

**Of Monks, Managers, and Lawyers:
The Emergence of Bureaucratic Careers in the
Medieval Church**

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Abstract

Theories of organization have primarily explained organizational change through the adoption of existing models of organization. However, this fails to account for the initial development of these models in the first instance. Furthermore, current organizational theory has privileged the role of the environment in explaining organizational change and development, while failing to adequately account for ways in which innovation in organizational structures shape the environment surrounding organizations. Utilizing arguments drawn from the emergence of complex systems, this paper attempts to account for the endogenous development of a new form of organization and an environment favorable to it through a historical examination of the development of bureaucratic careers within the English Catholic church in the middle ages. Processes of competition between the church and the state, and between different groups within the church, produced multiple models of careers within local administrative structures over the course of this period, which had significant effects on the selection pressures from the environment, leading to the eventual development of bureaucratic careers based upon university education and advancement through administrative hierarchies.

Introduction

In his classic textbook essay, Charles Perrow (1986) opens with the question “why bureaucracy?” Using the characteristic traits of bureaucracy described by Weber (1968) he discusses how bureaucracy, or formal organizations more generally, are ways to collectively rationalize the behavior of numerous individuals on the basis of universalistic criteria, where expectations about mobility are on the basis of achieved characteristics, and how the organization operates through the application of impersonal rules. Though bureaucratic organizations have been criticized from many quarters, the bureaucratic model of organization has proven to be one of the central features of modernity, and serves as the basis for later developments in organizational technologies.

However, in this discussion of why we implement bureaucratic structures, the question of why and how bureaucracy develops in the first instance is never raised. In this, Perrow is accurately portraying a significant theoretical blind-spot in organizational sociology. It is certainly sensible for social actors to adopt an organizational form that is universalistic when they value universalism over particularism, yet this assumes that universalism is already valued, which itself implies bureaucratic organizations. Similarly, promotion on the basis of performance and prior training is not the only basis for organizational careers, and it is clear that factors such as class, family, and loyalty have served, and continue to serve, as significant bases for career trajectories. Likewise with impersonal rules, where the acceptance of written, uniformly applied rules needs to be understood as a social achievement, and we need to understand the social processes by which individuals come to accept such rules as legitimate.

However, given the importance of new types of organizations in explaining significant features of social life, there has been a lack of theorizing about how new types of organizations

emerge. This undertheorizing is particularly pronounced in organization theory. Some of the most prominent theories of organizations ask similar questions, but do not directly examine organizational genesis. The new institutionalism in organizational analysis examines how new organizational practices or structures enter into an existing or new organizational fields, but these practices are constructed externally (Scott 1995; Hirsch 1997). In this perspective, new organizational forms, when they are analyzed, are the products of the hybridization of existing practices or structures, combining disparate existing elements to create a new entity (c.f. Clemens 1997). Similarly, the organizational ecology perspective asks questions about the dynamics of populations of organizational forms, such as founding and mortality rates, without exploring how these forms come into existence (Young 1988). The transaction costs approach looks at how market failure creates organizational hierarchies, but avoids asking how the specific types of organizations come about (Perrow 1986). All of these theories assume the existence of organizational structures and focus on the reproduction of these structures and selection among alternatives (Padgett 2001). Instead, the existence of alternatives is assumed, and research focuses on the factors that create different survival chances for the alternatives.

In order to examine this problem of organizational genesis, this paper examines an early and consequential example of the creation of a new form of organization: the development of bureaucracy in the Medieval Catholic Church in England during the ‘long’ 12th century (ca. 1050-1250). In particular, it looks at the shift towards bureaucratic career structures. The Church was a (if not the) central institution in Medieval European social life. It was also the first bureaucracy created to continue into the present day. Furthermore, it was the first instance of bureaucracy in the Medieval West, and was not directly influenced by other bureaucracies, such

as Rome or Byzantium.¹ Thus, it represents an early *de novo* example of the bureaucratic form of organization, making it an appropriate case to study to explore how organizational genesis occurs. The English church was typical of the general trends in medieval society, and the changes in its structure followed the paths of local churches elsewhere (Lawrence 1965; Brett 1975).

It does so through an examination of the changes in career structures among clergy in the Catholic Church in England from 1066 to 1250. This periodization encompasses what is sometimes called the long twelfth century, when Western Europe underwent a dramatic transformation (Moore, 2001). The church during this period was not only central to social life, but also underwent tremendous structural changes, moving from a local, traditionally based collectivity of churches closely tied to local political structures to one that was a highly centralized bureaucratic administration. Unlike other early examples of bureaucracy the church implemented bureaucratic structures at local levels, particularly in France and England. Local dioceses increasingly operated as bureaucratic organizations, with bureaucratic careers, specially trained professional administrators, a codified and rational system of rules, and separation of household from office.

These different elements of bureaucratic structures all developed over the same time period, typically characterized as beginning in 1071 with the publication of the *Dictatus Papae* by pope Gregory VII, which began the movement known as the Gregorian Reform, and ending in 1216 with the death of Innocent III. It was during this period that the essential elements of a bureaucratic church came into being. This paper takes a slightly longer view, in order to capture

¹ While other bureaucracies have developed in the West, notably the Egyptian, Roman, and Byzantine states, the Catholic Church did not draw directly on these examples, but instead developed bureaucracy independent of other instances of bureaucratic organization.

the early periods where the church was an appendage of the state, and looking further into the 13th century in order to get a fuller view of the bureaucratized church.

This provides an opportunity to examine not only an early instance of bureaucratization, but also to look at an example that was relatively independent of other previous instances of bureaucratic administration. The late Roman Empire had developed a bureaucratic administration that had become quite elaborate, but had ceased to exist after the fall of the empire in the West. The bureaucratic administration continued with the Byzantine state, but there was a lack of extensive and intense contact between the Latin west and the eastern empire that would have allowed for the transmission of organizational structures. Furthermore, the eastern church was characterized by a strong relationship with the state, such that it served as one department within the state bureaucracy, and did not have an independent institutional existence which would have served as a model for the Latin church (Ostrogorsky 1987).

Theories of Organizational Change and Emergence

Given the centrality of the question of the development of modern social structures in the development of the social sciences, it is surprising that organizational theorists have not focused on how formal organizations emerged. Early organizational theorists focused on explaining how formal organizations operated, especially bureaucratic organizations, and the consequences of organizations in various areas of social life, including government (Weber 1968; Hegel 1942), labor unions (Michels 1949), the economy (Barnard 1938), and most importantly the impact of organizations on work (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939; Marx, 1977). More recently, scholars have focused on the diffusion of organizational forms through various fields of social life, and examining mechanisms for differentiation or isomorphism in patterns of organizing. Some

prominent examples include arguments about how organizational technologies came to be used as cultural scripts that organizations were expected to follow, even when these conflicted with task demands (Meyer and Rowan, 1977), how industries become imprinted with the organizational technologies available at the time when the industry first came into being (Stinchcome, 1965), why organizations have become increasingly similar over time (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), why organizations have differentiated into multiple populations (Hannan and Freeman, 1977), or why the corporate form of governance came to dominate and proliferate in the U.S. economy (Roy 1997; Perrow 2002).

As Padgett (2006) notes, in one of the few studies to examine mechanisms for the genesis of new organizational forms, the recent literature on diffusion of organizational forms assumes the existence of these forms in the first instance. The focus on these studies is selection amongst existing alternatives, without an examination of the processes that produce alternatives from which to select. This emphasis on selection as the primary mechanism does not imply that organizational theorists have not made arguments that could be applied to the question of the emergence of new forms of organizing. Instead, two broad conceptions of organizational development and change have defined the field of organizational theory. The first set of models focuses on the role of internal organizational dynamics leading to innovation and change in organizational structures. These models identify endogenous mechanisms of change. In contrast to this endogenous model, more contemporary work on organizations has focused on environmental, or exogenous, mechanisms that produce organizational change. However, each of these groups of models fail to identify ways in which organizational dynamics produce endogenous change within the environment, which then has causal impact on organizations. After discussing both groups of models, this paper develops an outline of a model to understand

better the interrelationships between organizations and their environments and how organizational dynamics create endogenous change in the environment.

Endogenous Change in “Classical” Organization Theory

The traditional view of the development of new ways of structuring formal organizations focused largely on mechanisms for organizational change that were internal to the organization. Organizational change was understood as an endogenous process where decision-makers within the organization innovated new structures to respond to a variety of internal pressures. The earliest instances of this argument can be seen in the works of the classical social theorists and their focus on the division of labor. In *Kapital*, Marx notes how the concentration of capital in industrial capitalism creates pressures for production to be organized cooperatively and rationally (Marx 1977, chapter 13). Similarly Durkheim argued that increased division of labor created pressures to formalize law, government, and production (1984). Most significantly, Weber argued that the increasing demands of states to control people and territory led to an increased division of labor within governments that required increasingly formal mechanisms of control, resulting in the development of bureaucratic organizations (1968).

Later scholars focused on other mechanisms besides the division of labor, but still internal to organizations. These include Blau’s argument on how working within bureaucratic rules became increasingly difficult to produce efficiencies of production, leading members of organizations to develop informal structures suited to the particular tasks on hand (1956). Gouldner noted the role of managers in implementing a model of bureaucratic organization to gain greater control and efficiency over production in a gypsum mine (1954). Others have focused on the role of internal political dynamics shaping organizational structures (Selznick

1966; March 1962), while others noted how particular organizational structures arose out of the demands of information processing under conditions of increasing complexity and uncertainty (March and Simon, 1958; Cyert and March, 1963). Finally, the functional theorists focused on formal organizations as functional systems, where there were internal pressures for homeostasis resulting in formal bureaucratic forms (Parsons 1960; Merton 1957).

The aforementioned list is cursory at best, and ignores a tremendous amount of differences between different scholars. Yet, while there were significant differences in the particular mechanisms suggested, there was a general sense that organizations developed to solve particular sorts of problems, and that the structure of organizations was shaped by mechanisms internal to the organization, whether information processing or the division of labor. One of the central features of organizational theory during its early decades, whether organizations were understood as “rational” or “natural” systems following Scott’s (1998) classification, was that mechanisms of organizational innovation were endogenous to the organizations themselves.

One consequence of this focus was that the unit of analysis was the organization, and that the organization was itself the source of innovation. Here the organization is understood as a self-contained entity, and the cause of organizational change are internal forces. New structures emerge as a response to these internal forces, and solve organizational problems. To take the example of Blau (1956), working within the framework of the organizational structure in terms of its formal hierarchy described by the organizational chart was highly inefficient. Members of the organization instead created an informal hierarchy which was independent from the formal hierarchy which served as a much more efficient means for these members to perform their roles within the organization. In this sense, the functional problems of the formal hierarchy created pressures for members of the organization to rewire the hierarchy to better suit their performance

of organizational tasks. Organizational inefficiencies within the formal structure drove the development of the informal structure of the organization.

Exogeneity in Contemporary Organizational Theory

More recent work theorizing organizations has focused less on the organization, and more on organizations, plural, in relation to their external environments. In large part this was a response to deficiencies in the endogenous models which ignored the role of the environment as a causal factor in the explanation of organizational structures and behavior. Scott (1998) characterizes these models as “open systems”, where organizations are no longer understood as self-contained systems to be understood through endogenous processes, but instead organizations are “open” to their environment, which then have a primary causal impact on focal organizations.

This has long been the understanding within economics, where firms are interchangeable with one another within the standard theory of the firm, and changes in their structures are driven by competition within the market which imposes discipline and efficient structures. Institutional economics in its transaction costs incarnations likewise focus on how the structure of transaction relations between an organization and its partners shapes the boundaries of the firm (Williamson 1975). Within sociology, the shift to focusing on the role of the environments began with contingency theory, arguing that there was no one best way to organize, but that organization depended in large part on the task environment of an organization (Perrow 1967; Thompson 1967; Lawrence and Lorsch 1967). More recently, sociological institutional theories have pointed to the role played by cultural and institutional environments, and the central role of the legitimacy of organizational structures vis-à-vis external actors which create pressures on organizations to imitate other organizations causing homogeneity (Meyer and Rowan 1977;

DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Making the opposite conclusion, but similarly placing the principal causal role on the external environment, the population ecology of organizations approach locates populations of organizations competing for environmental resources as the principal source of innovation and change (Hannan and Freeman 1977).

