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HANS HUMMER

THE IDENTITY OF *LUDOUICUS PISSIMUS AUGUSTUS*
IN THE *PRÆFATIO IN LIBRUM ANTIQUUM LINGUA*
SAXONICA CONSCRIPTUM

In 1562 the humanist and Protestant reformer Matthias Flacius Illyricus published two medieval Latin texts dubbed the *Praefatio in librum antiquum lingua Saxonica conscriptum* and the *Versus de poeta et interprete huius codicis*¹. The title of the former, a prose preface, makes clear that these prefaces once introduced some Old Saxon texts, and the Carolingian style of both points to origins in the ninth century². Flacius himself did not specify to which texts the prefaces were attached; they were of interest to him mainly as precedents for Protestant initiatives, including Luther's translation of the Bible into German. Attractive to Flacius was the claim in the preface that the Old and New Testament scriptures, once only accessible to the learned, had been put into Saxon verse to make them more broadly available to the entire Saxon people. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as philologists revived interest in ancient German texts, the *Praefatio* and *Versus* were suspected of once having been appended to early medieval manuscripts of the Old Saxon Genesis and Heliand, two alliterative epics of the Creation and the life of Jesus, respectively³. In view of the absence of any similar extant works, and the fact that Flacius received the texts from a person with access to a manuscript of the Heliand likely to have been the one familiar to Luther, the preface is now assumed to refer to the Genesis and the Heliand⁴.

If the prefaces are indubitably early medieval, their provenance within the ninth century has been the subject of considerable debate. It is generally agreed that the

1 *Praefatio in librum antiquum lingua Saxonica conscriptum*, and *Versus de poeta et interprete huius codicis*, in: Otto BEHAGHEL ed., *Heliand und Genesis*, 9th reprint, rev. by Burkhard TAEGER, Tübingen 1984, p. 1–4.

2 On the sixteenth-century publication of the texts and the provenance of the Latin, see Kurt HANNEMANN, *Die Lösung des Rätsels der Herkunft der Heliandpraefatio. Mit Nachtrag 1972*, in: Jürgen EICHHOFF and Irmengard RAUCH ed., *Der Heliand*, Darmstadt 1973, p. 1–13; Willy KROGMANN, *Die Praefatio in librum antiquum lingua Saxonica conscriptum*, in: *Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung* 69/70 (1943/47) p. 141–163, esp. p. 141–151; and Francis P. MAGOUN Jr., *The Praefatio and Versus Associated with Some Old-Saxon Biblical Poems*, in: *Medieval Studies in Honor of Jeremiah Denis Matthias Ford*, Cambridge, Mass. 1948, p. 107–136.

3 See Eduard Sievers's discussion in his classic edition, *Heliand*, Halle 1878, p. XXIV–XXXVIII.

4 See TAEGER, *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXIV; Irmengard RAUCH, *The Old Saxon Language. Grammar, Epic Narrative, Linguistic Interference*, New York 1992, p. 101–103; Alger N. DOANE ed., *The Saxon Genesis: An Edition of the West Saxon Genesis B and the Old Saxon Vatican Genesis*, Madison, Wisc., London 1991, p. 3–8; and John Knight BOSTOCK, *A Handbook on Old High German Literature*, 2nd ed., rev. by K. C. KING and D. R. McLINTOCK, Oxford 1976, p. 181–183.

Versus was composed in the late ninth century, and that a version of the prose preface was composed probably no later than 850. Disputed, however, are a number of issues surrounding the precise dating and authorship of the prose preface. On the basis of content and style, the *Praefatio* is believed by some to have been composed by different authors and traditionally has been divided into two parts, A and B⁵. Part B assigned agency for the poems to divine inspiration and thus appears to have been written to reconcile part A, which describes a royal commissioning of the poems, with the later verse preface, which essentially depicts the poet as a continental Caedmon, inspired by God to make poetry. Moreover, the alleged author of B, or perhaps a third author, is believed to have interpolated phrases in A in order to blend the two, for the few phrases in part A that allude to divine involvement seem to betray the interpolator's distance from the period of composition. Thus, whereas part A was written in the present tense during the reign of a certain *Ludouicus piissimus Augustus*, the suspected interpolator appears to refer retrospectively to works composed »in the time of his rule« (*imperii tempore*). This *Ludouicus piissimus Augustus* for a long time was assumed to be Louis the Pious, and on that basis part A was dated to before 840. But subsequent investigations, most notably by Richard Drögereit and Wolfgang Haubrichs, have argued that the ascription points to Louis the German, king in east Francia (833–838, 840–876), during whose reign vernacular activity peaked⁶. Judging by the sympathetic reception of their work, the tide has turned in favor of Louis the German⁷. In this article, however, I will reassert the view that the *Ludouicus piissimus Augustus* in the preface can refer to none other than Louis the Pious.

The case for Louis the German

At its most general, the case for Louis the German springs from the supposition that he, rather than his father, who reportedly was antipathetic to vernacular poetry, was more likely to have patronized vernacular literature. This conviction finds support

5 SIEVERS, *Heliand* (see n. 3) p. XXIX–XXXVII; KROGMANN, *Praefatio* (see n. 2) p. 142–159; and more recently, Wolfgang HAUBRICHS, *Die Praefatio des Heliand. Ein Zeugnis der Religions- und Bildungspolitik Ludwigs des Deutschen*, in: *Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung* 89 (1966) p. 7–32, esp. p. 9–17.

6 Richard DRÖGEREIT, *Werden und der Heliand: Studien zur Geschichte der Abtei Werden und zur Herkunft des Heliand*, Essen 1951, p. 94, 106–107; and HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 11, 18–32. Haubrichs slightly expanded his argument in his survey of early medieval vernacular literature: ID., *Die Anfänge: Versuche volkssprachiger Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter (ca. 700–1050/60)*, in: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum hohen Mittelalter*, ed. Joachim HEINZLE, vol. 1: *Von den Anfängen zum hohen Mittelalter*, Frankfurt a. M. 1988, p. 335–341.

