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## Capistrano Project

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To understand and use Ottokar Bonmann's material is a big, hard job. The most absurd we could do would be to do it twice. In order to publish "A Provisional Calendar of St. John Capistran's Correspondence," *Franciscan Studies* 49, 50, 52 (1989, 1990, 1992), 255-345, 321-403, 283-327, Gedeon Gal and Jason M. Miskuly did a complete investigation of OB's material. The first thing we must do is to use the very precious information one can find in these 3 articles. What do we learn?

### 1. About John of Capistrano's works *status quaestionis*

- JoC's letters against the Hussites are preserved in 20 mss (cf. list in *FS*, 50, p. 390-403)
- part of the letters of JoC is preserved in Capistrano Franciscan Convent in 4 volumes: A (letters 74-172), B (173-286), C (287-375), D (376-482)
- 50 letters were recopied in the XVth Century by Alessandro Ricci, *Chronica Ordinis Minorum*, L'Aquila, Archivio di Stato, cod. 73
- L. Wadding included 140 letters in vol. 11-13 of the *Annales Minorum*
- 100 of these letters published by Wadding were recopied in the *Liber epistolarum* in the XVIIth Century: the best ms is Roma. Biblioteca nazionale, cod. 2468 (Gesuitici 339)
- Antonio Sessa inserted 200 letters in his *Opera omnia sancti Iohannis a Capistrano*, end of the XVIIth Century. Sessa's collection is available in facsimile (Roma-L'Aquila, Provincia San Bernardino da Siena in Abruzzo, 1985).

### 2. About Ottokar Bonmann's studies

- he worked about Capistrano Project from 1952 to 1977
- he revised J. Hofers's *Johannes Kapistran* (Innsbruck, 1936) in order to produce a new edition Heidelberg, 1964-1965, 2 vol.
- he left a *schedarium* containing between 25/30,000 index cards
- he left 6 x 4 drawers
- in the drawers, the information about each letter is kept in an envelop (often, transcription by Hofer, then typewritten by OB)
- these envelops are numbered, sometime twice (a number in the center, another in the upper right hand corner)
- some letters are sufficiently examined
- some ones are ready for an article
- others require further study ("noch zu bearbeiten")
- 70 envelops contain no letters, but notes of Hofer or OB about illegible letters
- OB established the list of the lost letters
- he didn't know what to do with the always identical 80 letters of affiliation or confraternity, or Capistrano's responses to juridical queries

- he left a 608 pages provisional catalog (a full page for each letter) with date, address, location of mss, observations (but without inc., expl. and registers)
- OB inherited from Hofer the list of the Capistrano's Hussite correspondence (12 legal-size typewritten pages)
- OB left 2 unfinished articles with the same title: "Was ist ein Brief?".

### **3. Gal and Miskuly's publication**

- Gedeon Gal and Jason M. Miskuly published "A Provisional Calendar" in *Franciscan Studies* 49, 50, 52
- the PC is based on OB's envelops, more some letters discovered by Piana and Mascia or listed by Chiappini
- some envelops may have been lost or misplaced
- the PC gives indications on 667 letters: date and place of composition, writer and addressee, inc. and expl., register, mss, eds, number of OB's envelop, published or not, copied or not by OB (handwritten or typed)
- in *FS* 50, p. 390-403, they publish the mss of Capistrano's Hussite correspondence with reference to the number of the PC
- 90 % of the published letters are available at the FI in Xerox copies sent by C. Cenci.

I give frankly my advice: the 2 scholars, Gedeon Gal and John M. Miskuly, did an exceptional work. I think they have offered with their 3 articles the best promotion one can dream of OB's material. I add a cruel question: Since these publications in 1989-1992, how many people have written to the FI in order to obtain more information about OB's material and studies on JoC? If the FI wants to promote OB's material, I think that the priority is to ask for John M. Miskuly's advice: Do you think the PC is sufficient? Did you remember other things in OB's material which are worth of a publication or, at least, a mention on the website of the FI? Are you personally interested and ready to involve yourself again in such a job? Etc.

Nevertheless, I've tried to exam OB's material with 2 goals: Understand the general structure of the material; distinguish between the material already used in the PC and the material which could be worth of a mention or publication.

