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Finding Patristic Authorities in the Carolingian Period

Abstract

This article investigates how and for what reasons Carolingian scholars sought and found works by the so-called church fathers. It begins by discussing the use of late antique bibliographical guides to learn about patristic titles and their orthodoxy. It looks at how Carolingian scholars went about acquiring copies of interesting works through their networks, and the peculiarities particular to the search for patristic texts. It closes by looking at examples of how some of the works of Augustine of Hippo were 'edited' by Carolingian scholars, arguing that such active engagement with these texts took place more often than sometimes thought.[1]

Keywords

Carolingians, Manuscripts, Patristics, Medieval editing, Annotations.

While the character and execution of the initiatives usually known as the Carolingian reforms continue to be debated (van Rhijn, "Introduction"), it is well established that Charlemagne (reigned 768–814) and his family funded selected institutions and called for educational reforms and correct books to be put to use by the bishops, responsible for teaching the will of God to their flocks. Consequently, books were copied in great numbers in a new uniform script known as the Caroline minuscule, library collections were systematically built up and enriched, and children were schooled (McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms* 140–66; McKitterick, *Carolingians*; Brown, "Introduction;" Contreni, "The Carolingian renaissance").

The Carolingian reforms stimulated intellectual work and patristic literature was central to these activities. Carolingian scholars were convinced that the patristic period had ended but was not beyond recall (Ward 166–72). Although the correct books called for in Charlemagne's famous *Admonitio generalis* were primarily liturgical, when applying the directive in their own dioceses, Carolingian bishops sometimes interpreted it more widely, to include also homilies by Gregory the Great (d. 604) (*Admonitio generalis* 70, 224; Contreni, "'Let Schools be Established'" 230–31). More importantly, Carolin-

1. I wish to thank Lars Boje Mortensen and Reka Forrai for inviting me to give the paper on which this article is based at the Odense symposium in 2022, and Jean-Félix Aubé-Pronce and the two anonymous reviewers for their critical remarks and suggestions.

gian bishops saw themselves as safeguarding and perpetuating patristic teaching. Rosamond McKitterick has shown how Carolingian scholars developed from the works of late antique church historians a view of history as a story about Christian writers and their works (*History and Memory* 229, 232, 234–44). The fathers were seen as teachers, not yet the giants of scholastic imagination (Steckel 548).

The Carolingian period continued the development of the canon of patristic writers that had begun in late antiquity (Otten; Gioianni; Pollard and Weber). Reform activity required clarifying what the fathers had written, which of the works attributed to them had they in fact written, and sorting out authoritative writers from those who were theologically suspect. It also involved finding out where exemplars of interesting titles were kept and negotiating access to them, ensuring they were preserved in good copies and corrected when necessary, and making sure that those who were supposed to read them could make sense of them.

In this article I survey some of the practical aspects involved in the search for and finding of patristic books in the Carolingian period. I will first discuss how the Carolingians went about determining what were the authoritative works of the fathers. I then turn to how Carolingian scholars procured copies of interesting books through their networks and continue with a closer look at how and why specifically patristic titles were sought out. Many of the specific examples concern engagement with the works and thought of Augustine of Hippo (354–430). The article concludes by considering cases where more than one copy of some of his major works seems to have been used to produce one surviving Carolingian copy. These cases imply that somebody gathered or even hunted for copies of the work in question and demonstrate the active nature of Carolingian engagement with authoritative texts.

Learning about patristic titles

Before one can look for books, one must find out what books to look for. How did the Carolingian scholars identify authoritative Christian texts? A few of the patristic authors had taken care to curate their literary oeuvre. Augustine famously wrote up the *Retractationes*, where he not only listed the works he had written but also sketched out the main argument of each work or the circumstances of their composition and noted issues he had since changed his mind about.

Moreover, his hagiographer Possidius drew up a list of his works. Other examples of authors who drew up lists of their works include the sixth-century senator and monastic founder Cassiodorus (d. *c.* 585) (*De ortographia* praef., 144) and Gregory of Tours (d. 594) (*Decem libri historiarum* 10.18, 535–36).

In addition to catalogues of the works of a single author, late-antique bibliographical quides could be used. *De uiris illustribus*, compiled by Jerome (d. 419/20) and continued by Gennadius of Marseille (d. *c.* 496) and Isidore of Seville (d. 636), listed ecclesiastical writers and their works. Cassiodorus wrote his *Institutiones* for the use of the brothers of Vivarium, the monastery he had founded. It gives advice about suitable titles both for secular and sacred studies. However, the guide that may have spoken best to the Carolingian desire for authoritatively correct books was the *Decretum* or *De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*, a list of orthodox and apocryphal works circulating falsely under the name of either pope Damasus (366–84) or pope Gelasius (492–6). It may have been created by an Augustinian faction in the context of the fifth- and sixth-century debates over Augustine's teaching on grace and free will (Schwartz; Gioianni 28; cf. von Dobschütz 348–52). Its purported papal origin was important to the Franks, who made wide use of it in their quest for orthodox books (McKitterick, *Carolingians* 202–04).

McKitterick has shown how late-antique guides to Christian literature were often collected in Carolingian manuscripts to create veritable bibliographical manuals (*Carolingians* 206–10). There even appear to be concrete traces of the use of *De uiris illustribus* as a kind of shopping list. David Ganz and McKitterick have drawn attention to a copy made at the turn of the eighth century in a northern Frankish centre that belonged to the library of Corbie already in the Merovingian period. Some lines of text in this manuscript of *De uiris illustribus* are marked with the *require*-symbol, commonly employed to mark linguistically questionable passages, but in this case intended perhaps as a reminder to seek out particular titles (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), lat. 12161, *e.g.* fol. 77r; McKitterick, *Carolingians* 202; Ganz, "The Merovingian Library" 154).[2]

The collection and study of bibliographic tools is reflected in Carolingian library catalogues, as McKitterick has also shown. The earliest surviving book lists that refer to an actual collection of books come from Würzburg and Fulda in the late eighth century.[3] From the ninth century, we possess systematic catalogues, not alphabetical but thematically organised, from the monasteries of Reichenau (in 821–

2. On *require* and other technical signs used in the early Middle Ages, see Steinová *Notam superponere studui*; Steinová "*Nota* and *Require*."

