

# On the manufacture and dating of the Pistoia choirbooks

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**ABSTRACT.** *Pistoia, Archivio capitolare, manuscripts C.119, C.120 and C.121 – two twelfth-century graduals and a troper from the cathedral of San Zeno – are relatively small, undecorated choirbooks copied during a time when the cathedral chapter gained unprecedented wealth, power and autonomy. This study closely connects the choirbooks to their cultural milieu and specifically to two high-ranking Pistoiese clerics who were likely involved in their manufacture. By examining the political and social environment in which they were created, this article places the manuscripts in a specific historical context and uses paleographical and historical evidence to date them between 1108 and as early as 1116.*

Pistoia, Archivio capitolare, manuscripts C.119, C.120 and C.121, two graduals and a troper from the early twelfth century, are reasonably well known to musicologists.<sup>1</sup> *Pst 119* and *Pst 120* are listed in *Le graduel romain: Les sources* and Heinrich Husmann's *Tropen-und Sequenzenhandschriften* includes entries for *Pst 121*. All three choirbooks are cited in *Corpus Troporum*.<sup>2</sup> Likely intended for everyday use at Pistoia's cathedral of San Zeno, these three chantbooks are relatively small and for the most part undecorated if strikingly beautiful in their script and notation, as Bruno Stäblein observed. Although cited here and there in the literature,<sup>3</sup> only one article treats them in any detail: Lance Brunner's study of fragments that were once part of *Pst 121*.<sup>4</sup> This article will focus exclusively on the Pistoia choirbooks and offer a contextual lens through which to view their production.

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter I will use the *Corpus Troporum* sigla (*Pst 119*, *Pst 120* and *Pst 121*) in reference to these manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic Church, *Le graduel romain; édition critique par les moines de Solesmes, Vol. 2, Les sources* (Solesmes, 1947), 115; Heinrich Husmann, *Tropen-und Sequenzenhandschriften*, Répertoire International des Sources Musicales, Series B, vol. 5:1 (Munich, 1964), 180; Ritva Jonsson, ed., *Corpus Troporum [Studia Latina Stockholmiensia]* (Stockholm, 1975–).

<sup>3</sup> Bruno Stäblein, *Schriftbild der einstimmigen Musik*, Musikgeschichte in Bildern, Band III/4 (Leipzig, 1975), 136. See also David Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Oxford, 1993), 216, 252, 254, 354, 586; Kenneth Levy, 'Latin Chant Outside the Roman Tradition,' in *The New Oxford History of Music: The Early Middle Ages to 1300*, ed. Richard Crocker and David Hiley (Oxford and New York, 1990), 79n, 101. Karlheinz Schlager's *Thematischer Katalog der ältesten Alleluia-Melodien aus Handschriften des 10. und 11 Jahrhunderts, ausgenommen das ambrosianische, alt-römische und alt-spanische Repertoire* (Munich, 1965) includes the Pistoia choirbooks among its sources and uses them for several musical examples.

<sup>4</sup> Lance Brunner, 'Two Missing Fascicles of Pistoia C.121 Recovered', in *Cantus Planus [Papers Read at the Third Meeting, Tihany]* (Budapest, 1990), 1–19.

As currently bound, the gradual *Pst 119* comprises 141 folios. It opens with Masses for the Temporale, from the second Sunday after the Epiphany through the octave of Pentecost – the opening leaves are missing. There follow Masses for the Sanctorale from St Andrew to St Clement, then the Temporale from the first Sunday after the octave of Pentecost to the twenty-third Sunday after that feast. Votive Masses, processional antiphons and other chants complete the original corpus. A fragment of an *epistolarium Pauli*, the writing of which predates the gradual, had been bound with the manuscript but was removed in 1969–70 and given the siglum ‘C.119 A’. This fragment, which is larger than the rest of *Pst 119*, once probably belonged to Pistoia, Archivio capitolare, C.122, a twelfth-century *epistolarium Pauli* that was (and remains) in the chapter library.<sup>5</sup> Some processional antiphons were also copied on these errant leaves.

The second twelfth-century gradual in the chapter library, *Pst 120*, comprises 184 folios. It is a complete gradual, the Temporale beginning with the first Sunday of Advent and continuing to the octave of Pentecost. Like *Pst 119*, the succeeding Sanctorale includes feasts from St Andrew to St Clement. The Temporale then continues with the first Sunday after Pentecost to the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost. The original corpus concludes with votive Masses, processional antiphons and other varia. Non-consecutive fragments of a second gradual book are bound after the main corpus. These closing leaves contain liturgies for the Christmas season, Trinity Sunday and Paschal time, along with votive Masses and varia. The final part of the codex is a fragment of an Office antiphoner containing parts of the night Office.

