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The Formation of Laon's Cathedral Library in the Ninth Century

The Carolingian intellectual renaissance was a renaissance of the written word. While it is sometimes difficult to defend the originality of the Carolingian achievement, there can be no doubt, I think, of the significance of the Carolingian emphasis on the written word. The sacred texts were to be corrected, copied faithfully, and complemented by texts on the liberal arts whose study would enrich the understanding of the sacred texts. In addition, the Carolingian program was suffused by the belief that learning, study, the book were useful. Study of the written word would lead to the regeneration of society. 

This optimistic belief in the ability of the word in some way to better man and society has had a long history since the Carolingian period.

In the context of the ninth century, however, the Carolingian intellectual program would have been stillborn without the transcription and collection of texts carried out by individuals and institutions. Numerous paleographical studies have isolated important eighth and ninth century scriptoria where primary responsibility for the success of the Carolingian literary and intellectual renaissance must be placed. Other recent studies have begun to focus on the individuals responsible for building library collections. Laymen as well as ecclesiastical figures carefully searched for manu-

scripts which interested them (2). The lists in which they sometimes recorded the contents of their libraries are of inestimable value for reconstructing the cultural formation and interests of a Dhuoda, a Lupus, or a Hinmarc of Reims.

The formation of institutional libraries, those of the monastery and cathedral, however, is often an anonymous affair. The contents of many important libraries have been collected in Becker’s still useful compendium of medieval library catalogues (2). Yet, in many cases the individuals responsible for the creation of these libraries are unknown. Where medieval library catalogues have not survived, it becomes, of course, even more difficult to trace the growth of a library. In the instances where a medieval library has been scattered, as has Fleury’s, for example, one must first search the major European manuscript depositories in order to reconstruct the library before one can begin to discern those individuals who were interested in the intellectual and cultural life of the monastery or cathedral. For the cathedral of Laon, however, the task is easier: a substantial number of Laon’s tenth century manuscripts have survived and, as almost important, many of them can be studied in the same place they were used in the ninth century (3).

The school of Laon, especially during the third quarter of the ninth century, has increasingly attracted attention as an important Carolingian intellectual center (4). In the absence of detailed narrative sources for the history of the school, the study of its library is crucial for understanding the activities and significance of the work of the Laon masters. The study of Laon’s library reveals that this superb collection of manuscripts was put together by two generations of Laon masters and bishops.

Three important tools aid the systematic exploitation of Laon’s manuscripts as a source for the history of the formation of the cathedral library. The first and most recent is Félix Ravaissin’s catalogue of Laon manuscripts published in 1849 (5). This catalogue was the first departmental catalogue of manuscript holdings published in France. This was a mixed honor though for the manuscripts of Laon. In 1849, Ravaissin was working in the dark as far as the study of medieval literature and paleography as in France was concerned. French medieval studies were just beginning to recover from the dissolution of the religious orders during the Revolution. When Ravaissin began to work on the Laon manuscripts, both the Monumentum Germaniae Historica and Abbé Migne’s republication of medieval sources, the Patrologia Latina, were in their infancy. Ravaissin’s catalogue, then, is essentially worthless and offers little help to the researcher. His analyses of the manuscripts are often vague or erroneous. His dating is equally unreliable. He has omitted some manuscripts and misjudged the provenance of others.

Two other manuscript catalogues are more valuable than Ravaissin’s. They are also both about a century older and record the contents of the library as it existed before the French Revolution. These catalogues record approximately fifty-four manuscripts which somehow had disappeared by Ravaissin’s time. Dom Bernard de Montfaçon published his census of Laon manuscripts in his two volume Bibliotheca bibliothecarum manuscriptorum nova (7). His list preserves 364 titles. One hundred nineteen of these bear the short description, s. est summae antiquitatis, or s. est antiquissimae, or simply, s. antiquus. Judging from the existing manuscripts s. very old cnotated a manuscript of the tenth century or older to Montfaçon.

Dom Buguèt’s list of Laon manuscripts is similar to Mont-
The manuscripts themselves are more helpful. According to Dom Bugnât, nineteen Laon manuscripts were given to the cathedral by Bishop Dido (ca. 882–903). A twentieth manuscript with Dido’s ex-dono left Laon before Bugnât compiled his catalogue (9). Bugnât attributed twenty-two manuscripts to the generosity of a Bernard and Adelelm. Two additional manuscripts bear their ex-dono (9). Finally, Bugnât recorded that Bishop Rodulf of Laon gave four manuscripts to the cathedral library. The preservation of this information is a stroke of great fortune. Of the approximately 125 manuscripts which were at Laon in the ninth and tenth centuries, forty-eight, or about forty per cent, can be traced to a donor. More importantly, the size of their donations, whose magnitude has never been suspected, reveal Dido, Bernard, and Adelelm, as cultural patrons of the first order. Their donations compare favorably with that of Archbishop Hincmar of Reims who gave at least twenty-one manuscripts to the churches of Reims (10). Their personal libraries must have been as large as that of Archbishop Wulfid of Bourges (ca. 866-876) who had thirty-one titles in his collection (9).

