Michele Baitieri

Diplomatic Script and Pen Trials: The Case of Carolingian Lyon

Abstract
The scriptorium of Lyon represents a well-known case of uninterrupted learning throughout the early Middle Ages. Starting with the pivotal works of Tafel and Lowe, manuscript studies have greatly broadened our knowledge of this privileged writing centre. While further research is still needed to fully understand its Carolingian scriptorium, a substantial number of manuscripts have been convincingly located in ninth-century Lyon. This article looks at a handful of such manuscripts which contain pen trials written in diplomatic script, and specifically those executed in the elongated letters deployed in coeval royal and imperial diplomas. By discussing both pen trials and diplomatic evidence from Carolingian Lyon, the article uncovers the existence of a flourishing chancery *milieu*, and thus sheds new light on the cultural and political history of that learning centre during the second half of the ninth century.

Keywords
Carolingian Lyon; Pen trials; Diplomatic script; *Litterae elongatae*; Palaeography; Diplomatics

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In 1998 Armando Petrucci delivered a thought-provoking lecture in which he introduced his audience at Spoleto to the concept of *microtesti avventizi*, meaning the unexplored phenomenon of short texts cropping up in the blank spaces of already completed early medieval books which bear no direct connection with the main texts that those same books preserved[1]. Pen trials pertain to the first of four categories put forward by Petrucci in order to group these texts and are defined as purely graphical additions (*aggiunte meramente grafiche*). Within this umbrella term Petrucci placed at one end of the scale single letters or short sequences of words for trying out the temperature and density of the ink, as well as the sharpness of the quill. At the other end of the spectrum, Petrucci identified more formulaic or familiar short texts. These latter additions also varied in the degree of writing competence from attempts by unskilled pupils to master the quill and enhance their knowledge of the alphabet through didactic or mnemonic passages, to incipits of literary, liturgical and documentary texts performed as an exercise by highly proficient writers[2]. Ildar Garipzanov's discussion of "minitexts" in this volume, which are similar but not identical to Petrucci's "*microtesti avventizi*", also incorporates pen trials within his core categorisation of textual additions and stresses their practical, didactic, mnemonic, and devotional functions[3].

Like all other "minitexts", pen trials emerged during the early Middle Ages, but they remained a significant feature of book culture in the following centuries. Often neglected, these short and somewhat erratic examples of writing tend to be marginalised in scholarly discussions, but much can be learned from careful examination as they provide invaluable insights into medieval written culture. The masterful study by Erik Kwakkel of pen trials in manuscripts produced at Rochester Priory in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, for example, has revealed the presence at that writing centre of numer-

1 Petrucci 1999.

2 *Ibidem*, pp. 983-984. On didactic pen trials and their use in early medieval school settings see the seminal, Bischoff 1938.

3 See the article of Garipzanov in this volume.

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ous scribes trained in various regions of the Continent, which in turn called into question established knowledge of book production and development of script in twelfth-century England[4].

This article studies pen trials written in blank spaces of four manuscripts that can be convincingly located in Lyon during the ninth century, though not necessarily produced there. Specifically, what will be discussed are pen trials written in diplomatic script. Other pen trials appearing alongside them but written in different scripts or at a later point in time will be mentioned, yet the focus of the study is on those written in the elongated script deployed in contemporary sovereign documents[5]. They were the work of skilled writers, and it should be stressed that the presence of pen trials in this script is significant. Mastering this form of writing was a challenging task, and its deployment was limited to specific parts of royal and imperial diplomas; in other words, its usage pertained to the sphere of political communication at the highest levels. By delving both into the content and script of these so far neglected "minitexts", this study aims to shed new light on the cultural and political history of Lyon during the second half of the ninth century.

To achieve this objective, the article will begin by examining the current knowledge of manuscripts available in Carolingian Lyon, followed by an overview of the Lyonnais "heroic age" and its protagonists. This is particularly relevant as three of the four manuscripts under consideration are associated with key figures of that period. Subsequently, the analysis will focus on the pen trials in elongated script. Each of the four manuscripts containing them will be described, and the pen trials will be discussed from both palaeographical and textual perspectives[6]. Finally, the article aims to establish a connection between these pen trials and the production of sovereign documents in the latter part of the ninth century, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the cultural and political history of Lyon during that period.

4 Kwakkel 2013.

5 The classic overview on elongated script or *litterae elongatae* is still Götze 1965, Carolingian and post-Carolingian period are discussed at pp. 34-70.

6 Another manuscript bearing a ninth-century pen trial in elongated script is Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 619. The biblical pen trial in question was added in the lower margin of fol. 39r and reads: «Devotione devovimus» (Acts 23.14). While the codex reached Lyon before the year 900, it was likely produced in Northern France during the second quarter of the ninth century, see Bischoff 2004, n. 2581. The decision to not include this manuscript in the discussion of pen trials in elongated script written in Lyon during the ninth century rests on the impossibility of determining whether the biblical pen trial on fol. 39r was actually written in Lyon or somewhere else in France. The manuscript can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr.

Lyon and "its" manuscripts between Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages

Much of our knowledge of the scriptorium of Lyon and "its" late antique and early medieval manuscripts is built on the scholarship of two pupils of Ludwig Traube: Sigmund Tafel and Elias Avery Lowe. Tafel, whose life was cut short while fighting on the Belgian front in 1914, laid the foundation for ascribing numerous early books to Lyon. His work, posthumously published in English by Wallace Martin Lindsay, identified the hand of Florus (c.825-c.860) in them, thus providing the first study of the manuscripts available in Lyon during the ninth century, alongside a list of manuscripts produced there at that time[7]. The other pupil of Traube, Elias Avery Lowe, focused on the oldest manuscripts of Lyon dating from the fifth to the eighth centuries[8]. Lowe was aware of Tafel's still unpublished endeavour and acknowledged its findings regarding the marginal annotations in the hand of Florus as solid evidence for placing various manuscripts, including some of the oldest codices, in Lyon during the ninth century[9]. However, for the period considered in his *Codices Lugdunenses Antiquissimi* (1924) Lowe was faced with the impossibility of clearly identifying a recognisable local style of Lyon. Some of the manuscripts under examination seemed to have been written in Italy or elsewhere and arrived only at a later stage in the French centre. As stressed by Malcolm Parkes, Lowe was thus inhibited from proceeding with definite attributions to Lyon[10]. This view was only partly revised in *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (1953), where Lowe appeared more open to the possibility of a "probable" local origin for some of the Lyonnais early manuscripts, an opinion he came to mostly based on the texts that they transmitted[11].

The quest for a local origin for the oldest manuscripts of Lyon continues, but the cautious approach of Lowe remains the safest and most sound way to approach this material[12]. Nevertheless, by taking a closer look at marginalia, annotations and proper "minitexts" present in some of these codices, one

7 Tafel 1925.

8 Lowe 1924a.

9 *Ibidem*, pp. 9-10 and 14-15, Lowe only acknowledged the possibility that some of the marginalia may have been autograph of Florus, while stressing that more than one ninth-century hand can be discerned within the complex of marginal annotations of those manuscripts.

10 Parkes 2008, p. 11.

11 CLA VI, pp. XIII-XIV.

12 Tino Licht, for example, has recently argued against a local origin of the Half-Uncial manuscripts of Lyon preferring to talk of a Southern French style, Licht 2018, pp. 228-269.

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can trace their presence back to Lyon as early as the seventh and eighth century. This is exactly what David Ganz has shown in his superb examination of such additions written in Merovingian cursive, while also highlighting the exegetical, liturgical and legal interests of the clergy of Lyon prior to the ninth century[13]. It is worth noticing that some of these additions had been written in a Merovingian cursive displaying chancery features, something not lost on Ganz, who hints to the ties between bishops of Lyon and the royal court in the late Merovingian period[14].

Moving into the ninth century brings us back to the marginal annotations penned by Florus and what can be considered his working library, which mostly coincided with the numerous manuscripts held at the episcopal library of Lyon at the time of his writing[15]. Tafel and Lowe called attention to specific features of such ninth-century marginalia: the K (*kaput*) to mark the beginning of a chapter, gamma and reversed gamma shaped paragraph signs for the beginning and end of a passage, abbreviated forms of biblical books to highlight a citation in the text, as well as the peculiar question mark shaped like an Arabic number three[16]. More conclusive evidence came with Célestin Charlier, who provided the final proof for identifying the ninth-century annotator as Florus. During his forced stay in the south of France in the last years of the Second World War, Charlier had time to direct his research towards the manuscripts of Lyon. His groundbreaking article demonstrated that there is a perfect correspondence between the passages marked out by the marginalia added to patristic and legal Lyonnais manuscripts and the same passages in several works attributed to Florus[17]. This had profound consequences on subsequent scholarship. Firstly, it allowed for the correction of several misattributed texts, restoring their paternity to Florus and thus inaugurating a long editorial sea-

13 Ganz 2019.

14 *Ibidem*, pp. 44-45.

15 For a complete overview of the studies of these marginalia and their importance for subsequent research on Florus and its working library see, Chambert-Protat 2016, especially pp. XXII-LXII. A considerable number of manuscripts available in Lyon at the time of Florus are still in that city today, within the holdings of the Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, while the remaining are mostly housed in various European cities, especially Berlin, Paris and Rome. The manuscripts in Lyon can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr

16 Tafel 1925, pp. 40-48 and Lowe 1924a, pp. 14-15. In that same year Lowe published a short essay in which, building on his observations on the Codex Bezae, was able to stress another characteristic feature of Lyonnais manuscript production at the time, namely the rare use of blue ink for marginal rubrics and first word of sections, Lowe 1924b.

