

*Małgorzata Chudzikowska-Wołoszyn*

## THE ANTI-CORRUPTION MANIFESTO OF THEODULF OF ORLEANS. A CONTRIBUTION TO A DISCUSSION ABOUT LITERATURE OF THE CAROLINGIAN ERA

It remains unknown to what extent Master Theodulf, Charlemagne's protégé, was able to escape from earthly weaknesses such as snobbery or exaltation. In view of the respect bestowed on him by the members of Aachen's academic community<sup>1</sup> and the monarch himself, we could venture to say that the poet separated himself from other mortals with a wall of fairylike pathos and megalomania. Yet an in-depth analysis of Theodulf's works seems to refute those observations. It suggests that Theodulf, one of the most educated academics at Charlemagne's court<sup>2</sup>, an expert scholar of Latin and classic literature, an outstanding theologian and mentor, was also a master of self-discipline.

Theodulf received a well-rounded education before rising to the position of Charlemagne's indispensable advisor and intellectual dedicated to the cause. The early life of this outstanding poet and bishop remains a mystery. Theodulf's date of birth is unknown, and various researchers placed it some-

---

<sup>1</sup> Alcuin, a versatile educator and the leading promoter of education in the Kingdom of the Franks, referred to Theodulf as "the finest of men endowed with wisdom incarnate". Cf. Alcuinus, Ep. 225, in: *MGH, Epistolae, Epistolae Karolini aevi* II, p. 369.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Raby referred to Theodulf as the finest poet of his time. According to Raby, the bishop's talent most closely matched that of Venantius Fortunatus who lived two centuries before Theodulf. Cf. F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, ed. 2, Oxford University Press 1966, p. 174. According to William Paton Ker, Theodulf's poems are not characterized by the liveliness we find in Fortunatus' work. Yet in comparison with the bishop of Poitiers, Theodulf's work enjoyed greater social esteem. Cf. W. P. Ker, *Wczesne średniowiecze. Zarys historii literatury*, translated by T. Rybowski, Wrocław 1977, p. 122.

where between 750 and 760<sup>3</sup>. This early medieval scholar of Gothic descent was born in Spain, and he fled the country in the face of the “Arab occupation”<sup>4</sup>. In 781, he arrived at Charlemagne’s court when the monarch’s achievements in both foreign and internal policy were at their peak.

Theodulf’s greatest strength was his perfect command of Latin which he had mastered on equal terms with his mother tongue. The Gothic poet’s Latin was undoubtedly more “alive” than the academic and schematic language used by another pioneer scholar of the Carolingian Renaissance, Alcuin of York (~735–804). For the Anglo-Saxons, the language of the Romans was a literary and “dead” set of symbols that were completely unrelated to their social development. Theodulf grew up in a country where Roman traditions were permanently rooted in the national heritage. Spain preserved many traces of its Roman past. Latin was definitely spoken in cities that cultivated their Roman traditions. The significance of Roman culture for the development of the Iberian Peninsula was rhetorically described by Pierre Riché: “Could the Roman tradition fall into oblivion in Spain, a country that had benefited immensely from Rome’s intellectual culture and reciprocated in gratitude by giving Seneca, Lucan, Quintilian and Marial to Rome?”<sup>5</sup>.

Theodulf’s fine education was thus a reflection on Spain’s extensive intellectual traditions. Bishopric schools were officially institutionalized in Spain already in 572<sup>6</sup>. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the royal court in Toledo was one of Europe’s most prominent intellectual centers. The monarch’s well-stocked library comprised both religious and secular works. Visigothic aristocrats were thoroughly educated in rhetoric and grammar, and the clerical culture was in full blossom already in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. This era witnessed the rise of Isidore of Seville, one of the most learned men of the early Middle Ages (~560 – 636).

Theodulf’s knowledge and skill testify to the magnificence and significance of the “Isidorian” period. The rich traditions of his country instilled in him the enthusiasm to study the ancient masters and explore biblical and theological problems. Theodulf was an exegetist, a theologian, a moralist and a poet. He was among the great Visigothic scholars who revitalized humanistic ideals<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The most recommended works discussing Theodulf of Orleans: F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, vol. I, ed. 2, Oxford University Press 1967, pp. 189–197; Hugh Bredin, *Alcuin (c. 735–804) and Theodulf of Orleans (died 821)*, edited by Chris Murray, in: *Key Writers on Art: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*, Taylor & Francis Books 2003, pp. 22–28; E. Duemmler, *Theodulf carmina*, in: *MGH, Poetae I*, Berolini 1881, pp. 437–445; C. Liersch, *Die Gedichte Theodulfs, Bischofs von Orlean*, Halle 1880.

<sup>4</sup> The Arab invasion of Spain began in 711.

<sup>5</sup> P. Riché, *Edukacja i kultura w Europie Zachodniej (VI–VIII w.)*, translated by M. Radozycka-Paoletti, Warszawa 1995, p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> The Toledo synod of 527 decided to create bishopric schools where future clerics were educated under the bishop’s supervision. Cf. P. Riche, *Edukacja i kultura w Europie Zachodniej (VI–VIII w.)*, pp. 137–138.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. P. Riché, op. cit., pp. 288–289.

*De libris quos legere solebamet qualiter fabulae poetarum a philosophis mystice pertractentur*<sup>8</sup>, a 60-verse long poem, provides us with a deeper insight into Theodulf's intellect. The work makes numerous references to the Gothic poet's favorite readings and literary inspirations. Theodulf admits to having been influenced by the teachings of Gregory the Great, Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose and Isidore<sup>9</sup>. His views and general knowledge were shaped by the works of Sedulius, Arator and Fortunatus<sup>10</sup>. Prudentius, a Spanish-born philosopher, was greatly esteemed by Theodulf who referred to him as *parens*<sup>11</sup>. Theodulf also admitted to a weakness for Donatus, Virgil and the "loquacious" */loquax/ Ovid*<sup>12</sup>.

Unlike Alcuin, the Gothic scholar openly admitted his fascination with classic authors. He rejected the extreme views of Alcuin who forbade his students from reading Virgil whose works, according to Alcuin, could cast a "fatal spell" on Christian readers<sup>13</sup>. Theodulf resorted to allegory as formal justification for his fascination with pagan authors. In descriptions of ancient deities, he searched for ideals and symbols that he transposed onto Christian ground. This approach enabled him to freely explore the classic works of Virgil and Ovid. Frederick Raby referred to Theodulf's allegorical method of analyzing controversial literature as "exorcising the latent evil"<sup>14</sup>.