7 Dieter GEUENICH, *Die volkssprachige Überlieferung der Karolingerzeit aus der Sicht des Historikers*, in: *Deutsches Archiv* 39 (1983) p. 104–130, esp. p. 117–119, 129; ID., *Ludwig ›der Deutsche‹ und die Entstehung des ostfränkischen Reiches*, in: Wolfgang HAUBRICHS et alii, ed., *Theodisca: Beiträge zur althochdeutschen und altniederdeutschen Sprache und Literatur in der Kultur des frühen Mittelalters*, Berlin, New York 2000, p. 313–329, esp. p. 318, 322–325; Wilfried HARTMANN, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, Darmstadt 2002, p. 225–227; and Heinz THOMAS, *Frenkisk: Zur Geschichte von theodiscus und teutonicus im Frankenreich des 9. Jahrhunderts*, in: Rudolf SCHIEFFER ed., *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Regnum Francorum*, Sigmaringen 1990, p. 67–95, esp. p. 82–83.

in the quantity of vernacular texts traceable to Louis the German's reign⁸, and indeed by the extant manuscripts of the Heliand and Genesis themselves, which date to the third quarter of the ninth century⁹. The difficulty is that the Louis of the preface is described as a *piissimus Augustus*, whose *jussa imperialia* the poet allegedly obeyed – imperial jargon that points to Emperor Louis the Pious rather than to Louis the German, the self-styled *rex in orientali francia*. But advocates for Louis the German have pointed to a number of studies which have turned up references to the east Frankish king as *imperator*¹⁰. These attestations appear in a smattering of charters from the monasteries of St. Gall, Fulda and Werden¹¹, the first of which was administered by Louis's archchaplain and archchancellor, Grimald, who was also abbot of Weissenburg, the home of Otfrid, who dedicated his masterpiece of Old High German literature, the *Evangelienbuch*, to Louis the German; and the latter two of which have long been suspected as the Heliand poet's ecclesiastical home¹².

The preface poses another difficulty for seeing Louis the German as the *Ludouicus piissimus Augustus* of the *Praefatio*: How does one reconcile the present-tense depiction of the imperial commands with the phrase referring retrospectively to an earlier composition? Whereas the phrase *imperii tempore* was considered by those positing two parts to have been interpolated, Haubrichs has argued that it was part of the original part A on the grounds that it should be translated as »in the time of the empire«, rather than »in the time of his rule«¹³. Thus, this particular phrase does not point to an interpolator's retrospection, but evokes the language of dating clauses in charters, e.g. *anno imperii ... actum*. For Haubrichs, this meant that the Saxon poems must have been composed during the reign of Louis the German, but also at the »time of the empire«, i.e. before 840, when Louis the Pious died, and after which the empire was subsequently partitioned among his sons. Haubrichs ingeniously compensated for this kink in chronology by proposing that Louis the German had devised a plan as early as the 830's to have the Gospels versified in Low German and Old High German for the northern and southern sectors of his nascent east Frankish kingdom. Indeed, this would coincide with when Louis first styled himself »king in east Francia«, and also when Fulda, or monasteries associated with Fulda, produced increasingly ambitious Old High German compositions. Moreover, Fulda's abbot at the time,

8 GEUENICH, *Überlieferung* (see n. 7) p. 117–130.

9 Bernhard BISCHOFF, *Paläographische Fragen deutscher Denkmäler der Karolingerzeit*, in: ID., *Mittelalterliche Studien: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte*, 3 vols., Stuttgart 1966–1981, vol. 3, p. 73–111; esp. p. 103–105.

10 DRÖGEREIT, *Werden und der Heliand* (see n. 6) p. 94; and HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 7–8.

11 Edmund STENGEL, *Kaisertitel und Souveränitätsidee: Studien zur Vorgeschichte des modernen Staatsbegriffs*, in: *Deutsches Archiv* 3 (1939) p. 1–72, esp. p. 50–56; reprinted in: ID., *Abhandlungen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisergedankens im Mittelalter*, Cologne, Graz 1965, p. 239–342, esp. p. 282–286; Heinz ZATSCHKE, *Die Erwähnungen Ludwigs des Deutschen als Imperator*, in: *Deutsches Archiv* 6 (1943) p. 374–378; and Wolfgang EGGERT, *Das ostfränkisch-deutsche Reich in der Auffassung seiner Zeitgenossen*, Vienna, Cologne, Graz 1973, p. 30–31, 58–59 and 261–262.

12 Wolfgang HAUBRICHS, *Althochdeutsch in Fulda und Weissenburg – Hrabanus Maurus und Otfrid von Weissenburg*, in: Raymund KOTTJE and Harald ZIMMERMANN ed., *Hrabanus Maurus: Lehrer, Abt und Bischof*, Wiesbaden 1982, p. 182–193. On the case for Werden, see DRÖGEREIT, *Werden und der Heliand* (see n. 6) p. 93–110.

13 HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 11.

Hrabanus Maurus, later served as Louis's archbishop of Mainz and, according to Haubrich's stylistic analysis, must have composed the preface shortly after the Synod of Mainz (848) which reissued Charlemagne's earlier decree of 813 that homilies be preached in the vernacular¹⁴. The language of the *Praefatio* also seems to echo Hrabanus's heresy trial of Gottschalk (847), further convincing Haubrichs that the *Praefatio* was composed around 850. In subsequent articles, Haubrichs pointed to other clues that suggest Hrabanus's involvement in plans hatched in the 830's, most notably Hrabanus' instruction of Otfrid of Weissenburg, who perforce must have studied at Fulda in the 830's when Hrabanus was abbot¹⁵. In short, the threads of later known developments converge on Fulda in the 830's, whose activities coincide with Louis's earliest claims to authority over the trans Rhenish regions and overlap with Louis's well-known interest in the vernacular.

The Case against Louis the German

If the argument for Louis the German has enjoyed wide support, it also has attracted detractors. Karl Ferdinand Werner, in a long and indignant footnote, criticized the enterprise on historical and technical grounds¹⁶. He simply found it difficult to believe that Louis the German could have hatched a plan at Fulda in the 830's, and even harder to believe that the east Frankish king would have been depicted as an Augustus. The Heliand scholar, Burkhard Taeger, also considered it unlikely that the author of the *Praefatio* would have depicted Louis the German with such imperial affectation¹⁷. Neither, however, offered a sustained critique of the arguments for Louis the German, nor a full exposition of the case for Louis the Pious, both of which we shall now attempt.

While Louis the German is with good reason ultimately believed to have been behind the surge in Old German texts in the mid ninth century, there is little evidence that Louis himself had initiated a plan to vernacularize the scriptures in the 830's. Despite Louis's grand claims to overlordship of east Francia after 833, he is unlikely to have had close contacts with Fulda at that time. Until 838, when he was essentially deposed by his father, Louis was limited mostly to Bavaria, and when he did venture beyond Bavaria, he usually did so to meet with his father or his older brother Lothar¹⁸. Nor is Louis likely to have had so close a relationship with Hrabanus at this early period. As best as can be reconstructed, Hrabanus remained loyal

14 HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 24–32.

15 HAUBRICHS, *Althochdeutsch in Fulda und Weissenburg* (see n. 12) p. 183–186; see also ID., *Otfrids St. Galler Studienfreunde*, in: *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur Älteren Germanistik* 4 (1973) p. 49–112, esp. p. 55–59; and ID., *Eine prosopographische Skizze zu Otfrid von Weissenburg*, in: Wolfgang KLEIBER ed., *Otfrid von Weissenburg*, Darmstadt 1978, p. 397–413, esp. p. 404–405.