Of the twenty books which Dido gave to Laon, nine survive (9). His library contains few survivals. It was weighted in favor of patristic authors. Three of his codices, all apparently lost, contain Augustine’s sermons on the Psalms and other minor works (Bugnât, cod. 79, 80, 91 (9)). Dido also had a collection of Augustine’s letters (Bugnât, cod. 93). Dido’s manuscript 97 contains


(9) It is, of course, entirely possible that a ninth or tenth century manuscript might have come to the cathedral library in the eleventh, twelfth, or later centuries and thus be irrelevant for the study of the ninth century library. Judging from the surviving ninth and tenth century manuscripts, this possibility seems remote. Most of Laon’s manuscripts bear unremovable signs that they were in use at Laon during the period considered in this study.

(10) In a letter to Bishop Pardulus of Laon (849-850): “In hunc munus Marini vacnate pastore, ut unde cum hopastor, quilibet ipsa eccl. recto perpetuo, et pro libris sancti Ambrosii de Iisd. tibi mittenda.” Providence, Historia episcoporum Ecclesiae, in M.O.R. Ser., XIX, 198.

In a letter to Hincmar of Laon (858-862): “Protestabilis beatus Leonis ad Leonem Augustam deprecatus pariparipere molendo debo, quern in symno apud Suevios audidisti; et in hunc librum quem tibi debeat legere poetas, P.L., 126, 544.

In another letter to Hincmar of Laon: “Et quid distichum retributionis non considerant de sominis suis signis exitantibus, et eccl. genere in regia pasturis beneficis Gregorii ex ordine poetas relegatus, quam tibi una cum libris sanctorum canonicorum in saeculo ante altare sanctae Marliae in die ordinacionis tune mile, obstans quidunque ignorare non potest et obliviscit non debet,” ibid., 530.

In his treatise, Oufpam NL. Capitulorum, ibid., 119: “Et ut certum crede (i.e., Hincmar of Laon) quae de hoc etiam verbo dicimus, revolvant libros veterum et librum Millonumm codicum quodam minuo, a te ubi suum Anselmi receptas, et tibi a me praemia sem portas sicut ne quis quantum alias tibi a me commissarium obficit...”

(11) Mentioned in a letter from Hincmar of Reims to Hincmar of Laon: P.L., 126, 280: “Poste Clarinus communis comprensus seder ad me venire ad tres partes mili dixit qvis haudus consilium permeans mottoe monasterium leon ad vitiarii episcopum de civitate Augustibure pro libro Patert et alius quam tibi placuerunt commotur...”
Augustine's *De consensus evangelistarum*. Another extant manuscript, 135, is a collection of eight Augustinian sermons with a pseudo-Augustinian homily and another homily wrongly attributed to Fulgentius of Ruspe. Dido also possessed Eugippius' handy precis of the African Father's voluminous work, the *Excerpta ex operibus S. Augustini* (Bughnâtre, cod. 101). Other fathers were not so amply represented. Dido gave a copy of Jerome's comments on Daniel, Jonas, Nahum, Micheas, and Habacuc (Bughnâtre, cod. 66) to Notre Dame of Laon. His donation of Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* (manuscript 24) is still conserved at Laon. His only manuscript of Ambrose's work, a collection of his treatises, has been lost (Bughnâtre, cod. 57). The bishop of Laon also read John Chrysostom. Dido's copy of Chrysostom's thirty-four sermons on the epistles to the Hebrews has not been conserved (Bughnâtre, cod. 61).

Among medieval authors, Dido's collection was spread rather thinly. In addition to Bede's commentary on Proverbs and on the book of Tobit (Bughnâtre, cod. 123), he owned Ps. Alcin's little treatise, *De processione sancti spiritalis* (manuscript 122h), and commentaries by Rahbanus Maurus on Genesis (Bughnâtre, cod. 133) and Exodus (manuscript 6). Dido also possessed a beautiful copy of Anastasius the Librarian's *Collectanea ad Ioannem Diaconem*. The same manuscript (Paris, B. N. lat. 5095) contains Hincmar of Laon's *Collectio altera ex epistolis Romanorum Pontificum* and a collection of the correspondence between Hincmar of Reims and Hincmar of Laon. Dido's library was completed by two volumes of conciliar canonics (20), the *Liber Pontificalis* (manuscript 342), and Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* (manuscript 428).

Dido's manuscripts add a few details to his obscure life. Dido was evidently a wealthy man (20). With one important exception, his books do not seem to have been used in the school. They are well preserved and are bare of all notes which would indicate heavy use. In fact, in Dido's nine surviving manuscripts there is no evidence of his own handwriting. The only manuscript which can be connected with the school at Laon is Dido's copy of Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, manuscript 24. On a flyleaf, folio 17, there are two important notes in Irish script (21). On the verso of the same leaf, Martin Scoto (819-875) copied the table of contents for the manuscript (21). Obviously Martin owned this handy guide to Hebrew etymologies before it came into Dido's possession. This manuscript is the only connection between Dido and Laon before his consecration as bishop of Laon in 882/883. It allows us to suspect that Dido was familiar with one of the Laon masters sometime in the early 870s (Martin Scoto died in 875) and perhaps was a student at Laon.

