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TOWARD A REESTABLISHMENT OF THE CORRESPONDENCE OF POPE HADRIAN II

THE LETTERS EXCHANGED BETWEEN ROME
AND THE KINGDOM OF CHARLES THE BALD
REGARDING HINCMAR OF LAON

Hadrian II, pope from December, 867 to December, 872, presided over the Holy See during some of the most tumultuous events of the age.¹ Inheriting a host of difficult problems from his powerful predecessor, largely problems connected with the marriage of king Lothar II,² the new pope in spite of difficult circumstances imposed his own, frequently more humane, diplomacy upon the policies of the Roman see. The death of the king rendered nugatory the indications of leniency,³ and simultaneously gave birth to a host of problems more difficult yet, when Charles the Bald and Louis the German, disregarding the legal and equitable claims of their remaining nephew, the emperor Louis II, forcibly assumed the succession in Lotharingia.⁴ Papal protest was both strong and constant, although ultimately unsuccessful, and forms one of the constant themes of the pontificate. The importance of the succession problem colored the

1. In the present paper, the following abbreviations and editions will be used throughout, unless otherwise noted: *Ann. Bert.* = *Annales Bertiniani*, edd. F. GRAT et al., *Annales de Saint-Bertin* (Paris, 1964); *JE* = P. JAFFÉ et al., *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*, vol. I (Leipzig, 1881); *MANSI* = J.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Florence and Venice, 1759-1798); *MGH* = *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, followed by the series thus, *Epp.* = *Epistolae*; *Capit.* = *Capitularia regum francorum*; *PL* = *Patrologia latina*, ed. J.P. MIGNE (Paris, 1844-1855); *Reg. Had.-HL* = the register of correspondence established in this paper.

2. See especially R. PARISOT, *Le Royaume de Lorraine sous les Carolingiens (843-923)* (Paris, 1899); J. CALMETTE, *La diplomatie carolingienne du traité de Verdun à la mort de Charles le Chauve (843-877)* (Paris, 1901); E. HLAWITSCHKA, *Lotharingien und das Reich an der Schwelle d. deutscher Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1968).

3. Lothar II died on 8 August, 869.

4. On the following, the references at n. 2.

other areas of continual dissension between pope and king, while even Lotharingia was as well the battle-ground for the working out of principles regarding the relations between papacy and royalty, papacy and local episcopacy, and in general the nature and extent of relations in and between spiritual and secular aspects of administration and government, principles which both king and metropolitans might feel had been compromised by the forceful personality and policies of Nicholas.

Yet the papal correspondence during these five years amounts to little more than 40 letters in the *Monumenta* edition.¹ Numerous reasons may account for this. Hadrian did not conduct his administration through epistolary channels, and indeed was unaware of even the content of a number of letters drafted in his name by the librarian Anastasius.² His pontificate was not assertive, as was that of Nicholas I, while unlike his successor John VIII, the great events of Hadrian's reign were of a sort that the principals sought to avoid rather than to court papal involvement. The result was a lessening of the correspondence both from and to Rome, and in addition much of what correspondence there was appears to have been lost. Of what remains, Frankish affairs occupy by far the major portion; 36 of the letters in the *Monumenta* edition are concerned with the northern kingdoms.³ Of these, two represent additions to the *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*,⁴ and clearly many others should be included. It is the purpose of the present paper to examine the history of one series of correspondence, and to attempt to fill some of the gaps in both sides of the sequence.

Taking up some eight letters in the *Monumenta* edition,⁵ the correspondence concerning bishop Hincmar of Laon is easily the largest single subject of the papal collection. It was as well a controversy which, originating in contention regarding property, came in a short space of time into integral relation with virtually all the major issues, both operative and ideological, of the relations between Hadrian and the kingdom of Charles the Bald.⁶ In 868

1. *MGH Epp.* VI (= *Epistolae Karolini aevi* IV) (Berlin, 1925), 691-765. The letters begin at p. 695.

2. Thus, A. LAPÔTRE, *De Anastasio Bibliothecario* (Paris, 1885), p. 264.

3. *MGH Epp.* VI, n^o 1-36, at p. 695-746.

4. N^o 11, of c. 8 March, 868 (at p. 712), and n^o 20 (at p. 723-724), on which see *infra*, *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o 13.

5. N^o 14, 15, 20, 29, 30, 34, 35, 36.

6. On Hincmar of Laon, see especially H. SCHRÖRS, *Hincmar, Erzbischof von Reims* (Freiburg i.B., 1884), p. 295 ff., 315-353. Also, the present author's forthcoming study of Hincmar of Laon and Frankish politics.