16 Karl Ferdinand WERNER, *Hludovicus Augustus: Gouverner l'empire chrétien – Idées et réalités*, in: Peter GODMAN and Roger COLLINS ed., *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)*, Oxford 1990, p. 99–100 and n. 369.

17 TAEGER, *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXV, n. 37.

18 So much can be inferred from Louis's itinerary, see Johann Friedrich BÖHMER, *Regesta Imperii*, vol. 1: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter den Karolingern 751–918*, rev. by Engelbert MÜHLBACHER et alii, Hildesheim 1966, 1348–1365a, p. 565–570. On the shallowness of Louis the German's support outside of Bavaria in the 830's, see HARTMANN, *Ludwig der Deutsche* (see n. 7) p. 31–35.

to Louis the Pious throughout the 830's¹⁹. Shortly after the revolts of Louis the Pious's sons in 833, Hrabanus composed his long defense of the emperor and of paternal authority (834)²⁰. The abbot did dedicate his *Expositio in librum Paralipomenon* to Louis the German sometime between 834 and 838; however, as Hrabanus's dedicatory letter to Louis explains, the work is a reflection on moral kingship²¹. Following as it did upon Hrabanus's defense of the imperial order, it is best seen as advice on the proper behavior of subordinate kings. It certainly bears no hint of plans for vernacular compositions. In any case, we would be hard pressed to pinpoint a place the two might have met to formulate such elaborate plans²². After the emperor's death, Hrabanus remained consistent in his devotion to imperial rule and supported the new emperor, Lothar, not Louis the German. Hrabanus's loyalty to Lothar no doubt played a role in his losing the abbacy of Fulda in 842 when Louis finally won control of the east²³. Hrabanus was reconciled to Louis the next year and succeeded Otgar as archbishop of Mainz in 847, thus it is only after 843 that we can conceive of close cooperation between Hrabanus and Louis.

Be that as it may, the criteria for dating the *Praefatio* to around 850 are too elastic to be relevant. The author's depiction of *Ludovicus* as »devoted« to *sacrosancta religio* and careful to suppress »harmful and superstitious things« (*nociva atque superstitiosa*) could be said of any Carolingian king, not simply of Louis the German²⁴. It

19 On Hrabanus's career at this time, see John M. McCulloh's excellent survey, *Rabani Mauri Martyrologium*, critical edition with introduction (*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 44), Turnhout 1979, p. XVII–XXI; and Raymund КОТТЯ, Hrabanus Maurus, in: Kurt RUH et alii, ed., *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 4, Berlin, New York 1983, columns 166–196; esp. columns 168–170.

20 Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistolae*, ed. Ernst DÜMMLER, *MGH Epistolae*, vol. 5: *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. 3, Berlin 1899, no. 15, p. 403–415.

21 Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistolae* (see n. 20) no. 18, p. 422–424.

22 Haubrichs – citing Ernst DÜMMLER, *Hrabanstudien*, in: *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preuss. Akad. der Wiss. zu Berlin* 54 (1898) p. 24–42, esp. p. 37 – proposes a meeting in 835/836, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 31. If such a meeting occurred, it has gone undetected in Louis's reconstructed itinerary, see BÖHMER-MÜHLBACHER, *Regesta Imperii* (see n. 18) 1354–1357, p. 567–568; and has gone unnoticed in Hartmann's close-to-the-sources survey of this period in Louis the German's career, *Ludwig der Deutsche* (see n. 7) p. 30–32. Hrabanus did receive confirmation of Fulda's immunity and probably also a grant of property from Louis the German at Frankfurt on February 5, 834, *Diplomata Ludowici Germanici, Karlomanni, Ludowici Iunioris*, ed. Paul KEHR, *MGH Diplomata Regum Germaniae ex Stirpe Karolinorum*, vol. 1, Berlin 1932–1934, no. 15, p. 17–19. These exchanges took place against the backdrop of Lothar's seizure of imperial authority and Louis the German's successful efforts to mobilize support for his father's restoration at the end of February, cf. *Annales Bertiniani*, Félix GRAT et alii, ed., Paris 1964, a. 834. Considering the flurry of diplomatic activity between Louis and his brothers in January and February of that year, it is doubtful that at Frankfurt vernacular poetry was on the mind of either the east Frankish king or the abbot of Fulda.

23 McCULLOH, *Rabani Mauri Martyrologium* (see n. 19) p. XVII–XVIII.

24 Haubrichs believed that these royal responsibilities pointed to Louis the German, citing the record of the Council of Mainz which is addressed to *dominus serenissimus et christianissimus rex Hludowicus verae religionis strenuissimus rector ac defensor sanctae Dei aecclisiae*, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 20. But this differs little in substance from the depiction of Louis the Pious and Lothar in the capitulary collection of Ansegisus which is dated to *DCCCXXVII, indictione V., anno vero XIII. imperii gloriosissimorum principum domni Hludowici augusti, christianae religionis magni propagatoris, et Chlotharii caesaris filii ipsius ...*, *Collectio Capitularium Ansegisi*, ed. Gerhard SCHMITZ, *MGH Capitularia Regum Francorum Nova Series*, vol. 1, Hannover 1996, p. 431.

may be that Hrabanus, or a pupil, composed the *Praefatio*, but it would be impossible to pin down a time within Hrabanus's career²⁵. Haubrichs pointed to verbal echoes of *nociva* and *superstitiosa* in Hrabanus's letter to Hincmar about Gottschalk's trial, noted that Hrabanus placed *superstitio* under the heading *De heresibus variis* in his *De Clericorum Institutione*, and concluded that the preface must have been written around 850 in the midst of heightened concern about Gottschalk's writings on predestination. The basic difficulty here is that *superstitio* does not refer to heresy in the narrower sense of doctrinal error. After the manner of his time, Hrabanus used the term variously to describe deviant monastic observances or extra-Christian cultic practices²⁶. So much is clear in a sampling of his works, among them the *De Clericorum Institutione* itself, composed early in Hrabanus's career (819). Therein Hrabanus did lump a number of related issues under the general rubric of »heresy«, nonetheless he proceeded to distinguish heresy from sect, schism and *superstitio*, the last of which he defined as »superfluous« observances²⁷. In the subsequent presentation of individual »heresies«, Hrabanus listed *nyctares*, or those who dismiss nightly vigils as *superstitiones* on the grounds that God instituted the night for sleeping and the day for working²⁸. In other works, among them his early *Homiliae* (822–826) and a later epistolary addendum on magic (842), Hrabanus inveighed against popular *superstitiones*²⁹. Thus, the phrase in the *Praefatio*, *nociva atque superstitiosa*, most likely alludes to improper ritual observances (i. e. pagan survivals); and, since the concern is expressed in works throughout Hrabanus's career, it is impossible to use it to date the *Praefatio* to 850. Indeed by this criterion, the *Praefatio* could have been composed by any number of writers since *superstitiones*, and exhortations to suppress them, were a preoccupation of