While there are tremendous differences between all of these approaches, they all extend the endogenous models of organizations to take into account the role of environmental factors. Within this broad set of perspectives, organizational change is driven by factors exogenous to the organization itself. In some incarnations, organizational change is an adaptive response to changing environmental conditions that are exogenous to the models. Organizations are responsive to the environment, and change in the environment causes some organizations to be less fit than others, which causes either a change in the selection frontier or adaptation on the part of organizations to be more successful under different external conditions. Other models focus more on the role of diffusion processes between organizations, where new innovations spread throughout a population or field of organizations. Innovation is located within the environment, and the model focuses on organizations adopt this innovation.

In studying the question of the innovation of new types of organization, these diffusion models fail to explain the initial source of the innovation. The focus on selection from alternatives means that these alternatives are assumed, instead of explained. This leaves open the question of how to explain the initial emergence of new forms of organizing. Furthermore, for the most part these models fail to explain changes in the environment itself, instead taking environmental changes as assumptions that are independent of organizational changes. However, this fails to account for the role organizations play as the environment for other organizations, as

well as the role organizations play in shaping their environment. To examine these factors, we must look towards a different theoretical tradition.

Emergence Models

In recent years there has been a development of theoretical and empirical models that describe how large social structures emerge out of smaller micromechanisms of individual behavior that attempt to explain how it is that new structures emerge in the first place. This has led to a deeper understanding of how we can understand social structures as dynamic systems, instead of fixed, stable categories (Cederman, 2005). Under these models, micro processes generate new social structures that have global properties separate from the actions of the individual actors. One of the most prominent examples of this approach has been the small worlds arguments under their new incarnation, where micro processes of relationship formation create global properties of the entire network that are independent of the processes themselves, and these global properties are emergent (Watts, 1999).

Within this understanding, social structures are aggregate properties of the micromechanisms of individual actors within some type of social space. In some sense, the sum is greater than the parts. A classic example of this type of argument is Jane Jacob's (1966) study of urban neighborhoods, where the safety of the neighborhood was a product of the layout of streets and density, where in higher density areas with a particular arrangement of streets residents were more likely to walk on the street or watch the activity from their windows, providing fewer opportunities for criminal behavior. The overall safety of the neighborhood was not the goal of the residents' behavior, though they desired a safe neighborhood, but was instead

a function of the distribution of houses and businesses which made people actively engage the street.

The identification of these micro behaviors which produce coherent, reproducible social structures, is one of the central insights of this work on emergent forms of organization. Furthermore, the emergent properties of the system come to shape future states of behavior, acting as environmental factors. In this way, this perspective attempts to endogenize the environment. In some recent research, Kennedy (2005, 2008) finds that in the development of new production markets, firms attempt to establish symbolic framings on what the actual product category is, which is then formalized through the media into narratives that describe certain kinds objects products within the category and other objects as not part of the category, which produces advantages for those firms who make the categorized objects. These media narratives then shape the environment for the development of the market, shaping what types of firms and products are part of the market, while defining others as outside of the boundaries of the market. However, these narratives are shaped in interaction with the organizations the media is covering, which involves a greater degree of complexity in the relationship between organizations and their environments. In this way, the environments surrounding organizations are responding and reacting to organizational dynamics, even as they play a significant role in shaping organizational structures and behaviors.

One of the principal ways in which this happens is through a conceptualization of fields as institutionalized areas where actors compete over the rules of the game (Martin 2003). While the concept of the organizational field has been utilized in institutional theory and organizational ecology, it has typically been understood as having dynamics separate from its effects on focal populations of organizations within the field. However, field dynamics are in large part driven

by competitions between organizations or actors within the field to define the institutionalized rules to their own advantage, which creates dynamic processes that shape the direction of the field as a whole. Some recent research on biotechnology (Powell, et. al. 2005), Broadway musicals (Uzzi and Shapiro, 2005), and transnational commercial arbitration (Dezelay and Garth, 1996) all show how organizations play a significant role in shaping the rules which govern them.

However, this research has primarily focused on relationships between actors or organizations within these fields, leaving it unclear how the development of organizational structures shapes selection pressures at the aggregate level. In this paper, I examine the organization of the church in England and its relations to its political environment, in particular the relationship between the English crown and the papacy. In particular, I examine the micro processes of organizational development and innovation within the church, and how this was affected by, and shaped, this political environment. To do this, it looks at the development of career structures from traditional careers based upon loyalty and dependence to bureaucratic careers based upon internal mobility and professional expertise. However, the shift from traditional to bureaucratic careers was not one where individual dioceses adopted new career structures or not, but instead bureaucratic careers were an emergent structure based upon micro behaviors of members of the clergy within the church, and how these changed selection processes at the environmental level which ended up privileging bureaucratic careers over other alternatives.

Careers

This paper examines the question of organizational emergence by looking at the development of one of the core elements of bureaucracy, the bureaucratic career. Careers are

crucial to understanding organizations, as individual careers link positions within the formal structure (White 1977). Furthermore, careers shape the distribution of power within organizations. The structuring of careers also shapes expectations about the organization, and shape the behavior of individuals within the organization (Kanter 1977; Merton 1949). As individuals move through the organization, their structured backgrounds and location within different parts of the organization shape their views of the organization, leading to very different types of behavior at the aggregate (Fligstein 1990; Jackall 1988). Those who have control over the internal promotion structures tend to select individuals who are similar to them, creating a mechanism for the reproduction of structures over time (Kanter 1977). This all implies that structural changes within career pathways are a significant element of the overall organizational structure.

Traditional Career. Following Weber (1968), I identify two primary ideal types of career patterns. The first follows from his traditional mode of authority. In this career pattern, careers tend to be based on ascriptive characteristics or on individuals' network of relationships. The primary method of appointment tends to be based on personal relationships of trust and loyalty. Within the organization, careers tend to be ad hoc, with a strong tendency for individuals to remain in the office for which they were first appointed during their tenure in the organization. Because the appointment is based on personal relationships, incumbents frequently come from outside of the organization, based on their external network of relationships or on their social status.

In the church, relationships with the monarch or the leading noble family within an area were the primary sets of social relationships that led to appointment to top ecclesiastical posts. In the 10th and 11th centuries, bishops were frequently selected from the upper nobility, in part

because of their noble lineage (Duby 1980), and in part because noble families used bishoprics to consolidate their power (Morris 1989). Many of the bishops were drawn from outside of the organization, whether from the royal household or from the separate hierarchy of the monastic orders. The diocesan administrative staff was largely drawn from the bishop's household, where the new bishop would bring in their family's retainers to help him run the diocese (Southern 1970). The staff was directly tied to the bishop through feudal and personal obligations, where the bishop would pay them directly out of his family's wealth, and they would lose their position when the bishop died or otherwise left office.² The staff was largely not trained to be administrators, and the only educational requirement was literacy, which was not always a barrier to appointment.

Bureaucratic Careers. In contrast to the traditional career, the bureaucratic career offers a stark contrast. In bureaucratic careers, individuals move up through a hierarchy of office, gradually increasing their authority, responsibility, discretion, and salary. In addition, in organizational careers the incumbents gain competency in the organizational tasks, rules, and routines, becoming socialized into organizational roles (Becker and Strauss 1956). This opportunity for mobility within the organization and the increased salary attached to higher positions motivates individuals to pursue organizational goals (Sofer 1970). Promotions are based on qualifications, education, training, merit, and achievements, not external relations or status markers (Spilerman 1977; Stovel, Savage, and Bearman 1996), though at the top of a bureaucracy these informal factors play a more significant role than do formal qualifications (Janowitz 1960; March and March 1977; Kanter 1977; Jackall 1988). The organizational career

² Because ecclesiastical positions involved the transformation of the self through magical rituals, primarily the ordination and acts of investiture, clerics hold their positions for life unless they are moved to another position or through some form of legal action they are removed from office, though the legal route was not typically available in the 11th century (Benson 1968).

is not only to be understood as the movement of individuals through the organization, but also as a pattern of linkages between positions. Bureaucratic organizations tend to develop normative careers, where positions are related in a functional manner, where power, prestige, and the scope of responsibilities increase over the sequence of positions.

Within the church, bureaucratic careers begin to emerge in truncated forms in the mid-12th century, and later become more fully elaborated throughout the century and into the 13th century. Increasingly, clerics entered into dioceses at low levels of the organization, as a member of the bishop's staff or as a lower official of the diocese. They were promoted through a set of offices into increasing positions of authority within the church. By the end of the 12th century, most of the administrators of the church were university educated, and university-trained individuals were more likely to be promoted. Bishops were selected by the church, and rose up through the church hierarchy (Rodes 1977).

Data Sources

The primary data source used in this chapter to uncover career structures is the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-). The *fasti* contain information about the incumbents of positions, when the positions were created, and biographical information about the incumbents. The positions can be classified according to their functional role: managerial (archdeacon, dean), fiscal (treasurer), judicial (chancellor), and liturgical (precentor and succentor).³ Each listing contains the career history of the incumbent before they occupied the

³ For the managerial functions, the dean (*diaconus*) was primarily responsible for the assemblies of clergy at the cathedral, while the archdeacon (*archidiaconus*) was responsible for the day-to-day affairs of a territorial subset of the diocese. The fiscal function of the diocese was headed by the treasurer (*thesaurus*) who handled the financial affairs of the diocese and the administration of property. The chancellor (*cancellarius*) combined several functions: the head of judicial staff, the officer in charge of external affairs and correspondence, as well as being responsible for the local cathedral school (a primary school focusing on the seven liberal arts). The liturgical functions of the

position and after they leave it, as well as their known kin relationships with the upper nobility, the royalty, or other highly-placed ecclesiastics. In addition, it also contains information about whether or not an incumbent was considered a *magister* (master), an indicator of whether or not the incumbent received higher education, generally at a university (Baldwin 1976).

The *fasti* allow me to derive the structure of careers at multiple points in time. By looking at career histories, I am able to construct career paths, by looking at the previous positions held by new appointments to the different positions. In addition, it also lets me examine the roles of kinship relations in appointments as well as whether or not the new occupants of positions also worked or continued to work in royal administration.

However, this data is limited with respect to understanding the social environment of the time. While the *fasti* allow me to understand the structure of careers, they do not provide easy ways of testing some of the theories for the development of bureaucratic structures in the church. Furthermore, they do not provide information about the attitudes of individuals at the time. In order to explore the beliefs and ideologies surrounding ecclesiastical careers, I have relied on other textual sources. Because paper was expensive and literacy rare, the production of documents was much more limited in the middle ages than it is today. In addition, many documents have not survived the eight to nine centuries from when they were written to today. This leaves a relatively small pool of documents with which to survey medieval public opinion. Following historians of the medieval English church, I have focused on using narrative sources, supplemented with some of the few letter collections to have survived. The primary narrative sources were histories of England during the time, which flourished in national historiography in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Gransden 1974). In particular, I have primarily relied on the

diocese (mass and other rituals, as well as managing the choir) were the responsibility of two officers: the precentor (*praecantore*) who was the primary officer, and the succentor (*subcantore*) who was the precentor's assistant.

historical works of William of Malmesbury (Preest 2002), Henry of Huntingdon (Greenway 1968), Simeon of Durham (Arnold 1882-1885), Richard of Devizes (Appleby 1963), Gerald of Wales (Brewer 1861-1891), John of Salisbury (Chibnall 1956), Hugh the Chanter (Johnson et al. 1990), Matthew of Paris (Luard 1872-1883), Eadmer (Rule 1884), Ralph de Diceto (Stubbs 1876), Roger of Howdon (Stubbs 1868-1871), William of Newburgh (Howlett 1884-1885), and Orderic Vitalis (Chibnall 1969-1980). In addition to the narrative sources, I have used other primary texts in order to flesh out some of the missing details, including collections of letters to and from Thomas Becket (Duggan 2000), John of Salisbury (Millor and Brooke 1979), Gilbert Foliot (Morey and Brooke 1965), Lanfranc (Clover and Gibson 1979), and the various popes (Holtzmann 1982; 1952-1972; Holtzmann and Kemp 1954; Migne 1844-1859). While limited, these do provide for a window into the world of the attitudes and beliefs of the elite of medieval English society, particularly among the clergy.⁴

To develop the basic structural framework of careers within the church, it was necessary to reconstruct the careers of individuals who held positions of authority within English dioceses in the period 1066 to 1250. As the office of bishop was the highest office within the diocese, and also the most consequential office, this paper focuses on the careers of bishops. As careers became elaborated, members of the clergy who sought higher office increasingly sought to become bishops with their political, economic, and organizational power. In addition, by focusing on the highest office, it elaborates the careers of clergy within the dioceses. In this paper, the careers of all bishops appointed between 1066 and 1250 were examined, numbering 160 in all. England contained two archbishoprics, Canterbury and York, which were not included in the analysis, as the office of archbishop, particularly that of Canterbury, was quite

⁴ The documentary limits are significant, but most historians consider that these do provide an accurate representation of the worldviews and attitudes of the elite in medieval society (c.f. Ginzburg 1992; Le Goff 1980; Schmitt 1983; Van Engen 1986).

distinct from that of the diocesan bishop. Additionally, bishops who were never formally consecrated were removed from the analysis, which primarily excludes those who were elected to the office, but whose election was quashed by the pope or his legate. This also excludes those who were elected to the office but died before they were formally consecrated.

