In his remarkable life of St. Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine, the Carolingian abbot of Hautvillers offered a challenging view of the goals of educational inquiry. In his account of Helena's search for the true cross, Abbot Altmann, a pupil of John Scottus Eriugena, explained how Christian education could achieve what the pagans had failed to accomplish. He describes how, while a pagan, Helena strove to explore the cults of all races, observing their diversity of customs and rites. She wished to understand the word of God, the creation of the world, the origin and immortality of the soul, and the coming judgment and resurrection of the body. To find answers she first consulted Jews and then Christians, and, after her son's conversion, she was guided to the relics of the true cross.¹

Helena's quest is not unlike the shared search that brought some two hundred scholars to The Ohio State University in Columbus in February 1989 to hear and discuss the important series of papers on Carolingian education and learning that inspired this volume. Their questions were about the context, schools, patristic tradition, art, music, and search for ideology in the Carolingian world.

Too many accounts of Carolingian education and learning have ignored the tensions between spiritual fulfillment and resistance to ecclesiastical authority, or between the values of monks and the aristocratic world they often left. Richard E. Sullivan, who has established Carolingian studies in
North America on a secure footing among colleagues as closely linked by loyalty and friendship as were Alcuin's pupils, has not shied away from such questions. Defining the intellectual program of the monastery of Hautvillers, where relics of Helena were preserved, Altmann praised the program's height of speculation, broad charity, and profundity of wisdom, both divine and human, all of which raised the monastery above Athens as a center of learning. Similar aims have shaped this volume. It is important to recognize the change in ideological approach that those aims imply, the new directions for research that have emerged from the explorations of Carolingian cultural activity in the past, and the ultimate significance of the studies included in this volume.

The Carolingian cultural achievement is presently evaluated through the use of a tacit ideology, long in the making and sustained by the selective quotation of those Carolingian sources that tend to develop and establish the myths this ideology entails. Textbooks neither explain nor justify the term "Carolingian renaissance," a phrase that has had an unusually long life as a code signifying that something significant happened in the cultural realm during the reign of the Carolingian dynasty. Those primers simply cite royal pronouncements commanding that a renovatio should be undertaken and, as proof that it was, offer comments to the effect that Einhard imitated Suetonius or that Charlemagne's favorite book was Augustine's City of God. Students of art history are shown some dozen images of Carolingian works of art ostensibly linking Carolingian artists with ancient models, examples that have barely changed since the appearance of Franz von Reber's History of Medieval Art, translated into English in 1887. 

Because the historiography of Carolingian education and learning has more frequently relied on views that have been inherited than it has concerned itself with tracing or challenging those views, scholars have often ignored those who have chosen to doubt the myth of Charlemagne the lover of wisdom and the fiction of careers open to talent derived from a ideologically inspired reading of Notker's description of the clientele attending the palace school. Too often those investigators have failed to see that what they have inherited has stemmed from evaluations of the Carolingian accomplishment cast in terms of the needs and ideologies of those who produced these interpretations. One result is that the Carolingian achievement is now the subject of reification: concepts such as literacy, dramatic narrative, or "the social function of grammatica" are applied to the sources in an effort to discover original insights. In delight at such
originality, factual errors and distortions pass unchallenged, cocooned in the language of indefinitude.  

As Chris Wickham has recently reminded us, "As society and politics changed, the social memory of Charlemagne changed to fit." By surveying the changes in social memory that Charlemagne’s educational legacy underwent, it is possible to see what different epochs have found useful in that legacy. The medieval legend of Charlemagne, nurtured by bellettrists, polemicians, and visual artists, had little to say about education and learning until that legend became the property of historians, but one of the liturgical lections used at St. Emmeran in Regensburg from the fifteenth century praised Charles’s love of letters and his attempts to learn to write; and Alexander von Roes, in his Memoriale de prerogativa imperii Romani, started the myth that Charlemagne had founded the University of Paris.

The finest tribute to Charlemagne’s educational achievement may be Montaigne’s sentence: “In this way Cyrus can be honoured by his farming and Charlemagne for his eloquence and knowledge of good letters.” A brief survey of the historiography of Charles the patron of learning reveals the biases and hopes of his admirers. The most constant feature is the use of Notker Balbulus’s stories of the Irishmen who arrived on Charlemagne’s shores selling wisdom and of Charlemagne the inspector of schools. Albertus Krantz was the first to praise Charlemagne as the man who brought the liberal arts to the Saxons. The first extended account of Charlemagne’s educational policies was written by Jean Launoy in 1672; it ended the myth of the Carolingian University of Paris, but suggested that Charlemagne was responsible for many cathedral schools. Jacques Bénigne Bossuet’s Discours sur l’histoire universelle, published in 1681, not only validated this view but also made it widely accessible. In 1750 Frobenius Forster, who had been professor of philosophy at Salzburg, was appointed librarian of St. Emmeran and strove to produce an edition of the works of Alcuin as a part of the work of the Societas Literaria Benedictina. In 1777 his edition appeared, and subsequent work has confirmed the quality of his texts. Frobenius’s introduction praises Charlemagne’s attack on entrenched barbarism and ignorance and explains Alcuin’s share in this program.

Frobenius’s concern for texts was rare in the eighteenth century. Rather than labor with the sources, historians were inclined to dismiss the distant Carolingian past in terms of the cultural values of the Enlightenment. In a general history, William Robertson’s History of the Reign of Charles V, published in 1769, the outline in the opening chapter of the progress of society in Europe gives Charlemagne a single sentence. Like Alfred he “gave
his subjects a short glimpse of light and knowledge. But the ignorance of the age was too powerful for their efforts and institutions.”  