25 On Hrabanus's suspected authorship, see Eduard SIEVERS, *Heliand, Tatian und Hraban*, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 50 (1927) p. 416–429; and HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 24–30. Krogmann tabbed Lupus de Ferrières as the author, *Praefatio* (see n. 2) p. 159–163. The phrase *mysticus sensus*, which appears in both the *Praefatio* and is a driving principle of Hrabanus's exegesis, may point to Hrabanus or to someone steeped in his works, but since the exegetical concept appears throughout Hrabanus's career, in the works of many others influenced by Hrabanus's commentaries, and indeed in the works of many patristic authorities widely read by Carolingian ecclesiastics, it again would be difficult to establish the authorship or the date of the *Praefatio* by such means.

26 In a letter to Hincmar, Hrabanus himself distinguished the two, accusing Gottschalk of introducing both *novas superstitiones* and the *noxia doctrina de praedestinatione*, *Concilia aevi Karolini DCCCXLIII–DCCCLIX*, ed. Wilfried HARTMANN, *MGH Concilia*, vol. 3, Hannover 1984, p. 184. In view of the fact that Hrabanus introduced the charge with a condemnation of Gottschalk as a gyrovague, *novas superstitiones* may have alluded to Gottschalk's efforts to extricate himself from his oblation, cf. McCULLOH, *Rabani Mauri Martyrologium* (see n. 19) p. XXII–XXIII.

27 *De Clericorum Institutione*, ed. MIGNE, PL 107, bk. 2, ch. 58, col. 371.

28 *De Clericorum Institutione* (see n. 27) bk. 2, ch. 58, col. 376.

29 Hrabanus Maurus, *Homilia XLII: Contra Eos Qui in Lunae Defecti Clamoribus Se Fatigabant*; and *Homilia XLIII: Contra Paganicos Errores, Quos Aliqui de Rudibus Christianis Sequuntur*, in: MIGNE, PL 110, col. 78–81. Hrabanus did not invoke the word *superstitio* in the latter sermon on pagan practices, but his addendum on magic makes clear that he considered them *superstitiones*, *Epistolae* (see n. 20) no. 31, p. 455–462, p. 458: *De magicis autem artibus atque incantationibus et de superstitionibus diversis, quas gentiles et falsi christiani in divinationibus suis et observationibus diversis sequi videntur, quid lex divina sanciat in auctoritate veteris testamenti ac novi, facile est invenire.*

Carolingian councils and reformers from the time of Boniface on³⁰. In view of the well-attested challenges of Christianizing the Saxons, and the recurring factional strife that was responsible for reversions to traditional Saxon practices³¹, the author of the *Praefatio* must have been referring to the problem of popular *superstitiosa*, rather than to an abstract, elite argument over predestination. One may ponder the many ways that a versification of the scriptures in Old Saxon might have been perceived to have been of some help in the struggle against *superstitiosa*, but one would be hard pressed to figure how such a project could have been seen as a bulwark against doctrinal deviance. After all, a thorough knowledge of the Bible had not prevented Gottschalk from lapsing into »error«.

Ultimately, arguments for Louis the German as the *Ludouicus* of the *Praefatio* rise or fall on two words: *piissimus Augustus*. As we have seen, proponents of Louis the German have cited evidence that Louis the German is known to have been called *imperator*. One has to admit first that such designations are exceptional, and secondly that the examples do not appear in Louis the German's court documents, but almost exclusively in monastic charters. The latter may or may not be significant with respect to the *Praefatio*, since the ascription need not necessarily have originated at court. However, if it were written by Hrabanus Maurus in the aftermath of the Synod of Mainz and thus is to be seen as a reflection of a program originating in court circles, we might expect the document to have borrowed from official practices. Heinz Zatschek, whose study has been widely cited as evidence that Louis perceived himself as an *imperator*, drew attention to the problem of inferring evidence of royal policy from such arbitrary and inconsistent depictions³². While Louis does appear as *imperator* in some charters, it is also the case that some charters of Fulda and Werden refer to Lothar and Louis the Pious as kings, even though the notaries surely knew the two figures were emperors. Moreover, by widening the number and range of charters in which Louis the German is called emperor, Zatschek saw his findings as a corrective to Edmund Stengel's contention that the designation *imperator* appeared in charters of Fulda and St. Gall at critical moments in late Carolingian history as dynasts jockeyed for position after the deaths of emperors Lothar I (855) and Louis II of Italy (875)³³.

Zatschek also turned up examples in several annals which refer to the confirmation of an immunity and settlement of a tithe dispute in 845 by *Ludouicus imperator* or *Ludowicus augustus*, and from them argued that Louis's imperial title probably originated at Fulda around 843/845³⁴. Admitting that close connections existed between

30 Peter BROWN, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity AD 200–1000*, 2nd ed., Oxford 2003, p. 421–428; Rosamond MCKITTERICK, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895*, London 1977, p. 87–102, 119–122; and Wilfried HARTMANN, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien*, Paderborn 1989, p. 447–448.

31 Eric GOLDBERG, *Popular Revolt, Dynastic Politics, and Aristocratic Factionalism in the Early Middle Ages: The Saxon Stellinga Reconsidered*, in: *Speculum* 70 (1995) p. 467–501.

32 ZATSCHEK, *Erwähnungen* (see n. 11) p. 378.

33 In Zatschek's view, the widened distribution of cases subverted Stengel's general explanation, cf. STENDEL, *Kaisertitel* (see n. 11) p. 55–56. Louis, for example, appears as *imperator* in a charter from Werden which dates to the late 840's when there was no documented dynastic strife and when Lothar was the universally acknowledged emperor, ZATSCHEK, *Erwähnungen* (see n. 11) p. 378.