The third Pistoia choirbook, *Pst 121*, is the best preserved of the three. Its original corpus of eighty-two folios contains a troper, copied around the same time as *Pst 119* and *Pst 120*, after which is bound a mutilated fragment of an older gradual. Both the troper and the following gradual employ central Italian notation with staves of four drypoint lines. After the folio numbered 1, which preserves a troped Kyrie and appears to have been added later, there are several more with Kyrie tropes plus five untroped Glorias. The tropes and sequences that follow these chants were organised by feast, corresponding in order to those of the two Pistoia graduals described above. Unfortunately, there is a lacuna between folios 73 and 74, the Sanctus tropes break off after folio 79, and no Agnus Dei tropes remain part of the codex as presently bound. Lance Brunner filled some of these lacunae when he identified fragments in the private library of Rodrigo de Zayas (*SeZ 2*) as having come from *Pst 121*.<sup>6</sup> The first seven folios of *SeZ 2* continue seamlessly after folio 73, though there is still a lacuna before folio 74 of *Pst 121*. The remaining seven folios of *SeZ 2* complete the Sanctus and Agnus Dei tropes and contain other varia.

The three Pistoia choirbooks appear to have been copied during a volatile period in local political history and this environment likely influenced their creation,

<sup>5</sup> Giovanna Murano, Ciancarlo Savino, Stefano Zamponi, eds., *I manoscritti medievali della provincia di Pistoia* (Florence, 1998), 48.

<sup>6</sup> Brunner, ‘Two Missing Fascicles’, 4.

especially when considered in light of the cathedral chapter's rise to prominence at the time. This article will explore possible reasons for the creation of these manuscripts and make a case for connecting them to two local clerics, namely Bishop Hildebrand and Martin, the provost of the cathedral chapter. By connecting these figures to these books it is possible to propose a more specific dating than has heretofore been offered.

To put the circumstances surrounding the manufacture of these manuscripts in historical perspective, we must consider briefly the power structure in medieval Pistoia. The period of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries was transitional in Pistoia's political development as power shifted among the imperial party, the bishop, the free commune and the cathedral chapter of San Zeno. The Investiture Controversy, the Gregorian reform and the emergence of a free commune also had their impacts on Pistoia's politics, though in the end the local cathedral chapter gained control of the episcopal seat and allied itself with the increasingly powerful free commune.

In the second half of the eleventh century, the Investiture Controversy and the ecclesiastical reforms begun by Pope Gregory VII and Peter Damian coloured both ecclesiastical and secular politics in Europe, particularly in present-day Germany and Italy. The reformers wanted to end, or at least curtail, the practice of simony and to abolish clerical marriage. They advocated a return to the ideals of St Benedict and urged the clergy to live corporately according to one of several sets of guidelines, of which the Rule of St Benedict was the strictest. Furthermore, Gregory VII and his allies sought to rid the Church of lay control, an initiative that brought them into conflict with the Holy Roman Emperor and the imperial party. The emperor and his nobles had long exercised control over the Church by appointing relatives and allies to high ecclesiastical posts, including Pistoia's episcopate. Secular authorities understandably sought to retain the privilege of investing high-ranking clerics with offices and grants of church property.

It was precisely during the last quarter of the eleventh century that Hildebrand and Martin were resident at the cathedral of San Zeno before reaching their highest ecclesiastical ranks, bishop and provost respectively. This same period saw the papacy and the reform party gain the upper hand in 'the crisis of church and state', as Brian Tierney has called it.<sup>7</sup> The widely held view that Pope Urban II, once he had been generally recognised as the legitimate pontiff, abandoned more flexible, 'opportunistic' policies in favour of more 'rigorously Gregorian' ones suggests the growing power and confidence of the reform party and the papacy.<sup>8</sup> In 1080, Henry IV was excommunicated and deposed for the second time; the Council of 1095 at Piacenza was a triumphal success for the papacy.<sup>9</sup> In the same year, at the Council of Clermont, Urban II called for the first crusade against the Seljuk Turks, a decree that

<sup>7</sup> Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300* (Toronto, 1988).

<sup>8</sup> Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia, 1988), 140.

<sup>9</sup> Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 138.

drew an enthusiastic popular response.<sup>10</sup> By the time of Urban II's death in 1099, the crusaders had taken the city of Jerusalem. In short, the papacy was stronger than ever. Indeed, Uta-Renate Blumenthal goes so far as to write that, in the late eleventh century, 'the kings of Europe were reduced to marginal players'.<sup>11</sup> The imperial party was weakened further when Henry IV's son opposed him in 1104, forcing the emperor to abdicate and it was not until the Concordat of Worms in 1122 that the Investiture Controversy was resolved fully.<sup>12</sup> The emperor renounced his right to name bishops but preserved the ability to influence episcopal elections, even maintaining the right to decide disputed ones.<sup>13</sup>