Bishop Rodulf's contribution to the cathedral library was less spectacular than Dido's. Of the four manuscripts Bugnître attributed to Rodulf, two have survived. Rodulf's copies of Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel (Bughnâtre, cod. 65) and Cassiodorus' commentary on the Psalms (Bughnâtre, cod. 103) have both been lost. Bugnître also ascribed a copy of Augustine's *De trinitate* to the generosity of Rodulf. This must be manuscript 130 whose contents fit Bugnître's description. The front flyleaf has been cut in half vertically. On the verso of the remaining portion is the note [Rodulphi episcopos]. There would have been sufficient space on the entire folio to read *Hinc librum dedit Rodulphi episcopus*, or some variation. According to Bugnître, Rodulf also gave a copy of Florus of Lyons' *Expositio in epistolam beatæ Pauli, ex operibus sancti Augustini collecta* to Notre Dame of Laon. Manuscript 105 exactly fits Bugnître's description. However, it contains no ex-dono. The ex-dono may have disappeared when the flyleaves were removed from the manuscript after Bugnître saw it.

There are two problems in assessing the significance of Rodulf's contribution to the formation of the library at Laon. First, there were two Bishop Rodulfs at Laon during the tenth century. Rodulf I presided over the see from 894 to 921 (20). Rodulf II was...

(18) Dido's ms. 194 is a copy of the *Codex Lateranensis Romanum* of 659. A second collection of canons, unfortunately lost (Bughnâtre, cod. 36), also contained a chronicle from the creation of the world to the twenty-fifth year of Charlemagne's reign as well as excerpts from Augustine, Jerome, Anastasius, and Gregory of Tours.


(20) See below.

(21) Martin's script has long been known from the notes he made in ms. 444, Laon's famous Greek-Latin glossary. This script is also found in many other Laon mss., including ms. 24, cf. n. 46 and n. 50 below.

bishop of Laon from 936 to 948 (22). There is no sure way to tell which of these is the Bishop Rodulf of the manuscripts. The same must be said for a short note which appears in a manuscript at Laon: Rodulfo episcopo vivat in aeternum (23). For the present, I am inclined to identify Rodulf I as the benefactor of the cathedral library. The two manuscripts which survive and are attributed to him are from the ninth century. Presumably, Rodulf II would have had greater opportunity to present tenth century manuscripts to the library.

Secondly, it is surprising that no one has seriously argued that the Rodulfs of Laon with two important classical manuscripts now conserved at Leiden (24). Both Leiden, Voss. lat. F. 84, which contains the philosophical works of Cicero, and Leiden, Voss. lat. Q. 20, Curtius' History of Alexander the Great with an excerpt from Orosius' History, bear a mutilated ex-dono which refers to a Bishop Rodulf. In the Cicero codex all that is visible at the top of the page is: 

_Hunc librum dedit Rodulfa episcopus._

The name of the recipient of the manuscript has been blotted out. A Rodulf's ex-dono is found several times in the Leiden Curtius. Unfortunately, it has been zealously covered with dark brown ink so that only a portion of it is legible. Historians who have tried to decipher the ex-dono in this manuscript have been misled by the facsimile of folio 68v presented by Chatelin in his Paléographie des classiques latins (25). The ex-dono is not confined to the verso of this folio but continues onto the corresponding opposite recto leaf. In other words, Traube knew only half of the ex-dono when he reconstructed it as: 

_Hunc librum Rodulfa episcopus de.


(24) Manuscrit 420, f. 98v. This copy of Marcellus' De medicamentis is from the first quarter of the ninth century, cf. E. Willemsen, Les manuscrits de médecine du haut moyen âge dans les bibliothèques de France, Paris, 1956, pp. 14-16. It was at Laon at least from the middle of the century as the possession of Martin Scotus (1053-1117) script indicates. Thus, the epigraph could refer to either Rodulf.


(26) Vol. 11, Paris, 1854, p. 26 (pl. CLXXXVII). All discussions of the ex-dono of this manuscript spell the donor's name Rodulphus. However, when I examined the ms. in May, 1970, I saw Rodulfus, the same form used by the bishop of Laon and later variant is in the ex-dono of the Leiden Cicero. My reading has been graciously corroborated by J. van Groningen, Western Manuscripts, Bibliothecae der Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden (letter, 1 March 1971).

DE [o] [ET BEO]US MARTINO [MARTINO] [HINC LIB RUM RODULFOUS EPS] de.


(28) Cf. n. 25 above.


(30) Ibid., n. 14.


(32) Cf. P. B. Gans, Series Epidocrinum Ecclesiae Catholicae, Brest, 1951. A search of the lists for France, Belgium, Holland, and Laon reveals Rodulfus at the following bishoprics during the second half of the century: Auxerre (990-1006); Chalon-sur-Saône (977-985); Chartres (1004-1009); Noyon (990-992); St. Malo (1000-1022).
the twenty-four manuscripts which bear their presentation notice are found the most important books used in the school (33).

