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Church Foundation and Parish Formation in Frisia in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries A Planned Development?*

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Abstract

This paper reviews the efforts of the Church to re-establish and expand its power in the Frisian parts of the northern Netherlands after the disruption caused by the Vikings. The emphasis lies on the Ottonian and Salian period, for which only a few written sources have been preserved. The chosen approach is to combine text study with archaeology by the help of spatial analysis in GIS. The base data consist of dating results concerning the oldest wooden churches, information from early charters, a series of datable saints' dedications, and spatial information on parish boundaries and the location of the landed property per church. These data are researched for three cases on the foundation of baptismal churches, after which a broader assessment follows for the Frisian coastal area between Vlie and Ems. The map projection of the data shows that around 1000 a series of equally spaced baptismal churches functioned as autonomous centers of clearly demarcated parishes, which together covered the whole territory. These churches consisted of newly founded houses and restored pre-Viking mission centres. It is argued that the formation of this system was guided by a top-down policy of the bishops of Utrecht and Munster. There are strong indications that the foundation of the new baptismal churches was mainly the result of fundraising under relatively small local sponsors on the gentry level. The process as such suggests that, at least for Utrecht, this creation of a real parish system in the second half of the tenth century was as much important for the development of the power position of the bishop as the restoration of the cathedral and its dependant collegiate churches.

* We are grateful to Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld, the late Otto Roemeling, Kaj van Vliet, and Oebele Vries for their comments on the first draft of this article. We also would like to thank Michael Douma here for his contribution to the translation and wording of the text.

Introduction

In the Netherlands, as elsewhere in Western Europe, the development of villages and towns in the early and high Middle Ages was closely related to the genesis of parish churches. This relationship was twofold. Most of the early churches seem to have been founded at places with economic and demographic significance and/or potential. But local patrons also wanted to support the construction of churches because churches could contribute substantially to the development of settlements. Diocesan authorities, for their part, might have hoped or expected that a well-placed settlement would lead to the positive development of a local church. The study of settlement growth should not neglect research into the emergence of churches and chapels, because it is clear that church development and settlement growth were often intertwined. This applies especially to the disciplines that study settlement history, such as archaeology, landscape history, onomastics, and historical geography. Disciplines that focus on the history of ecclesiastical institutions and church buildings, such as church history and building history, should pay attention to the impact of the inhabited environment on the foundation and development of parish churches.

The historiography of the development of parish churches in the northern Netherlands has not yet included a systematic spatial approach to research on the subject. Most studies on ecclesiastical architecture in Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe focus only on individual churches or on the remaining (stone) church buildings in specific places or regions. This makes difficult a comparative analysis for large regional units and allows only vague and general conclusions about the increase of the number and size of parishes. Reading these studies, one might get the impression that the extension of the parish network was a long-term affair. In any case it is often presented as an ongoing process of division, starting in the eighth century and ending in the fourteenth century, by which mother churches gave birth to daughter chapels, which again inspired further developments, and so on.¹ The extant literature proposes

¹ Jan Kuys, *Kerkelijke organisatie in het middeleeuwse bisdom Utrecht* (Nijmegen: Valkhof Pers, 2004), p. 146 (in general); Remi W. M. van Schaik, 'Een samenleving in verandering: de periode van de elfde en twaalfde eeuw', in *Geschiedenis van Groningen I. Prehistorie – Middeleeuwen*, ed. by M. G. J. Duijvendak and others (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 125–68 (pp. 103–04) (regarding Groningen); F. C. Theuws, 'Middeleeuwse parochiecentra in de Kempen 1000–1350', in *Het Kempenproject 3. De middeleeuwen centraal*, ed. by A. Verhoeven and F. C. Theuws (Waalre: Stichting Brabants Heem, 1989),

that this multiplication of worship centres over several generations was not centrally led. It is possible that the growth of churches could have been steered on a supra-regional level, but that has not been systematically examined. Various authors explicitly state that the extension of the parish network was – in all phases – determined by population growth and the progress of the large-scale land reclamations of the high Middle Ages. As for the foundation of specific churches, local power relations are generally thought to have been decisive.

It may be correct that local power relations determined the increase in the number of parishes after about 1100, but, as we will argue, this does not appear to be the case for the period before 1100.² In particular, the proliferation of ‘primary’ baptismal churches seems to have been planned at a larger level.³ Primary churches are a group of mother churches which also included the minsters or mission centres that had been established by missionaries like Boniface and Liudger shortly after the Frankish conquest c. 800. These mother churches, and also their earliest daughters, each formed the initial focal point of a delimited area that was accessible for every local resident for the administration of sacraments such as baptism

97–216 (p. 185); M. Mostert, ‘Veelkleurige devotie en zakelijk schriftgebruik. Religie en schrift in middeleeuws Holland’, in *Geschiedenis van Holland tot 1572*, ed. by T. de Nijs and E. Bakker (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002) 125–55 (p. 125). According to the latter, in Holland the parish network only started to grow after 1000, when large peat areas were brought under cultivation and a score of new settlements were founded. For Zeeland, see P. A. Henderikx’s recent essay, ‘Kerk en kerkelijke instellingen’ in *Geschiedenis van Zeeland I. Prehistorie – 1550*, ed. by P. Brusse and P. Henderikx (Zwolle: Waanders, 2012), 146–66 (p. 156). The traditional vision on the gradual development of the parish system in France is expressed by M. Aubrun, *La paroisse en France des origines au XV^e siècle* (Paris: Picard, 1986), pp. 33–43. For England, see N. G. J. Pounds, *A History of the English Parish: The Culture of Religion from Augustine to Victoria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 67–87.

² The trend in the multiplication of parish churches in Friesland after 1100 is treated by J. A. Mol, *Friezen en de zeggenschap over hun kerken* (Leiden: Universiteit Leiden, 2004), pp. 6–11, and P. N. Noomen, ‘De ontwikkeling van het parochiewezen in Oostergo’, *De Vrije Fries*, 94 (2014), 133–46 (p. 137–42).

³ We use here the terminology of Frans Theuws, ‘Parochiecentra in de Kempen’, p. 189. The term ‘primary’ refers to the central mother churches from which chapels or (daughter) churches were split off that may or may not have acquired full parish rights afterwards. In England, these *ecclesiae matrices* are usually designated as baptismal churches because they long reserved the right to baptism (and burial as well).

and communion, as well as for the conducting of burial rites. When we plot these early churches on the map, a pattern of such regular spread emerges that we must consider that this development was somehow planned. In this paper, we argue that these mother churches were likely established under the direction of bishops and their administration.

When one proceeds from a church historical perspective, the diocese seems to constitute the most suitable spatial research unit. For our historical settlement approach however, we prefer to work with a political geographical unit, specifically the lands of medieval Frisia, between the rivers Vlie and Ems. This territory consists of the coastal region of the present-day Dutch provinces of Friesland and Groningen. In earlier centuries, the same land was known as the Carolingian *pagi* Westergo, Oostergo, Humsterland, Hunzingo, and Fivelingo. Until the sixteenth century the first two of these districts fell under the authority of the bishop of Utrecht; the latter three belonged to the diocese of Munster.

This political landscape largely mirrored a geo-physical reality. Frisia between Vlie and Ems was a clay zone bordering the sea. The area had been populated even in pre-Roman times. The early inhabitants had settled on artificially raised dwelling mounds, called *terpen* or *wierden*. At its south side, this *terpen* area bordered a zone of large peat bogs. In between was a small transition zone consisting of peat soils with a thin (10–50 cm) layer of clay. Although the edges of these peat bogs were cultivated as early as the Iron Age, it was during the tenth century that the peat reclamation developed on a large scale.⁴

For several reasons, this coastal region with its adjacent peat zone lends itself very well for a more detailed study of the parish formation process. First, it was densely populated at the time when its first churches were founded. Secondly, most of its early medieval habitation nuclei are easily located thanks to their mounds, a substantial number of which have been mapped and researched by archaeologists. Thirdly, for this part of medieval Frisia, a complete inventory of all knowable patron saints to whom the parish churches were dedicated has recently become available.⁵ Furthermore, for the provinces of Friesland and Groningen,

⁴ J. Zomer, *Middeleeuwse veenontginningen in het getijdenbekken van de Hunze: een interdisciplinair landschapshistorisch onderzoek naar de paleogeografie, ontginning en waterhuishouding (ca 800–ca 1500)* (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2016), p. 125–26.

⁵ This inventory consists of two elaborate data sets from Otto D. J. Roemeling. The first one, the so-called *Corpus patroonheiligen en priesters in de middeleeuwse parochies van Friesland* (cited hereafter as *CPF*), is attached as annex nr. 1 to Roemelings dissertation *Heiligen en Heren. Studies over het parochiewezen in*

precise reconstructions down to the parcel can be made of the lands with which the parish churches and their clergy had been endowed.⁶ Since the finances of the clergy and churches in Friesland depended less on tithes than on income from landed property, the shape, size, and location of these ecclesiastical estate funds provide insight into the early phase of benefaction, patronage, and foundation. Finally, for the three northern provinces of the Netherlands (Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe) the boundaries of all parishes from the pre-Reformation period have been reconstructed in such a way that they can be analysed in a historical geographic information system (GIS).

There are, generally speaking, two ways of treating the historical development of the parish system: top-down or bottom-up. In the first case, the focus is on the politics of the bishops and the royal power behind them, which requires research into the administration of the bishoprics and their cathedral and collegiate chapters.⁷ We, however, prefer the second type of research, which is to identify within a particular region the churches of the first generations and to analyse their spatial pattern. Local parish churches have long been a subject of study in various disciplines including archaeology, building history, settlement history, and church history. Various disciplinary approaches have undeniably yielded a lot of knowledge of the development of the parish, although mostly on the level of the individual churches and settlements. After c. 1980 however, this field of research has become rather quiet, owing possibly to the stagnation of each isolated disciplinary approach. Though the stagnation was observed by archaeologists like H. Stoecker – he urged his colleagues in 1990 to renew their interest, calling for studies with a spatial contextual approach – not many relevant publications have appeared since. Only for the northern part of Holland has a solid foundation for further research been laid, and this by André Numan, who in 2005 published an archaeological and historical inventory of medieval churches and chapels dating from

het Noorden van Nederland vóór 1600 (Leeuwarden: Afûk, 2013); the second, covering the parishes of Groningen and Drenthe (*Corpus patroonheiligen en priesters in de middeleeuwse parochies van Groningen en Drenthe* (CPGD), will be published digitally in the course of 2018.

⁶ On the method of reconstructing the landed property of the medieval Church in Friesland, see P. N. Noomen and J. A. Mol, 'Das friesische Kataster von 1511/1640 und die historische Siedlungsforschung', in *Siedlungsforschung. Archäologie-Geschichte-Geographie*, 14 (1996), 217–35 (pp. 221–31).

⁷ For the diocese of Utrecht, such a study is already available in the seminal dissertation of Kaj van Vliet, *In kringen van kanunniken. Munsters en kapittels in het bisdom Utrecht 695–1227* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2002).

the period c. 720–1200. In recent decades, the medievalist Paul Noomen has contributed to a better understanding of manorial structures in high society in the province of Friesland, but even here, there is much work to be done. In this paper, we build on these studies by combining historical and archaeological approaches with attention to spatial considerations.

The goal of this paper is to explain the process of parish church formation during the Ottonian and Salian period, covering roughly the time span between 900 and 1050. This implies that we try to date the churches and discover any patterns that link them in a larger process of development. The base data consist of the results of the archaeological dating of the oldest wooden churches, information from early charters, and hagiographical sources, as well as a series of datable saints' dedications. Additionally, we try to map the parishes as they existed in the middle of the eleventh century. We do this by tracing the partitioning process of each primary church from its founding through its development at the end of the Middle Ages,⁸ recognising of course, that some parish boundaries may have changed over time.⁹ For some of the key parishes, we map the glebe land in order to gain an insight into the original endowment. By visualising all of the above data and boundaries in GIS, and setting them against the backdrop of the larger landscape, we hope to dissect the earliest phases of the church filiation process in Friesland and Groningen. An additional look will be cast on the development in the bordering regions: the northern part of Holland, the Frisian isles, and the inward province of Drenthe, not only for the comparison, but also to fill some gaps in our knowledge. This comparative glance elsewhere is important because, in contrast to Friesland and Groningen, the timber construction of the

⁸ Most of them had already been mapped, albeit not on a detailed scale, in the *Geschiedkundige atlas van Nederland*, ed. by A. A. Beekman, 2 vols (The Hague 1912–1938), map 9: 'De kerkelijke indeeling omstreeks 1550', ed. by S. Muller Hzn., J. G. C. Joosting, J. S. van Veen and A. A. Beekman. The updating and controlled converting into a GIS has been realized within the framework of the long-term HISGIS-programme of the Fryske Akademy which aims at developing a Dutch national infrastructure for historical geodata on the base of the napoleonic cadastre of 1811–1832. A version for public use is available on the internet: www.hisgis.nl.

⁹ As a rule, however, parish boundaries seem to have been relatively stable in the diocese of Utrecht. Cf. the approach applied for Walcheren by P. A. Henderikx, 'De ringwalburgen in het mondingsgebied van de Schelde in historisch perspectief', in *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland*, ed. by R. M. van Heeringen, P. A. Henderikx, and A. Mars (Goes: De Koperen Tuin, 1995), 71–112 (p. 103).

oldest churches in these neighbouring regions have been relatively well researched.

Such a spatial approach of medieval churches in GIS on the micro and meso-level has not been pioneered thus far, partly because of the lack of vectorised cadastral data. In the case of the Frisian areas however, cadastral data have come available in the course of the last fifteen years, enabling us to reconstruct precise parish boundaries and the landed property of the Church as well. We therefore take it as an additional objective of our study to determine what new impulses can be given to parish formation research by applying the released data and the methods developed.

