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The Poetry of Leonin

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The Poetry of Leonin

At the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Philadelphia last October [1984], I had occasion to present a paper entitled "Leonin, Poet and Musician". The intent of that communication was to suggest the musician Leonin had been a canon at Notre Dame at the end of the twelfth century, one sometimes called Leo, sometimes Leonius, and sometimes Leoninus. I sought to provide a biographical sketch of this canon and to show, among other things, that he was also a poet. I stated that a discussion of Leonin's poetry would require a separate, later study.¹ It is the initial findings of that study that I wish to share with you today.

Because your enthusiasm to join with me in a consideration of the poetry of this canon of Notre Dame will only be as great as your conviction that this individual was in fact the composer Leonin, I will present again in summary fashion the archival documents that led me to make this identification. To my colleagues who heard my paper in Philadelphia, I apologize. I hope that I will be able to spark your interest in this review when I mention that two additional documents have come to light since the meeting last October. Also, I think you will agree that the present format of this conference here in Wolfenbüttel is much more conducive to a slow, careful evaluation of the validity of this evidence, and I look forward to your observations and criticisms.

In 1976 I began what I intend to be a thorough investigation of the extant archival documents of Notre Dame of Paris dating from before 1550—account books, cartularies, chapter acts, letters, mandements and the like—most of which are preserved in the Archives nationales, a few in the Bibliothèque nationale. Needless to say, this investigation is still continuing.² But I believe I have now carried out a fairly complete review of the documentation surviving for the period prior to 1400, and in the course of that review I have come upon a number of records that make mention of a canon Leonin at Notre Dame during the second half of the twelfth century.

¹ Later published: Craig Wright, "Leoninus, Poet and Musician," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39 (1986):1-35.

² Later published: Craig Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris, 500-1550* (Cambridge University Press, 1989).

I need not emphasize in the presence of this group the role that Leonin played in the astonishing growth of liturgical polyphony that radiated from the cathedral of Paris in the High Middle Ages. Anonymous IV tells us that he wrote a great book of organum for the Mass and canonical hours which was in use until the time of Magister Perotinus, who revised it, and subsequently the books of Perotinus were employed in the choir of Notre Dame of Paris at least until the time that Anonymous IV set pen to parchment. We also know that the polyphony of Leonin's Magnus liber organi was indeed designed to serve the liturgy of the cathedral of Paris. And, since Leonin preceded Perotin, according to Anonymous IV, and Perotin's four-voice organa were apparently sung at Notre Dame by at least 1198, according to the cartularies of the church, we have rightly assumed that Leonin was active at the cathedral of Paris sometime during the second half of the twelfth century. We should note that Anonymous IV refers to the composer in both the substantive form of the name (Magister Leo, Leonis) and the diminutive (Magister Leoninus, Leonini).

In the records of Notre Dame of Paris reference is made to a canon Leonin in more than a dozen documents. His name is found in either the substantive (Leonius) or the diminutive (Leoninus). Most often Leonius, as this musician and poet usually styled himself, is encountered among a group of signatories attesting the authenticity of documents emanating from the cathedral of Paris. These are preserved today in the important cartularies of the chapter and bishop of Notre Dame. Almost all of these documents have been previously unknown to musicologists because we have relied on the published versions of the cartularies edited by Benjamin Guérard in the 1850's; while this edition is generally of the highest quality, it omits some documents and universally fails to include the names of signatories because the editor thought such information was unimportant. The archival documents pertaining to Leonius that have so far come to light are given in your handouts. Let us examine them in turn.

The earliest archival reference to Magister Leonius is preserved in a group of documents relating to a small church on the Left Bank of Paris under the patronym of St. Benoît (St. Benedict). Founded as an oratory in the Merovingian period, St. Benoît had evolved by the twelfth century into a collegiate church under the protection and administration of the cathedral of Paris. Because the canons who served this church were

appointed by the chapter of Paris, St. Benoît, along with three similarly controlled collegiate churches in Paris, came to be numbered among the so-called "quatre filles de la cathedrale." The clergy of these subordinate institutions had the right to wear the habit of the cathedral, march in processions, and attend the offices in the choir of the mother church. The document of 1179, promulgated by Bishop Maurice of Sully, who was then residing at St. Victor, attests to the sale of three vineyards near the Left Bank monastery of St. Hilary by Abbess Ascelina of the convent of Chelles (north of Paris) to the church of St. Benoît for twelve livres, which monies were received "per manum magistri Leonij Sancti Benedicti parisiensis canonici" (Doc, 1). From this charter the following biographical facts can be deduced: that by 1179 Leonius had earned the academic degree of Master, undoubtedly at Paris; that he was serving as an administrator of St. Benoît, which as his poetry will show was a position he had occupied by this time for at least twenty years; and finally that he was a member of the clergy of Notre Dame through his position at this collegiate church.

Document 2 similarly shows Magister Leonius acting as an executer for St. Benoît in the sale, or in this case exchange, of another vineyard. Foulque, abbot of St. Germain des Près, takes control of a vineyard at la Chausee near Versailles, "which Magister Leoninus had long held" and the abbot in turn consigns to the canons of St. Benoît a vineyard at a place called Gibard. The exchange is approved by the respective chapters of the monastery and cathedral and witnessed by representatives of both institutions.

Related to these first two documents is one of 1192 (Doc. 3) that pertains to a small house near the thermal baths on the Left Bank (today on the grounds of the Musée de Cluny) and hence very near St. Benoît. This agreement stipulates that the rents from the dwelling were to be assigned partly to the church St. Benoît and partly to the canon of the cathedral who then occupied the claustral home of Albert, formerly the cantor of Notre Dame. Albert himself is of interest to students of medieval music: he succeeded Adam of Notre Dame (until recently known as Adam of St. Victor) as cantor of the cathedral about 1140 and left a volume of versus to the church at the time of his death sometime before 1177. Moreover, Magister Albertus, cantor, was likely identical with Magister Albertus Parisiensis named as the composer of the three-voice conductus Congaudeant catholici in the Codex Calixtinus. The document of 1192 requires that the

occupant of Magister Albert's dwelling transfer the thirty-one sous annual rent he received from the house near St. Benoît to the cathedral to provide additional lighting on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, the patron saint's day at Notre Dame. Listed among the members of the chapter of Notre Dame attesting to this agreement was "Leonius presbyter," a signature which shows that Magister Leonius continued his interest in the affairs of St. Benoît, and that by at least 1192 he had attained the priesthood.