Bernard and Adelelm were first identified by Félix Ravaisson (34). He found their names in the testament Charles the Bald prepared before his Italian voyage of 877. In the twelfth paragraph of the testament, Counts Bernard and Adelelm, along with two other counts and various prelates, were delegated to distribute Charles’ books to St. Denis, Notre Dame at Compiegne, and Charles’ son, Louis (35). Counts Bernard and Adelelm were also among those designated as Louis’ guardians during his father’s absence. Ravaisson conjectured from this testament and the six ex-donos in Laon’s manuscripts that he knew that Louis, less interested in books than his father, gave his portion to Bernard and Adelelm who, in turn, gave them to the cathedral at Laon. Ravaisson’s hypothesis was strengthened by the fact that Adelelm was a close vassal of Charles. In addition, Adelelm was rector, by royal will, of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Bavo in Gent and also count of Laon (36).

Ravaisson’s ingenious and happy solution to the puzzle of Laon’s benefactors held sway for more than a century despite the publication of the Annales Landaisenses et S. Vincenti Mellensis Breves in 1888 by O. Holder-Egger (37). The annals present two cathedral canons, Bernard and Adelelm, whose claim to the books which bear their names is manifestly more obvious and more in accord with the nature of the books than that of the counts Bernard and Adelelm. Bernard, the cathedral canon, was a scolastici at Laon. He later became dean of the cathedral chapter. Adelelm, who became priest in 892, succeeded Bernard as dean and became bishop of Laon in 921. Thus, both had a long association with the cathedral. Both also taught in the school. As the following discussion will prove, most of the books Bernard and Adelelm gave either came from the school or belonged to an earlier Laon master. They can hardly be described as the l’ifi nostri qui in thesouro nostro sunt which Charles the Bald confided to Counts Bernard and Adelelm and others. Charles’ will undoubtedly referred to the luxurious illuminated Gospel books prepared for him rather than to a collection of teachers’ manuals. In addition, although Bernard and Adelelm jointly donated twenty-three manuscripts, there was at least one donation by Adelelm alone after he became bishop (38).

In addition to manuscripts of Jérôme’s (39), Augustin’s (40), Ambrose’s (41), and Gregory the Great’s works (42), Bernard and Adelelm also owned a copy of Origen’s homilies on Numbers (manuscript 298), Cassiodorus’ commentary on the Psalms (manuscript 25), Prosper of Aquitaine’s De vocatione omnium gentium with five letters of Pope Leo I (manuscript 122), as well as a copy of Hesychius’ commentary on Leviticus (Bignétre, cod. 106), and Fortunatus’ Carmina and Vita sancti Martini (manuscript 460). Bernard and Adelelm also owned Rhabanus Maurus’ commentary on Exodus (Bignétre, cod. 135), a complex collection of extracts from early medieval authors (manuscript 265), an anonymous manuscrits de l’ancien archidioceze de Reims, in Scripturum, 2 (1948), 124; S. MARTINET, Laon, in Catholicae: Mgr, aujourd’hui, dometh, ed. D. JACQUINOT, VI, Paris, 1967, p. 1031.

ÉDOUARD PLERAY, in his Les manuscrits à miniatures de la bibliothèque de Laon... (2e ed.), Paris, 1963, pp. 22-3, challenged Ravaisson’s identification. He suggested that Bernard and Adelelm might be cathedral canons but offered no proof. O. HOLDER-EGGER, in M.G.H. Sle, XV, 1295, n. 1, guessed correctly that the Bernard and Adelelm of the Annales Landaisenses were also the donors of the manuscripts.

(35) This is the Paris, H.N. lat. 5643 already mentioned in n. 33 above.

(36) Bignétre, cod. 62, 63, 64, commentary on Isaiah; cod. 65: commentary on Joel; HABACUE, Zacharias, and Malachi; ms. 38: commentary on Joel, Jonah, Nahum, Micah, and Habakkuk.

(38) Manuscript 136: various Augustinian and pseudo-Augustinian sermons.

(39) Bignétre, cod. 64: commentary on the epistles of St. Paul.

(40) Bignétre, cod. 107: books 17-22 from the Moralia in Job. In the margin of his catalogue, Bignétre attributed this ms. to Adelelm alone.
commentary on St. John (manuscript 80) (43), and two collections of saints' Lives (44).

All these texts, of course, could be used in a school. What is remarkable about Bernard's and Adeleim's collection is the presence of several manuscripts specifically designed for teaching. Wichod's Quaestiones in Octateuchum ex dictis sanctorum Patrum Augustini, Gregorii, Hieronymi, Ambrosii, Hilarii, Eucherii, et Isunilli (manuscript 273) is, as its title suggests, a compilation of extracts from the fathers and other early medieval authors. Wichod's text has never been fully published for the precise reason that he was merely content to pass on the thoughts of his authorities in a convenient format (45). There is nothing original about Wichod's work except his system of selection and arrangement of his materials. In addition to its popular dossier format, Wichod built his work around a dialogue between a master and a student. In one codex, then, the masters of Laon possessed a handy and far-ranging repertoire of information on the first eight books of the Old Testament. A similar manual employing the dialogue format was Aldehelm's treatise on versification, the Retroactio reciprocam interrogaiones et respondonis de psalm regulis (manuscript 464). Designed to teach the rules of meter, the dialogue is built around a hundred riddles drawn from pagan and Christian poets and exotic word-lists which exemplify various meters.