Constructing Careers. As mentioned above, identifying career paths among the clergy in England during this period involves the collation of multiple data sources. For those dioceses covered, the initial list of bishops was drawn from the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (Le Neve and Greenway, 1968-). However, because of certain limitations in the material used to collect the biographical information in the *Fasti*, other sources were utilized to generate fuller information about the previous careers of bishops. To provide an overview of how these sources were consulted, it would be useful to go through an example of how the career path of a bishop was identified.

As an example, we can examine the career of Herbert Poore, who was bishop of Salisbury from 1194 to 1217. Herbert himself was not a prominent bishop nor politician, where information is easier to come across, so he provides a useful example of the process of reconstructing careers for a typical bishop. Herbert came from a family that had long served in administrative positions in both the church and in the royal court. He was the illegitimate son of Richard of Ilchester, who had been the archdeacon and treasurer of the diocese of Poitiers though born in Somerset, before being elected to the diocese of Winchester in 1173. Herbert had also been born in Somerset c. 1148, and entered royal service under his father, who had also been the chancellor of the exchequer (Duggan, 1966). Herbert served as a royal justice from 1185, though only intermittently (Stenton, 1954-1967, vol. 3). He was appointed a canon of Lincoln cathedral in 1167, when his father held custody of the see during a vacancy in the bishopric, and Herbert

became the archdeacon of Northampton in Lincoln diocese in 1174 or 1175 (Le Neve and Greenway, 1968-, vol. 3). Quickly he left this office, instead becoming archdeacon of Canterbury in 1175, being appointed by archbishop Richard of Dover. While he was consistently in royal service, he was also active in the administration of the church in his capacity as an archdeacon (Kemp 2001). He was appointed one of three custodians for the vacant diocese of Salisbury in 1185-1188, but sought his own bishopric (Kemp, 1999). He was a nominee for the see of Lincoln in May 1186, but was rejected by the king. However, he was nominated for the bishopric of Salisbury in September of 1186 by part of the chapter there, and had the support of the king, but some of the chapter appealed the election to the pope on the basis of Herbert's illegitimacy (Kemp, 1999). The election was quashed, and Hubert Walter was instead elected. When Hubert was translated to become archbishop of Canterbury in 1193, Herbert was again elected by the chapter, and received a confirmation by the archbishop, despite his illegitimacy (Le Neve and Greenway, 1968-, vol. 4).

This mini-biography shows the basis for the coding of careers that was utilized to generate the basic data set used in the following analyses. Herbert was simultaneously a royal servant and a secular clerk. Within the royal service he advanced from clerk to positions of greater authority within the judiciary, while as a clerk he was first a canon of Lincoln, rising to become an archdeacon within Lincoln diocese, before transferring to become an archdeacon in Canterbury archdiocese. While certainly literate, there was no indication that he ever attended a university, and his name never appears with the title of *magister*, which indicates a university education.

Overview of the Argument

This paper identifies four periods of career development in the English church. These periods are divided on the basis of three major events which shaped the relationship of the English church with its environment, which at the time constituted the shifting relations between the English monarchs and the papacy. The first period begins with the Conquest, when the English crown had tight control over the church. Bishops were selected principally from the royal household, and had no special qualifications beyond a close relationship of loyalty and dependence on the king. However, there was a significant social movement within the church centered around the papacy pushing for papal sovereignty over Christian kings, and part of their policy at the time was to remove lay control over the appointments of bishops. In 1125, king Henry I responded to this movement by removing himself from a direct role in the selection of bishops, which created a significant shift away from careers based on loyal retainership.

In the period between 1125 and 1169, the church had control over the selection of bishops. However, there was an internal struggle within the church between two groups of clergy, monks and secular clerks. The monks had been the principal advocates for the social movement which sought ecclesiastical control over the selection of bishops, and many were selected during this time. In contrast to the monks, the secular clerks were based in newly founded positions within the diocesan administration, and made claims to advancement on the basis of their administrative knowledge, their involvement in worldly affairs, and increasingly on their education within the universities. Both groups vied for control over the church, but neither was able to establish themselves as the obvious group to be selected for the episcopacy. Towards the end of the period, king Henry II made an attempt to reestablish royal control over the English church, leading to the eventual murder of the archbishop of Canterbury. This led to a

de jure separation of the church from the state, but in practice the king played a major role in the selection of new bishops after 1170.

With the reestablishment of royal control over the selection of bishops, newly appointed bishops were again drawn from the royal administration. However, the careers in the period 1170 to 1214 were characterized less by the selection of retainers on the basis of their loyalty to the king, but instead drawing from professional administrators who were making careers simultaneously within the ecclesiastical and the royal administrations. This had the effect of selecting for the secular clerks, who were the principal administrators of dioceses. Because of the availability of these ecclesiastical administrators, the royal administration relied more heavily on the clergy in order to perform tasks, and individuals who made their careers in both the church and the state were more likely to be appointed bishops. However, concerns about the growing closeness of the church and the English state led to pope Innocent III's eventual interdiction of England, which along with a baronial revolt, led to king John's eventual submission to the papacy.

This led to a model of careers that persisted for the several following centuries. Bishops were principally drawn from within the ranks of the diocesan administration, and they were frequently university educated and having significant administrative expertise. A large proportion of the episcopacy was still drawn from clerks who were making their careers within the royal administration at the same time as serving as clerical administrators, but this was a much smaller percentage of the episcopacy. Overall, bishops were drawn from within the ranks of the church on the basis of their educational and administrative backgrounds, leading to a full elaboration of a bureaucratic career within the church.

Royal Control, 1066-1124

At the close of the 11th and into the opening decades of the 12th centuries, careers within the church were characterized by strong ties to the royal household. Bishops during this period were almost exclusively drawn from royal administration. As indicated in Table 1, all of the 25 bishops were appointed directly by the king. Even though England was being consolidated and centralized under the new king, this pattern of royal appointment of bishops was not unique to England. Instead, it was the dominant pattern for church-state relations throughout Europe (Tellenbach 1940; Duby 1980; Bartlett 1993). The church was an appendage of the state, where bishops were an important part of royal power, because the king could exert direct control over the bishops to the detriment of the local lords.

The deep relationship between royal administration and the church is also seen when we look at the backgrounds of the bishops. Table 2 shows that of the 40 bishops appointed between 1066 and 1124, 25 (62.5%) were drawn directly from royal administration. Furthermore, of the remaining fifteen, six were members of the clergy, either as monks or as diocesan officials, but who were also royal servants. The dominant career path at this time was for individuals to work their way up through royal administration, and one of the rewards of service was an ecclesiastical appointment.

While the numbers appear to be identical, there was not a one-to-one correspondence between royal appointments and members of the royal household being elevated to the episcopacy. Of the six bishops elected by their chapters, three were drawn directly from the royal household, and the other three were simultaneously members of the royal household and the clergy. With the exception of Rochester, discussed below, when the church had control over

the selection of new bishops, they overwhelmingly selected individuals who came from the royal household.

The exceptions to this path are also telling. While 30 of the bishops came directly from royal service, the nearly all of the others also had deep connections with the king. The lone monk who was not also a royal servant that was elevated to the episcopacy during this period was Remigius, the bishop of Lincoln, who was the first Norman appointed by William I to a diocese in England. As a monk of Fécamp, a reformed monastery in Normandy, he came over with William I with several knights funded by the monastery to aid in the conquest of England. Contemporary historians regarded his elevation as a reward for this martial aid (Preest 2002, 211; Rule 1884, 11). Similarly, the only secular clerk who was appointed, Alexander, was appointed by King Henry I in 1123 to be bishop of Lincoln. Although Alexander was a clerk, he was also the nephew of the bishop of Salisbury, who was also the royal chancellor, the top royal official in England. A contemporary said that he did this as a reward for the uncle, saying he did this “out of love for the bishop” (Whitelock 1965, 190). Even in these exceptions, the central role of the king in ecclesiastical careers is clear.

The only significant exception were the four bishops of Rochester who were appointed during this period. The bishopric of Rochester was unique among English dioceses in that it was under the direct control of the archbishops of Canterbury. The four bishops of Rochester, Arnost, Gundulph, Ralph d’Escures, and Ernulph, were all monks, and all came from the Canterbury chapter or the archbishop’s household. They were all loyal and trusted servants of the archbishops under whom they served, indicating a replication on a small scale of the relationship of the king with the rest of the dioceses, but drawing instead from the archiepiscopal household.

The lower levels of the diocesan administration followed a similar pattern. Many of the archdeacons were drawn from the royal household. In particular, the chaplains of the king were frequently placed into archdeaconries throughout England (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-). The bishops also placed a significant number of their own kin into diocesan administration. Many archdeacons were the nephews and sons of the bishop, and the bishops placed other relatives throughout the administration (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-; Brett 1975). For example, Richard de Belmeis I, bishop of London from 1108 to 1127, made one of his sons a canon at London, another became an archdeacon, one nephew became dean at London, and three other nephews were appointed as archdeacons within the diocese (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-).

The king played a central role in the church at the time. The king was not only considered to be the temporal ruler, but was also considered to be “God’s instrument to regulate the Church as well as the kingdom” (Brooke and Brooke 1984, 131). The king appointed the bishops and was instrumental in all aspects of the church. In addition to appointing the bishops, he also convened councils and established the rules of the church. The role of the king was explicitly put forth by King William I. He instituted a set of rules for observance throughout England governing the role of the king. Among these rules he would not allow anyone to recognize anyone as pope, that if the archbishop of Canterbury “presided over a general council of assembled bishops, no statute or prohibition could be passed if it were not suitable to the wishes of the king and he had he had first given his assent” (Rule 1884, 10).⁵ It also stipulated that no member of the clergy could excommunicate any member of the nobility except by his command.

⁵ “...*si coacto generali episcoporum concilio praesideret, non sinebat quicquam statuere aut prohibere, nisi quae suae [the king] voluntati accommodata et a se primo essent ordinata.*”

During the 11th century, the understanding of authority within the church was based on both the personal character of the bishop and traditional and customary attachments. Underlying any notion of authority in the church was *charismas*, from which Weber (1968) took the idea of charisma. The *charismas* of the bishop was drawn from the magical transformation that happened as soon as they were ordained into the office. However, this *charismas* was not initially a function of the office, but instead of the individual bishop (Duby 1980). In fact, the bishop had to have a personal reservoir of charisma in order to ordain the other clergy within his diocese, by imparting some of his own charisma onto the clergy. On the continent, the source of *charismas* was the noble lineage of the bishop, which allowed him to invest some of his charisma in the priests who he ordained. This personal reservoir of *charismas* was drawn from the king, who by anointing and investing the bishop with his symbols of office was able to transfer some of his own authority to that of the bishop.

Contestation over Royal Control

Around the mid-eleventh century a reform movement began within the church to “liberate” the church. This movement, commonly known today as the Gregorian reform, attempted to separate the church from the influence of the state and secular authorities (Blumenthal 1988; Robinson 1983; Morrison 1969; Tierney 1964; Tellenbach 1940). These reformers sought the *libertas ecclesiae*, or the freedom of the church, which sought a moral reform of the church by only placing those with the appropriate moral character. The greatest moral threat to the church was in the form of the involvement of members of the clergy in secular affairs, and the appointment of those whose primary concern was neither the church nor pastoral care. The reformers identified the involvement of secular rulers in the affairs of the

church as a main source for the debasement of the moral character of the clergy. Included in this were claims for papal supremacy over the church, at times extending to claims for papal supremacy over all of Christendom, including the emperor and kings (c.f. Morris 1989; Blumenthal 1988; Robinson 1983). This reform movement also had a significant impact on the relations between dioceses and the monarchy, in addition to its impact on the internal relations of bishops with the pope. In particular, the reform movement had three specific reforms which it sought to implement to remove the influence of state from ecclesiastical affairs.