After having taken a look at Drenthe and Northwest-Overijssel, we will focus on three relatively well-mapped baptismal church districts of the Frisian region which belonged to the diocese of Utrecht from around the year 1000 or shortly before that time. The first of these is Menaldum, lying in what was a densely populated *terpen* area of the *pagus* Westergo. Thereafter, two similar districts in the peat zone will be discussed, namely that of Oudega, in the southern part of Westergo, and Oldeboorn, in the southern part of Oostergo. The resulting findings will then be tested for the entire coastal region between Vlie and Ems. A concluding section will discuss whether a network of primary churches that existed about 1000/1050 did indeed come into being under supervision of the bishops of Utrecht and Munster, and whether the process can be caught in a model to be used elsewhere in Northwestern Europe. First of all, however, we have to address the problem of the possible stagnation of the Christianisation process in the Frisian lands during the Viking period, and give some introductory information on the origin and formation of parishes, deaneries, and archdeaconries in the Northern Netherlands.

The First Churches in the Frisian Lands Between 700 and 900: A Dual System

The Christianisation of Frisia coincided with its conquest by the Franks. When they went on expedition through the newly subdued territories, missionaries like Willibrord and Boniface were protected by Frankish soldiers.¹⁰ Perhaps even more important for the success of their mission than this military safeguarding was the material support the successive Frankish rulers offered them for the erection of sanctuaries and mission

¹⁰ M. Mostert, 754: *Bonifatius bij Dokkum vermoord* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999), pp. 46–47. On his last mission into Oostergo, Boniface was accompanied by 50 *armigeri* (armed men).

centres. Several early churches founded by Willibrord, such as Velsen, are known to have been built on royal estates obtained by occupation or confiscation during the Frankish conquest and then given over to the Church. Logically, we find such estates especially in strategic places, e.g., at the mouths of rivers and on lateral moraines along routes that gave access to the hinterland.¹¹ Landed property was also donated by native aristocrats who hoped to take advantage of the Frankish rule. Generally, in this period the ownership of the churches stayed with the founders of the churches and with their successors in title. Those who held the titles controlled the appointment of ministers and received a share from the revenues of the church. These revenues were generated both by the estate of the church (through farming) as by the parishioners paying their dues. The term proprietary churches or *Eigenkirchen* is often used to describe churches of this kind.¹² In practice, most churches in the Northern Netherlands were owned by the monasteries or the episcopal church, to whom the missionaries had transferred the churches founded by them, which in themselves had often been made possible by royal and aristocratic donations. In this way, a dual system was born. This system included diocesan and monastic parish churches, belonging to Utrecht and Munster respectively or to one of the Carolingian abbeys that had supported the missionaries and their first assistants. For the Frankish kings and their successors, the fact that this system of administration was bipartite had no further consequence, because they probably regarded both kinds of churches as extensions of their own authority. Thus, we see that the Carolingian churches in Frisia – including churches in the later province of Holland – came under the control of either the St Martin's Church of Utrecht, St Paul's of Munster, or one of the grand abbeys in the Carolingian heartlands like Echternach, Fulda, Werden, Corvey, and Prüm.

Frisia lay stretched along the southern coast of the North Sea and was subdivided in several geographical units. The Franks conquered the region step-by-step. As a consequence of the Frankish invasion, Frisia's sub-regions could not be provided with mission centres simultaneously. The first churches between Maas and Vlie therefore date from an earlier period than the ones between Vlie and Lauwers. Where the former region had already become acquainted with Christendom in the early eighth century, the lands between Vlie and Lauwers were only opened up for missionary work after Charles Martel won the battle of the Boorne

¹¹ D. P. Blok, *De Franken in Nederland* (third, revised edition, Bussum: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1979), pp. 74–86.

¹² S. Wood, *The proprietary church in the medieval west* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

in 734, and even then, it took some extra 20 years, culminating in the martyrdom of Boniface in 754 and the foundation of a worship centre in his memory, before real progress could be made in the conversion of the local people. The string of lands east of the Lauwers became accessible for missionaries only after Charlemagne had put down the Saxon rebellion of Widukind in 782.

Briefly examining these earliest centres, we first need to pay attention to the churches of Velsen and Heiloo, founded about 720 in the elongated sandy area of Kennemerland.¹³ Thanks to Willibrord, both churches became the possession of the abbey of Echternach. The church of St Martin at Limmen however, although positioned just in between the other two churches, came under the control of Utrecht. Other early Carolingian churches in this region, further north, were the St Martin of Medemblik, the church of Hippolytushoef on the Isle of Wieringen, the church of Den Burg on the Isle of Texel, along with at least one other chapel on that island. These churches also belonged to Utrecht.

The first Utrecht-controlled church in the area between Vlie and Lauwers, and definitely the main religious centre of the *pagus* Oostergo, was the above-named *ecclesia* at Dokkum. The church of Holwerd, situated somewhat north of Dokkum, was another church established at an early date. This church, with St Willibrord as its patron saint, came under the control of Echternach. Several miles to the west from there lies the church of Ferwerd, dedicated to St Martin and also dating from the Carolingian period.¹⁴ From later documents we know that it originally was a proprietary church under the bishop of Utrecht. Further to the southwest, but still in Oostergo, the St Vitus of Leeuwarden, for which the foundations were laid by a royal donation to the abbey of Corvey, must have come into being shortly before 850.¹⁵

In Westergo, at the other side of the Middelzee estuary, two centres arose, each of which have been claimed to be mother church of the *pagus*: the St Martin of Franeker and the St Martin of Bolsward.¹⁶ In addition to

¹³ Numan, *Noord-Hollandse kerken*, pp. 31–37.

¹⁴ Noomen, 'Parochiewezen Oostergo', p. 136.

¹⁵ P. N. Noomen, 'Leeuwarden in de middeleeuwen', in *Leeuwarden 750–2000. Hoofdstad van Friesland*, ed. by R. Kunst and others (Franeker: Van Wijnen, 1999), 46–77 (p. 53). Kaj van Vliet thinks that the church of Leeuwarden was founded some time before 850 as a private chapel on a royal estate, which was donated by the king in a later phase to the newly founded Abbey of Corvey: *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 104 (117–18).

¹⁶ M. P. van Buijtenen, 'Het dekanaat Bolsward annex Utbirdum en Grandivorum', *It Beaken*, 17 (1955), 84–96 (pp. 84–87), claims that Bolsward was the *ecclesia*

these two proprietary churches of the Utrecht bishop, there was at least one other Carolingian church, namely, the church of Tzum, dedicated to St John and St Denys and owned by the abbey of Prüm.¹⁷

In Zuidergo, the third *pagus* of Friesland between Vlie and Lauwers, the oldest ecclesiastical centre was the church of Staveren, which was closely linked to the chapter of St Salvator in Utrecht. A reliable hagiographical source reports that St Odulf, canon of St Salvator, was sent to Staveren by bishop Frederick to do mission work and root out an alleged heresy. St Odulf's arrival in Staveren must have taken place before 836, the year of Frederick's death.¹⁸ To this list of early churches can be added the Echternach churches of Strijp and Hollum on the isles of Terschelling and Ameland, respectively.¹⁹

In the Frisian region under the diocese of Munster, the churches of Leens in Humsterland and of Usquert in Hunzingo, founded by Liudger himself, were the oldest. They had St Peter and St Paul as their patron saints.²⁰ The church of Loppersum, which undoubtedly was the ecclesiastical centre of the *pagus* Fivelingo, also came under the episcopal church of Munster, founded by the same missionary, who was also its first bishop. The church of Garnwerd in the small *pagus* Middag that made part of Hunzingo, can also be regarded as a former mission church. From post-Carolingian sources, it can be inferred that it originally was a proprietary church of the abbey of Werden, founded by Liudger as well. Thus, in the

matrix of Westergo. Ch. J. C., Broer, *Uniek in de stad. De oudste geschiedenis van de kloostergemeenschap op de Hoorst bij Amersfoort, sinds 1050 de Sint-Paulusabdij in Utrecht: haar plaats binnen de Utrechtse kerk en de ontwikkeling van haar goederenbezit (ca. 1000 – ca. 1200)* (Utrecht: s.n., 2000), pp. 449 and 454–55, tends to designate Franeker as the oldest centre of the *pagus*. We are inclined to follow her in this. The church of Franeker is founded on a 'King's land' (*froon* means royal) and her landed property constituted the largest and richest of all real estate parish funds in Frisia. See its mapping on the site www.hisgis.nl/Fryslân.

¹⁷ Roemeling, *CPF*, s.v. Tzum.

¹⁸ Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapitels*, pp. 117–20.

¹⁹ Noomen, 'Leeuwarden', pp. 54–55; P. N. Noomen, 'De goederen van de abdij van Echternach in de Friese landen', *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 2 (1999), 7–37 (pp. 24–25).

²⁰ Leens in the Marne-area has come to belong under the *pagus* Hunzingo in the high Middle Ages, as the mouth of the Hunze river had silted up and the river had found a new, westly course to flow out in the Lauwerszee, by which the old *pagus* Humsterland was split in two parts, the southern part of which kept the old name.

lands between Vlie and Ems the same complementary structure existed as was attested for in the region west of the Vlie (Westflinge), later known as Holland, where diocesan and monastic parish churches also developed in close proximity.

What was the original design and function of these early Carolingian churches? At first glance, each church seems to have had controlled a delineated territory, within the bounds of which the pastor of the church was responsible for the souls of the people. On closer view however, it appears that not all people living within these *pagi* could reach the named churches at regular intervals to receive the sacraments. In many cases, the distances from the corners of the *pagi* to its few centres of Christian worship simply were too long. It is therefore obvious that in the first stage of their existence, the oldest churches did not yet function within exactly defined parish boundaries. It is more likely that these centres, for a long time to come consisting of simple building complexes in wood, were manned by groups of priests, some of whom periodically traveled through the country with portable altars or to unmanned chapels where they could administer the sacraments. At these, saints were worshipped, children could be baptized, and the dead could be buried in consecrated earth. Altfried's biography of St Liudger reports that shortly after 780, Liudger founded congregations in several parts of Friesland, with the intent of encouraging faster Christianisation of the region.²¹ During the early ninth century this network of convent-like churches probably achieved a certain degree of territorial coverage, thanks to the payment of tithes that was made mandatory in 779.²² For the time being however, it cannot be assumed that by the year 850 such a system was already fully established. As a matter of fact, for some parts of France, historians doubt whether such a church hierarchy was achieved before the year 1000.²³

²¹ Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 117–20. Van Vliet assumes that such convents have been attached to the churches of Leeuwarden, Bolsward and Stavoren.

²² Th. Riis, 'Zehnt', in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* IX (München: Artemis Verlag, 1999), 499–502 (col. 500); J. Semmler, 'Zehntgebot und Pfarr termination in karolingischer Zeit', in *Aus Kirche und Reich. Studien zu Theologie, Politik und Recht im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Friedrich Kemp*, ed. by H. Mordek (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1983), 33–44.

²³ In particular, Elisabeth Zadora-Rio and Anne Lunven assert, on the basis of archaeological investigations of cemeteries, that most parish boundaries in the Touraine and the diocese of Reims only date from after 1050: E. Zadora-Rio, 'The Making of Churchyards and Parish Territories in the Early-Medieval Landscape of France and England in the 7th–12th Centuries: A Reconsideration', *Mediaeval Archaeology*, 47 (2003), 1–19; A. Lunven, 'Naissance de la paroisse

Stagnation in the Late Ninth and Early Tenth Century?

The next issue is whether, and to what extent, the new Christian infrastructure of the late eighth and early ninth century in the Frisian coastal regions was damaged by the notorious raids of the Vikings, which allegedly ended the regional trade dominance of the city of Dorestad. As far as day-to-day life in these Frisian coastal regions is concerned, the question of whether Viking attacks had a long-lasting devastating effect remains unanswered, since archaeological data is still scarce and in some ways contradictory. The present scholarly consensus on the matter is that the economy of the small settlements in Friesland was not gravely disrupted by Viking invasions.²⁴ Although treasure of Holland silver dating to the ninth century has been found along the coastal area of the Netherlands, indicating Viking presence,²⁵ it is unclear whether these finds are related to plunder or trade activities.²⁶ Archaeological research does attest to the destruction of trading places like Deventer and Zutphen, but also demonstrates that these places quickly recovered.²⁷ Obviously, trade could survive Viking attacks as long as Frankish royal or local aristocratic support remained firm, but without such support, trade would diminish or cease altogether, as was possibly the case in Dorestad.²⁸ It is therefore very

“territoriale”. L’apport de trois actes du XI^e siècle relatif à la Bretagne’, *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l’Ouest*, 121–22 (2014), 31–46.

²⁴ H. Groenendijk, and R. W. M. van Schaik, ‘Het Noorden tussen Karolingische expansie en Noormannendreiging ca 750-ca. 1000’, in *Geschiedenis van Groningen I. Prehistorie – Middeleeuwen*, ed. by M. G. J. Duijvendak and others (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 101–24 (pp. 109–20).

²⁵ Jan C. Besteman, ‘Two Viking hoards from the former island of Wieringen (the Netherlands): Viking relations with Frisia in an archaeological perspective’, in: *Land, Sea and Home. Settlement in the Viking Period*. Proceedings of a Conference on Viking-Period Settlement, at Cardiff, July 2001, ed. by J. Hines, A. Lane, and M. Redknap (Leeds: Maney, 2014), 93–108.

²⁶ Cf. the recent paper of N. IJssennagger, ‘Between Frankish and Viking: Frisia and Frisians in the Viking Age’, *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 9 (2013), 69–98, who discusses the possibility of close cooperation between Vikings and Frisians on common raids.