### **1. Material outside the woody filing cabinets**

- photocopy of Antonio Sessa *Opera omnia sancti Iohannis a Capistrano* in 25 vol. with grey bindings: the anastatic reproduction of 1985 limits the value of this copy; it's useful to have it, but it would be useless to offer it on line for example
- 4 green crates (1 is empty), each one of them containing 3 green folders:
  - o 5 folders of OB's correspondence classified by years ("Jahränge"): 1952-1959, 1960-1964, 1965-1968, 1969-1973, 1974-1975
  - o 3 folders of photocopies of the studies about JoC; 1934-1950, 1950-1958, 1959-1972 (I added on the back: "Bibliography about JoC" with the years)
  - o 1 folder of excerpts from newspapers ("Zeitungs-Ausschnitte") and typed lectures or articles by OB
- a pile of papers coincides with the preparatory works of GG ad JMM:

- 2 yellow spiral-bound notebooks (“St. Bonaventure University”, 1983) entitled: “Register of St. John Capistran’s Correspondence, Italian Period, nn. 1-217” and “Register of St. John Capistran’s Correspondence, Italian Period, nn. 218-380”
- handwritten and typed preparatory works of GG and JMM
- photocopies of articles and books
- extracts of articles 1985, 1986
- in 2 envelops, photocopy of the *Liber epistolarum* (Roma, BN, 2468, Gesuitici 339, f1-50 and 51-121)
- booklet about “La commissione capistraniana”, Roma, 1965
- 3 envelops OB on Masci, Wadding and Hermann
- booklet of advertising “Presentazione della stampa anastatica” of Sessa.

## 2. The little wooden filing cabinet (24 drawers)

The wood front pieces of the 24 drawers are now separated from the drawers. They are going to be lost. Here is my reconstitution:

1	2 A-C	2 D-G	2 H-N	2 O-R	2 S-Z
3	4 A	4 Basel	4 C	4 D	4 Fr-H
5	4 I	4 Lins	4 N	4 Petrus	4 S
empty	4 T	6 1452-1456	6 1422-1451	7	7

1: *Initia epistolarum JoC et datum earum*: incipitary of the letters

2: *Initia sermonum JoC et aliorum*: very huge incipitary of many sermons

3: The mss of JoC in alphabetic order of the cities

4: *Index generalis alphabeticus*: names of persons and places

5: *JoC Miscellanea, Vita, Opera*

6: *Epistolae JoC per annos dispositae*

7: Several alphabetical files on JoC’s bibliography.

## 3. The main woody filing cabinet (24 drawers numbered 3-26<sup>1</sup>)

I looked at the 24 drawers. At present, I would like to give a synthetic vision of the whole.

- A. Drawers without interest:
  - # 6, # 7, # 13, # 16 because they are empty
  - # 4 because it contains 13 x 2 volumes of E. W. Platzeck, *Raymond Lull*, Roma, 1962-1964 (Bibliotheca Franciscana, 5-6) and 23 packs of ads for the 2 books.
- B. Drawers which contains exclusively, mainly or partially reproductions of manuscripts or old printed books (see also below # 20 and # 25):

<sup>1</sup> The number 1 is actually the little woody filing cabinet. I couldn’t understand what the number 2 is.

- # 3 (52 reproductions in microfilms in 3 boxes, photographs or photocopies, among them the reproduction of an incunabular of the *Arbor vitae* of Ubertino of Casale)
- # 8 (material of filing non used, numerous stamps in a box, reproductions of mss or printed book in German, handwritten notes about the acts of S. Klara of Nuremberg 1421-1452, a file with 5 notebooks which contain handwritten descriptions of Franciscan mss, typed and handwritten notes – probably the preparatory material of an article – about “De Kanonisatioprozess von 1625 und der *Liber epistolarum* des Hl. Johannes Kapistran”)
- # 9 (3 copies of J. Hofer, *Johannes von Capestrano*, 1936, and J. Hofer, *Johannes Kapistran*, 1965, 2 vol.; the rest of the drawer is dedicated to the sermons of JoC: 1 box contains envelops with sermons numbered 1-33, typed and handwritten description of the mss of the sermons, photographs of 11 manuscripts, envelops with numerous typed transcriptions of sermons)
- # 10 (photographs of 4 mss blinded as books, 6 microfilms of mss)
- # 11 (reproduction of 1 ms: the rest is dedicated to the biography and the portraits of JoC, several typed transcriptions)
- # 14 (preparatory typed material for an article “Zwei Handschriften aus Falconara – Ancona – unde ihre Beduntung fur die Capistranus-Kritik”, reproduction of *La vita del glorioso beato Gioanne da Capistrano*, an incunabular of 1479, of *Vita et gesta beati Johannis de Capistrano*, a printed book of 1523, the printed edition of the *Commentariolum* of Bonaventure, collections of the bulletins *La Valle del Tirino* and *Societas*, booklets *La commissione capistraniana*, Roma, 1965, postcards)
- # 17 (reproductions of mss, notebooks about S. Klara of Nuremberg, other files with handwritten notes)
- # 23 (reproductions of 9 mss and handwritten notes).
- C. Drawers which contain mainly notes (see also above # 8, # 9, # 11, # 14, # 17):
  - # 15 (files about letters of James of the March to JoC, someones typed; several files of notes about manuscripts, texts or persons; some typed transcriptions of treatises, for example *De immaculata conceptione*)
  - # 19 (typed transcription of *De altissima paupertate* by Ubertin of Casale; file about JoC and the third order, photocopies of a printed book 1906, different files about bibliography, persons, topics)
  - # 20 (many files about Franciscan Story: someones are probably articles then published by OB; there are few reproductions of manuscripts and some typed transcriptions, for example *Defensorium auctoritatis generalium conciliorum ed. per mag. Petrum de Colle*; 1 PhD; a file about the *Ars praedicatoria* of Nikolaus Eyfeler)
  - # 21 (Franciscan Story *ut supra*)
  - # 22 (iconography of JoC: envelops classified by towns, museums; envelops containing transcriptions of treatises of JoC, several ones typed: extracts of OB)