17 Charlier 1945.

son of his textual corpus[18]. Secondly, it provided scholars with a list of over one hundred manuscripts that were in Lyon at time of Florus and of which almost half bore traces of his hand[19].

Although an in-depth study on the episcopal scriptorium of Lyon during the ninth century is still lacking, the identification of the working library of Florus made by Charlier constituted a turning point in research and has furthered scholarly knowledge on ninth-century Lyonnais manuscripts production[20]. Once Florus's autography of the marginalia was demonstrated, the deacon's hand could also be recognised in several manuscripts copied by him and his collaborators, and thus their palaeographical and codicological features could be used to assign these and other ninth-century codices to Lyon. While not clearly stated, this underlying argument partly explains the rather extensive list of manuscripts regarded as products of ninth-century Lyon by Bernhard Bischoff[21].

The Lyonnais "heroic age" and its protagonists

In a recent contribution, Pierre Chambert-Protat has defined the years spanning between the start of the pontificate of Leidrad (798) and the death of Remigius (875) as the Lyonnais "heroic age"[22]. Prominent figures active in that environment made Lyon a pivotal centre for theological, exegetical, literary, and legal learning. As previously discussed, more than one hundred of the codices these same figures would have had access to are still preserved, including those they personally donated, commissioned and annotated. Book donations show the episcopal support to Lyonnais scholarship throughout this period. This tradition, inaugurated by Leidrad and followed by his three successors to the see of Lyon, was memorialised by a seemingly generic expression saying that the books had been given to the altar of the cathedral church of St Stephen, sometimes paired with an intercessory/protective heptasyllabic tercet,

18 On this see the exhaustive, Chambert-Protat 2016, pp. LII-LXII.

19 Charlier 1945, pp. 82-84. The best palaeographical discussion of Florus' autograph annotations, containing a useful distinction between the deacon marginal and interlinear writing is, Holtz 1994. For further appraisals of Florus's hand see, Holtz 2009 and Holtz 2013b.

20 Charlier's list is available in a revised form continuously updated by Chambert-Protat at https://florus.hypotheses.org/liste-de-charlier.

21 Bischoff 2017, pp. 303-304.

22 Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 308.

which became a trademark of Carolingian Lyon[23]. The *ex-dono* formula is not only significant for tracing the episcopal sponsorship of the school of Lyon, but it can also, as we shall see, provide valuable insight for discussing pen trials in diplomatic script. However, it is worthwhile to first briefly address the role played by the protagonists of the Lyonnais "heroic age"[24].

The Lyonnais "heroic age" began with Leidrad, who led the church of Lyon between 798 and 814; it was under his tenure, in 804, that Lyon became an archbishopric[25]. The career of Leidrad started in his native Bavaria where he was ordained deacon of the church of Freising[26]. A protégé of archbishop Arn of Salzburg and Alcuin, Leidrad became a courtier of Charlemagne, who appointed him to lead the ancient see of Lyon in order to restore and renovate a bishopric which had fallen in a ruinous state through the negligence of Leidrad's predecessors[27]. In his episcopal see Leidrad endeavoured to reform the cult of God and its material infrastructures. He created a school of cantors and one of lectors, while also prompting the restoration of numerous ecclesiastical institutions beyond Lyon's cathedral complex[28]. He was also involved in the struggle of Carolingian theologians against the Hispanic heresy of Adoptionism[29]. It was Leidrad, alongside Nebridius of Narbonne and Benedict of Aniane, whom Alcuin sent to convince Felix of Urgell, one of the main advocates of this Christological position, to agree to an in-person debate. Moreover, after Felix recanted at Aachen and was deposed from his bishopric, it was to the custody of Leidrad in Lyon that the former bishop of Urgell was consigned for the rest of his life[30]. Lastly, in terms of supporting ecclesiastical learning we have seen how Leidrad prompted the creation of a tradition of books donation to the church of Lyon; four manuscripts bearing his autograph *ex-dono* are still extant[31].

23 *Ibidem*, pp. 315-316. The heptasyllabic tercet (still preserved in full in Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 463, fol. 1r and as incomplete pen trial in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 11709, fol. 255v) reads: «Sit utenti gratia, / Largitori venia, / Fraudanti anathema».

24 For an overview on the church of Lyon and its protagonists in the Carolingian period see, Rubellin 2003, pp. 133-326.

25 For the biography of Leidrad see, Depreux 1997, pp. 287-288.

26 Hammer 2007, pp. 226-227. For the hand of Leidrad and his graphic training see, Holtz 2013a.

27 De Jong 2005, pp. 103-105.

28 Rubellin 2003, pp. 139-152.

29 Cavadini 1993, in particular pp. 71-102.

30 *Ibidem*, pp. 81-82.

31 Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 313. The manuscripts still bearing Leidrad's autograph *ex-dono* are: Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MS Pagès 1, fol. 1v; Lyon, Bibliothèque

The successor of Leidrad to the see of Lyon, and previously his chorbishop, was Agobard. He led the church of Lyon between 814 and 840, though his succession was contested until 816. He had a fractious relationship with Louis the Pious, which resulted in his temporary deposition from the episcopal office (835-838)[32]. A prolific writer, Agobard left behind numerous works on wide-ranging topics, spanning from theological to legal issues[33]. In line with his predecessor, he was engaged in the debate regarding Hispanic Adoptionism on which he wrote the well-known *Adversum dogma Felicis*[34]. Again, in continuity with Leidrad's legacy, Agobard endeavoured to implement reforms in the diocese, as witnessed by the polemical work against the liturgical innovations introduced by Amalarius during his forced absence from Lyon and the restoration of various Lyonnais churches[35]. Moreover, Agobard also kept donating books to the church of Lyon: three known codices bore his autograph *ex-dono*, two of which are still extant[36].

After Agobard, the deacon Amolo was elevated to the archbishopric of Lyon, which he held between 841 and 852[37]. Amolo wrote a polemical tract against the Jews in continuity with Agobard's work[38]. The fidelity of Amolo towards his predecessor can be also appreciated in the letter that Amolo sent in reply to a query of Bishop Theobald of Langres regarding the suspicious miracles generated by unauthenticated relics of two saints inside the church of St-

municipale 466 + Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 152, fols. 21-25 (*ex-dono* on fol. 25v); Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 599, fol. 1r and Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 608, fol. 1r. As mentioned by Chambert-Protat, Louis Holtz has suggested that a greater number of manuscripts may have borne Leidrad *ex-dono* on flyleaves which were later removed, Holtz 2013a, pp. 320-321. Amongst these manuscripts is Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 11709. On the upper margin of fol. 1r of that manuscript the beginning of Leidrad *ex-dono* was written as a pen trial in diplomatic script during the second half of the ninth century: «Leidrat licet indignus tamen episcopus». For the dating of this pen trial see, Bischoff 2014, n. 4705.

32 On Agobard's life and works see the classic, Boshof 1969. For the fractious relationship between the archbishop of Lyon and Louis the Pious see, Booker 2009, pp. 99-105 and 129-182.

33 Van Acker 1981.

34 Chandler 2019.

35 Rankin 2019 and Rubellin 2003, pp. 139-152.

36 The extant manuscripts bearing Agobard's autograph *ex-dono* are Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 471, fol. 1r and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 1622, fol. IIIr. An Evangeliary bearing Agobard's *ex-dono* paired with the Lyonnais heptasyllabic tercet disappeared in modern times, Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 315.

37 Chambert-Protat has argued that Amolo's pontificate may have ended in 850 and not 852, Chambert-Protat 2016, pp. LXXXIII-LXXXVI.

38 Herbers-Rauhut 2017.

Bénigne in Dijon, at the time under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Langres[39]. In his reply to his suffragan Theobald, Amolo condemned this disruptive cult and ordered the removal of the relics from the church of St-Bénigne. Amolo's decision was not only modelled on a letter of his predecessor Agobard on a similar matter, but what is more, Amolo signalled that a copy of that letter was sent along with his own[40]. Furthermore, the correspondence with Theobald offers a glimpse into the challenges faced by the ecclesiastical province of Lyon in the shifting political landscape of the early 840s. At the end of the civil war amongst the heirs of Louis the Pious, Lyon was assigned to Lothar I, while Langres fell to Charles the Bald. Amolo's letter can thus be seen as an attempt to preserve the metropolitan authority of Lyon over its suffragans[41]. Amolo also took part in the theological controversy on double predestination condemning the unorthodox position of Gottschalk of Orbais, though in milder terms compared to other Carolingian theologians such as Hincmar of Reims[42]. Like Leidrad and Agobard, Amolo too endeavoured to give books to the church of Lyon, of which one bearing his autograph *ex-dono* is still extant[43].

Amolo's successor to the archiepiscopal office, Remigius, concludes the Lyonnaise "heroic age". Remigius was archbishop from 852 until his death in 875, and during the first part of his episcopate he was archchaplain to King Charles of Provence[44]. His episcopate saw the involvement of the clergy of Lyon in the controversy on double predestination continuing and intensifying, until the debate eventually drew to an end[45]. Though we have no worked penned by him, Remigius kept alive his predecessors' tradition of endowing the church of Lyon with books; two codices bearing his autograph *ex-dono* are still extant[46].

39 Epistolae 3, pp. 363-368.

40 The letter of Agobard is published in Van Acker 1981, pp. 237-243. On Amolo's letter see West 2010. West rightly emphasises the different nuance given to the concept of parish in the letters of the two archbishops of Lyon, *Ibidem*, pp. 304-310. The two letters are only preserved in one manuscript (possibly an epistolary *libellus*), Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 717. For a detailed study of this manuscript see, Bobrycki 2017.