*De septem liberalibus artibus in quadam pictura depictis*<sup>15</sup> fully asserts Theodulf's vast educational backgrounds. As it turns out, the Visigothic poet had mastered all of the seven liberated arts, and he attached the greatest importance to grammar, followed by rhetoric and dialectic which he referred to as *mater sensus*<sup>16</sup>. He also emphasized the significance of logic, ethics, physics and geometry.

Theodulf made an immense contribution to the intellectual prowess of Charlemagne's court. He was the monarch's most admired court poet and theologian. Together with Alcuin, Einhard (770–840), Angilbert (745–814), Paul the Deacon (~720 – ~790) and Paulinus of Aquileia (before 750 – ~802), he was part of the first generation of Carolingian erudites who made laborious efforts to reinstate the correct usage of Latin in liturgical rites, administration and literature<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Theodulfus, *De libris quos legere solebamet qualiter fabulae poetarum a philosophis mystice pertractentur*, [w:] MGH, *Poetae I*, pp. 543–544.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 3 and 5, p. 543.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 1, p. 543.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 16, p. 543.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 18, p. 543.

<sup>13</sup> F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>15</sup> Theodulfus, *De septem liberalibus artibus in quadam pictura depictis*, in: MGH, *Poetae I*, pp. 544–547.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 27, p. 545.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. E. Auerbach, *Język literacki i jego odbiorcy w późnym antyku łacińskim i średniowieczu*, translated by R. Urbański, Kraków 2006, p. 111.

The provisions of the Second Council of Nicaea (787) provided Theodulf with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate his aptitude for debating on controversial theological issues. His skills did not meet with the approval of the Franconian west. Already in 788, Charlemagne was presented with council documents which were translated from ancient Greek into Latin and imposed the worship of icons on the Christian world. Those ideas did not find fertile ground in the Carolingian empire. For the Franks, this Byzantine adoration was synonymous with idolatry. Their beliefs relating to the presentation of sacred images were rooted in the teachings of Pope Gregory I<sup>18</sup>. The Carolingian manifesto was developed over a period of four years. In 794, the debate was closed with a polemicizing treatise. Theodulf<sup>19</sup> was presented with the honorary function of the treatise's "editor-in-chief". He brought together Carolingian theologians' deliberations into a single piece of work known as *Libri Carolini*<sup>20</sup>.

Theodulf also authored many diocese statutes in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The statutes were written once a year during clerical conventions. Those documents are an invaluable source of information about the life of Carolingian clergy, liturgical traditions and the congregation's mentality<sup>21</sup>. Theodulf also participated in the debate surrounding *Filioque*. Commissioned by Charlemagne, a great advocate of the theory postulating the consubstantial hypostasis of the Holy Trinity<sup>22</sup>, the poet also edited the treatise entitled *De Spiritu Sancto*<sup>23</sup>.

In 794, Charlemagne instructed the Gothic scholar to compose an epitaph for his deceased fourth wife, Fastrada<sup>24</sup>. Already then, Theodulf was

<sup>18</sup> Gregory I (590–604) was the first to emphasize the didactic significance of images, arguing that an image is a "Bible for the poor" /*Biblia pauperum*/.

<sup>19</sup> *Libri Carolini* was long attributed to Alcuin. The discussion regarding the treatise's true author was reopened in 1777 by Froben Forster who edited a collection of Alcuin's works. He questioned Alcuin's authorship of *Libri Carolini*. More references to the authorship of *Libri Carolini*: L. Wallach, *Diplomatic Studies in Latin and Greek Documents from the Carolingian Age*, Ithaca 1977; A. Freeman, *Theodulf of Orleans and the Libri Carolini*, "Speculum", 32/1957, pp. 663–705; P. Meyvaert, *The authorship of the Libri Carolini, Observations prompted by a recent Book*, "Revue Benedictine" 89/1979, pp. 29–57; A. Freeman, *Theodulf of Orleans: Charlemagne's Spokesman against the Second Council of Nicaea (Variorum Collected Studies Series)*, ed. P. Meyvaert, Ashgate Publishing 2003.

<sup>20</sup> The full title is: *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum*. The most recent edition of the treatise was published in 1998 and edited by Ann Freeman.

<sup>21</sup> P. Riché, *Chrześcijaństwo na karolińskim Zachodzie (połowa VIII — koniec IX wieku)*, in: *Historia Chrześcijaństwa. Biskupi, mnisi i cesarze (610–1054)*, eds. G. Dagron, P. Riché, A. Vauchez, translated by A. Kuryś, Warszawa 1999, p. 559.

<sup>22</sup> M. Żakowska, *Prawosławne widzenie dogmatu Trójcy Świętej. Filioque*, "Seminare" 24/2007.

<sup>23</sup> Theodulfus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, in: *PL*, col. 239–276.

<sup>24</sup> Charlemagne's marriage to his first wife, Himiltrude, was dissolved after she had given birth to their son Pepin who suffered from a spine deformity. Pepin's disability was only a pretext for dismissing Himiltrude with the aim of establishing a political alliance between Charlemagne and Desiderata, the daughter of the King of the Lombards. After annulling the marriage with Desiderata, the monarch remarried three times. In 771, he married Hildegard, in 783 – Fastrada, and in 794 – Luitgard.

called Pindar by his fellow academics in Aachen. The eloquence and pathos of the queen's epitaph<sup>25</sup> demonstrate that the author's nickname had been fully deserved. The monarch also commissioned Theodulf to write an elegy for Pope Hadrian I<sup>26</sup>. He composed works in honor of the people closest to Charlemagne, which suggests that Theodulf was probably the monarch's personal poet. The literary exuberance and freedom of *Ad Carolum regem*<sup>27</sup>, a poem dating back to around 796, testify to the trust vested in the poet by the king. This work is a prime example of panegyric court poetry, and it accurately depicts the monarch's private life. Theodulf composed the poem with a significant dose of humor which further asserts his friendly relations with Charlemagne.