Voltaire had already belittled the emperor in his *Essai sur les moeurs* (1769), but despite stressing Charlemagne’s illiterate cruelty, Voltaire conceded that “he conceived by the force of his genius how much literature was necessary.”  

In chapter 49 of his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon, relying on Gabriel Gaillard’s four-volume *Histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1782), noted that “the literary merits of Charlemagne are attested by the foundation of schools. . . . The grammar and logic, the music and astronomy, of the times were only cultivated as the handmaids of superstition; but the curiosity of the human mind must ultimately tend to its improvement, and the encouragement of learning reflects the purest and most pleasing lustre on the character of Charlemagne.”  

In 1818 Henry Hallam affirmed that “a strong sympathy for intellectual excellence was the leading characteristic of Charlemagne.”  

Leaders of the Enlightenment saw Charlemagne as a precursor of their heavenly city, but they acknowledged, indeed celebrated, the deep gulf between his cultural ideals and their own.

Hegel in his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (lectures given from 1822 to 1831, published posthumously in 1837) devoted a chapter to Charlemagne’s empire. He described how the emperor sought to restore learning, which was almost completely decayed, by requiring the establishment of schools in towns and villages. But Hegel explains that Charlemagne could not create a state; this would have required reactions, by nations and individuals, to the continual lies that ruled the Middle Ages and a repudiation of the division of reality that governed the medieval worldview.

Charlemagne had been compared to Peter the Great and Napoleon, but his importance as a political figure increased as a result of the case advanced by François Guizot and Jules Michelet. In his lectures of 1828–30 on European civilization, Guizot’s bourgeois-oriented history saw Charlemagne as the leader of “the battle against the barbaric state” and the embodiment of “the spirit of civilization.”  

In 1833 Michelet, inspired by Vico’s historical categories, published his own Collège de France lectures as the start of his *Histoire de France*. Michelet’s account of Charlemagne in book 2 has left unacknowledged traces on much subsequent historiography, but its evaluation was more critical than many suspect: “No less pedantic and barren was the attempt at literary reform directed by Alcuin.” Michelet retells Notker’s story of the Irishmen who sold wisdom, but after many extracts from Notker his verdict remains: “While Char-
lemagne discoursed on theology, dreamed of the Roman Empire and studied grammar, the domination of the Franks collapsed little by little.” In the reign of Charles the Bald “feudalism was founded; scholastic philosophy was at least being prepared for,” as evidenced by Paschasius Radbertus, Gottschalk, and John Scottus, who was “the renewal of the free Celtic spirit.”

Michelet inspired J.-J. Ampère’s literary history of France, and in volume 3 Ampère treated Charlemagne’s renaissance, which he saw as the result of the influence of one man. The De litteris colendis was “the charter of modern thought.” Charlemagne aimed at universal instruction, and unlike Napoleon his achievement was a lasting one. “Charlemagne latinized the West.”

In A. F. Ozanam’s La Civilisation chrétienne chez les Francs, Charlemagne is clearly a model fulfilling a mission relevant for Catholics opposed to the revolutionary ideology of Michelet. Avoiding the dangers of lay power and armed with the heroism of the Christian monarch, he converts pagans and seeks the peaceful glories of letters; he is the instrument of providence and humanity. Ozanam repeats Ampère’s translation of the De litteris colendis and concludes that “the destiny of the human spirit was assured.” In his Charlemagne et sa cour, B. Hauréau, following Ampère, sees Charlemagne as the restorer of arts and letters and devotes a chapter to his palace school.

Arno Borst has traced the development of Leopold von Ranke’s view of Charlemagne as reflected in his lectures delivered from 1826 to 1865. In 1825 Ranke regarded Charles’s greatest achievement as the conquest of Saxony. After reading Michelet, he defended Charlemagne’s greatness against French attacks, and he valued the court as a cultural center and Charlemagne’s more systematic revival of culture. In a less nationalistic vein, Jacob Burckhardt in 1851 placed Charlemagne in his typology of renaissances, and in lectures on Charlemagne he regarded Carolingian education as “the soul of Karl’s system.” While the value of Charlemagne’s culture might be challenged, it was certain that between 732 and 830 culture was again possible.

The first treatment in English of Charlemagne’s achievement in education was the prize essay by J. Bass Mullinger, The Schools of Charles the Great and the Restoration of Education in the Ninth Century (London, 1877). The subject was chosen for the Kaye Prize at Cambridge as a question “relating to ancient Ecclesiastical History.” Mullinger claimed that he was treating of “the true boundary line between ancient and modern history.” Separate chapters discuss Alcuin, Hrabanus, Lupus, and John
Scottus. "The younger members of the Palace School seem to have required to be at once instructed and amused, much after the way that would now seem well adapted to a night-school of Somersetshire rustics." He relied chiefly on Ampère, Francis Monnier's study entitled Alcuin et Charlemagne (2nd ed., Paris, 1863), and Léon Maitre's Les Écoles épiscopales et monastiques de l'Ocident depuis Charlemagne jusqu'à Philippe-Auguste (768-1180) (Paris, 1866).

The names Georg Wilhelm Pertz and Ranke evoke a shift in the approach toward the history of Carolingian education. A part of their legacy included the editions of Carolingian capitularies, charters, letters, poems, and annals that are one of the glories of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Those editions were the fruit of a critical approach that focused on reconstructing authentic versions of historical sources through a rigorous methodology applied to manuscript remains. The sharpened focus of scholarly attention on the sources and their decipherment gave new impetus to reconstructing the past based on an objective gleaning of the "facts" from the sources and the arrangement of those facts into a narrative that would reveal the past "as it actually happened."