41 West 2010, pp. 298-299.

42 Gillis 2017, pp. 160-164. For the Carolingian controversy on double predestination see also, *La controverse carolingienne* 2019.

43 The only extant manuscript bearing Amolo's autograph *ex-dono* is Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462, fol. iv, Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 313.

44 *Actes des rois de Provence,* nos. 7, 11 and 12.

45 Pezé 2017, pp. 76-97.

46 The extant manuscripts bearing Remigius' autograph *ex-dono* are Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 463, fol. ir and Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 609, fol. ir, Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 315.

Alongside these prelates, stands the last protagonist of the Lyonnais "heroic age", the deacon Florus. His activity (c.825-855) under Agobard, Amolo and Remigius resulted in a vast and eclectic production which makes him the epitome of the Carolingian school at Lyon[47]. No work penned by Remigius has survived; the same is true for Aurelian, who led the church of Lyon from 875 to 895, and his successors in the tenth century. However, manuscript evidence suggests that the latter part of the ninth century as well as the tenth century did not represent a crisis for Lyon as prominent centre of learning[48]. To echo Chambert-Protat: «books were being produced, texts were being copied and people were being schooled and educated» there; what changed is that discretion seems to have been the shared behaviour in the Lyonnais scholarly *milieu* in this phase «leaving posterity all the fruits of its scholarship, but little or no information on the actual scholars»[49]. Bearing this in mind, we shall turn to the Lyonnais pen trials in elongated script and the manuscripts that preserve them.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740

To begin, a first group of Lyonnais pen trials in diplomatic script are found in a manuscript now held in Paris which contains part of the Old Testament (Deuteronomy to Ruth)[50]. According to Lowe, the manuscript was written during the early eighth century in France[51]. While the great palaeographer did not attribute it to a specific writing centre, he did notice that the manuscript was written in the same French scriptorium that produced Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MSS reg. lat. 11 (*Psalterium Duplum*) and 257 (*Missale Francorum*), as shown by the same artificial late Uncial displayed in these three books[52]. By the late eighth or early ninth century the manuscript

47 On Florus see, Zechiel-Eckes 1999. For recent scholarship on the deacon's vast production see, Chambert-Protat 2016, especially pp. LII-LXII.

48 Chambert-Protat 2020. In this respect, it is worth noticing that over one hundred books were copied at the initiative of Manno († 893), provost of Saint-Oyen (a monastery under the direct jurisdiction of the archbishops of Lyon), several from now-lost Lyonnais manuscripts, Turcan-Verkerk 1999.

49 Chambert-Protat 2020, pp. 323-324.

50 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740 can be accessed at http://gallica.bnf.fr

51 CLA V, n. 691.

52 CLA V, n. 691 and CLA I, nos. 101 and 103. For the two Vatican manuscripts McKitterick has suggested a possible origin within the constellation of convents in the Paris basin, McKitterick 1992, pp. 20-21.

was in Lyon, where five leaves (fols. 193-197) were replaced in the roundish Lyonnais minuscule of Leidrad's time, probably by the same scribe who wrote Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 599[53]. Both manuscripts were part of what can be considered the working library of Florus and are enumerated in Charlier's list[54]. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740 has attracted further scholarly attention due to the extensive early ninth-century glosses on Deuteronomy (fols. 1r-94r)[55]. The anti-Jewish discourse pervading these marginalia shows the development of a local exegetical tradition which would later influence the works of Agobard and Amolo[56].

Less attention has been paid to further ninth-century additions appearing in other empty spaces of this same manuscript. Lowe noticed that ninth-century pen trials in elongated letters were written in the lower margin of fol. 162v and the upper margin of fol. 163r[57].

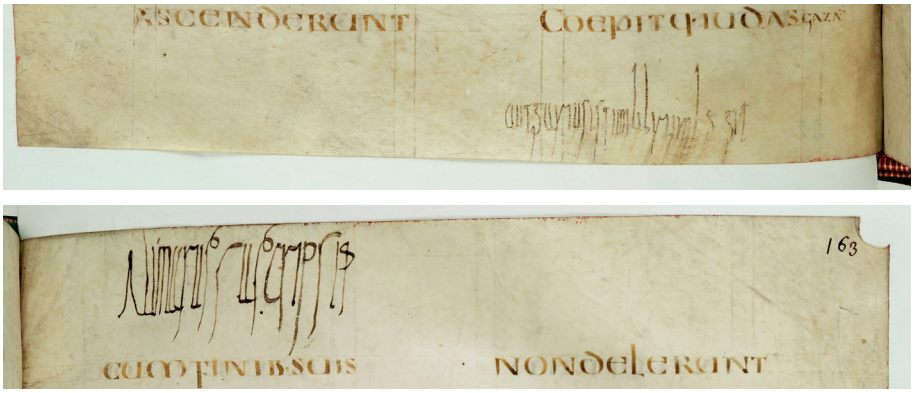

Figure 1. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740, fols. 162v-163r.

These short notes read respectively: «Autgarius istum librum legit» and «Alimarus suscripsit». Both Autgarius and Alimarus were in all likelihood clerics of Lyon. The fact that they are not mentioned amongst the Lyonnais

53 Bischoff 2014, n. 5113a, drawing on CLA VI, n. 780.

54 Charlier 1945, p. 83. Of the two codices only Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 599 bears autograph notes of Florus. It is worth noticing that amongst the pen trials on fol.1r, at the lower margin appears a ninth-century name (*Hilpericus*) written twice in diplomatic script. The manuscript can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr

55 Fransen 1997.

56 Liu 2020, which also proposes amendments to Fransen's edition at pp. 231-232.

57 CLA V, n. 691.

clerics listed in the *Liber confraternitatum* of Reichenau compiled at the time of Agobard suggests – though does not prove – that they may have been part of Lyon's clergy at a later point[58]. The script of both notes would accommodate a dating to the middle or second half of the ninth century. While a certain stiffness can be observed in the hand of Alimarus, Autgarius' execution is more confident, and the ductus of his note suggests that he was an experienced writer.

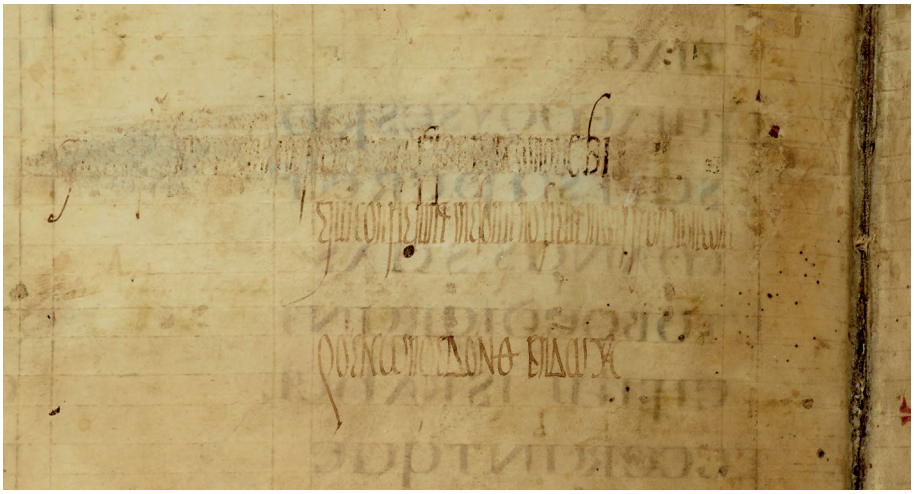

Figure 2. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740, fol. 94v.

Roughly coeval to the notes of Alimarus and Autgarius, is a so far neglected series of pen trials appearing on fol. 94v. This page, located at the end of Deuteronomy and before the beginning of Joshua, was originally left blank. After the arrival of the manuscript in Lyon, three pen trials transmitting the opening words of Psalm 124 were added by two or three different hands. While the first line is almost completely effaced, the second displays a rather calligraphic elongated script reading: «Qui confidunt in Domino sicut mons Syon non com[movebitur]». Possibly the same scribe also wrote the third line, which shows an interesting attempt at rendering the first words of Psalm 124 in Latin using Greek letters. Line one, of which only the beginning and end are partly legible, was also written in elongated script and seems to transmit the same text as the following line. It was certainly written at a later point, as

58 *Libri confraternitatum*, p. 257 and *Das Verbrüderungsbuch*, p. 226.

shown by its descenders running over the top portion of the second line. Furthermore, different ductus of letter q as well as inclination of the descenders in these two subsequent lines indicate the work of two different scribes, neither of whom can be identified with either Autgarius or Alimarus. Recitation of the Psalms was not only part of daily liturgical practices in both monastic and cathedral contexts, but the Psalter was also widely used for teaching Latin during the first years of schooling in ecclesiastical centres since Late Antiquity[59]. Therefore, the choice of a psalm for writing a series of pen trials certainly befits an ecclesiastical environment such as the one of Carolingian Lyon. However, writing a familiar text in the attempt to master a challenging form of writing gives a clear schoolroom flavour to the pen trials at fol. 94v, a context confirmed by the attempt to render that same text in a foreign alphabet.

Lowe always took special care in recording donation and possession notes in the manuscripts that he was describing, as provenance can often throw light on the origin of a book. Therefore, it is not surprising that he recorded the presence of various notes at fol. 225v[60].