So the larger political context of Hildebrand and Martin's rise through the ecclesiastical hierarchy at San Zeno was one of weakening imperial power over the Church, increasing papal authority, and popular support for both the pope and the ecclesiastical reformers. This dynamic was intensified in Tuscany by Urban II's strong alliance with the countess Matilda of Canossa. Thus when the two Pistoiese clerics became bishop and provost in the early twelfth century, it seemed that not only was the Church winning the Investiture Controversy, but also that reconciliation with the emperor was likely. Hildebrand's election, which will be discussed later, only highlighted weakening imperial power and ecclesiastical hegemony. From a modern vantage point, the Concordat of Worms allowed the emperor considerable influence over Church affairs, but this was not the world of Hildebrand and Martin. Particularly in Tuscany, theirs was a time of confidence throughout the Church, a time ripe for projects such as rebuilding the cathedral, increasing the chapter's wealth and land holdings, and copying new liturgical manuscripts for San Zeno.

In addition to the Investiture Controversy, the rise of the Italian communes shaped the political landscape at Pistoia. In the pre-communal and early communal periods, the bishop was the city's leading temporal and spiritual authority, a role that sometimes put him at odds with noble families (other than his own) as well as urban and rural landholders.<sup>14</sup> The commune that grew out of this factionalism was flexible, careful at first not to assert too much power, leaving largely unchallenged ecclesiastical rights of exaction and control.<sup>15</sup> One of the earliest of the Italian communes, Pistoia's 'free commune of lay landholders' was first mentioned in 1105, and had communal statutes as early as 1107.<sup>16</sup> George Dameron notes that in order for Pistoia's commune to extend its control to the *contado* it had to overcome the power of the bishop.<sup>17</sup> This suggests that the bishop, not the communal government,

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>12</sup> William Chester Jordan, *Europe in the High Middle Ages* (New York, 2001), 99.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society, 400–1000* (Ann Arbor, 1989), 189.

<sup>15</sup> Giovanni Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule* (Cambridge, 1989), 190. These rights included control over markets, weights and measures, and sites of tolls.

<sup>16</sup> Jeanne Krochalis, 'Pistoia', in Christopher Kleinhenz, ed., *Medieval Italy: An Encyclopedia* (New York and London, 2003), 916–17.

<sup>17</sup> George W. Dameron, *Episcopal Power and Florentine Society, 1000–1320* (Cambridge, MA, 1991), 66.

retained true authority, at least at first. Even when the commune later controlled the city and the land approximately four miles around it, the episcopate continued to hold land in the countryside beyond.

The communal government gained prominence steadily in the early twelfth century while the imperial party to which the bishop's position was tied declined. Pistoiese notaries began to omit the emperor's name and the year of his reign from charters and other documents, a sign of weakening imperial authority.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Pistoia sought to reorient itself politically towards its neighbours Lucca and Pisa, which were also becoming communes. Pistoia had a fully functioning communal government by the first decade of the twelfth century.<sup>19</sup> Still, during the earlier period from which the choirbooks *Pst 119*, *Pst 120* and *Pst 121* date, the bishops of Pistoia, including Hildebrand, held considerable sway over both city and *contado*.<sup>20</sup>

The cathedral chapter was also becoming a major power broker in the diocese. As it grew in size and wealth, it came to be designated as a *capitulum* with increasing frequency in wills, charters and other notarial documents.<sup>21</sup> This nominal distinction suggests that the clerical corporation at San Zeno was large enough to be organised as a formal cathedral chapter.<sup>22</sup> They also gained increased control over their property and finances, which the bishop had likely controlled previously. It became the provost, rather than the bishop, who executed rentals of chapter property after 1065 and made acquisitions on behalf of the chapter as early as 1074.<sup>23</sup> Although the bishop remained the most powerful figure in the late eleventh-century diocese of Pistoia, his position was still linked to a weakening imperial party. Prior to the emergence of a strong communal government, the cathedral chapter wielded considerable power and by the dawn of the twelfth century the canons were in full control of *mensa canonica*.

Another major development in the chapter's history was the canons' acceptance of the *vita communis*. This may simply have been an internal decision of the increasingly independent cathedral chapter, parallel to current reform trends across Tuscany and the Church at large.<sup>24</sup> Still, the canons adopted not the strict *vita communis* advocated by the Lateran Synod of 1059, but the more liberal Rule of Aachen,<sup>25</sup> a twelfth-century copy of which is preserved in codex C.115 of the cathedral chapter's library. This rule allowed the canons to hold private possessions

<sup>18</sup> Luigi Chiappelli, 'Disegno della più antica storia di Pistoia', *Bullettino Storico Pistoiese*, 19 (1917), 129–60, at 145. Chiappelli also identified a decrease in Germanic names and an increase in vernacular language in notarial and other documents as further evidence of weakening imperial influence.

<sup>19</sup> Chiappelli, 'Disegno', 148.