In manuscript 468, Bernard and Adeleim had a Handbuch for the study of Virgil and of the Christian author Sedulius. This important manuscript provided the student with an introduction to Virgil's life and works as well as a glossary of the more difficult vocabulary in both Sedulius' and Virgil's work. Another important teaching aid is manuscript 444, a Greek-Latin glossary to which Martin Scutus added a Greek and Latin grammar. This

(43) Piau 1: Il est nomine patri et fili et spiritus sancti. In principio vertum super continentiae intelligetur verbum super substantia verbum et in ipso nomine quod altum intue. Quod vero spiritualiter dicitur quod intelligitur de nobis non solum sine nobis sed etiam de substantia hoc est verbum de deo in corde tuo.

According to the file of excipita at the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (Paris), this commentary is also found in Vat. Palat. Lat., 170 (R. 87-161), a ms. of the tenth century according to the L.I.H.T.'s file.

(44) See above, n. 13.


(46) These are nos. 38, 50, 80, 203, 273, 298, 444, 464, 498 and 499.

(47) X. Meyer has translated these interesting scribal notes into German, cf. Neun aufstrebende lateinische Quellen, in Zeitschrift für keltische Philologie, 8 (1910), 175-176.


(49) Ibid. 444, cf. J. Vercourey, Les mots vier-sclares dans le manuscrit de Laon, in Revue celtique, 25 (1940), 317-360 among many studies of this important code. For ms. 409, cf. below and, more fully, my study in Le Moyens Age, cited in n. 5 above.

manuscript formed the core of instruction in Greek at Laon during the third quarter of the ninth century.

Two more aspects of Bernard's and Adeleim's library need to be stressed in order to appreciate fully the significance of their donation. Of the fifteen extant manuscripts they donated to the cathedral, ten came to Bernard and Adeleim from Martin Scutus as the presence of his script in their margins or on their flyleaves attests (49). This means that most of the books which Bernard and Adeleim gave to the cathedral were not new to the school of Laon. Rather, they had been at Laon since approximately the middle of the ninth century. Secondly, of the surviving manuscripts of Bernard and Adeleim, at least four show signs of an Irish background. Manuscript 26 (Cassiodorus, In Psalmos) is copied in Irish pointed minuscule and bears marginal notes in Old Irish (48). Manuscript 59 (Lachau, Ecloga in Moralia Gregorii in Io) was copied by a continental scribe directly from an Irish exemplar (49). The Greek-Latin glossary, manuscript 444, bears some words in Old Irish, an important clue to its background. The text of manuscript 468, the guide to the works of Virgil and Sedulius, although written by a continental hand bears some anomalies that can most easily be explained by the use of an Irish architype for the material in the manuscript (49).

Bernard and Adeleim's collection of manuscripts mirrors the character of the library at Laon in the ninth century. It was a library formed by Martin Scutus. Not surprisingly, this library which was used by John Scutus, Martin, and other members of the Irish group at Laon contained manuscripts with an Irish origin or provenance.

Martin never left an ex-dono or ex-libris in his books. We may assume, I think, that Bernard and Adeleim inherited their books from the master who died in 875 just as they inherited his position as teacher. Some of Martin's books, or at least the books which he used, were not passed on to Bernard and Adeleim. Martin's handwriting is found in at least fourteen other Laon
manuscripts in addition to the ten just mentioned in Bernard and Adeleme's collection (69). Some of these Martin probably found at Laon. He also added his own to those he found. On the flyleaf of manuscript 38 (folio 1r), Martin recorded the contents of this manuscript:

Hic continentur iohel (liber i), ionas (liber i), micheas (libri ii), naum (liber i), abace (libri ii). Libri vii.

Above this list, at a slightly later date, he noted, «Iohel et abace habeo in altero libro». And immediately below his table of contents he indicated, «Expositionem super sophoniam et aegum non habeo» (70). Here was a scholar eager to have all of Jerome's commentaries. Another precious note reveals the source of at least one book Martin owned. In his copy of Wibod's Quaestiones in Octateuchum, Martin added a marginal note to the discussion about the sons of Cham which occurs in Wibod's section on Genesis:

Cham invasit per vim feream fratris sui sem, id est, terram reparationem, et iohel redidit eum deus semini sem. Videolcut abraham et semini eius. Sic enim inveni in libro quem dedit mihi fulbertus (71).

The book Martin referred to has not yet been identified. There is a strong possibility, however, that his friend Fulbert was attached to Charles the Bald's court (72).

(69) These are nos. 24, 37, 47, 86, 92, 259, 319, 336, 430, 434, 441, and three others not at Laon: Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Phillipps, 1832 (Annales Laudanensis et S. Vincentii Metatis Breves); Paris, B.N., lat. 2024; Paris, B.N., lat. 12968 (Iohannes Scotus, De Divini Bene Naturae, libri I-V). For knowledge of the last two ms., which exhibit Martin's script, I am indebted to Abbé Bernard Marette.