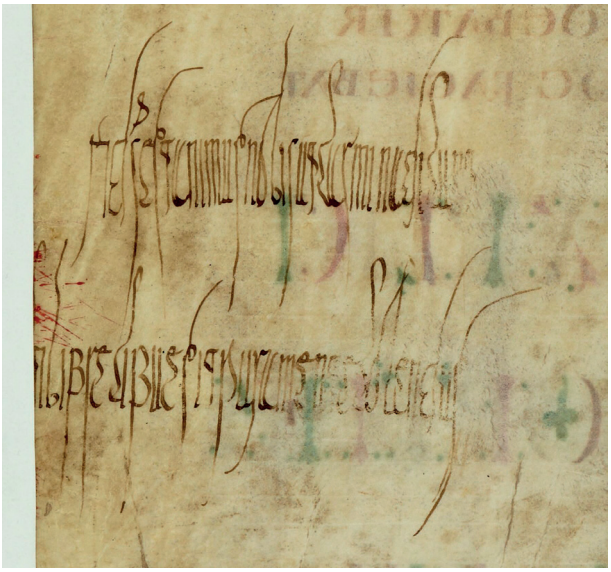

Figure 3. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740, fol. 225v.

59 Bischoff 1938, p. 10.

60 CLA V, n. 691.

This page between Judges and Ruth, was originally left blank and only during the ninth century started to be filled with several additions. Chambert-Protat has recently discussed some of these short notes as signs of the enduring tradition of giving books to the cathedral library by clergymen of Lyon after the "heroic age". He did so by describing the possession note of an otherwise unknown cleric Daniel written twice over three lines in crude Capitals and faulty Latin at the bottom of the page «ISTE LIBER ES DANIELE CERICE SANCTI / ISTE LIBER EST DANIELE CLERICE SANCTI / STEFANI EPISCOPATUM BONUM», alongside other pen trials transmitting the distinctive expression of the Lyonnais donation notes «Ad altare sancti Stephani» written in different scripts (clumsy Uncial, diplomatic minuscule and clumsy minuscule) by one or more hands during the ninth or tenth century in the middle and lower portion of the page[61]. Admittedly, the crude Capitals transmitting the note of Daniel are difficult to date, and they could be either from the ninth or the tenth century[62], yet Bischoff describes the remaining notes with the distinctive Lyonnais phrasing of the *ex-dono* as ninth century[63]. Therefore, the manuscript arrived in Lyon in the time of Leidrad and during the ninth century clerics active in that centre gradually started to fill this empty page with various notes.

Only Delisle remarked on the existence of another ninth-century pen trial on fol. 225v [64]; the opening hexameters of the *Disticha Catonis* «Si Deus est animus nobis ut carmina dicunt / [Hic t]ibi precipue sit pura mente colendus»[65]. Written in the elongated script deployed for diplomatic usage in the latter part of the ninth century, this pen trial was likely the work of a Lyonnais cleric too. The *Disticha* provided proverbial wisdom as well as moral instruction to pupils, and it was an extremely popular text for teaching Latin in schools throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. Its use for a pen trial evokes a schoolroom setting, which in turn points to a didactic overtone as *fil rouge* encompassing all the pen trials in elongated script added to this manuscript. What is so striking though, is their cumulative effect. Over the course of half a century, they reveal the presence of five different clerics active in Lyon in their attempts at mastering the script of political communication at the highest level.

61 Chambert-Protat 2016, pp. 512-513 and Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 315.

62 Lowe described these lines as written in imitation Uncial of the tenth century, CLA V, n. 691.

63 Bischoff 2014, n. 5113b.

64 Delisle 1895, p. 654.

65 *Disticha Catonis* 1.1.

Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26

A second group of pen trials in diplomatic script can be found in the well-known Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26[66]. According to Bischoff, this manuscript was produced in Lyon between the first and second quarter of the ninth century[67]. Investigation of the subsequent history of the book have shown it was still in Lyon in the early modern period when, during the French Wars of Religion, was acquired by the Benedictine monk Jean Dubois, who brought it to Rome[68]. In its current state the manuscript has 162 folios but was originally made of at least twenty-four quires. Of the lost pages, only ten folios have been found. Turcan-Verkerk has demonstrated how Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 8680 was detached from Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 and corresponds to its missing quire XVIIII and first two folios of quire XX[69].

The overall focus of the book is on computistical matters and includes excerpts from Bede and Polemius Silvius[70]. Based on internal evidence provided by the computistical texts, Arno Borst has clarified the chronology of its creation putting it between 814 and 816, with further material being added to it during the following decade[71]. Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 owes much of its fame to the fact that it contains the so-called *Annales Lugdunenses* which include a group of autobiographical entries penned by Agobard[72]. Florus augmented these annalistic entries and drew heavily on the material for the calculation of Easter assembled in the book to write his *De pascha*[73]. Moreover, recent research on several Lyonnais anonymous marginalia and additions made during the pontificate of Agobard, but prior to Florus's systematisation,

66 The manuscript can be accessed at http://www.internetculturale.it

67 Bischoff 2014, n. 5361.

68 The manuscript has remained in Rome ever since Dubois brought it. For the troubled history of the book in modern times, including its theft and retrieval in Rome, see Paniagua 2016, pp. 170-171.

69 Turcan-Verkerk 2000, pp. 223-225. The discovery was not incorporated in Bischoff's catalogue, which describes the Paris portion as a separate manuscript, Bischoff 2014, n. 4558. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 8680 can be accessed at http://gallica.bnf.fr

70 For a detailed description of the manuscript's content, including the Paris portion, see Paniagua 2016, pp. 168-170.

71 Borst 2006, pp. 285-286.

72 After much debate, the autography of Agobard's notes has been demonstrated in Holtz 2019, pp. 122-129.

73 Turcan-Verkerk 2003.

has shown how the manuscript served for a time as a repository of scientific knowledge created by communal effort aimed at perfecting the subtle techniques necessary for the calculation of Easter[74]. While many texts within this manuscript, and particularly the *Annales Lugdunenses*, have been the focus of past and current scholarship, little attention has been paid to the pen trials in diplomatic script added to its empty spaces.

Figure 4. Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26, fol. 1r.

On fol. 1r, originally left empty, alongside early modern and modern notes relating to the content of the manuscript and its history, there are three early medieval additions. In the middle part of the page is a tenth-century excerpt from the main body of the manuscript, the names of the months in Hebrew as transmitted by Polemius Silvius in his *Laterculus* and copied in full within the manuscript at fol. 137r-v[75]. On the lower portion of the page are three lines in Rustic Capitals, written in the late tenth or eleventh century. They are an attempt at transliterating into the Latin alphabet two separate Hebrew texts. While the first line transmits the incipit of a liturgical hymn by Rabbi Shimon Ben Yitzhak (c.950-c.1020) «BARUC ADONAI IUM IUM», the two following lines are Genesis 4.15 «VAIOR MERLO ADONAI LACHEN CHOL O/

74 Chambert-Protat 2019.

75 Paniagua 2016, p. 166.

REG CAIN SOBATHAIM IOKHAMO»[76]. However, the earliest additions to the page can be found in its upper portion. Written in diplomatic script is a pen trial of the second half of the ninth century, the first three words of which have been rewritten by a different, but roughly coeval scribe, who also used diplomatic script. The text in elongated letters reads «Quicumque vult salvus esse ante omnia opus est ut». Therefore, this pen trial transmits the opening of the so-called Athanasian Creed or *Quicumque vult*, a comprehensive exposition of Trinitarian doctrine that Carolingian theologians regarded as one of the fundamental statements of orthodox belief from the early church[77]. Knowledge of this text, erroneously ascribed to the fourth-century bishop Athanasius but probably created in the fifth century, was encouraged amongst Carolingian clergy and its emphasis on the Trinity made it a key text during the Christological disputes against Adoptionism[78]. From the early ninth century the *Quicumque vult* was certainly known amongst the clergy of Lyon as witnessed by its presence (fols. 109v and 114r-v) in a book donated by Leidrad to his Church and now held at the Vatican library (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MS Pagés 1)[79]. Moreover, considering the involvement of the archbishops of Lyon during the "heroic age" in the debate regarding Adoptionism, the presence of these pen trials fits the cultural *milieu* of the Lyonnais church in the mid-ninth century. Based on the ink and ductus it seems likely that the second scribe who re-wrote the beginning of the *Quicumque vult* also drew the somewhat clumsy monogram of Charles in the upper part of the page as well as individual words/letters in elongated script like «Si q» and «b». The monogram should be considered as the one of a generic ruler Charles and not necessarily the one of the first Carolingian emperor, as from the mid-ninth century several of Charlemagne's heirs named after him adopted, with virtually no changes, his cruciform monogram for diplomatic usage[80].

76 I am indebted to Yitzhak Hen for the correct identification of these texts. Hen suggests that whoever scribbled these lines did it by ear as there are some inaccuracies in the orthography; furthermore, an Ashkenazi dialect/accent can be detected in the writing.

77 The text was edited by Turner 1910.

78 Manuscript transmission of commentaries and explanations of this Creed suggest its widespread use in Carolingian times, Keefe 2012, pp. 155-159 and 191-192.

79 CLA IV, n. 417. For a detailed discussion of contents and codicology of this book see, Radiciotti 2008, pp. 121-133. The manuscript can be accessed at https://digi.vatlib.it

80 Garipzanov 2018, pp. 256-264.

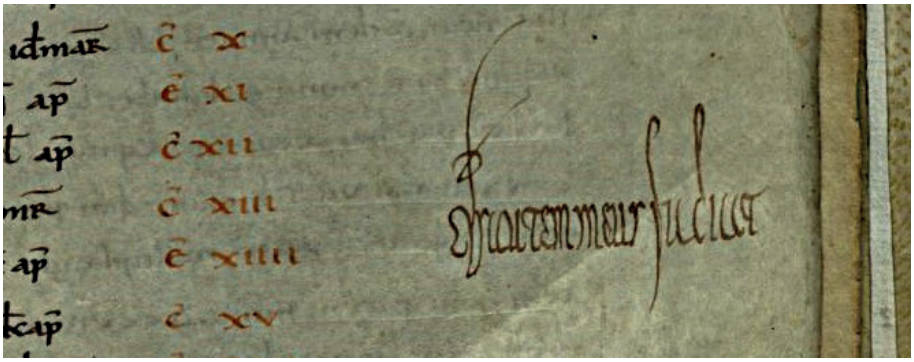

Figure 5. Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26, fol. 160r.