With the exception of the final document given in the handout, all the remaining entries likewise show Magister Leonius serving as a witness to some official transaction registered before the bishop or chapter at Notre Dame, and in one case at the nearby abbey St. Victor. We see him, for example, attesting to an agreement stipulating the amount of rents owed to the chapter from property near Rungis (Doc. 8), to a schedule whereby the income of the vicariate of St. Victor in Notre Dame would fall to the abbey or the estate of the incumbent in the event of the latter's death (Doc. 9), and even to a contract setting the amount of white wine that the chapter was due from a vineyard in Laye (Doc. 11). In these charters Magister Leonius appears among the canons most often simply as "Leonius presbyter" but the position of his name within the group of attestors is significant. Signatures were not affixed to church acts, charters and the like in random order in this period, but were arranged according to the position of the bearer within the existing ecclesiastical hierarchy, commencing with the bishop or dean and concluding with a lowly choirboy. Thus we see that by the 1190's Magister Leonius had ascended the ladder of clerical precedence to a point immediately below the eight dignitaries of Notre Dame (dean, cantor, three archdeacons, succentor, penitentiary, and chancellor). And the circle of ecclesiastics with which he dealt was an illustrious one indeed. Among the colleagues of Magister Leonius who instituted or signed the above named documents were bishop Maurice of Sully, the guiding force behind the construction of the new cathedral, bishop Odo of Sully, who promulgated the famous edict of 1198 concerning the celebration of the Feast of Fools and who established the singing of organum on this day and on the feast of St. Stephen, Dean Hugo Clemens who provided for organum on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, Peter of Poitiers, a poet and theologian of importance, and Peter the Chanter, a successor to Magister Albertus as cantor at Notre Dame and a

theologian and moralist of sufficient stature to merit a conductus in the Florence manuscript. Taken together with several of their contemporaries at Notre Dame, men such as Peter Lombard, Peter Comestor, Stephen Langton, and Philippe the Chancellor, they form an unusually brilliant array of poets, theologians, and moralists, Magister Leonius appeared as a signatory amongst his colleagues for the last time in 1201, and it is likely that he died in that year or shortly thereafter.

The connection between the musician Leonin and the aforementioned master, priest, and canon at St. Benoît and Notre Dame might to this point seem tenuous at best—perhaps there were two individuals active in Paris in these years, one the musician Magister Leoninus and another, the canon Magister Leonius. But proof that they were in fact one and the same person is found in two documents dating from 1193. These record in similar terms one minor transaction, the repossession by the canons of Notre Dame of a house near the King's palais on the Île de la Cité. Both were entered into the principal cartulary of the chapter. In each instance Leonius appears in his usual place among the canon-priest signatories immediately below the dignitaries, but now he is called Magister Leoninus presbyter.

Document 5: 1193. Regarding Nicolas, priest canon [of Notre Dame of] Paris. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen. I Michael, dean, and the entire chapter of Notre Dame of Paris wish to make known to all persons present and future that we have sold to Nicolas, priest, our colleague canon, for forty-two livres, a certain house of Notre Dame near the court of the king situated next to the house of the shoemaker Fulcon, which we obtained by means of a certain escheatage; and we invested him with it, and also, at his own request, we invested his wicked brother with it to be the peaceful possessor after his death. Now, however, said N[icolas], in the sight of God and for the salvation of his soul, gave the aforementioned house in charity to the church of Notre Dame after his death and after the death of his wicked brother; having retained to himself, as was in his power, that it might be rented in whatsoever use the church may wish. Executed publicly in our chapter in the year of the Word made incarnate 1193: signature of Michael the dean, signature of Petrus the cantor, signature of Mauricius, Osmundus and Haymericus archdeacons, signature of Galon succentor, signature of Matheus de Meudun [and] signature of master Leoninus priests, signature of Petrus de Campellis, signature of Reginaldus [and] signature of Barbedaurus deacons, signature of Adde de Barris, signature of Herluinus, and signature of Galterus de Pyssiaco subdeacons, signature of Willermus and signature of Odon, boys. Given in the hand of Petrus Pictaviensis, chancellor. Not to be overlooked is that the above said N[icolas] and after him his brother will be held to pay twelve deniers to us annually. (Paris, Archives nationales, LL 76, p. 705)

Why does the name Leonius now suddenly appear here in the diminutive, as Leoninus? Likely, as the political historian John Benton believes, because the diminutive was

employed in this period as a sign of familiarity and even longevity—that Leonin was well known to all and had been in their midst for some time. The use of the diminutive in this period is extremely rare, a fact not immediately apparent to historians of music because the names of two prominent composers of the era, Leoninus and Perotinus, are given in this form in the writings of Anonymous IV. To weigh accurately the popularity of the diminutive, however, one need only scan the index to the four volumes of cartularies of Notre Dame published by Guérard. Here only two men bearing names in this form can be identified, Prepositinus, a theologian and chancellor of Notre Dame in the late-twelfth century, and Jacobinus, a canon in the thirteenth century. Moreover, although the name Lee is itself rare in the Île de France at this time, the diminutive Leoninus is so unusual as to be unique: in the hundreds of published and unpublished documents that have passed before my eyes, I have encountered it only once, in connection with this master and canon at Notre Dame. What is most important, the form of the name given in Documents 5 and 6, "Magister Leoninus", agrees precisely with the appellation most familiar to us from the treatise of Anonymous IV. Given the activity of the composer in Paris during the last decades of the twelfth century, his association with Notre Dame, the rarity of the name Leo or Leonius, and the uniqueness of the application of the diminutive to this name, I believe we can be certain that this is the hitherto illusive Leonin.