²⁷ Bartels, Michiel H., *De Deventer wal tegen de Vikingen. Archeologisch en historisch onderzoek naar de vroegmiddeleeuwse wal en stadsmuren (850–1900) en een vergelijking met andere vroegmiddeleeuwse omwalde nederzettingen* (Deventer: Gemeente Deventer, 2006), p. 210.

²⁸ Christian Coijmans, ‘The Controlled Decline of Viking-Ruled Dorestad’, *Northern Studies*, 47 (2015), 32–46 (p. 42).

well possible that (a larger part of) the agrarian settlement pattern of the coastal region remained functioning – at least in the long run – while at the same time the churches, protecting valuables from raids and largely depending on Frankish support, underwent serious strain.

The 'Reichsannalen' have long been a source of information on Frisia in the period.²⁹ From these sources, we know that the first Danish raids on the Frisian coast took place in 810. These raids led Charlemagne to station guard posts in the ports that were accessible for Viking ships. 826 was the next important year for the northern coastal area since Harald, ex-king of Denmark, was then enfeoffed by Louis the Pious with the Frisian county of Rüstringen, northwest of Bremen. In 834, a Danish fleet sailed to Utrecht to plunder Dorestad. A year later, and then again in 839, Dorestad was attacked again by Danes, who only departed after a tribute had been paid by the inhabitants. They thus aimed at bringing in booty in the form of money and precious metal objects. The emperor responded by building large strongholds at strategic places along the coast. Inside these strongholds, the local population could find refuge.³⁰

The fear of Viking raids must have been serious: according to the annals of Fulda, shortly before his death, Emperor Louis decided to give Dorestad in fief to the Danish brothers Rorik and Harald, pagans not willing to integrate into Frankish society. In 842, these men were driven out again by imperial forces, after which Rorik gathered a group of Danish warriors to assist him in sacking the same areas in which he had been active before. For the years 845–47, several Danish plunder expeditions have been recorded for the Frisian *pagi* Oostergo and Westergo as well as the trade centres Dorestad and Meinerswijk. In 850 the emperor saw no other solution than to reappoint Rorik as a vassal on the condition that he would fend off raids from others. Nothing indicates that Rorik took this obligation seriously. On the contrary, it seems that he facilitated the pillaging of his territory by other Danes, like in 857, when once again Dorestad was overpowered and burned to the ground. This was also the time when Bishop Hunger of Utrecht decided to flee with all his canons to the monastery St Odiliënberg in Limburg, which King Lothar II had put at his disposal as a temporary residence.

The Viking raid in Oostergo and Westergo in 846 indicates that Friesland between Vlie and Lauwers was not spared by the Normans.

²⁹ A clear analysis is given by Henderikx, 'Ringwalburgen', pp. 81–100. Cf. L. van der Tuuk, *Vikingen. Noormannen in de Lage Landen* (revised edition, Utrecht: Omniboek, 2015), and the site www.gjallar.nl.

³⁰ The circle shaped 'burg' of the Isle of Texel made part of these early reinforcements from the thirties of the ninth century: Henderikx, 'Ringwalburgen', p. 83.

From the sea, they could easily reach places like Bolsward, Leeuwarden, and Groningen through tidal streams like the Marne, the Boorne, and the Hunze. In this way, the *pagus* of Oostergo, which was administered by a certain Count Albdag, was the main objective of an attack by Roriks cousin Rudolf. The Frisians on site, led by a converted Viking, succeeded in killing Rudolf and a few hundred of his men. The annalist who reported on the event could not resist remarking that the Dane thus got a fitting end to his dog-like life.³¹

The Church in Frisia probably suffered heavily under these Viking attacks. Her material capital consisted mainly of movable property such as reliquaries, liturgical vessels, and books, which were often decorated with precious metals and gems. When these were robbed and priests were assaulted or killed, it was difficult to keep the institution going. The flight of the Utrecht bishop and his staff to Sint-Odiliënberg in 857, and from there to Deventer about 885, must seriously have hindered the administration of the parishes. The episcopal exile lasted until 922 when Bishop Radboud's successor, Balderic, decided to move back to Utrecht. From the *Cartularium Radbodi*, an overview of the landed property and privileges of the St Martin's Church of Utrecht, the first part of which has been put up under Bishop Radboud, it can be concluded that countless rights and possessions of the Utrecht Church were lost in the Viking period between 857 and 917.³² This would also apply for many proprietary churches under Utrecht or under one of the Carolingian abbeys. A few of these were abandoned, while some others were rebuilt and rededicated.

In these cases, the data concerns the West-Frisian part of the diocese of Utrecht. For the area between Vlie and Lauwers and the Frisian part of the diocese of Munster, we should also assume such a stagnation. The bishop of Munster was not forced to move his see in Westfalia to a safer place, but his northern Frisian coastal exclave seems to have suffered as much as its neighbouring lands did. Especially for Bishop Wolfhelm (882–98), it is reported that he found this territory in a desolate condition.³³

For the moment, we can say that the development of the parish system came to a halt and even witnessed a setback in the course of the ninth century as a result of the Viking raids. The eastern parts of the bishopric of Utrecht – Drenthe, Twente, and Hamaland – seem to have suffered

³¹ Taken from the *Annales Xantenses*: R. Rau, *Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* vol. II (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1958), pp. 368–70.

³² Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 150–52.

³³ W. Kohl, *Das Bistum Münster* 7.1. Die Diözese, *Germania Sacra Neue Folge* 37, 1 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1999), pp. 74–75.

less.³⁴ There, initiatives were taken to found new churches already under the episcopate of Radboud. The northern and western regions, however, can only have received administrative attention of the bishop and his staff in a later phase. After his final return from Deventer, the bishop presumably had to give priority to the restoration of the Utrecht cathedral and the churches of the collegiate chapters, as well as to the central parish churches in the nearby river area. In short, the year 950 should be considered the rough date *post quem* for the restoration and renewed expansion of the parish network in the northern and western part of the bishopric. In the case of Munster, less data is available, but here, too, a renewed expansion in the coastal districts is likely not to have been started before the second half of the tenth century.

The Territorial Church Organisation: Parish, Deanery, and Archdeaconry

By lack of direct information, it is difficult to determine whether precisely delineated parish territories already existed in the Frisian lands in 950, or if such marked-off territory existed in Western Europe in general at that time. Circumstantial evidence indicates, however, that the issue is connected to the spread of Christianity or, to put it precisely, its completion, for as long as there were still (major) groups and families that had not been baptised, their households could not be assigned to a particular church, let alone be brought under its ecclesiastical jurisdiction. We are inclined to think that in and shortly after the Viking period, many Frisians shared the pagan religion of the invaders and temporary new rulers. The Old Frisian synodal statutes, of which some clauses date from the late tenth century, depict a robbery on an officiating priest during one of the great feast days. During the offense, the priest's ciborium was broken, and the wine wasted.³⁵ And then there is the well-known early eleventh century report from the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, according to which a village potentate (*maior villulae*), somewhere in Utrecht-controlled Friesland, publicly uttered his skepticism about the value of the Eucharist: he tried to persuade his fellow-villagers that they would be better to follow him to a tavern to drink beer, and had some success in this, thanks to his prestige and power (he was accompanied by an armed servant of

³⁴ Radboud died in 917 in his recently founded chapel of Ootmarsum, after he had made a tour through Drenthe: Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, p. 157.

³⁵ M. P. van Buijtenen, *De grondslag van de Friese vrijheid* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953), p. 153.

his own).³⁶ In the story, the villager was immediately punished by God: at the end of the story, the drunk man fell dead from his horse. It may be that the author of the *Gesta* addressed this case of resistance because, at the time of writing, the Church had just established its authority in every corner of the country. The above-named Old Frisian synodal statutes present us an already completed parish system in which every soul is under a church where funerals and children's baptisms take place and to which everyone has to pay tithes.³⁷ Some articles in the statutes even spell out the dues the parishioners were expected to pay. We are therefore inclined to believe that, around the millennium, everywhere in the Frisian parts of the dioceses of Utrecht and Munster parish boundaries were drawn, at least for the territories of baptismal churches.

The implementation of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which in the case of the bishopric of Utrecht can be dated roughly between 950 and 1050,³⁸ must have led to a strong territorial cohesion of the Church. It would also have strengthened the episcopal grip on the parishes and thereby given an extra dimension to the authority of the bishop over not only his own churches but also over various Carolingian abbeys. The church had to ensure that its members adhered to its standards and commandments, which also meant that members could be punished if they violated them. The central figure within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was the bishop. He was the carrier of the ban and had the power to impose penalties. At the regional level, the main authority to whom he could delegate the execution of the ban was the land dean. The dean's district, the deanery, consisted of an extensive and spatially coherent group of parishes, of which ideally one church, the oldest, constituted the centre. There, once a year, the synod or *seend* was held, in the presence of prominent parishioners, who acted as sworn witnesses. In the oldest known arrangements for the synodal meetings in Drenthe and Friesland, we see that the bishop visited and chaired the court every four years. At the end of each session, he handed over his ban to the dean, who thus was entitled to exercise the jurisdiction

³⁶ Discussed by Heinrich Schmidt, 'Adel und Bauern an der Nordseeküste', *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte*, 45 (1973), 45–95 (pp. 52–53).

³⁷ *Westerlauwersches Recht I. Jus Municipale Frisonum*, 2 vols, ed. by W. J. Buma and W. Ebel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977) I, pp. 178–79 (art. 21).

³⁸ This, again, on the basis of the above-named Old Frisian synodal statutes, which are judged to be relatively old, seen in a Western-European context. Van Buijtenen, *Grondslag Friese Vrijheid*, p. 148, dates some of its content in the tenth century.

in the next three years with the exception of some difficult consequential cases that were reserved for the bishop.³⁹

Originally, the deaneries coincided with the Carolingian *pagi* or counties. Up to the thirteenth century, the Frisian part of the diocese of Utrecht counted three such deaneries: Oostergo, Westergo, and Zuidergo. Coincidentally, the Frisian region between Lauwers and Ems, part of the diocese of Munster, also counted three deaneries: Humsterland, Hunzingo, and Fivelingo. The latter deanery must have been split up before the year 1000, since by about that time Loppersum and Farmsum, being the oldest central churches of Fivelingo, both functioned as places where synodal court meetings were held.⁴⁰ In the fourteenth century, the above-named deaneries of Utrecht Friesland – Westergo, Zuidergo and Oostergo – were divided into a series of sub-deaneries, each of which then had a centrally located church as its focal point, functioning as a synodal centre. This division of deaneries – which did not take place east of the Lauwers – ran parallel to the formation of ever smaller communal governmental units.⁴¹ Apparently, the bishop of Utrecht was unable to prevent this juridical fragmentation, which was caused by the political autonomy the region enjoyed after having defeated the count of Holland in 1345. In the end of the fourteenth century, Oostergo counted twelve sub-deaneries or synodal districts, while Westergo and Zuidergo counted, respectively, ten and three sub-deaneries.⁴²

³⁹ During this four-year cycle, called the *circatus*, the bishop visited the entire diocese in four quarters. According to a notice in the so-called chapterbook of Sint-Marie the bishop used to inspect Westergo and Oostergo in the third year of this cycle: *Annales et notae S. Mariae Ultratraiectenses*, ed. by L. Weiland, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores* 15–2 (Hannover: Haniani, 1888), 1298–1304 (p. 1304); Mulders, *Archidiakonat*, 30–1; cf. Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 208 en 316, n. 1295. The codex dates from 1133–1138 but the notice describes a much older custom, at which is already indirectly pointed in the Old Frisian synodal statutes. It was also practiced in the diocese of Cologne: W. Neuss and W. Oediger, *Das Bistum Köln von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts* (second, revised edition, Cologne: Bachem, 1972), p. 203.

⁴⁰ The Frisian deaneries in the diocese of Munster are treated by: M. Hartgerink-Koomans, 'De proosdijen van Munsters Friesland', *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 7 (1953), 1–31.

⁴¹ On the development of the communal administration in Friesland west of the Lauwers, see: O. Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk en de Friese vrijheid* (Leeuwarden 1986), pp. 14–27.

⁴² For Westergo and Zuidergo, see the overviews given by: S. Muller Hzn, *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis der kerkelijke rechtspraak in het bisdom Utrecht in de middeleeuwen*, vols I and II: *De indeeling van het bisdom* (The Hague: Nijhoff,

These small, late-medieval synodal districts are of interest because their synodal centres were, as a rule, old churches out of which a series of daughter churches had split off. This pattern obviously applies for the main churches of the three original deaneries: Dokkum, Franeker, and Staveren, each of which functioned as the centre of a sub-deanery in the late Middle Ages. However, this pattern of sub-division was also the case with other synodal 'chairs' from around 1500, with the exception of a few chairs located in those peatlands, where the transformation of the landscape following its reclamation had led to such alterations in the transport network that an adjustment of the juridical system had been necessary.⁴³ Overall, the system is so transparent that we can, with some confidence, work backwards in time to assume that smaller districts emerged from a larger one. So, most late medieval synodal 'chairs' presumably were the earliest baptismal churches of their respective regions. As already has been mentioned, the Old Frisian synodal statutes only know of three churches within the modern province of Fryslân where the synodal court meetings could be held. In the twelfth century, when the number of parishes had increased enormously, this situation cannot have been very practical, given the size of the areas concerned.⁴⁴ We therefore think that by then each deanery already disposed of more than one church where the synodal meeting could be organized, a solution that preceded the formation of the sub-deaneries

The vast deanery of Drenthe, which did not split into parts, presents us with a counter-example. In the early sixteenth century, its dean visited no less than eight synodal churches each year to hold court and administer

1906/1915) I, pp. 336–64; II, pp. 516–98. For Oostergo, for which Muller *c.* 1555 only mentions the deaneries of Dokkum and Boornego, information on the various synodal 'chairs' can be found in: Roemeling, *CPF*. Cf. E. H. Bary and M. P. van Buijtenen, 'Synode en seendrecht. Doorwerking in middeleeuws Friesland', in *Kerk in beraad. Opstellen aangeboden aan prof. dr. J. C. P. A. van Laarhoven bij gelegenheid van zijn afscheid als hoogleraar aan de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen*, ed. by G. Ackermans, A. Davids and P. J. A. Nissen (Nijmegen: Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid, Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, 1991), 103–23 (pp. 112–15).