The first reform was a ban on lay investiture. Lay investiture involved the appointment of clerics by secular rulers.⁶ This was clearly an attempt at separating the role of secular authorities from determining the leadership of local churches. As we saw above, this was the sole way in which bishops were appointed during this period. The second reform involved simony, or the use of monetary payments to secure an office.⁷ For example, Ranulph Flambard bought the bishopric of Durham in 1099 from the king for £1,000 (Thorpe 1848-1849; Rule 1884; Prest 2002). Similarly, the monk Herbert Losinga paid William II 1,000 marks for the bishopric of Norwich for himself as well as the abbey of Winchester for his father (Thorpe 1848-1849). The final reform was clerical marriage, which was made universal and extended to many members of the lower clergy that had previously been able to customarily marry. In large part, the ban on clerical marriage was an attempt to pull the clergy out of kinship networks with local dynasties as well as an attempt to prevent making offices hereditary (Berman 1983).

These reforms were slowly implemented in England during this period. Simony was first banned in England in 1075 at a council in London held by Archbishop Lanfranc (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981). However, these reforms were most aggressively pushed in England by

⁶ It is known as lay investiture because it involves a lay person investing the cleric with the symbols and authority of office.

⁷ It is termed simony after Simon Magus, Acts 8:9-24 (c.f. Lynch 1976).

Anselm, the noted theological scholar and later saint, who was the archbishop of Canterbury. He sought to implement and ratify all three of these reforms in the English church. In a council held at Westminster in 1102, Anselm led the assembled clergy in reaffirming the ban on simony, as well as instituting canons against clerical marriage (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981). His attempt at reform brought him into opposition to the king, but was able to get the king to agree in 1107 to a ban on lay investiture, so long as those bishops who had already been appointed were not deposed. This agreement set the pattern for later bargains between the king and the church about lay investiture. The king agreed to discontinue to invest bishops himself, allowing the church control over appointments and elections. However, since bishops were large landowners and powerful magnates in their own rights, the church agreed to give the king power over this property, or temporalities, essentially giving the king veto power over the election of bishops.

However, this agreement does not seem to have been immediately followed. Between 1107 and 1125 six more bishops were appointed, all of them by the king. Furthermore, all of these bishops were royal servants. It was not until after 1125 that bishops were elected by their local chapters from among the clergy. This date is important because 1122 was the year of the Concordat of Worms, which was an agreement between the pope and the emperor of Germany to ban lay investiture, but allowed the secular ruler the right of veto over episcopal elections, which was the pattern of later involvement of the English king in the investment of his bishops (Edwards 1967). However, it is not likely that King Henry I stopped appointing bishops because of the agreement between the pope and the emperor. Instead, it was part of a rearrangement of the relationship between the papacy and the king (Barlow 1979; Southern 1963). In addition, the papacy began to take a much stronger role in the English church in 1125 with the appointment and arrival of the reformer John of Crema as papal legate (Brett 1975; Arnold 1882-1885).

While Henry I at first blocked him from entering England, he was allowed to enter in 1125 for the explicit purpose of reforming the church, which he did at a council held at Westminster in September (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, 730-740).

In sum, the period between the conquest of England by the Normans and 1122 was marked by direct royal control over the church. The king claimed control over the appointments to bishoprics, and withheld the right of refusal for any clerical acts. A movement for reform attempted to change the relationship between the king and the church, and was only modestly successful (Cantor 1958). While the reformers were able to ban all three elements of the reform, the king continued to be involved in the investiture of bishops, though the monarchy did stop taking money for these appointments. The king's involvement was less direct than it had been before. Instead, the king had the right to refuse the investment of a bishop by refusing to hand over the lands necessary to provide the income for the operation of the diocese. Because of this power of veto, the kings would often put forward candidates for vacant episcopal positions, or the clergy would attempt to select someone who was acceptable to the king to avoid a lengthy vacancy.

Ecclesiastical Control, 1123-1170

After 1125, the king played a less significant role in the appointment of bishops. As Table 2 indicates, there were only six royal officials appointed to the episcopacy during this period, and two of these were also members of the clergy. The appointment of royal officials was very much the exception, and typically due to extraordinary circumstances. For example, Maurice was appointed bishop of London in 1141, and this was done by the Empress Matilda during the short period when King Stephen was captured in 1141-1142 (Bartlett 2000). Overall,

this is a significant difference from the previous period.⁸ While he still had influence over the elections of bishops, he did not directly appoint them. Instead, bishops were selected from within the church, primarily through elections.⁹ The church appointed or elected 25 bishops during this period, with 4 of those elections being quashed.¹⁰ The king played a role as a veto point in these elections, since he could refuse to give over the manors of the diocese to the newly elected bishop, quashing the election.

Given the absence of royal control over the appointment of bishops, the church did not have any specified career path. Instead, two distinct career paths formed that individuals followed to become bishop. During this period there were ten monks elected to become bishops and sixteen secular clerks. The monks, with one exception, had previous administrative experience within monasteries or in monastic cathedrals. Gilbert Foliot, whose letters provide an important source of information about administrative activities during this period, had been abbot of Gloucester before being elected to Hereford and later translated to London. Eight of the other nine monks who were elected as bishops likewise had administrative experience as heads of religious houses (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-; Knowles, Brooke, and London 2001). Other examples include Henry of Blois was abbot of Glastonbury before appointed bishop of Winchester by his grandfather King Henry I in 1129, Seffrid was a monk at Séez before becoming abbot of Glastonbury following Henry and then becoming bishop of Chichester, and Robert de Béthune the bishop of Hereford was a canon and later prior at Llanthony. These

⁸ Table 2 presents the crosstab comparing the period ending in 1124 to the one that ends in 1169, and the chi-square statistic for the background is 31.036, significant at $p < .001$.

⁹ The formal test of the difference in method of appointment for the period ending in 1124 and that ending in 1169 yields a chi-square of 20.919, significant at $p < .001$.

¹⁰ The quashing of an election involved the veto of the election by the pope, a papal legate, the king, or occasionally by an archbishop (Benson 1968). One example of this is the election at Salisbury in 1140. King Stephen supported his royal chancellor, Philip of Harcourt, while Stephen's brother, Henry of Blois, who was also the papal legate in England at the time, supported the clunian monk Henry de Sully, who was also their nephew. Both the king and the legate vetoed each other's candidate, which resulted in the election of Jocelin de Bohun in 1141 while the king was temporarily imprisoned by Matilda (Knowles 1951; Saltman 1956).

monks were not neophytes to administration, but brought along significant personal experience as heads of these religious houses.

As Table 3 indicates, the secular clerks who were elevated to be bishops were largely archdeacons. Of the seventeen, including Nigel who was both a royal clerk and a secular clerk, ten were archdeacons, two were deans, one was a treasurer, two were official members of a bishop's staff, one was a clerk in the papal curia, and one was a canon in the cathedral. All of them had some form of administrative experience, whether as a bishop's clerk, as an archdeacon, or as a resident canon of the cathedral. Furthermore, several of these secular clerks had extensive education. Gilbert the Universal, bishop of London from 1128 to 1134, was a noted theologian, Robert Chesney, bishop of Lincoln, was most likely educated in Paris, Robert de Melun was a student and successor of Peter Abelard at Paris before becoming bishop of Hereford, the aforementioned Nigel was a student of master Anselm at Laon prior to serving in the exchequer and becoming bishop of Ely, and Jocelin de Bohun studied law in northern Italy while archdeacon of Wiltshire before becoming bishop of Salisbury. Overall, the secular clerks appointed to the bishoprics of these dioceses were highly educated, both formally in the schools, and also in experience in ecclesiastical administration.

Looking at the administrative staff below bishops, we see that secular clerks were increasingly involved in the administration of the diocese. The deans were selected from within the chapter, with many of them being archdeacons before becoming dean. Archdeacons were also increasingly selected from the cathedral chapter, as were precentors. In addition, during this period an increasing number of the local clergy were educated. Table 4 indicates that overall, around 20% of the higher officials within each diocese were called *magister*, and indication that they had some form of higher education, increasingly a university education (Baldwin 1976).

Education was also prominent among the rest of the administrative staff of the diocese, with the vast majority being trained at the cathedral, even if they did not warrant the title of *magister* (Clanchy 1993).

Two sources of authority

The central problem facing local dioceses at this time was that they had gained control over the appointment of bishops, but it was unclear who should be appointed bishops. There were two very different paths towards becoming bishop (c.f. Bouchard 1979; 1987). The first involved the elevation of monks to be bishop. The Gregorian reformers sought the moral reform of the clergy and the disengagement of the church from secular affairs. Monks, because of their rejection of the world, were considered not only less likely to be involved in secular affairs, but because of the strictures of their rule, holier as well. The second career path was by being a secular clerk, and moving up from being an official of a bishop or being an archdeacon to the bishopric.

The reform ideology that had led to ecclesiastical control over the appointment of bishops strongly preferred monks. Monks were supposed to reject the world and to hold themselves to higher levels of personal sanctity. The laity gave significant amounts of money and land to the monasteries in order to benefit from their prayers, since their personal sanctity and holiness made their prayers more effective (Moore 2000; Rosenwein 1989; Knowles 1950). Monks epitomized the ideal of the holy life, and the monastic life was considered the surest path to salvation (Vauchez 1975). The reform ideals were based around a moral reform of both the church and the clergy. While monks were barred from being priests (Friedberg 1879), they were able to become bishops, and rarely deacons. The reform ideology supported monks not only because their

personal sanctity would serve as an appropriate model of the christian life for the rest of the clergy in their diocese, but also because their otherworldliness would keep them removed from secular affairs that had tainted the independence of the church and the moral character of the clergy (Bouchard 1979).

These attributes of monks played themselves out at all levels of the organization. This is particularly revealed by a letter sent in 1162 from a monk to Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, asking for a position on the archbishop's staff.¹¹ In this letter, the monk enumerates all of the characteristics mentioned above to emphasize his qualifications for becoming an administrator. He writes to Becket:

[Administration] requires discerning and diligent men, armed with zeal for God, who can administer external affairs with prudence and know also how to preside over internal matters with watchful care, according to their expertise; men who set the needs of the community before their own, who, seeking not their own interests but Christ's, can effectively discharge the duty assigned to them with discernment and humility; men who do not follow flesh or blood, who are especially able to provide for the household servants of the faith; men who do not strip the churches of their sustenance to enrich their relative. . . men, who strive to serve the Spirit, unmoved by the delights of the flesh and exhausted neither by surfeit of food nor wine-soaked slumber; to whom the music of hymns and psalms is sweeter than wandering by day or sleep by night, to whom the care of souls is dearer to the heart than the care of bodies. . . men who act with discretion in both aspects of life, what is within and what is without, so that the rest may be added and, seeking first the kingdom of God, put spiritual before carnal and divine before human things (Duggan 2000, i.2-5).

From this letter, we can see that monks' "zeal" and their desire to "set the needs of the community before their own", who act with "humility", and who delight of "hymns and psalms" particularly qualify them for becoming ecclesiastical administrators. These attributes of holiness and sanctity served to set monks spiritually and morally above those of the secular clerks. The asceticism of the monk is also considered. Monks give greater concern to "the care of the soul . . . than the care of bodies", and put "spiritual before carnal" things. Finally, the separation of monks from the concerns of politics and familial relations also recommend them. Monks do

¹¹ While monks were barred from being in the secular orders (such as canons, archdeacons, etc.), there were no special restrictions on them being administrators to bishops.

not “enrich their relative” with church property, and do not seek “their own interests, but Christ’s”.

