

A Partial Survey of Continental Scribal Centres Writing Caroline Minuscule, c. 700 – 1000

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Introduction

The Network for the Study of Caroline Minuscule

This survey project began in 2012 as part of the Network for the Study of Caroline Minuscule (NSCM), which I set up together with Zachary Guiliano while we were PhD students at the University of Cambridge. The aim of our new network was to bring together scholars, particularly students, interested in manuscripts written in Caroline minuscule, and in the palaeographical issues they raise. We had both worked with manuscripts written in Caroline minuscule, and been confronted with the difficulties of dating and localising them, as well as some of the more significant problems of studying the palaeography of this and other early medieval scripts: the absence of a scholarly consensus on terminology, the fluidity and diversity of palaeographical styles and scribal hands, the methodological and historical obstacles to identifying specific ‘centres’, the challenges of dating a widely-used script written in a highly uniform manner, and the lack of a public network that would enable palaeographers from different backgrounds to share information and ideas on a regular basis.

Our awareness of these issues, as well as the confidence to attempt to resolve them, grew from the excellent teaching in Latin palaeography at the University of Cambridge, as well as from palaeographical forums such as the Cambridge Medieval Palaeography Workshop, then convened several times a year by Teresa Webber, Orietta Da Rold, Suzanne Paul and David Ganz. These and other scholars provided both the encouragement and the caution that enabled us to get our network set up as a serious academic project. From the beginning, we have been supported and advised by Teresa Webber, who remains an extraordinarily generous mentor, who sets the high standard of academic excellence we attempt, and to whom we owe a great debt. Both Zachary and I are also grateful to our mutual PhD supervisor, Rosamond McKitterick, who always encouraged and supported our work and intellectual curiosity.

The Network has grown slowly since 2012, hosting a colloquium in 2014 with the aid of Suzanne Paul, then Manuscript Librarian at Cambridge University Library, and with generous funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council UK and the Gates Cambridge Trust. The Network also hosted a series of sessions at the Leeds International Medieval Congress in 2015, and other sessions are planned at future Congresses. In 2015, *A Partial Survey of Continental Scribal Centres Writing Caroline Minuscule, c. 700 – 1000* was awarded the J. M. M. Hermans Grant by the Association paléographique internationale – culture, écriture, société (APICES), as well as an Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH) Incubator Project grant. These awards enabled me to set up a new team to commission articles upon Zachary’s departure, and to hire Drew Thomas as Project Manager to develop a website and database under the mentorship of Dot Porter, Curator of Digital Research Services at the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies (SIMS). Our digital presence – which from 2017 includes a major blog series with advice on travelling to and accessing archives from those with experience working in the major European libraries – is now professionally hosted by SIMS at the University of Pennsylvania.

Both the Network and the survey project have been made possible only thanks to the generosity and support of others, therefore. The current team consists of myself as General Editor, Evina Steinová as Assistant Editor, Arthur Westwell as Peer Review Editor and Drew Thomas as

Project Manager. All of us are early-career scholars who have taken on NSCM and the survey project as a long-term commitment in addition to our own work.

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The project presented on litteracarolina.upenndigitalscholarship.org began as the Caroline Minuscule Mapping Project, which had the aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing scholarship on the major early medieval continental European book production centres that copied manuscripts written in Caroline minuscule. This remains the goal of the present project, which has been re-named to reflect its scope more accurately, and to acknowledge the problems associated with identifying medieval scriptoria.¹

The thirty scribal centres selected for the survey project are listed below in alphabetical order. In some cases, a number of cities are grouped together as one centre, because they were closely associated in the early middle ages and it would be difficult to consider one without considering the others. In other cases, such as Rheims, several major monasteries or churches are included as part of that scribal centre. Finally, while the below centres were undoubtedly significant places of scribal activity from c. 700 to c. 1000, they were by no means the only such places. This survey project is therefore only a beginning for the further palaeographical study of the focal points of writing and writing-associated activities in the early medieval Frankish empire.