the bishop, accused of unjust reprise of lands held from his church, countered by sending one Celsanus to enter a secret complaint with the pope against count Nortmannus, holder of the *villa* of Poilly, which Hincmar asserted to have been illicitly abstracted from the property of the bishopric of Laon. Receiving no more than royal anger for his attempts, and censured by a synod at Verberie for his excommunications, the bishop was finally imprisoned at the *villa* of Servais late in May, 869. The precise reasons are unclear; but Hincmar did undoubtedly present a threat to Charles, either through his appeal to Rome or in an asserted intent to desert to Lothar II. Released toward July of 869, the bishop renewed through oath his amicable relations with his monarch, and attended Charles at the coronation at Metz in September. But by mid-870, the two were once again embroiled. A possibility of reconciliation in September, 870 was squelched by Hincmar of Rheims, whose antipathy toward his nephew centered upon the bishop's repeated refusals to accept what his uncle regarded as the proper regard of a suffragan toward his metropolitan; gradually, Hincmar of Laon came to assume the role of scapegoat for the elder Hincmar's long-frustrated conceptions of provincial autonomy and archiepiscopal hegemony. With the visit of papal legates in October, 870, the metropolitan managed at last to dent the bishop's credibility at the papal court. Hadrian now adopted a more neutral stand, and ordered Hincmar of Rheims to make certain that the metropolitan privilege was not derogated; Hincmar of Laon was summoned to appear at a council at the *villa* of Douzy in August, 871. Summoned, or taken in custody, for the bishop had become involved with the rebel prince Carlomann, whose condemnation he had refused to support some months before.¹ At Douzy, on the complaint of the king, he was deposed. Once again Hadrian protested, demanding that the case be heard at Rome. But faced with the unyielding opposition of Charles and Hincmar of Rheims, he retracted his threats; one of his last letters, in striking reversal, compromises on Hincmar of Laon, and promises the imperial succession to Charles in the event of the death of Louis II.

In the course of this expanding controversy, which lasted from 868 until 872, some 26 letters were exchanged by Rome and various parties in the north, relating to different stages and

1. On Carlomann, see the article forthcoming by the present author, *The Rebellion of Prince Carlomann*.

aspects of the quarrel, albeit sometimes tangentially. The motivations of the principals were affected by these stages. Originally consulted with regard to Poilly, the pope later became more concerned with apparent disregard of the Petrine privilege on the part of Hincmar of Rheims; then, after the journey of the abbot Ansegis to Rome, in October, 870, Hadrian questioned the credibility of the bishop of Laon, thus giving inadvertant support to the purposes of the archbishop of Rheims. Finally, the concern of the pope, or of his writers, was once again with the apostolic privilege, which Hadrian considered to have been violated by the council of Douzy. Charles the Bald was moved by the bishop's coutumacy and his alleged sedition, Hincmar of Rheims by what he felt was the bishop's attempt to avoid the metropolitan privilege, an attempt which he had seen successfully undertaken too often in the past. Both king and archbishop related the case of the bishop of Laon to their concern with their policies in Lotharingia, and so did Hadrian, although less directly. Finally, Hincmar of Laon alone was inconsistent, shifting principle as frequently as allegiance; his motives are as unclear as his culpability.

Not surprisingly, it is difficult to chronicle and to assess these 26 letters. Only four are dated¹ — all late, when the affair had become a *cause célèbre*; three others, from the same period, can be placed without much difficulty.² The rest are a shambles, undated and unconnected. Some are known by their inclusion in other treatises and documents, and this inclusion is generally only fragmentary, with the fragments widely scattered, often with the intent of conveying a meaning other than that of the writer. Frequently too these letters can be known only on the basis of references, explicit or implied. The intention here has been to avoid multiplying these unduly, and to include only those references which can be supported on the basis of adequate demonstration.

REGISTER OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ROME AND FRANCIA
REGARDING HINCMAR OF LAON

Date	Letter	Location*
1. July, 868	Hincmar of Laon to Hadrian	
2. August, 868	Hadrian to Charles the Bald (<i>JE</i> , 2911)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 14, p. 715-716 (868)

1. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n°s 16, 18, 21, 22.

2. *Ibid.*, n°s 17, 19, 20.

3. August, 868	Hadrian to Hincmar of Rheims (<i>JE</i> , 2910)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 15, p. 716-717 (868)
4. August, 868	Hadrian to Hincmar of Laon	
5. c. 1 May, 869	Hincmar of Laon to Hadrian	
6. June-July, 869	Hadrian to Hincmar of Rheims	
7. June-July, 869	Hadrian to Charles the Bald	
8. June-July, 869	Hadrian to Hincmar of Laon	
9. July-Aug. 869,	Charles the Bald to Hadrian	
10. c. 5 September, 869	Hadrian to Charles the Bald	
11. c. 5 September, 869	Hadrian to Hincmar of Laon	
12. June-July, 870	Hincmar of Laon to Hadrian	
13. July-August, 870	Hadrian to Hincmar of Rheims	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 20, p. 723-724 (869)
14. 19-26 October, 870	Hincmar of Rheims to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 126, 174-186
15. 19-26 October, 870	Hincmar of Rheims to Hadrian	
16. 25 March, 871	Hadrian to Hincmar of Rheims (<i>JE</i> , 2936)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 29, p. 734
17. 25 March, 871	Hadrian to Hincmar of Laon (<i>JE</i> , 2938)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 30, p. 735
18. 6 September, 871	Council of Douzy to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 126, 635-641
19. c. 6 September, 871	Hincmar of Rheims to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 126, 641-648
20. c. 6 September, 871	Charles the Bald to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 124, 876-881
21. 26 December, 871	Hadrian to the council of Douzy (<i>JE</i> , 2945)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 34, p. 738-740
22. 26 December, 871	Hadrian to Charles the Bald (<i>JE</i> , 2946)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 35, p. 741-743
23. Febr.-March, 872	Council of Douzy to Hadrian	<i>Mansi XVI</i> , 569-571
24. Febr.-March, 872	Charles the Bald to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 124, 881-896
25. Febr.-March, 872	Charles the Bald to Hadrian	<i>PL</i> , 124, 896
26. c. June, 872	Hadrian to Charles the Bald (<i>JE</i> , 2951)	<i>MGH Epp.</i> VI, n° 36, p. 743-746 (872)