At the time of his death in or shortly after 1201, Leonin left to the cathedral of Paris forty livres, a sizable sum at that time, which was to be used to establish a memorial office, an obit, for the salvation of his soul. The entry in the thirteenth-century obituary of Notre Dame for the date 24 March (no year is given) reads as follows (Doc. 13):

On that same day (24 March) died Magister Leonius, priest and canon colleague, who gave to us forty livres to be invested. And he ordered that all those who assisted at the major altar on the vigil [i.e. Vespers, Matins and Lauds] of his anniversary should have six deniers and those who attended Mass another six and the sacristans twelve, and if there shall be any remainder, it will be given to the account (of the office) of Matins.

Finally, I bring to your attention a document that dates from the 16th century. It is a passage from Étienne Pasquier's Recherches de la France. Pasquier (1529-1615) was a legal scholar, historian, and member of the Pléiade. He had studied the poetry of Leonin and indeed knew it from a manuscript that no longer survives today, one which evidently referred to the author as Leoninus rather than Leonius: "ie trouve que sous le rgne de

Louys septiesme vers l'an mil cent cinquante quatre nous eusmes vn braue Poete dans Paris le quel en ses oeuvres manuscrits, est tantost nommé Leoninus, tantost Leonius".

Although the poetry of Magister Leonius is not generally known today, it seems never to have disappeared completely from the literary consciousness of the French. It was copied in manuscripts as late as the fourteenth century, and was discussed, though in somewhat repetitive fashion, by historians of literature from the sixteenth century down to the present day. The nineteenth-century Histoire littéraire de la France devoted no fewer than fourteen pages to the work of "Leonius, prêtre de l'église de Paris", and even modern reference works such as Littré's Dictionnaire and Grand Larousse de la langue Française have an entry for the poet Leonin.

Today his literary legacy is preserved in at least seven different sources, six of which are now in the Bibliothèque nationale and one in the Vatican library (listed on handout). All seven manuscripts seem to have originated in Paris or its immediate environs; that is to say, all the manuscripts are in various Parisian hands and all but one of them can be shown to have belonged to Parisian libraries by at least the sixteenth century.

Although there are indeed seven extant volumes that preserve the poetry of Leonin, this is somewhat misleading, for in fact six of these books contain virtually identical versions of one work and one work only, his lengthy Hystorie sacre gestas ab origine mundi. The seventh source preserves this poetic history as well as a handful of his other poems. Since it is clear that the Acts of Sacred History was the major poetic work of Leonin, we should examine it in some detail.

In his Acts of Sacred History Leonin sets the first eight books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch plus Joshua, Judges, and Ruth) in more than 14,000 lines of hexameter verse, which he arbitrarily divided into twelve books, each approximately equal in length. His is not a line by line translation, but rather a broad, poetic transformation that dwells on the narrative aspects of the story of the people of Israel but quickly passes over the often tedious expositions of law and genealogy. Thus he moves from the end of Exodus, through Leviticus and Numbers and into Deuteronomy in a single book, but devotes two books to just the first nine chapters of Judges.

The content of the work is the same in all manuscripts, though in external appearance varies from one source to the next. Depending upon how many lines a given scribe wished to enter on a page, the Acts of Sacred History occupies as few as one hundred forty-seven folios (Latin 14759) or as many as two hundred forty-one (Reg. lat. 283).

Leonin surrounded his poetic history with a short prologue and epilogue, and in two manuscripts the prologue is itself preceded by rubric which functions as a title: Leonii presbiteri parisiensis historiarum veteris testamenti liber primus incipit ab orbe condito. Then commences the voice of the poet:

Hystorie sacre gestas ab origine mundi
 Res canere et versu facili describere conor;
 Quas habere satis moyses moysenque secuti
 Auctores mandare prose verbisque solutis
 Lege metri sed me iuvat uti carmine gratum
 Auribus ut sit opus nec sit minus utile menti
 Que brevitate metri que delectata canore
 Firmius id teneat quanto jocundius hausit.

(I strive to celebrate in song and in simple verse the acts
 of sacred history since the origin of the world
 Which Moses and his successors thought sufficient
 to set down in prose and in accustomed words
 But I take pleasure in bringing pleasing sound to the ear
 by the laws of poetry
 So that the history may be no less useful to the mind, which,
 delighted by the brevity of the poetry and by the song,
 may hold it more firmly the more it enjoys it.)

At the end of the prologue and again in his short epilogue Leonin suggests that his intent is not to tilt in the lists of exegetical disputation, an activity that consumed much of the intellectual energy of the day, but simply to instill a love of the true God into the hearts of young men (handouts, p. 2, end of first paragraph). The prologue also contains an eight-line petition to the Heavenly Father asking that the author's poetic journey progress safely (p. 1 Tu modo summus pater); and this in turn is followed by a twenty-line supplication to a high-ranking cleric who, as the epilogue later reveals, had urged the poet to undertake this labor ("Magnus adegisti monitor componere librum"). Although the identity of the prelate is not specified, he is described as the leader of an important church in an order, named obliquely in the epilogue as the monastery of St. Victor (p. 3, line 23).

Since St. Victor witnessed a revival of poetry and learning during the tenure of abbot Guérin (1173-1193), circumstances suggest that it is he whom Leonin invokes as patron and protector of his verse.

A notion of how Leonin versified the Old Testament can be had by setting his Acts of Sacred History³ against Jerome's Vulgate, which evidently served as the model, and using the well-known beginning of Genesis as a basis of comparison.

Vulgate

In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram
 Terra autem erat inanis et vacua et tenebrae super faciem abyssi et spiritus
 Dei ferebatur super aquas
 Dixitque Deus fiat lux et facta est lux
 Et vidit Deus lucem quod esset bona et divisit lucem ac tenebras
 Appellavitque lucem diem et tenebras noctem factumque est vespere et mane
 dies unus
 Dixit quoque Deus fiat firmamentum in medio aquarum et dividat aquas ab
 aquis
 Et fecit Deus firmamentum divisitque aquas quae erant sub firmamento ab
 his quae erant super firmamentum et factum est ita
 Vocavitque Deus firmamentum caelum et factum est vespere et mane dies
 secundus.