1. Autun + Flavigny
2. Benediktbeuern + Mondsee
3. Charlemagne's court groups
4. Chelles
5. Cologne
6. Corbie + Corvey
7. Fleury + Micy + Auxerre
8. Freising
9. Fulda + Hersfeld
10. Laon + Arras + Cambrai
11. Liège
12. Lorsch
13. Lucca
14. Lyon + Vienne
15. Metz
16. Murbach + Weissenburg
17. Nonantola
18. Regensburg + Tegernsee
19. Reichenau + Konstanz
20. Rheims: Notre Dame + St Remi + St Thierry + Hautvillers
21. Paris: St Denis + St-Germain-des-Prés
22. Salzburg

¹ These problems are explored in *Scriptorium. Wesen – Funktion – Eigenheiten. Comité international de paléographie latine, XVIII. Kolloquium. St. Gallen 11.–14. September 2013*. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Herausgabe der mittelalterlichen Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz, ed. A. Nievergelt *et al.* (Munich, 2015).

23. St Gallen
24. St Amand
25. Tours
26. Trier: St Maximin + Echternach
27. Vercelli + Bobbio
28. Verona
29. Werden
30. Würzburg + Mainz

The posthumous publication of the third and final volume of Bernhard Bischoff's *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts (mit Ausnahme der wisigotischen)* was an important catalyst for this survey project. The completion of this monumental work enables scholars to build on Bischoff's expertise in a way that was not previously possible. As his editor Birgit Ebersperger noted at the NSCM colloquium in 2014, Bischoff expressed the wish that his catalogue be accompanied by images of the manuscripts. This was not practical then, and would still be difficult to accomplish today. The impressive rate of manuscript digitisation in the last few years means, however, that this digital survey project has been able to bring together both the palaeographical scholarship and direct links to many of the digitised manuscripts for specific centres for the first time. By summarising all the available palaeographical information for particular geographical locations and making it available open-access online in parallel with new digital repositories, this survey project aims to make Caroline minuscule – in many ways one of the most influential medieval scripts – and the manuscripts in which it was written more accessible, as well as to bring the scholarly foundations of palaeography in closer alignment with the digital sphere.

This project does not, therefore, aim to replace first-hand examination of manuscripts and their palaeographical features – in fact, it is hoped that the lists of manuscripts and links to their digitised versions will provide a convenient starting-point for this work and encourage readers to consult the primary sources directly – nor to replace the scholarship which has been used to compile the summary articles. It is intended principally as a reliable guide to the state of knowledge in the field up to 2017 (or later for future articles) for those beginning their research into Caroline minuscule, or a particular early medieval centre of manuscript production.

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Principles of the survey articles

Contents

The survey articles have undergone double peer review, firstly by a member of NSCM and secondly by an expert external reviewer in a fully anonymous process.

Since this is a survey project, all articles rely on previously published scholarship. Any original palaeographical studies made by the authors within the articles are supplied in additional

² For an explanation of the terms of this license, please visit: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0>.

sections. Some authors may also have chosen to include additional sections to the ones listed below, depending on the particular features of the centre in question.

All survey articles contain the following sections:

a) A historical summary and introduction

This is not intended to be exhaustive, but to provide both a historical and a historiographical starting point for the history of the writing centre in question.

b) A list of datable manuscripts localised to the writing centre, based on Bischoff's *Katalog*. Any manuscripts that have been digitised and are available in open access have been hyperlinked (fee-charging repositories such as Leiden University Library's *Codices Vossiani Latini* collection are not included). Simply click on the classmark to be redirected to the digitisation. All manuscript classmarks are listed in full in this section, but abbreviated to their short form in the rest of the article. In both the main text and in footnotes that discuss manuscripts from this list, the classmarks are in bold font (mentioned manuscripts that do not appear on the list are not bolded).

The list is split into three core sections:

i. List of manuscripts assigned that place of origin or provenance by Bischoff. Occasionally Bischoff questions the certainty of this despite including the manuscript in his list of books from that centre; in such cases, a question mark is included in brackets after the classmark.

ii. List of manuscripts recorded in Bischoff's *Katalog* as having their origin or provenance in the region around a particular centre, that is 'Umkreis...' (or similar), with Bischoff's wording reproduced in brackets. Uncertain attribution is noted using a question mark in brackets after the classmark.

iii. List of manuscripts assigned that place of origin or provenance by other scholars, but not recorded as such in the *Katalog*. Uncertain attribution is noted using a question mark in brackets after the classmark.

