis paribus ; cum uero probatum hoc habuerit, facit suo seniori, tempore messis, dies .III. cum praebenda sibi data ; sin autem dabit, propter hoc, denarium .I. et dimidium.*

counts 26 *mansi ingenuiles*, each occupied by two free tenants, and 24 *mansi serviles*, each occupied by a *servus* tenant. The procedure to be followed, « by reason of poverty », was probably indicated because the lord had doubts as to the success of the colonisation endeavour.

In the mid-IXth century, free dependents of Saint-Remi had to « pay » for their departure from the manor a period of labour service generally set at 9 days per year, redeemed at the cost of 4 deniers. *Accolae*, who remained within the territory of the manor without managing a *mansus*, had to pay the same dues. This service or its redemption tax materialises the hierarchic relationship of protection and dependency between the lord and the free peasant subjected to manorial dominance. In exchange, *forenses* (born on an estate but living outside) and *acolae* retained usage rights (pannage, pasturage) in their territory of birth⁸.

The residence obligation of peasants bound to the manor (*manentes*) draws a sharp line between those who remained fully free and had the right « to go and to settle » and all those who, having entered into dependency, were allowed - or not allowed - to exercise some of the other prerogatives of individual freedom. The closeness of *coloni* and *servi* within the manors favoured the process of assimilating the former to the latter. The writers of the imperial constitutions of the Lower Empire were already unable to « define » a *colonus* in a « manner that would have been acceptable to the elegant jurists of the classical period ». One of Constantine's laws stipulates that *coloni* who seek to escape « shall be put in irons like slaves so as to be forced by a slave's punishment to carry out the duties to which free men are bound »⁹. The Lex Alamannorum refers, in its title XXIII, to the *liberi ecclesiastici quos colonos vocant*. The more recent Carolingian version, without altering the clause, changes the wording from *liberi* to *servi ecclesiastici*¹⁰.

In Italy, without generating confusion between free and unfree peasants as regards the statutes and penalties applicable to them, the Frankish domination introduced among the clauses of limited-term tenancy contracts the obligation (absent from the contracts of the Lombardian period) for the occupant (*livellarius*) to submit to the

⁸ J.-P. DEVROEY, *Économie rurale et société dans l'Europe franque (VI^e-IX^e siècles)*, Bd. 1 (2003), S. 84.

⁹ Codex Theodosianus, 5.17.1, quoted by FINLEY, *Esclavage antique* (wie Anm. 5), S. 167.

¹⁰ Leges Alamannorum, hg. K. LEHMANN, MGH, Legum sectio I: Legum nationum germanicarum, Bd. 5/1 (1888), 22. H. W. GOETZ, *Serfdom and the Beginnings of a Seigneurial System in the Carolingian Empire*, *Early Medieval Europe* 2 (1993), S. 29-51: S. 35.

master's private justice (*iustitia domnica*) in matters of contract execution. The peasant tenant recognised the right of the manorial stewards to seize a pledge and to compel him, without having to make any claim before the public authority. The *livellarius* remained a tenant, however, bound to the land only for the duration of the contract. When the contract expired, he was free to leave with part or even all of his chattels¹¹.

Towards the end of the IXth century, there began to arise some confusion between peasants temporarily occupying their farms under the terms of a written contract (*livellarii*) and those whom the Italian polyptychs called *massarii*, residing on perpetual tenements (*massa*). The term *manens* applied to these people means that they have an obligation to reside (*manere*) on a lord's land and to work it for his benefit. This limitation of the freedom to move was clearly perceived in Italy as a mark of servitude. In *livello* contracts at the end of the IXth century, the clause that restricted the scope of the *iustitia domnica* to application of the contract itself gradually disappeared, to be replaced with more general stipulations prohibiting *coloni* from fleeing manorial domination. In 1197, in proceedings held in Ferrara, witnesses had to specify before testifying « whether they were free ». They answered positively, stating that they were not *manentes* (*quod non sunt manentes*)¹². In Catalonia, another part of the Frankish world and its margins where free peasant farmers (owning at least part of their land) were also particularly numerous, the establishment of servitude, at the end of the XIIth century, was preceded in the XIth century by the introduction of a life-long commitment to reside into the contracts of tenants who wanted to occupy a *mas*¹³.