* This includes only those letters published, whether as fragments or whole, under their own titles. For all other references, see the text. The numbers in parentheses refer to the approximations of date given in the Monumenta edition of Hadrian's letters, where these differ from the calculations of the present study.

The group of letters known by date or confident inference begins only late in the year 870, with the letters written by Hincmar of Rheims following the meeting with the papal legates at Rheims (n^o. 14). Schrörs gives a date of October-November, 870,¹ while Noorden is less specific yet;² but the chronology of the legatine visit may be closely calculated, and from this, so may the date of the letters. According to the *Annales Bertiniani*, the legates arrived at Saint-Denis on 9 October, and went to Rheims following the release of Carloman; there Charles remained for eight days, and then left for the campaign in the south.³ Hincmar of Rheims states that he received the letter(s) from the legates on 19 October;⁴ considering the great importance of the messages, we may assume that they were delivered on the first day of the visit. Consequently, since the abbot Ansegis, who served as royal *missus* to Rome bearing the response, accompanied the royal party as far as Lyons,⁵ the letter must have been completed by 26 October; earlier, if the archbishop did not receive the papal correspondence immediately. N^o. 15 is known from the letter sent in the name of the council of Douzy early in 872.⁶

N^o. 16 is dated, and that n^o. 17 was sent on the same day is indicated at *Acta Duziacensia*, c. 6.⁷ That the letters were received between 10 June and 5 July appears from the fact that the call issued by Hincmar of Rheims to his nephew on the first date makes no reference to the pope, while the next calls the bishop on the basis of these papal letters.⁸ The attribution of n^o. 17 to late fall, 870, is untenable.⁹

N^o. 18 is dated, and provides the approximate date for n^{os}. 19 and 20, as appears throughout the letters.¹⁰

N^o. 21 (*JE*, 2945) is dated.¹¹ N^o. 22 is essentially the same

1. SCHRÖRS, *Hincmar*, p. 579 n. 115.
 2. C. VON NOORDEN, *Hincmar, Erzbischof von Rheims* (Bonn, 1863), p. 257-258, 408.
 3. *Ann. Bert.*, p. 177.
 4. *PL* 126, 174 C.
 5. *Ann. Bert.*, p. 178.
 6. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o 23. The printed edition, as at MANSI XVI, 569-571, contains but one chapter. Portions of the remainder exist in a badly damaged state at Paris lat. 1594 fol. 196-277*. The present reference is to c. 5, at fol. 204.
 7. MANSI XVI, 666 D.
 8. *PL* 126, 566 C; cfr *PL* 126, 561 B.
 9. For its defense, see NOORDEN, *Hincmar*, p. 285 n. 3.
 10. The date appears at *PL* 126, 641 B.
 11. *MGH Epp.* VI, 740.

letter. N^{os}. 23-25 are the replies to n^{os}. 21 and 22. I have here followed the dating of Schrörs.¹ N^o. 23 is clearly contemporaneous. N^o. 26 (*JE*, 2951) in the papal response to n^{os}. 23-25, and is dated accordingly.

Thus the final series of letters. The establishment of content and chronology for the earlier correspondence is considerably more problematic. The first group, n^{os}. 1-4, are all connected with the complaints regarding Poilly. N^{os}. 2 and 3 were presented by Hincmar of Laon personally, to the king at least.² Charles arrived at Quierzy on 1 December, and was informed at about this time that the bishop had sent to Rome and had obtained the letters;³ hence Hincmar had received them prior to 1 December. The bishop left Quierzy no earlier than 5 December, when the party which had ordained Willebert as bishop of Châlons returned to the royal *villa*.⁴ Thus, n^o. 1 cannot reasonably postdate early October; in fact it is earlier still. The *Responsa episcoporum*, redacted by the prelates at Douzy on the request of the king,⁵ states that Celsanus was sent prior to a local complaint having been made in a provincial council.⁶ The hearing referred to by Hincmar of Rheims, in his letter to Charles following the assembly of Pîtres, in August, 868,⁷ might be the Rheims provincial council, but there is no definite indication of this; the references indicate only locality.⁸ Later, however, the archbishop apparently indicates that the letter was sent either just prior, or contemporaneously with the complaint which his nephew had made to him;⁹ in fact, the order indicates the former. The complaint to his metropolitan led to the composition of the *Pro ecclesiae libertatum defensione*,¹⁰ and hence was prior to Pîtres, where the king was by ca. 15 August;¹¹ thus, a *terminus ad quem* for n^o. 1 of July, 868. On the other hand, the archbishop states that the Poilly complaint was made to counter the