A further pen trial in diplomatic script was written in the outer margin of fol. 160r, within a section of the manuscript (fols. 158v-162r) dealing with *De cyclis decemnovenalibus*. The overall morphology of the letters (in particular the crested letter c and the letter s) indicates a coeval but different hand from the ones observed at fol. 1r. The pen trial written in confident elongated letters reads «Deus autem meus faciat». While at a first glance this may appear to be a simple biblical pen trial from Genesis 43.14, its specific phrasing suggests a liturgical pen trial. The omission of *omnipotens* between *meus* and *faciat* corresponds with a responsory for the third Sunday of Lent[81]. The presence of a liturgical pen trial relating to Lent not only well fits a book primarily concerned with knowledge and techniques necessary for the calculation Easter, but also supports the idea that it was, like the other pen trials in diplomatic script appearing in empty spaces of this book, written within the clerical community of Lyon.

The last page of the book (fol. 162v) was also originally left empty, and it was gradually filled with pen trials in the course of the early Middle Ages. Amongst tenth- and eleventh-century additions, two stand out for their didactic flavour. Firstly, the intonation formula of the second mode «Noeais» with neumes at the bottom of the page written by a tenth-century scribe[82]. Secondly, the opening of the *Disticha Catonis* in the top right corner of the page executed by an eleventh-century hand. However, the first pen trials were added to this page in the ninth century. What immediately strikes

81 The responsory is listed on Cantus (https://cantusindex.org) with identification number 007769.

82 For a detailed discussion of these mnemonic and pedagogical formulas see, Bailey 1974.

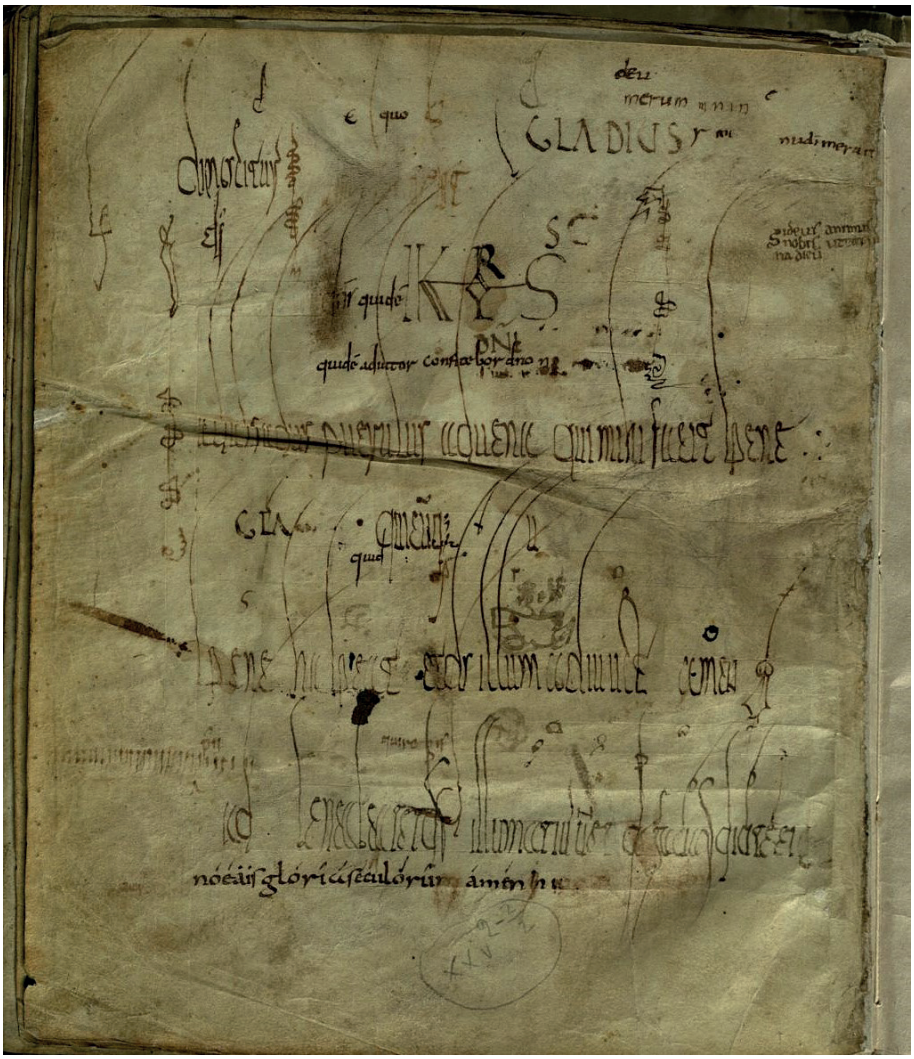

Figure 6. Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26, fol. 162v.

the observer is the display of distinctive features of contemporary diplomas, namely another monogram of Charles and three different chrismons. Alongside them, and written around the same time, is a group of pen trials in diplomatic script that can be dated to the second half of the ninth century. Two of these are extremely short: the word «dinoscitur» in the top-left corner and the word «quicumque» at the middle of the page. While the word *quicumque* directly echoes the pen trials on fol. 1r in terms of textual con-

tent, the word *dinoscitur* does so with the script, as its ductus indicates that it could have been written by the same scribe who wrote the more extended pen trial of the *Quicumque vult* on the first page. The remaining pen trials in elongated letters are more conspicuous. The first, confidently executed, covers two lines and reads: «Adalsadus puerulus advena qui mihi facit bene / bene habeat et Deus illum adiuvet amen»[83]. The second, written by a less proficient scribe, repeats the last part of the previous text, with some spelling oddities (missing h in *habeat* and use of letter t instead of d for *adiuvet*), after which it adds «Deo gracias dicite ei». It is worth noticing that the longer of these pen trials, the one mentioning the young foreigner Adalsadus, seems to allude to a school setting and it was probably written by the same scribe who wrote only the first three words of the *Quicumque vult* at fol. 1r.

Surveying the pen trials written in diplomatic script in Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 shows the presence of a group of clerics (at least five different hands) active in Lyon during the second half of the ninth century and their endeavours at mastering the elongated script of sovereign diplomas. What is more, the first and last folio of the book demonstrate an even closer link to a chancery *milieu* through the deployment of other features of diplomatic usage: Charles' monograms and three different forms of chrismon. Finally, the content of these pen trials points to a learned ecclesiastical centre which engaged with the main theological debates around Adoptionism in which the archbishops of the Lyonnais "heroic age" had featured so prominently.

Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462

Further pen trials in diplomatic script can be observed in Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462. In its current state the manuscript only has 32 folios, but was once together with Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 449[84]. It contains Bede's commentary on the Book of Kings and according to Bischoff was written in Lyon during the first half of the ninth century[85]. On the flyleaf (fol. 1) of Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462 several additions and pen trials were added during the second half of the ninth century.

83 This pen trial is listed in Tafel 1925, p. 64.

84 No pen trial in diplomatic script is present in Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 449. Both manuscripts can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr

85 Bischoff 2004, n. 2554.

< ISSN 1128-5656 (online), DOI 10.6093/1128-5656/11421 >

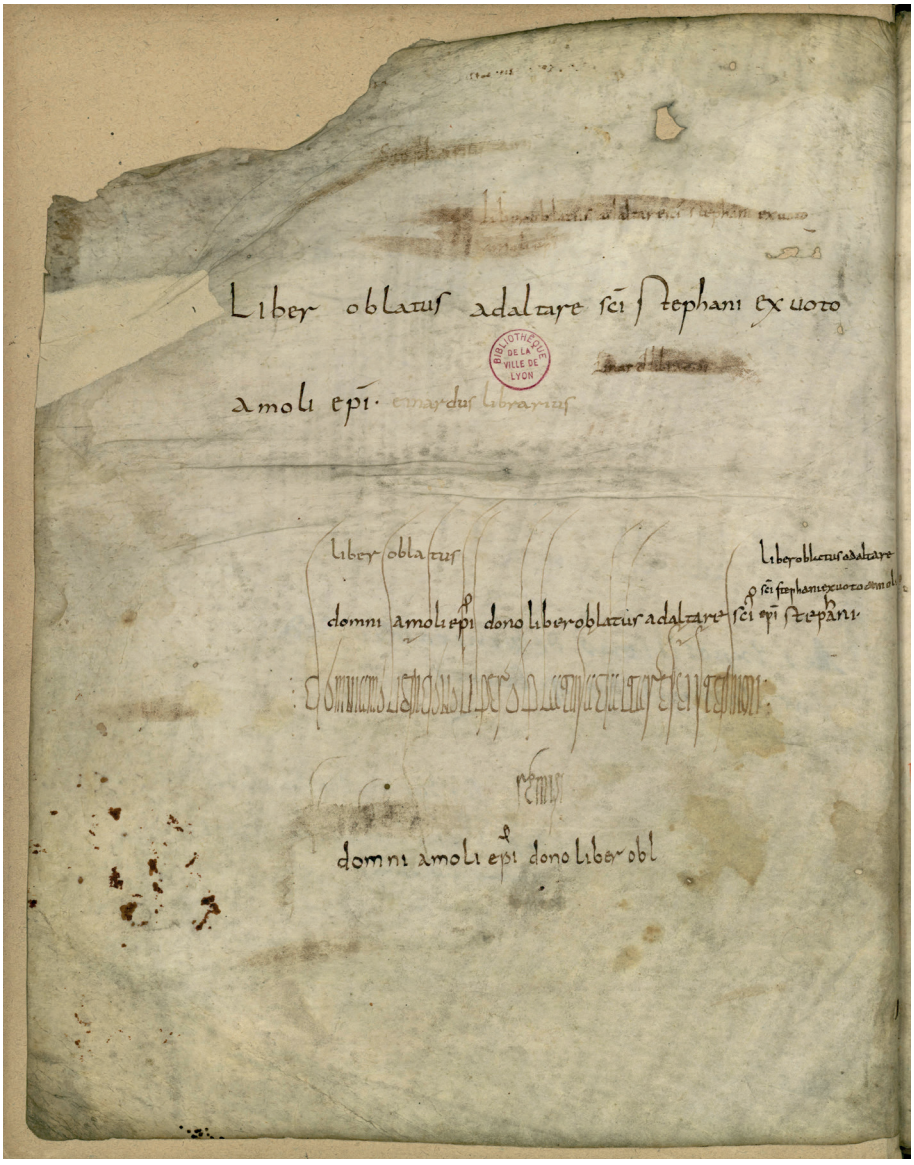

Figure 7. Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462, fol. 1v.