Since this core list of manuscripts is based on Bischoff's *Katalog*, which contains only ninth-century manuscripts, any eighth or tenth-century manuscripts are listed separately before and after the above sections.

Additional lists may be added by some authors where this is necessary; they include:

iv. List of manuscripts with features from one centre but origin in another (whether recorded in Bischoff's *Katalog* or elsewhere).

v. List of manuscripts recorded in Bischoff's *Katalog* as having origin or provenance in other regions, but assigned a Werden origin or provenance by other scholars.

It is important to note that in instances of manuscripts written in another script (e.g. Anglo-Saxon minuscule) and containing Caroline minuscule only as additions or notes, the date given in the manuscript list is the date of the Caroline minuscule and not of the main manuscript.

This enables the manuscript to be listed in the online database according to the date of the Caroline minuscule it contains. However, where the dates thus diverge, articles will always include the date of the manuscript itself in brackets. Every manuscript listed in the survey articles may be assumed to have been written primarily in Caroline minuscule, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

It is the individual choice of authors whether or not to list the text contents of manuscripts in the above sections.

Some manuscript lists will include sources that do not have a classmark, usually because they are now lost. All such written evidence is listed as s.n., *sine nomine* ('without name').

c) Letterforms of Caroline minuscule

The project does not attempt to establish a set English-language palaeographical terminology, nor do the articles explicitly rely on any particular system. Every effort has been made, however, to make it clear which descriptions refer to which graphic features. More precise palaeographical information may be found in the studies on which these survey articles rely.

d) Other distinctive treatments of script

Any particular scribal features that do not fall into the above category may be included here if they are characteristic of a particular centre, or otherwise indicative of it. Such features may include (but are not limited to) distinctive treatments of scribal colophons, monograms, marginal notes and rubrics.

e) Key features beyond letter forms

These may include binding, ruling, layout or quire collocation; parchment quality/size; ink colour; illustrations or an illustrative style; punctuation, abbreviations, annotations or other signs.

f) Bibliography

Lists of digital sources do not include online manuscript repositories, as links to these are easily found both within the article and in the project database.

Dating

The dating system used in all articles and in the database represents year ranges, as shown below using the example of the ninth century:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Year range</i>
8 th /9 th century	790–810
c. 800	790–810
9 th century	800–900
9 th century, in.	800–815
9 th century, 1/4	800–825
9 th century, 1/3	800–833
9 th century, 1/2	800–850
9 th century, 2/4	825–850
9 th century, 2/3	833–865
9 th century, med.	840–860
9 th century, 3/4	850–875
9 th century, 2/2	850–900
9 th century, 3/3	865–900
9 th century, 4/4	875–900
9 th century, ex.	885–900

This dating system is, to some extent, arbitrary, since the descriptive dates in the first column are commonly used by scholars but do not always indicate the same year range. We cannot, therefore, be sure that when a cataloguer classes a manuscript as dating from the 9th century, ex., that he or she means the last quarter of that century and not, for example, the last 20 years; or that 8th/9th century does not cover a span of 200 years instead of only 20. The above dates have been used in the survey project both by our authors and in the manuscript database in order to provide a clear and searchable system. However, when taken from the manuscript catalogues that inform the survey articles, the above dates should be treated as indicative only, and the catalogues consulted directly in case of any doubt.

Principles of the database

To encourage readers to interact with the manuscripts listed in the articles, they are available in an online searchable database. Manuscripts will be added to the database as each article is published. Users can search the database by classmark, title (if applicable), scribal centre, country, year, or range of years. In order to perform a search, year ranges need not conform to the dating system used for the survey articles as described above. Additionally, users can filter their search results to include only manuscripts with links to an online digitisation. Users also have the option to sort their results by any of the available fields.

A unique feature of *A Partial Survey of Continental Scribal Centres Writing Caroline Minuscule, c. 700 – 1000* is the visualisation of users' search results on a Google map. This is achieved by linking the database to the Google Maps API. The scribal centres of a user's search query will appear proportionally on the map according to the number of manuscripts produced in that centre based on the search criteria. This will prove more valuable as more scribal centres are added to the database.

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