1. *Hincmar*, p. 580 n. 120.
 2. See MANSI XVI, 578 E, 651 A-B.
 3. *Ann. Bert.*, p. 151.
 4. MANSI XV, 864 D.
 5. MANSI XVI, 581 D-E.
 6. *Responsa episcoporum*, c. 6, at MANSI XVI, 651 A.
 7. *PL* 126, 94-99.
 8. See *PL* 126, 95 A.
 9. *PL* 126, 643 A-B, cfr MANSI XVI, 578 E.
 10. *PL* 125, 1035-1070.
 11. *Ann. Bert.*, p. 150.

complaints which the bishop's men had brought, ¹ a statement which seems particularly plausible since it is not necessarily derogatory of Hincmar of Laon, who was apparently taking no chances. Thus, a reasonable *terminus a quo* would appear to be established by these accusations to the king, which were made, probably, in June, 868. ² Allowing then a minimum of a month for the journey to Rome, and the remainder for return (and for preparation of the response), the papal letters (n^{os}. 2 and 3 must date from July or August, 868. But they were not produced by Hincmar of Laon at Pîtres in August, implying that he had not yet received them. The fact that Hadrian called for Hincmar's attendance by the following August ³ may well indicate that (i) he knew his letters would arrive after opportunity to use the best travelling time, and (ii) he was perhaps, in picking this particular date, rounding off the time to the nearest full year, and hence was writing during the first half of August. N^o. 1 then seems to date from July, while the dates for n^{os}. 2 and 3 are indicated as August 868. That the papal letters arrived in September may be indicated by the bishop's refusal to heed the summons of his metropolitan or that of his king, the latter to attend Ponthion, ⁴ where Charles is known to have been on 27 September. ⁵ N^o. 4 is a logical assumption, at least as a covering letter, and may be indicated by a statement in the *Proclamatio* of Charles the Bald at Douzy. ⁶

The second group of letters, seven in number, pertain to the year 869. ⁷ They are by far the most difficult to assess. Since

1. PL 126, 643 A.
 2. The summons to Hincmar of Laon by Charles the Bald is mentioned at MANSI XVI, 755 D-E. It followed a complaint made to the king in the presence of Hincmar of Laon and other *fideles* (*ibid.*, col. 755 B). Presumably (and particularly as it involved a tenant of the bishop) it was made near Laon. Charles left Saint-Denis for Servais about 26 May (*Ann. Bert.*, p. 143), and is found at Quierzy on 29 May (G. TESSIER et al., edd., *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve*, II [Paris, 1952], n^o 309), following which he remained at Attigny, where he held a *placitum*, and in the Laonnais; it was during these days that he issued the summons (*Ann. Bert.*, p. 150). It seems likely that the complaint came at the Attigny *placitum*, and (following Hincmar of Laon) the summons was issued immediately after, with the *mallum* also held only a short time later (see MANSI XVI, 779 C).
 3. MGH *Epp.* VI, 715-717.
 4. PL 126, 570 B.
 5. TESSIER II, n^o 316.
 6. MANSI XVI, 579 A-B.
 7. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o 5-11.

there is no certain point of chronology by which some orientation can be obtained, they may be discussed in chronological sequence. N^o. 5 is the letter carried to Rome by Walco and Berno, ¹ the second complaint sent by Hincmar to the pope. ² That it should be dated in 869 appears from the fact that it was sent following oaths which the two messengers had taken; ³ these oaths were administered in January, 869. ⁴ As no mention is made of violation of a recent oath by Hincmar of Laon, the likely *terminus ad quem* is July, 869. ⁵ In this letter both Charles and Hincmar of Rheims were accused, ⁶ the latter apparently for having failed to aid his nephew in a way fitting for an uncle, ⁷ the former for preventing the bishop's journey to Rome, and for refusing to guard the properties of the Laon church during Hincmar's absence, ⁸ as well as for not promoting the restoration of Poilly. ⁹ These notices imply a date in May, 869, an implication strengthened by the fact that nowhere do we discover evidence that the Servais imprisonment was mentioned. ¹⁰ May, 869 is also indicated by the sequence of events as it is presented at *Opusculum 55 capitulorum*, c. 7. ¹¹ The implication too is that things had gone badly for the bishop at Verberie, and this is known from other sources. ¹²