The *ex-dono* on fol. 1v reveals that archbishop Amolo (841-852), donated this manuscript to the church of Lyon: «Liber oblatus ad altare sancti Stephani ex voto Amoli episcopi». This form of the *ex-dono* appears three times on fol. 1v, though the instance in the upper portion of the page is barely legible. Tafel's

attention was caught by the fact that alongside the *ex-dono* there is an explicit mention to a librarian «Einardus librarius»[86]. Therefore, aside from confirming the enduring episcopal sponsorship to the school of Lyon, this note also places the manuscript within the cathedral library. In the middle of the page another roughly coeval hand has provided a different phrasing of the donation note: «Domni Amoli episcopi dono liber oblatus ad altare sancti Stephani». This second version recording the donation made by Amolo was then written as pen trial in elongated script. The confident hand which rewrote that version during the second half of the ninth century shows similarities with the pen trial of Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 concerning the young foreigner Adalsadus (see fig. 6). In particular, the way in which the letters b and d are formed is quite distinctive and their resemblance in the two pen trials suggest that they may have been penned by the same scribe. However, the development of the ascender and descender of the letter s, as well as the use of drop-shaped letter o in the donation note, demands caution in decisively attributing both pen trials to the same hand. Following the pen trial based on Amolo's donation note, is a second pen trial in diplomatic script almost completely effaced. It starts with «Do», so is perhaps once again the beginning of a donation note. Alongside it, a coeval hand has written a name in elongated script «Remigi[us]», likely hinting to Amolo's successor.

Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 471

A final group of pen trials in diplomatic script can be found in Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 471[87]. Produced in Lyon during the first half of the ninth century (but no later than 840), this manuscript contains Bede's commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah[88]. As witnessed by the *ex-dono* on fol.1r, originally left empty, it was archbishop Agobard who donated the book to the church of Lyon[89].

Five pen trials in diplomatic script fill the entire verso of the final flyleaf of the manuscript (fol. 121v). Once again, they were all written during the second half of the ninth century in a script closely resembling the elongated letters of coeval royal and imperial diplomas. Moreover, four of the five pen trials were

86 Tafel 1925, p. 64.

87 The manuscript can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr

88 Bischoff 2004, n. 2560.

89 Chambert-Protat 2020, p. 313.

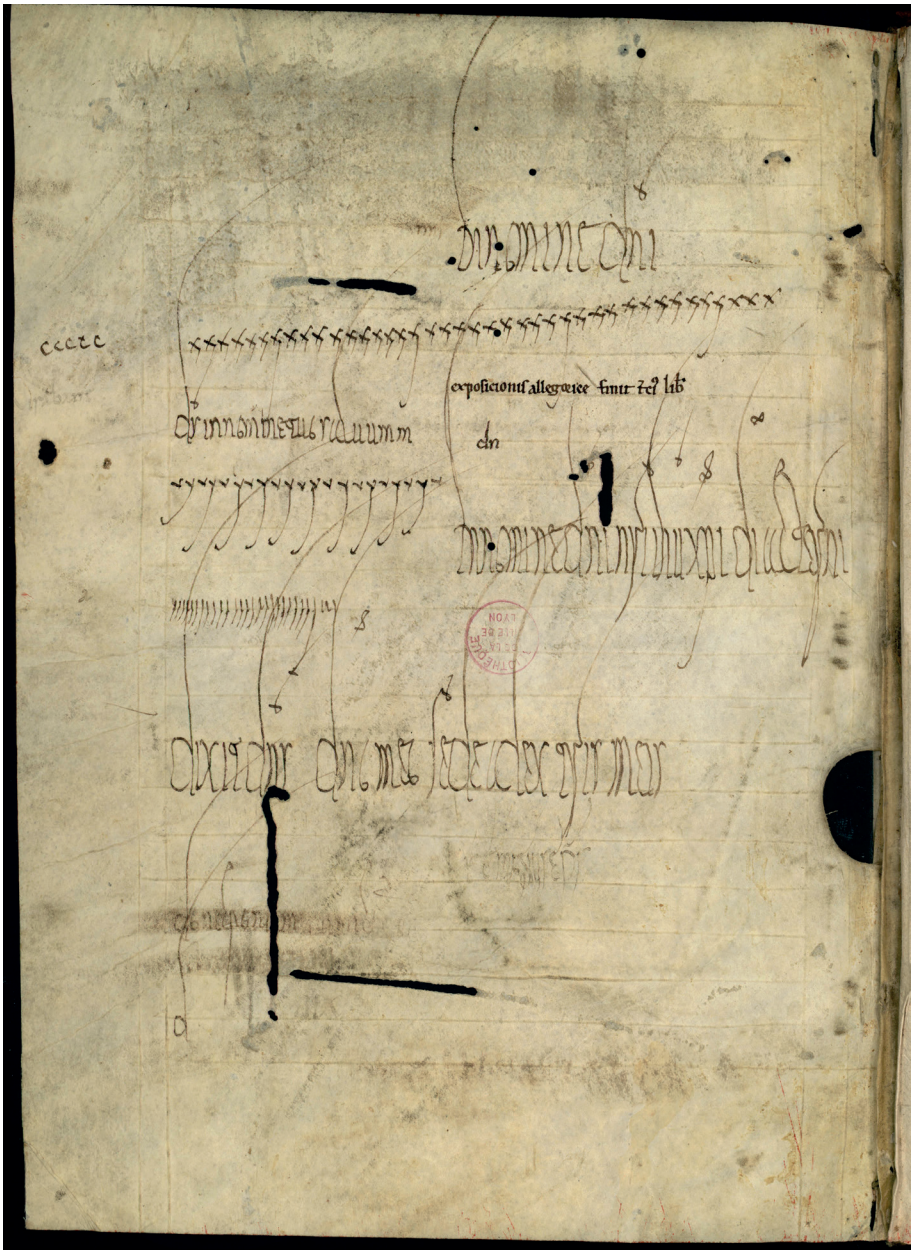

Figure 8. Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 471, fol. 121v.

probably executed by the same hand. Slight differences are due to their different size, but ductus, letter forms (in particular d, e and t), ligatures (especially om), and abbreviation signs for *nomina sacra* strongly point to the work of just one scribe. Starting from the top of the page, the first pen trial simply reads «In nomine Domini». This is followed by Psalm 53.3 «Deus in nomine tuo salvum m[e]». At the centre of the page is a more conspicuous invocation to God: «In nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi Dei aeterni». The fourth pen trial is the beginning of Psalm 109: «Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede a dextris meis» continued below «donec ponam inimicos». The scribe who wrote these pen trials should be identified with the writer of the Adaladus pen trial in Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 (see fig. 6), as evidenced by overall aspect, ductus, letter forms[90], ligatures and abbreviations. Finally, another hand added, in roughly coeval elongated letters, the words «Remigius episcopus» between the two lines transmitting the beginning of Psalm 109. This addition likely hints to the pontificate of Remigius of Lyon (852-875), and a reference to this prelate also occurs as a pen trial in Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 462.

The use of psalm verses to write pen trials in diplomatic script, already encountered in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS NAL 1740, fol. 94v, certainly fits an ecclesiastical setting like Carolingian Lyon, but also reinforces the impression that these pen trials have a certain didactic flavour to them, as in both manuscripts the scribes seem to be practicing charter script by writing texts known by heart. What is more striking in the case of this book, is that the scribe is also using a specific diplomatic formula. The *Invocatio* «In nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi Dei aeterni», is not at all generic. During the ninth century it was only used in diplomas of three rulers: Lothar I (822-855) and his sons Charles of Provence (855-863) and Louis II (850-875)[91]. Considering that Louis II never exerted any direct control over the Lyonnais or issued diplomas for its ecclesiastical institutions, and that Lothar I only established his authority in the region in 843, this pen trial points to a very specific period of time: the mid-ninth century, an historical phase which mostly coincides with the pontificate of archbishop Remigius (852-875), whose name we have seen evoked in two of the Lyonnais pen trials written in diplomatic script.

90 The only actual divergence is in the pen trial of Psalm 109 where the letter s at the beginning of «sede» does not rest on the baseline but shows flourishing in both its ascender and descender. However, considering that its use is not consistent within the pen trial, this can be put down to the scribe experimenting different letter forms.