<sup>20</sup> Dameron's work also makes it clear that this intermediate stage on the path to the free commune, during which the bishop controlled the city, seems to have been fairly common in Tuscany, having been experienced by Massa Marittima, Arezzo and Volterra, in addition to Pistoia.

<sup>21</sup> Natale Rauty, ed., *Regesta Chartarum Pistoriensium: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XII* (Pistoia, 1995), XXIII.

<sup>22</sup> Yoram Milo, 'From Imperial Hegemony to the Commune: Reform in Pistoia's Cathedral Chapter and its Political Impact', in *Istituzioni Ecclesiastiche della Toscana Medioevale*, ed. Chris Wickham *et al.* (Galatina, 1980), 87–107, at 97.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 95n.

and enabled them to amass considerable wealth and property, which in turn helped the chapter gain influence and power. In addition, the citizens and the commune of Pistoia generously supported the canons living the *vita communis*, as evidenced by numerous donations in the later eleventh century. This outpouring of civic support seems to have been an attempt by the emerging commune to ally itself with a religious institution other than the episcopate, which was the commune's main competition for control of the city, a position that the ecclesiastical post's imperial ties complicated. As Hildebrand and Martin advanced in their clerical careers at San Zeno, the Gregorian reforms and conflict between the imperial party and the commune afforded for the cathedral chapter a golden opportunity to become one of the most wealthy and prominent landholders in the *contado*.<sup>26</sup>

Allied with the commune and bolstered by its support, the cathedral chapter found itself in a position to challenge the imperial party, at least in the selection of a bishop. In 1105, Hildebrand was elected Pistoia's bishop, a position he held until at least 1131. His election and episcopate are historically significant for three reasons.<sup>27</sup> First, Hildebrand appears to have been the first bishop elected from among the canons of San Zeno, clear evidence of a shift in power. Exercising the same independence that had allowed them to wrest control of chapter affairs from the bishop, the canons had evidently stripped from the imperial party the power to impose an outsider on the diocese. This development is not altogether surprising given the broader context of the Investiture Controversy and the Church's popularity in the wake of the first Crusade and the Gregorian reforms, but was nonetheless a major event in the chapter's history. Second, Hildebrand played a leading role in the reconstruction of the cathedral, not just as bishop but also previously as *primicerius*, a post he held from 1076 until his election.<sup>28</sup> The cathedral of San Zeno, still being rebuilt in the aftermath of a 1048 blaze, was again damaged by fire in 1108 during Hildebrand's tenure as bishop. As we shall see, the cathedral's reconstruction was likely connected to the copying of the Pistoia choirbooks.<sup>29</sup> Third, it was during Hildebrand's episcopate that the cathedral and its institutions reached the height of their wealth, power and prestige in the medieval period.

However, the favourable relationship between cathedral and commune in the late eleventh century did not last. Perhaps because of the chapter's wealth and power during the early twelfth century, the civic authorities sought to exert increased control over the canons, binding them to communal law and requiring the consent of civic authorities for transactions involving the landed wealth of the chapter.<sup>30</sup> By the end of the twelfth century the commune had surpassed the bishop and cathedral chapter as the most powerful institution in the *contado*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>27</sup> Rauty, *RCP: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XII*, 78.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Krochalis, 'Pistoia', 917. An 1114 document reveals that Count Guido and Countess Emilia ordered the construction of a water channel for the building works, indicating that work on the cathedral was still not finished.

<sup>30</sup> Natale Rauty and Giancarlo Savino, eds., *Lo Statuto dei Consoli del Comune di Pistoia: Frammento del Secolo XII* (Pistoia, 1977), 42; Milo, 'From Imperial Hegemony', 103n.

Deeply immersed in politics, the cathedral chapter had stepped into the power vacuum created by a weakening imperial party during the formative period in the commune's development. It was between 1060 and 1135 that *Pst 119*, *120* and *121* were created: that is, precisely when the bishop and the cathedral chapter were at their most powerful. The usual dating of these manuscripts, which not surprisingly corresponds neatly with the height of the chapter's influence, is 'late eleventh or early twelfth century'. A number of scholars have simply accepted this dating, which is provided in *Le graduel romain*.<sup>31</sup> An exception is Natale Rauty's study of saints' cults at Pistoia, which dates *Pst 119* and *Pst 120* to the 'first quarter of the twelfth century'.<sup>32</sup> I would like to propose an even narrower window for the copying of the Pistoia codices between 1108 and 1127.

*Pst 119*, *Pst 120* and *Pst 121* were all copied at approximately the same time and in the same scriptorium. Several features common to all three codices support this assertion. The two graduals are almost identical in content, and the repertory of the troper provides accretions to the liturgies in *Pst 119* and *Pst 120*. All three manuscripts appear to have been written in the same hand, or very similar ones, and are approximately the same size: 26 by 19 centimetres, 28 by 19 centimetres, and 26 by 18 centimetres respectively. While the manuscripts have almost certainly been trimmed, the writing area is consistent in size from manuscript to manuscript.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the striking uniformity of the dry point lines – 4 millimetres apart – in all three codices also suggests that the parchment was ruled at the same time and with the same guide.