1. See PL 124, 878 C-D.
 2. See PL 126, 314 A, and cfr MANSI XVI, 579-580 with *ibid.*, col. 653 B-C.
 3. MANSI XVI, 579 E.
 4. PL 126, 571 D; cfr though *Ann. Bert.*, p. 151.
 5. The oath sworn by Hincmar of Laon is given by Hincmar of Rheims in *Libellus expostulationis*, c. 10, at PL 126, 575-576. The year 869 is clear, and an approximation of the date may be made as follows. The oath was sworn outside the province of Rheims, at the suggestion of bishops Aeneas of Paris and Wenilon of Rouen (PL 126, 577 A). In *Libellus expostulationis*, c. 10, the order of topics makes this oath follow immediately upon an account of the interdict imposed by the bishop on his diocese (*Libellus expostulationis*, c. 5-9). It preceded the sending of the second letter to Hadrian II, according to Hincmar of Rheims (see PL 126, 315 B), and the reply to this letter was sent during 869 (see *infra*). Hincmar of Laon had returned to his city by 8 July, for the subscribed and dated sentences were issued there (*Opusculum 55 capitulorum*, c. 36, at PL 126, 428 C). Hence, a likely date for the oath is 27 June 5 July. See, for all this, the present author's forthcoming work on Hincmar of Laon, at Appendix I: Register of Written Materials and Assemblies Connected with Hincmar of Laon.
 6. PL 126, 643 B.
 7. *Loc. cit.*, and cfr PL 126, 185 C-D.
 8. PL 124, 877 C, 878 B. Cfr on all, the discussion of Hadrian's letters, *infra*.
 9. MANSI XVI, 579-580.
 10. The bishop was imprisoned on 28 May, 869; see PL 126, 512 B-C, 515 C.
 11. PL 126, 313-314.
 12. See PL 126, 315 C, and likely, MANSI XVI, 667 A-B.

The papal correspondence of 869 was discussed by Lapôte, ¹ who challenged the attributions of Ewald made in the *Regesta pontificum romanorum*; ² Lapôte was followed by Perels, in the Monumenta edition of the letters. ³ None of the papal letters directly concerned with Hincmar of Laon, and written in 869, are extant, and their content and existence must be inferred from fragments cited by the other principals. The problem is further complicated by the fact that a crucial letter from Charles the Bald has also perished, ⁴ and this then can be evaluated only in terms of the papal response to it, which in turn exists only fragmentarily in a later letter sent by the king.

Charles had written to Hadrian in complaint about Hincmar of Laon (n^o. 9), and the papal response is known from the references in two letters dating from September, 871 and February-March, 872. ⁵ Ewald had then placed the papal letter at a time following April, 871. ⁶ Lapôte challenged this correctly, pointing out that Ewald had neglected to include in the *Regesta* the letter clearly sent to Hincmar of Rheims in 869 (n^o. 6). ⁷ At *Opusculum 55 capitulorum*, c. 8, letters to both king and archbishop are mentioned in conjunction. ⁸ Since the *Opusculum 55 capitulorum* dates from the first part of 870, ⁹ the letter to Charles the Bald (n^o. 7) must date from 869, and must have arrived in France by early 870. ¹⁰

Lapôte's argument, while right in its conclusion, must be corrected nonetheless, for there appear to have been two papal letters written to Charles concerning Hincmar of Laon during 869. The first, (n^o. 7), was in response to the letter carried by Walco and Berno (n^o. 5), the second, n^o. 10, in answer to Charles' letter accusing the bishop (n^o. 9); it is this letter which was the prime concern of the king in his letters of 871 and 872, which are our

1. *De Anastasio Bibliothecario*, p. 260 n. 1.

2. See, i.e., *JE*, 2939.

3. *MGH Epp.* VI, 723 n. 1.

4. The letter to which Hadrian was responding in his lost letter; see *PL* 124, 880 A.

5. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o. 20, 24.

6. *Supra*, n. 2.

7. As is shown by the reference made by the archbishop in his letter of 19-26 October, 870 (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o. 14, at *PL* 126, 185 D).

8. *PL* 126, 315.

9. Thus, SCHRÖRS, *Hincmar*, p. 334, and p. 579, n. 113. For a qualification of this dating, see my work on Hincmar of Laon; but the revision does not affect the present argument.

10. Thus, LAPÔTRE, *loc. cit.*

source for Hadrian's letters. ¹ It was not accompanied by a letter to Hincmar of Rheims, and, while it arrived in 869, it was not known until mid-870.

To the letter carried by Walco and Berno the pope gave at least two responses, to Charles and to archbishop Hincmar, and probably one to Hincmar of Laon as well. ² They were sent via the bishop's *missi*, probably in June-July, 869. ³ The date may be hypothesized on the basis of the mode of their final delivery, for Hincmar of Rheims says that they were given to Charles and to himself by the archbishops of other provinces. ⁴ Further, he informs us that the delivery was made "in parochia mea," ⁵ ordinarily the designation of a diocese, but often used by the elder Hincmar with reference to his province, particularly in the context of discussion concerning the respective rights of metropolitans, as here. ⁶ Since the archbishop implies clearly that the delivery was made at an assembly, ⁷ the assembly at Pîtres, in July, 869, would seem the likely attribution. ⁸ However, the passage also states that the archbishops were "longinquarem regionum," ⁹ which does not apply to any of those included in the only name-list we possess. ¹⁰ The description does fit Rémi of Lyons and Hardwic of Besançon, who did carry letters for the bishop. ¹¹ But in July it is much less likely, though not impossible, that they would have been so openly in the kingdom of Charles the Bald than it would in late August, when word of the death of Lothar II, on 8 August, had arrived. ¹² The point is difficult,

1. *Supra*, p. 178, n. 9.

2. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o. 6-8.