91 DD Lo I, p. 43; *Actes des rois de Provence*, pp. XI-XII and DD Lu II, p. 29.

Diplomatic evidence

During the second half of the ninth century, Remigius (852-875) and his successor Aurelianus (875-895) actively pursued a policy aimed at tightening the episcopal control over various territories within their diocese[92]. An impressive chain of imperial and royal charters of donation, confirmation and restitution bear witness to their efforts at strengthening the position of the church of Lyon[93]. What is considered in this final section is whether diplomatic evidence can substantiate an active engagement of the Lyonnais clergy in the production of sovereign documents during the second half of the ninth century. Two intertwined factors make this task particularly difficult: the constantly shifting political landscape of Lyon at the time and the manuscript transmission of the diplomatic evidence itself.

After the civil war among the heirs of Louis the Pious in 843, Lyon was assigned to the emperor Lothar I. Upon his death, it came under the control of his sons, first Charles of Provence (855-863) and then his older brother Lothar II (863-869). Lyon then fell under West Frankish control with Charles the Bald (870-877) and his son Louis the Stammerer (878-879), before becoming part of the short-lived kingdom of the non-Carolingian ruler Boso (879-880). The Carolingian response to the revolt of Boso brought Lyon back into West Frankish hands with Carloman II (880-884), and then under the rule of emperor Charles the Fat (885-887). Finally, Lyon passed to Boso's son, Louis the Blind (887-928), who revived the Kingdom of Provence for one last time[94].

This succession of rulers makes it difficult to detect active involvement of Lyonnais clergy in the production of royal and imperial charters within a large and disparate diplomatic tradition. Moreover, none of the twenty diplomas directed to the church of Lyon under the tenures of Remigius and Aurelianus has survived as an original[95]. They have all been preserved in later copies, and while Theodor Schieffer demonstrated that they were genuine documents, their manuscript transmission impedes any palaeographical comparison with the Lyonnais pen trials in elongated script[96]. Nevertheless, they can still pro-

92 Rubellin 2003, pp. 245-263.

93 Schieffer 1963. For a detailed study on power and authority of the Lyonnais archbishops in the ninth and tenth centuries see, Gerner 1968.

94 Rubellin 2003, pp. 160-161.

95 Schieffer 1963, pp. 3-4.

96 *Ibidem*, pp. 3-33.

vide fruitful evidence for the existence of an active chancery *milieu* in Lyon during the second half of the ninth century.

Recent scholarship on Carolingian diplomas has highlighted how the initiative behind the issuing of sovereign charters often came from the recipients, and thus the term "petitioners" may be more appropriate to define their role in the process that inspired the documents' production[97]. The fact that the group of diplomas for the church of Lyon was inspired by archbishops Remigius and Aurelianus demonstrate their efforts in securing and strengthening the rights of their church, but it does not prove a direct involvement of the Lyonnais clergy in the production of royal and imperial charters. This gap can be filled by considering a more nuanced picture of charter production. This builds on recent studies on early medieval diplomatic, looking at in particular the activity of local scribes who worked for the "recipients" and wrote diplomas which were then presented ready-written to the rulers for confirmation[98].

The stream of royal and imperial charters directed to the church of Lyon began under archbishop Amolo (841-852), who obtained the restitution of lands in the Lyonnais and Portois from emperor Lothar I. The surviving copy of this diploma lacks a precise dating clause, but according to its editor was written in the last years of Amolo's pontificate[99]. While Schieffer stressed that the diploma petitioned by Amolo did not see the involvement of the "recipient" in its drafting, the same cannot be said for the diplomas obtained by his successor[100]. As argued by Elina Screen, the charters issued in 852, especially the diplomas of restitution (DD Lo I, nos. 124-126), show a shift in the balance of power within the Middle Kingdom, suggesting an attempt by Lothar I to create an alternative episcopal powerbase in the South of his domain[101]. Moreover,

97 Mersiowsky 2015, pp. 781-782.

98 The production of royal and imperial diplomas by notaries working for the recipient (*Empfängernotare*) is only one of the elements highlighted by scholarship on early medieval diplomatic for overcoming the idea of chancery as the centralised bureaucratic office envisioned by Sickel. Works appearing in the last decades, and especially Huschner's study of the Ottonian diplomas, have depicted a more nuanced picture of charter production and of the role of the scribes (*Notare*) who drafted and wrote those same documents. On the role of notaries working for the recipient see, Bautier 1984. For the more nuanced picture of the production of royal and imperial diplomas during ninth and tenth century, see at least Huschner 2003; Ghignoli 2004; Bougard 2011 and Mersiowsky 2015. Useful discussion of these new approaches and their deployment in Roach 2022 and Vignodelli 2023.

99 DD Lo I, n. 117.

100 *Ibidem*, nos. 120-121 and 123-126.

101 Screen 2011, pp. 269-270. On the Middle Kingdom or *Francia Media*, meaning the territories ruled by Lothar I after 843, see *De la mer du Nord à la Méditerranée* 2011.

Schieffer argued that this entire group of diplomas was drafted entirely or in part by the "recipients", meaning by members of the clergy of Lyon[102].

At the death of Lothar I, in 855, Lyon became part of the independent (though not long-lasting) Kingdom of Provence assigned to Lothar's youngest son Charles of Provence (855-863). Throughout this period and beyond, the two real power brokers in the region were the counts of Vienne and the archbishops of Lyon. As already mentioned, archbishop Remigius was the archchaplain of Charles of Provence. He obtained royal charters of donation, confirmation, and restitution from the young ruler[103]. According to Schieffer, this group of diplomas also points to a direct involvement of the "recipients" in their drafting.[104] While the direct involvement of the "recipients" in drafting all or part of royal charters demonstrates knowledge of the language of political communication at the highest level amongst the clergy of Lyon, the fact that these diplomas have only survived in later copies impedes our ability to see whether this knowledge also entailed the mastering of chancery script. A diploma issued for the monastery of Île Barbe, the only original extant for the reign of Charles of Provence, indicates that this may have been the case[105].

This royal charter, petitioned by Remigius of Lyon and issued in August 861, confirmed a series of privileges to the Lyonnais monastery of Île Barbe[106]. The diploma is entirely written by the notary Aurelianus, who within the *Recognitio* certified the document instead of Bertraus. The same *Recognitio* is found in the donation of properties issued a week earlier by Charles and directed to archbishop Remigius[107]. As argued by Herbert Zielinski, while the notary Aurelianus should not be confused with the future archbishop of Lyon, he was in all likelihood a cleric of that city[108]. Therefore, knowledge of the language and script of political communication at the highest level can be seen among the clergy of Lyon during the reign of Charles of Provence. Although no positive identification can be made for the notary Aurelianus within the pen trials in elongated script appearing on the Lyonnais Carolingian manuscripts exam-

102 DD Lo I, pag. 49 and Schieffer 1963, pp. 29-30.

103 *Actes des rois de Provence*, nos. 1 (confirmation), 7 (donation) and 10-12 (restitutions).

104 Schieffer 1963, pp. 12-13.

105 Lyon, Archives départemetales du Rhône, 10 G 3125. *Actes des rois de Provence*, nos. 8 and pp. 125-126.

106 On this diploma and its fortuitous retrieval in 1914 see Guigue 1915 and Rubellin 2015, pp. 47-49. Facsimile reproduction in *Diplomata Karolinorum* 9, no. 1.

107 *Actes des rois de Provence*, n. 7.

108 Zielinski 2013, pp. 28-30.

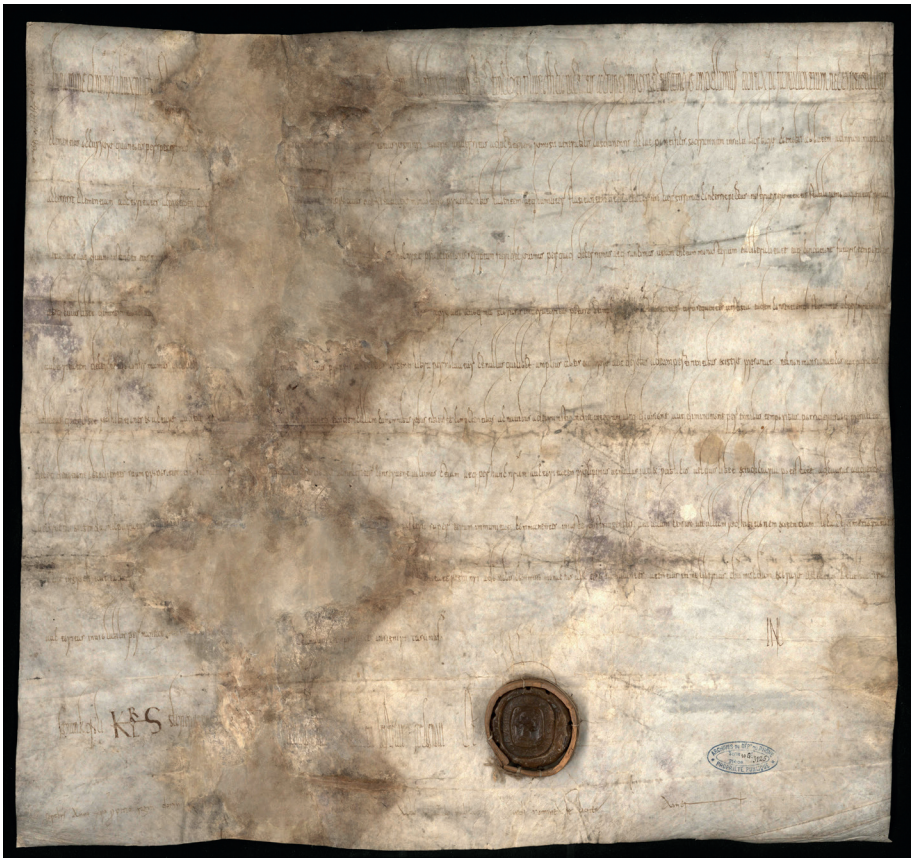

Figure 9. Lyon, Archives départemetales du Rhône, 10 G 3125.

ined in this article, noticeable similarities can be found between his hand and the one of the anonymous scribe seen at work in the manuscripts held in Rome and Lyon (see figs. 6 and 8). It is also worth remarking that those same pen trials show clear adoption of features of diplomatic usage, especially the monogram of Charles and the *Invocatio* (*In nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi Dei aeterni*), which both find clear parallels in the diplomas of Charles of Provence.