- # 26 (descriptions of manuscripts including letters of other works of JoC, some of the envelopes contain handwritten or typed transcriptions, for example *Tractatus universi iuris*, *Tractatus adversum Hussitas*).
- D. Drawers which, according to me, have been sufficiently used by the 3 articles of *Franciscan Studies*:
  - # 5 (preparatory works about the letters of JoC: *Textus adhuc procurandi*, “Further study needed”, all the letters regarding affiliations or confraternities, more some thematic envelopes)
  - # 12 (envelops for each letter of JoC, classified by chronological order 1451-1456)
  - # 18 (*ut supra* for 1418-1451: so 18 > 12)
  - # 24 (chronological catalogue of JoC’s letters; envelops for each letter by manuscript or edition)
  - # 25 (envelops by manuscript of JoC’s letters, 1 reproduction of manuscript).

### **And now, what must we do?**

Material advices:

- The first duty is not to scatter the OB’s material and not to add external material in it. Presently, I brought down the content of the drawers 5 and 11, that Paul put in boxes and carry up the second floor, in order not to scatter them. But I had also to remove external material (results of academic years...) progressively accumulated on the woody filing cabinets.
- The best would be, according to Paul’s plans, to isolate the whole OB’s material in a special room. The present one is too hot and dry for the paper, but above all for the microfilms: They are really in danger.
- If we cannot remove soon all OB’s material in a special, adapted room, I recommend remove at least the microfilms and photographs in a special room, for example the reserve of rare books. In this case, each reproduction must comport the number of the original drawer. When few photographs are linked to a file of notes, I recommend not separate the photographs from the file: The intellectual preservation is here more important than the material preservation.

About the contents:

- Outside the woody filing cabinets, nothing deserves a special treatment.
- In the little woody filing cabinet, only the part 2 deserves a particular treatment. It is worth to see if this incipitary is more complete than other incipitaries of sermons (Schneyer for example). If it is the case, this incipitary could be integrated to the electronic incipitary *In principio* (a work of IRHT and Hill Medieval Monastic Library published by Brepols, the most complete incipitary in the world).
- In the main cabinet, only drawers of the categories B and C deserve an ulterior treatment. The goals we could plan would be: publish on the Web or in *Franciscan Studies* a list of all the manuscripts of which we have a reproduction, and another list of all the unpublished medieval sources of which we have a typed transcription. Frankly, I think that the Franciscan Institute must not begin any other kind of work (except if a specialist of JoC wants to use the complete material): It would be a big spending of time, efforts and money for a very poor result.

- In order to produce these 2 lists, one must identify the reproduced manuscripts (City, Library, call number, date, author, text). Fortunately, we have a convenient reference for JoC's manuscripts with Aniceto Chiappini, *Reliquie letterarie Capestranesi. Storia – codici – carte – documenti*, Aquila 1927 (BX 4700 G72 C45). Nevertheless, I think it's not an easy work. It must be done by somebody who knows mainly Latin and the uses about the manuscripts. I presume the items are about one hundred. It's a job of 2/4 weeks.
- One must identify too the typed medieval sources, mainly the works of JoC, and eliminate the already published sources. I would eliminate the transcriptions of the letters too, already indicated in the 3 articles of *Franciscan Studies*. The best guide is O. Bonmann, "Jean de Capestrano", in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualite*, vol. 8, Paris, 1972, col. 316-323, given that this article was written by OB himself near the end of his life. It must be done by someone with skills in Latin and, eventually, German. It's a work of 2/4 weeks too.

### **Conclusion**

With the 3 articles of *Franciscan Studies*, the Franciscan Institute has already largely valorized the material of OB that it owns since some decades: in broad outline, we have done our duty.

If we want to do more, the first duty is to preserve; the second is to plan realist goals, as the publication of the 2 lists. In order to do that, we cannot hope an immediate help from the Italian group of Marco Bartoli (see my correspondence with him in September 2004). So we must eventually plan to employ a graduate student with a very good medieval back ground for one or two months. It's a decision which deserves to be deeply discussed and examined in the framework of the others tasks and priorities of the FI.