In recognition of his service to literature, the monarch appointed Theodulf the Bishop of Orleans. Theodulf fulfilled this function with utmost diligence, and followed Charlemagne's orders to establish schools in monasteries and cathedrals. The poet ventured even further by creating schools in towns and rural areas where children from the poorest families could get free basic education under clerical supervision<sup>28</sup>. The bishop's dedication earned him yet another promotion in 789 when he was entrusted with the post of the emperor's controlling officer, *missus dominicus*<sup>29</sup>, and was dispatched to inspect the Province of Narbonne. This long journey prompted Theodulf to write his longest poem, *Versus Teodulfi episcopi contra iudices*<sup>30</sup>, in criticism of the abuse of power, corruption and legal violations that he had encountered in the audited region.

*Contra iudices* is a rhetorical admonition composed in dactylic pentameter and inspired by the work of Ovid<sup>31</sup>, Virgil<sup>32</sup>, Prudentius<sup>33</sup> and Sedu-

<sup>25</sup> Theodulfus, *Epitaphium Fastradae reginae*, in: *MGH, Poetae I*, p. 483.

<sup>26</sup> He died in 796. Theodulf composed an elegy in his memory, entitled *Super sepulcrum Hadriani papae*, in: *MGH, Poetae I*, pp. 489–490.

<sup>27</sup> Theodulfus, *Ad Carolum regem*, in: *MGH*, s. 483–489.

<sup>28</sup> J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian–Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, p. 173.

<sup>29</sup> The office of royal envoy — *missus dominicus* — was established by Charlemagne in 789. The officers inspected all administrative regions to strengthen the monarch's control over the state. The empire comprised around 30 such regions, referred to as *missatica*. Every inspection was carried out by two officers, one secular and one clerical. They received detailed instructions from the monarch in the regularly edicted *capitularia missorum*. The office of control inspector survived through the reign of Louis the Pious, and it gradually disappeared in the period of confraternity that followed his death. Local inspections ceased to take place in the kingdom of Louis the German. To limit their dependence on the monarch, the nobles made every attempt to interrupt the appointment of the inspectors.

<sup>30</sup> Theodulfus, *Versus Teodulfi episcopi contra iudices*, (later *Contra iudices*) in: *MGH, Poetae I*, pp. 493–517.

<sup>31</sup> Numerous references to *Amores* and *Ars amatoria*. Theodulf's rhetoric was also inspired by *Remedia amoris*, *Metamorphoses* (mainly in mythical digressions), *Fasti*, *Epistulae ex Ponto* and *Tristia*.

<sup>32</sup> The bishop of Orleans was significantly influenced by the language of *Aeneid*, *Georgics* and *Bucolics*.

<sup>33</sup> Some of Theodulf's biblical digressions are based on *Cathermerinon liber*. The allegorical conflict in the judge's soul resembles that described in *Psychomachia*, (*Battle for Mansoul*).

lius<sup>34</sup>. In 956 verses that list the judges' vices, the bishop of Orleans warned all corrupt assessors of infernal suffering<sup>35</sup> and encouraged them to become fully dedicated to their work. Diligent observance of duties, argued Theodulf, produces numerous rewards and leads to eternal happiness<sup>36</sup>. The poem enumerates Biblical fathers and monarchs whom the author considered to be model examples of virtues for mortals. The list opens with Moses, and the poet also makes references to Samuel, Hezekiah and Josiah<sup>37</sup>.

The apologetic introduction ends in verse 99. The further sequence contains a highly captivating description of the function held by Theodulf, with detailed topographic data that support the identification of the traveled route.

The Visigothic poet proudly reported that Charlemagne, "the generous and fair distributor of goods"<sup>38</sup> chose him to perform "duties of utmost caliber"<sup>39</sup>. Theodulf was appointed for the office of controlling officer<sup>40</sup> in one of the royal districts<sup>41</sup> in Narbonese Gaul (Galia Narbonensi). He was aided in his work by Laidrad, later the bishop of Lyon<sup>42</sup>.

The first city on the inspectors' long and tiresome journey was Lyon, followed by the rocky Vienne<sup>43</sup>, the city of Valance<sup>44</sup>, the estates of Avignon<sup>45</sup>, forts in Nimes<sup>46</sup>, Narbonne<sup>47</sup>, Carcassonne<sup>48</sup>, Arles<sup>49</sup> and Marseille<sup>50</sup>. In each visited town, the emperor's officer encountered many people from various age groups and social classes who attempted to reach their goals through material gain<sup>51</sup>. He describes the objects presented to him with great mastery. The poem shows Theodulf to be a great art connoisseur. Although he had a general contempt for bribery, he was able to appraise the quality of the presented gifts with remarkable skill. The poem features

<sup>34</sup> References to *Carmen paschale*.

<sup>35</sup> *Contra iudices*, v. 5–6, p. 494.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 7–12, p. 494.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 21–44, p. 494.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 102. This is Theodulf's panegyric homage to Charlemagne. With great pathos, the poet enumerated the rivers that succumbed to the monarch's reign, among them Waal, Rhone, Meuse, Rhine, Seine, Weser, Garonne, Po, Marne, Danube and Elbe. This list set the limits of the Christian ruler's territorial domain. Cf. *Ibid.*, v. 103–106, p. 496.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 100, p. 496.

<sup>40</sup> *Missus dominicus*

<sup>41</sup> *Contra iudices*, v. 125–142, p. 497

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 117, p. 496.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 125, p. 497.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 127, p. 497.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 129, p. 497.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 131, p. 497.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 137, p. 497.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 141, p. 497.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 146, p. 497.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 151, p. 497.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 163–169, p. 498.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 179–202, pp. 498–499.

a masterly description of ornaments on an ancient vase<sup>52</sup>. This mythological digression asserts Theodulf as a master of rhetoric and an expert in ancient art. With great ease and refinement, Theodulf depicts Heracles' struggle against various opponents<sup>53</sup>. The antique vessel was covered with a series of mythological scenes. Theodulf's literary mastery breathed life into the portrayed figures. The scenes become dynamic, they create a sense of motion and pull the reader into the mythical world. We accompany Heracles<sup>54</sup> in his struggle against the merciless monster Cacus<sup>55</sup>. Thanks to the poet's skillful form of expression, we hear the cracking of the bones broken by the hero, we shudder at the image of the conquered giant's crushed throat and ripped entrails. We suffer the tragedy of Deianira who watches her dearest Heracles die before her very eyes, wrapped in a blood-stained robe<sup>56</sup>. The detailed account of ornaments on the antique vase brings to mind Homer's description of the shield of Achilles<sup>57</sup>, which was later deployed by Virgil to portray the shield of Aeneas<sup>58</sup>. Theodulf's lengthy and panoramic imagery draws upon the legacy of ancient masters, most probably Virgil and Ovid. For Polish readers, the Visigothic poet's vase creates associations with Wojski's dishware which was intricately described by Mickiewicz<sup>59</sup> and the cup of "concord" in Krasicki's *Monachomachia*<sup>60</sup>.