3. These are the list of books loaned from the Würzburg cathedral library to the abbeys of Fulda and Holzkirchen, Glauche et al. 977–79; and the earliest surviving list of books owned by Fulda, probably a copy of an older list, Schrimpf et al. 5–6; see also McKitterick 169–72; Gorman 55–56. An eighth- or ninth-century possibly Anglo-Saxon booklist survives in a volume that Gerward, the librarian to Louis the Pious, donated to Lorsch, Häse 168; Gorman 56–62. A fragment of an apparent booklist probably written in North Italy in the late seventh or early eighth century, in Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, cii, fol. 127v, was signalled by Bischoff as a library catalogue ("Die Bibliothek" 212 n. 3). However, while its fragmentary state makes determining its nature difficult, it might simply be a list of books to be acquired or of books that have been lent; see also Gavinelli 375; I thank Evina Steinová for sharing a picture of the fragment and her ideas on the text.

822), Lorsch (*c.* 830, in 830–40 and again *c.* 850), St. Riquier (831), Fulda (ca. 840–50), Murbach (*c.* 850), St. Gallen (*c.* 850), and Bobbio.[4] A list of books could be simply a way of keeping track of books in a collection, but catalogues were also a way of conceptualising a collection of books, and it is possible they were also circulated in order to make the location of exemplars of certain texts known (McKitterick, *Carolingians* 209).

Throughout the early Middle Ages, Rome was famous as a source of books. They were sought out by monastic founders, benefactors, and scholars, and gifted by the popes (McKitterick, "Roman Books" 93–95; Bischoff, "Die Hofbibliothek" 151–52). For example, Pope Paul (757–67) sent Charlemagne's father King Pippin (758–63), perhaps at his request, liturgical texts and Greek texts on grammar ("Codex Carolinus" 24, 529; Gastgeber). Charlemagne requested and received a Roman Sacramentary from Pope Hadrian (772–95) in the late 780s ("Codex Carolinus" 89, 626).[5] Constantinople was another possible source of books: famously, the emperor gave Louis the Pious (778–840) a collection of the works of Dionysius the (Ps.)-Areopagite (Paris, BNF, gr. 437) in 827 (McCormick 374). The papacy was above all a religious authority, yet it seems to have been worthwhile seeking secular works in Rome as well, as Abbot Lupus of Ferrières (*fl.* 850) did, writing to Pope Benedict III (855–58) and asking after Cicero's *De Oratore*, Quintilian's *Institutiones Oratoriae* and Donatus' commentary on Terence (*Ep.* 103, 90–91; McKitterick, "Roman Books" 118).

4. Respectively, Lehmann 244–50; Häse 82–101, 102–35, 136–67; Hariulf 3.3 89–93; Schrimpf et al. 85; Milde 36–48; Lehmann 71–82; Lehmann 263–66; Tosi 197–214. Generally, see McKitterick 173–96, 262–66.

5. See also the indispensable translation of the *Codex Carolinus*, with much contextualizing information, by McKitterick et al., the letters referenced here at 246 and 368–69.

Procuring books through scholarly networks

Recent work has highlighted the importance of scholarly networks to Carolingian scholarly pursuits (Meeder 4–5, Grifoni–Vocino 102–05). Locating and getting a hold of copies of interesting titles, like publishing new ones also depended on scholarly networks (Tahkokallio 2, 8–9; Niskanen 1–2; Keskiaho 29–30). Looking at Carolingian scholars and authors, it is clear and unsurprising that the book collection they were first acquainted with was that of the place where they studied. Later, a successful scholar may have been assigned to lead a monastery or a bishopric somewhere else. They might not lack for books so much as the particular titles they knew or the authoritative texts suitable for teaching their flocks in accordance with the spirit of the Carolingian reforms. However, if they knew where an exemplar was

available, they could reach out to their friends and connections to get copies. Extant letters exemplify how the Carolingian elites went about procuring books.

Alcuin of York (d. 804) was one of the leading scholars in Charlemagne's entourage. Master of the cathedral school in York, he was recruited by the Frankish king and joined his court probably in 786 and was appointed as the lay abbot of Tours in 796 (Bullough). We find him there in September 798, suggesting to Charlemagne that he send a few boys to York to make excerpts from titles Alcuin knows are there but has no access to in Tours (Alcuin, *Ep.* 121, 176–77). A few years earlier he had responded to Charlemagne's astronomical query by noting that both Bede and Pliny the Elder had written things relevant to the question, but that he did not have their works with him at that moment. Therefore, he asked that Charlemagne send him a copy of Pliny's books so that he could answer properly (Alcuin, *Ep.* 155, 250).[6] On both occasions, Alcuin refers to books he had become familiar with previously but did not have currently at hand. In one case he knew the books were in York, and in both he sought to appeal to Charlemagne's resources to get them.[7]

One of Alcuin's major undertakings for Charlemagne was mounting, with other court theologians, opposition to Spanish Christological thinking that they disapproved of (Cavadini). One of the proponents of this so-called Adoptionism was Felix, bishop of Urgell (d. 818). Preparing to debate him in 799, Alcuin sought to locate a transcript of Felix's debate with a Muslim, and, after asking around, sent word to Bishop Leidrad of Lyons (798–814), who he had been told might have a copy. He also noted that Peter of Pisa, one of the other scholars Charlemagne had recruited, had debated a Jew at Pavia, and that there was a transcript of that debate as well, which Angilbert, the lay abbot of Saint-Riquier (d. 814), might know something about (Alcuin, *Ep.* 172, 284–85; van Renswoude 43–44). Angilbert was the lover of Charlemagne's daughter Bertha and a close counsellor of the king, and had accompanied his son Pippin to Italy in 782 as one of the advisers assigned to the underage ruler (Davis 417 n. 218 with a helpful collection of literature). Leidrad, a Bavarian, had been introduced to Alcuin by his friend Arn, bishop of Salzburg (d. 821), and tasked, together with two other agents, with bringing Felix to Aachen (Boshof 56–57; Holtz 315–16). Alcuin writes that he had made enquiries to determine who was likely to have knowledge of the texts he was seeking. Leidrad as a bishop of a southern see involved in the fight against Adoptionism plausibly had a copy of Felix's debate or