The fruits of the change heralded by Pertz and Ranke were reflected in the work of scholars who were among the editors of Carolingian texts. Ernst Dummler, for instance, published a general history of the East Frankish kingdom that reflected an effort to embrace all the data contained in the sources into a narrative account that would embrace the totality of Carolingian civilization. Along another line, Ludwig Traube trained students to explore the manuscript evidence and reconstruct the transmission of classical texts. The study of Carolingian education was transformed by new evidence of how texts were read and which texts were read. Traube was a close friend of E. von Steinmeyer, whose systematic edition of Old High German glosses revealed what evidence survived of the activities of the schoolroom, and an admirer of Johann K. Zeuss and Heinrich Zimmer's collection of Irish glosses, some of which were written in Carolingian Europe. The study of vernacular glosses, as Traube recognized, was crucial to understanding the language of Carolingian education.

The first chapters entitled "The Carolingian Renaissance" are found in works by Gabriel Monod (1898) and Karl Lamprecht (1891). While Monod is concerned with Charlemagne's role in promoting and leading the revival of learning, Lamprecht offers an important and original analysis of Carolingian culture, including a long section on Carolingian art and especially its choice of ornament. Lamprecht was concerned with the
problems of expressing ideas in Latin rather than the vernacular, and with the veneration of the formal content of education in which phrases were more important than meanings. “The mental sphere of the Germans of this time was still completely intuition, the coexistence of all things, but not understanding, not the superimposition of one thing over another.” He noted that Old High German borrowed from Latin only for its religious vocabulary, and he contrasted the culture of the eastern and western parts of the empire.\textsuperscript{35}

The impact of the Nazi triumph in 1933 left traces in the writings of Hermann Aubin, Albert Brackmann, Johannes Haller, Feodor Schneider, and Gerd Tellenbach, who all saw Charlemagne as the embodiment of “a chiefly Germanic world” (“ein vornehmlich germanische Welt”).\textsuperscript{36} Hitler noted that “the German people did not emerge solely as a product of the classical idea and Christianity, but as a product of force, the classical idea, and Christianity.” For Charlemagne, “Cultural activity was collective activity” (“Kulturarbeit sei Zusammenarbeit”).\textsuperscript{37} In 1935 Karl Hampe could affirm that “he [Charlemagne] was far too much an original Germanic layman to be absorbed totally in this ecclesiastical-classical educational ideal,” a view Carl Erdmann had the courage to oppose.\textsuperscript{38}

In the face of such orthodoxy, the courage and capacity for change of Hermann Heimpel were neither common nor influential.\textsuperscript{39} Those concerned with the history of Carolingian education also must pay tribute to scholars who were victims of the darker side of this orthodoxy: to the work of Traube, long denied tenure because of his Jewish origins, and to that of Wilhelm Levison, excluded from German universities after 1935.\textsuperscript{40} Charlemagne’s 1200th birthday was celebrated on 2 April 1942, after historians had explained how his empire and his eastern campaigns were models.\textsuperscript{41} After the Second World War, Charlemagne became the model of all those who sought a united Europe; the effort to evaluate his work from this perspective culminated in the Aachen exhibition of 1965 and the “Karl der Grosse Festschrift.”\textsuperscript{42} Since 1950 the city of Aachen has awarded a Charlemagne prize for services to Europe, whose recipients for the most part have been conservative politicians.\textsuperscript{43}

It appears, then, beyond question that to write about Charlemagne entails an ideological stance. It might be argued that happy are those who are unconscious of how they attained such a position. But this quick review of the various ideological perspectives that have been brought to bear on Carolingian educational and cultural history in the past suggests that consciousness on the part of any scholar of his or her ideological bent and its
potential impact on the reconstruction of that history might expose some of the myths that still cause distortion in our understanding of the Carolingian educational and cultural achievement.

Despite being pulled one way or another by ideological concerns, the long-standing effort to assess the nature and import of Carolingian educational and cultural activity has left many matters still open for investigation; some of them seem likely to occupy the major attention of Carolingian scholars in the foreseeable future.

The effort to see the Carolingian educational and cultural scene in holistic terms has challenged a succession of scholars to try their hand at syntheses. In 1924 Erna Patzelt, a student of Alfons Dopsch, published the only book devoted to the Carolingian renaissance, making a case for continuity instead of innovation.44 M. L. W. Laistner did much the same in his survey of thought and letters in Western Europe from 500 to 900, first published in 1931; his effort was prompted by the lack of any work in English that did justice to “the immense debt we owe to the Carolingian Age for the preservation of classical and post-classical Latin literature, that era and the centuries that preceded it were a formative period without which it is impossible either to understand or to explain the full achievement of medieval culture at its zenith.”45 Walter Ullmann, in his Birkbeck lectures of 1968–69, emphasized that the Carolingian renaissance cannot be seen in isolation from Charlemagne’s policies for the reform of society.46 Another important recent synthesis is that of Pierre Riché, who set the Carolingian renaissance in a continuous line of development that highlighted evolutionary developments within the Carolingian era.47

Akin to these general syntheses have been recent efforts, often collaborative, to reconstruct a picture of Carolingian cultural life at particular moments during the eighth and ninth centuries.48 Historians continue their efforts to fix Carolingian cultural activity more firmly in the larger context of Carolingian history and to assess the impact of the Carolingian renaissance on society as a whole.49 Beyond doubt, the effort to see the Carolingian cultural achievement whole and in context will continue to challenge scholars.