*Missus dominicus* was presented with an impressive choice of bribes. Theodulf provides the readers with a long list of colorful capes<sup>61</sup>, crystal and silver cups<sup>62</sup>, swords, helmets, shields<sup>63</sup>, Spanish hide<sup>64</sup>, wool and linen garments, shoes and hats<sup>65</sup>. He was also offered horses, mules, foals and oxen<sup>66</sup>. The scale of bribery was limitless. The Bishop of Orleans condemned both those who accepted bribes as well as those who, taught by previous experience, gave them. Bribery had been common practice for centuries,

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., v. 194–199, p. 499.

<sup>54</sup> Scenes from the myth of Heracles adorn many ancient vases, among them the black figure lekythos from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC depicting Heracles fighting with Triton. The image of Heracles killing Nessos is the leading motif of ornaments on the famous Nessos amphora (around 615 BC). Ancient pottery also features images of the twelve labors of Heracles, including an amphora depicting Heracles and Stymphalian birds (around 500 BC), Heracles fighting with the Lernaean hydra (black figure amphora, around 540 BC), a kalpis showing Heracles fighting with the Cretan bull (around 500-475 BC).

<sup>55</sup> *Contra iudices*, v. 181–188, p. 498.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., v. 199, p. 499.

<sup>57</sup> *Iliad*, book XVIII.

<sup>58</sup> *Eneid*, book VIII.

<sup>59</sup> *Pan Tadeusz*, book XII.

<sup>60</sup> Song VI.

<sup>61</sup> *Contra iudices*, v. 211, p. 499.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., v. 221, p. 499.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., v. 236, p. 500.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., v. 245, p. 500.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., v. 247–248, p. 500.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., v. 217, p. 499.

plunging the empire into turmoil and anarchy. Theodulf referred to bribery as an epidemic and the worst insanity<sup>67</sup>. He instilled honest practices and ethical work principles into judges.

Theodulf advocated firmness and perseverance in action. He appealed to his readers to care for orphans, widows and the poor. In the poet's opinion, humility and prudence should be the main qualities of every juror. He conjured up scenes that were guidelines for effective and fair conflict resolution. He advised his readers how to avoid suspicious deals.

The poem is more than an appalled author's monotonous and dramatic outcry for justice. Theodulf resorted to various literary and stylistic techniques to breathe life into his work. The satirical scene depicted near verse 700 is a humorous parable. Theodulf masterly uses hyperboles to convey the heroes' grotesque and highly expressive characteristics. There is the judge's weeping wife who is unable to forgive her husband for sending away a generous donor. There is a crowd of maids who unite in grief with their greedy mistress. In conclusion, Theodulf demonstrates that a plot hatched by a woman is the ultimate trial by fire for stewards of justice. The advice dispensed to a fictional judge testifies to the author's skill of composition, and it comprises a series of suggestive arguments characteristic of cynic rhetoric<sup>68</sup>. The bishop's tempestuous and satirical criticism occasionally takes the form of short dialogues.

In *Contra iudices*, the Bishop of Orleans paints a very suggestive picture of provincial life engulfed in lawlessness. Yet the poem is more than a rhetorical work filled with pathos. Grotesque and humor endow the poem with timeless originality. Its structure demonstrates that Theodulf had a masterly command of language which he deployed to express his individuality. The poet was able to score these achievements at a time that was not conducive to literary experiments or ambitious, pioneer ideas. In the bishop's cultural milieu, success could be achieved only through the strict observance of long-established trends<sup>69</sup>. The poem asserts the Spanish tradition's significant contribution to Carolingian culture. Theodulf gave to the Franks something that the Anglo-Saxons could never offer. The Visigothic poet's technique was rooted in Spain's centuries-long connections with the Latin language and civilization<sup>70</sup>.

Theodulf's period of prosperity, which commenced upon his arrival in the Kingdom of the Franks, came to an abrupt end in 814. Theodulf's tragedy began with the death of his great mentor and benefactor, Charlemagne. His successor, Louis the Pious, was not endowed with his father's artistic sensi-

---

<sup>67</sup> v. v. 255–256, p. 500: *O scelerata lues, partes diffusa per omnes, o scelus, o furor, o res truculenta nimis, (...)*.

<sup>68</sup> F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, pp. 194–195.

<sup>69</sup> W. P. Ker, *Wczesne średniowiecze. Zarys historii literatury*, p. 23.

<sup>70</sup> F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, p. 197.



tivity. The new king was absorbed by the chaotic situation in internal affairs which seemed to escape his control. In 818, the emperor's authority was undermined by a plot staged by his nephew, Bernard of Italy, who opposed the monarch's concept of indivisibility of the Empire. Louis the Pious issued an *Ordinatio imperii*, an imperial decree that laid out plans for an orderly succession to guarantee the unity of the Empire. The rebellion came to a bloody end and Bernard, its initiator, was sentenced to blinding. He did not survive the ordeal and died in 818. The emperor started an investigation to disclose all supporters of the rebellion. Theodulf was among the suspects, and despite attempts to assert his innocence, he was removed from the post of Bishop of Orleans and imprisoned in St. Albin's monastery in Angers<sup>71</sup>.

An avid supporter of Ovid, Theodulf also shared the great poet's dramatic fate. Eight centuries earlier, Ovid was exiled by emperor Augustus to Tomi, and he was forced to leave Rome at the peak of his popularity. A similar fate befell Theodulf who was confined to prison and oblivion in Angers. Identifying with his Roman predecessor, the poet sent a pleading letter in which muse Thalia spoke in his defense<sup>72</sup>. The letter was addressed to Theodulf's influential friend, Bishop Modoin of Autun.