Grouping them as a unit, we must now establish a *terminus ante quem non* for the copying of the manuscripts. It is possible that Hildebrand was one of the driving forces behind the production of the choirbooks, and that he exerted this influence after becoming bishop in 1105. Hildebrand had been *primicerius* of the cathedral from 1076 until his episcopal election, a title that has been connected to music since its earliest appearance in the eighth century, referring to the leader of the Roman *schola cantorum*. In some medieval cathedrals, the *primicerius* served in several capacities, including various combinations of choirmaster, conductor, singer and singing instructor.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the title was not exclusive to the head of the *schola cantorum* at Rome; it was borne frequently by the heads of other choirs in churches and monasteries.<sup>35</sup> Thus, in his capacity as *primicerius* of San Zeno, Hildebrand would have served as the principal liturgical officer of the cathedral. In addition to overseeing music and liturgy, he may have led the choir and supervised the training of singers, although mention of a cantor in chapter documents suggests instead that Hildebrand's role was mainly one of oversight and administration. The

<sup>31</sup> Catholic Church, *Le graduel romain*, 115.

<sup>32</sup> Natale Rauty, *Il culto dei santi a Pistoia nel medioevo* (Florence, 2000), preliminary plate II.

<sup>33</sup> Brunner, 'Two Missing Fascicles', 6. Brunner comments on the trimming of the parchment, not on the consistency of the writing area.

<sup>34</sup> Frank A. D'Accone, *The Civic Muse: Music and Musicians in Siena during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Chicago, 1997), 29–30.

<sup>35</sup> Hugh Alexander Douglas, 'Notes on the History of the Pontifical Singers', *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, 11 (1910), 447.

maintenance and custody of liturgical manuscripts, then, would likely have been among his responsibilities. Holding the position of *primicerius* for at least thirty years, Hildebrand would surely have taken an interest in supplying chantbooks for the choir.

Hildebrand's episcopal election likely provided him with the authority to act on his concerns in a more direct manner than he could even have done as *primicerius*. As the first bishop elected from among the canons, he doubtless enjoyed the support and esteem of the cathedral chapter. This, coupled with episcopal authority, suggests that Hildebrand wielded considerable power within the ecclesiastical community at Pistoia. He was, it seems, one of the most powerful bishops in Pistoia's history, and certainly in a position to facilitate the provision of choirbooks for a *schola cantorum* with which he had such a long history.

Hildebrand was not, however, the only high-ranking member of the ecclesiastical community at San Zeno who during this period can be linked to the choirbooks. The literary and manuscript culture of the period reveals another possible collaborator, a certain notary named Martin. Both Natale Rauty and Giancarlo Savino have confirmed the existence of an active scriptorium connected with the cathedral at Pistoia in the twelfth century.<sup>36</sup> The nucleus of the Archivio capitolare consisted of about forty codices from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, written with 'a type of letters along the lines of the Caroline minuscule'.<sup>37</sup> In addition to manuscripts such as the choirbooks, which preserve a record of the liturgy and music at San Zeno, the Archivio capitolare contains a variety of scriptural and ecclesiastical texts. Glosed copies of the Old and New Testaments, the Catholic Letters, and writings of Church Fathers such as Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory I and Cyprian suggest a sophisticated level of theological discourse within the cathedral chapter. This is supported further by the sermons, commentaries and canon law documents found in the library. Manuscript C.100 of the Archivio capitolare also makes clear that plainchant was being studied, taught and possibly composed at San Zeno: the twelfth-century codex contains Guido d'Arezzo's *Micrologus*, *Prologus in antiphonarium* and *Epistola de ignoto cantu*, as well as Odo of Cluny's *Dialogus de musica*.

In 1076, the same year Hildebrand is first recorded as the *primicerius* of the *schola cantorum*, Martin, a notary who spent his entire professional life in the orbit of the canons of San Zeno, began work at the cathedral.<sup>38</sup> Martin was educated in the school of copyists of the chapter's library, and appears to have gained notable proficiency in the cursive minuscule.<sup>39</sup> He also seems to have been more than just a notary: according to Rauty, Martin received more rigorous instruction than other notaries and had a greater command of the Latin language than did the typical notary.<sup>40</sup> Of particular bearing on this discussion is the fact that Martin adopted a

<sup>36</sup> Natale Rauty, *Storia di Pistoia*, I (Florence, 1988), 318.; Giancarlo Savino, 'La libreria della cattedrale di San Zenone: nel suo più antico inventario', *Bullettino storico pistoiese*, 79 (1987), 25.