Access to good editions of Carolingian sources remains an important item on the agenda of Carolingianists to which contemporary scholars continue to respond. Postwar editors have made new texts available, especially the writings of Gottschalk and Paschasius Radbertus and the Latin glosses to Bede’s computistical writings.50 Editors are increasingly taking
advantage of computer technology to expedite analyses of the sources.\textsuperscript{51} The number of translations of Carolingian sources into modern languages appears to be increasing, perhaps a reflection not only of a decline in competence in Latin but also an expanding interest in Carolingian civilization. What the impact of reading Carolingian sources in a modern language might be on the interpretation of Carolingian cultural history provides ground for interesting speculation.\textsuperscript{52} Perhaps the greatest challenge facing scholars interested in Carolingian cultural life is to increase the availability of quality reproductions of Carolingian visual and aural sources and to expand the competence of Carolingian scholars in general in utilizing such materials.\textsuperscript{53}

The most fruitful developments in the study of Carolingian education have been the attempts to reconstruct the libraries and intellectual life of major cultural centers at Tours, St. Gall, Freising, Tegernsee, Regensburg and Salzburg, Würzburg, Lorsch, Laon, Corbie, Auxerre, and Fleury.\textsuperscript{54} This work has been shaped by the profound knowledge of the paleography and contents of Carolingian manuscripts which Bernhard Bischoff accumulated over sixty years; when his catalogue of Carolingian manuscripts is published, systematic comparative studies of Carolingian library growth will become possible.\textsuperscript{55} We need to explore how easy or difficult it was for libraries to obtain specific texts and the extent to which there were standard texts for the study of grammar, poetry, and theology.\textsuperscript{56}

The history of how particular texts were read and annotated has provided details about the study of grammar, computus, and the classics, and this approach is now being extended to the study of patristic writers. No one has yet compared Carolingian glosses on Martianus Capella or Boethius to those on Virgil in order to explore how far Carolingian readers were still in touch with the late antique legacy of Servius or Donatus, but John J. Contreni has shown that at least one of them put notes on Virgil and Sedulius into the same manuscript.\textsuperscript{57} And sometimes glosses on classical authors refer to contemporary events or to the teachings of a Carolingian master.\textsuperscript{58} The spread of sets of glosses throughout the Carolingian realms may reveal how few people were involved in close study of texts, but it may also suggest that some texts were widely considered as the best authorities.\textsuperscript{59}

But the question of how to identify a “schoolbook” is still unresolved: The presence of glosses need not always entail teaching.\textsuperscript{60} And even if we think we have a schoolbook, it does not always lead us into a classroom: we cannot be sure whether Lupus of Ferrières taught anyone other than Heirc of Auxerre.\textsuperscript{61} In part the problem results from the nature of our
evidence; manuscripts preserve the notes and text of one or more scribes, but references to teaching come chiefly from biographies and letters. The pedagogical handbooks of the Carolingians were concerned with content, not educational practice. The classification of manuscripts, texts, and glosses can reveal how ideas circulated and hint at the contacts between friends and pupils that gave Carolingian education the charm that shared learning retains. Manuscripts of Horace or Juvenal, Priscian or Martianus Capella or Boethius can preserve references to the teachings of named masters. But no one has yet attempted to assemble this evidence.

Recent work has shown that the Carolingian world was fringed with contacts to other traditions. Knowledge of Greek and Hebrew and interest in Slavic and runic writings was never extensive, but often important. While earlier scholars evaluated medieval schools for their preservation and transformation of Latin culture, we are now more ready to set that culture beside its rivals and explore the syncretisms of Carolingian thinkers. When Rudolf of Fulda used Tacitus to describe the beliefs of his pagan ancestors, he was giving them a legitimacy that an oral culture could not provide. In the same way, when the poets of German biblical epics used the vernacular, they explained, in Latin prefaces, why this was a legitimate activity. The close comparison of their works with the Latin epic and exegetical sources can reveal the clash of two sets of values and the tensions of transferring Christian vocabulary into a language still in the throes of conversion. Carolingianists are often immune to comparative history, but they can learn much from work on education in other worlds.

As the different complexions of schools become clearer, it seems probable that not only the personalities of teachers but the pressures on their teaching affected those complexions. Carolingian education was conceived to meet specific needs, and to study it in terms of an evolutionary paradigm of growing enlightenment is to distort it.

We still need studies of the nature of Carolingian classicism, the reasons for the study and correction of works of Cicero, but also of authors like Valerius Maximus and Aulus Gellius, and the nature of imitation of classical models by Carolingian authors. In the same way, fuller studies of borrowings from particular authors must distinguish between respect for authority and the process of selecting what seemed especially appropriate among a range of possible sources. Only when we can see Carolingian scholars choosing their authorities will we understand their thought. We are far from certain how far we can speak of a canon of authors studied throughout the empire. Too little work has been done on the study of mathematics and natural science, though treatises on computus were some
of the most popular school texts.\textsuperscript{67} Mathematics was linked to music theory, but musicologists seldom attempt to integrate their discoveries so as to clarify educational procedures.\textsuperscript{68}

All too little work on the teaching of medieval medicine has been assimilated by students of Carolingian education. But much of the compiling of medical texts was done in monasteries. Recent work on the Lorscher Arzneibuch has suggested that it was compiled by Richbod, the abbot of Lorsch from 784 to 791. The work contains a history of medicine and its divisions, a list of the \textit{dies aegyptiaci}, tables of medical weights, a list of Greek medicines, and over 560 recipes, including dietary rules, a treatise on the origins of spices, and a work on the preparation of remedies.\textsuperscript{69} More than 200 recipes have been lost. Scholars distinguish between the longer and shorter types of recipe and suggest that the latter may have been designed for oral transmission. A selection of the short recipes is found in a Saint Gall manuscript folded in a way that suggests that it was carried by a doctor.\textsuperscript{70} It uses a question and answer formula for its first page, so it may also have been used for teaching. The clearest evidence for medical instruction is found in Agnellus's commentary on Galen, which survives in Carolingian manuscripts in Munich and Karlsruhe.\textsuperscript{71} This work is clearly designed to treat medicine as one of the liberal arts.