(70) Bernard and Adeleme owned a ms., now lost, which contained Jerome's comments on Joel, Habacuc, Zephaniah, and Malachi (Bibliothèque nationale, cod. 69). It is very possible that this is the ms. to which Martin referred. There is no evidence that the library at Laon ever possessed Jerome's commentaries on Sophonis and Aggus.

(71) Manuscript 273, f. 63r.

(72) There is no record of a Fulbertus at Laon during the ninth century but there was one at the palace who was a deacon and a chancellor there. In addition, this Fulbertus possessed property in a place called Laundunum. In 855, according to a charter granted by Charles the Bald, Fulbertus exchanged this property for five marks and their Sears at Guifroweg on the Oise river. Nine years later, in another charter, Chancellor Fulbertus' donation of this property to the monastery of Saint-Étienne-de-la-Grande. In the second

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We can safely ascribe most of the Irish manuscripts, or manuscripts with an Irish background, to Martin. Of the four just mentioned, only one (manuscript 26) does not bear his script. There were at least three more Irish books at Laon during the ninth century. Unfortunately, they exist today only as fragments used as flyleaves in other manuscripts (73).

Bishops Did and Rodulf, Bernard and Adeleme, and Martin Scotus, were not the only ones who helped form the library at Laon. Bishop Hincmar of Laon sent one of his canons to Bishop Willigis of Augsburg to borrow a copy of Paterius' abridgment of Gregory the Great's work (74). An anonymous note in a Laon manuscript further illustrates the efforts that the Laon masters undertook to fill lacunes in their library. On a flyleaf of manuscript 24 (folio 1r) (Jerome, Interpretationes hebraicorum nominum), which Bishop Did presented to the cathedral but which was already at Laon during Martin Scotus' time, an Irish hand has copied the following note:

Domine vinhibete commodate nobis felicem capellam parvum tempore et si valis illum emendabo in illos partibus quas dam simul eramus praetermissimus. Utinam in uno loco essessem etiam parvo tempore! Sidera si sparsis speciali lumine folget. O quam collectum fac animosa forest!

The identity of the Irish author of this letter and its import for the history of the school of Laon is explored elsewhere (75). Winibert, there is good reason to believe, was the abbot of Schittern, near Strasburg, during the second quarter of the century. Whether he eventually provided his Irish co-worker with a copy

charter, Fulbertus in no longer described as a charter in the palace. This would seem to indicate that he left the palace and the area of Laon when he gave up his hands there. In that case, he probably knew Martin during the early 800's although it is quite probable that they maintained contact during the 800's. Cf. Recueil des actes de Charles le Chauve, rol de France, 1, 453-455 (no. 172: 11 July 855); * ... quidem diaconom, sacri palatii nostri can- tor, Fulbertus nomine ... * ibid., 2, 100-111 (no. 211: 26 July 864); * ... electum nobis diaconom nover Fulbertus nomine ... * (73) Manuscript 55 contains two flyleaves, f. A and B, from two different sources, in Irish script. Manuscript 1226 has two leaves, f. 25-26, from a commentary on St. Paul in Irish script, cf. G. Déroux, Grundzüge der Geschichte der lateinischen Exzerpte im Früh- mittelalter, in Mittelalterliche Studien, 2, 292, n. 123.

(74) Cf. above, n. 11.

(75) I tentatively suggest that John Scotus may be the author of this letter in my A propos de quelques manuscrits de l'abbaye de Laon au XIème siècle, cited above, n. 5.
of Marciandus Capella's De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii is unknown. Nevertheless, we can now single out another individual at Laon who like Martin, Hincmar, Didol, Rodulf, Bernard, and Adelelma actively sought and attempted to bring to Laon manuscripts which were important to their work. In no other center can so many individuals with an interest in building a library be found during as short a time span as the period considered here. This intense activity made the library at Laon extremely rich for a cathedral library. It also bears witness to the vitality of intellectual life at Laon especially during the period of Martin Scotois and Hincmar, the third quarter of the ninth century.

Thus far, we have considered only half the question of the library's formation. We have tried to single out those individuals who contributed to the growth of the library at Laon. We have found that these individuals, who can be identified by the presentation notices and other marks they left in their manuscripts, were the bishops and masters of the city. There is yet another factor which ought to be considered – the possibility that an active scriptorium existed at Laon which furnished the school with texts. This aspect of the library's formation deserves special treatment. It demands, first of all, a detailed paleographic analysis of Laon's manuscripts. The prospects of success for such an inquiry, which can not be undertaken here, are discouraging (59). Yet, we can provide some evidence to indicate that Laon did indeed have an active, if modest, scriptorium during the third quarter of the ninth century and that the chief products of this scriptorium were texts used in Laon's school.