6. For the context, see also McLeish and Garrison esp. 20–25, with a partial translation of the letter at 47–50.

7. While Alcuin does not say so, he probably was acquainted also with Pliny's work at York; see Garrison 98–99.

the means to acquire it, and Angilbert with his contacts in the Italian kingdom might have knowledge of Peter of Pisa's debate. The court connected these men, and it is symptomatic that the letter from which we learn about this book-hunting is one that Alcuin wrote to Charlemagne.

While books may have been difficult to obtain, the lack of access to necessary books is also a trope in the literature of the period. Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856), abbot of Fulda from 822 to 842, archbishop of Mainz from 847, and a prolific author of biblical commentaries made frequent use of a related conceit. He proposed that his commentaries, effectively collections of patristic excerpts, could stand for a whole library, and would be especially useful to those who did not have access to many books (Hrabanus, *Ep*. 13, 400; *Ep*. 28, 443; *Ep*. 34, 468; *Ep*. 36, 471).

Hrabanus himself clearly did not lack access to books. It is not surprising that when Frechulf, probably a former monk of Fulda, was installed as the bishop of Lisieux (824/5–50/2), he wrote to Hrabanus to request the books of the Bible and patristic commentaries on them. Frechulf claims he did not have any of these basic books in Lisieux, which may be simply an exaggeration designed to make Hrabanus do what he wanted (Hrabanus, *Epp*. 7–12, 394–400; Ward 7–12, 29–30). When he eventually compiled his *Historiarum libri xii*, he made use of a substantial collection of patristic books. He may have built up a collection of books at Lisieux or simply loaned the books he needed, utilising his networks. In addition to Hrabanus, he was acquainted with Helisachar, the archchancellor of Louis the Pious and abbot of Saint-Denis. Michael Allen, who has edited the *Historiae*, concludes that the imperial court undoubtedly provided bibliographical assistance and that the libraries of Helisachar's many monastic benefices and especially Hrabanus's Fulda probably furnished many of the codices Frechulf made use of (Allen *Prolegomena* 17*, 200*; Allen, "Fréculf" 72–73; Ward 30). The composition of the *Historiae* suggests how Frechulf employed his networks to procure books.

In the case of living authors, it was possible to write to them to request a copy of their works. Thus, we have Abbot Peter of Nonantola writing to Amalarius of Metz (d. *c*. 850), at that time the bishop of Trier, to request copies of two of his works (Amalarius, *Ep*. 4, 245). Councils and synods, as gatherings of literate men, were good places for finding books (Zechiel-Eckes 222). Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims (d. 882) had Florus of Lyons's (d. 860) *Rescriptum de praedestinatione* copied at the synod of Bonneuil (855) from an exemplar

supplied by Bishop Heribald of Auxerre (Zechiel-Eckes 120, 222 n. 31). He also appears to have obtained a copy of Florus's *De tribus epistolis* at the council of Savonnières (859) (Pezé *Le virus* 90 nn. 284–85). Florus and Hincmar were at this time on different sides of the debate on double predestination, the idea that God has predestined all humans to either salvation or damnation (on the debate see Pezé, *Le virus*). The latter's actions suggest how the works of living authors, to whom one could or would not write directly, might be acquired by employing one's own networks.

The importance of networks is highlighted in the case of Lupus of Ferrières, famous for taking an interest in the Classics and leaving his mark on their textual traditions, as, for example, in the case of certain of Cicero's philosophical works. In his book hunting, exceptionally well-known through his letters, Lupus both bravely forged new connections and resorted to the networks of others.[8] He wrote to Einhard (d. 840), best known as the biographer of Charlemagne, to introduce himself and to borrow books that he knew Einhard had because he had seen a list (*brevis*) of the latter's books (Lupus, *Ep*. 1, 8). He also engaged his friends to loan books from their connections and then covertly lend them to him, such as when in 844 he asked Abbot Marcward of Prüm to borrow a book from the monastery of Fulda and then send it onward to him. In this case, Lupus probably knew about the book because he had seen it at Fulda while he studied there, as he specified that the work he sought had been copied as two small volumes (Lupus, *Ep*. 91, 81). On another occasion, sometime in the early 840s, Lupus requested that Archbishop Orsmar of Tours borrow a papyrus book from the library of St. Martin's Abbey in Tours without mentioning Lupus and then send it onwards to Lupus via the agent the latter had already sent (Lupus, *Ep*. 16, 24).

As the case of Lupus of Ferrières indicates, while books were normally borrowed and lent between trusted acquaintances, an ambitious and well-enough networked individual could still find ways to get his hands on the books he wanted. Generally, since books were expensive, their owners would have had good reasons for not wanting to loan them (Depreux 278–80). Because they were valuable, they were vulnerable to theft en route, a possibility Lupus raises in another letter (*Ep*. 76, 70), especially if the courier travelled by foot (*Ep*. 20, 28). Those interested in a book needed to be able to send a courier whom both parties trusted (*Ep*. 6, 18; *Ep*. 91, 81). The trustworthiness of couriers was especially important since communications were slow and uncertain. Alcuin's two letters to Arn in 800 mention

8. The classic study of Lupus's activities is Beeson; see also Bischoff "Paläographie" 63–68; for his book hunting see Depreux; for Cicero's philosophical works, Rouse in Powell et al. 124–28.

two books of Ambrose' works belonging to his monastery that a courier called Hildegar has taken to Salzburg and Alcuin tries to get returned, not knowing if the volumes have arrived in Salzburg or if Hildegar still has them (*Ep*. 193, 320; *Ep*. 194, 322). Practical considerations may also explain why Lupus approached Prüm for books from Fulda, and why he did not want his name to be mentioned to the monks of Tours. It may be that he lacked good connections in Fulda: in 844 his teacher Rabanus was no longer abbot there, having stepped down in 842. Conversely, Lupus seems to have had close connections with the abbot and monks of Prüm (see *Epp*. 5, 105, 10, 91, 68, 117, 123). Finally, while the secrecy in the case of the papyrus volume of St. Martin's may hint that Lupus may not have been able to aks for the book directly from the monastery, it may simply be a security measure: the book was old and probably fragile as well, and the less people knew about where it was taken the safer it would have been.