These social regressions, which have seen precedents and diverse chronologies since Antiquity, are the sign of a gradual erosion in the lower classes « of their

¹¹ B. ANDREOLLI, M. MONTANARI, L'azienda curtense in Italia. Proprieta della terra e lavoro contadino nei secoli VIII – XI (1983), S. 85-98.

¹² Quoted by ANDREOLLI, MONTANARI, L'azienda curtense, (wie Anm. 11), S. 117. B. ANDREOLLI, Coloni dipendenti e giustizia signorile. Una verifica in base alla contrattualistica agraria dell'Emilia altomedievale, in: I Contadini emiliani dal Medioevo a oggi. Indagini e problemi storiografici (1986), S. 33-50. F. PANERO, Schiavi, servi e villani (1999), S. 140-143.

¹³ L. TO FIGUERAS, Servitude et mobilité paysanne : les origines de la *Remença* catalane (XII^e-XIII^e siècle, in: Les Formes de la servitude : esclavages et servages de la fin de l'Antiquité au monde moderne. Actes de la table ronde de Rome, 8 et 9 octobre 1999 (2000), S. 827-865 (Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome, 112).

capacity to resist working for the benefit of someone else under conditions that fall short of full freedom of contract »¹⁴.

From the mid-VIIth century onward, manorial administrators had become accustomed to encompassing within the designation "*mancipia*" all inhabitants, free or not, described with the lands in the charts, but also in written inventories called *descriptiones mancipiorum*, direct ancestors of the Carolingian polyptychs. In Corbon's little *liber traditionum* (chapter XII of the polyptych of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, France, Orne), the free peasants included in donations to the Abbey are listed as *mancipia*. A dynamic analysis of the polyptych shows that some of them were *coloni* installed by the monks on other holdings. Before the polyptych was written down, a certain *Iderna* had donated four *mansi* of the *villa* of Pont in the *pagus* of Exmes, along with *mancipia* among whom were a couple with children : *Segenandus*, *Siluanus*, *Siemberga*, *Sigenildis*, *Sesberga* (XII, 1). This *Siluanus*, once an adult, appears as a tenant on two other donations : a *mansus* of "four bonniers and one arpent" and a piece of land measuring "one bonnier and a half and six perches". This time he is listed as *Siluanus, colonus sancti Germani, quem Iderna partibus sancti Germani condonavit* (XII, 41-42)¹⁵.

¹⁴ FINLEY, *Esclavage antique* (wie Anm. 5), S. 193.

¹⁵ *Das Polyptychon von Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Studienausgabe*, hg. D. HÄGERMANN, K. ELMSHÄUSER, A. HEDWIG (1993), S. 101-102.

3. When the lord settles his dependents

This approach was fruitful. Lords intervened in the life of a family farm to offset, for instance, the absence of a male successor capable of perpetuating the farm. According to the mortality model accepted by most historians, about one-fifth of all peasant households remained without an adult descendant. Laurent Feller has noted in lists of *mancipia* at Farfa (c. 820) the presence of « adopted » slaves (*affiliati*), married or not, having been housed on the same holding as a childless peasant couple¹⁶. In Provence (813-814), administrators of the Church of Marseille also ensured that there were « fresh troops » to take over the obligations of old or sick tenants (*relevati*), by installing younger slaves at their sides¹⁷. These examples illustrate the will of the major Carolingian landowners to manage their human capital with rigour.

For the master of a big « classic » estate, the most desirable type of household must have been the stem family (i.e. an authoritarian family model) composed of a couple of farmers and a single marriageable son to ensure the succession. Any other children were probably forced to leave the family farm to settle elsewhere, as servants or new tenants. Applied to the two Frankish polyptychs, which include extensive inventories of populations at Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Saint-Remi of Rheims, a study of family-related vocabulary and modes of tenure inheritance indicates that tenure was transmitted regularly within a primogeniture system giving priority to direct male succession and to the oldest among the *fili*. These working hypotheses are confirmed by the reconstitution of families of dependents of Saint-Remi of Rheims at Viel-Saint-Remi (France, Ardennes) in the mid-IXth century¹⁸.