<sup>37</sup> Rauty, *Storia di Pistoia*, I: 349: 'tipo di littera antiqua nel solco della carolina'.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*



type of script that was very near the Caroline script or *littera antiqua* with which the twelfth-century codices of the Archivio capitolare at Pistoia are copied.<sup>41</sup> Martin's activity as a notary ended in 1104, when he became provost of the canons of San Zeno, just a year before Hildebrand was elected bishop of the diocese. As provost, he launched a major project, a massive compilation of charters and other notarial documents that provided evidence of the chapter's land assets, a codex that came to be known as the *Libro Croce*.<sup>42</sup> A project of this scope suggests that the scriptorium at Pistoia certainly had the resources in the early twelfth century to produce three utilitarian choirbooks, and Martin was clearly willing to assign large scriptorial undertakings, evidenced not only by the *Libro Croce* but also by the other contemporary codices in the Archivio capitolare. Martin is listed as provost in May 1116, but another provost does not appear in chapter records until 1127.<sup>43</sup>

At the very least, Martin was connected closely with the scriptorium at San Zeno during the period in which the three Pistoia codices were copied. He had been trained there, had worked as a notary for the canons, and eventually became not only a canon but also the provost of the college of canons. It is also certain that he taught at the chapter school, which had existed since the ninth century.<sup>44</sup> While the contents of the chapter library seem to focus on materials to prepare the student for a clerical career and that was certainly one function of the cathedral school, it also served to train notaries and scribes.<sup>45</sup> These students also appear to have remained, like Martin, in Pistoia: Martin assigned one of his students, Gualberto, to draft the *Libro Croce*;<sup>46</sup> the document was later finished by another Pistoiese notary, Domiziano.<sup>47</sup> Martin has been credited with reforming the style of handwriting at the scriptorium at San Zeno, specifically the 'evolution from cursive to an elegant Caroline minuscule'.<sup>48</sup> He is also identified as the first Pistoiese notary to use this particular script in notarial documents, 'starting a radical change of writing' in the evolution from the Antique cursive.<sup>49</sup>

This change in handwriting may be observed in the charters and wills of both the cathedral chapter and the bishops preserved in *Diplomatico* of the Archivio di Stato, Firenze, as well as in documents redacted by cathedral notaries for other ecclesiastical institutions in the region. The Pistoiese notaries of the eleventh century generally used cursive scripts, often lengthening ascenders and descenders in a manner somewhat reminiscent of Merovingian chancery practice or Luxeuil minuscule. This is particularly evident in the hand of the notary Bonus, active from as early as 1062 to 1094, and in Martin's earlier documents. In fact, the similarities in

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Rauty, *RCP: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XII*, xxvii.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxi–ii.

<sup>44</sup> Rauty, *Storia di Pistoia*, I: 353. After 1160, the designation *magister* appears in chapter documents, further confirming the existence of a school.

<sup>45</sup> Rauty, *Storia di Pistoia*, I: 353.

<sup>46</sup> Rauty, *RCP: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XII*, vi.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxvii.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, vi.

handwriting between Bonus and Martin make one wonder if perhaps Bonus was one of the younger notary's teachers at the cathedral school. Martin's notarial documents show the evolution of handwriting at Pistoia clearly, one of his earliest documents being a *livellus* redacted at Pistoia on 18 September 1076 for the cathedral chapter.<sup>50</sup> The hand here is distinguished by lengthened ascenders and descenders, a marked upright aspect, and a careful ductus. The script, while cursive, already shows separation between letters, and the spacing between lines makes the text easily legible. Twenty-five years later, in 1101, another *livellus* redacted by Martin displays the same attention to detail and legibility, with two significant changes.<sup>51</sup> First, the notary adopted a script much closer to Caroline minuscule than the cursive of his youth, evidence of what would become the predominant style of writing at the Pistoiese duomo. Second, Martin used an Uncial 'M' for the initial letter of his signature instead of a cursive capital, a practice he likely began before 1089, its earliest dateable appearance. Furthermore, Uncial capitals appear occasionally in Martin's notarial documents as early as 1082, and with increasing frequency. This seems to be limited at first to the letter 'E' and to the main texts, but by 1088, Uncial 'Ms' begin to appear in both indiction and main text. Although common in books and more decorated documents, the combination of Uncial capitals with Caroline minuscule script was not the norm for notarial documents. Although one should not read too much into such a detail, the use of Uncial capitals in notarial documents could indicate that Martin's role in the scriptorium and chapter school included some aspects of manuscript production as well, perhaps as a teacher, scribe, supervisor, or a combination thereof.