While in banishment, Theodulf composed his best religious poem, *Gloria laus et honor*<sup>73</sup>. To this day, the hymn is sung during Palm Sunday liturgy. When the ceremonious procession depicting Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem approaches the gates, Theodulf's hymn of praise is intoned inside the church. The poem, composed in dactylic pentameter, is one of the finest works of Latin church hymnography.

Around 821, Louis the Pious decided to acquit the bishop of Orleans<sup>74</sup>. Theodulf was released from Angers, and he tried to reclaim his bishopric in Orleans. There is little historical evidence indicating whether the poet was able to reach the city. Theodulf died shortly after the emperor had issued the acquitting sentence. His burial place remains unknown.

To conclude our discussion on Theodulf's work, let me once again quote

<sup>71</sup> More references to the rebellion initiated by Bernard of Italy and Theodulf's punishment – B. Simson, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reichs unter Ludwig dem Frommen*, vol I, Leipzig 1874, pp. 117 and 122.

<sup>72</sup> Theodulfus, *Epistola Theodulfi episcopi ad Modoinum episcopum scribens ei de exilio*, [w:] MGH, *Poetae I*, pp. 563–565.

<sup>73</sup> Theodulfus, *Gloria laus et honor*, in: MGH, *Poetae I*, pp. 558–559. The hymn for Palm Sunday (*Na procesję w Niedzielę Palmową*) was translated into Polish by A. Świderkówna, in: *Muza łacińska. Antologia poezji wczesnochrześcijańskiej i średniowiecznej (III–XIV/XV w.)*, ed. M. Starowieyski, Wrocław 2007, pp. 209–210.

<sup>74</sup> The Orleans legend has it that around 821, emperor Louis visited Angers on the Palm Sunday. He participated in the local procession which stopped under the tower where Theodulf was kept prisoner. The crowd and the monarch allegedly heard Theodulf's melodious voice singing *Gloria laus et honor*. Moved by the performance, Louis requested to meet the singer. The benevolent monarch set Theodulf free and absolved him of all charges. Cf. Ch. Cuissard, *Théodulfe, évêque d'Orléans, sa vie et ses œuvres*, pp. 136–137, Orlean 1892.

Frederick Raby's prominent book about the history of Christian-Latin poetry: "Theodulf's work is a reflection on the Carolingian era, and it represents the highest standard of literary achievement which, upon an in-depth analysis, may easily yield to criticism due to its limitations (...). It shows a dim half-conscious humanism struggling with the insistent temper of medievalism of the Middle Ages, a mixture of freedom and tradition, the secular and the religious. And Theodulf, the scholar and the churchman, represents the best side of his age. His poetry is not always a mere imitation. The proof of this lies in the fact that he lives again in his verses, as a noble and enlightened man"<sup>75</sup>.

*Versus Teodulfi episcopi contra iudices* (a selection)<sup>76</sup>

Iudicii callem censores prendite iusti,  
 Et vestri spernant avia curva<sup>77</sup> pedes.  
 Hoc iter ad caelum ducit, trahit illud ad umbras,  
 Hoc pia vita tenet, mors habet illud hians.  
 5 Ergo cavete, viri, scatebras Acerontis<sup>78</sup> adire,  
 Quo Stix, Cociti<sup>79</sup> quo furor omnis inest<sup>80</sup>.  
 At, paradise, tuis nil gratius aedibus extat,  
 Quo mala nulla insunt, quo bona cuncta manent.  
 Si mihi mille forent centeno in gutture<sup>81</sup> linguae,  
 10 Aerea vox cunctis ferrea verba daret,  
 Non possem<sup>82</sup>, fateor, tot promere sedis amoenae  
 Gaudia, quae capiunt qui bene iura tenent.  
 Sed neque poenarum percurrere monstra loquendo  
 Possem, quae patitur fraudis amica cohors.  
 15 Iudicio pietas, pietati industria detur,

<sup>75</sup> E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, pp. 176–177.

<sup>76</sup> The original texts can be found in *MGH, Poetae I*, pp. 493–517.

<sup>77</sup> (...) *spernant avia curva* (...). Cf. Sedulius, *Carmen paschale I*, 300: (...) *curva per avia*, in: *PL* 19, col. 585.

<sup>78</sup> Acheront was one of the rivers of the Greek underworld which human souls had to cross to enter the world of the dead.

<sup>79</sup> Cocytus was the river of wailing in Hades. The dead who did not pay Charon, the ferryman, for the journey across the Styx would travel along the banks of Cocytus for a hundred years.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Ovidius, *Amores I*, 7, 2.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Persius, *Satirae V*, 6. Persius lived and worked during the reign of Caligula, Claudius and Nero. His legacy comprises six satires which are sometimes quite incomprehensible, probably out of fear of Nero. Theodulf makes a reference to the fifth satire which expresses the poet's gratitude to his mentor, Cornutus. In the fifth satire, Persius condemns weakness of character and slavery to base instincts. Persius' work became popular in the Middle Ages. Cf. L. Rychlewska, *Persius*, in: *Słownik pisarzy antycznych*, ed. A. Świderkówna, pp. 351–352.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid VI*, 628–629: "Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues, And throats of brass, inspir'd with iron lungs, I could not half those horrid crimes repeat", translated by John Dryden, [www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil.aeneid.6.vi.htm](http://www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil.aeneid.6.vi.htm).

Quo teneant nullum munera saeva locum.  
Hoc veteris clamat peragendum pagina legis,  
Nullius hoc vatam lingua beata tacet. (...).

99 Praefectura mihi fuerat<sup>83</sup> peragenda tributa  
Resque actu grandes officiumque potens.  
Nulli vi studiisque piis armisque<sup>84</sup> secundus  
Rex dedit hanc Carolus, primus ad omne bonum:  
Cui parent Walis<sup>85</sup>, Rodanus<sup>86</sup>, Mosa<sup>87</sup>, Renus<sup>88</sup> et Henus<sup>89</sup>,  
Sequana<sup>90</sup>, Wisurgis<sup>91</sup>, Wardo<sup>92</sup>, Garonna<sup>93</sup>, Padus<sup>94</sup>,  
105 Rura<sup>95</sup>, Mosella<sup>96</sup>, Liger<sup>97</sup>, Vultur<sup>98</sup>, Matrona<sup>99</sup>, Ledus<sup>100</sup>,  
Hister<sup>101</sup>, Atax<sup>102</sup>, Gabarus<sup>103</sup>, Olitis<sup>104</sup>, Albis<sup>105</sup>, Arar<sup>106</sup>.  
Quo sinodus clerum, populum lex stringeret alma,  
Duxque foret cunctis regula calle suo;  
Ecclesiae sanctus matris quo cresceret ordo<sup>107</sup>, (...).