⁴³ For instance, in the deanery of Wagenbrugge Zuid, where Sint-Nicolaasga acquired a central position after the peat reclamation process had come to its end in the fourteenth century, which made the church apt to function as synodal 'chair'.

⁴⁴ For the parishioners of the peat region around Oldeboorn *c.* 1000, it is hardly conceivable that they would have taken the trouble to travel about 40 kilometers to Dokkum to attend the synodal court there.

ecclesiastical justice. A similar development seems to have taken place in the part of Friesland under Munster, where ecclesiastical jurisdiction over lay people had come into the hands of hereditary lay functionaries, the *proosten* (provosts).⁴⁵ The *proost* of Hunzingo, for instance, not only held court in Usquert but also in some other central churches within his deanery, namely, in Baflo, Winsum, and Garnwerd. The jurisdiction over the priests within the Munster part of Frisia, was exerted by the so-called archdeacon of Frisia who was a canon of Munster cathedral.

The archdeaconry formed the third level of territorial organisation.⁴⁶ For brevity's sake we will limit description of this form of control by focusing on the archdeaconries that came into being in the bishopric of Utrecht. In Carolingian times, and also in the tenth century, the bishop was assisted in administering his diocese by a number of officials recruited from the priest colleges that were attached to the Utrecht Church. An important figure among them was the 'choir bishop' or *choriepiscopus*. In the Old Frisian synodal statutes he is explicitly named the bishop's rightful substitute in case the latter is unable to appear in Friesland, in such an instance as when he has to make a visit to Rome. Nevertheless, already before the year 1000, the choir bishop's role as judicial vicar to the bishop seems to have been taken over by one of the administrators of the collegiate chapters, either the provost of the Chapter of the Cathedral

⁴⁵ In all probability, they succeeded in acquiring this office, for which they were provided with a fief consisting in landed property, in their original role as synodal sworn witnesses. The property complexes belonging to these lay deaneries appear to have been lying next to the glebe of the corresponding synodal churches: P. N. Noomen, 'Mariëngaarde en de Friese samenleving', in *Vitae Abbatum Orti Sancte Marie*, ed. by H. Th. M. Lambooij and J. A. Mol (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 109–30 (pp. 115–16).

⁴⁶ For the following, see Kuys, *Kerkelijke organisatie Utrecht*, and particularly C. Dekker, 'De vorming van aartsdiakonaten in het diocees Utrecht in de tweede helft van de 11^e en het eerste kwart van de 12^e eeuw', *Geografisch Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Nieuwe Reeks, 11 (1977), 339–60. Dekker leans heavily on: H. J. B. Mulders, *Der Archidiaconat im Bistum Utrecht bis zum Ausgang des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Nijmegen: Dekker en Van de Vegt, 1943). Cf. Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 208, 311–25. The setup of the territorial archdeaconries is thus posterior to that of the deaneries. This was also the case in the dioceses of Munster and Liège: Kohl, *Bistum Münster*, pp. 157, 160–61; A. Dierkens, 'La création des doyennés et des archidiaconés dans l'ancien diocèse de Liège', *Le Moyen Age*, 92 (1986) 345–65 (p. 355); A. Deblon, 'Les origines des doyennés ruraux dans le diocèse de Liège', *Le Moyen Age*, 105 (1999), 703–16 (p. 705).

or his equivalent from the Chapter of St Salvator. It is thought by Van Vliet that up until the middle of the eleventh century, the substitutional judicial administration of the whole diocese stayed divided between these two appointed archdeacons.⁴⁷ If so, and given the traditional relationship St Salvator maintained with the churches of Dokkum and Staveren, the earliest ecclesiastical centres of Oostergo and Zuidergo, it will have been the provost of St Salvator who, since the late tenth century, assisted the bishop in handling his Frisian affairs.⁴⁸

About 1040, the bishop transferred some of his administrative duties, such as the supervision of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the appointment of parish priests, to the already named collegiate chapters at Utrecht and three other collegiate chapters in the outer areas of the diocese, namely, the St Lebuin of Deventer (which had a well-established partnership with St Salvator), the St. Plechelm of Oldenzaal, and the St Martin of Emmerich, which was also part of the *Ecclesia Traiectensis* as well, having been established in the tenth century.⁴⁹ In about 1050, when the bishop founded three other new chapters in Utrecht – St Peter's, St John's, and St Mary's – he endowed them with archdeaconries that he formed from parts of the jurisdictions of St Martin's Cathedral and St Salvator. It is, in this way, that the archdeaconry of Westergo must have come into the hands of the Utrecht chapter of St John.⁵⁰ The custody of Oostergo and Zuidergo remained with St Salvator. For our reconstruction, however, this regrouping from the period 1040–1050 has no great importance. The late medieval practice of archdeacons who resided in Utrecht left the real administration of justice to the deans in the region, while maintaining as much income as possible from visitation dues, appointment fees, and the like. This applies to a large extent also for the Cathedral canon of Munster who was responsible for the administration of the Munster archdeaconry of *Frisia*, which covered the above listed three deaneries in Friesland between Lauwers and Ems, besides three other ones in the area east of the Ems.

⁴⁷ Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, p. 319.

⁴⁸ B. van den Hoven van Genderen, *De Heren van de Kerk. De kanunniken van Oudmunster te Utrecht in de late middeleeuwen* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1997), p. 557.

⁴⁹ Kaj van Vliet makes plausible that this was organised c. 1040.

⁵⁰ Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, p. 317–18. Van Vliet correctly rejects the dating by Dekker, who links the Westergo's splitting off from St Salvator's archdeaconry of Friesland with the donation of the proprietary church of Franeker by the bishop to the Chapter of St John in 1085.

In the eleventh century, the proprietary churches of the Carolingian abbeys came to fit into the diocesan structure of deaneries and archdeaconries. How this came about has not yet been made entirely clear. For the dioceses of Utrecht and Munster, there has been little research on the subject. It is known that most of the named monasteries lost their grip on their Frisian estates in the course of the twelfth century, as a result of usurpation by local rulers or due to economic problems within the abbeys themselves, causing the abbots to sell property to local power parties. In the tenth century, however, such management considerations did not yet play a decisive role. During the Viking raids, the abbeys of Echternach, Fulda, Werden, Prüm, and others must have had as many troubles administering their parish churches as had the bishops. Their superiors too, however, must have done their best afterwards to restore the devastated and neglected churches and to found and promote new chapels within the already delineated parish territories. At the same time, the abbots gradually had to cede power to the bishop, since the latter was authorized to carry out the visitation and regularly hold the synodal court of justice within all the parishes, including the ones of the abbeys. That this could lead to conflicts is demonstrated by the agreement of partition that Bishop William of Utrecht concluded in 1063 with the abbot of Echternach over the possession of five early 'Holland' (= West Frisian) baptismal churches, including their later founded chapels, which had been bequeathed by St Willibrord to his cherished abbey of Echternach.⁵¹ From the charter, which was directed at the count of Holland who had usurped some income from these churches, it is clear that these churches owed several dues to the bishop on a regular basis, including dues for the *circatus* (visitation), *oblaciones* (altar donations), and the *servitium* (for holding the synodal court). The charter also declared that these churches would have to cede additional contributions for the construction, dedication,

⁵¹ *Oorkondenboek van Holland en Zeeland I. Eind van de 7^e eeuw tot 1222*, ed. by A. C. F. Koch (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970), nr. 84. On this charter, see: R. R. Post, *Eigenkerken en bisschoppelijk gezag in het diocees Utrecht tot de XIII^e eeuw* (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1928), pp. 54–61. In this agreement, it is clearly described that the jurisdictions of the five mother churches had been marked off (*terminate*). Their churches apparently still functioned as baptismal, funeral, and tithe collection centres. The daughters had no fixed boundaries yet. At first sight, this supposes that these had only recently been founded; which is improbable though, when one realises that the chapel of Assendelft, daughter of Velzen, already existed in the early tenth century: Numan, *Noord-Hollandse kerken*, p. 114.

and demarcation of daughter churches.⁵² The abbot and the bishop agreed that the count could not assert any rights to these sources of income. As for the partitioning of churches, the Solomon-like solution was that the bishop got half of the churches. The other half was left to the abbot, under the favourable condition that he did not have to pay the above-mentioned charges. In addition, he was still allowed to appoint parish priests and exert episcopal jurisdiction over his parishioners. The arrangement gives the impression that for this part of Friesland the bishop of Utrecht, at least in the first half of the eleventh century, put a lot of energy into incorporating the parish network of Echternach into his reinforced diocesan organisation and jurisdiction. Presumably, he and his Munster colleague acted accordingly in other parts of their dioceses and toward other monasteries.

Churches and Their Patron Saints in Drenthe and the Northwestern Part of Overijssel

Armed with this knowledge, we can try to identify and date the first baptismal churches and map their demarcated areas. One of the – admittedly rough – methods for doing so, is to determine the churches of which the remains of an early timber version are documented. Because for Friesland the oldest building phases are poorly researched, we first cast a look on the development in the neighbouring regions of Drenthe and northern part of Overijssel, both part of the deanery of Drenthe.

In the eleventh century, the deanery of Drenthe did not only cover the present province of Drenthe but also the jurisdiction of the later city of Groningen, as well as the peat region of Stellingwerf and the Land of Vollenhove, part of the present province of Friesland and Overijssel, respectively. Vollenhove belonged to the King until 944, when he donated it to Bishop Balderic of Utrecht who then developed it further, a century before one of his successors acquired the county of Drenthe as a royal fief.⁵³ The settlement of Vollenhove, located on a relatively high moraine ridge near the sea, held a prominent position. It lay near the point where skippers traveling through the Almere and the river Nagele and approaching

⁵² On the origin of the various named dues, see Kuys, *Kerkelijke organisatie Utrecht*, pp. 114–15, 132. It strikes one in this case that the *servitium* had to be paid to the provost of the Cathedral chapter, which means that the bishop by then already had ceded his jurisdiction for an important part to him: Dekker, 'Aartsdiakonaten', p. 343.

⁵³ J. A. Mol, 'De middeleeuwse veenontginningen in Noordwest-Overijssel en Zuid-Friesland: datering en fasering', *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 14 (2011[2012]), 46–90, pp. 49–61.

Map 2. Early baptismal churches in Drenthe and the northwestern part of Overijssel c. 1000

Vollenhove from the West and South (Utrecht!) could choose to sail the Old Kuinder river north of Vollenhove, to get upstream in the direction of Steenwijk and Diever or to Stellingwerf and the Frisian region of Schoterland, or to keep starboard and follow the mainstream southeast along the Vollenhove coast and then bend into the mouth of the IJssel or go straight through to reach Southwest Drenthe, via the Sethe, or ascent into Salland and Twenthe via the Zwarte Water and the river Vecht. In the twelfth century, the bishop built a strong castle near his manor. It is clear – though we know little about it – that he founded a church here long before that, probably soon after 944.

The core region of Drenthe, which, from the perspective of Utrecht, lies behind Vollenhove and Steenwijk, consisted, as its name suggests, of three parts, each of which had its own drainage system. The Noordenveld discharged its water northwards into the rivers Drentse Aa and Hunze, the Zuidenveld drained southwards into the upper reaches of the Vecht, while the surplus water of the Westenveld streamed towards the West, via the rivulets Steenwijker Aa and the Reest. In each of those ‘velden’ [= fields], we find one or more ancient parishes, focal points which also formed centres in secular terms, being the places where the ‘thing’-court was held. Dirk Blok speaks, in this respect, of the six mother churches of Drenthe, which also functioned as synodal ‘chairs.’⁵⁴ Vries, Rolde, and Anloo were the main baptismal churches of the Noordenveld, with the proviso that before about 1000, Groningen with its old St Martin’s church may have been included in this territory as well. Emmen probably was the oldest church in the Zuidenveld,⁵⁵ whilst Beilen and Diever were the main religious centres in the Westenveld. Dating the foundation of these churches is difficult, with global datings ranging somewhere between 800 and 1000. The earliest documented date we have concerns the so-called church of *Arlo*, which is mentioned in a register of the abbey of Werden as a donation from about 820 made by the wealthy aristocrat Theodgrim. This monastical church then must, at some point in time, have passed into the hands of the bishop, since in later ages the St Boniface church

⁵⁴ D. P. Blok, ‘Vroege Middeleeuwen, tot ca. 1150’, in *Geschiedenis van Drenthe*, ed. by J. Heringa and others (Meppel: Boom, 1985), 141–70 (p. 150).

⁵⁵ P. den Hengst, ‘De archeologische opgraving (1964) in de Grote Kerk van Emmen. Sporen van het vroege christendom in Zuidoost-Drenthe’, *Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak*, 130 (2013), 117–56 (p. 144). On the location near the *curtis*, see bij de hof, zie P. N. Noomen, ‘Koningsgoed in Groningen. Het domaniale verleden van de stad’, in *Groningen 1040. Archeologie en oudste geschiedenis van de stad Groningen*, ed. by J. W. Boersma, J. F. J. van den Broek, and G. J. D. Offerman, (Bedum: Profiel, 1990), 97–144 (p. 109).

of Tinaarlo/Vries, with which it generally is identified, is known to have been a proprietary church of the bishop.