Although the new metrical treatment may make the subject easier to remember, as Leonin contends, it is clear that the poet has lost much of the beauty and precision of Jerome's original text. Indeed, his verses seem closer to the expansive glosses of Peter Comestor's Historia scholastica and Bede's In pentateuchum commentarii, a source which Leonin draws upon at various places throughout the story of Moses.

Because Leonin's approach to his subject is more expansive than reductive—such was the very nature of Parisian exegesis—he expends more than 14,000 verses yet completes only the first eight books of the Bible. But here the poet stops. He declares that he has finished the first part of his labors, rueful that this constitutes only the smaller portion of his assigned task. But rather, he says, than tax the patience of the reader ("Ne tibi sint operis lector fastidia longi fessaque"), he will tie up. And here he uses an image drawn from Vergil and other classical authors—he will drop anchor in a foreign port, even though the great sea, in this case the remainder of the Bible, lies before him. So the

³ Text not included here, but see Wright, "Leoninus," *JAMS* 39 (1986): 20.

reader is promised a second part. But apparently Leonin never wrote it, or at least no such work survives.

Leonin was not the only poet to versify the Bible in the second half of the twelfth century. At about the same time he was composing the Acts of Sacred History, another Parisian student, Petrus Riga, undertook to write a Biblia versificata. Riga was occupied with his Bible, which he called Aurora, for approximately two decades sometime between 1170 and 1200. In its final form his entire setting of the Old and New Testaments required only a few more than 15,000 lines, brevity that bespeaks a direct, simple style. His Aurora quickly became one of the most popular books of the Middle Ages, providing for Scriptural lore what Jacobus de Voragine's enormously successful Golden Legend later accomplished for hagiography. Even today the Aurora survives in no fewer than two hundred and fifty manuscripts. Leonin's Acts of Sacred History, however, achieved no such universal currency, perhaps because his writing is discursive and sometimes pretentious. While his musical Magnus liber organi was carried across the reaches of Western Europe, his poetic magnus liber, as he himself styled it ("Sintque satis magno bis sena volumino libro"), was known only in the region of Paris.

About 1200 another poet of Paris, Egidius Parisiensis, added certain supplementary materials to Petrus Riga's Aurora and prefaced it with a dedicatory letter to Bishop Odo of Sully. Not surprisingly, Egidius was also aware of Leonin's Acts of Sacred History since both were canons at the cathedral of Paris. In a supplement to his Karolinus, a didactic poem presented to the future King Louis VIII on 3 September 1200, Egidius names Leonin among the illustrious men of Paris who brought fame to their native city.

Altisoni jactet dictantem iura Philippum;
Nec minus in sacris metrico sermone Leonem
Ludentem historiis, et quem intepuisse dolemus
Petrum in diuinis verbotenus alta sequentem.

(The writing of Philippe tunes the celestial ear; not less
than Leo in his sacred histories in metrical word; and Peter
whose poetic powers, we regret, have waned.)

Here Leonin's Acts of Sacred History, called "sacrae historiae in metrico sermone" by Egidius, is praised after a reference to Philippe the Chancellor and before a somewhat disparaging mention of Petrus Riga.

If the Hystorie sacre is a grandiose attempt to transform the initial books of the Bible into ancient heroic verse, the eight remaining poems of Leonin, preserved only in BN Latin 14579, are shorter and more varied in form. Four of these are moralizing texts and four are letters of one type or another. The moralizing poems are short (sixteen, twelve, sixteen, and two lines respectively) and religious in tone. The poet contrasts the purity of the spiritual world with the innate corruption of the temporal and implicitly urges the reader to follow a life of Christian rectitude. Quod nemo in hac vita perfecta bonus vel sapiens declares that no matter how lofty man's intentions, he will always be caught in the snare of sin; Quod non sint negligenda venialia urges that venial offenses not be ignored; and De cuppa et culpa juxtaposes, by means of a delightful word play of opposites, the salutary effects of the chalice with the inevitable damnation resulting from culpable acts. Thus the tenor of these poems is not unlike the admonitory tone of many conductus and motet texts of the Notre Dame era. Philip the Chancellor's Homo qui semper moreris, for example, is thematically similar to Leonin's Quod nemo in hac vita perfecta vel sapiens. But unlike many motet and conductus texts, the moralizing poems of Leonin seem not to have been designed for liturgical or para-liturgical use: that is to say, they are general in tone and were not intended for specific feasts in the Christian calendar.

The remaining four poems are letters addressed to personages important in the life of Leonin and, therefore, they are autobiographical in content. The first of these epistolary poems, Ad Adrianum papam pro ecclesia sancti Benedicti Parisiensis, is a petition, written in rhyming hexameter couplets, to Pope Adrian IV on behalf of the collegiate church St. Benoît. The fact that the Englishman Nicolas Breakspear occupied the throne of St. Peter as Adrian IV from 1154 until 1159 conveniently provides a means to date the poem within a five-year span, and this in turn establishes that Leonin's association with St. Benoît extended back into the 1150s. In his poetic epistle the young Leonin claims to solicit papal favors not for himself, but for the poor church St. Benoît for which he evidently has some administrative responsibility:

Ad Adrianum papam pro eccelsia Sancti Benedicti

Pope Adrian, deign to hear my prayers
 Receive them with both placid will and blessed mind
 Love of novelty or levity does not motivate me
 Nor hope of useful gain
 I do not seek prebends
 Nor are honors of the Church in my prayers
 My modest, pious prayers are for the poor church
 For which I rightly labor
 As you are just, may you remember I pray for no more
 Although poverty assails me, cold supports me
 And tedium consumes me
 These do not concern me
 And I will not succumb
 Unless you withdraw from me . . .
 When from the frozen pole sent you came back
 I think that you did not know that you would
 Be made pope so quickly
 You promised to stand by me in all things
 So long as my cause was just.

The career of Nicolas Breakspear confirms the credibility of these last lines as historical fact. In 1152, prior to assuming the papal tiara, Nicolas had been sent by his predecessor, Eugenius III, as papal legate to Norway and Sweden. Upon his return to Rome in 1154 he was hailed as the apostle of the North, and later that year was elected pope. According to Leonin, it was while the papal legate was making his way back from Scandinavia to Rome, presumably via Paris, that he promised the young cleric his assistance (handouts, p. 4, end of first paragraph).