117 Haeserat hac nobis Laidradus sorte sodalis,  
Cederet ut magnus hoc relevante labor.  
Noricus hunc genuit, hunc tu, Lugdune, futurum  
120 Pontificem speras relligionis ope<sup>108</sup>.

---

<sup>83</sup> The office of the emperor's envoy, *missus dominicus*, held Theodulf in Narbonese Gaul (contemporary Languedoc and Provence) together with Laidrad, later the Bishop of Lyon.

<sup>84</sup> Theodulf emphasizes that he accepted the office bestowed on him by Charlemagne in accordance with every principle of fair and honest conduct. His decision, argued Theodulf, was not influenced by excessive zealotry or political pressure.

<sup>85</sup> Waal.

<sup>86</sup> Rhone.

<sup>87</sup> Meuse.

<sup>88</sup> Rhein.

<sup>89</sup> Inn.

<sup>90</sup> Seine.

<sup>91</sup> Weser.

<sup>92</sup> Gard.

<sup>93</sup> Garonne.

<sup>94</sup> Po.

<sup>95</sup> Ruhr.

<sup>96</sup> Moselle.

<sup>97</sup> Loire.

<sup>98</sup> Volturno.

<sup>99</sup> Marne.

<sup>100</sup> Lez.

<sup>101</sup> Danube.

<sup>102</sup> Aude.

<sup>103</sup> Gave de Pau.

<sup>104</sup> Lot.

<sup>105</sup> Elbe.

<sup>106</sup> Arar.

<sup>107</sup> Theodulf emphasizes Charlemagne's universal power. The King of the Franks headed a theocratic state, and he had full legislative powers, including religious. The emperor attempted to exercise control over church organization and doctrine. Theodulf thus wrote: "Let Charlemagne convene synods with the clergy and formulate just laws with the people".

Arte cluit, sensuque viget, virtute redundat;  
 Cui vita ad superam transitus ista manet.  
 Iam, Lugdune<sup>109</sup>, tuis celsis post terga relictis  
 Moenibus, adgredimur, causa quod optat, iter.  
 125 Saxosa petimus constructam in valle Viennam<sup>110</sup>,  
 Quam scopoli inde artant, hinc premit amnis hians.  
 Inde Valentinis<sup>111</sup> terris urbique iacenti,  
 Rupee, nos dedimus, hinc, Morenate<sup>112</sup>, tibi.  
 Post et Arausinas<sup>113</sup> terras et Avennica<sup>114</sup> rura  
 130 Tangimus et fines, quos tenuere Getae<sup>115</sup>.  
 Inde Nemausiacas sensim properamus ad arces<sup>116</sup>,  
 Quo spatiosa urbs est resque operosa satis. (...).  
  
 163 Magna cetervatim nos contio saepe frequentat,  
 Aetas quod dicat sexus et omnis habet,  
 Parvulus<sup>117</sup>, annosus, iuvenis, pater, innuba, celebs,  
 Maior, ephoebus, anus, masque, marita, minor.  
 Quid moror?<sup>118</sup> Instanter promittit munera plebes,  
 Quodque cupit factum, si dabit, esse putat.  
 Hoc animi murum tormento frangere certant,  
 170 Ariete quo tali mens male pulsa ruat.  
 Hic et cristallum et gemmas promittit Eoas<sup>119</sup>,  
 Si faciam, alterius ut potiatur agris.  
 Iste gravi numero nummos fert divitis auri,  
 Quos Arabum sermo sive character arat,  
 175 Aut quos argento Latius stilus inprimit albo,  
 Si tamen adquirat predia, rura, domos.  
 Clam nostrum quidam submissa voce ministrum  
 Evocat, ista sonat verba sonanda mihi:  
 180 Cui pura et vena et non leve pondus inest,  
 Quo caelata patent scelerum vestigia Caci<sup>121</sup>,

<sup>108</sup> Having completed the mission, Laidrad became the Bishop of Lyon.

<sup>109</sup> Lyon is the first of the towns mentioned by Theodulf. It was the inspectors' meeting point and the first stop on their journey.

<sup>110</sup> Vienne – all towns listed by Theodulf are situated in Provence in the region of Rhone-Alps and the Cote d'Azur. This was the former region of Narbonese Gaul.

<sup>111</sup> Valence.

<sup>112</sup> Mornas.

<sup>113</sup> Orange.

<sup>114</sup> Avignon.

<sup>115</sup> "The borderlands under Goth control" – easternmost territory inspected by Theodulf along the Pyrenees.

<sup>116</sup> *Nemausiacas arces* – castles of Nimes.

<sup>117</sup> This begins the presentation of Theodulf's patents.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* XIII, 531: *Quid moror* (...). "Why do I delay the cleansing of your wound?", translation: <http://www.romansonline.com/>

<sup>119</sup> *Gemmas Eoas* – "Eastern pearls"

<sup>120</sup> Epic retardation – description of an ancient vase presented as a bribe.

Tabo et stipitibus ora solute virum;  
 Ferrati scopoli variae seu signa rapinae,  
 Humano et pecudum sanguine tactus ager.  
 185 Quo furor Hercules Vulcanidis ossa retundit,  
 Ille fero patrios ructat ab ore focos;  
 Quoque genu stomachum seu calcibus ilia rumpit,  
 Flumifluum clava guttur et ora quatit.  
 Illic rupe cava videas procedure tauros,  
 190 Et pavitare iterum post sua terga trahi.  
 Hoc in parte cava planus cui circulus ore est,  
 Nec nimium latus signa minuta gerens,  
 Perculit ut geminos infans Trintius angues<sup>122</sup>,  
 Ordine sunt etiam gesta notata decem.  
 195 At pars exterior crebro usu rasa politur,  
 Effigiesque perit adtenuata vetus,  
 Quo Alcides<sup>123</sup>, Calidonque<sup>124</sup> amnis, Nessusque biformis<sup>125</sup>  
 Certant pro specie, Deianira, tua.  
 Inlita Neseo feralis sanguine vestis<sup>126</sup>  
 200 Cernitur et miseri fata pavenda Lichae<sup>127</sup>.  
 Perdit et Anteus dura inter brachia vitam<sup>128</sup>,  
 Qui solito sterni more vetatur humo.