The data on the timber construction of the earliest church buildings may offer a clue. For the first phase, which probably ended between 1000 and 1050, it seems that the lower ends of the main posts were still resting in the ground, as they were placed in dug holes. To prevent early decay, in later phases the main bearing construction was preferably placed on stones. For the oldest church in Groningen, an early wooden construction with a foundation in postholes has been found. On the basis of C-14 data and its location near an old burial place, it is assumed that it was erected before 800.⁵⁶ The remains of the wooden church in Rolde can hardly be dated. That church must have been founded some time before or around 1000, a date which can be inferred from the wood construction of the St. Margaret church of Norg, which shows the same foundation structure as the church in Groningen but which, at the same time, must have been younger than the baptismal church of Rolde. The first wooden church buildings of Anloo, Diever, and Emmen, all three of which are known to have been proprietary churches of the bishop, fall into the category of structures resting in postholes.⁵⁷

A more detailed dating of these early wooden churches is hardly possible. By lack of sharp dendrochronological or C-14 data, researchers still have to rely on typology and archaeological finds. Recently, the archaeologist P. den Hengst suggested to date the first of three successive churches of Emmen in the period between 800 and 850 because of its construction near a burial ground from that time.⁵⁸ Number three is built with posts on flat stones or props, which presupposes a construction in the eleventh century or later. According to Den Hengst, the second church, with postholes like those in Norg, may have been built about 1000 or shortly before. If this indeed was the case, there would have been an interval of 100 to 150 years between the first and second church, which is very long, if one realises that for that period the average lifespan of wooden buildings

⁵⁶ J. N. Lanting, 'De ouderdom van de houten gebouwen onder de St.-Walburg-en Martinikerk', in *Groningen 1040*, 155–74 (pp. 172–74).

⁵⁷ C. Ahrens, *Die frühen Holzkirchen Europas*, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2001) I, pp. 549–52; For Anloo, see H. T. Waterbolk, 'Profane en sacrale houten gebouwen uit de middeleeuwen in Noord-Nederland', *Groninger Kerken*, 19 (2002), 44–56 (p. 52); voor Diever, zie D. te Kieffe, 'Middeleeuwse houten kerken in Diever en Rolde. Een archeologische studie naar het vroege christendom in Drenthe', *Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak*, 130 (2013), 157–84 (pp. 169–74).

⁵⁸ Den Hengst, 'Opgraving Grote Kerk Emmen', pp. 138–40.

is estimated to have been more than 50 years. An important indication in this regard is that the Emmen church was dedicated to St Pancras, just like the church of Diever, for which a wooden construction of the oldest generation has been found as well.⁵⁹ In other parts of the diocese of Utrecht, a series of Pancras churches have also been dated to the same period. As for the devotion of St Pancras in general, it can be stated that various devotion traditions have been traced, which developed after the end of the ninth century.⁶⁰ However, when it comes to the old proprietary churches of the bishop of Utrecht, the most obvious possibility is that they were dedicated during the lifetime of Bishop Balderic (917–75). He and his family are known to have had a great liking for this Roman saint.⁶¹ Balderic donated several relics of St Pancras after 966 to the Cathedral church and the church of St Salvator in Utrecht.⁶²

In this way, the combination of early wooden churches and the devotion of St. Pancras takes us back to the episcopate of Balderic, to its second phase to be more precise, or to his successors who continued to employ his policy. The other early churches in Drenthe, of which wooden remains have been found, were dedicated to patron saints that boasted a more general popularity in the whole of Northwestern Europe, like St Martin (Groningen), St Willibrord (Beilen) – whose relics were already present in Utrecht in the eighth century – and St Clement (Steenwijk, whose church is recorded to have come into being around 1000).⁶³ Interesting in this respect are the saints of the church of Vollenhove, which is thought to have been constructed in tufa about 1100, immediately after its foundation, but of which we have already assumed that it must have been there much

⁵⁹ P. N. Noomen, 'St. Magnus van Hollum en Celdui van Esens. Bijdrage tot de chronologie van de Magnustraditie', *De Vrije Fries*, 69 (1989), 7–32 (p. 20).

⁶⁰ H. J. Kok, *Proeve van een onderzoek van de patrocinia in het middeleeuwse bisdom Utrecht* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1958), pp. 136–37; see also: Alida Z. Huisman, *Die Verehrung des heiligen Pancratius in West- und Mitteleuropa* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1938) about the devotion of St Pancras in general.

⁶¹ On the origin and social background of Balderic, see: R. Grosse, *Das Bistum Utrecht und seine Bischöfe im 10. und frühen 11. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1987), pp. 22–27.

⁶² Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, pp. 156–58.

⁶³ M. D. J. Klomp, *Opgravingen in vroege Overijsselse NH kerken* (Zwolle: SPA Uitgevers, 2013), pp. 74–75. St Clement belongs to the oldest group of saints on the calendar of Utrecht: P. Séjourné, *L'ordinaire de S. Martin d'Utrecht* (Utrecht: Dekker en Van de Vegt, 1919–1921), p. 38. In Munster, the devotion of St Clement has been strongly promoted by bishop Wolfhelm (882–99), who had acquired relics of him in Rome: Kohl, *Das Bistum Münster*, pp. 73–74.

earlier as a chapel to the central manor of the bishop, probably dating from the middle of the tenth century. St Nicholas, who had only become popular in the Netherlands in the period of the crusades, has always been presented as Vollenhove's only saint. Upon closer examination, however, it appears that the church had also been dedicated to St Margaret, who was an object of devotion in period before St Nicholas was. Since Norg had the same patron saint, and since the first wooden church of Norg can be dated about 1000 – as we have seen – the tufa church of the much more centrally located settlement of Vollenhove must have had an early wooden predecessor.

When we place all these early baptismal churches of the deanery of Drenthe on a map, a pattern becomes apparent during the last administrative term of Bishop Balderic or during that of his immediate successors. Shortly after 1000, a spatial network of baptismal churches, later serving as synodal 'chairs', was created, including the first mission churches. Within this network, which incorporated the first mission churches, the churches seem to have been evenly spread over the various landscape units.

A Case Within the *Terpen* Area of Westergo: Menaldum and its Oldest Daughters

When the deanery of Drenthe had already been covered with a web of primary churches around the year 1000, it is hardly conceivable that at the same time the more densely populated Frisian coastal area between Vlie and Ems had to do without such a system. The available information on this region is admittedly less easy to interpret because sufficient archaeological data on the oldest wooden churches is lacking. It is possible though to test the pattern shown for Drenthe by zooming in on a few sample regions with well-reconstructed church estates and parish boundaries. The first district then to be addressed is the synodal jurisdiction of Menaldum in the *terpen* area of Westergo. In the next section, the focus will be on two peat areas that have been reclaimed since the tenth century.

Menaldum

The village of Menaldum is located about ten kilometers west of Leeuwarden. The original parish district, of which the St Lambert church of Menaldum was the centre, coincided with the later and until recently existing municipality of Menaldumadeel. It was situated west of the Middelzee, a large tidal channel, that separated the *pagus* Westergo from that of Oostergo before it silted up in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the Menaldum district, a broad salt marsh ridge lay stretched along

this shore. The ridge and the adjacent shallow clay zone was dotted with scattered *terp* settlements. From that coastal ridge, a second and older ridge stretched south-southwest dividing lower clay zones. On this older ridge too, various wide *terps*, including the one of Dronrijp, had been developed. Within this scenic setting, the church of Menaldum seems to have been founded at a convenient central spot, exactly where the inland ridge and the ridge along the shore were connected. To the west, a clear natural boundary was lacking. The *terpen* range on the ridge of Menaldum and Dronrijp linked up with the area of Welsrijp and Winsum, while in the north, the Menaldum district and the Franeker region were interconnected by the two *terpen* series on small ridges of Berlikum-Ried and Slappeterp-Peins.

At the end of the Middle Ages, the deanery of Menaldum counted ten churches. Most of these came into existence after 1100: Wier, Beetgum, Engelum, Deinum, Blessum, and Schingen. Their secondary position can be deduced both from their small parish territories as from the saints in whose honour the churches were dedicated and who became popular in Friesland not earlier than the twelfth, thirteenth, or even fourteenth centuries. These saints included St John the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, and St Christopher. The older large parishes from which they originated are, besides Menaldum as the mother of all, Berlikum in the north, Marssum in the east, and Dronrijp in the south. The filiation link between the daughters and these churches can – more or less speculatively – be reconstructed as follows: Wier was split off from Berlikum; Beetgum from Menaldum; Engelum and Deinum – with Blessum branched off in a still later phase from the latter – from Marssum; and Schingen from Dronrijp. Going back to roughly the middle of the eleventh century, when these foundations had not yet been realized, we arrive at four major parishes of similar size.

To date the creation sequence of these four parishes, there are only two kinds of data on which we can lean: hagiolatriy trends and traces of wooden churches. Let us first see what these may tell us about Berlikum and Marssum, of which the latter might be the youngest. The patron saint of Berlikum was the archangel Michael, who was venerated in the diocese of Utrecht already in the tenth century.⁶⁴ Without making the connection with the famous *Chiesa della Frisoni* in Rome, dedicated to St Michael and St Magnus, it can be pointed out that the unmistakably old churches of Almenum and Oosterland on Wieringen, the latter of which already existed before 860 as the first daughter of Hippolytushoef, had Michael

⁶⁴ M. Martens, 'Le culte de Saint Michel dans les Pays-Bas', in *Millénaire monastique du Mont Saint-Michel*, vol. III (Paris: Bibliothèque d'histoire et d'archéologie chrétienne, P. Lethielleux, 1971), pp. 447–58.

as their patron saint.⁶⁵ Marssum constitutes an interesting case as well, since it was the only Frisian church dedicated to St Pontian of Spoleto, a saint of whom Bishop Balderic managed to acquire a series of relics in 966 from Italy via Emperor Otto I.⁶⁶ It is known that Balderic donated these remains, along with some relics of the aforementioned St Pancras, to the Utrecht St Martin's cathedral to lend luster to its restoration. It therefore seems probable that canons of this cathedral were involved in the foundation of the church of Marssum, if only after the donation made by Balderic.

Salvius, the patron saint of Dronrijp, is likewise a special case in Friesland. The former State archivist in Leeuwarden, M. P. van Buijtenen, spent much attention on him in his study on the *Heiligenweg* in 1977, however, without precisely dating the start of his cult in Friesland.⁶⁷ We have a bit more information relevant for dating the church itself, since during the restoration conducted 1997–2001 the traces of a few postholes were excavated. The archaeologist Th. A. Spitzer, who analysed them, cautiously declared that although the post holes bear no direct evidence for a church building, their presence is in line with the expectation that an older wooden church once stood on the spot.⁶⁸ We would like to point out that such a timber construction resting in postholes, resembling the design of Emmen, would easily take the date of the first church back to around 1000, considering the fact that the timber construction of Dronrijp already had to make place for a large building in tufa in the course of the eleventh century.

About the church of Menaldum we are less well informed, since the foundations of its building have not yet been investigated by archaeologists. Its dedication to St Lambert may provide a clue to its date, however. Though the veneration of this saint has its origin in the region of Liege, in the centre of the Franconian realm, it does not seem to have

⁶⁵ Numan, *Noord-Hollandse kerken*, p. 156–57.

⁶⁶ Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, p. 173; A. C. de Kruijf, *Miraculeus bewaard: middeleeuwse Utrechtse relieken op reis: de schat van de oud-katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal* (Zutphen: Waanders, 2011), pp. 47–48.

⁶⁷ M. P. van Buijtenen, *Langs de Heiligenweg. Perspectief van enige vroeg-middeleeuwse verbindingen met Noord-Nederland* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1977), pp. 20–22. Salvius is a Merovingian saint, venerated at Montreuil-sur-Mer. It is unknown how and when his cult reached the diocese of Utrecht.

⁶⁸ Th. A. Spitzers, 'Het archeologisch onderzoek in de kerk', in *Sint-Salvius op de terpen. Dronrijps heerlijk hoogtepunt*, ed. by D. J. de Vries (Leeuwarden: De Friese Pers Boekerij, 2002), 36–47 (p. 37).

Map 3. The St Lambert church of Menaldum and its oldest daughters

been promoted in the diocese of Utrecht until the episcopate of Bishop Ansfried (995–1010). Stemming from a high noble family from Lorraine, Ansfried came to belong to the circle of confidants of King Otto III.⁶⁹ After having had a long lasting secular career as count of Huy, he was appointed bishop of Utrecht. It is known that he harbored a special worship for St Lambert. He donated many goods from his family inheritance to the Utrecht church and to the Benedictine abbey he founded at Hohorst near Amersfoort, which was moved to Utrecht around 1050. Among the estates of these institutions, various St Lambert churches can be pointed out as probably founded by Ansfried.⁷⁰ Menaldum would cut a good figure on the list, but it remains unknown whether or not it ever belonged to the property complex of Ansfried's family. Although among the goods and privileges Ansfried received from the king in 985, a fief somewhere in the county of Frisia is indeed mentioned, it must be doubted whether this had anything to do with Menaldum. If Ansfried was involved with the foundation of the church of Menaldum, the church's origin would be dated somewhere between 995 and 1010.

Two Cases in the Peat Region: Oudega in Westergo and Oldeboorn in Oostergo

Web patterns as regular as that of the Menaldum parish district can also be observed in the peat zones directly adjacent to the *terp* region. Here, two of them will be treated in detail, because they not only show how quickly the systematic reclamation of peat for arable farming, entailing the opening up of large spaces, led to new parishes, but also illustrate how already at an early stage even the mere prospects of these reclamations played a role in this process of parish formation. The first concerns the church foundations in the peatbog of Oudega-Heeg on the southern edge of Westergo.