The evidence which has thus far been brought forward for the existence of a scriptorium at Laon concerns the late eighth and early ninth centuries and the early tenth century. If Laon was not the principal home of the famous « Laoz az-type script », it appears nevertheless that Laon was an important center for the production of manuscripts in this script (60). There is also a


(60) Cf. W. M. Lindsay's The Laon AZ-type, In Revue des Bibliothèques, 24 (1914), 14-23 and E. A. Lowe's remarks, C.L.A., 8, xviii. Abbé Merlot's discovery of Martin Scotus' script in Paris, B.N., lat. 2024 (cf. n. 30 above), a collection of extracts from various authors which contains a leaf in az-type script (cf. CLA, 6, 7 ms. 530), permits the attribution of one more az-type specimen to Laon.

reference to an early ninth century scriptorium at Laon during the pontificate of Bishop Weniilo (799-814) (60). Finally, at least one manuscript was partially copied at Laon during the first quarter of the tenth century (60). No evidence, however, has yet been presented for the work of copyists at Laon during the third quarter of the ninth century, the period coincidental with the work of the most important Laon masters. Many of Laon's manuscripts can be attributed to other centers. St. Amand, Reims, and Corbie were the chief sources of Laon's manuscripts (60). On the other hand, several important Laon manuscripts bear unmistakable signs that they were copied at Laon and thus that there was a local interest not only to collect manuscripts from other scriptoria but also to copy them at Laon for use in the school and for the library.

It is somewhat paradoxical that the only literary reference to scriptural activity at Laon in the ninth century comes from the pontificate of the much maligned Hincmar of Laon. Hincmar most certainly had a scriptorium at his disposal for the preparation of the tracts he addressed to the archbishop of Reims (61). At one point in his controversy with his uncle, he mentioned the names of two of his deacons, Teutlandus and Hurtgarus, who served him as copyists (61). Scholars have tried to identify the Hurtgarus who corrected manuscript It. Originis homilies on Leviticus, without knowledge of this passage (61). The Hurtgarus who worked as a scribe for Hincmar, however, is obviously

(60) See my article, Le Pompier de Laon (Paris, B.N. lat., 11727) • Source de l'histoire de l'Ecole de Laon ou commence la belle aile, in Revue des Bibliothèques, 24 (1914), 14-23 and E. A. Lowe's remarks, C.L.A., 8, xviii. Abbé Merlot's discovery of Martin Scotus' script in Paris, B.N., lat. 2024 (cf. n. 30 above), a collection of extracts from various authors which contains a leaf in az-type script (cf. CLA, 6, 7 ms. 530), permits the attribution of one more az-type specimen to Laon.

(61) Hincmar conjured in his catalogue of Laon mss., p. 60, that Hurtgarus was Archbishop Hincmar's scribe at Cambrai (787-833). More recently, P. 257, did not repeat this gratuitous identification but suggested that Hurtgarus belonged to a scriptorium other than Laon's. Travaux M.G.H., Paris, tomo IV, 151, 152) identified Hurtgarus with Bishop Hincmar of Liège (845-854). I do not think that it is necessary to go that far afield.
the Hartgarus who corrected the Laon manuscript and left the following note on folio 195r:

Quisquis ad aeternae festins gaudia uitae
Hos flores typicos devota mente require
Nocia quo valeas contempti liniqere saeclis
Et tandem capias celestis premia regni
Hartgarus memnor esto precor qui nocia caneta
Quae potuit rasit nuc non consilium remisit.

This identification accords well with Bernard Bischoff's remarks concerning the manuscript. He dates it to the second half of the ninth century. Furthermore, while it is not a Reims manuscript, it bears paleographical characteristics of the scripture of Reims - exactly what would be expected in light of the proximity and ties between Laon and Reims. I conclude that Hartgarus of Laon corrected this manuscript and that the manuscript itself was produced at Laon during the 870s or 880s.

Another manuscript which I would not hesitate to ascribe to Laon's copyists is the famous Greek-Latin glossary, manuscript 444. This manuscript has an Irish background and was probably copied during the 860s. It is divided into two distinct parts. Folios 5 to 275 contain the glossary itself. The remainder of the manuscript, from folio 276 to folio 318, contains a Greek and Latin grammar. Two subscriptions in the latter part attribute the grammatical glosses to the hand of Martin Scotus. The subscriptions themselves seem to be a service imitation of Martin's hand and may belong to a student. But there is no doubt that most of the grammatical portion of the manuscript, as the subscriptions suggest, was personally copied by Martin whose hand is easily recognized in notes and passages copied in numerous other manuscripts. The importance of the presence of Martin's hand in manuscript 444 is that it gives a key to the production of the entire manuscript. As it exists now, the manuscript has the appearance of being completed in two stages. The glossary section ends on folio 275v with a dedicatory poem to Hincmar which indicates that this leaf was the last in a codex which originally only contained the glossary.

Martin Scotus had the glossary section copied by local scribes for Hincmar of Laon, his pupil and patron. When Hincmar was disgraced, imprisoned, and eventually blinded, Martin reclaimed the manuscript. He then added, in his own hand, the grammatical portions of the present manuscript to the glossary portion.