It was these characteristics that made monks particularly appropriate to become bishops in the wake of success of the Gregorian reform in England. We can also see this with contemporary historiography, which placed a strong emphasis on personal sanctity. Even outside of the reformers, the monkish life was highly regarded. Most of the chroniclers of this period look highly on monks in general, but also single out for praise monks who were elected bishops (c.f. Gransden 1974). In listing the qualities of the bishop, Bernard of Clairvaux, the great spiritual and monastic writer of the age, writes to bishops that “you will not be honored for the splendor of your clothes, nor the elegance of your horses, and neither for great buildings, but instead for distinguished manners, spiritual zeal, and good deeds,”¹² clearly favoring the qualities of monks (Migne 1844-1859, clxxii.812b-813a).

In contrast to the monks, secular clerks were increasing in importance. All of the other administrative positions within local dioceses were filled with secular clerks. The qualifications for these clerks were primarily based on their education and experience within the diocese. However, they were typically lacking in personal sanctity. From the conquest onwards, multiple councils promulgated canons regulating the behavior of the secular clerks. Many of these had to do with clerical marriage and the inheritance of churches, but many also had to do with the manner of dress, should not drink to excess, and so forth (Rule 1884; Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981). While similar decrees were done in the first decades of the 12th century for

¹² “*Honorificabitur autem non cultu vestium, non equorum fastu, non amplis aedificiis, sed ornatis moribus, studiis spiritualibus, operibus bonis.*”

monks, the concern about the appropriate behavior of the secular clergy continued throughout the 12th century.

This lack of personal morality or sanctity is most clearly seen in attitudes towards archdeacons. One priest, who later founded a native monastic order, said that becoming an archdeacon was “the quickest path to damnation” (Foreville and Keir 1987). John of Salisbury, a secular clerk himself, teases a friend of his who had recently been appointed an archdeacon. He says of them:

I seem to remember that there was a race of men known in the Church of God by the title archdeacons for whom you used to lament, my discerning friend, that every road to salvation was closed. They love gifts, you used to say, and follow after rewards. They are inclined to outrage, rejoice in false accusation, turn the sins of the people into food and drink, live by plunder so that a host is not safe with his guest. The most eminent of them preach the Law of God but do it not. Such and such like qualities your pious compassion used to bewail in the most wretched state of the men (Millor and Brooke 1979, 25).

The secular clergy were considered by many to be corrupted by family and secular affairs. As one chronicler put it, they were “irregular clerks regular”¹³, and accuses them of turning away the poor (Appleby 1963, 70). During this period, a number of councils enacted canons attempting to better regulate the behavior of the secular clergy (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981).

These secular clerks brought a number of pragmatic advantages, even if they were vilified. The rise of internal administrative positions, as we saw in the previous chapter, opened up a number of positions for secular clerks that were closed to regular monks. Increasingly, clerks were involved in the administration of the diocese (Edwards 1967; Cheney 1950). Furthermore, they were involved in the administration of all of the bishops, whether they were monks or secular clerks. Jocelin de Bohun, the bishop of Salisbury, was typical of this pattern. He had previously been an archdeacon in the diocese of Winchester, and had some training in the law, as was mentioned above. He also relied heavily on his archdeacons and dean in the diocese

¹³ “...*clericorum irregulariter regularium...*”

to help him administer the diocese. Furthermore, he relied on a number of *magistri* in conducting his business, most of whom were drawn from within the cathedral chapter (Kemp 1999). Bishops who were drawn from the monastic orders also relied heavily on secular clerks in their administration. Robert de Béthune was previously prior of Llanthony, and relied extensively on three secular clerks who were *magistri*, as well as on his successor at Llanthony and another canon of Llanthony (Barrow 1993). Increasingly, the higher officials of the diocese, primarily the archdeacons and deans, were involved in managerial oversight of a number of lower clergy. The deans were responsible for managing the cathedral chapter, and the archdeacons with overseeing the activities of rural deans and priests in their respective territories. This administrative experience within the diocese gave them a background that was difficult for monks to emulate (Bouchard 1979).

In addition, clerks were increasingly trained in the law, both through education and through practice. The cathedral schools were used as places to educate the clerks, and they were increasingly teaching the law. The administrative staff of the diocese was also increasingly educated at universities, and this was primarily in the law. In particular, archdeacons were responsible for holding ecclesiastical courts for the lower clergy within their territory (Rodes 1977; Thompson 1943; Scammell 1971; Edwards 1967). These courts were typically standing courts, and used extensively the formalized canon law (Kemp 2001). For example, Ralph Diceto was archdeacon of Middlesex from around 1152, and in his later history quotes directly from the *Digest*, one of the principal texts of the canon law (Stubbs 1876, ii.12). Their use of the law was often times to further their own interests, however, and many of the appeals to the pope were based on archdeacons attempting to seize the property of monasteries. Richard de Belmeis was recommended to the pope to become bishop of London, and was recommended based on his

“honest life, laudable learning, and amiable charity”¹⁴ (Morey and Brooke 1965, no. 99), and was praised in a letter at his confirmation for being “industrious and rich in knowledge”¹⁵ (Stubbs 1876, i.295). It was their extensive use of the law, often to the detriment of what many considered just, that led them to have such a tarnished reputation (Bartlett 2000).

This raises the problem of why the secular clerks were promoted at all. Secular clerks were poorly regarded, and in particular, archdeacons were widely loathed. Yet clerks were promoted at the same rate as were monks, and of the clerks, archdeacons were the predominant path into the episcopacy. The monks were closely tied to the ideals of reform, and were promoted for the general moral uplift of the entire ecclesiastical order. Furthermore, most of them had previous administrative experience in abbeys and priories, so they were not new to administration.

One explanation was that clerks were better administrators than monks were (c.f. Bouchard 1979). This would be a more significant factor in those dioceses which had greater administrative requirements. Whether or not this was about effectiveness in management or in order to draw out larger rents, one would expect that larger dioceses would be more likely to appoint administrators (i.e. secular clerks), while smaller dioceses could afford to have poorer administrators (i.e. monks). I split up the dioceses between those that were large, in that they had extensive administrative responsibilities, and those that were smaller and the administration requirements were lower.¹⁶ In Table 5, we can see that monks were no less likely to be

¹⁴ “...*vita honestum, laudabilem scientia, liberalitas amabilem...*”

¹⁵ “...*industria viget et scientia floret...*”

¹⁶ The larger dioceses include Bath and Wells, Ely, Exeter, Lincoln, Salisbury, and Winchester, all of which were large and wealthy dioceses in the middle ages (Edwards 1967; Crosby 1994). In addition, I included Durham to the large dioceses, because the bishop of Durham was also the secular ruler of that shire, in lieu of a secular, feudal lord. The smaller dioceses were Carlisle, Chichester, Coventry and Lichfield, Hereford, London, Norwich, Rochester, and Worcester.

appointed bishop in the larger dioceses than in the smaller dioceses. While the percentage of bishops in large dioceses who came from the monastic orders was slightly lower than those in small dioceses (22.2% vs. 47.0%), this difference is not statistically significant. Thus the argument that large dioceses will be more likely to produce bureaucratic careers where officials are promoted from within the organization is not supported. The officials who were promoted were primarily archdeacons, who were primarily responsible for overseeing the lower clergy within the diocese, not primarily in managing property.¹⁷

Another possibility is that the constitutional structure of each diocese could have affected the selection of type of clergy. In England there were two main types of chapters in the cathedral, a secular chapter composed of canons not under orders, or a monastic chapter composed of either a Benedictine monastery or an Augustinian priory. Furthermore, there were two dioceses that were considered “bicephalous”, in that they had two cathedrals, one containing a secular chapter and the other containing a monastic chapter.¹⁸ Table 6 examines whether or not the organization of the diocese had an impact on the type of bishop selected within the diocese. We can see that in secular cathedrals, there was a preference for secular clerks, where 69% of the bishops (9/13) coming from the secular clergy and only 31% coming from monastic orders. However, there is no statistical difference with monastic cathedrals or bicephalous cathedrals, where 44% and 50% respectively came from monastic orders.¹⁹

We have already seen that monks accounted for roughly half of all bishops, while secular clerks, who were in many ways the opposite of what the reformers intended, constituted the other

¹⁷ Throughout England at this time, only two treasurers were promoted, one to the archbishopric of York and the other to the bishopric of Durham. However, this is compared to the eleven archdeacons who became bishops and the two deans who were also promoted.

¹⁸ Wells was a secular cathedral that had been the original see in the dioceses, until moved to Bath, but was reconstituted during this period as an equal part of the diocese. Similarly, Coventry was a Benedictine monastery that was considered on equal standing with the secular chapter at the cathedral at Lichfield.

¹⁹ The formal test of difference between the type of cathedral and background of bishop indicates a χ^2 of .686, $p=.710$, failing to obtain statistical significance.

half of all of the bishops during this period. Instead, the change in the external relations of the king with the papacy opened up opportunities for actors to pursue different sets of interests.

The shift in the environment that allowed the church to select its own bishops did not lead to the dominance of any particular career path. Instead, it opened up a different opportunity set than before, which allowed both monks and secular clerks to advance their own claims and attempt to be promoted. This structural change in the opportunities for appointments led both of these groups to contest with one another over who should be appointed to vacant bishoprics.

Monks and secular clerks began to fight with one another over who should be appointed bishop. We see this as early as 1123, when King Henry II allowed the free election of the archbishop of Canterbury. Initially a monk was elected, but Simeon of Durham describes the reaction of the assembled bishops:

But all of the bishops of England, who were all of the clerical order [secular clerks], protested and refused to have a monk as primate [archbishop of Canterbury], when they had clerks who were equally good and fit for the administration of the church. The delegates from Canterbury [two monks who were representing the chapter of monks there] responded, "Since the time of the first head of the church, St. Augustine, who was certainly a monk, to the present day a monk has always been selected to govern the church and be its archbishop" (Arnold 1882-1885, ii.268).²⁰

Notice here that the bishops, who were secular clerks, did not make any claims based on a particular expertise or background, but instead simply based on a rejection of a monk for archbishop. This was a common sentiment at the time, and clerks were becoming increasingly organized against the monks (c.f. Nicholl 1964). Clerks who became bishops in the monastic cathedrals had poor relations with their monastic chapters (Crosby 1967; Appleby 1963, 71). In this election, they forced the monks of Canterbury to elect another archbishop from a list of appropriate secular clerks that were provided, and finally settled on one.

²⁰ "At episcopus totius Angliae, qui omnes fuerant ex clericali ordine, reclamantibus nolle se monachum habere primatem, cum aequo probos et idoneos ad ecclesiasticum regimen haberent clericos, responderunt legati Cantuariensium. 'A tempore,' inquit, 'sancti Augustini, qui utique monachus hujus ecclesiae primus fuerat praesul, ad regimen illius useque in praesen semper monachi eligebantur.'"

While the monks at Canterbury were making claims based on tradition, they also fought back against the moral character of some of the secular clerks. The Cistercians and Augustinians of York strongly attacked William FitzHerbert, the archbishop of York from 1141 to 1147, claiming that he was invalid because he was a womanizer, and appealed to the bishop of Winchester and then the Pope, who appointed two bishops to act as judges delegate in the case. In the end, it was decided for the monks, and William FitzHerbert was removed from office and a monk, Henry Murdac, was elected as the new archbishop. Similarly, the Augustinians of Coventry elected their prior to the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield in 1149, where the clerks of that diocese also appealed to Rome, but their appeal was overturned (Franklin 1997).