If we contrast Carolingian education with the picture of the twelfth century presented by Peter Classen and his pupils, it becomes possible to specify what the Carolingians failed to achieve.\textsuperscript{72} We assume that Carolingian students were less mobile and that their curiosity was more restricted. Nor did they have the same chances to profit from their learning at royal, papal, or episcopal courts. The most crucial distinction is that Carolingian scholars seldom thought of themselves as a group with common interests; instead they were monks, clerics, or bishops. And monastic schools were designed to provide readings for meditation and prayer.

But Carolingian schools, supported by royal and imperial legislation and free from the dramatic expansion and diversity of twelfth-century religious foundations, should have flourished. We have very inadequate information about the people involved in teaching, even in major abbeys.\textsuperscript{73} The commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict by Hildemar, a monk of Corbie who taught in northern Italy, gives important information on how oblates were trained and quotes a decree of Pope Eugenius II on the need to learn the liberal arts.\textsuperscript{74} But though he describes how bright pupils are to converse with guests about chant, computus, grammar, or some art, the training envisaged is spiritual and not intellectual. The vision of a meritocracy described by Notker was an ideal and not a reality.\textsuperscript{75}
Obviously, this brief assessment of current scholarly concerns with respect to the broad area of Carolingian cultural life makes it clear that there is much yet to be done. Not unlike the inhabitants of a crowded Carolingian villa, contemporary scholars looking outward from the clearing fashioned by their scholarly predecessors behold a formidable and mysterious forest whose clearance promises its own rewards in terms of understanding better a distant age. It needs hardly be said that now, as has been the case for a long time, Carolingianists are extending their vision and spending their energy moving beyond the settled lands into the unknown. Perhaps we can conclude by asking to what extent and in what ways the chapters in this volume are attuned to received wisdom about Carolingian education and learning and in what ways they reflect a productive foray into the forest to clear new and fertile land.

The studies assembled here are an eloquent testimony to the tensions between the ideal and the real in Carolingian cultural life. Those tensions emerge most vividly when cultural “events” are put in their context. Sullivan has reminded us in general terms that Carolingian learning cannot be seen merely in the idealizing perspective imposed by a search for precedent; it has context. Each of the other studies reinforces this vital point with respect to a specific situation, be it what gave shape to the curriculum of schools, the performance of music, the perception of a revered Biblical scholar, the selection of a program for an art work, or coping with heterodox ideas. To read these chapters in this light will give pause to those who are tempted by the siren call of poststructuralist critical theory to dismiss as irrelevant to the understanding of cultural artifacts the context in which “texts” are set.

These chapters make a strong case that the cultural history of the Carolingian age will be understood more clearly only to the extent that those studying it immerse themselves more fully in an exploration of its context; and conversely, Carolingian civilization in general will be better comprehended only when cultural factors are given a central place in assessing its nature. In making that point, these studies mute some of the intellectual trends that in recent times have spread chaos in the arena of cultural history and point the way toward giving that field new vitality by reassessing the nexus between society and culture.

In adding to his previous helpful accounts of Carolingian teachers and pupils a treatment of the goals of Carolingian education, which includes a discussion of how women were educated, John J. Contreni alerts us to a
dimension of Carolingian cultural history that will surely warrant attention in the future. In drawing attention to the place of women in the educational system he invites us to ask whether the circle of people affected in some way by the Carolingian cultural revival was more extensive than heretofore allowed. Once that thought enters our mind, we find ourselves wondering whether the intellectual and artistic creations treated in the other papers were aimed at audiences with whom Carolingianists have heretofore been little concerned. Once the potential audience for cultural creations is expanded, another question arises quite logically: are there substantive aspects of Carolingian cultural life that have heretofore escaped the attention of historians because it never occurred to them that there might be an audience that would be affected in some way by such matters? Again these chapters leave little doubt that there is new ground to be discovered in the record that has survived to mark the Carolingian cultural effort. As is the case with contemporary historical inquiry in general, Carolingian cultural history will continue to be enriched by the identification of new participants and by a new array of activities that can properly be annexed to the realm of cultural history.

The chapters of Bernice M. Kaczynski and Richard L. Crocker remind us of two matters that will undoubtedly play a role in future studies of Carolingian cultural life. They show us the ways in which received tradition—be it in music, scriptural exegesis, or doctrinal discourse—was transformed into new forms of cultural expression that in the long run made a significant impact on the cultural history of western Europe. And they remind us of an array of cultural figures—such as anonymous cantors (whose potential creative role was stunningly illustrated by Crocker’s virtuoso performance of Carolingian chant), choir singers, preachers, translators, scribes, and manuscript illuminators—who had a role in shaping the cultural environment for which they have been given little attention. In a sense these dimensions of Carolingian intellectual and artistic life present a version of Carolingian culture “from the bottom up.” A firmer grasp on Carolingian cultural history depends on the willingness of future scholars to pursue this line of inquiry on as broad a range as possible.

Thomas F. X. Noble’s account of the *Libri Carolini* focuses our attention on the innovative aspects of the cultural program of Charlemagne’s court; his interpretation of that text must now be set beside Ann Freeman’s account of how far the *Libri Carolini* was a failure. His reading of the *Libri Carolini* only serves to highlight what is implicit in all the other essays: there were dimensions of Carolingian cultural activity that broke new intellectual and aesthetic ground. Such creative efforts were responses
made by individuals who saw thought and expression as means of resolving real problems facing real people. Future cultural historians must continue the effort to identify the innovative aspects of the Carolingian cultural revival and put it into its appropriate place in the total stream of cultural history.