Although it would be convenient to ascribe the texts of *Pst 119*, *Pst 120* and *Pst 121* to Martin's hand, this is almost certainly not the case. Martin would likely have been too high ranking a figure at the cathedral and far too busy with his administrative duties as provost of the powerful cathedral chapter – dealing primarily with the maintenance and acquisition of the chapter's property – to copy three choirbooks for the *schola cantorum*. The similarity, as mentioned above, between his Caroline script and the hands of several of the twelfth-century codices of the chapter's library suggests not that he was himself the scribe of the choirbooks, but rather that one or perhaps several of his students copied them. While comparing notarial and book hands is certainly not a parallel appraisal, the choirbooks show the same upright aspect, open vertical spacing, and meticulous, regular ductus evident in Martin's hand, as well as the Caroline minuscule that Martin had championed during his tenure as a notary. Like Hildebrand's relationship with the *schola cantorum*, Martin was deeply embedded in the fabric of the scriptorium. A relatively permanent fixture there from his youth, Martin was a pivotal figure in that institution's development through his work as a notary and as a teacher. In fact, given his many contributions to the written culture at Pistoia, especially his promotion of the use of Caroline minuscule script, it would be reasonable to call him the father of the twelfth-century Pistoiese scriptorium.

<sup>50</sup> ASE, *Diplomatico*, Pistoia, San Zeno (cattedrale, capitolo), i.d. 00001560.

<sup>51</sup> ASE, *Diplomatico*, Pistoia, San Zeno (cattedrale, capitolo), i.d. 00002944.

On becoming provost in 1104, Martin gained a position of considerable power and influence, one that likely afforded him some control over what manuscripts were being produced in the scriptorium. We need only look to the *Libro Croce* as evidence of such control. Just as Hildebrand's long tenure as *primicerius* links him to the choirbooks, Martin is connected to them through his activity in the scriptorium. Moreover, as Hildebrand's past would surely have interested him in supplying liturgical books for the choir, Martin's past would have surely interested him in the production of those books.

Hildebrand and Martin also share a suggestively similar career timeline: Hildebrand became *primicerius* of the choir in 1076, the same year that Martin began his work as a notary. Hildebrand was elected as bishop in 1105, less than a year after Martin ceased his notarial duties to become provost of the cathedral chapter. The two men obviously knew each other, both being canons at the cathedral and both having been active together at San Zeno for forty years before reaching their respective high ranks. In fact, several notarial documents written by Martin at various points in his career list Hildebrand as a witness, placing them together in the same room on 18 September 1076,<sup>52</sup> on April 1085<sup>53</sup> and on 27 May 1086.<sup>54</sup> From this vantage point, it seems increasingly likely that both bishop and provost share the credit as the administrators responsible for the copying of the Pistoia choirbooks.

It is also possible that the Pistoia choirbooks were copied to replace items damaged or lost in the 1108 fire at the cathedral. The fragment from C.122 once bound with *Pst 119* makes reference to 'Zeno patronus' on the first folio, suggesting Pistoiese origin, and it appears to be older and in much poorer condition than the main corpus of the choirbook *Pst 119*. Furthermore, the remnants of a second gradual and an Office antiphoner that are bound after the main corpus of *Pst 120* also appear older and in poor condition, like the fragmentary manuscript C.119 A. These fragments are similar to the Pistoia choirbooks in handwriting – a beautiful combination of careful Caroline minuscule script and generous vertical spacing – and musical notation. Also on a four-line staff of drypoint lines, they likely date from the late eleventh or early twelfth century, a relatively short time before *Pst 119*, *Pst 120* and *Pst 121*. Part of yet another gradual is bound together with the main corpus of *Pst 121*. It too is in very poor condition, most folios being partially unreadable. The fragment shares the palaeographical characteristics of the other Pistoiese manuscripts, although it appears to have been copied less carefully than the fragment bound with *Pst 120*. Finally, two folios of a Pistoiese troper-proser that likely predates *Pst 121* are housed in the archive of the Institute for Russian History in St Petersburg under the siglum Koll. 47 Nr. 626/27 (*SpA 27*).<sup>55</sup> Viatcheslav Kartsovnik identifies the damaged, partially illegible fragment as of Pistoiese

<sup>52</sup> ASF, *Diplomatico*, Pistoia, San Zeno (cattedrale, capitolo), i.d. 00001560.

<sup>53</sup> ASF, *Diplomatico*, Pistoia, San Zeno (cattedrale, capitolo), i.d. 00002095.

<sup>54</sup> Natale Rauty, ed. *Regesta Chartarum Pistoriensium: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XI* (Pistoia, 1985), 188.

<sup>55</sup> Viatcheslav Kartsovnik, 'Zur Tropen-und Sequenzenüberlieferung im mittelalterlichen Pistoia: Ein Neumenfragment aus Sankt Petersburg', *Musica e Storia*, 5 (1997), 6. Hereafter I will refer to the fragment by Kartsovnik's siglum, *SpA 27*, which is consistent with the formatting of the *Corpus Troporum* series.

provenance through its handwriting, musical notation and the ruling of the drypoint lines, noting that *SpA 27* and *Pst 121* are ‘remarkably similar in character forms and codicological details’.<sup>56</sup> The fragment, which Kartsovnik dates to the late eleventh or early twelfth century, contains repertory also found in *Pst 121*, indicating that in addition to the sources and fragments discussed above, a troper was copied at Pistoia a relatively short time before *Pst 121*.

