

**Julia Barrow**

**'How did kinsmen influence the careers of clerics? Uncles and nephews among the clergy 800-1200'**

Historians have often noticed individual pairs of clerical uncles and nephews in medieval sources, but the social and institutional implications of this pattern have not often been explored in depth. In a forthcoming book (*The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, Their Families and Careers in North-Western Europe c.800-c.1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)) I have examined the relations between clerics and their kinsfolk, especially clerical kinsmen, as part of a study of how clergy built up their careers between the reign of Charlemagne and the pontificate of Innocent III. By 800 a tendency towards child entry into the clergy, which was already very marked in the seventh century, had become pretty well universal, and this strengthened the influence of parents. Where fathers of future clerics were laymen but had brothers or brothers in law who were clerics, they often made use of them to ensure their sons' futures. In my lecture, I intend to give an overview of entry into the clergy and early education c.800-c.1100, before turning to look at the role of parents, the transmission of property within families and the extent to which clerics might benefit from this, and the roles of uncles towards nephews. Areas of Europe in which clerical marriage was more entrenched produce a somewhat different pattern of clerical upbringing and provide a useful contrast. Both patterns were challenged by new social forces from the end of the eleventh century onwards, above all changes in the running of schools. Most of the evidence I will be considering will be taken from charter and narrative sources for Northern France, England and also Germany, but I hope to include one or two twelfth-century Spanish examples.