Utbirdum (Oudega)

In the late Middle Ages, we find a small synodal district, called *Utbirdum*, of which the St Martin's church of Oudega was the centre, as a sub-deanery under Staveren. It may seem surprising that this district was

⁶⁹ Grosse, *Bistum Utrecht*, 130 ff.

⁷⁰ H. J. Kok, 'De patrocina van de H. H. Servatius, Gertrudis en Lambertus in het middeleeuwse bisdom Utrecht', *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland*, 6 (1964), 291–330 (pp. 313–27); Broer, *Uniek in de stad*, p. 455.

Map 4. Abbega, Oudega, Idzega and Heeg with their glebe lands

part of Zuidergo, since the elongated north-south oriented peat parcels of this reclamation area indicate clearly that the reclamation of this peat zone must have started from the southern edge of Westergo.⁷¹ A closer look, however, renders a logical explanation for its link with Staveren and Zuidergo.

Long before 1132, the parish of Oudega was donated by the bishop to the collegiate chapter of St Odulf at Staveren, to extend and improve the material base of the latter.⁷² In a charter from 1132, concerning the transformation of the chapter of St Odulf into a Benedictine monastery, a list is inserted of all churches and chapels in the region owned by the chapter. By naming the churches, the bishop confirmed that they were included in the property transfer to the Benedictines. Among all these names – which are geographically ordered – we find halfway down the list, ordered from west to east, the churches of Oudega, Sandfirden, Gaastmeer, Idzega, Heeg, and Ypecolsga. Because *Utbirdum*, long assumed to be the centre and eponym of the (sub) deanery, is not mentioned in the charter – only coming to the surface in a fifteenth-century administrative list – the place has been difficult to identify. But recently, Otto Roemeling has convincingly declared *Utbirdum* to be identical with Oudega. Roemeling pointed out that only the name Oudega is missing in the fifteenth-century list of churches that made up the district.⁷³ Oudega/*Utbirdum* therefore must have been the first and oldest church in the area. The earliest known name *Aldekerke* (= the old church) can only confirm this conclusion. With its transfer some time before 1132 to the collegiate chapter of Staveren, her daughter chapels will have belonged to the latter institute as well.

If the peat area around Oudega was indeed under Westergo at the time the reclamation activities started, then an important question is how long before 1132 its central church at Oudega, no doubt originally a proprietary church of the bishop, was transferred to the collegiate chapter of Staveren. A precise date cannot be established, but it is evident that this transfer must have taken place before the archdeaconry of Westergo was taken out of the archdeaconry of Friesland, which was first under the

⁷¹ G. Bakker, 'Veenontginningen in Wymbritseradeel en Doniawerstal vanuit Goënga, Sneek, IJlst, Oosthem en Abbega 900–1300', *It Beaken*, 65 (2003), 87–124 (p. 95).

⁷² J. A. Mol and K. van Vliet, 'De oudste oorkonden van het Sint-Odulfusklooster van Staveren', *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 1 (1998), 73–134 (pp. 118–20).

⁷³ Roemeling, *Heiligen en heren*, p. 198. The enumeration is found in a document on the exercise of the synodal jurisdiction from 1449: Van Buijtenen, 'Dekenaat Bolsward', p. 94.

Utrecht chapter of St Salvator, and later given to the chapter of St John, newly erected in 1051. Kaj van Vliet argues convincingly that this donation of the Westergo archdeaconry to St John made part of the latter's starting capital. Therefore, 1051 will be the date around which the act of partitioning was organized. On that occasion, the Oudega peat area was not transferred to St John with the rest of Westergo because it had for some time already been oriented towards Staveren. Hard evidence for a precise date of Oudega's association with Staveren is lacking, but we believe that the transfer of Oudega to the collegiate chapter of Staveren must have taken place a number of decades before 1051. An argument in favour of this supposition is that in 1132 Oudega not only had a series of daughter churches, including those of Idzega and Heeg, with old patron saints like St Martin and St Wiro, but even a granddaughter, namely, the chapel of Ypecolsga, dedicated to St. Odulf. This chapel was split off from Heeg and was located on an elongated parcel exactly in line with the glebe parcel of its mother church, then located four kilometers to the south of its mother church. This is a clear indication that the peat settlers, working their way up from the north, by then already reached the end of their territory. There is no table for the distances that peat reclaimers were capable (or forced) to move on in a certain period of time. But it is hardly conceivable that they would have needed less than hundred years to span a distance of more than nine kilometers, starting at the edge of the *terpen* area in the north to the shore of the Lake of Sloten in the south. If one agrees with this consideration, one has to project the foundation date of the Oudega church back in time to the first decades of the eleventh century, possibly even further.

The next question then is from what mother church in Westergo was Oudega formed? Research on the location of the presbytery's and church fabric's estates, both in the peat area as in the *terpen* zone offers a surprisingly clear answer: the St Gertrude of Abbega. When we identify those lands, on the basis of the oldest land registry of 1832 and a series of pre-cadastral land administrations, we discover several large ecclesiastical property complexes with an elongated character for Oudega and her earliest daughters Idzega and Heeg.⁷⁴ These complexes can be traced back in the documents to at least 1500, but they must have been already age

⁷⁴ For a detailed explanation of the reconstruction method, see annex 3 'Kartografische reconstructie van de kloostergoederen' in: J. A. Mol, *De Friese huizen van de Duitse Orde. Nes, Steenkerk en Schoten en hun plaats in het middeleeuwse Friese kloosterlandschap* (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1991), pp. 325–39. The method is based on the work of O. Postma, *De Friesche kleihoef* (Leeuwarden: Noord-Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1934), pp. 5–10, 132–35.

old by then. They each consisted of various components, which originally had formed one entire estate fund per church. The main parts are quickly identified as the church fabric's land (most often designated as 'patrons land' because the saint was considered to be its owner) and the 'pastors land'. In the late Middle Ages, the former was administered by lay church wardens or 'church masters' on behalf of the parishioners. The latter were intended to provide for the parish priest and were administered by the pastor himself. The division of the original real estate fund of the church into these sub funds is difficult to date, but it may have taken place in the thirteenth century. Before that time, this must have been an undivided property complex, which does not mean that it should have been used by only one farmer. On the contrary, it was probably rented out to several users. The map shows that these lands were lying next to and behind each other together building a series of continuous elongated units, which seem to have been kept free for the benefit of the church and its minister right from the start of the reclamation campaign. Between and behind this partly contiguous church fabric and presbytery estates we also find several farm complexes that before the Reformation belonged to the Benedictine St Odulf abbey of Staveren. In Idzega, these are larger than those in Oudega. The complex south of the church of Idzega includes a former grange that was run by lay brothers until the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁷⁵ This outlying estate must have been constituted after 1132, the year the Benedictines, who introduced the model of the grange as a large agricultural unit, made their first appearance in Friesland. The Benedictines came from the St Lawrence abbey of Oostbroek near Utrecht.⁷⁶ The location of the grange adjacent to the farms of the presbytery and the church fabric supposes that its lands have been split off from the original church estate complex that the collegiate chapter of St Odulf at Staveren, predecessor of their abbey, had received earlier. In Oudega, such a grange has existed as well, which must have been even older and more important, since we find it mentioned in property charters of the abbey from 1243 and 1245, under the name of *grangia Gaesterdorp* and

⁷⁵ In 1486 a defensible stone house (*de Grouwstins*) stood here near the main farm, probably as a remnant of the former complex of grange buildings: *Oudfriesche Oorkonden II*, ed. by P. Sipma (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1933), nr. 123.

⁷⁶ This type of grange near a church was very popular with the Benedictines, since they had a lot of parish churches to administer; see: J. A. Mol, 'The Cistercian Model? The Application of the Grange System by the Various Religious Orders in the Frisian Coastal Area, 1150–1400', *The Medieval Low Countries. An Annual Review*, 1 (2014 [2015]) 205–33 (pp. 215–16).

grangia Algodeltorp.⁷⁷ The toponym *Muenckehouw* (*muenck* = *monk* = *monachus conversus* = lay brother), passed down in a land register of the pastor of Oudega from 1543,⁷⁸ recalls the activity of the lay brothers on this grange, which lands also must have been extracted out of the property complex of the parish church and its ministers.

When one zooms in on the most northern farms of both the parish churches and the abbey, it appears that their land directly bordered the particularly large property complex of the church of Abbega in the *terpen* area of Westergo. This situation strongly suggests that the St Martin's church of Oudega – from which the St Martin's church of Idzega was split off in a later stage – was founded by the bishop of Utrecht on land which he, as owner of the St Gertrude of Abbega, could lawfully claim as his property since its reclamation took place within (or made it) a direct extension of the Abbega church property. In other words, the church Oudega, itself the first church in this peat area, knew Abbega to be her mother. On further consideration, this is very logical from a geographical point of view. Around 1000, the territory of Abbega, including its later split off parishes Oosthem and Westhem, must have been a sort of *terpen* isle on its own, as it lay separated from the Bolsward territory in the west and north by the extension of the Middelzee estuary, and divided from Sneek by a depression in the east. The foundation of the church of Abbega and its daughter Oudega cannot be dated exactly, but we may not be far off if we assume that the first was realized some decades before 1000, and the second about that year.

Oldeboorn

That same dating can be applied to the church of Oldeboorn, that would become the centre of the likewise named deanery, covering the entire sand and peat area of South-East Friesland, excepting Stellingwerf. The name indicates that the village lies along the river Boorn which was the central axis opening up the region.⁷⁹ In Carolingian times, this river flowed downstream past Rauwerd into the Middelzee. As long as the Middelzee

⁷⁷ Mol and Van Vliet, 'Oorkonden Sint-Odulfusabdij', pp. 123–26. In 1399 the complex of church and grange is referred to as '... die kercke van Oldenkerck en de dat monichuus dat dair bi staat': E. Verwijs, *De oorlogen van hertog Albrecht van Beieren met de Friezen* (Utrecht 1869), p. 533.

⁷⁸ *De Beneficiaalboeken van Friesland*, ed. by P. L. G. van der Meer and J. A. Mol (Leeuwarden: Afûk, 2013), p. 841.

⁷⁹ This does not apply to the later municipality of Schoterland, which was orientated on the river Tjonger. The churches of Schoterland – Oudeschoot

Map 5. The churches of Oldeboorn, Akkrum and Terkaple

was not dammed, the Boorn had the character of a tidal river. For this reason, the river is bordered by clay deposits, reaching upstream a few kilometers beyond Oldeboorn. Outside this clay strip an enormous peat wilderness stretched out as far as the Pleistocene hill land of Drenthe. From the tenth century, more and more of this wilderness was brought under cultivation.⁸⁰

According to the pottery finds and radio-carbon dating results, habitation on the mound that was erected next to the church of Oldeboorn started in the early eleventh century. The church must therefore have been founded around or earlier than 1000.⁸¹ From later charters we know that the church was a proprietary church of the bishop. It was dedicated to St. Pancras and had a large contiguous property complex. In 1243, the bishop donated the church to the then recently founded commandery of the Teutonic Order at Nes, which later split off a part of its estate to strengthen the material base of her daughter houses of Katrijp and Oudeschoot.⁸² Concerning the dedication to St Pancras, we already underlined that the veneration of this saint has been strongly stimulated by Bishop Balderic (917–75).

It would take too much space here to analyse the possible foundation dates of all early daughters of Oldeboorn, such as Beets, Terwispel, and Haskerdijken. We must confine our research to Akkrum, lying west of Oldeboorn. Two aspects of this church attract attention. First of all, it is revealing that both the church and the *terp* settlement close to it, with the series of farms next to them, were all located at the same stripe of clay deposits along the embankment of the river. Here, the stripe was even somewhat broader, heavier, and therefore more fertile than at Oldeboorn. Given the *um* = *heem*-suffixes to the names for the small settlements in the immediate vicinity (Aalsum, Birstum and Bokkum), dating from the Merovingian or Carolingian period, this riverside land must already have been under cultivation for ages: a nice place thus for an early church, one would think. However, that Akkrum did not become the mother church of this region but was founded as an early daughter of Oldeboorn, means that the latter as a mother church deliberately was erected further upstream, as a matter of priority, with the foresight that she had the best

being its first parish – seem to have been assigned to the deanery of Boornego in a later phase, possibly in the fourteenth century.

⁸⁰ G. J. de Langen, *Middeleeuws Friesland. De economische ontwikkeling van het gewest Oostergo in de Vroege en Volle Middeleeuwen* (Groningen: Wolters Noordhoff/Forsten, 1992), pp. 112–24.

⁸¹ De Langen, *Middeleeuws Friesland*, p. 124–29.

⁸² Mol, *Friese huizen van de Duitse Orde*, p. 27.

chances there to become the religious landmark of a huge reclamation district that, at the time of the church foundation, was only in the first phase of its development. In other words, the founders of Oldeboorn assessed its prospects far in advance and thus seem to have acted according to a preconceived plan.

The second interesting aspect of the church of Akkrum is that, already in an early stage, she, herself, must have become the religious centre of a separate peat reclamation area, with the chapel of St Margaret at Terkaple as her first daughter.⁸³ To the date of the foundation of Akkrum, the dedication of the church to St Lawrence might provide a rough clue. The cult of this saint had been strongly encouraged by Emperor Otto I and his sons, after the emperor had beaten the Hungarians at the Lechfeld in 955, with St Lawrence's help, as he believed. The dedication of Terkaple to St Margaret may be old as well, considering the fact that the already discussed churches of Norg and Vollenhove, which existed about 1000, also had Margaret as their patron saint. With these indications for the high age of Akkrum and her first daughter church, in combination with the fact that Oldeboorn as a settlement took off in the early eleventh century, the planned foundation of the church of Oldeboorn can be dated in the late tenth century.