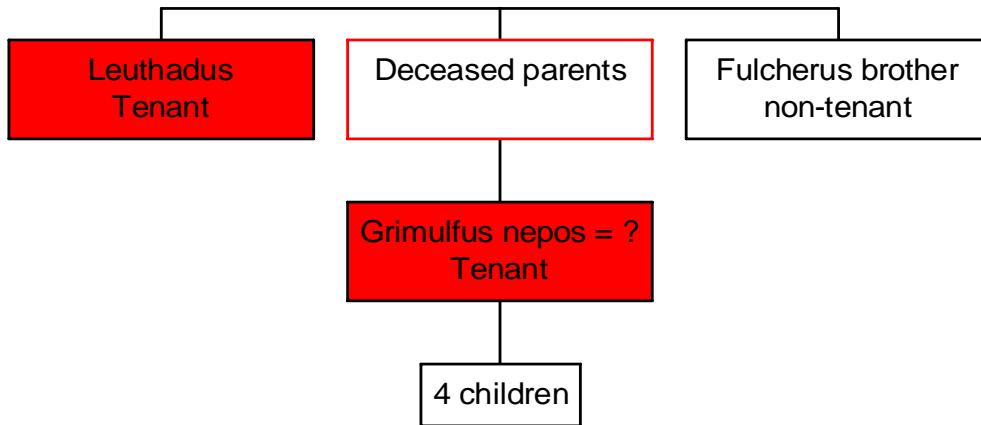
Some examples of tenure inheritance at Viel-Saint-Remi

¹⁶ L. FELLER, *Les Abruzzes médiévales. Territoire, économie et société en Italie centrale du IX^e au XII^e siècle* (1998), S. 526-529 (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 300).

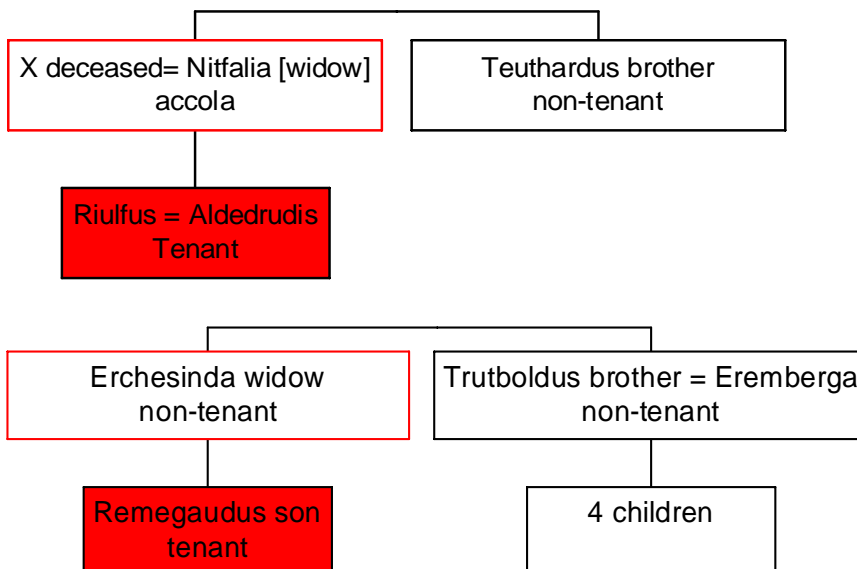
¹⁷ DEVROEY, *Économie rurale* (wie Anm. 8), Bd.1, S. 73. Edition of the polyptych of the Church of Marseille: *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*, hg. B. GUÉRARD, A. MARION, L. DELISLE, 2 Bde., (1857), 1, S. 633-654: F 20 : *Ursius debilis. Mancipium Lubus filius, uxore extranea, qui ipsa colonica regere debet.*

¹⁸ DEVROEY (wie Anm 7), S. 36-46.

1. A family group holds two free mansi



2. The elder son is preferred to his uncle



The Carolingian magnates set up a « family policy » that regulated the transfer of land and shaped the profile of the households settled on the holdings. Under manorial domination, « everything revolved around the married couple. Marriage was what ensured the legitimacy of descendance and its right to tenancy by custom. It was the foundation of marital authority (...). In limit situations, it guaranteed the potential rights of the widow to maintain the household »¹⁹.

Other interventions of lords in populating their manors had a violent character. In the *villa* of Sault-Saint-Remi (France, Marne), a certain number of tenants are classified under the name *vicaratus*, a hapax legomenon that literally means

¹⁹ P. TOUBERT, Le moment carolingien (VIII^e-X^e siècle) », Histoire de la famille, Bd. 1, Mondes lointains, mondes anciens (1986), S. 333-360: S. 351.