However, the secular clerks used their knowledge of the law to advance their cause. In the case of the monks against William FitzHerbert, they sent their archdeacon to make the case, since he had a background in the law. Similarly, in 1151 the clerks of London used their knowledge of law to make a creative interpretation of a papal edict when the pope ordered them to elect a monk to be their next bishop. John of Salisbury describes the events following the death of Robert de Sigillo, bishop of London, in 1151 and how the clerks maneuvered to select one of their own:

...[Pope] Eugenius [III] instructed the clergy to elect within three months a man of good morals, learned [*litteratum*] and wearing a religious habit [i.e., a monk]. Fearing that this would exclude them from electing one of their own [i.e., a secular clerk], they sent to Rome and carried back papal letters with this interpretation of the last clause: that not only monks and canon regulars, but also those commonly called 'seculars' would be understood as wearing a religious habit; because when someone gets the clerical tonsure, as explained in the words of consecration, he immediately assumes the sacred religious habit (Chibnall 1956, 88).²¹

Here, the clerks organized to prevent them from having to appoint a monk, instead appealing to the pope and pushing forward an interpretation of clerks as equivalent of the monks. Some in the

²¹ "...domino Eugenio clero Londoniensi, quatinus eligerent infra tres menses virum honestum et litteratum et religionis habitu decoratum. Illi timentes universitatem suam excludi miserunt ad ecclesiam Romanam et hanc novissime clausule reportaverunt in litteris apostolicis interpretationem, ut non modo monachi et canonici regulares, sed etiam illi quos vulgus / seculares nominat, intelligantur religionis habitu decorati; quia quando quis attendetur in clericum, sicut ipsius benedictionis edocent verba, tunc habitum sacre religionis assumit."

papal court “objected to this foolish interpretation”²², because it made the original mandate completely unnecessary, unless “by chance the pope feared that the people of London were determined to elect some layman to be bishop”²³ (Chibnall 1956, 88). In addition, elections were increasingly technical, and following the letter of the canon law was increasingly important (Benson 1968; Helmholz 1996). Plus, the secular clerks did not hold the virtues of the monks to be a necessarily qualification for the episcopate. One clerk, Gerald of Wales, made this explicit when he looked back on the 12th century and wrote of “how many harms to the English church have occurred in our time through the election of monks, both in bishoprics and especially promoted to the principal see of the church of Canterbury, and in contrast, the many honors and advantages that have happened at the same time from the clerks who have been elected”²⁴ (Brewer 1861-1891, 75). Ralph de Diceto, compiling his history at the end of the 12th century, primarily focuses on the legality of the elections, not the moral character of the bishops who were elected (Stubbs 1876). Overall, this was the development of an attitude among the secular clergy deeply hostile to monks (Knowles 1976).

Overall, the change in the relationship between the papacy and the king opened up opportunities for both monks and clerks to advance their claims over the other. However, these changes in the environment did not determine the structure of careers in the church, nor establish a legitimate career path. Instead, it created a context for monks and clerks to fight with one another over who would become promoted to the church. During this period, it was unclear which group would be successful, or if a structure of careers that was split between monks and secular clerks would continue.

²² “...hanc interpretationem causarentur ineptum...”

²³ “...nisi fate timebat apostolicus ne Lundonienses aliquem de laicis in episcopum eligere destinarent.”

²⁴ “Quanta vero incommoda Anglicanae ecclesiae nostris diebus per monachorum electionem, et eorumdem in pontificalibus ecclesiis, et maxime in Cantuariae ecclesiae sede principali promotos, acciderint, et utilitates e diverso quantae et quam honorificae per clericos ibidem assumptos evenerint...”

Reassertion of Royal Control, 1170-1213

After 1170, English bishops were overwhelmingly drawn from the ranks of the secular clergy. Only ten monks were promoted to the episcopacy after 1170 through 1250, out of 99 total bishops, half of them before 1215.²⁵ With few exceptions, the bishops (79.2% of the total) who began their tenures between 1170 and 1214 were drawn overwhelmingly from the ranks of the secular clergy, as shown in Table 2. Monks become exceptionally rare after this point throughout England, though they do not completely disappear (Bartlett 2000; Gibbs and Lang 1934; Le Neve and Greenway 1968-). During this period, the elections were overwhelmingly decided in favor of secular clerks, with monks having only a trivial involvement in the administration of the church.

However, half of these bishops (17 of the 34) were simultaneously members of the royal administration. Of these 17, roughly half continued to be involved in royal administration after they were invested in their sees. However, this was not simply a return to direct royal control over the investiture of bishops. Unlike in the period before 1125, the king only appointed one of these bishops. Instead, there were 51 bishops elected, of which twelve of these elections were quashed, leading to a total of 29 of the 34 being elected canonically by their cathedral chapters. In terms of education, only 9 bishops during this period were *magistri*. However, the lower ranks of diocesan administration became inundated with educated clerks, as we can see from Table 4. Among the deans and chancellors, over 60% of those appointed were *magistri*, while roughly half of the archdeacons and roughly 40% of the chancellors were *magistri*. Treasurers continued to lag behind, with only 2 of the 17 treasurers having a university education.

²⁵ In several of the dioceses not studied, more monks were promoted (Le Neve and Greenway 1968-). However, these were entirely within the monastic cathedrals, an institution peculiar to England. For a brief discussion of the monastic cathedrals, see chapter 2 and Edwards (Edwards 1967).

Among the lower officials in diocesan administration we begin to see a fuller development of a bureaucratic career. Archdeacons were increasingly drawn from the cathedral chapter and from the bishop's staff. Deans were frequently promoted from among the archdeacons of the diocese, while the other offices were also filled by canons. Many of these new officials were simultaneously royal officials, particularly deans and archdeacons. Table 7 shows the background of the new appointees to these positions. While the background of many of these officials is unknown, we can see that for those officials for whom the background is identifiable, they were largely drawn from within the church hierarchy. Very few were drawn solely from royal administration, though anecdotal accounts suggest that archdeacons were drawn from secular clerks in royal administration (Cheney 1950; 1956; Edwards 1967).

This new reassertion of royal involvement in the church led to the development of a career pattern that was marked by simultaneous careers in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and in royal administration. Officials started at low levels within either the church or in royal administration. As Table 8 shows, of the seventeen bishops who were also involved in royal administration, seven of them were secular clerks first, only later becoming royal officials. The other ten bishops were royal officials before becoming secular clerks.

Unlike the earliest period, where appointing royal clerks to the episcopacy was a reward for loyal service to the crown, this new breed of royal administrator was also a clerical administrator. While some historians have emphasized the royal connection to the exclusion of their involvement in church affairs, these clerks were active in both the court and the church (c.f. Barlow 1979). Seffrid, the bishop of Chichester who was elected in 1180 had been educated at the University of Bologna, and was archdeacon of Chichester for roughly fifteen years before

becoming dean of Chichester around 1177. At the same time he was a royal justice, deciding cases in the royal courts. However, he continued to be active as both archdeacon and dean, with one of his official documents as archdeacon surviving (Kemp 2001), and he was a witness on half of his predecessors official acts (Mayr-Harting 1964), an indicator that he was involved in the administration of the diocese (Stenton 1929). Similarly, Richard FitzNeal was the chancellor of the exchequer, one of the most important positions in the royal administration. He is famous for writing the *Dialogus scaccario*, a manual for running the exchequer. By all accounts he was an important royal official, and primarily made his career at court. However, he was also involved in church administration as Archdeacon of Ely, where he was also chosen as a papal judge-delegate, and witnessed several *acta* at Lincoln (Smith 1980). Overall, these royal officials were involved in administration both at the court and in their respective churches, indicating that these were dual careers.

Reestablishment of Royal Control

The general explanation for this shift towards greater involvement of the king in ecclesiastical affairs, and the involvement of the clergy in royal administration, is an outgrowth of the dispute between King Henry II and the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, which lasted from 1163 through Becket's death in 1170. The king had been crowned in 1154, and initially promised to uphold the liberty of the church. However, some of the clergy, in particular archbishop Theobald, were concerned about the king's attempts to increase his involvement in church affairs (Saltman 1956). When archbishop Theobald died, Henry moved to have his chancellor, Thomas Becket, elected to the archbishopric. He expected that Thomas would be more inclined to support his policy of increased involvement of the king in church affairs. In

fact, the opposite happened, and Thomas Becket became a surprisingly active proponent of the independence of the church from royal interference. In order to gain further control over the church, Henry sought to reassert some of the power the kings had over the church prior to 1125. In 1164, he held a royal council at Clarendon and issued a set of constitutions which outlined his program. It was introduced as a “recollection and recognition of some of the customs, liberties, and dignities of his predecessors, certainly of his grandfather King Henry and others, which should be held and observed in the kingdom” (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, 877).²⁶ The constitutions then went on to list a number of rights the king wanted to hold over the church, and he got Becket to reluctantly agree (Lawrence 1965). However, Becket changed his mind, sought a rejection of all of the precepts, and using canon law, attempted to have the constitutions declared void. The papacy was in a weak position, since it was involved in a serious dispute with the German emperor, and so attempted to resolve the matter amicably, but Becket instead went into exile, and after a time, began to excommunicate a whole host of people in England (see Duggan 2000). While the bishops in general were supportive of the archbishop, they were unwilling to go to the lengths he desired, and sought a more amicable resolution. In the end, the king relented and revoked the constitutions, and reconciled with Becket, who returned from exile in 1170. However, the relations between the archbishop and king flared up again immediately after his return, and he sent four knights to murder Becket in Canterbury Cathedral.

This dispute between King Henry II and archbishop Thomas Becket was a significant event in the history of the church in England, and was recognized as such by contemporaries. While the king had in the end revoked all of his constitutions, the murder of Becket and the desire of the rest of the bishops and the pope for better relations with the crown, created a shift in

²⁶ “...*recordatio et recognitio cuiusdam partis consuetudinum et libertatum et dignitatum antecessorum suorum, videlicet regis Henrici avi sui et aliorum, que observari et teneri deberent in regno.*”

the relationship between the church and the king (Lawrence 1965; Brooke 1932). Even though the legal framework remained unchanged, the king was able to have a greater involvement in ecclesiastical matters than he had previously been able to do.

This change in the relationship between the church and the king had a direct impact on the structure of careers. The king had a much more direct involvement in ecclesiastical affairs, and had an easier time getting his candidates elected to bishoprics. However, several characteristics serve to distinguish this period from the earlier period of royal control. First, the formal liberty of the church was maintained. All of the bishops and deans were freely elected, and the bishops continued to appoint the rest of their administrative staff. However, the chapters and bishops were increasingly selecting royal officials to promote. Matthew of Paris said that one bishop was elected by the clergy either “at the request of the king or to gain his favor” (Luard 1872-1883). Gerald of Wales considered the elections during this time to be “shadow” elections (Bartlett 1982; Brewer 1861-1891).

Henry II was certainly much more involved in the selection of ecclesiastical officials after 1170. However, this did not lead to the same type of involvement that his predecessors had before 1125. Instead, half of the bishops were drawn exclusively from the clergy without being royal administrators, and among the royal officials, all of them were simultaneously ecclesiastical officials. Furthermore, the church was canonically electing the majority of the episcopate, and freely selecting the lower officials from their own ranks. The king used his power to veto candidates in order to have the local clergy elect a clerk who was acceptable to the king. Thus, candidates needed to be appealing to both the clergy and the king. This structure of the clergy selecting candidates who they approved of, as well as being acceptable to the king, led to this pattern of promotion. While half of the candidates were solely from the ranks of the

clergy, they were safe appointments. The other half of the candidates were the royal/church officials who had close relationships to the king, while at the same time having the background that would make them acceptable to the clergy.

In addition, the royal administrators were also clerical officials. Most of them were archdeacons, and are seen conducting official acts as archdeacons (c.f. Kemp 2001). Nearly all of them were clerks who entered the royal administration after the judicial reforms of Henry II. Here we see a shift to appointing clerics to the royal household, instead of appointing royal officials to the episcopacy. Instead, the king began to increasingly rely on ecclesiastical officials to conduct royal affairs.

This pattern of recruitment differed dramatically from the earlier period of royal control. During the earlier period, the church was an appendage of the state, used to help “Normanize” England after the conquest. Bishoprics were rewards for royal officials, and provided them an additional source of income as they continued to conduct royal affairs. In contrast, after 1170, the church increasingly colonized royal administration. Royal officials were selected from the ranks of the secular clergy, using their experience in administration and their legal training to conduct royal affairs (Bartlett 2000). This infusion of the secular clergy into the ranks of royal administration was more common than royal administrators becoming secular clergy, and while some of the clerks served as chancellors, treasurers, and other posts, in general they served in the courts as justices. Of the nine bishops who were also at one point royal administrators, two-thirds of them were first secular clerks before becoming royal administrators. Of the three who were royal officials first, two of them were elected bishops of London, which maintained close ties to the royal court because of its position in the kingdom.

In accounting for the shift, there is no significant difference between large and small dioceses, contrary to the predictions of the state-building and division of labor theories. Using the full sample of English bishops, the statistical test of difference between large and small dioceses in whether or not they promote royal officials produces a $\chi^2=0.153$, $p=0.696$.²⁷ Furthermore, while there was a major shift in royal involvement during this period, less than half of all bishops were royal administrators when they were appointed.