34 ZATSCHEK, *Erwähnungen* (see n. 11) p. 376–377.

Fulda and Louis the German from then on, Zatschek concluded that Fulda's use of the imperial title »possibly« reflected the will of Louis the German's court. However the annals in question – an incestuous cluster from Hildesheim, Weissenburg, Quedlinburg and Hersfeld – are of Ottonian/Salian provenance and, as Werner pointed out, are problematic witnesses for ninth-century practices³⁵. Zatschek recognized the difficulty and argued that they were dependent on earlier annals from Fulda, now lost³⁶. That may be, but one can hardly assume that political terms such as *imperator* (Weissenburg Annals) or *augustus* (Lampert of Hersfeld) were faithfully reproduced from older annals, especially in light of the fact that the entries for 845 pertain to Hersfeld's immunity, resistance to episcopal control and control of tithes, all of which were issues of recurrent conflict in the Ottonian period³⁷.

The most damning argument against the case for Louis the German is that the evidence for Louis as *imperator* is irrelevant. We can drastically narrow our range of variables by drawing attention to a basic fact that seems to have escaped those who want to assimilate the examples dredged up by Zatschek and Stengel as support for Louis the German: the *Praefatio* does not refer to *Ludovicus* as *imperator*, but rather as *augustus*. While both may apply to an emperor, they are nonetheless not the same and we cannot assume an equivalence. As a sort of »super king« ruling over Saxons, Thuringians, Bavarians, and Alemans, etc., Louis may very well have been perceived by some monastic notaries, perhaps even by himself, to have been an *imperator*³⁸, but we are hard pressed to find any references to Louis as a *piissimus Augustus*. Like it or not, these are the words left to us by the author of the *Praefatio* and it is these that we have to consider.

When we restrict our search to references to Louis the German as *augustus*, the possibilities vanish to nearly zero. A search of east Frankish diplomas and capitularies, and of the letters and poems composed by court functionaries and *literati*, turns

35 WERNER, *Hludovicus Augustus* (see n. 16) p. 100, n. 369.

36 ZATSCHEK, Erwähnungen (see n. 11) p. 377.

37 The word *imperator* in an entry of 845 most likely reflects the imperial pretensions of the Ottonian era. The now lost Annals of Hersfeld, which is believed to have been dependant upon the lost Fulda annals, were begun around the mid tenth century and then continuously added to by a number of monks over the next several decades under the supervision of Hersfeld's abbots, two of whom accompanied Otto to Rome in 962. An exemplar of the Annals of Hersfeld was drawn up in 973 and acquired by monks at Quedlinburg and Hildesheim. And a second, drawn up in 982, was acquired by Weissenburg in 984, see Oswald HOLDER-EGGER ed., *Lamperti Monachi Hersfeldensis Opera*, MGH SRG, vol. 37, Hannover, Leipzig 1894, p. XXXVII–XXXVIII. While it is possible that these extant annals merely recapitulated verbatim the lost Annals of Hersfeld, which in turn had inerrantly reproduced the lost Fulda annals, the exemplars themselves date to the period after Otto I had assumed the emperorship and after Otto I had intervened several times either to confirm Hersfeld's immunity from episcopal jurisdiction or to mediate their rights to tithes, *Diplomata Ottonis I.*, MGH *Diplomata Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae*, vol. 1: *Diplomata Conradi I., Heinrici I., et Ottonis I.*, ed. Theodor SICKEL, Hannover 1879–1874, nos. 97 (948), p. 180; 215 (960), p. 298; 356 (968), pp. 488–489. When we consider that Ottonian notaries are known to have bestowed the imperial title grandly, if erroneously, on Carolingian kings (see for example MGH DOI [see n. 37], no. 235, p. 325 [Pippin the Short]; and *Diplomata Ottonis II.*, ed. T. SICKEL, *ibid.* vol. 2, 1888, no. 135, p. 151 [Louis the German]), it is probable that the title *imperator* was an Ottonian-era interpolation.

38 Cf. EGGERT, *Ostfränkisch-deutsches Reich* (see n. 11) p. 262.

up no evidence of Louis as an *augustus*³⁹. Even the poets, a group most likely to have taken liberty with language to flatter rulers, never refer to Louis as an *augustus*⁴⁰. Nor does the designation appear in any of Hrabanus Maurus's letters or poems, a glaring absence if Hrabanus, or one of his underlings, were indeed the author of the preface⁴¹. The word *augustus* appears in association with Louis the German only twice. One appears in Lampert of Hersfeld's late eleventh-century chronicle⁴². The lateness of the ascription alone makes it problematic. The title does not appear in the source of which Lampert apparently made use, the now-lost Annals of Hersfeld, which was kept down to at least 1040 and which served as a source for the extant Annals of Hildesheim, undertaken in the 1020's or 30's; and the Annals of Weissenburg, launched in the 1060's⁴³. Indeed Lampert, who composed his annals at a time when the monks of Hersfeld were involved in a major tithe dispute with Mainz (1073)⁴⁴, expanded the entry for 845, which mentions an immunity granted by Louis to Hersfeld, to digress on a tithe dispute allegedly mediated by *Ludovicus augustus* in 845⁴⁵. He may have been prompted by the lost Annals of Hersfeld, whose entry for that year must have referred to Louis as *imperator*, but since as we have seen these annals were written at a time of earlier disputes during the reign of the monks' defender, Emperor Otto, they hardly can take us back to the ninth century. Or Lampert may have deduced the interpolation from his narrative of the dispute of 1073 where he refers to earlier *privilegia Karoli [magni] aliorumque imperatorum*⁴⁶.

The second mention of Louis as *augustus* appears in a charter of Werden dated to the reign of *domnus noster Hludouuicus imperator junior augustus*⁴⁷. This is the lone

39 Capitularia Regum Franciae Orientalis, and: Additamenta Capitularia Regum Franciae Orientalis, Alfred BORETIUS and Victor KRAUSE ed., MGH Capitularia Regum Francorum, vol. 2, Hannover 1897, p. 152–195; Epistolae Karolini Aevi, vols. 3 and 4, ed. Ernst DÜMMLER et alii, MGH Epistolae, vols. 5 and 6, Berlin 1895–1925; and MGH Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini, vol. 2, ed. DÜMMLER, and vol. 3, ed. Ludwig TRAUBE, Berlin 1884–1896.