In this case the pontiff evidently did not keep his word, for the next poem of Leonin is a versified letter of thanks not to Adrian IV, but to his successor Alexander III (1159-1181). The poet suggests that before Alexander had become pope (he was cardinal chancellor from 1153 until 1159), he had opened doors for him at the Curia (p. 5, second paragraph). Now the patron has become the father. Leonin thanks the pope for both past and future gifts, and as testimony of this pontifical beneficence he cites two special favors (p. 5, paragraph 2, last five lines): a prebend granted to Leonin's intimate companion whose "special love" he enjoys and to whom he is subordinate, and an unspecified splendid gift (preclarum munus) received from King Louis VII at the urging of the pope. That Leonin may have received a benefit from Louis VII is entirely possible inasmuch as this king had been reared in the cloister of Notre Dame. Moreover, from 1162-1165

Alexander III, now a refugee from the army of Frederick Barbarossa, resided in France, mostly at Sens, south of Paris. During the Lenten season and most of the spring of 1153 the pope and his court sojourned in Paris. He conferred with Louis VII, spent Easter at Notre Dame, and is believed, though without much historical basis, to have posed the first stone of the new cathedral at this time. Thus the poem Ad Alexandrum papam actio graciarium may have been stimulated by the papal visit to Paris early in 1163.

The next of Leonin's poetic epistles, De anulo dato ab henrico cardinali, also relates to an important event in the history of Notre Dame. It is another actio gratiarum, this time to Henri de Marcy, cardinal bishop of Albano and papal legate to France from 1179 until 1189. According to the Chronicle of Limoges, it was Henri, along with Bishop Maurice of Sully, who consecrated the altar of the newly finished choir of Notre Dame on 19 May 1182. The gift of this gold ring set with rubies to canon Leonin, as well as the poem it occasioned, may date from this year but certainly not after 1189 when Cardinal Henri de Marcy died.

If the recipient of the preceding letter can be readily identified as Henri de Marcy, the receiver of Ad amicum venturum ad festum baculi cannot be determined. He is simply an unnamed friend. Leonin warmly entreats his companion to return, presumably to Paris, for the Feast of the Staff (baculus) or Feast of Fools. As is well known, the Feast of Fools had come to be celebrated at many churches in the West on Circumcision Day as a riotous parody of the sacred liturgy. At Notre Dame of Paris this festival had become so degenerate that a later papal legate to France, Petrus de Capua, chastised the bishop because "on the feast of the Circumcision of the Lord, many egregious and flagrant acts were committed, and that the holy place, which the glorious Virgin chose as her acceptable abode, is frequently defiled not only by foul language but even by bloodshed." (It was, of course, in response to this rebuke that Bishop Odo issued his famous edict of 1198 that sanctioned two, three and four-voice organum at Vespers, Matins, and Mass.) In his poem Leonin mentions the coming of the New Year, of the ceremonial passing of the staff to the newly elected Bishop of the Fools, and of the pleasant jokes and serious mysteries that the feast will engender (p. 6, after fol. 151v). His principal concern is not to describe the Feast of Fools, however, but to declare his intense friendship, even special love, for his unnamed friend. This is accomplished by using the form and syntax of a love

letter written in classical antiquity. Indeed, Ad amicum venturum as well as the preceding poem, De anulo dato, were based on classical models.

The influence of classical Latin verse in the poems of Leonin is evident even to the casual observer. His Hystorie sacre is composed in the heroic hexameters of Vergil's Aeneid, and there are phrases in it that seem to be drawn from the Aeneid and from Horace's Epistles. De Anulo dato for Cardinal Henri de Marcy manifestly has as its model a rather famous poem by Ovid contained in the Amores (II, xv). Ovid's first line "Anule, formosae digitum vincture" (Ring that art to circle the finger of my fair lady) becomes with Leonin "Anule, qui sacri datus es mihi pignus amoris" (Ring, that is to me a pledge of sacred love); and Ovid's line six "Et digitum iusto commodus orbe teras" (and press her finger with aptly adjusted circle) is transformed by Leonin into ". . . tam iusto digitum complectis orbe" (you surround my finger in an aptly adjusted circle). In a similar way Leonin's Ad amicum venturum ad festum baculi is patterned after the form of the love letter developed by Ovid in his Heroides. Compare, for example, Leonin's opening line "Hanc tibi, que sine te, rara est mihi, muto salutem" (This wish for welfare I extend to you, which without you is rare to me) and the beginning of letter sixteen Paris to Helen "Hanc tibi Priamides mitto, Ledaean, salutem" (I, son of Priam, send you, Leda's daughter this wish for welfare). Ovid's placement of the word "salus" in the accusative singular at the end of the first line characterizes several of the letters in the Heroides (numbers IV, XIII, XVI, XVIII, XIX). And in the middle of his poem Leonin again seems to draw from Ovid, now the Metamorphoses, when he says that he wishes to bind his neck to the yoke of love and his heart to that of his friend, in a love no less than that which Nisus had for Eurialus, Phoeus for Orestes, or Theseus for Pirithous. Undoubtedly Leonin borrowed many other passages from ancient authors, and these will be identified as his poetry is the subject of further study.

Renewed interest in the writers of classical antiquity was an important part of the renaissance of the twelfth century which had Paris and the cathedral of Notre Dame as its geographic center. Students in the cathedral schools and the nascent university came to know and emulate the writers of antiquity by means of model composition. After the pupil had mastered the basic grammars of Donatus and Priscian, he would practice composing verse with the aid of glosses on Priscian and other manuals of poetic

composition such as Matthew of Vendome's Ars versificatoria, written in Paris about 1175, or the somewhat later Poetria nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf. These treatises, like the later and more famous Parisiiana Poetria of John of Garland, taught the aspiring poet formal strategies and provided useful figures of speech (colores), many of which were drawn from classical writers. (It is, of course, the vocabulary of these primers in grammar and the manuals of poetic composition that was taken over wholesale by the music theorists of the thirteenth century when they sought to describe the polyphony of the period.) It is possible that Leonin came to know and borrow classical themes and phrases only from the grammatical and poetic treatises. But more likely, he knew the original works of Vergil, Ovid, and Horace, since he borrows entire forms as well as individual phrases. While we may never know the full extent of Leonin's indebtedness to the ancient writers or the medium, by which he came to know them, we can be certain that he was thoroughly versed in the laws of classical metrics.