In addition, of the ten bishops in the six dioceses studied here who were also royal administrators, five of them stopped acting as royal administrators either immediately upon their entrance into the church or within one or two years. This indicates that even though the church was becoming more involved in royal administration, and bishops were selected who were also active in royal administration, only a relatively small number continued their service to the crown. The neo-institutional and conceptions of control arguments would predict that the change in the environment increasing royal involvement in the church would lead to a change in the promotion patterns of bishops. This certainly did happen, but in some ways that differ somewhat from the predictions of the neo-institutionalists. For one, the changes in royal policy towards the church opened up opportunities for the secular clerks in royal government, particularly in the courts, which they were quick to pursue. However, less than half of all of the bishops were drawn from royal service, and many discontinued their involvement after becoming bishops. In addition, while royal control over the church increased, it did so in a way that did not supplant the career paths of secular clerks, but instead joined these careers to careers in royal administration, leading to the dual career path that is apparent during this period. Finally, the changes in policy saw a marked decrease in the number of monks who were elected bishop

²⁷ There were 47 total bishops elected during this period, and in total 20 of them were royal officials, with all but two of them (one at Ely and one at Worcester) simultaneously being secular clerks.

during this period. In part this is because a background in royal administration was beneficial to the chances of a cleric being promoted, and monks were only very rarely part of the royal administration, and the use of clergy in the courts closed off further opportunities for monks because they did not in general have a legal background. However, this was also a result of monks avoiding becoming bishop, because of an increasing feeling among the monks that bishops were too secular in orientation, and the asceticism and otherworldliness of the monks were incongruent with the increasing involvement of bishops in secular affairs, whether or not they were royal officials or not (Knowles 1976).

While monks never entirely disappear from the English episcopate, their frequency drops dramatically. While during the period between 1125 and 1170 roughly half of the English bishops were monks, after 1170 they drop to slightly less than 10% of all newly appointed bishops. At first glance, this appears to be a result of the replacement of monks by royal officials. However, it is not entirely certain that this is the case. For one, monks retained close ties to the king during this period, particularly in some of the more important abbeys, and the monks in general were supportive of the king (Knowles 1976).

What is particularly striking is that the king's involvement in ecclesiastical affairs allowed the nascent careers of the secular clergy to become more firmly established. The return of royal involvement in ecclesiastical careers was, as we have seen, largely the bringing of clergy in to royal administration, and primarily into the courts. The judicial reforms around 1170 which led to a greater involvement of the clergy in the secular legal system were primarily an attempt to standardize, rationalize, and humanize legal practice (Turner 1985). This was a widespread reform which sought to completely revamp the role of the courts in English society. There were three central reforms (Bartlett 2001). The first involved the "general Eyre", or the creation of

judicial circuits where royal justices would travel the country side holding court. The second reform was the creation of a central court in London, sitting in regular terms to hear civil cases, many of which were referred from the Eyre justices. Finally, there was experimentation in the appointment of justices, finally settling on the preference of clergy over the laity, as described by Ralph de Diceto (c.f. Stubbs 1876). The concern was that the courts were too arbitrary and harsh, and that the inclusion of clergy in the courts would lead to a better legal system. The idea was that the clergy in royal courts would be more likely to act justly towards the poor and would not accept bribes from the rich (Stubbs 1876, i.434-435).

These reforms and the involvement of clergy in them significantly benefited the secular clergy, who were increasingly involved in the administration of canon law. Their legal background, both in formal education and in practice in the archdeaconries and bishoprics, gave them a significant advantage over monks. While monks were personally devout and holy, and this could give them an aura of personal authority over legal proceedings, this did not provide them with the background for the demands of the royal courts. In addition, they found the court proceedings contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the canon law (Friedberg 1879). While the secular clerks were able to defend their involvement in secular affairs, these defenses involved ignoring the general thrust of a number of canons promulgated in English councils over the past century (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981). Ralph de Diceto goes to great lengths in his history to defend the involvement of the clergy in royal administration, citing precedents back to the early Christian church (Stubbs 1876).

In addition, the monks were increasingly seeing the role of bishops as too involved in secular affairs, whether they were royal officials or not. The role of the bishop at the time meant that they were deeply involved in politics. In addition they were powerful magnates, and

necessarily had close dealings with the crown and the upper nobility. Regardless of whether they were in royal administration or not, bishops were important political and economic actors in the secular arena. This led some monks to dismiss the possibility of being both holy and a bishop. For example, one monkish chronicler says of two bishops who were in a dispute with one another:

seeking too strongly for their own interests and too feebly those of Christ, began, to their great and grievous scandal, a dispute: one to be in charge, the other to not be subordinate, but to the profit of neither. Indeed it is clear that in our times pastoral honor has vanished to such an extent that even among the pastors of the church a man who understands and seeks God is exceedingly rare to find, while nearly all seek after their own interests” (Howlett 1884-1885, i.371).²⁸

The same chronicler also comments on the duality of the careers, noting how these bishops used their ecclesiastical position and the canon law for decidedly secular purposes:

For if his secular power was clearly ineffective in coercing or repressing any of the powerful laity, he supplied it with the censure of apostolic power. Moreover, if any of the clergy opposed his will opposing him by defending themselves according to the canon law, he crushed them with his secular power. Nor was anyone able to hide from his anger. For a layman must fear the scepter or sword of his apostolic authority, and the ecclesiastic have no defense or power against his royal imminence. In the end, immensely proud of his power, he became an object of terror to both of the archbishoprics, which thus far seemed to mock his authority, so that they might experience his power” (Howlett 1884-1885).²⁹

This shift in the attitudes of monks towards bishops indicated that the “otherworldliness” of monks was difficult to manage in such “worldly” activities as was required to be an English bishop in the late 12th century (Knowles 1976; Partner 1977).

Overall, the reassertion of royal control after 1170 did alter careers, primarily by creating a dual career model for advancement simultaneously in the church and in the royal

²⁸ “...sua fortius, et remissius ea quae sunt Christi, quarentes, cum multo et gravi scandalo disceptarunt. Ille, ut praesset; iste, ne subesset; neuter vero, ut prodesset. Ita quippe in diebus nostris pastorale decus evanuit, ut inter pastores ecclesiasticos admodum rarus inveniatur intelligens aut requirens Deum, dum fere omnes quae sunt quaerunt.”

²⁹ “Ad cogendos quippe vel coercendos potentes laicos, si quid forte ex seculari potentia minus poterat, Apostolicae id ipsum potestatis censura supplebat; si autem ex clero forte quisquam voluntati ejus obsisteret, hun proculdubio frustra pro se secundem canones allegantem, seculari oppressum potentia coercebat. Nec erat qui se absconderet a calore ejus, cum et secularis in eo virgam vel gladium Apostolicae potestatis timeret, et ecclesiasticus nulla se ratione vel auctoritate contra imminentiā regiam tueri valeret. Denique de potestate in immensum glorians, ut et metropolitanae ecclesiae, quae adhuc ejus videbantur aspernari excellentiam, experirentur potentiam, ad utramque tremendus accessit.”

administration. However, this model had as much to do with clerks becoming royal officials than royal officials becoming clerics. This change created additional opportunities for clerks, which many seized upon to bolster their careers in the administration of both the church and the state.

The Bureaucratic Career, 1215-1250

This period marks the full flourishing of the organizational career within the English church. Only five bishops were drawn from monastic orders and three from the royal administration, while the rest were drawn from the secular clergy.³⁰ In addition, of the 45 bishops, only 12 (26.7%) held dual careers in both the royal and diocesan administration. Instead, as Table 2 shows, the modal (48.9%) bishop was drawn solely from within the internal hierarchy of the church. Furthermore, these bishops did not have the same form of dual careers in both the church and royal administration. Furthermore, over 60% of bishops during this period were previously deans or archdeacons of their diocese, as shown in Table 3. Of the deans, four of the five had previously been archdeacons or chancellors within the diocese before becoming dean. This indicates that bishops were now primarily drawn from secular clerks who had long backgrounds of administration within the diocese.

In terms of education, we also see the promotion of a significant number of masters to the higher offices of the church, as seen in Table 4. Overall, 70% of the higher officials within the six dioceses were university educated, including 51% of the bishops. We begin to see the promotion to bishoprics of the university graduates who filled the lower offices of the church in the preceding period. Many of them were distinguished scholars as well as church

³⁰ With the notable exception of three bishops who were selected from the ranks of university faculties, all of whom were specialists in the canon law.

administrators, such as Richard of Chichester, who held the first professorship of canon law at the University of Oxford (Jones 1995).

The ranks of the other officers of the diocese were also filled with university graduates. Furthermore they were increasingly drawn from other positions within the diocese, promoted from positions of lesser authority to positions of greater authority, as is shown in Table 9. Deans were primarily drawn from the offices of the chancellors and archdeacons, precentors and archdeacons were drawn from the canons of the cathedral, and chancellors were drawn from a variety of other positions within the diocese. It is unclear where the treasurers were selected from, because very few of them were mentioned enough in the records to produce reliable biographical information.

Overall, this period marks the full development of bureaucratic careers in the church. Bishops were drawn primarily from the officials of the local diocese, after rising up through the ecclesiastical hierarchy. We see the secular clergy moving up through positions of increasing authority, autonomy, and remuneration. The clergy in general was highly educated, with university graduates dominating the higher offices of the church, and constituting the majority of new appointments, not only to these offices, but also to the episcopacy itself.

What distinguishes ecclesiastical careers in this period is the full development of the career that first became evident after 1125 among the secular clergy. After 1215, this was marked by the overall dominance of the bureaucratic career path, since the selection of monks or royal officials was incredibly rare. In addition, the secular clerks who were elected after 1215 built their careers principally within the church hierarchy, not with a dual career in both the church and the royal administration. Instead, the bureaucratic career which had been developing for nearly a century was fully realized.

The central event which removed royal influence from the church was the vassalization of the kingdom of England to the papacy in 1213. This was sparked by a relatively minor event. In 1206, the archbishop of Canterbury died, and the monks there elected their subprior, Reginald, even though the king had put forth his own nominee, John de Grey, who was bishop of Norwich. This disputed election was appealed to the papacy, where Innocent III rejected both candidates, and instead appointed Stephen Langton, one of his own staff, to be the new archbishop. The king attempted to prevent Langton's entry into England, and attempted to get his appointment nullified. Pope Innocent III, one of the most powerful and active popes in history, finally decided to directly attack the king, and placed the entire country of England under an interdict in 1208, and excommunicated John in 1209.³¹ Unlike in the dispute between Henry and Thomas Becket, where the English episcopate for the most part remained in England and attempted to resolve the dispute, during the interdict, nearly all of the bishops of England left the country and went into voluntary exile in France. This move by the papacy along with the assent of the bishops, essentially removed England from the Christian community, and made John's position untenable (Cheney 1949). In addition, this increased the disaffection of the barons with King John, causing them to rise up in a more open revolt. In this situation, John resolved his dispute with the papacy, and agreed that England should become a vassal state of the papacy (Lawrence 1965). In 1215 this was further reiterated as the first chapter of the Magna Carta (Powicke, Cheney, and Hadden 1964, 85).

While England in actuality never truly remained a vassal of the pope, this agreement dramatically affected the church. John not only granted a significant amount of freedom to the church, but also helped to minimize royal involvement in the affairs of the church (Bartlett 2001).

³¹ The interdict prevented the conduct of the basic rites of the church, which prevented any of the sacramental acts (such as baptisms, ordinations, marriages, etc.) from being performed by any member of the clergy throughout England, though the actual practice varied somewhat (c.f. Powicke, Cheney, and Hadden 1964, 11).

This shift in relations between the king and the papacy freed the church from having much involvement in royal affairs and administration. It allowed the full development of the bureaucratic career in the church by removing the possibilities in royal administration for secular clerks, and allowed the secular clerks to rise up principally in the church hierarchy.

However, this shift in policy did not create new career structures, but instead allowed for the careers of the secular clerks to be separated from royal administrators, which had shaped many of the careers prior to 1215. No new career patterns were created by this change, but instead the career path that had developed for internal promotions within the church was allowed to become dominant as secular clerks used this new freedom from royal involvement to promote those of their own who were not involved in royal administration.

Discussion

The development of bureaucratic careers within the church was by no means a foregone conclusion. Other possible models of careers within the English church were not only possible, but three alternative models appeared at different points in time. The English church, like the continental church, was characterized in the late 11th century by traditional careers, where bishops and other church administrators were drawn from the royal household, or from those who were rewarded for displays of personal loyalty to the king. This model of careers had been longstanding within the church, and survived in various forms for several centuries on the continent. However, it quickly disappeared except in very rare cases in England.