Martin was also intimately involved with the production of a second manuscript as important as the Greek-Latin glossary and grammar for the school at Laon. Manuscript 468 has already been mentioned as a Handbuch for the study of Virgil. The sixty-one folios of this manuscript have been copied by one hand. It is a clear, continental hand which, however, exhibits a tendency to

sary section. Although Greek-Latin glossaries were not as rare as one might expect in the ninth century, I think that it is safe to assume that the three hands responsible for the glossary section of the manuscript belong to Laon scribes. First, there is the question of the archetype behind manuscript 444. It unquestionably either belonged to or was copied by Irishmen. Secondly, the glossary section was produced for a Hincmar. Hincmar of Reims was familiar with Greek-Latin glossaries. However, I think that manuscript 444 was dedicated to his nephew, Hincmar of Laon. The younger Hincmar, according to his uncle, knew both Greek and Irish and loved to garnish his literary productions with Greek words indiscriminately and improperly used. This sounds like a trait of someone whose knowledge of a language is superficial and dependent primarily on a dictionary. Thirdly, there is the fact that manuscript 444 is at Laon. It belonged to Martin and then passed to Bernard and Adelemon. All of Hincmar of Reims' manuscripts stayed at Reims until the modern era.

I reconstruct the production of manuscript 444 as follows. Martin Scotus had the glossary section copied by local scribes for Hincmar of Laon, his pupil and patron. When Hincmar was disgraced, imprisoned, and eventually blinded, Martin reclaimed the manuscript. He then added, in his own hand, the grammatical portions of the present manuscript to the glossary portion.

(66) See above, n. 49.

(67) For the subscriptions, cf. MGH, Poetas, III, 696-697, 831, for Trasche's transcription and a plate exhibiting Martin's script.

(68) Cf. ibid., 696.

(69) Professor Bischoff (cf. n. 01 above) has noted simply that the hands responsible for the glossary exhibit Reims traits.

(70) Cf. Visser's article cited above, n. 49. This does not mean that the exemplar of the manuscript necessarily derived from Ireland - as J. F. Kenney, The Sources for the Early History of Ireland (Eschatologically): An Introduction and a Guide, New York, 1995, p. 509, thought. In fact, the exemplar of manuscript 444 was definitely based on a continental manuscript, London, British Museum, Harley 579 (cf. CLA, 2, 25 no. 263).

(71) "... omni appetenter suffecta verba Latina, quae in locis potius patet, ubi Graeca, et obnomina et interdonum Scotiae et alia barbar a ubi manas hath nobis aliquo corrupit ...", Opusculum I.V. Capitulum, 448.

(72) One of Hincmar's twenty-one ms. is at Cambridge. Another is at Paris. The remainder are still conserved at Reims, cf. Casey, 49-59.
slant to the right and some Irish traits (73). Throughout the manuscript, another hand has assisted that of the principal copyist. This second hand is Martin Scotus'. It is important to note that Martin did not correct the manuscript. The main copyist left blank spaces in the text which Martin filled with the proper word or phrase. This method of work indicates that there was close cooperation between the scribe and Martin Scotus. The scribe copied from a text which presented some difficulty to him. To judge from the characteristic nature of Martin's additions to the text, the copyist worked with an Irish exemplar and had difficulty with Irish abbreviations and symbols (74). Martin, working with the copyist, filled in the words and phrases which were unclear to the scribe.

Hartgarus and the scribes who worked on manuscripts 444 and 468 for Martin Scotus were, of course, kept busy with other manuscripts. A detailed analysis of manuscripts 11, 444, and 468 might provide sufficient paleographic clues to isolate other products of Laon's scriptorium among the Laon manuscripts generally ascribed to northeastern France.

Laon's scriptorium is but one aspect of the school which needs further study. The Laon masters' texts and notes must be published for the true significance of the school to be appreciated (75). Martin Scotus' career and work especially need to be illuminated: he, more than John Scotus, was at the center of the school at Laon (76).

(73) There is a tendency to set off end strokes with a flourish in the cross-bar of the t, the abbreviation bar, the torque of the e, and in the s or abbreviation. Professor Birchall has observed that these traits extend in the whole Laon circle, c.f. L. P. Shearson-Williams, Johannes Scoti Eshigamus Periphrasticus (De Divisione Naturae), Liber Prima, Dublin, 1968, p. 12.

(74) See my study of this ms. cited above, n. 5.

(75) A more complete edition of John Scotus' commentary on Martianus Capella is in especial desideratum. Adolf Mollat intends to publish the notes to ms. 468, a Handbuch for the study of Virgil and one of Laon's most important teaching manuals. Manuscript 444, the famous Greek-Latin glossary, deserves a fuller and more modern critical edition than Miller was able to furnish in Notices et Extraits in 1890. I hope to be able to study John Scotus' and Haimon of Auxerre's Biblical glosses.

(76) The commentary attributed to Martin by J. G. Préaux, Le commentaire de Martin de Laon sur l'Oeuvre de Martianus Capella, in Latomus, 12, 1953, 431-459, needs further work. Also, while Martin might be responsible for the Greek notes attributed to him by M. L. W. Lassen (Notes on Greek from the Lectures of a Ninth Century Monastery Teacher, in Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 7, 1923, 421-456), I am not convinced by Lassen's evidence, i.e., that Vol. IV, ed. 215 is from Laon. Cfr. further, Lassen, Candidatus Theodorianus, in The Classical Quarterly, 16 (1922), 197, and H. J. Thompson, Anaphora, in The Classical Review, 34 (1920), 32-33.