3. That is, by Walco and Berno.

4. *Opusculum 55 capitulorum*, c. 8, at *PL* 126, 315.

5. *Ibid.*, col. 315 A.

6. See, for example, at *MGH Epp.* VIII¹, n^o. 136, at p. 90, and *PL* 126, 393 D.

7. *PL* 126, 315 A.

8. At *MGH Capit.* II, n^o. 275, p. 333-337. The assembly may be dated by two acts of Charles the Bald, the first at Bèzu, dated 28 June (TESSIER II, n^o. 325), the second from Pîtres, dated 21 July (*ibid.*, n^o. 326). No record exists attesting the bishop's attendance at this assembly, and the only name-list from the meeting does not include his (see QUANTIN, *Cartulaire général de l'Yonne*, I, n^o. xlix, p. 97; the list, however, is suspect, according to TESSIER II, n^o. 325 bis). De Clercq believes that the bishops at Pîtres may have effected Hincmar's release (*La législation religieuse franque*, II [Antwerp, 1958], 282), but see *supra*, p. 177, n. 5, which also tends to indicate that the bishop, if he was at Pîtres, was not long present.

9. *PL* 126, 315 A.

10. See QUANTIN, as at n. 8, *supra*.

11. See *infra*.

12. Thus, see *PL* 124, 875-876.

but the balance seems to tend toward a delivery in late August, and perhaps at Attigny, which was in both the province and the diocese of Hincmar of Rheims.¹

But these letters must be distinguished from the correspondence presented to Charles by Rémi and Hardwic (n^o. 10), to which Hincmar of Rheims makes frequent reference.² First, there is no indication that more than one letter had been sent, although this is far from firm evidence. Secondly, though, there is no mention of this letter until 2 July, 870.³ Again, Hincmar of Rheims implies, in October, 870, that he had never seen this letter;⁴ once again, not firm evidence. Finally, it would appear that the bishop contemplated no reply to the pope until the end of 869,⁵ although he was long since on good terms with Charles, and would be eager to disavow the charges he had raised; such delay is unlikely if the letter was delivered in July or August. It is possible that Hincmar of Rheims may be reprimanding his nephew a year after the deed, but this seems an unlikely exercise. Nor could he have been unaware for a year, if the letter were identical with n^o. 7, for in addition to the evidence of the *Opusculum 55 capitulorum*,⁶ he was present at that delivery.

Something of the pope's letter to Charles is known from citations by the king.⁷ It was Charles' belief, given in a later message,⁸ that his accusations were true and well-known,⁹ and that the pope had been misinformed.¹⁰ Presumably this misinformation had come to Hadrian from Walco and Berno, who are mentioned by the pope.¹¹ But Hadrian's reference to false accusations made by the king¹² clearly implies definite charges; what would these be, which Charles says are widely known? There were by the time of the journey undertaken by Walco and Berno five possible major

1. For Charles' presence there, with a number of the Lotharingian bishops, see *Ann. Bert.*, p. 156-157.

2. Thus, *PL* 126, 185 C-D, 587 D, etc.

3. See Hincmar of Laon, at *PL* 124, 1000 D, and MANSI XVI, 862 E for the date; cfr *PL* 126, 186 B.

4. *PL* 126, 186 B.

5. See *infra*.

6. That is, the reference at *PL* 126, 315.

7. See *PL* 124, 876 B, 878 C-D, 879-880, 882 B-C, 883 B.

8. *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o 20.

9. *PL* 124, 880 A.

10. *PL* 124, 876 B-C.

11. *PL* 124, 878 C.

12. *PL* 124, 879-880.

accusations current: the sending of Celsanus to Rome; the alleged defection to Lothar II; the anathema which Hincmar of Laon had issued to prevent his capture by Charles' troops, in January, 869;¹ the interdict which the bishop had imposed for similar reasons, on a provisional basis, in April;² the status of Poilly.³ Hadrian could hardly call the first a lie, since he himself had seen Celsanus at Rome.⁴ The first four are in fact unlikely subjects for discourse by the king, since the defection and anathema⁵ would raise embarrassing questions about the conduct of Charles' foreign policy, about the meeting at Metz in 867 or 868,⁶ and about the royal intentions with regard to Lotharingia during the absence of Lothar II,⁷ questions more embarrassing still if Lothar were still in Italy. Further, Charles' treatment of the bishop during January was hardly a matter for publication to the papacy, regardless of alleged provocation,⁸ while Hadrian's response would indicate further that Charles' remark, if it concerned interdict or defection, must not have been a simple statement (which the sources of Hadrian's information would be unlikely to deny, since the interdict, again, was a matter of acknowledged fact); thus the bishop's messengers must rather have provided a different explanation for these facts, which, especially in the case of the interdict, would have been most interesting to the pope. The same argument holds against the accusations having concerned the anathema. The likely alternative is Poilly, more reasonable still since it was currently the matter under discussion between Charles and Hadrian; it is also interesting to compare the similar language used by Hincmar of Rheims.⁹ Presumably, then, the information conveyed by Charles had to do with the status of Poilly. This charge had

1. See *Ann. Bert.*, p. 152; *PL* 126, 571 C-D.

2. *PL* 126, 511-512, 515-516.