Lawrence Nees provides sure guidance to the considerable array of Carolingianists who suffer to a greater or lesser degree from visual illiteracy. His skilled reading of visual artifacts in search of the message their creators sought to convey about the real world in which they lived provides a highly instructive guide to how to decode visual images and a powerful reminder of what visual sources have to say about what people thought and felt.²⁸ Hardly less impressive on this same score is Crocker's exploitation of musical documents as sources of information for the cultural historian. These studies leave no doubt that in the future effective historians of Carolingian culture must develop skills in reading visual and aural as well as literary texts.

It need hardly be said that these chapters collectively highlight the ongoing importance of source criticism that is at once disciplined and imaginative, traditional and innovative. Without asserting undue claims to the possession of critical infallibility by virtue of adherence to one or another contemporary school of criticism, each author has subjected a “text” or a group of “texts” to the kind of scrutiny that at once honors the long tradition of treating sources as vessels containing a message about something that really happened while at the same time it takes into account contemporary critical insights relating to the nature of language, the processes governing human discourse, how texts are created, how their structure determines their message, and how their reception shapes their meaning. The authors' efforts in this realm highlight the importance of critical awareness to the advance of knowledge about Carolingian cultural life. It might be argued that a more overt and conscious collective cultivation of textual criticism among Carolingianists would be a fruitful enterprise.

Each of these studies confirms Sullivan's reminder that we must acknowledge the importance of the particularities of the Carolingian intellectual and artistic enterprise. That situation is obvious whatever aspect of cultural life one deals with: schoolbooks, curricula, teaching methods, the practices of different scriptoria, the performance of antiphons, the reception of classical and patristic authors, the interpretation of the past. Scholars need to continue their efforts to discern and describe these particularities. And they must remain patient in formulating generalizations
about Carolingian cultural life until they have mastered all its particularistic aspects.

But we must also recognize the truth of Sullivan’s remark in chapter 2 that “at stake [in Carolingian society] was control of the traditions that defined by whom, through what means, in what ways, and to what ends Christian society should be directed.” An investigation of that control, its costs in financial but also in social terms, its flaws, and its consequences is implied in all of these chapters. To escape the triumphalism of previous treatments of Carolingian cultural life it is worth trying to focus on what Carolingians were quarreling about. Lupus of Ferrières was more concerned with the cell of St. Josse than with the text of Cicero. That he regarded both tasks as compatible is the measure of what Carolingian tradition could encompass. Altmann explains how the Christian Helena is superior to Helen of Troy and reminded his readers that Christ’s apostles were not orators skilled in the splendors of eloquence or laden with worldly riches, for they were judged by the state of their souls, not the fluency of their words. The standard Christian formula for excusing faults of style is also a reminder of the Christian transformation of educational values. That transformation of power, embodied in the powers of the relics of Helena, is one symbol of how Carolingian education in particular and cultural life in general controlled the institutions and values of the Frankish empire. The essays collected here treat aspects of that control, and it is in searching for the visions of power they explore that we come closest to how to read them.

Notes

I am very grateful to Richard E. Sullivan for inviting me to write this piece, and for his meticulous and patient assistance in making it more lucid.


4. Such efforts are not always lacking in merit; see, e.g., Joaquin Martinez Pizarro, A Rhetoric of the Scene: Dramatic Narrative in the Early Middle Ages, pp. 129–50, which is stimulating on the historical writings of Paul the Deacon, Agnellus, and Notker.

5. James Fentress and Chris Wickham, Social Memory, p. 161. The Charlemagne whose twelve peers were recalled by the Contestado of Brazil in 1914 (ibid., p. 107) cannot be linked with education, yet the values he shared with his younger knights would have been recognized as a proper part of a schola by Bede and Hildemar.


9. This account draws on Amo Borst, “Das Karlsbild in der Geschichtswissenschaft vom Humanismus bis heute”; and Siegfried Epperlein, “Karl der Grosse in der deutschen bürgerlichen Geschichtsschreibung.”

10. For a background of Notker’s vision of Charlemagne, see Theodor Siegrist, Herrscherbild und Weltausbild Notker Balbulus: Untersuchungen zu den Gesta Karoli; and my own “Humour as History in Notker’s Gesta Karoli Magni.”

11. Albertus Krantzius, Saxonia, pp. 29–43. The work was composed in 1502.


13. PL 100:42–55. For Frobenius’s career, see Bernhard Bischoff, Salzburger Formelbücher und Briefe aus tassilonischer und karolingischer Zeit, pp. 3–7.


20. I know the works of Count Wackerbarth (comparing Charlemagne and Peter the Great) and of Barbet du Pertaud (comparing Charlemagne and Napoleon) only from library catalogues, but see C. H. Castille, *Parallèle entre César, Charlemagne et Napoléon: L’Empire et la démocratie, philosophie de la légende impériale*.
23. J.-J. Ampère, *Histoire littéraire de la France avant le douzième siècle*: “Par là, je suis amené à considérer le règne de Charlemagne sous son véritable point de vue, c’est-à-dire comme une renaissance... La première renaissance est la mère des deux autres” [In that way, I am led to consider the reign of Charlemagne from its true point of view, that is to say, as a renaissance... The first renaissance is the mother of the other two] (3:32). As Lucien Febvre has shown, the word “renaissance” was first used by Michelet; see his *Michelet et la Renaissance* (Paris, 1992), pp. 155–96.
27. B. Hauréau, *Charlemagne et sa cour*, pp. 21–45; quotation from Ampère is at p. 32. The chapter on the palace school is at pp. 198–228. Hauréau attributes to Charlemagne the desire to create a new Athens; see p. 203. (This work went through four editions from 1854 to 1888 in the Bibliothèque des chemins de fer).