“substituted”. To understand this term it is necessary to look at the *Life of saint Remi* by Hincmar of Rheims. The archbishop imagines a story where he fustigates the « seditious and rebellious » character of the inhabitants of Sault. Saint Remi having ensured that the harvests were stored on the manors of the bishopric to relieve the people in the event of famine, the villagers set fire to the stacks. To punish them, the saint inflicted congenital anomalies on them and their lineage: the men were swollen, the women afflicted with goitre. Moving from legend to history, Hincmar goes on to tell of the assassination of the vidame (*vicedominus*) of Rheims by the inhabitants of Sault, in Charlemagne’s time (before 814) : « The entire population of this *villa* was changed by executing the those who had committed the crime and scattering their accomplices over various regions and sentencing them to permanent exile. This *villa* was renewed through the introduction of new inhabitants taken from other *villae* of the bishopric ». Under Ebbon a man named Radulfus, a successor of the assassinated vidame, was notably in charge of calling to justice any *mancipia* or *coloni* who had deserted the land. We know through Flodoard that Ebbo had organised a certain number of *colonus* tenements belonging to the Church, after sending strong men (*per strenuos viros*) to describe the *coloni* of these tenements and their services²⁰.

²⁰ HINCMAR, *Vita sancti Remigii*, c. 22, hg. B. KRUSCH, MGH, SRM, Bd. 3 (1896), S. 315-316. FLODOARD, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, l. 2, c. 19, hg. M. STRATMANN, MGH SS, Bd. 36 (1998), S. 175.

4. Who leaves the manor ?

With a relatively great degree of social mobility within the dependent peasantry between the free and the unfree, younger men could hope to « marry upward » (i.e. marry the heiress to another tenement), found a homestead by clearing new land, or become day labourers on the lands of the lord or elsewhere. Others left the manor.

This emigration of peasants was surprisingly massive.

Table : Population of Viel-Saint-Remi (after May 847) broken down according to its position in the manorial *familia*²¹

Total population : 1.202 persons adults : 546 children : 656		
Population category	number	%
Tenants	295	24
<i>Accolae</i>	107	9
Other dependents of Saint-Remi residing inside the manor	355	30
<i>Forenses</i> , born on the estate but residing outside the manor	445	37

Young women were the most numerous group to have to seek settlement possibilities outside the manor. Amongst the manors of Saint-Remi of Rheims described in the mid-IXth century, there were 156 men for every 100 women *intra villam*, whereas there were only, on the average, 82 men per 100 women among the emigrants. Exogamy was thus frequent in the manors of Saint-Remi of Rheims. This population mobility was thus above all the mobility of women. Towards what “beyond” did these peasant women head? Among the hundred or so *forenses* attached to the *villicatio* of Condé-sur-Marne (France, Marne) after 861, only a little more than half resided beyond the river Vesle, about fifteen kilometres away (i.e. at one day’s walking distance)²².

In the rural areas described in the polyptychs, social relationships linked to production were translated into differences in status between the two sexes. With its dual character as a family and agricultural enterprise oriented towards ploughing and the other masculine tasks of the *opus rurale*, the *mansus* could have a real demographic imbalance between men and women. The *mansus* system and the

²¹ J.-P. DEVROEY, La démographie du polyptyque de Saint-Remi de Reims, in: Compter les Champenois (1997), S. 81-94: S. 91-93.

²² DEVROEY, La démographie (wie Anm. 21), S. 93.

organisation of the *villa* reflect above all the manorial requirements for cereal production. This production implies the installation or settlement on the *mansus* of a group of *men*, specialised cultivators, labourers, or ox drivers capable of handling the plough, along with their wives so as to ensure the farm's perpetuation²³.

Women were thus more numerous than men to join the fringe within the manor or to choose to leave. This impression is confirmed by the abundance of entries concerning women alone or with children in the smallest tenements of the villages: houses with or without a farmyard, farms reduced to a field, guest holdings, or little fractions of a *mansus*²⁴.

²³ J.-P. DEVROEY, Femmes au miroir des polyptyques : une approche des rapports du couple dans l'exploitation rurale dépendante entre Seine et Rhin au IX^e siècle, in: Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes à Byzance et en Occident (VI^e-XI^e siècles), (1999), S. 227-249. Id., Men and Women in Early Medieval Serfdom: the Ninth-Century North Frankish Evidence, Past and Present (2000), S. 3-30.