3. On Poilly, see E. LESNE, *Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France* (Paris, 1905-1943), 2¹⁻², passim; see especially at fasc. 2, p. 340-341. For a fuller and sequential account, see my work on Hincmar of Laon.

4. As is shown in the lost letter to Charles the Bald; see *PL* 124, 878 C.

5. The two are connected, according to Hincmar of Rheims; see *PL* 126, 571 A-D.

6. For the agreement between Charles and Louis the German at Metz, see *MGH Capit.* II, n^o 245. For the presence of Hincmar of Laon, p. 167. On the date, see CALMETTE, *La diplomatie carolingienne*, p. 195-200, and cfr H. ZATSCHEK, *Wie das erste Reich der Deutschen Entstand* (Prague, 1940), p. 123.

7. That is, as implied by the agreement itself, as well as other factors. See the discussion in my study of Hincmar of Laon.

8. On this, see *Ann. Bert.*, p. 152.

9. See *PL* 126, 185 B, 504 B.

come up publically at Pîtres, in July, 869,¹ and Charles also indicates elsewhere that he had, following Pîtres, disavowed the charges of Hadrian's letter of 868.² Hence, both Charles' letter and Hadrian's reply, both known from the later letters sent by Charles, must have followed early July, 869.

The problems are accounted for on the assumption that the letter was delivered at Attigny in June of 870, at the council at which both Rémi and Hardwic were present.³ But this letter had been sent in 869, as is indicated by Hincmar of Laon.⁴ The bishop provides a clue as to both content and date of n^o. 10, and of n^o. 11 as well, in mentioning his intention to send messengers to Rome to explain his delay in appearing there.⁵ The context of the passage would place this incident in October-November, 869, or in January-February, 870, since the passage is concerned with an event which had occurred during the bishop's stay with Charles at Aix,⁶ and Charles is known to have been at Aix in October, 869⁷ and in December, 869.⁸ January-February, 870, is more likely, since the reference to Aix concerns the decision there taken to send abbot Ansegis to Rome,⁹ and this would probably have been connected with the receipt of the papal envoys at Gondreville in November, 869.¹⁰ They carried letters dated 5 September, 869,¹¹ and not implausibly other letters as well, some relating to Hincmar of Laon, sent when the bishop did not appear at Rome by 1 August, as had previously been commanded.¹² One of these would have been directed to Charles, in answer to the king's letter charging Hincmar of Laon, and intended to prevent the detention of the bishop,¹³ the other, hypothetically but logically, would have inquired about the bishop's whereabouts; and perhaps indicated a few doubts.¹⁴ Thus indication of n^o. 11. Finally, in his message directed

1. Thus, Hincmar of Rheims, at *PL* 126, 438 B.

2. *PL* 124, 880 A.

3. Following the *Narratio eorum quae peracta sunt ab utroque Hincmaro*, as at *MANSI* XVI, 860 A.

4. *PL* 124, 1032-1033.

5. *PL* 124, 1032 D.

6. *PL* 124, 1033 C.

7. *Ann. Bert.*, p. 167.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

9. *PL* 124, 1033 D.

10. See *Ann. Bert.*, p. 167.

11. *JE*, 2917-2918, at *Epistolae Hadriani*, n^os 16-17, in *MGH Epp.* VI, 717-720.

12. See the discussion *supra*, and p. 176, n. 2.

13. See *PL* 126 587 D.

14. It may well be implied at *PL* 124, 1032 D.

to his uncle in July, 870, the bishop refers to a papal order. As the passage was delivered verbally by the provost Heddo it states that the bishop of Laon could no longer refrain from excommunicating the offenders against the property of his church, reminding that on a former occasion, "... quando domno apostolico mandavit de Nortmanno, hoc ei remandavit domnus apostolicus, ut prius inde fecisset suum ministerium, et tunc se reclamasset...", and that as yet he had not done the first, i.e., excommunicated the malefactors.¹ If this cryptic passage may be given any of the import which the bishop attaches to it, then it would probably not refer to Hadrian's first letter, since at that time it was the archbishop of Rheims who was commanded to excommunicate Nortmannus if the property was not restored,² nor to the second letter, since Hadrian had responded to the bishop's first complaint with a directive that he come to Rome by the following 1 August,³ which had not yet arrived when the second letter was sent; thus, effectively, the complaint, accepted, still stood. More likely, the letter was written after 1 August, 869, and the pope, while disbelieving Charles, still did not wish the whole onus to be upon his shoulders, and perhaps did feel that Charles might have a point, and that Hincmar of Laon might be using appeal to Rome simply as a device to bring pressure to bear against his enemies. Of course, by November, 869, the bishop was on good terms with Charles; there is no indication that he sent anyone in response.⁴ But Hincmar saved the letter (which he would have been unlikely to give over to his uncle in any case, considering their extremely strained relations at this time),⁵ in spite of what the archbishop indicates to have been an explicit papal order,⁶ and gave it over to Rémi and Harwic at Attigny during the council held there in June of 870.⁷ It might be noted too that Hincmar of Laon, writing on 2 July, 870, refers to two summonses to Rome;⁸ the first is clearly that of 868,⁹ and since that called

1. *PL* 126, 495 C.