Collectively, these items might represent the surviving portions of manuscripts damaged in the fire, their condition suggesting the need for replacement choirbooks. This idea is supported further by the parallel nature of the Pistoia choirbooks and the earlier Pistoiese fragments extant: the fragments reveal that in the late eleventh or early twelfth century, two graduals, an Office antiphoner and a troper were copied or owned by the San Zeno cathedral chapter. With the Pistoia choirbooks, two graduals and a troper, the canons seem to have replaced in one large project exactly what was lost or damaged, although there is no surviving evidence that a replacement Office antiphoner was part of that effort. That the choirbooks *Pst 119*, *120* and *Pst 121* would have been copied shortly after the extant fragments suggests strongly that some unexpected event – such as a fire – made it necessary to replace relatively new choirbooks all at once.

It is generally agreed that the Pistoia choirbooks were in existence by the end of the twelfth century. Most likely they were copied before 1140, when Bishop Atto transferred a relic of St James from Compostela to Pistoia. St James became the patron saint of the city and quickly achieved a status higher than the cathedral’s patron, San Zeno. The *Cappella di San Jacopo* in the cathedral was consecrated in 1145, and the *Opera San Jacopo* was founded soon after.<sup>57</sup> None of the codices, however, reflect St James’s new status in the city of Pistoia. On the contrary, the graduals *Pst 119* and *Pst 120* show only the modestly larger capitals and rubrics befitting any feast day of similar rank.<sup>58</sup> Had the manuscripts been copied after the transfer of relics, one might have expected at least some decoration for a feast so important to the city. I have already advanced the hypothesis that Hildebrand and Martin were driving forces behind the copying of the manuscripts. Since Hildebrand died around 1131 and a new provost is mentioned in 1127, I suggest that codices date from before 1127. This places the creation of the choirbooks between 1108 and 1127. As I have mentioned, the latest extant document referring to Martin as provost is dated May 1116, which may indicate that the manuscripts were copied before this date.<sup>59</sup> Regardless of whether a *terminus post quem non* is established at 1127 or 1116, this is much a narrower time frame than previously offered.

In this article, I have proposed a likely scenario for the copying of the Pistoia choirbooks. I have attempted to link the sources to a distinctive period of Pistoiese history, one that saw unprecedented power concentrated in the hands of the only institution in Pistoia likely to have undertaken the manufacture of such items – the

<sup>56</sup> Kartsovnik, ‘Zur Tropen-und Sequenzenüberlieferung’, 8.

<sup>57</sup> Krochalis, ‘Pistoia’, 918.

<sup>58</sup> Pistoia, Archivio capitolare, C.119, f. 98r, and Pistoia, Archivio capitolare, C.120, f. 116v.

<sup>59</sup> Rauty, *RCP: Canonica di S. Zenone, secolo XII*, 51.

cathedral chapter. It is also probable that this power manifested itself in life at the cathedral through the acquisition of wealth and real estate, rebuilding at the cathedral, and manuscript production. It is my hope that this framework elucidates the historical context in which the scriptorium at San Zeno flourished, producing not just the three choirbooks at the heart of this study, but also the extant fragments bound with them, as well as other twelfth-century codices in the chapter's library.

While the scribe or scribes of the codices may never be identified, two major historical figures at the cathedral can be connected with the choirbooks. The bishop Hildebrand had an enduring and close relationship with the choir and the *schola cantorum*. Martin, provost of the chapter during the early twelfth century, was an integral part of the scriptorium and the culture of letters at Pistoia, specifically in the area of handwriting development. After the 1108 fire at the cathedral, Hildebrand and Martin had the obligation and the resources to ensure that liturgical manuscripts damaged or lost in that catastrophe were replaced. They held the two most powerful positions in the ecclesiastical community at San Zeno, positions magnified by the power concentrated in the cathedral chapter during the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. The manuscripts and extant fragments themselves support this theory, through both their condition and contents. When the historical and palaeographical evidence discussed in this study is taken into account, the Pistoia choirbooks can be dated to the period between 1108 and 1127 with reasonable certainty, and perhaps even between 1108 and 1116.

Although it was not without unique characteristics, Pistoia was indeed a fairly typical medieval Italian diocese for a city of its size and status, and as such it can be a valuable case study. A thorough study of its ecclesiastical institutions, liturgy and music will contribute to a better understanding of other musical and ecclesiastical institutions. Further investigation may shed more light not only on manuscript production at San Zeno, but also on the historical, cultural and ecclesiastical environment in which those sources were created.