40 See for example, Sedulius Scottus's panegyric to Louis *rex* which, despite the shameless sycophancy, carefully celebrates the east frankish king as having »issued from Caesars« (i.e. from Charlemagne and Louis the Pious), and compares him favorably to his father who is consistently referred to either as Caesar or Augustus, Carmina Sedulii Scotti, MGH Poetae, vol. 3 (see n. 39) no. 30, p. 195–197. Sedulius twice describes Louis the German with the adjective *Caesareus*, celebrating his *Caesareum pectus* and lauding him as the *Caesareum sidus*, but within the context of the poem Sedulius was not proclaiming Louis an *imperator* or an *Augustus*, but was honoring Louis's issuance from an imperial lineage. Thus, Sedulius's poem is not necessarily additional evidence, as Haubrichs argued (Anfänge [see n. 6] p. 336–338), that Louis the German was seen as an emperor because it can be read to say just the opposite.

41 Carmina Hrabani Mauri, MGH Poetae, vol. 2 (see n. 39) p. 154–258; and Epistolae Hrabani Mauri, MGH Epistolae Karolini, vol. 3 (see n. 39) p. 379–516. When Hrabanus did address Louis the German, he addressed him as *rex*, cf. letters no. 18, p. 422; no. 30, p. 448; no. 33, p. 465; no. 34, p. 468; no. 35, p. 469; and no. 37, p. 472.

42 Lamperti Annales (see n. 37) a. 845, p. 26.

43 On the relationship between these texts, see above, n. 37, and Wilhelm WATTENBACH and Robert HOLTZMANN, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter: Deutsche Kaiserzeit, Tübingen 1948, vol. 1, p. 40–46; vol. 3, p. 455–456, and 462–463.

44 Lamperti Annales (see n. 37) a. 1073, p. 141–144.

45 Lamperti Annales (see n. 37) a. 845, p. 26.

46 Lamperti Annales (see n. 37) a. 1073, p. 143.

47 Urkundenbuch für die Geschichte des Niederrheins, ed. Theodor J. LACOMBLET, Düsseldorf 1840, no. 65, p. 31.

instance in which the word *augustus* appears in the same sentence with Louis the German. But what did the notary mean? Did the notary consider Louis an *augustus*, or did he use the word adjectivally to say something like: »our lord Louis the younger, august emperor«? Moreover, as we have seen, the Werden scribes inconsistently referred to Lothar I as *rex*, so we ought not invest too much in their witness. In any case, we would be hard pressed to connect this lone mention from 855 to the *Praefatio*. A poet of Werden might have had something to do with the Heliand and Genesis, but no research has turned up connections to the author of the *Praefatio*. If we suspend doubt and concede that the *Praefatio* dates to 848–850, the point becomes moot since the ascription from Werden clearly would antedate the preface. And finally, recall that the *Praefatio* refers to a *piissimus Augustus* and it is that superlative, *piissimus*, that is conspicuously lacking in the Werden charter.

The term *piissimus* itself is revealing of Carolingian practices. The word is used to describe Louis the German in monastic charters where he appears frequently in dating clauses as *piissimus rex*, for example at Fulda⁴⁸. However, this is definitely not the case in royal documents, where Louis the German rarely appears as a *piissimus* ruler, but rather as a *serenissimus* or *gloriosissimus* one⁴⁹. When Louis the German does appear as a *piissimus* king in royal documents, he does so only after his death in the diplomas of his sons⁵⁰. There he frequently is depicted as *piissimus* or *pius genitor noster Hludovvicus*, or in some variation thereof, e.g. *piae memoriae genitor noster Hludouuicus*, which makes clear the memorial valence of the word. And so it goes for other dead ancestors, such as Louis the Pious, Louis II of Italy and Lothar I, all of whom frequently are honored posthumously with the moniker *piissimus*, not only in the diplomas of Louis's sons, but also in Louis's own⁵¹. These observations do not in themselves preclude the possibility that Louis the German is the Louis in the *Praefatio*, but they certainly pose problems for seeing the *Praefatio*, and by extension the Old Saxon texts, as directly connected to Louis the German himself.

Now let us turn to the cases where the combination, *piissimus Augustus*, appears in connection with Louis the German: there are none.

48 See Codex Diplomaticus Fuldensis, ed. Ernst F. J. DRONKE, 1850; reprint: Aalen 1962, nos. 573, 580, 582, 586, 587, 589, 595, 596, 598, 599.

49 KEHR, MGH DLG (see n. 22) p. XVIII–XIX. Louis appears as *piissimus rex* in his confirmation of an immunity and protection to Utrecht, but the word appears to have been lifted from the earlier grant of Louis the Pious, MGH DLG (see n. 22) no. 68, p. 95; and again in a forged diploma, MGH DLG (see n. 22) no. 106, p. 154. Louis the German appears as *piissimus* in two other documents, but both are later summaries of earlier diplomas: one a late ninth-century *noticia* from St. Emmeram, i.e. it was drawn up after Louis's death (MGH DLG [see n. 22] no. 152, p. 214), and the other a fifteenth-century copy of a digest, MGH DLG (see n. 22) no. 143, p. 200.

50 Diplomata Karlomanni (see n. 22) no. 4, p. 290; Diplomata Ludovici Junioris (see n. 22) nos. 16, p. 355 and p. 356; 18, p. 358 and p. 359; and 19, p. 359; Diplomata Karoli III., ed. Paul KEHR, MGH D Regum Germ. ex Stirpe Karol., vol. 2, Berlin 1936–37, nos. 65, p. 110 and p. 111; 100, p. 163; 103, p. 167; 168, p. 272; 169, p. 273.

51 MGH DLG (see n. 22) nos. 22, p. 27; 26, p. 32; 27, p. 33; 32, p. 40; 37, p. 48; 41, p. 54; 42, p. 56 and p. 57; 53, p. 72; 63, p. 86; 75, p. 110; 119, p. 169; <180>, p. 260; MGH Diplomata Karlomanni (see n. 22) nos. 5, p. 291; 6, p. 293; 7, p. 295; 8, p. 296; 12, p. 301 and p. 302; 26, p. 324; MGH Diplomata Ludovici Junioris (see n. 22) no. 4, p. 338; MGH Diplomata Karoli III. (see n. 50) nos. 12, p. 18; 34, p. 58; 35, p. 60; 90, p. 148; 102, p. 166, etc.