²⁴ L. KUCHENBUCH, Opus Feminile Das Geschlechtverhältnis im Spiegel von Frauenarbeit im früheren Mittelalter, in: Weibliche Lebensgestaltung im frühen Mittelalter, hg. H. W. GOETZ (1991), S. 139-175: S. 160-161 u. N. 57. The author gives a survey of small holdings occupied by women in the major Frankish polyptychs.

5. Mobility managed by the lord?

By mentioning the manor of origin of Saint-Germain dependants having left one manor to live elsewhere, Irmino's polyptych enables us to follow the trajectories of a few of these migrants. Three-fourths of these 98 migrants were women. Most of these were married, whereas there were 5 bachelors among the 23 listed men. For these women, marriage appears to have been the main motivation behind their move from one property of Saint-Germain-des-Prés to another. We have seen an illustration of this manorial practice in the region of Corbon, where the monks had to manage many heterogeneous donations. Attentive re-reading of the polyptych should enable scholars to detect the existence of these systematic endeavours to clear or reorganise the land²⁵.

I will give just a single example, noting the markers that enable us to identify these systematic organisation or colonisation endeavours.

The hamlet of *Hostoldi Villa* is a settlement located in a cultivated clearing at the edge of the large manor of Maule (chapter XXXI), in the Forêt des Alluets (France, Yvelines).

The mansi of Hostoldi Villa

81	Mansus [...]	Ratbertus colonus = uxor advena The children are not of Saint Germain	18 bonniers of AL
82	Mansus [...]	Otbertus [...] = uxor advena The children are not of Saint Germain	18 bonniers of AL
83	Mansus [...]	? = Odelindis [...] The children are of Saint Germain	9 bonniers of AL
84	½ Mansus [...]	Ricboldus advena = uxor colona The children are of Saint Germain	8 bonniers of AL
85	½ Mansus [...]	Girboldus colonus = uxor colona	13 bonniers of AL
86	½ Mansus [...]	Bernulfus [...], homo sancti Germani = uxor extranea The children are not of Saint Germain	8 bonniers of AL

(AL=arable land)

These were recently created tenements:

- Maule bears the trace of the development initiatives of Abbott Irmino: displacement and renovation of the mills on the demesne;
- the *mansi of Hostoldi Villa* are not yet qualified (blank in the text);
- regularity of the holdings, consisting solely of arable land, whilst in the rest of the manor there is the usual combination of land, grapevines, and meadows;

²⁵ DEVROEY, *Économie rurale* (wie Anm. 8), Bd. 1, S. 59.

- a large number of inhabitants from outside the manor : *advena, extranei* ...

An analysis of the list of duties confirms the context of land clearing and colonisation organised by the lord :

At Maule	At <i>Hostoldi villa</i>
2 days of ploughing service/cartage with oxen + 1 day of <i>manopera</i>	1 day of ploughing service/cartage with oxen + 2 days of <i>manopera</i>
3 days of <i>manopera</i>	3 days of <i>manopera</i>
<i>Carropera ubicunque ei iniungitur</i>	The <i>mansi</i> of <i>Hostoldi Villa</i> grouped together with a <i>socius</i> to do the cartage within the <i>pagus</i> and with four other associates <i>extra pagum</i> .

The ploughing service was organised so as to take into account the recent creation of the *Hostoldi Villa* holdings, and cartage over long distances was lightened. : on the new holdings the number of available oxen must have been very limited, perhaps a single animal per holding (taking into account the usual team size of four oxen used for long-distance cartage²⁶.

6. Conclusion

The files we have briefly opened today confirm the dynamic and voluntary character of the Carolingian « manorial » model. In this model the lord appears concerned with managing his human capital, organising land strips, and channelling to his benefit a part of the demographic growth, making use of his power to compel. The written description of manors and their inhabitants is a key moment in this process of domination. Yet this model does not totally take into account the extent of disorder, increasing in the second half of the IXth century, or the extent of misery and active or passive resistance in rural populations. If a peasant feels that the fruit of his labour eludes both himself and his children, then he is alienated in the strict sense of the word and he seeks to improve his lot by escaping.

Jean-Pierre Devroey

Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and Académie royale de Belgique

²⁶ *Das Polyptychon von Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (wie Anm. 15), S. 175.