29. I rely on a transcript of unpublished lectures on Charlemagne by Burckhardt, which survives in Basel. The text will be edited in the forthcoming Gesamtausgabe of Burckhardt's writings.


31. Monnier, who was trained at the Ecole des Chartres, describes the renaissance of Gaul under Charlemagne, listing schools in each diocese and reprinting library catalogues. I have been unable to examine Maitre's work.

32. In addition to the MGH editions, Philippus Jaffe's editions of texts related to Charlemagne and of the letters and other works of Alcuin, in his *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, 6 vols. (Berlin, 1864—73), vols. 4 (texts related to Charlemagne) and 6 (Alcuin's works) deserve particular mention, as do the reasons for his suicide. On Jaffe, see Gabriel Silagi, "Jaffe, Philipp," in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (Berlin, 1974), 10:292—93.

33. Ernst Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfränkischen Reiches*.


35. "Das geistige Feld der Germanen dieser Zeit war noch durchaus die Anschauung, das Nebeneinander, nicht aber das Verständnis, das Übereinander," Karl Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 2:46—83. It is instructive to compare Lamprecht's picture with that of the novelist and cultural historian Gustav Freytag, who, after citing the same quotations from Notker, Angilbert, and Alcuin, affirmed that "the king had an unbounded reverence in the presence of all higher learning and understood exactly and quickly" ("Der König hatte eine unbegrenzte Ehrfurcht vor allem edelen Wissen und fasste scharf und schnell"); see *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*, vol. 1, chap. 6, pp. 314—48, at p. 337. Freytag described Charlemagne using the present tense! There is a chapter entitled "La Renaissance carolingienne" in Gabriel Monod, *Etudes critiques sur les sources de l'histoire carolingienne*, pp. 37—67, emphasizing Charlemagne's contribution and suggesting decline had set in by the reign of Charles the Bald.

36. K. Schreiner, "Führertum, Rasse, Reich: Wissenschaft von der Geschichte nach der nationalsozialistischen Machtteregreifung," pp. 163—252. At p. 189 the author notes as typical of these historians the idea that "without Charlemagne today there would be no German people and no German history" ("Ohne Karl den Grossen gabe es heute kein deutsches Volk und keine deutsche Geschichte").

37. "Das deutsche Volk sei auch nicht lediglich als ein Produkt von antiker Idee und Christentum, sondern als ein Produkt von Gewalt, antiker Idee und Christentum entstanden ... Kulturarbeit sei Zusammenarbeit." Henry Picker, ed., *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier* (Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 166—67. Charlemagne has no place in *Mein Kampf*, but Hitler regarded him as a great German emperor. While Hitler seems to have read little more than his school textbooks, his ignorance made his stance all too clear, and others followed his lead.

39. "In Memoriam Hermann Heimpel," Göttinger Universitätsreden 83 (1989), esp. pp. 34–42, with an account of Heimpel at the 1987 Historikertag. Heimpel was a student of S. Hellmann, the author of classic studies of Einhard and Sedulius Scottus, who was killed in a concentration camp.

40. Levison's seminal work was England and the Continent in the Eighth Century, esp. the lecture entitled "Learning and Scholarship," pp. 132–73. On Levison, see Theodor Schieffer in Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter 40 (1976): 225–42.

41. Extracts from the speeches of Paul Sethe and Kurt Reich on this occasion are printed by Friedrich Schneider, Die neueren Anschauungen der deutschen Historiker über die deutsche Kaiserpolitik des Mittelalters und die mit ihr verbundene Ostpolitik, pp. 39–40. The Franks did not think like the Carolingians (p. 37).


43. Winston Churchill, Konrad Adenauer, Jean Monnet, Helmut Kohl, and François Mitterand, among others. It is relevant that the prize was not awarded to Willy Brandt.

44. Erna Patzelt, Die karolingische Renaissance.

45. M. L. W. Laistner, Thought and Letters in Western Europe, A.D. 500 to 900; the quotation is from the preface of the first edition as reprinted in the revised edition, p. 5.


47. Pierre Riché, Ecoles et enseignement dans le haut moyen âge: Fin du Ve siècle-milieu du XIe siècle. Riché's earlier monograph, entitled Education et culture dans l'Occident barbare, 6e–8e siècles, is an indispensable collection of material for those who wish to evaluate whether there was a Carolingian renaissance of learning. Other recent surveys are Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, "La 'Renaissance carolingienne': Modèles culturels, usages linguistiques et structures sociales"; and Johannes Fried, Der Weg in die Geschichte: Die Urspriinge Deutschlands bis 1024, pp. 263–96. The treatment of Carolingian cultural life in the forthcoming vol. 2 of The New Cambridge Medieval History should be a valuable addition to these efforts to provide an overview of the Carolingian cultural achievement.

48. The best example is the five-volume work entitled Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben, cited in n. 42, above. Others include Peter Godman and Roger Collins, eds., Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis

49. Illustrative are Donald A. Bullough, The Age of Charlemagne; Friedrich Heer, Charlemagne and His World; Riché, Les Carolingiens: Une famille qui fit l'Europe; and Arnold Angenendt, Das Frühmittelalter: Die abendländische Christenheit von 400 bis 900.