What then was the relationship between Leonin's demonstrable familiarity with quantitative meter and the advent of the rhythmic modes? To answer this question, we perhaps need to pose another: what is the relation of his poetry to music? To begin with, this is quantitative poetry; it is not the qualitative (accentuated), rhyming, assonant isosyllabic poetry that characterized most of the new Latin verse set to music in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, namely texts for sequences, rhymed offices, conducti and motets. Moreover, none of the poetry of Leonin appears to have been set to music. In the case of the four epistles, this is not surprising since their subject matter would certainly make them inappropriate for musical settings. But the four moralizing poems are not thematically different than the texts of many conducti and motets. The moralizing poems differ from these, however, not only because they are durational rather than accentual, but also because they do not have the same number of syllables in each line or any recurring pattern of line length. In elegiac couplets, like hexameter verse, the number of syllables per line continually changes, and there are no prescriptions for metrical repetition, save that the first and last two syllables in each line must be long. This sort of poetry, one lacking metrical regularity, was ill-suited to be set to music in one of the rhythmic modes, six formulae of continually recurring durational patterns. Despite the renewed interest in

classical verse in the twelfth century, quantitative poetry incorporating classical meters seems not to have been set to music to any significant degree.

Moreover, were we to posit a direct or causal relation between Leonin's use of classical meter and the advent of the modal system, which makes its first appearance in a rudimentary state in his Magnus liber organi, we could reasonably expect some correlation between meter and rhythmic mode. The dactylic foot is the basic unit of Leonin's poetry, both in heroic hexameters and elegiac couplets, and its musical equivalent is mode three. A dactyl, however, is a duple unit, each foot consisting of a long (equal to two shorts) followed by two shorts; mode three, on the other hand, is a ternary unit, each long being equal to three shorts. What is more, mode three, while clearly known and used during Leonin's lifetime, is not employed in the body of the Magnus liber. Even when examining the latest versions of his oft revised organa, it appears that Leonin used only mode one and its extension (mode 5) and dissolution (mode 6). As a poet Leonin writes with dactylic hexameters; as a musician he composes primarily in the musical equivalent of the trochaic foot, and then only in the discant sections of his organa. In light of this we must conclude that there is little direct relationship between Leonin's poetry and music: here is a man fascinated with the process of setting and manipulating duration, yet he applies his artistic energy in two not necessarily interrelated spheres of creative activity. With regard to the interaction of poetry and measured music in this period, we must not forget that the system by which duration could be fixed and reproduced more or less identically in each successive performance can be first observed in liturgical forms that were not poetic, indeed that were textless except for an initial syllable (hence sine littera)—in the discant sections of the graduals, alleluias, and responsories of the Magnus liber. Only later was the system of the rhythmic modes extended to poetic genres such as the conductus and motet.

Finally, let us examine the last item in Leonin's collection of poetry (handouts, p. 7), the distich Quod melius sit bene quam diu vivere. It is a single elegiac couplet: "Everyone tries to live long, no one tries to live well (righteously); although everyone is able to live righteous, no one is able to live long (have control over how long he lives)." This poem, too, seems to be built according to a classical model, in this case Cicero's De senectute (On Old Age). As a comment on longevity, Quod melius provides a fitting

close to Leonin's poetic works, a collection that gives the appearance of chronological order.

Ultimately, it is the poetry of Leonin that makes possible a biographical sketch of this man and suggests the nature of education he received and the sort of mind he possessed. Leonin was likely born about 1135 and was a native of Paris, as Egidius Parisiensis attests. He was educated in the schools, undoubtedly in the cathedral schools of Notre Dame of Paris, and earned the degree of master, likely master of arts, but possibly the more advanced degree master of theology, given his interest in versifying the Bible. Because he was a licensed master, he may even have taught lectio sacra in Paris. Early in his career he served as a canon at the Left Bank collegiate church St. Benoît, but by the 1180s had been elevated to the position of canon at Notre Dame, where he remained to become one of the most senior canons. Whether owing to family origin or his own intellectual accomplishments, he gained the ear and favor of a pope, a king, and a cardinal. As a poet he was of sufficient importance to have his principal work, the Historie sacre, copied many times and praised after his death. He was active in the affairs of Notre Dame into the 1190s and even until 1201, at which point he disappears from the records.

While at first it may seem surprising that Leonin was a poet as well as a musician, in the age in which he lived it would have been surprising if he had not evidenced some poetic skill. Cantor Adam of Notre Dame (olim St. Victor; d. ca. 1145), Cantor Albert of Paris (d. ca. 1177), Chancellor Philip (d. 1236), Bishop William of Auvergne (d. 1249), canon Stephen Langton (d. 1228), and later canon Philippe de Vitry (d. 1360) were just a few of the ecclesiastics of the cathedral of Paris who manifested creative abilities in both music and poetry. To fail to acknowledge the broad range of intellectual interests and artistic talents of these men is to fail to recognize an essential element of the "Notre Dame Experience."

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1. 1179. Ego M[auricius] dei gratia parisiensis episcopus. Notum fieri volumus universis tam presentibus quam futuris quod Ascelina, abbatisa Kalensis monasterij, et totus ejusdem loci conventus, debitorum honore graviter oppresse, tres quartarios vinee quos habebant apud Sanctum Hylarium Parisius, quorum usus propter remotionem minus utilis videbatur, venditioni exposuerunt. Postea vero, oblato et accepto duodecim librarum precio **per manum magistri Leonii Sancti Benedicti Parisiensis canonici**, eandem possessionem a censu et omni pensionis honore liberam, ecclesie Sancti Benedicti et canonicis ibidem commorantibus perpetuo possidendam concesserunt. ... Actum apud Sanctum Victorem, anno incarnati verbi M°C°LXX°IX°, episcopatus vero nostri anno XX°. Archives nationales, S 891^a, dossier 5.