How could Lupus know that an institution he did not approach directly had the volumes he was after? Since he could describe the volumes he wanted, he had either seen them on a previous occasion, consulted the librarians of the respective collections, or knew them from booklists. At least some booklists circulated: Lupus himself refers to Einhard's *brevis*, and Murbach for example seems to have had a copy of Reichenau's earliest library catalogue (Depreux 277 n. 76; McKitterick *Carolingians* 209). In other cases it is probable that Lupus had seen the books he requested at an earlier occasion. For instance, he may well have learned of the existence of the volumes he requested from pope Benedict III when he had visited Rome in 849 (Depreux 276–77), although the possibility that a list of the books in the papal library also circulated cannot be excluded (McKitterick "Roman Books" 118). The details Lupus gives on the two books in Fulda and Tours – in two volumes, on papyrus – could as well stem from a booklist as from autopsy.

Hunting for copies of patristic works

In addition to building up institutional collections, theological controversies were a central reason to study books and look for more of them. The discussion of contentious or simply difficult questions required research into what individual authoritative theologians really taught. Especially in the case of prolific authorities such as Augustine, it was necessary to track down all of their writings relevant to

the topic to be able to reconstruct their thought. In this section, I consider the availability of patristic texts, both generally and then particularly on the basis of Alcuin's discussion of the soul. I then move to consider other obstacles between Carolingian readers and patristic works, related to their difficulty and questions about the authenticity and authority of individual titles.

The works of the late antique Christian theologians, patristic works, comprise a varied collection in terms of types of texts, ranging from practical texts such as monastic rules and sermons to scholarly treatises, from exegesis to speculative theology (see generally Dekkers and Gaar). Some authors and types of text were more popular or regarded as more useful than others; in other words, the variety of patristic texts was likely reflected in their availability. Judging the availability of individual titles at any given moment is challenging and necessarily imprecise, based as it is on the surviving manuscripts, on the use of these works in surviving early medieval texts, and, by the Carolingian period, on library catalogues, all of which only represent small parts of the evidence that once existed. Emanuela Colombi suggests that before the Carolingian period there was especial interest in exegesis, the works of Gregory the Great, as well as trinitarian and anti-heretical theological treatises, especially those that could be used to combat Arianism. More speculative or difficult theological texts seem to have been comparatively rare. This seems to be the case with many of Augustine's texts before the ninth century, and it may be that less complex works on the same subjects by other authors were preferred. However, renewed intellectual ambition and confidence, reflected in the Carolingian period in new theological controversies, created demand for more speculative theological works (Colombi, "La trasmissione" 9–16; "La presenza").

Carolingian intellectual confidence was brought to bear on issues that had remained controversial since late antiquity. The origin of the soul was one such issue (Tolomio; Haverkamp). Alcuin, in his *De ratione animae*, written in the 790s, notes that he will not deal with that difficult question because he does not have the necessary books:

> Thus even the blessed Augustine wrote a letter to blessed Jerome about the origin of the soul, wishing to know what that great scholar might declare on the subject. If that book should be in your library, read it and learn what that most sagacious investigator of nature said about the origin of the soul. […] blessed Jerome replied to him in a very brief but

> most perceptive letter. I read the book in England, but we do not have it here, nor the letter written in reply to it. The same scholar also produced, according to his *Retractations*, other essays on the nature of the soul – *On the Size of the Soul*, one book, *On the Immortality of the Soul*, one book, *On the Two Souls*, one book, and *On the immortality of the soul and its Origin*, four books. These I have not yet come upon. If perhaps they should be in the imperial library, do search them out, read them, and as a kind favour, send them to me to read. (8 86–87; trans. by J.J.M. Curry)

Here we see Alcuin using Augustine's *Retractationes* to see what the bishop of Hippo had written on the topic at hand. He suggests, but does not necessarily know, that the four works he only knows from the *Retractationes* might be found in the book chests at the court.

As far as can be determined, Augustine's treatises on the soul may indeed have been rather rare before the second quarter of the ninth century. *De quantitate animae* is included in the late-eighth-century list of books loaned from Würzburg (Glauche et al. 979), and *De natura et origine animae* (surely what Alcuin cites as *De immortalitate animae et eius origine*) is listed in the catalogue of St. Riquier in 831 (Hariulf 3.3, 90). *De immortalitate* is listed in Reichenau among the books copied during Erlebald's abbacy (823–38), while *De quantitate* was in Reichenau by the later ninth century (Lehmann 264). Of these works, only excerpts from *De quantitate* are listed in the first Lorsch catalogue, written in 830 (Häse 89). One copy each of all four works and a second of D*e immortalitate* are found in the next catalogue, probably from the 830s (Häse 108, item 43; 109, items 44 and 47; 123, item 93) The library catalogue of Murbach from the 840s lists *De immortalitate*, *De quantitate* and *De duabus animabus* as present in the collection but notes as desiderata on the basis of the *Retractationes* several titles, including *De natura et origine animae* (Milde 38, 40).