Other Primary Churches of About 1000 in the Region Between Vlie and Ems

This reconstruction of three autonomous baptismal churches, each the centre of its own parish, defined by the landscape and probably already demarcated, raises the question whether they represent a model that can be applied to other Frisian areas as well. For the answer, we must zoom out and focus on the meso level of the *pagus*, trying to trace the primary churches from about 1000 in the entire coastal landscape between Vlie and Ems and determine whether they indeed functioned within similar primary parishes. We do this against the background of the landscape, using a map [map xxx] on which both the churches are represented as the various parcellation types that were characteristic for the diverse landscape units of the early eleventh century. The strictly regular parcellation of the peat area is indicated by the colour brown. The *terpen* area is divided in

⁸³ This is treated comprehensively in: 'De Lege Wâlden: in foarbyld', section 5 of the introduction, in *Prekadastrale Atlas van Fryslân 1700/1640*, vol. 6, *Raarderhim en Utingeradiel*, *Prekadastrale Atlas fan Fryslân 1700/1640*, ed. by J. A. Mol and P. N. Noomen (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1993), pp. 23–30.

five zones. The estuary zones are light blue coloured, which have been embanked not earlier than the high and late Middle Ages and therefore were uninhabited in the period under review. Light green represents the continuous high salt marsh with its parcellation of small-scale regularity. The light blue-green colour renders the raised ridges of sandy clay alongside the sea in Northern Westergo and the Groningen Marne area. In dark green, we find more inland a broad strip with an irregular block subdivision, which roughly represents low-lying clay grounds. Bordering to its south, there finally is a transition zone of clay on peat, likewise occupied with scattered *terpen*, which is characterized by a small-scale block subdivision with some regularity.

The churches are in red dots of three different sizes. The largest dots stand for the primary churches or mother churches preceding or dating back to the year 1000. The middle-sized dots represent the first daughter churches already present in 1000, while the smallest dots designate the daughters that certainly existed by *c.* 1050. The numbers correspond to the specifications in annex 1.

Westergo

By going from west to east and first casting a look at the *terpen* area of Westergo, we first encounter in its south-western part the deanery of *Grandivorum* which had Wons (23) as its centre. The St Magnus church of Wons could be fairly old: the church of Hollum on the Island of Ameland, which appears on an eleventh century list of long-established Holland and Frisian churches of Echternach, also had St Magnus as its patron saint.⁸⁴ The church of Anloo in Drenthe, which was a proprietary church of the bishop, and which surely stemmed from before 1000, was dedicated to this saint as well.

More to the north lay the synodal district of Arum (18), whose central church had St Lambert as its patron saint, possibly introduced here by Bishop Ansfried at the same time as in Menaldum. As to the landscape, we are dealing here with raised sandy clay ridges that were already inhabited in the early Middle Ages, considering the chain of *terpen* along the tidal gully of the Marne, which reached as far as Bolsward, and considering the fact that a lot of the *terpen* within the Arum district have *ingi*-suffixes, *-werd* (height) and *-um* (heem = home) in their names.⁸⁵ The church of

⁸⁴ Noomen, 'St. Magnus van Hollum', pp. 15–16.

⁸⁵ K. F. Gildemacher, *Terpnamen en terpnamen. Een naamkundig en historisch-geografisch onderzoek naar vijf naamtypen in Fryslân* (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy/Afûk, 2008), pp. 282–94.

Map 6. The landscape with the baptismal churches and their first daughters 1000–1050.

Arum was a proprietary church of the bishop, who transferred her and her daughters to the Benedictine abbey of St Paul at Utrecht between approximately 1050 and 1085.⁸⁶ Important early daughter churches, to which large parish areas were assigned, are Witmarsum (19, St Martin), Pingjum (21, St Victor), Kimswerd (22, St Lawrence), and Achlum (20, St Gertrude).

East and north of Arum, we find the jurisdictions of Bolsward (14), Tzum (11) and Franeker (9), definitely the three oldest churches of Westergo, dating back to the mission period. Bolsward and Franeker, dedicated to St Martin, were, as we have seen, proprietary churches of the bishop. The church of Tzum, which had St John and St Denys as its patron saints, was a proprietary church of the abbey of Prüm. Franeker is thought to be Westergo's oldest church and functioned as synodal 'chair'. For the other two it is certainly true that they also had the respect and stature of baptismal churches. However, it does not seem that Arum, Menaldum, Wons, and the other primary churches of Westergo, still to be treated in the following, had territories that were split off from these earliest three parishes. It may even have been the other way around: the foundation of new baptismal churches forced the ecclesiastical authorities to mark off territories of the older churches. In this way, the parish of Tzum was more or less contained. Franeker had to be content with an elongated region as parish territory between Harlingen (3) in the west, Berlikum (7) in the northeast, and Winsum (10) in the southeast. Northwest of this Franeker district, on the highest ridges of Westergo, the synodal district of Sexbierum (1), coinciding with the later municipality of Barradeel, came into being. The name reflects that its central church had St Sixt as patron saint. This saint was also venerated in the main church of the Isle of Texel, at Den Burg, of which we know for certain that she already existed in the first decades of the ninth century, though she might have been rededicated after the Viking period, since the relics of St Sixt only have come from Rome to the north around 850.⁸⁷

Concerning the church of Bolsward, we assume that she was the mother of the St Martin of Oosterend (16), probably dating from before 1000, the St Peter of Tjerkwerd (15), and possibly also the St Victor of Kubaard (17). In the east of the *pagus* Westergo then, we find the ancient parish district of Jorwerd (12), separated from the territories of Oosterend and Winsum

⁸⁶ See, for the following: Broer, *Uniek in de stad*, pp. 453–59.

⁸⁷ His remains would have been donated by Pope Leo IV to Empress Irmengard, wife of Lothar I, who then let them transfer to the Alsatian nunnery of Erstein in 850: E. Kettenhofen, 'Sixtus II', in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexicon*, vol. 10 (Hertzberg: Traugott Bautz, 1995), cols 578–82.

in the west by a low basin, and bordering on the Middelzee estuary in the east.⁸⁸ An interesting detail here is that Jorwert was the only Frisian church dedicated to St Radboud, the Utrecht bishop who died in 917, and whose cult has been strongly promoted by his successor Balderic. That the latter honoured his predecessor by elevating his relics and having a *vita* of him composed, is a strong indication that the Jorwerd church was founded before 1000. The first daughter of Jorwerd undoubtedly was the St Martin's church of Bozum (13).

South of the Middelzee estuary, the later sub-deanery of *Wagenbrugge* was situated, which had the St Martin of Sneek (29), once again a proprietary church of the bishop, as its religious centre. Just like Oldeboorn, Sneek was located in the transition zone of clay to peat. The church of Sneek was the mother to all parishes that came into being alongside the rivulets Ges and Ee, that ran from the south and drained the water from the peat district there. Sneek, however, also extended to the north, counting some old clay settlements to its territory, just like Oldeboorn did. Here we find the early daughter church of Goënga (30), dedicated to St Willibrord, which in the eleventh century developed into a centre herself, namely that of the reclamation settlements in the immediately adjacent peat zone. West of Sneek, and probably split off from its church, was the St Martin's parish of IJlst (31). She had a peat hinterland as well, in which several daughter churches were founded after 1100.

Oostergo

The district northeast of Goënga, that of the St Lawrence church of Rauwerd (50), which bordered the district of Oldeboorn (50) in the east, traditionally belonged to Oostergo. On its northeastern side it bordered the mother parish of Grouw, with, at its centre, the church of St Peter, being a proprietary church of the bishop. This district more or less covered the most southern part of an elongated sandy clay ridge, running all along the eastern side of the Middelzee estuary. To the north, the next part of this ridge belonged to the synodal district of Wirdum (44), of which the central St Martin church seems to have been established by the bishop to form an Utrecht counterweight to the jurisdiction of the already existing St Vitus of Leeuwarden (43) that was under the abbey of Corvey. Concerning this Frisian territory of Corvey, it is still a question whether

⁸⁸ G. J. de Langen and P. N. Noomen, 'Jorwerd', in *Verborgen verleden belicht. Introductie tot het historische en archeologische archief van Friesland*, ed. by G. J. de Langen and others (Leeuwarden: Ryksargyf yn Fryslân, 1996), pp. 30–33.

the parish of Stiens (43), situated north of Leeuwarden, which also had St Vitus as patron saint, has been split off from Leeuwarden. The size of its parish and the fact that the church functioned as a synodal 'chair' apart from Leeuwarden, point at either an early separation from Leeuwarden or an autonomous foundation as a baptismal church before or around 1000.

In the clay-on-peat zone east of this long, more-or-less sandy clay ridge between Grouw and Stiens, the churches of Warten (46) and Oudkerk (45), the latter of which was dedicated to St Paul, can be identified as centres of later synodal districts. Warten lay along the reclamation axis of the Ouddiep, a rivulet that drained water from the peat region beyond the Bergumermeer in the east. The church of this village, however, lost its religious centre function after some time to the St Martin's church of Burgum (47).

When we continue to follow the sandy clay ridge along the Waddenzee coast, looking for other primary churches northeast of Stiens, we come across the St Martin of Ferwerd (40), which is known to have been founded on a large estate of the bishop, who at some time donated a part of it to the Benedictine abbey of Foswerd. For this reason, Paul Noomen counts her among the Frisian churches of the Carolingian period.⁸⁹ She had the church of St Martin of Hallum as her first daughter. We certainly do not go too far when we date foundation of the latter before 1000. To the east, the Ferwerd parish borders Holwerd (39), whose St Willibrord church had, for a long time belonged to the abbey of Echternach. Still further to the east, stretches the district of Ternaard (33), an early daughter of the oldest church of Frisia, the St Martin and St Boniface of Dokkum (32). The only mother church east of the Paesens rivulet is that of Anjum (34), which can also be identified as a daughter of Dokkum.

Another early daughter of Dokkum was the St Alexander of Rinsumageest (36). According to Paul Noomen, this church was founded on an estate of the Ottonian dynasty, whose rights here may have gone back to the Danish-Frisian mother of Mathilde, wife of King Henry I.⁹⁰ Its patron saint is identical to the martyr St Alexander who was venerated in the *Stift* Wildeshausen in the county of Oldenburg, which had been founded by the Saxonian Widukind family. A foundation around the year 1000 is surely feasible. The other villages of the area south of Dokkum, which almost all had their origin in the clay zone running east-west south of the city, would have been under the church of Dokkum up to the Reformation. This does not apply to the territory of the later

⁸⁹ Noomen, 'Parochiewezen Oostergo', pp. 134–36.

⁹⁰ Report of a lecture on this theme by Paul Noomen, given at the *dies natalis* of the Fryske Akademy, September 29, 2006, in the church of Rinsumageest.

municipality of Kollumerland, which was under the synodal 'chair' of Westergeest (37), dedicated to St Martin, of which the St Martin of Kollum (38) will have been an early daughter. With this, our tour through Oostergo and Utrecht Friesland is completed. The west Lauwers region of Achtkarspelen belonged to the diocese of Munster, and in particular to the deanery of Humsterland.⁹¹ The oldest church of Achtkarspelen was undoubtedly the St Peter of Twijzel. Unfortunately, there is no data available to date her founding. The same goes for most churches in the so-called Westerkwartier, east of the Lauwers, that also had to respect the authority of the dean of Humsterland.

Humsterland

In 778 Charlemagne assigned the *pagus* Humsterland together with the *pagi* Hunzingo and Fivelingo to St Liudger as mission areas. Because of this, the entire coastal area east of the Lauwers came under the diocese of Munster, whose first bishop was Liudger. The first church in Humsterland was that of Leens (54) in the centre of the region which is presently better known as the Marne area. She was, just like the first churches of Hunzingo (Usquert 64) and Fivelingo (Loppersum (69), dedicated to the Munster patron saints St Peter and St Paul. In 'little' or proper Humsterland, which is the area of Oldehove and Niehove south of the later Reitdiep, Oldehove (55) can be designated as the first baptismal church. She had St Liudger as her patron saint. The fact that this church was not built on an early medieval *terp* and that during his archaeological research, Halbertsma did not reveal any traces of a church built of tufa stone or wood, convinced Halbertsma that Oldehove's church was founded as late as the thirteenth century; reason enough for him to point to Niehove as the original centre of the deanery.⁹² As we see it, however, the church of Oldehove has been positively constructed on a slightly elevated platform that was raised shortly before 1000. This, and the size of the parish, as well as the choice of its patron saint, make a convincing argument to designate Oldehove as the second baptismal church in Humsterland, founded about 1000, which would function as a synodal 'chair' after the parish of Leens has got limited to the Marne area.

⁹¹ Roemeling, *CPF*, s.v. Twijzel.

⁹² H. Halbertsma, 'Oldehove', *Nieuwsbulletin van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond*, 6de serie, 11 (1958), pp. *101–02.