50. For Gottschalk, whose grammatical writings await an adequate study, see his Oeuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais, ed. Cyrille Lambot. For Paschasius, see the editions of his works by Bede Paulus, E. Ann Matter, and Albert Ripberger, CC cont. med. 16, 56, 56A–C, 85, 94, 97 (Turnhout, 1969, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1991); and the important review by A. Hardelin in Kyrkohistorisk Arsskrift 87 (1987): 23–36. For Carolingian glosses to Bede, see Bedae Venerabilis Opera, pt. 6, Opera didascalica, ed. Charles W. Jones, 3 vols., CCSL, 123A–C (Turnhout, 1975–80), which incorporates editions of the glosses; and Steven B. Killion, “Bede's Irish Legacy: Knowledge and Use of Bede's Works in Ireland from the Eighth through the Sixteenth Century,” which treats the Old Irish glosses that circulated in the Carolingian world. On the matter of publication of improved editions of Carolingian sources, the products of the Corpus Christianorum series and of the MGH are of crucial importance to Carolingianists.

51. On this matter, see the remarks of Sullivan above, chap. 1.


53. The importance of such “editing” for understanding the Carolingian renaissance will become obvious to anyone who spends a few moments surveying Jean Hubert, Jean Porcher, and Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, L'Empire carolingien; or Marcel Durliat, Des barbares à l'an mil.

Conclusion


Laon: John J. Contreni, *The Cathedral School of Laon from 850 to 930: Its Manuscripts and Masters.*

Corbie: David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance.*

Fleury: Marco Mostert, *The Library of Fleury: A Provisional List of Manuscripts.* Mostert is engaged in a full study of Fleury.


56. Louis Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical: Etude sur l’“Ars Donati” et sa diffusion (IVe—IXe siècle) et édition critique,* is the model.


58. The Virgil glosses in MS Bern 165 identify the Daci with the Northmen and refer to the teachings of Master Berno.

59. While vernacular glosses have been expertly studied, Latin glosses still need editors. For an insight into the problems, see W. M. Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt, and Leiden Glossaries,* and for the complexity of one tradition, see Charles E. Murgia, *Prolegomena to Servius,* vol. 5: *The Manuscripts.* For Boethius, see Gibson, “Boethius in the Carolingian Age”; for Priscian, see Gibson, “Milestones in the Study of Priscian, circa 800—circa 1200.”


61. On Lupus and Heiric, see the contributions to Dominique Iogna-Prat, Colette Jeudy, and Guy Lobrichon, eds., *L'Ecole carolingienne d'Auxerre de Muretshach à Rome,* 830—908.

62. For Greek, see Walter Berschin, *Greek Letters and the Latin Middle Ages: From Jerome to Nicholas of Cusa,* and the important papers in Michael W. Herren, ed., *The Sacred Nectar of the Greeks: The Study of Greek in the West in the Early Middle Ages.*


66. On the circulation of the works of Augustine, see Alain J. Stoclet, *Le De civitate dei de St. Augustin*”; and the studies by M. Gorman summarized in his “The Manuscript Tradition of St. Augustine’s Major Works.” For Jerome, see Bernard Lambert, *Bibliotheca Hieronymiana Manuscripta: La Tradition manuscrite des œuvres de saint Jérôme*, which provides a full list of all extant manuscripts including the spuria.

67. The proceedings of the 1991 Aachen colloquium, Paul Leo Butzer and Dietrich Lohrmann, eds., *Science in Western and Eastern Civilization in Carolingian Times*, make an important contribution in filling this gap. See also Wesley M. Stevens, *Bede’s Scientific Achievement: The Jarrow Lecture, 1985*, with a list of all extant manuscripts of Bede’s *De temporum ratione*; and Bruce S. Eastwood, “Plinian Astronomical Diagrams in the Early Middle Ages.” H. le Bourdelles, *De Astronomia more Christiano,* edits a Carolingian treatise on the zodiac, though the author’s claim to have established that it was composed by Paschasius Radbertus is neither convincing nor probable.


69. Gundolf Keil and Paul Schnitzler, eds., *Das Lorscher Arzneibuch und die frühmittelalterliche Medizin*. There is a helpful introduction in M. L. Cameron, “The Sources of Medical Knowledge in Anglo-Saxon England.”

70. P. Köpp, ed., *Vademecum eines frühmittelalterlichen Arztes.*


73. For Tours, see E. Mabille, “Les Invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de St. Martin”; a charter of 894, printed on p. 434, gives a history of the *scola Sancti Martini* from the reign of Charlemagne. For Fulda, see Mechthild Sandmann, “Wirkungsbereich fuldische Mönche,” pp. 760–63, where there is a discussion of the *magistri.*

74. Mayke de Jong, “Growing up in a Carolingian Monastery: Magister Hilde-mar and His Oblates.”

75. For an acute characterization of early medieval education, see Detlef Illmer, “Totum namque in sola experientia usque consistit: Eine Studie zur monastischen Erziehung und Sprache”; and Illmer, *Formen der Erziehung und Wissensvermittlung im frühen Mittelalter: Quellenstudien zur Frage der*
Kontinuität des abendländischen Erziehungswesens. The challenge Illmer presents to Riché's account of early medieval education has remained unanswered.

76. Seventeen of his articles are collected in Contreni, *Carolingian Learning, Masters, and Manuscripts*. In addition he is the author of a chapter entitled “The Carolingian Renaissance, Education, and Literary Culture” to appear in the forthcoming *New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2.

77. Ann Freeman, “Carolingian Orthodoxy and the Fate of the *Libri Carolini*”; and Celia M. Chazelle, “Images, Scripture, the Church, and the Libri Carolini.”

78. Lawrence Nees is also a contributor to the forthcoming *New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2. I have offered a sketch of an alternative approach to Carolingian art in “‘Pando quod ignoro’: In Search of Carolingian Artistic Experience.”