The library catalogues offer only one part of the picture, but surviving manuscripts of Augustine's treatises on the soul also suggest that there were fewer copies of these works available than in the second quarter of the century. The earliest surviving copy of both *De quantitate animae* and of *De natura et origine animae* is a Corbie manuscript copied before 830 (Paris, BNF, lat. 13369). Fulda prepared a copy of both *De immortalitate animae* and *De natura et origine animae* in the first third of the ninth century (Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek, 20 Ms. Theol. 30), and another copy of *De immortalitate* was made near the court of Louis the Pious *c.* 830 (Paris, BNF, lat. 2718). From

the second quarter of the ninth century, there is one further pairing of both *De natura* and *De quantitate* (Valenciennes, BM, 163 (155)), one copy each of *De immortalitate* (Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek, Gud. lat. 184 40) and *De natura* (Paris, BNF, lat. 12205) alone, three manuscripts that carry both *De immortalitate* and *De quantitate* (Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. perg. 236 and Aug. perg. 95; Roma, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 16) and none of *De duabus animabus*.

It thus seems that the four treatises that Alcuin mentions (and *De duabus* animabus especially) may have been rare enough for him to choose to simply note their existence instead of looking for copies. On the other hand, discussing the origin of the soul would have been perfectly possible based on Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*, which Alcuin uses extensively in his treatise. It features a comprehensive, if difficult and ultimately inconclusive, discussion on the question. Alcuin may have hoped that Augustine might have committed to a clear view on the issue in one of the four treatises he did not know. However, the lack of books also freed him for from discussing a difficult question he may not have wanted to adress, likely judging it too complicated for his target audience.

In addition to the rarity of certain titles, there were many obstacles between literate Franks and theological texts that affected the search for books. Some were due to the complexity of many patristic texts. Charlemagne's sister and daughter asked Alcuin to compile for them a commentary on the Gospel of John because they had tried and failed to make sense of Augustine's *Tractatus in Johannem* (Alcuin, *Ep*. 196, 324). Moreover, restriction of access was also ideologically grounded: simple monks and clerics were not supposed to read about nor discuss difficult theological questions (Pezé, *Le virus* 304–07; generally, Steckel 518–27, 535–37). They were to be happy with the simple works bishops selected for their education and use (on these see van Rhijn, *Leading the Way to Heaven* esp. 52–83). Monastic reading was controlled: in Corbie, monks were questioned about their Lenten reading, and the abbot was charged with judging which book to which reader (Ganz 71). Finally, despite the availability of bibliographical guides and efforts to clarify the matter, uncertainty about what texts had been written by the fathers persisted throughout the Carolingian period and beyond. For example, while Augustine' major works – such as *De ciuitate Dei*, *De Trinitate*, *De Genesi ad litteram*, *De doctrina Christiana*, and *Enarrationes in Psalmos* – and others appear the surviving library catalogues of major Carolingian

houses (Lehmann 71, 74; 244–45; Häse 108, items 31–41; 123, items 81–83, 68 and 90; 124, item 97), many libraries lacked many others of his works or catalogued as his works titles that he had not written. This meant that it was relatively easy to claim for Augustine texts that were not written by him.[9]

9. On Augustine and Ps.-Augustines in the Carolingian period, see the recent discussion by Timmermann 541–42.

The predestination controversy led to intensive study by all parties involved in the debate, also leaving traces in the surviving manuscripts, as Warren Pezé has shown. Hincmar of Rheims clearly commanded a small army of clerics that searched through patristic texts for usable passages and compiled them for the archbishop's treatises (*Le virus* 265, 475–80; Devisse 924–26, 946, 1069–71). Gottschalk of Orbais (d. 868/9), a monk and an itinerant preacher, had taught that God had predestined the faithful to eternal salvation and the reprobate to eternal damnation. Although the idea had clear precedents in Augustine's thought, it was interpreted by many to challenge mainstream Carolingian understanding of Christian society, built on personal responsibility and fear of damnation (Pezé, *Le virus* 275–87; Gillis). While negotiating the challenges of determining what Augustine had in fact taught about this issue, Hincmar was also prepared to exploit these challenges and unequal access to patristic literature. He seized on a text called the *Hypomnesticon*, which argued against double predestination and asserted that it was an authentic work of Augustine. This provided him with a way of claiming that Augustine had in his old age changed his mind on the issue. This confusion may have at first been genuine, but even after Florus of Lyon had demonstrated that the *Hypomnesticon* could not have been authentic, Hincmar persisted and even concocted a predestinationist heresy supposedly combatted by Augustine. The reception of the *Hypomnesticon*, listed, for example, among Augustine's works in the St. Riquier catalogue in 831 (Hariulf 3.3, 90), generally exemplifies the difficulty of telling Augustine's authentic works apart from texts falsely attributed to him. Yet Hincmar's persistence also demonstrates that this was not a community of equal readers, all with access to books and information about them (*Le virus* 374–79).

Such uncertainty about patristic writers and the texts they had written probably affected the search for books. If only good authorities were to be used, how to recognise them? Moreover, texts seen as less authoritative or of questionable orthodoxy may have been rare and as such difficult to find. The letters of Lupus offer examples of the difficulties of locating copies of rarer works and of the use of the Ps.-Gelasian catalogue to define the canon. In 849/50, in the context of the controversy on predestination, he warned King Charles the

Bald (reigned 843–77) that if the latter was confronted with the writings of a certain Faustus of Riez (d. *c.* 490) on predestination, he should know that pope Gelasius and 70 learned bishops had decided that his writings were not authoritative (Lupus, *Ep*. add. 4, 113–14). A few years later, Lupus seems nevertheless to have decided to investigate Faustus's ideas. In August 859 he wrote to Abbot Odo of Corbie and requested the works of the "unfortunate" (*infaustus*) Faustus (*Ep*. 111, 96). It seems that Lupus received the wrong texts or was met with a request for further information, because in a subsequent letter to Odo he specified that he wanted the writings of the Faustus mentioned by Gelasius, not those of the Manichean bishop debated by Augustine (Lupus, *Ep*. 112, 97).