The case for Louis the Pious and a unified *Praefatio*

Needless to say, the evidence that Louis the Pious was lauded as the *augustus* or the *piissimus augustus* is simply overwhelming. In contrast to Louis the German, it was not uncommon for Louis the Pious to be called *piissimus*, not only in monastic charters and in letters of Carolingian writers, but also to designate himself as such in his own diplomas and capitularies⁵². That is, by contrast with Louis the German, we can point to numerous examples where Louis the Pious was the acknowledged *piissimus augustus* in a variety of genres while he was alive⁵³. Moreover, many contemporary and near contemporary sources frequently distinguish Louis the Pious, the *augustus*, from his father, the *imperator* (and from his son Lothar, the *caesar*)⁵⁴. That is, in the minds of many contemporaries, Louis the Pious was the *augustus*⁵⁵. Indeed, in Louis the German's own diplomas, the title is reserved for his father⁵⁶. Considering the virtual absence of references to Louis the German as *augustus* or *piissimus augustus*, and the plethora of attestations for Louis the Pious as *piissimus augustus* during his own time and during the reigns of his sons, it is difficult to see how anyone composing, or reading, the *Praefatio* either in the 830's, when Louis the Pious was still ruling, or in the 850's, when he was dead, would have associated the title with Louis the German. If it were the intention of the author to refer to Louis the German, we would have to conclude that the *Praefatio* ranks as one of the clumsiest pieces of propaganda ever composed.

We can assert confidently that the *Praefatio* must refer to Louis the Pious and, because the author spoke of Louis in the present tense, that it was written prior to

52 Rudolf SCHIEFFER, Ludwig »der Fromme«: Zur Entstehung eines karolingischen Herrscherbeinamens, in: Frühmittelalterliche Studien 16 (1982) p. 58–67, esp. p. 62–64. Schieffer draws attention to the application of the cognomen *pius* to Louis the German (p. 65–68), but most of these appear in postmortem sources where, as we have seen, the moniker is most likely to appear.

53 The title is ubiquitous in Louis the Pious's diplomas, *Diplomata Ecclesiastica Ludovici I Cognomento Pii*, ed. MIGNE, PL 104, col. 927–1332, esp. col. 1000ff. On Louis the Pious's titlature, see BÖHMER-MÜHLBACHER, *Regesta Imperii*, vol. 1, p. LXXXVI; and Herwig WOLFRAM, *Intitulatio II: Lateinische Herrscher- und Fürstentitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert*, Vienna, Cologne, Graz 1973 (Mitteil. des Instituts für Österreich. Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband 24), p. 78–83. In addition to diplomas, see also MGH *Capitularia Regum Francorum*, ed. A. BORETIUS, vol. 1, Hannover 1883, nos. 180, p. 370; 132, p. 263; *Concilia Aevi Karolini*, vol. 1, p. 2, ed. Albert WERMINGHOFF, Hannover, Leipzig 1908, nos. 58, p. 783; 53, p. 689 (*pius augustus*); *acta spuria*, no. 9, p. 836, 850, 851; Agobard, *Epistolae*, MGH *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. 3 (see n. 39) no. 1, p. 153; *Epistolae Variae*, MGH *Epistolae Karolini*, vol. 3 (see n. 39), no. 10, p. 313; no 11, p. 314.

54 The distinction is not hard and fast, but there is a tendency to differentiate the three in this way when they are mentioned together, see for example, Ansegisus, *Capitularium Collectio* (see n. 24) p. 394, 413, 424, 435, 449; MGH *Capitularia* (see n. 39) vol. 2, nos. 220, p. 100 and p. 101; 259, p. 268; 293, p. 420; MGH *Concilia*, vol. 1, p. 2 (see n. 53) no. 44, p. 481; and MGH *DLG* (see n. 22) no. 67, p. 93.

55 The emphasis on the title *Augustus* during the reign of Louis the Pious's reign appears to be evocative of Louis's »Christian empire«, cf. WERNER, *Hludovicus Augustus* (see n. 16) p. 65.

56 MGH *DLG* (see n. 22) no. 22, p. 27; no. 26, p. 32; no. 27, p. 33; no. 40, p. 53; no. 41, p. 54; no. 42, p. 56, 57; no. 63, p. 86; no. 67, p. 93; no. 68, p. 96; no. 75, p. 110; no. 91, p. 131; no. 148, p. 207; and no. <180>, p. 260. In the diplomas of Louis the German's sons, *augustus* points variously to Charlemagne, Louis the Pious, Lothar I or Louis II of Italy, see as examples, *Diplomata Karlomanni* (see n. 22) no. 6, p. 293; no. 7, p. 295; no. 8, p. 296; no. 12, p. 301, 302; *Diplomata Karoli III.* (see n. 50) no. 35, p. 59; no. 47, p. 78; no. 102, p. 166; and no. 168, p. 272.

840. Whether all, or only a portion, the so-called preface A, was written then is unclear. As we have seen, the phrases *imperii tempore*, »in the time of his rule«, and *actum est nuper ut*, »it has recently been brought about that«, have led many to conclude that the preface was interpolated with phrases to link it to the allegedly later composed part B, and to assert that this was done shortly after the said ruler had died. Haubrichs, let us recall, reconciled this difficulty by arguing that Louis the German had planned these Old Saxon texts »in the time of the empire«, i.e. in the 830's, but that the *Praefatio* was written afterwards, around 850. Thus, the *Praefatio* at once refers to the present ruler and retrospectively to earlier plans.

There are two main difficulties with these arguments. First, it would have to be demonstrated that an author writing around 850 would have believed that the death of Louis the Pious had marked the end of imperial unity. Only by virtue of hindsight is that now clear. To the end of their reigns, Louis the Pious's sons behaved as if the many partitions were merely provisional and continually tried to seize one another's kingdoms⁵⁷. Only by the late ninth century does it appear to have dawned on Frankish chroniclers that the Carolingian Empire was irretrievably fragmented⁵⁸. Second, it is debatable whether the phrase *imperii tempore* necessarily betrays evidence of retrospection. Burkhard Taeger has put forth a much simpler, and more compelling, interpretation of the passage, arguing that the text can be understood as praise of the present ruler whose achievements surpassed those of a predecessor⁵⁹. According to Taeger, a proper understanding of the passage hinges on the words *prius* and *nuper*: »whereas before (*prius*) only the lettered and the learned had knowledge of the divine books [i.e. in the reign of the predecessor], by his zeal and in the time of his reign [i.e. during the reign of *Ludouicus* who is now ruling], but even more by the omnipotence of God who initiated it, miraculously it has recently (*nuper*) been brought about [i.e. lately by the still-reigning *Ludouicus*] that the whole people under his sway which speaks the vernacular language has nonetheless gained knowledge of the sacred text«.

