

ARBEO OF FREISING'S 'LIFE AND PASSION' OF ST EMMERAM*

THE MARTYR AND HIS CRITICS

1. St Emmeram's "Passion"

Sometime between about 765 and 772, Arbeo, bishop of the western Bavarian diocese of Freising (*ca* 764-783), wrote the "Lives" of two saintly bishops: the martyr, Emmeram, and the confessor, Corbinian, who had preached the Gospel in Bavaria and were now patrons at Regensburg and Freising, respectively. ⁽¹⁾ Arbeo's view of Bavaria's Christianization ignored the early-7th century missionaries from Burgundian Luxeuil. ⁽²⁾ More significantly, Arbeo's accounts of Emmeram and Corbinian obscured (apparently deliberately) the later diocesan organization of the Bavarian church

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(1) *Arbeonis Episcopi Frisingensis Vitae Sanctorum Haimhrammi et Corbiniani*, ed. B. KRUSCH (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum [= MGH, SSRG]), Hannover, 1920. Latin texts with German translations and critical commentary: *Leben und Leiden des Hl. Emmeram*, ed. B. BISCHOFF, Regensburg, 1953; *Vita Corbiniani. Bischof Arbeo von Freising und die Lebensgeschichte des hl. Korbinian*, ed. H. GLASER, F. BRUNHÖLZL and S. BENKER, Munich & Zurich, 1983. There is a fine literary analysis of Arbeo's "biographies" in W. BERSCHIN, *Biographie und Epochenstil im lateinischen Mittelalter* (Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters, 10), Parts 2/3, Stuttgart, 1988/91 (Part 3, p. 75-91), who notes particularly the archaic, Merovingian character of Arbeo's work (p. 78). The dating issues are discussed thoroughly (albeit inconclusively) in L. VOGEL, *Vom Werden eines Heiligen. Eine Untersuchung der Vita Corbiniani des Bischofs Arbeo von Freising* (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte, 77), Berlin & New York, 2000, p. 180-82.

(2) H. WOLFRAM, *Die Geburt Mitteleuropas. Geschichte Österreichs vor seiner Entstehung, 378-907*, Vienna & Berlin, 1987, p. 116-18; W. STÖRMER, *Frühes Christentum in Altbayern, Schwaben und Franken. Römerzeit und Frühmittelalter bis 798*, in: *Handbuch der bayerischen Kirchengeschichte*, 1/1, ed. W. BRANDMÜLLER, St Ottilien, 1998, p. 1-97 (16-19).