Lupus' difficulties in obtaining the works of the right Faustus seem to reflect the apparent rarity of the works of the bishop of Riez by the ninth century. He may have become retrospectively branded as anti-Augustinian or semi-Pelagian, after the settlement of disagreements over Augustine's teachings on grace and free will at the council of Orange (529) (on which Mathisen). Certainly, his *De spiritu sancto* circulated mostly under false attribution to a sixth-century Roman deacon (Engelbrecht xii–xiii). Furthermore, the single surviving copy of his *De gratia* comes with a notice on the flyleaf by a ninth-century scholar of Corbie, possibly the librarian Hadoard, quoting both Gennadius's short biography of Faustus in *De uiris illustribus* and his condemnation in the Ps-Gelasian *Decretum*, adding that the reader should make up their own mind about how to regard the work (Paris, BNF, lat. 2166, fol. Iv). Corbie, with a particularly well-stocked library (Ganz, *Corbie* 36–67), was a good place for Lupus to inquire after Faustus's works.

Seeking multiple copies of patristic texts for purposes of comparison and editing

While theological problems and controversies often called for searching for books, patristic books were also searched and collected for purposes of textual comparison and for the preparation of compilations and 'editions.' Such endeavours required locating several copies of the same work in search of good texts and perhaps also interesting paratexts. In this section I approach these issues especially through examples drawn from the textual tradition of some of Augustine's major works.

If finding the right book by the right author could be challenging, so could be finding a well-executed copy. Carolingian scholars understood nature of textual transmission in handmade copies, namely that texts circulated in different versions and could be corrupted or altered through careless copying. Thus, Charlemagne famously charged his bishops not only to arrange schooling but also to have books corrected and to take care that competent scribes undertook the copying of new ones (*Admonitio generalis* 70, 224; Brown 19–20; Contreni, "'Let Schools Be Established"). In the same spirit of reform, both Alcuin and Theodulf of Orléans (d. 821) sought to edit the text of the Bible (Fischer 93–95; Lobrichon), and Reginbert of Reichenau sent monks Grimaldus and Tatto to a copy a manuscript of the *Regula Benedicti* copied from St. Benedict's supposed authograph in Montecassino, furnishing it with variants from other copies of the rule (Traube 33; Jebe 329–34). Theodulf also compiled a *Supplementum* to the Roman sacramentary sent by Pope Hadrian and known as the *Hadrianum* (Ruffiot). Similarly, the monastic reformer Benedict of Aniane (d. 821) compiled the *Codex Regularum*, collecting monastic rules older than the rule of St. Benedict, and *Concordia regularum*, that sought to demonstrate the similarities of the decrees of these rules with those of the *Regula Benedicti* (Kramer 183–84 with further literature). It was probably such editorial and compilatory projects in his teachers' generation that inspired Lupus's famous projects with Classical texts (*e.g.* Meyvaert, "Bede the Scholar" 47–51). In the ninth century, new editions were also created of Isidore's *Etymologies*: two editions were compiled in St. Gall in the latter half of the ninth century, involving the collation of several copies of the work, and there is evidence of further such projects around the Carolingian world (Steinová, "Two Carolingian Redactions").

One reason behind such projects was the search for a more correct text, and patristic texts were also edited in this way. It is perhaps more widely known that copies of the Classics could be textually deficient. Thus, we find copies in which their scribes have even left empty lines where they expect or know text to be missing, so as to fill in the lacunae when a better exemplar was found (Stover; generally Bischoff, "Paläographie" 56–57). However, even the texts of the fathers were not exempt from textual problems, and these could make editorial interventions necessary. Large works that had originally circulated as sets of multiple volumes could be especially susceptible to accidents such as loss of text. For example, Augustine originally proposed two alternative arrangements of the 22 books of the *City of God*

(*De ciuitate Dei*), into five or two volumes. In practice, the work seems to have circulated in several different arrangements of one to five volumes before the ninth century, when it was often collected into one or two volumes (Colombi, "Assetto librario" 191–201). Certainly, surviving copies of the *City of God* carry traces of all kinds of accidents, some of which may be considerably old. For example, two ninth-century copies of the first ten books seem to descend from an exemplar where the pages had been bound in the wrong order (Bruxelles, Bibliothèque Royale, 9641 and Lucca, Biblioteca capitolare Feliniana, 19; Keskiaho, "Copied marginal annotations" 286).

Faulty copies called for editorial interventions and ultimately the search for other copies of the work in order to access the whole text. Surviving Carolingian copies reflect such activities, which could be imperfect and result in a still lacking copy. In one ninth-century manuscript from an unidentified centre in central France, the scribe (or the scribe of the exemplar of this codex) noticed a lacuna where the text of book seven suddenly changes into the text of book ten. A note indicates the lacuna and instructs the reader to find the missing text in book nine (Autun, Bibliothèque municipale (BM), S 15, fol. 91v)! The text of book seven resumes after a few pages (on fol. 93r), and we find the missing passage in book nine (on fols. 117–25r) where it curiously displaces a passage from that book that is completely missing.

Not only was it acknowledged that texts could be faulty by accident or carelessness, but it was also understood that patristic texts were sometimes intentionally altered. In particular, accusations of deliberate falsification and inept interpretation had become a part of doctrinal controversies already in late antiquity (*e.g.* Vessey, "The Forging of Orthodoxy"), and the Carolingians shared in this tradition. Tampering was not only suspected, but long-standing difficult questions, such as questions about the relationship of divine grace and human free will, had in fact left their mark in the texts central to the issue. Carolingian controversies, such as those over Adoptionism and predestination, also led to alterations. For example, during the predestination controversy, Hincmar researched the late-eighth-century discussion over Adoptionism, where Alcuin had accused Felix of Urgell of forging, among other things, a passage in *De Trinitate* by Hilary of Poitiers. The tradition of that text in fact carried a variant, already old by the time of the Adoptionist controversy, with some witnesses, in connection to the incarnation of Christ, referring to the adoption of humble flesh, others to its adoration. Hincmar focused on this variant, amplifying the accusation that it was Felix who had originated the reading

adoptatur to bolster his case. Pezé argues that Hincmar also corrected a manuscript he had had copied from an old St. Denis exemplar to read *adoratur* instead of *adoptatur* (Pezé, "Un faussaire" 204–08, 220–21; *Le virus* 408–18; Paris, BNF, lat. 12132, fol. 18v).

