



Mensch und Schrift. Die Privaturkunden der Karolingerzeit

International conference to be held at St. Gall, 20–23 september 2006

In 2002 the work on a new facsimile edition of all the extant ninth-century charters preserved in the St. Gall archives has started. This editing-project is a joint undertaking by the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*, the *Stiftsarchiv Sankt Gallen* and the *Institut für Mittelalterforschung* in Vienna. The archives of the former monastery of St. Gall contain by far the largest amount of private charters preserved as originals from the early middle ages/Carolingian realm north of the Alps. This edition, following the two volumes on the eighth century edited by Bruckner in the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* in 1954-‘56, will consist of another 13 volumes, the first of which is scheduled to appear in the autumn of 2006.

To celebrate this occasion a conference on the diplomatics of Carolingian private charters is to be held at St. Gall on the 20–23 September 2006. Besides presenting the first examples from our work, we have invited numerous colleagues from abroad to shed their light on different aspects of Carolingian private charters, thereby hoping to further a fertile discussion on their features, origins and uses.

1. The structure of the conference offers in first instance a comparative approach. Some 30 years ago Heinrich Fichtenau in studying Austrian charters has brought forward the idea of regional diversity for private charters, by outlining separate regions each possessing more or less the same characteristics in their private charters, so-called „Urkundenlandschaften“. We would like to employ this concept as a tool for receiving an overview of the outlook and use of private charters in the Carolingian realm. Although the result cannot be a clearly sketched map outlining all the „Urkundenlandschaften“ of Carolingian Europe, we would like to encourage indepth study and systematic comparison region by region. A first step has been made by the study of the *Urkundenlandschaft Rätien* by Peter Erhart and Julia Kleindinst (Vienna 2004). By way of comparison, the features and functions of private charters used in Carolingian Europe should become clearer.

2. Furthermore it is obvious that in spite of all differences there are common characteristics these charters share. We will therefore not only focus on the regional differences, but on the similarities as well. These might (apart from mutual influences) partially be due to the common origin of private charters in the late Roman and early medieval charters but also to standardizing elements within the Carolingian realm. We would notably like to explore the use of collections of *Formulae* for charters and the influence of centralizing tendencies of the Carolingian state.

The publication of the contributions is foreseen. On the eve of this conference, and linked to it, an exposition will be inaugurated, titled *Mensch und Schrift im frühen Mittelalter*. It will show numerous examples of original charters and manuscripts from the *Stiftsarchiv Sankt Gallen* and the *Stiftsbibliothek Sankt Gallen*. The conference is organized by the *Stiftsarchiv Sankt Gallen* and the *Institut für Mittelalterforschung* in Vienna.