<sup>121</sup> Cacus was a fire- and smoke-breathing monster in Roman mythology. Cf. V. Zamarowsky, *Encyklopedia mitologii antycznej*, translated by J. Illg, L. Spyrka, J. Wania, Warszawa 2006, p. 234. Theodulf makes a reference to Cacus' character in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, VIII, v. 193-: "(...)T was once a robber's den, inclos'd around, With living stone, and deep beneath the ground. The monster Cacus, more than half a beast, This hold, impervious to the sun, possess'd. The pavement ever foul with human gore; Heads, and their mangled members, hung the door. Vulcan this plague begot; and, like his sire, Black clouds he belch'd, and flakes of livid fire", translated by John Dryden, [www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil.aeneid.8.viii.htm](http://www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil.aeneid.8.viii.htm).

<sup>122</sup> Df. Ovidius, *Ars amatoria* I, 187.

<sup>123</sup> Heracles was originally given the name Alcides after his grandfather. It was only later that he became known as Heracles in an attempt to mollify Hera. Cf. V. Zamarowsky, *Encyklopedia mitologii antycznej*, p. 188.

<sup>124</sup> In Calydon, Heracles found a wife, Deianira, daughter of king Oeneus. He had to compete for her with Achelou, the patron god of rivers. *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>125</sup> Centaur Nessos, the ferryman on the river Euenos, was shot by Heracles' arrow. Theodulf draws upon Ovid. Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IX, 119-.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IX, 154: "His garment, in the reeking purple dy'd", translated by Sir Samuel Garth, John Dryden, [www.classic.mit.edu/Ovid/metam.html](http://www.classic.mit.edu/Ovid/metam.html). Dying Nessus gives Deianira his blood-stained robe, assuring her that it would seal her husband's eternal love for her.

<sup>127</sup> Lichas –Heracles' friend and servant. Acting on Deianira's orders, he gave Nessus' blood-stained robe to Heracles. The gift turned out to be a lethal trap and the centaur's revenge. Heracles died a long and painful death, but he had murdered Lichas before he died.

<sup>128</sup> The giant Antheus guarded the road to the garden of Hesperides from which Hercules was to fetch three golden apples. This was the last task given to Hercules by Eurystheus, the king of Tiryns. The giant drew his strength from his mother, Gaia. To recover his energy, he had to lie down on the ground. Heracles lifted him up and the giant, deprived of his strength, was killed by Heracles' powerful grip. Cf. V. Zamarowsky, *Encyklopedia mitologii antycznej*, p. 192.

- Hoc ego sum domino – dominum me forte vocabat –  
 Laturus, votis si favet ille meis.
- 205 Pars numerosa subest populi, matrum atque virorum,  
 Infantum, iuvenum, sexu ab utroque simul:  
 Quos pater et genetrix sub libertatis honore  
 Liquere, ex illo libera turba manent.  
 Quorum si cartas vitium, vase ille vetusto,  
 210 His ego, tu donis mox potiere meis.<sup>129</sup>  
 Alter ait: ‘Mihi sunt vario fucata colore<sup>129</sup>  
 Pallia, quae misit, ut puto, torvus Arabs. (...)’
- 226 Alter ait ‘dabimus, quae rogo si dederis.  
 Vitibus atque oleis, herbis ornatus et hortis,  
 Inriguus patris est morte relictus ager.  
 Inde mihi partes fratresque sororque requirunt,  
 230 Consorte hunc nullo solus habere velim.  
 Voti compos ero, tibi si mea vota placebunt,  
 Quae do si capias, quae rogo, rite dabis.’  
 Subripere ille lares socii cupit, iste novales,  
 Ambo aliena quidem hic tenet, ille cupit.
- 235 Alter ut adquirat, ne perdat aduritur alter,  
 Iste ensem et galeam, hic dare scuta parat.  
 Res patris unus habet, frater cupit alter habere,  
 Et dare vult mulos alter, et alter equos.  
 Haec pars dives opum, pars instat cetera plebis,
- 240 Quod quaerant omnes, quodque querantur habent.  
 Sed nec eis deerat dandi tamen apta voluntas,  
 Diversis unus viribus usus erat.  
 Magna ut maiores, sic promunt parva minores,  
 Dum fore quae cupiunt hac sibi sorte putant.
- 245 Iste tuo dictas de nomine, Cordoba, pelles<sup>130</sup>,  
 Hic niveas, alter protrahit inde rubras.  
 Linea qui potis est, qui non, fert lanea dona,  
 Tagmen et hic capitis, hic pedis, ille manus.  
 Quo facies humore levi palmasque solemus  
 Tergere, quis dandum textile munus habet. (...).
- 255 O scelerata lues, partes diffusa per omnes,  
 O scelus, o furor, o res truculenta nimis.  
 Quae sibi captivum totum male vindicat orbem,  
 Nec deest, qui det, nec qui male capta ferat.  
 Flectere sic properant me, nec tamen esse puterent  
 260 Talem, ni talis ante fuisset ibi.  
 Nemo in aquis apros, in silvis squamea dona,

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Vergilius, *Liber Georgicon*, IV, 335. “Fleeces with deep rich hues of the sea’s own emerald dyed”, *The Georgics of Virgil*, translated by Arthur S. Way, London: Macmillan and Co., 1912.

<sup>130</sup> Spanish hide was a luxury good.

Inque rogos undis, in face quaerit aquas. (...).

283 Haec ego pertractans sumebam parva libenter,  
 Quae non saeva manus, cara sed illa dabat<sup>131</sup> :  
 Scilicet arboreos fructus hortique virentis,  
 Ova, merum<sup>132</sup>, panes, cornipedumque cibos.  
 Sumpsimus et teneros pullos, modicasque volucres,  
 Corpora sunt quarum parva, sed apta cibis.  
 O felix omnis virtus, discretio si quam  
 290 Virtutum nutrix temperat, ornate, alit. (...).