Apart from traces of editorial activity in early medieval manuscripts of patristic texts suggesting the intent to ensure a reliable and correct text, there are also marginal annotations and other signs of efforts to provide easier access to the more complex patristic works. For example, Augustine's major works are often annotated in Carolingian manuscripts (Gorman, "Marginalia;" Keskiaho, "Annotation of Patristic Texts;" Keskiaho, "Copied marginal annotations"). In comparison to Latin glosses to early medieval schooltexts and vernacular glossing, which usually include a focus on aiding the comprehension of the language and the vocabulary (*e.g.* O'Sullivan 80–101; Schiegg 98–124), these annotations are rarely about the language and mostly concern the ideas presented in the text. Many of these annotations are copies, moreover copied from the same earlier exemplar as the main text. In fact, again in comparison to glosses, which could travel singly or in groups between otherwise unrelated copies of the same text (Steinovà, "Parallel Glosses;" Teeuwen, "The Impossible Task" 197–200; Zetzel 5–6), the annotations to Augustine's works are textually relatively stable: in cases where multiple copies survive with the same set of annotations, all usually have the same series, and there are rarely any additional annotations. Sometimes, these annotations may have been copied simply because they were deemed to be an integral part of the exemplar. However, in other cases the annotations were copied because they were perceived as adding value to the text. This is suggested when annotations have been placed on the page carefully and copied neatly and correctly (see also Teeuwen, "Voices from the Edge" 20–22).

One example of probable Carolingian compilation, which may have necessitated the use of several exemplars, is a copy of *De Genesi ad litteram* copied in either Saint-Amand or Salzburg, when Arn was the abbot of Saint-Amand and archbishop of Salzburg. In this copy, Augustine's text is furnished with neatly copied annotations that closely follow the at times convoluted arguments of the text, providing guidance to the reader. They focus on analysing and interpreting the structure of Augustine's arguments, characterising them (for example, as rash, open, or negative),[10] and identifying their rhetorical character (for example, identifying one as a *comparatio de rebus notis*;[11] another as an *argumentum ad prouocationem*[12]), in order to

10. Keskiaho, "The Chapter Headings" 140: "Hic temerariam adfirmationem suspendit;" 138: "Aperta responsio;" 144: "Comparatio abnutiua."

11. Keskiaho, "The Chapter Headings" 159: "De rebus notis dat conparationem, ut adtendat illas uisiones, aut a corpore, aut ab anima, aut ab spiritu, causas habere, ut sint." ("Provides a comparison from known things, so that [he] might consider these visions to have their causes in the body, in the soul, in the spirit, as they might be.")

12. Keskiaho, "The Chapter Headings" 135: "Argumentum ad prouocationem ex nostro hoc uisu communi et usuali." ("A provocative argument about this our common and usual vision.")

pinpoint the passages that represent the author's views. The text was at times challenging: "I cannot fathom what this indigestible oblivion, as he says, means"[13] (where Augustine suggests that souls may be affected by an oblivion of their pre-existence, but one that is not insurmountable, literally indigestible, but allows recall). Both in clarifying the structure of Augustine's arguments and identifying difficult passages they mediated between the text and the early medieval reader. *De Genesi ad litteram* is in this manuscript also preceded by a short abbreviation of the same work, providing a helpful abstract before the full work. Neither the marginalia nor the abbreviation are necessarily originally Carolingian, but their combination in this manuscript may well be (Paris, BNF, lat. 2112; Keskiaho, "Chapter Headings;" Gorman, "Marginalia;" Gorman, "A Carolingian Epitome"). In Salzburg, the abbreviation and the full *De Genesi* were attentively studied and annotated by the librarian Baldo (*e.g.* fols. 1r, 1v, 2r, 16r, 16v; on Baldo, Bischoff, *Die Südostdeutschen Schreibschulen* 78–82).

In some cases, it is apparent that several copies of a text have been gathered, perhaps even hunted, and compared to produce the surviving copy. For example, one North Italian ninth-century copy of Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram* carries 108 annotations copied presumably from the same exemplar as the main text (Novara, Biblioteca capitolare, lxxxii; Keskiaho, "Late-Antique"). In addition, it also carries five additional annotations by a different ninth-century hand. The first of these (on fol. 8v) is labelled with a note surrounded by a diamond-shaped outline: "hoc de alio libro additum" (this added from another book). These notes can be distinguished from the others through their layout: whereas the 108 annotations are neatly placed in the margins and often set off by a distinctively shaped bracket, the five annotations added from another book are placed in the lower margin and connected to their place in the text using diverse symbols (Keskiaho, "Late-Antique" 192–93). Thus, not only did the scribe copy carefully the one book they had, but it seems that they also sought out another copy (the *alius liber* of the first of the additional notes), and added the annotations they found there in the surviving copy. The annotations identify topics ("On souls after death, whether they are put in corporeal spaces, and on the burning rich man and poor Lazarus"[14]) and note conclusions and teachings ("those who suppose that souls are created from the parents say that the soul is corporeal").[15] Such topic labels form an index, easing the navigation of the work. The annotations copied by the main scribes also frequently relate what Augustine says to philosophical opinions

13. Keskiaho, "The Chapter Headings" 155: "Indigestibilem obliuionem quod dixit, non mihi elucet, quid intellegi uelit."

14. Keskiaho, "Late-Antique or Early Medieval" 209: "de animabus post mortem, si locis corporeis collocentur, et de divite ardente, et de Lazaro paupere."

15. Keskiaho, "Late-Antique or Early Medieval" 210: "Qui opinantur ex parentibus animas creari corpus dicunt animam esse."