2. (1184-1192). Artifex est presens etas malignandi, et studet delum cudere ubi deberet simpliciter ambulare. Hac igitur consideratione ego Fulco, Dei gratia beati Germani de Pratis humilis abbas, universitati fidelium presentium pariter et futurorum notifico canonicos Sancti Benedicti, de communi assensu capituli ecclesie Beate Marie Parisiensis, quamdam vineam juxta Calceiam, quam videlicet **magister Leonius** diu tenuerat, nobis et ecclesie nostre in perpetuum habendam concessisse. Nos autem, in recompensationem et commutationem ejusdem vinee, quamdam portionem vinee apud Gibardum certis metis distinctam de communi assensu capituli nostri vice relativa eis et ipsorum ecclesie tradidimus. ... Quod ne alicujus perversitate ullatenus in posterum posset infringi. ... Signa testium ex parte nostra: Signum Roberti prioris, signum Odonis supprioris, signum Bartolomei tercii prioris, signum Ansoldi elemosinarii, signum Johannis thesaurarii. Signa ex parte illorum: Signum Hervei decani, signum Petri cantoris, signum Mauricii archidiaconi, signum Osmundi archidiaconi, signum Jerardi archidiaconi. Testes presbyteri: Galo succentor, Radulfus de Pissiac, Bernardus de Pontesia. Diaconi: Petrus de Campellis, magister Petrus Pictavensis, Hugo Clementis. Subdiaconi: Bartolomeus de Confluente, Gaufridus de Cabrosa, Robertus de Consemvilla. Archives nationales, L 782, no. 28.

3. 1187. Ego Mauritius dei gratia Parisiensis episcopus. Notum fieri volumus omnibus ad quos littere iste pervenerint quod de quaerela quam Albertus miles de Montibus et Bertrea uxor eius habebant adversus ecclesiam Sancti Victoris facta est in presentia nostraque compositio in hunc modum: ... Actum publice apud Athias in ecclesia coram altarj, anno ab incarnatione domini M°C°LXXXVII° sabbato post festum Sancti Mathie, quod ne valeat oblivione delerj sub chirographi partitione scripto et sigilli nostri impressione firmavimus testes commendavimus: Robertus prior, frater Petrus, **frater Leonius**, frater Alexander, frater Daniel, dominus Nicolaus, magister Phillipus canonicus Beate Marie, Hugo miles, Matheus, Stephanus frater eius, Azo de Mons miles. Archives nationales, LL 1450^a, fol. 147.

4. 1192. Ego Michael decanus et universum Parisiensis ecclesie capitulum. Notum fieri volumus tam presentibus quam futuris quod magister Hylduinus Parisiensis cancellarius de communj assensu nostro domunculam quamdam apud termas sitam ... tenore quod quicumque illius domus sint possessores novem solidos censuales qui de censu sepedicte domus debentur ecclesie Sancti Benedicti ad festum Sancti Remigij singulis annis solvere tenebuntur. Vero preterea triginta unum solidos Parisiensis monete persolvent canonico possidenti domos Alberti quondam precentoris que sunt in claustro Parisiensis singulis annis in octabis pasche. Hij autem xxxj solidi luminari quod fieri debet in assumptione Beate Marie sunt deputati. ... Actum publice in capitulo nostro Parisius anno verbi incarnati M°C°LXXXII° signum Mychaelis decani, signum Petri precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Hosmundi archidiaconi, signum Haimerici archidiaconi, signum Galonis succentoris presbyteri, **signum Leonij, signum Mathei presbyterorum**, signum magister Petri, signum Hugonis Clemens, signum Vostonis diaconorum,

signum Bartholomei, signum Suggestij, signum Philippi subdiaconorum, signum Henrici, signum Odonis, signum Willermij puerorum. Archives nationales, S 890°, dossier 26.

5. 1193. De domino Nicolao sacerdote canonico Parisiensis. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti amen. Ego Michael decanus totumque capitulum ecclesie Beate Marie Parisiensis. Notum fieri volumus universis presentibus et futuris nos vendidisse domino Nicholao sacerdoti concanonico nostro pro quadraginta duabus libris quamdam domum Beate Marie iuxta aulam dominij regis sitam.⁴ ... Actum publice in nostro capitulo anno verbi incarnati M°C°XC°III° signum Michaelis decani, signum Petri cantoris, signum Mauricij, signum Osmundi, signum Haymerici archidiaconorum, signum Galonis succentoris, signum Mathei de Meuduni, **signum magistri Leoninj sacerdotum**, signum Petri de Campellis, signum Reginaldi, signum Galteri Barbedauri diaconorum, signum Adde de Barris, signum Herluini, signum Gauteri de Pyssiaco subdiaconorum, signum Willermi, signum Odonis puerorum. Data per manum magistri Petri Pictaviensis cancellarij. [...] ⁵ Archives nationales, LL 76, p. 705.

6. 1193. De domino Nicolao canonico parisiensis. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti amen. Ego Michael decanus totumque capitulum [etc.] ... Actum publice in nostro capitulo anno verbi incarnati M°C°XC°III° signum Michaelis decani, signum Petri cantoris, signum Mauricij, signum Osmundi, signum Hamerici archidiaconorum, signum Galonis succentoris, signum Mathei de Meuduni, **signum magistri Leoninj sacerdotum**, signum Petri de Campellis, signum Reginaldi, signum Gauteri Barbedauri diaconorum, signum Ade de Barris, signum Herluini, signum Galteri de Pyssiaco, subdiaconorum, signum Willermi, signum Odonis puerorum. Data per manum magistri Petri Pictaviensis cancellarij. Archives nationales, LL 76, p. 791.