Taeger's solution has much to commend it, not least of which is that it obviates complex and controversial contortions. It also makes sense to see the passage as contrasting *Ludouicus* with his predecessors, as the *Praefatio* obviously was intended to celebrate an achievement which allegedly distinguished the ruler. It also conforms with known historical facts of Louis the Pious's reign. This at first seems strange because arguments for Louis the German have seized on Thegan's claim that Louis the Pious supposedly was antipathetic to vernacular literature⁶⁰. When counterposed to Louis the German's suspected interest in Old German compositions, it seems unlikely that Louis the Pious could have been involved. But can we really assume that Louis would have been so trivial as to have allowed his personal literary tastes to cloud his judgement as a ruler? Thegan's testimony should be weighed

57 Timothy REUTER, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, London, New York 1991, p. 70–77.

58 See Regino of Prüm's (abbot, 892–899; † 915) oft-cited early tenth-century observations on the break up of the Carolingian world upon the deposition of Charles the Fat, *Chronicon*, ed. Friedrich KURZE, MGH SRG, vol. 50, Hannover 1890, a. 888, p. 129.

59 TAEGER, *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXV.

60 Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici Imperatoris*, ed. Ernst TREMP, MGH SRG, vol. 64, Hannover 1995, ch. 19, p. 200.

against that of Louis's other biographer, the Astronomer, who claimed that Louis considered the Saxons among his most devoted subjects and tried to persuade them with mercy, rather than force⁶¹. Indeed, the impressive importation of relics into Saxony, and the increased patronage of northern monasteries, are traceable to Louis the Pious's reign⁶². There is little reason to doubt that this thoughtful and innovative ruler would have recognized the usefulness of vernacular poetry in deepening the Christianity of the Saxons. Whether Louis the Pious personally commissioned any Saxon works, as the *Praefatio* claims, is debatable. Panegyric literature was intended to exaggerate a ruler's creativity, rather than to reproduce literal historical fact. Louis the Pious would have been responsible only in that monks in northern monasteries had adapted Carolingian reform to the local situation and made use of imperial patronage to produce literature appropriate to the Saxon context. In this sense, the author of the *Praefatio* accurately credited Louis the Pious with the genesis of the Old Saxon texts.

The composition of Old Saxon works within the general framework of Carolingian reforms brings into question the long-held view that the *Praefatio* was written by multiple authors. Considered decisive in the positing of two prefaces, A and B, has been the presumption that the »historical« explanation of imperial commission in the former is contradicted by the »legendary« depiction of divine inspiration laid out in the latter. This overly schematic approach, first proposed by Friedrich Zarncke in the 1860's when scholars were much more comfortable making such positivistic declarations, and then taken up by Eduard Sievers⁶³, has been accepted as authoritative and simply embellished with additional arguments. However, if we abolish the false distinction between the »historical« and »legendary« material, the subsequent supporting arguments have little to sustain them. Taeger rightly points out that the imperial commission and divine inspiration are not »contradictions« necessarily pointing to different authorship, but are easily compatible with the call from above which simply reinforces the imperial decree⁶⁴. Taken as a unity, the *Praefatio* could be reflective of virtually any Carolingian edict, all of which invoke, or assume, the legitimizing authority of the deity.

Dual authorship might be warranted on stylistic grounds, but analyses thus far have lacked firm text-critical criteria⁶⁵. Unconvincing has been the focus on semantic variation⁶⁶. The greater use of superlatives in part B, for example, does not itself point to different authorship since a single author reasonably could have chosen to use adorning superlatives when he turned to depict the poet's divine inspiration⁶⁷.

61 Astronomer, *Vita Hludowici Imperatoris*, ed. Ernst TREMP, MGH SRG, vol. 64, Hannover 1995, ch. 24, p. 356.

62 WERNER, *Hludowicus Augustus* (see n. 16) p. 92–101.

63 Friedrich ZARNCKE, Über die *Praefatio*, in: *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akad. der Wiss. zu Leipzig, phil.-hist. Klasse* 17 (1865) p. 104ff.; SIEVERS, *Heliand* (see n. 3) p. XXVI–XXXI; KROGMANN, *Praefatio* (see n. 2) p. 153–156; and HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 9.

64 TAEGER, *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXVI.

65 See TAEGER, *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXV.

66 KROGMANN, *Praefatio* (see n. 2) p. 154; HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 10, 15–17.

67 HAUBRICHS, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 10; cf. Taeger's criticisms of *Heliand und Genesis* (see n. 1) p. XXVI.

Sievers, and to a lesser extent Haubrichs, did employ rhythmic analysis to determine the authorship of preface A and to differentiate it from later additions⁶⁸. On the other hand, rhythmic analysis has been used compellingly to demonstrate the opposite, that the *Praefatio* was the work of a single author⁶⁹. Ultimately, however, this kind of analysis has been criticized as too subjective and, not surprisingly, has not passed muster as a philological tool for rigorous textual analysis⁷⁰. More promising has been the evidence of syntactic awkwardness at points of suspected interpolation, but then these criticisms presuppose a standard of perfection on the part of the author that might not be warranted⁷¹. In any case, it is clear enough that the conviction that »contradictions« in content are pivotal has prejudged investigators to find alleged syntactic problems, rather than the other way around. It is beyond the scope of this essay to undertake such an analysis, but let it be said that any future attempts should dispense with the criterion of content, or at least thoroughly reevaluate it, and not simply repeat, as established fact, research that clearly is showing its age.

Conclusions

An analysis of the term *piissimus Augustus* in a range of ninth century documents reveals that the *Ludouicus piissimus Augustus* of the *Praefatio* must point to Louis the Pious, not to his son Louis the German. The Old Saxon texts most likely were promulgated as an indigenous expression of Carolingian reform in Saxony during the reign of Louis the Pious, who was, as Karl Ferdinand Werner aptly put it, »*Hludovicus Augustus: Gouverner l'empire chrétien*«.

68 SIEVERS, *Heliand, Tatian und Hraban* (see n. 25) p. 416–429. Although Haubrichs distanced himself from Siever's particular method, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 27, he himself made limited use of a form of rhythm analysis to distinguish preface A from B, *Praefatio* (see n. 5) p. 17.

69 Max H. JELLINEK, *Die Praefatio zum Heliand und die Versus de Poeta*, in: *Zs. für deutsches Altertum* 56 (1919) p. 109–125, esp. p. 109–118.

70 The problems are compounded by the fact that the method, devised for analysis of the rhythmic prose of high medieval Latin, becomes potentially even more problematic when applied to the comparatively irregular Carolingian Latin prose, cf. JELLINEK, *Praefatio* (see n. 69) p. 111–112. On the limitations of Sievers's »Schallanalyse« for text criticism, see Gerold UNGEHEUER, *Die Schallanalyse von Sievers*, in: *Zs. für Mundartforschung* 31 (1964) p. 97–124, esp. p. 115.

71 On syntactic awkwardness, see KROGMANN, *Praefatio* (see n. 2) p. 153.