("As natural philosophers supposed about Jupiter;" "As Hipparchus and Heracleides supposed").[16]

16. Keskiaho, "Late-Antique or Early Medieval" 208: "Sicut fisici de Iove senserunt; Sicut Hipatius* et Heraclitus* senserunt."

It is not always appreciated that the Carolingians could use multiple copies of a patristic work to construct a single new copy. Almost forty years ago Michaela Zelzer, for example, could claim that before the eleventh century patristic manuscripts were nearly always copied directly from late antique exemplars (536–37). Certainly, there was contaminating activity also in the eleventh century: the Novara manuscript discussed above also carries a series of annotations that was copied from another manuscript in the eleventh century (Keskiaho, "Late-Antique" 192). However, there is recently uncovered evidence that Carolingian scholars did also 'edit' major patristic texts.

If it were the case that the Carolingians mainly copied patristic works from a single ancient exemplar to one Carolingian apograph, it would be possible to use the same copied annotations found in multiple manuscripts to determine the relationships of the witnesses to the main text that they accompany. I ventured such an investigation recently with copied annotations to Augustine's *De ciuitate Dei*. However, while confirming that these annotations were usually copied from a single older exemplar, the investigation did reveal a limited degree of contamination between distinct series of copied annotations, implying contamination also in the textual tradition of the main text these annotations accompany (Keskiaho, "Copied marginal annotations"). Marina Giani has now collated the relevant copies of the *De ciuitate,* and we can see that the annotations were often copied from the same exemplar as the main text.

Moreover, Giani's work has also revealed interesting cases of Carolingian editorial work on the *De ciuitate*. Köln, Dombibliothek, 75, a copy of the first ten books of the work made in Saint-Amand in the first quarter of the ninth century, carries annotations found in several other Carolingian copies of this text, most of which transmit a version of the main text belonging to Giani's γ-family. However, the Köln manuscript was not copied from a witness to the γ-family, but from a contaminated witness of another family. It was subsequently corrected from a manuscript belonging to the γ-family, and the annotations were also copied from this second witness. These annotations label topics, but also issue directions to the reader ("[Augustine] explains above what the indecencies of theatre are, read if you will").[17] The manuscript was subsequently loaned to Cambrai, where a surviving copy (Cambrai, BM, 350) was made in the middle of the ninth century and probably ended up in Cologne already in the ninth

17. Keskiaho, "Copied marginal annotations" 282: "Quid sint scenicae turpitudines supra articulauit, lege si uis."

century, when the manuscript was corrected again against a third manuscript of *De ciuitate*, representing yet another family of witnesses. Here we thus see one particularly well-resourced Carolingian monastic centre, Saint-Amand, comparing (and possibly acquiring) two different copies of *De ciuitate* and producing a comprehensive edition, with a corrected text and helpful annotations, that gets copied and is later compared with a third copy of the same work (Giani).

It may not be a coincidence that this editing of the *De ciuitate* (Cologne, Dombibliothek, 75), as well of *De Genesi ad litteram* discussed above (Paris, BNF, lat. 2112), took place under Arn's abbatial governance of Saint-Amand and his episcopacy in Salzburg. Although all Carolingian centres worked with patristic texts and studied them, they probably did this with different agendas and standards, producing copies for different needs. The active engagement with Augustine's major works in Saint-Amand and Salzburg is comparable with other evidence of activities relating to authoritative texts in court-connected Carolingian monastic houses. McKitterick has highlighted the interest in Roman and early Christian history shown by scholars in Lorsch and St-Amand (*History and Memory* 196–216). Julia Becker has drawn attention to how Lorsch librarians systemised their patristic collection and corrected their books, and Helmut Reimitz has shown how Lorsch scholars rewrote Frankish history (Reimitz).

Like historical texts, patristic texts were collected and curated in St. Amand and Salzburg. Naturally, the difference between history and theology should not be overstated. *De Genesi* with its discussion of the six days of creation and especially the first ten books of *De ciuitate*, with Augustine's critical discussions of Roman history and religion, could also be understood as history, highly relevant to Carolingian understandings of what it meant to have a Christian Roman Empire. Comparing the evidence of the two Augustine copies to that of engagement with history in Lorsch and St. Amand suggests that the scholars working with Augustine's texts applied similar methods to them, seeking to repair and preserve them, striving for textual integrity and aiding understanding, preparing them for study.

Conclusion

Carolingian scholars and librarians studied late antique bibliographical guides to the works of the church fathers, and created and maintained booklists and library catalogues, at times even circulating

them. Using these tools, it was possible to determine what potentially relevant works one still lacked, as we saw Alcuin doing in his *De ratione animae*. A different use these bibliographic guides could be put to, exemplified by Lupus's advice to Charles the Bald on the authority of Faustus of Riez, was to distinguish between orthodox and heretical writers.

Despite the existence of such guides and catalogues, however, accessing books was difficult in many ways. Bibliographical guides were not enough to dispel confusion about authentic and pseudepigraphic works, and access to some patristic texts was at least in principle restricted. The ability to borrow books clearly depended on one's status and networks. The extant evidence shows us the Carolingian elite, and even they sometimes had difficulties in obtaining books. Lupus, for example, although endowed with education, connections, and status as abbot, still had to resort to subterfuge and his friends to obtain exemplars, whether because he lacked direct connections with the owners of these books or to safeguard valuable volumes. At the same time his letters demonstrate the strategies a resourceful and well-connected individual could employ to surmount difficulties in the pursuit of books.

Carolingian scholars sought books, among other reasons, for the purposes of scholarship, writing projects, and in theological controversies. They also took effort to obtain multiple copies of a specific text to compare them, and they collated them to ensure that they had reliable copies of important texts. Some of them did this not only to the Bible and some Classical texts, but also some works of the fathers. In Arn's St. Amand and Salzburg interesting annotations were collected to accompany the text of some works of Augustine's, not only to ensure a good copy of an important work but also to bridge the gap between these late antique works and their Carolingian readers.

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