7. 1193. Ego Mychael Parisiensis decanus totumque eiusdem ecclesie conventus omnibus ad quod litteras presente perveniunt eternam in domino salutem. Notum fieri volumus tam presentibus quam futuris nos contraversiam novisse contra homines de Mintri et de Moiry quam de Moncello et de Tremblei de hominio corporis quod ab eis erigebamus. ... Signum Mychaelis decani, signum Petri precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Hosmundj archidiaconi, signum Haymericij archidiaconi, signum Galonis succentoris et presbyteri, **signum Leonij presbyteri**, signum Mathei presbyteri, signum Petri de Campellis, signum Mathei, signum Vosonis diaconorum, signum Helluini, signum Bartolomei, signum Henrici subdiaconorum, signum Willermi, signum Odonis puerorum. Actum publice Parisius anno verbi incarnati M°C°LXXX°III°. Archives nationales, LL 78, pp. 298-299.

8. 1195. De terris Beate Marie apud Rungiacum. ... Ego Hugo Clementis Parisiensis deaconus totumque capitulum. Notum fieri volumus universis tam presentibus quam futuris quod nos terras Beate Marie apud Rungiacum sitas quas Symon de Sancto Dyonisio quondam frater et concanonikus noster possedit. ... Quod ut ratum habeatur auctoritate sigilli nostri corroborari fecimus. Signum Hugonis de Clementis decanj, signum Petri precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Hemerici archidiaconi, signum Odonis presbyteri, **signum Leonij presbyteri**, signum Petri de Campellis diaconj, signum Willermi diaconi, signum Johannis diaconi, signum Herluini subdiaconi, signum Henrici subdiaconi, signum Bartholomei subdiaconi, signum Willermi puerj. Actum publice in capitulo nostro anno incarnatj verby M°C° nonagesimo quinto. [...] ⁶ Archives nationales, LL 78, p. 302.

⁴ Missing text published in Wright, "Leoninus," p. 33.

⁵ Ibid., p. 34.

⁶ Ibid.

9. 1196. Ego Hugo Clementis dei gratia Parisiensis decanus et eiusdem ecclesie capitulum omnibus tam futuris quam presentibus. Notum fieri volumus quod nos sana consideratione inducti pieque ac prudenter curantes ut omnis ambiguitas et contentio que poterat emergere de termino annualium Beate Marie a canonicis Sancti Victoris percipiendum. ... Signum Hugonis Clementis decanij, signum Petri precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconij, signum Hemericij archidiaconij, signum Odonis archidiaconij, signum Galonis presbyteri et succentoris, signum Nicolas presbyterij, **signum Leonij presbyterij**, signum Petri de Campellis diaconij, signum Willelmij diaconij, signum Joannis diaconij, signum Herluinj subdiaconij, signum Philippi subdiaconi, signum Henericij subdiaconij, signum Willelmij puerij. Actum publice in capitulo nostro anno incarnati verbi M^oC^oXC^oVI^o. Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 14369, fols. 564-565^v.

10. 1200. Ego H[ugo] Clementis Parisiensis ecclesie decanus totumque capituli. Notum facimus tam presentibus quam futuris quod contentio quam inter nos et hospites nostros de Theovilla ex una parte et milites de Sancto Verano et hospites suos de Braecel erat ex altera. ... Quod ut ratum habeatur et imutabile hanc cartam auctoritate sigilli nostrij et subscriptarum personarum testimoniis corroborari decrevimus. Signum Hugonis Clementis decanij, signum Roberti precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Hemericij archidiaconi, signum Odonis archidiaconi, signum Galonis presbyteri et succentoris, **signum Leonij presbyteri**, signum Gaufridij presbyteri, signum Petri de Campellis diaconij, signum Willermij diaconi, signum Johannis subdiaconi, signum Philippi subdiaconi, signum Suggestij subdiaconi, signum Philippi subdiaconi, signum Petri pueri. Actum publice in capitulo nostro anno incarnati verbi M^oCC^o. Archives nationales, LL 78, pp. 270-272.

11. 1201. Ego Hugo decanus Parisiensis totumque capitulum. Notum facimus presentibus et futuris quod Stephanus Silvanectensi decano concanonicus noster vineas quas habebat apud Lai que pertinent ad domum suam Malpino et heredibus suis in perpetuum dedit et concessit ad vendendum et impignorandum sub hoc quidem tenore quod de singulis vinearum arpennis annuatim reddet duodecim denarios censuales et tres modios vini albi de meliori vinearum. ... Signum Hugonis decani, signum Roberti precentoris signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Hamerici archidiaconi, signum Odonis archidiaconi, signum Galonis presbyteri et succentoris, **signum Leonij presbyteri**, signum Gaufridi presbyteri, signum Petrus diaconi, signum Herluini diaconi, signum Mathei diaconi, signum Suggestii subdiaconi, signum Willermi subdiaconi, signum Gaufridi subdiaconi, signum Petri pueri, signum Leobini pueri. Actum Parisius in capitulo nostro anno incarnati verbi M^oCC^o primo. Archives nationales, LL 76, p. 57.

12. 1201. Ego Hugo decanus Parisiensis totumque capitulum. Notum facimus presentibus et futuris quod canonici qui prebendas suas habent Laiaci hominibus eiusdem ville et heredibus suis in perpetuum habendas dederunt et concesserunt ad vendendum et impignorandum vineas suas eiusdem ville. ... Signum Hugonis Clementis decani, signum Roberti precentoris, signum Mauricij archidiaconi, signum Haymerici archidiaconi, signum Odonis archidiaconi, signum Galonis presbyteri et succentoris, **signum Leonij presbyteri**, signum Gaufridi presbyteri, signum Petri diaconi, signum Herluini diaconi, signum Mathei diaconi, signum Suggestij subdiaconi, signum Petri pueri, signum Leobini pueri. Actum Parisius in capitulo nostro anno incarnati verbi M^oCC^o primo. Archives nationales, LL 76, p. 81.

13. [no year given]. 24 March. ix kal. aprilis. Eodem die obiit **magister Leonius concanonicus noster et sacerdos**, qui dedit nobis quadraginta libras Parisiensis monete positas in emptione. Et statuit quod omnes maiori altari deservientes illi qui vigiliis aniversarij sui intererunt de redditibus habeant sex denarios et qui misse intererunt alios sex et matricularij duodecim et si quid residuum fuerit ad denarios matutinarum reservabitur. Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 5185CC, fol. 172.

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