Hunzingo

The first church of Hunzingo was the St Peter and St Paul in Usquert (64). Located on the sandy clay ridge along the Wadden seacoast, she had a huge area to cover on either side of the old Hunze river. The long inhabited *terpen* area of Middag, adjacent to Humsterland but separated from it by a tidal gully, also belonged to it. The oldest church of Middag was that of Garnwerd (60). Its patron saint is thought to have been St Liudger, indicated by the fact that the old church bell bears his name.⁹³ Garnwerd was a proprietary church of the abbey of Werden. The church may have been founded on property donated by the Frisian monk Folckerus to the abbey in 858. The dean or provost of Usquert probably got jurisdictional hold on it during the late tenth or early eleventh century. This also applies to Winsum (61), centre of Ubbega, the *terpen* district on the eastern levee along the Hunze between Groningen and Baflo. Its church, with no known patron saint, originally formed the centre of a large manorial estate, which the church became detached from in the eleventh century. In the absence of any archaeological or written information, its foundation is difficult to date. Paul Noomen suggests the church was founded around the year 1000,⁹⁴ but this seems rather late for a parish church under a Carolingian abbey. We are inclined to assume that the church of Winsum, which later served as synodal 'chair' under Usquert, already came into being in the ninth century, like Garnwerd and many other parish churches of Carolingian abbeys in Frisia.

Directly north of Winsum lies Baflo (63) with its St Lawrence church. In the late Middle Ages, this church also served as a synodal 'chair' under Usquert – but then for the jurisdiction of the Hunzingo Halfambt. It is certain that she has been founded on a royal domain with a manor or *curtis* as its centre. At the time of the foundation the manor had been owned mostly by the bishop. Another part of the property was donated by King Otto III to the monastery of Pöhlde in the Harz region, while the abbey of Überwasser in Munster got the tithes.⁹⁵ Whether the initiative for founding the church was taken by the king or the bishop, this is unclear. At first glance, a lot can be said for a joint venture, in which the king kept some of the estate income to bestow it upon one or more of his favourite monasteries at a later date. The Ottonian involvement and the

⁹³ Roemeling, *CPGD*, s.v. Garnwerd.

⁹⁴ P. N. Noomen, 'Winsum in de vroege Middeleeuwen', in *Winsum 1057–2007*, ed. by R. Alma and J. Tersteeg (Winsum: Stichting Historische Uitgaven Winsum-Obergum, 2007), 56–87 (pp. 80).

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

dedication to St Lawrence indicate a foundation of Baflo's church about 1000. That Baflo arose as a new episcopal centre at a very short distance from the already existing church of Winsum under Werden, will be no coincidence because its founding would frustrate a northern expansion of Winsum.

About the earliest daughters of Usquert (64) we can be brief. The oldest, probably dating back to the tenth century, was undoubtedly Middelstum (65). This church was dedicated to St Hippolytus, known as patron of the Isle of Wieringen's oldest church in Hippolytushoef, existing already in the ninth century but possibly rededicated afterwards to the then popular martyr Hippolytus of Rome. Bedum (68) with its St Walfrid church was certainly the first daughter of Middelstum. It was founded in the first half of the eleventh century at the centre of a peat reclamation area.⁹⁶ East of Usquert, on the high ridge along the coast, we find the St Denys of Uithuizen (67) as Usquert's second daughter. She will date from about 1050, just like the St Vitus church of Kantens (66).

Fivelingo

The first church in Fivelingo was the St Peter and St Paul of Loppersum (69) on the southern elevated marsh ridge along the estuary of the river Fivel. It was a synodal church and, like Usquert, a centre of a deanery. It must have been founded in the early ninth century. Farmsum (74), which also constituted the centre of a deanery, covering a different landscape along the coast of the Ems estuary, must have come into being at the same time.⁹⁷ Within the deanery of Loppersum, three other early churches can be designated, dating in all likelihood from the first half of the eleventh century: Godlinze (73) in the northeast, Stedum (71) in the west, forming more or less a pendant of Middelstum in the deanery of Usquert, and Wierum (70) in the south, functioning as a portal site for the peatlands on the upper reaches of the river Fivel. The saints of these churches – Pancras, Bartholomew, and Vitus – provide, in the context of the worship tradition within the diocese of Münster, no clues for a precise dating.

Within the deanery (or *proosdij*) of Farmsum, the church of St Stephen at Holwierde (75) and the church of Termunten (76), dedicated to the relatively unknown St Ursus, were the eldest daughters. Termunten developed

⁹⁶ Remi van Schaik, *Walfridus van Bedum. Een duizend jaar oude Groninger overlevering* (Groningen: Wolters Noordhoff/Bouma's Boekhuis, 1985), pp. 26–37.

⁹⁷ R. Alma, *De grafzerken van Farmsum. Grafzerken, doopvont en klokken* (third, revised edition, Delfzijl: Protestantse Gemeente, 2016), p. 4.

as the mother church of all parishes in the peat area of Menterwolde. Given the similarities between Oldeboorn and Termunten we assume that the latter dates from the late tenth or early eleventh century.

Epilogue: The Planned Formation of a Parish Network between 950 and 1050

The model that has been distilled – with new dates and methods – from the case of three autonomous baptismal churches that came into being around 1000, is confirmed by the assessment on the level of the *pagi*, even when many foundations in this survey have only been given approximate dates. The data show that in the last half of the tenth century the Frisian coastal region between Vlie and Ems witnessed the systematic foundation of a relatively large number of primary churches, all equally spaced, as autonomous centres of separate landscape units.

These new places of worship were almost exclusively set up as diocesan churches, functioning next to the existing diocesan and monastic parish churches, who had not previously acquired a compelling hierarchical centre function. The new baptismal churches were meant to bind all residents, a function soon to be acquired by the older churches too. Consequently, they were marked off from the start in such a way that there could be no misunderstanding about what home and family belonged to which parish for the administering of the sacraments. In this way, around 1000, a close-knit network had come into being, that also had the function to serve the ecclesiastical jurisdiction and to properly regulate the payment of tithes and other administrative ecclesiastical dues.

The older mission churches, including the ones that had come into the possession of Carolingian abbeys, were integrated in this network, in order to give the diocese a good grip on them. The fact that some of the new primary churches got their location in and on the edge of the largely still reclaimed peat areas show us that by erecting them their promoters took an advance on future developments. Spatial order and regularity seem therewith to have gotten priority above ‘rewarding’ population density, accumulated wealth, and prestige. That sub-regions with relatively many residents in the *terpen* area had for a long time to be content with only one church, indicates that the ‘old land’ was not given preferential treatment in this process.

These new foundations were for the largest part initiated and guided by the bishop and his staff. As far as anything is known about their ‘owner’, it can be concluded that they were all proprietary churches of the bishop: Arum, Bolsward, Jorwerd, Sneek, and Oldeboorn, for example. This does not mean, however, that they all were built on estates of the bishop or the

king. Thus far, such a setup has only been found for the mission centres from the ninth century at Franeker, Tzum, Leeuwarden, Dokkum, Leens, and Usquert or most churches dating from shortly before 1000 – with the exception of Baflo and possibly Rinsumageest – we do not have any positive evidence that they were constructed on land of the king or the bishop. Neither are there reports available on Frisian foundations by patrons on the level of magnates, counts or other supra-regional lords.⁹⁸ The landed property per church, therefore, can, in most cases, only have been transferred to the bishop by one or more unique sponsors at the spot.

How the fundraising under the local elite was organized is still unclear, though one can form an idea based on what is known about the *circatus*, the four-year visitation and inspection cycle of the bishop. On this repeated and systematic round through his diocese, the bishop not only had to hold court, but it was also his task to administer confirmations, ordain priests, and consecrate churches and altars, which also implied that he and his staff had to carry a treasure of relics with them. In the churches that served as synodal ‘chairs’ he was of course welcomed by the dean and the local priests. He was, however, also hailed and hosted by the most prominent local laymen, who, in their function as synodal witnesses, were responsible for the proper settlement of the ecclesiastical court cases. In this way, the bishop came into direct contact with the local elite on a regular basis. This offered him ample opportunity to put initiatives for new foundations on the agenda, to be realized within the next visitation cycle.

These findings on the formation of a closed parish system for the Frisian coastal region and Drenthe evoke a series of new questions that may trigger follow-up research in various fields. The first is whether this Frisian case represents a catch-up movement, or if it stands for a renewal occurred simultaneously later elsewhere. A second question is whether the fundraising under relatively small local sponsors was a specific Frisian development, which could only occur in a relatively egalitarian society,

⁹⁸ In other parts of the diocese, or in the bishopric of Liège, secular (manorial) lords do seem to have played a more prominent role as founders of proprietary churches. Cf. Van Vliet, *Munsters en kapittels*, 140, and A.-J. A. Bijsterveld, *Aristocratic Identities and Power Strategies in Lower Lotharingia: The Case of the Rode Lineage (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)*: Tilburguniversity.academia.edu/ArnoudJanBijsterveld, pp. 176–78. For England, it is even stated that a leading part was taken by *comites* and local lords, imitating them, who founded churches on their own estates: John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 385–88; Richard Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London: Phoenix, 1989), pp. 163, 228.

or if it also took place in other Dutch, West German, and Northern French regions. A third question touches upon the role of tenth-century bishops in northwestern Europe as power brokers. In political-historical reference books, one finds it often stated that early in the tenth century the Ottonian kings and emperors started to transfer secular power to bishops. When we focus on this context on Utrecht, it is clear that all of Utrecht's bishops were royal protégés who were supported by the king with many goods and privileges. But it was only in the second quarter of the eleventh century that the bishop of Utrecht was invested with secular power as a count. Would it therefore rather not be that bishops were entrusted with comital authority only after they had established their ecclesiastical power, that is after they had created a tight parish network in which the elite had to participate?

In the literature on the diocese of Utrecht, Bishop Balderic is hailed as the second founder of the bishopric for his efforts to restore the cathedral and other collegiate churches in and outside Utrecht, and for his contribution to the extension of the Utrecht relics treasure. However, his contributions and those of his successors to the expansion and establishment of the Church all over the country, in hundreds of parishes, have never been discussed in this light.⁹⁹ In our view, the result of this enormous effort should be counted among his and their greatest achievements, especially when this parish building was an important precondition for the acquisition of political power.

It seems to us that here is a fertile field for further research, not only for the Utrecht diocese but also for other dioceses in northwestern Europe. In this research, history and archaeology should in any case cooperate closely, as far as possible in a spatial and landscape approach, using all possible methods and types of data sets.

⁹⁹ Under Balderic and his successors, no less than 80 new churches were founded in Utrecht, Friesland, and Drenthe between 950 and 1025, in addition to about 15 already existing places of worship; extrapolating this figure for the rest of the diocese ($\times 4$ [320:60]), would bring us to a number of at least 320 churches. The promotion and guidance of these must have required more effort from the diocesan staff than the restoration of the main churches in Utrecht itself.

Annex 1: Primary Churches and their Earliest Daughters in Frisia between Vlie and Ems

Primary church before 1000	First daughters circa 1000	Other early daughters circa 1050	Tot.	Later
<i>Westergo</i>				
1 Sexbierum (St Sixt)	2 Minnertsga (St Martin)	3 Almenum (Michael), 4 Tzummarum (Martin)	4	9
5 Menaldum (St Lambert)	6 Dronrijp (St Salvius)	7 Berlikum (Michael), 8 Marssum (Pontian)	4	9
9 <u>Franeker</u> (St Martin)	10 Winsum		2	18
11 <u>Tzum</u> (St Denys)			1	1
12 Jorwerd (St Radboud)	13 Bozum (St Martin)		2	9
14 <u>Bolsward</u> (St Martin)	15 Tjerkwerd (Pet.), 16 Oosterend (Martin)		4	15
	17 Kubaard (St Victor)			
18 Arum (St Lambert)	19 Witmarsum (St Martin)	20 Achlum (St Gertrude), 21 Pingjum (Vict.)	5	1
		22 Kimsward (St Lawrence)		
23 Wons (St Magnus)		24 Cornwerd (St Boniface)	3	9
		25 Ferwoude (St Pancras)		
26 Abbega (St Gertrude)	27 Oudega (St. Martin)	28 Heeg (St Wiro)	3	9
29 Sneek (St Martin)	30 Goënga (St Willibr.), 31 IJlst (St Martin)		3	29
<i>Oostergo</i>				
32 <u>Dokkum</u> (St Martin)	33 Ternaard, 34 Anjum	35 Ee (St Gangulf)	5	27
	36 Rinsumageest (St Alexander)			

37 Westergeest (St Martin)		38 Kollum (St Martin)	2	5
39 <u>Holwerd</u> (St Willibrord)			1	5
40 Ferwerd (St Martin)		41 Hallum (St Martin)	2	9
42 <u>Leeuwarden</u> (St Vitus)	43 Stiens (St Vitus)		2	11
44 Wirdum (St Martin)			1	5
45 Oudkerk (St Paul)			1	5
46 Wartena		47 Bergum (St Martin)	2	9
48 Grouw (St Peter)			1	4
49 Rauwerd (St Lawrence)			1	5
50 Oldeboorn (St Pancras)	51 Akkrum (Lawr.), 52 Haskerdijken (Mar.)	53 Boornbergum (St Sebastian)	4	39
<i>Humsterland</i>				
54 <u>Leens</u> (St Peter & Paul)			1	10
55 Oldehove (St Liudger)		56 Oldekerk, 57 Lutjegast,	5	29
		58 Midwolde (St Liudger), 59 Twijzel (Peter)		
<i>Hunzingo</i>				
60 <u>Garnwerd</u> (St Liudger)			1	10
61 Winsum		62 Adorp (St Denys)	2	8
63 Baflo (St Lawrence)			1	12
64 <u>Usquert</u> (St Peter & Paul)	65 Middelstum (St Hippolyt)	66 Kantens (Vitus), 67 Uithuizen (St Denys)	5	13
		68 Bedum (St Walfrid)		

<i>Fivelingo</i>				
69 <u>Loppersum</u> (St Peter & Paul)	70 Wittewierum (St. Vitus), 71 Stedum (St Bartholomew)	72 Godlinze (Pancr.), 73 Leermens (Donat.)	5	24
74 Farmsum (St Gangulf)	75 Holwierde (Steph.), 76 Termunten (Fab)		3	27
Total			76	366