When Charles died in 863, his brothers Louis II and Lothar II agreed to a division of his kingdom, which saw the Lyonnais and Viennois being incorporated into the kingdom of Lotharingia[109]. Two diplomas issued from Mantaille and Lyon that same year marked the succession of Lothar II to his brother's

109 On the Kingdom of Lotharingia and its fall see, Airlie 2011, MacLean 2013 and West 2023.

kingdom. With these acts Lothar was proclaiming his legitimate claim to throne, stating his acceptance of the division of the realm agreed upon with Louis II, and at the same time acknowledging the two main power brokers in the region: the count of Vienne and the archbishop of Lyon[110]. Remigius kept pursuing his policies under Lothar II and obtained four sovereign acts of restitution for the church of Lyon[111]. According to their editor, all these acts show once again direct involvement of the "recipients" in their drafting[112]. Further evidence pointing to an active engagement of the Lyonnais clergy in the production of royal diplomas under Lothar II cannot be found. Schieffer's compelling suggestion that the notary Bernar, who was recorded in Lothar's diploma for the monastery of Hornbach (865) and might have been previously a deacon in the service of archbishop Remigius of Lyon and afterwards bishop of Grenoble, is unfortunately impossible to prove[113].

The death of Lothar II in 869 and the passage of the Lyonnais into West Frankish hands did not disrupt Remigius and his policy aimed at tightening the episcopal control over various territories within his diocese. As a matter of fact, he obtained three acts of restitution for the church of Lyon from the new ruler, Charles the Bald (870-877)[114]. However, unlike in the cases previously discussed, nothing in this group of charters indicate involvement of the "recipients" in their drafting[115]. The same considerations apply to the diploma issued by Louis the Stammerer (878-879) from Troyes in 878 confirming properties and immunity to the church of Lyon[116]. This royal charter is the first obtained by archbishop Aurelianus (875-895), who continued Remigius' policy aimed at securing and strengthening the rights of the Lyonnais church.

Following the power vacuum created by the death of Louis the Stammerer in April 879, and the disputed succession which ensued, Boso of Vienne made his bid for the West Frankish Kingdom, and in October 879 had himself proclaimed king at a synod in Mantaille. Boso had a strong powerbase in Burgundy and Provence, was married to Ermengard, the daughter of the late emperor Louis II, and had been the most powerful and trusted man of Charles the Bald

110 DD Lo II, nos. 18 and 19. On these acts see, Koziol 2012, pp. 105-107.

111 DD Lo II, nos. 15, 20-21 and 36.

112 *Ibidem*, pp. 380-381.

113 *Ibidem*, n. 24 and p. 376. On this theory also see, Zielinski 2013, p. 64.

114 *Actes de Charles II le Chauve*, nos. 348, 355 and 385.

115 Schieffer 1963, pp. 15-16.

116 *Actes de Louis II le Bègue*, no. 20. On which also see, Schieffer 1963, pp. 16-17.

in Italy[117]. However, the unified Carolingian response to his bid for power put an end to his ephemeral kingdom by the end of 880[118]. While no diploma of Boso directed to the church of Lyon survives, his short reign provides nonetheless a clear link between the royal chancery and the Lyonnais clergy through its archbishop. As a matter of fact, Aurelianus not only anointed Boso at Mantaille, but was also his first archchancellor[119].

The reign of Carloman II (880-884) passed without any diplomas issued for the church of Lyon. Aurelianus's policy can be seen in action again only under Charles the Fat (885-887). His diploma for the church of Lyon, issued in June 885, includes restitutions, confirmations and further donations all at once[120]. Even though there is no direct involvement of the "recipient" in the drafting of the act, this far-reaching charter can be seen as the crown jewel of the policy aimed at securing and strengthening the rights of the Lyonnais church under the tenure of archbishop Aurelianus.

Upon the death of Charles the Fat, the Lyonnais fell to the son of Boso and Ermengard, Louis the Blind. His reign (887-928), saw the last revival of the Kingdom of Provence, which in the 930s would cease to exist. During the early years of reign of Louis, archbishop Aurelianus obtained his last royal diploma for the church of Lyon. The charter, issued in March 892, granted and confirmed various properties and rights to the Lyonnais church. It was issued from Lyon at the request of Louis' mother Ermengard and archbishop Aurelianus, described within the diploma as Louis teacher (*Aureliani nostri didascali*).[121] The notary Warimbaldus, who recognised this act instead of the archchancellor Bernuin of Vienne, is otherwise unknown amongst the personnel of Louis' chancery. Zielinski has suggested that he may have come from Lyon[122], and if that were the case the charter would provide further evidence for the engagement of Lyonnais clerics in the production of royal charters at the time.

The chain of imperial and royal charters issued in favour of the church of Lyon during the tenures of archbishops Remigius and Aurelianus clearly demonstrates knowledge of the language of political communication at the highest level amongst the Lyonnais clergy during the second half of the ninth century.

117 For Boso's career see Airlie 2000, pp. 25-41.

118 Bautier 1973 and MacLean 2001.

119 *Actes des rois de Provence*, n. 17. Aurelianus was soon replaced by Boso's old ally Adalgarius, bishop of Autun, *Ibidem*, n. 18.

120 DD Ka III, n. 123.

121 *Actes des rois de Provence*, n. 29.

122 Zielinski 2013, pp. 189-190.

Moreover, diplomatic evidence from the time of Remigius indicates that such a knowledge also entailed the mastering of the special script with which it was conveyed. Particularly striking in this respect are the clear parallels between the charter of Charles of Provence written by the notary Aurelianus, in all likelihood a Lyonnais cleric, and the pen trials in elongated script found in two ninth-century manuscripts from Lyon. The pontificate of archbishop Aurelianus substantiates the presence of a chancery *milieu* in Lyon through both his activity as first archchancellor of King Boso, and the involvement of another probable Lyonnais cleric (Warimbaldus) in the drafting of the diploma issued by Louis the Blind in 892 for the church of Lyon. Therefore, diplomatic evidence suggests that during the tenures of Remigius and Aurelianus, members of the church of Lyon became involved in the production of diplomas of subsequent rulers.

Considering the more nuanced picture of charter production outlined above[123], it is also possible that the activity of these local draftsmen-scribes went further than their involvement in the production of diplomas for the church of Lyon. Even though the paucity of extant original diplomas means this cannot be proven, it seems rather likely that around Remigius and Aurelianus emerged a group of *Notare* who also wrote diplomas petitioned by these same Lyonnais archbishops for "third parties" or who was even involved in some form of more regular royal service. At any rate, the archiepiscopal policy aimed at strengthening and securing the rights of the church of Lyon prompted and at the same time rested on the activity, amongst the clergy of Lyon, of highly skilled draftsman-scribes who were not only versed in the language, but also in the script of political communication at the highest level.

Conclusion

During the second half of the ninth century a series of pen trials in elongated script was written on the blank spaces of four manuscripts convincingly located in Lyon at the time. The analysis of these "minitexts" from a palaeographical point of view has revealed a considerable number of clerics (more than ten different hands) active in Lyon and their efforts at mastering the challenging elongated script used to write specific parts of royal and imperial diplomas in that period. These short texts were the work of highly skilled writers practicing charter script by penning texts known by heart, hence their

123 See footnote n. 98.

overall didactic flavour. The choice of texts used for practising charter script is nonetheless interesting, as liturgical snippets amongst these pen trials point to an ecclesiastical learning centre engaged with the main theological debates in which the protagonists of the Lyonnais "heroic age" had so prominently featured. At the same time, pen trials in Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E 26 (figs. 4 and 6) and Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 471 (fig. 8) provide a clear link to a chancery *milieu* through the deployment of specific visual features of diplomatic usage (monograms and chrismons), as well as a specific diplomatic formula (*Invocatio*). The stream of diplomas granted in favour of the Lyonnais church under the pontificates of Remigius and Aurelianus has shown the direct involvement of local clerics in the production of diplomas of subsequent rulers and demonstrated their knowledge of language, as well as script, of political communication at the highest level. The pen trials in elongated script discussed in the article complement the diplomatic evidence, as they trace the activity of those same local draftsman-scribes on the books of the episcopal library. To conclude, when considered together, pen trials and diplomatic evidence shed light on the cultural and political history of Lyon during the latter part of the ninth century, providing a very rare glimpse into the flourishing of a chancery *milieu* within a prominent Carolingian learning centre[124].

124 It goes beyond the scope of this article to ascertain whether this remained the case during the following century. Nonetheless, for determining the level of diplomatic knowledge of the Lyonnais clergy during the tenth century through the lens offered by pen trials written in diplomatic script one key manuscript should be considered: Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 1502. According to Bischoff, this manuscript was written in Lyon in the late ninth or early tenth century, Bischoff 2004, n. 2589. On fol. 371r four lines in diplomatic script were added during the early tenth century, apparently deploying the language and script of the diplomas of Louis the Blind. The manuscript can be accessed at https://florus.bm-lyon.fr

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