337 Te si forte furor pervasit pestis avarae,  
 Stet ratio et docili sic tibi voce canat:  
<sup>133</sup> Cerne, quod altitronus temet speculetur ab alto,  
 340 Quaeque facis summa singula mente notet.  
 Qui iudex testisque simul, vindexque malorum est,  
 Qui dare digna bonis scit, mala sive malis.' (...).

383 Ad fora fors quaeris veniendi tempus et horam?  
 Accipe consilium, 'mane venito', meum<sup>134</sup>.  
 385 Perque diem totum non te labor iste gravabit,  
 Hinc seges est maior, quo mage quisquis arat<sup>135</sup>.  
 Qui legem ut caperet, ieiunia magna peregit,  
 Fertur in hoc actu continuasse dies. (...).

389 Vidi ego censores ad iuris munia tardos<sup>136</sup>,  
 Munera, nam fateor, ad capienda citos.  
 Hora adsunt quinta<sup>137</sup>, norunt descendere nona<sup>138</sup>,  
 Tertia<sup>139</sup> si adducat, sexta<sup>140</sup> reducit eos.  
 Nam dare si debent, nona; si prendere, prima<sup>141</sup>  
 Adsunt, estque citus, qui modo serus erat. (...).  
 399 Crapula vitetur semper, plus tempore eodem,

---

<sup>131</sup> Not every gift should be interpreted as a bribe. Theodulf admits to having accepted "kind" and "small" donations comprising fruit, eggs, wine, bread, chickens and horse feed. He emphasized, however, that any gifts of the kind must be received with honor and constraint.

<sup>132</sup> *Merum, i* – pure wine, not diluted with water.

<sup>133</sup> Theodulf's warning. The culprit will not avoid punishment because *altitronus Deus* will pass judgment on everyone after death.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Ovidius, *Remedia amoris* 292.

<sup>135</sup> Theodulf's "golden principle of effectiveness and productivity" – "arrive in the morning and the work will not daunt you, the yield is greater where more is sown"

<sup>136</sup> A list of public officers' "standard abuses of power" – tardiness for work, leaving the workplace, drunkenness and lack of determination in action.

<sup>137</sup> Hour from sunrise. The fifth hour was around 10 a.m. in the summer and 11 a.m. in the winter.

<sup>138</sup> Between 2 and 4 p.m. CET.

<sup>139</sup> Around 10 a.m.

<sup>140</sup> Noon.

<sup>141</sup> The first hour after sunrise.

Quo pia iustitiae lora regenda manent.  
 Nam qui se nimiis epulis somnoque<sup>142</sup> sepelit,  
 Corporis atque animae vim sibi demit hebes:  
 Cum venit ad causas nudatus acumine sensus,  
 Marcidus et segnis et sine mente sedet. (...).

449 'Discite iustitiam<sup>143</sup>, caelestia discite iussa,  
 Quae pater altitronus sancxit ab axe poli:  
 Hanc dues, hanc vates, hanc leges, hanc quoque princeps  
 Percensent, haec vis pectora nostra regat.  
 Si nos illa regat, populos tunc rite regemus,  
 Mens bene cuncta regit, quam deus ipse regit.' (...).

629 Debilis, invalidus, puer, aeger, anusve, senexve  
 Si veniant, fer opem his miserando piam<sup>144</sup>.  
 Fac, sedeat, qui stare nequit, qui surgere prende,  
 Cui cor voxque tremit, pesve manusve, iuva.  
 Deiectum verbis releva, sedato minacem,  
 Qui timet, huic vires; qui furit, adde metum<sup>145</sup>.  
 635 Turbas et lites multarum et prelia vocum  
 Acri perstringes voce sonoque gravi:  
 Anseribus raucis, cornicibus atque nigellis,  
 Qui, ut recinant omnes, mos solet esse, simul.  
 Ni taceant, inpono minas, tamen usque caveto,  
 640 Ad fera ne faciles sint tibi verba manus<sup>146</sup>. (...).

941 Debita qui semper tibimet laxanda precaris<sup>147</sup>,  
 Hoc inopi facito, quod petis ipse deo,  
 Ne tua si miserum levet indulgentia nullum,  
 Cum petis hanc, eius destituaris ope.  
 945 Sic dum conservo contempnit parcere servus,  
 Iram in se iusti mox revocabit eri.  
 Parcere, mortalis, mortalibus ergo parato,  
 Cum quis naturae lex manet una tibi,  
 Quisque tuo dispar si sit per prospera cursus<sup>148</sup>,  
 950 Ortus et occasus qui tibi, par et eis.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* II, 265: "(...) oppress'd with sleep and wine", translated by John Dryden, [www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil/aenid.mb.txt](http://www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil/aenid.mb.txt).

<sup>143</sup> Filled with pathos and drama, this admonition is modeled on Virgil's *Aeneid* VI, 620: "Learn righteousness, and dread th' avenging deities", translated by John Dryden, [www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil/aenid.mb.txt](http://www.classic.mit.edu/Virgil/aenid.mb.txt).

<sup>144</sup> Altruism should be the main quality characteristic of a judge.

<sup>145</sup> Guardians of the law should be kind, yet decisive. "Weak ones should be strengthened. Dangerous judges should be tamed, while a healthy dose of doubt should be instilled in those who are presumptuous."

<sup>146</sup> Above all, a judge should not act impetuously. Physical violence is the biggest vice. According to Theodulf, it is not hands, but words that should prove the speaker's point.

<sup>147</sup> Justice is guided by faith and prayer.

<sup>148</sup> Judges should not overestimate their earthly powers. "We all fall subjects to the same



Fons sacer hos tecum beat, inlinit unguen avitum,  
Atque agni saciat hos caro sive cruor.  
Ut pro te vitae est, pro his quoque mortuus auctor,  
Quemque et pro meritis ad sua dona vocat.  
955 Hic submittantur transacti carbasa libri,  
Litore in hoc teneat anchora iacta ratem<sup>149</sup>.

law.”

---

<sup>149</sup> “Part of my task is left: part of the labor’s done. Moor my boat here to the anchor chains”, translated by A.S. Kline, 2001, [www.poetryintranslation.com](http://www.poetryintranslation.com). Theodulf ends his work with a reference to Ovid’s *Ars amatoria*, cf. I, 772.