A second model of careers was based on the personal moral characteristics of individual clergy, principally in the form of monks becoming bishops in the middle 12th century, which existed at the same time as the proto-bureaucratic career of the secular clergy. These monastic

careers were intimately tied up with the Gregorian reform, where one of the principal goals of the reform movement was a wholesale transformation of the moral character of the clergy. Monks, especially those in the reformed orders, embodied the new character which the reformers sought to impose upon the secular clergy, and many were promoted to the episcopacy. However, this turned out to be short-lived, and after 1170 few monks ever became bishop in England. Nevertheless, this model of careers was not necessarily doomed to failure. Most of the bishops who were drawn from the monastic orders in England were abbots of large abbeys, many of which were on a comparable scale in terms of property and responsibility to diocesan bishops. Furthermore, the idea of selection on the basis of character was one which thrived in other administrative entities, such as the British colonial administration of the 19th century.

A third model of careers, one which remained a significant minority of the church, was the professional royal and ecclesiastical administrator. While those who followed this career path were secular clerks, they built their career at the intersection of the church and the state, serving simultaneously as clerks in the royal administration as well as diocesan administrators. Having similar backgrounds to the secular clerks who were solely ecclesiastics, they also developed similar skills and experiences that would serve them well as bishops. They also developed experiences within the royal administration that were not irrelevant to their performance as bishop. However, by retaining close ties to the royal administration, and having owed much of their career to the pleasure of the king, their commitment to the church was always suspect, and this divided loyalty served as a constant source of criticism of these clergymen. Nevertheless, this type of career path is still not unknown, particularly within the upper echelons of the U.S. federal bureaucracy, where career paths typically develop in politics, government, and in the private sector.

Nevertheless, the church ended up with a career structure that was bureaucratic. The typical career of a thirteenth century bishop began in the local schools, from which he proceeded to a university, earning a degree in the canon law or theology, whereupon he would enter into diocesan administration, rising up through the ranks before becoming bishop. Bureaucratic careers within the church developed over the course of nearly a century, and did so through competition with other career models. The monastic career structure was a viable alternative to the promotion of secular clerks, and had ideological support in the context of the Gregorian reform. However, by competing with monks for control over the local church, the secular clerks began to develop positive arguments for their own advancement, and increasingly came to resemble a separate social class, with its own outlook, career trajectories, and educational backgrounds.

The shift between these career structures was occasioned by changes in the relationship between the English crown and the papacy. In the earliest period, the first three Norman kings had a substantial amount of direct control over the church, which was one of the principal critiques by the Gregorian reformers. As the reformers, with the support of the papacy, placed significant amount of pressure on the king, they were able to gain concessions from the king when the king needed the church support for his own political ends. This activity by the reformers in England and elsewhere allowed for a period of substantial independence on the part of the church in selecting its own leaders. With the removal of royal control, monks and secular clerks competed over control of the church, with monks making claims for their own advancement on their personal sanctity, while clerks made theirs increasingly on the basis of their experience in administrative affairs. However, neither group was able to establish any clear

and significant dominance over the other, and with no significant outside pressure, it was not clear which career structure would eventually succeed.

The secular clerks ultimately gained control over careers within the church, but through a Faustian bargain with the king. With the resolution of the conflict between Becket and Henry II, Henry II was able to establish a significant amount of *de facto* control over the church. Initially desiring to return the church's relationship with the crown to its state immediately after the conquest, he did not return to the initial career structures of traditional careers. Instead, utilizing the administrative and legal expertise of the secular clerks, he began to promote into the episcopacy a very different kind of royal servant, the professional administrator making his career in both the church and the state. The opening up of career structures that occurred between Henry I and Henry II created new pathways for advancement within the church, which when the political environment returned to one favorable to the king, the king opted to utilize the secular clergy with administrative experience not only for promotion within the church, but also within his own administration. This created a positive environment for the secular clergy, but one that was dependent upon the crown and the dual career structure.

The clergy and the papacy were unhappy with this arrangement, but were unable to shift the political balance back to their favor. However, by firmly cementing ecclesiastical careers amongst the secular clergy, the basic institutional supports for a bureaucratic career were put into place between 1170 and 1215. When the papacy won a stunning victory against king John in 1214, they were able to fully realize the bureaucratic career structure that had been developing, and this became the modal career for bishops in later time periods.

In the context of this empirical account, we can see how the environment surrounding the church was significantly impacted by internal organizational developments within the church.

The creation of a secular clerk career pathway created a very different selection environment when the king again had significant amounts of control over the church. He could not have developed the same kind of dual career structure without the groundwork initially laid in the period of ecclesiastical control, nor was it clear that the secular clergy would become the dominant group within the church until the crown selected for secular clergy over monks, as well as over their own royal household, excepting those members of the household who also held administrative positions within the church. When the church again had control over appointments within the church, it again selected for secular clergy, privileging those who based their careers solely within the church, but still preferring those who held dual careers to monks, which represents a dramatic difference from the earlier period of ecclesiastical control.

Conclusion

This paper analyzes the development of bureaucratic careers within the medieval church. Over the course of the 12th century, the church developed bureaucratic structures at local levels that was unparalleled by any other institution in Latin Europe at the time. One significant element of this creation of bureaucratic organization was in the development of careers based upon mobility within the hierarchy on the basis of specialized training and administrative experience.

Within organizational sociology, there has been a significant emphasis on the effect of an organization's environment, whether political, institutional, task, or competitive, on organizational structures and behavior. However, this has ignored the significant role that transformations within organizations play in shaping the environments which regulate so many aspects of organizational life. This paper moves in this direction by showing how internal

organizational developments within the medieval Catholic church interacted with changes in the church's environment, producing elements of bureaucratic structures.

To do this, this paper relied upon recent theoretical developments using mechanisms of microbehavior to explain emergent properties of social systems. Competition between the church and the state, between different groups within the church, and between different ideological models of qualifications drove organizational change in the medieval church. As relations between the church and state shifted over time, these organizational innovations produced multiple models of career structures within the church, ultimately ending up with a bureaucratic career structure that would have been impossible in the 11th century. These emergent models have typically focused on diffuse social systems of autonomous actors in definite relations with one another as producing emergent properties. However, this paper makes a case for how these models can help us understand the development of organizational structures that can persist even when the microbehaviors which led to their development disappear. In this way, we can start to approach a more systematic accounting for the development of social structures, which necessarily has to provide accounts for the development of formal structures. To this end, this paper examines this in the context of one of the most significant types of formal social structure, bureaucracy, and provides an account for how elements of bureaucratic structures were able to develop in an independent historical case.

	<u>1066-1124</u>		<u>1125-1169</u>		<u>1170-1214</u>		<u>1215-1250</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Royal appointment	25	61.0%	6	16.2%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	32	17.1%
Other appointment ^a	4	9.8	2	5.4	2	3.6	3	5.7	11	5.9
Elections	8	19.5	25	67.6	51	91.1	49	92.5	133	71.1
quashed ^b	1	12.5	4	16.0	12	23.5	8	16.3	24	18.0
Unknown	4	9.8	4	10.8	2	3.6	1	1.9	11	5.9
Total	41		37		56		53		187	

^a These include appointments by the pope, the papal legate, or the archbishop.
^b These are elections that were invalidated, and the percentages shown are the percentage of all elections.

	<u>1066-1124</u>		<u>1125-1169</u>		<u>1170-1214</u>		<u>1215-1250</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Royal Official	25	62.5%	4	12.1%	3	6.8%	3	6.7%	34	21.3%
Monk	5	12.5	10	30.3	3	6.8	4	8.9	23	14.4
Secular Clergy	1	2.5	16	48.5	17	38.6	22	48.9	55	34.4
Royal Official and Secular Clergy	4	10.0	1	3.0	17	38.6	12	26.7	34	21.3
Royal Official and Monk	2	5.0	1	3.0	2	4.5	1	2.2	5	3.1
Unknown and Other	3	7.5	1	3.0	2	4.5	3	6.7	9	5.6
Total	40		33		44		45		160	
χ^2			31.036 ^a , p<.001		21.292 ^a , p=.019		2.441 ^a , p=.785			

^a The chi-square tests compare each time period to the one previous to it, and is a general test of the significance of the cell frequencies.

	<u>1125-1169</u>		<u>1170-1214</u>		<u>1215-1250</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dean	2	11.8%	9	27.3%	8	23.5%
Precentor	0	0.0	3	9.1	2	5.9
Chancellor	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.9
Treasurer	1	5.9	0	0.0	2	5.9
Archdeacon	10	58.8	19	57.6	11	32.4
Other Clerk	3	17.6	1	3.0	4	11.8
Canon	1	5.9	1	3.0	5	14.7
Total	17		33		34	

	<u>1066-1124</u>		<u>1125-1169</u>			<u>1170-1214</u>			<u>1215-1250</u>			<u>Total</u>			
	N	N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	
	Masters	Total	Masters	Masters	Total	Masters	Masters	Total	Masters	Masters	Total	Masters	Masters	Total	Masters
Bishop	0	39	0%	6	33	18%	9	43	21%	23	45	51%	38	160	24%
Dean	0	11	0%	2	16	13%	13	19	68%	15	21	71%	30	67	45%
Precentor	0	4	0%	2	13	15%	8	19	42%	16	25	64%	26	61	43%
Chancellor	4	4	100%	3	5	60%	10	16	63%	18	25	72%	35	50	70%
Treasurer	0	3	0%	2	11	18%	2	17	12%	11	19	58%	15	50	30%
Archdeacon	0	42	0%	7	51	14%	26	55	47%	47	62	76%	80	210	38%
Total	4	103	4%	15	75	20%	45	107	42%	91	130	70%	224	598	37%

	Monks	Secular Clerks	Total
Large Dioceses	2	7	9
Small Dioceses	8	9	17
Total	10	16	26

$\chi^2=1.534$, $p=.216$

	Monks	Secular Clerks	Total
Secular	4	9	13
Monastic	4	5	9
Bicephalous	2	2	4
Total	10	16	26

$\chi^2=0.686$, $p=.710$

	Dean		Precentor		Chancellor		Treasurer		Archdeacon	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Precentor	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%
Chancellor	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	5.6
Treasurer	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4
Archdeacon	9	47.4	2	10.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4
Other Clerk	2	10.5	3	15.8	1	5.6	0	0.0	5	6.9
Canon	2	10.5	5	26.3	5	27.8	3	16.7	22	30.6
Royal Official	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.2
Unknown	4	21.1	8	42.1	12	66.7	15	83.3	35	48.6

Note: Only includes dioceses of Bath and Wells, Chichester, Hereford, Lincoln, London, and Salisbury

	1170-1214		1215-1250		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secular Clerks	16	48.5%	22	64.7%	38	56.7%
Royal Officials ^a	17	51.5	12	35.3	29	43.3
First a Royal Official ^b	10	58.8	9	75.0	19	65.5
First a Secular Clerk ^b	7	41.2	3	25.0	10	34.5

$\chi^2=1.7949^b$, $p=.180$
^a These are royal officials who were also secular clerks, and whether or not they started as royal administrators or as a church official.
^b The percentages shown are of the total number of royal officials who were also secular clerks.

Table 9. Backgrounds for High Diocesan Officers, 1215-1250

	<u>Dean</u>		<u>Precentor</u>		<u>Chancellor</u>		<u>Treasurer</u>		<u>Archdeacon</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dean	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	8.7%	1	5.6%	1	1.2%
Precentor	1	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.6	3	3.5
Chancellor	4	19.1	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2
Treasurer	1	4.8	0	0.0	1	4.4	0	0.0	2	2.3
Archdeacon	6	28.6	1	4.0	3	13.0	0	0.0	6	6.9
Other Clerk	1	4.8	2	8.0	3	13.0	0	0.0	5	5.8
Canon	2	9.5	8	32.0	1	4.4	2	11.1	26	29.9
Royal Official	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	8.7	0	0.0	1	1.2
Unknown	5	23.8	13	52.0	11	47.8	14	77.8	42	48.3

Note: Only includes dioceses of Bath and Wells, Chichester, Hereford, Lincoln, London, and Salisbury

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