2. *MGH Epp.* VI, 716-717.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 715-717.

4. His original choice, Grivo, did not go, for rather complicated reasons; see *PL* 124, 1033-1034.

5. On the events at Gondreville, see, i.e., Hincmar of Rheims, at *PL* 126, 290 A-D, 299 C-D, 300-301 C.

6. Mentioned at *PL* 126, 185 B-C.

7. Hence the reference by Hincmar of Laon, at *PL* 124, 1000 D, written 2 July, 870 (immediately following his flight from Attigny), and quite probably referring to a letter sent by his uncle during the previous week.

8. *PL* 124, 1000 A.

9. *Reg. Had.-HL* n^os 2-4.

for attendance by 1 August of 869, it is more likely that the second was written after rather than before that date.

Finally, two more hypothetical letters or messages, n^{os} 12 and 13, remain to be considered. In mid-July, 870, Hincmar of Laon, in a message to his uncle, threatened to send to Rome unless the metropolitan could help him with king Charles; ¹ the result was unsatisfactory for the bishop, ² and it appears likely that he, or possibly a friend, may have complained to Hadrian. ³ The date for the sending of this letter is most likely ca. July, 870. ⁴ It appears likely that the papal legates at Rheims in the following October carried an answering letter addressed to the archbishop. ⁵ The archbishop's response, in turn, was contained in n^{os} 14 and 15, the first letters treated in this paper, which were carried to Rome by Ansegis.

CONCLUSION

The impoverished correspondence of Hadrian II has contributed much to detract from his rightful place in the history of those so important events and ecclesiastical developments which occurred in the years 868-872, and perhaps still more from our knowledge of these as well. In fact, of course, the manifestation of both events and theory are intimately connected with the pope, whose role was by no means either passive or negative. The lack of extant correspondence, so at variance with the epistolary records for the pontificates of Nicholas I and John VIII, must be regretted,

1. *PL* 126, 495 B-C.

2. See LESNE, *La propriété ecclésiastique*, 2^e, 280-281, and my study of Hincmar of Laon.

3. See *PL* 126, 186 A, a reference to a papal accusation that Hincmar of Rheims had prevented the bishop's going to Rome, a charge very similar to that made by Hincmar of Laon to the archbishop on 2 July (*PL* 124, 999-1000; cfr the response, at *PL* 126, 587 A).

4. Late June is not impossible, but probably the bishop would have made his appeal after the request to his uncle had failed. See *PL* 126, 506 A, and *MANSI* XVI, 862 E.

5. *PL* 126, 186 A-C. The fact that the legates carried letters from the pope dated 27 June, 870 (*JE*, 2926-2931; *MGH Epp.* VI, n^o 21-26, p. 724-732) does not indicate that Hadrian could not have received word of Hincmar's predicament and hence have instructed his representatives. The papal correspondence of summer, 870, is quite confused, and spread over a long period of time. With regard to such chronological difficulties, cfr *Ann. Bert.*, p. 177, for the information that these same legates requested the release of prince Carlomann, whose difficulties on this occasion, like those of Hincmar of Laon, were related to the council of Attigny.

but though presumably irremediable it may still be compensated for, in some degree at least. The aim of this paper has been one such step. Hincmar of Laon, whose career of tribulations nearly coincides in time with the period of Hadrian's pontificate was, like the pope, closely if curiously involved in the happenings of these years. In no small measure Hadrian's most regular link with the north, through his quarrels and, finally, his deposition, he was the immediate subject and moving cause of that metropolitan ecclesiology earlier repressed by Nicholas I and now aimed really at the papacy; in addition, both quarrels and deposition reflected as well the bishop's close involvement in virtually every major aspect of the policy and diplomacy formulated at the court of Charles the Bald. Unfortunately, the condition of the sources for Hincmar of Laon is also difficult, in large measure due to their elaboration of ambiguous, even contradictory, character, generally intentional, and in this related once more precisely to the bishop's knowledge and to his connections with Rome and Lotharingia. The present study has been concerned with these various source difficulties, and has sought to examine and date the correspondance, extant or inferable, exchanged between Rome and the north and relating to Hincmar of Laon. Of twenty-six items proposed, eleven are extant, fifteen inferred; of the latter group, five (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 8, 10, 11, 12, 15) represent new critical hypotheses, of which three (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 8, 10, 11) are papal letters. Thus, on the basis of the argumentation presented here or elsewhere regarding the papal correspondence concerning Hincmar of Laon, to the eight relevant letters in the Monumenta edition (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 2, 3, 13, 16, 17, 21, 22, 26), six must be added (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11). Again, but four of the total twenty-six have explicit dates (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 16, 18, 21, 22), of which three (*Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 16, 21, 22) are papal letters. For the remainder, the dates established by previous studies have been followed where possible; in other cases, a date has been made more precise (as, e.g., *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^{os} 14 and 15) or has been totally readjusted (thus, see *Reg. Had.-HL*, n^o 13).

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