

SPRING
2022

Les Cils sauvages

CERCLE CALLIGRAPHIQUE

#1

CALLIGRAPHIC REVIEW

INTERVIEW

LE SCRIPTORIUM DE CASSIODORE
CHARLES BOISART

HISTORY

A WRITING :
GOTHIC TEXTURA

WORD OF THE SEASON

ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD
SCRIPTORIUM



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ÉDITO // LE SCRIPTORIUM DE CASSIODORE
> INTERVIEW OF CHARLES BOISART //
HISTORY OF A WRITING > THE GOTHIC //
CASSIODORE > A LIBRARIES HERO // THE
WORD OF THE SEASON > SCRIPTORIUM //
OURS

ARY

THE ART OF BEAUTIFUL LETTERS HAS NOT SAID ITS LAST WORD. THIS IS EVIDENCED BY THE MANY ARTISTS WHO ENGAGE IN CALLIGRAPHIC ART & MAKE THESE EXPERTISE CONTINUE, APPROPRIATE THEM IN ORDER TO BRING OUR ALPHABET TO LIFE.

LES OIES SAUVAGES (THE WILD GEESE) ARE AIMED AT CROSSING THE CALLIGRAPHIC TERRITORIES & TO INTRODUCE READERS TO DISCOVER THESE ARTISTS BY AN INTERVIEW AND THEN, KEEPING AN EYE IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR TO BETTER ADVANCE AS ANCESTORS OF TOMORROW, A LITTLE STORY OF A WRITING FOLLOWED BY A PORTRAIT OF AN HISTORICAL CALLIGRAPHER.

Naémie Heren



La sottise l'erreur le peche la lesine
Occupent nos esprits et travaillent nos corps
Et nous alimentons nos aimables remords
Comme les mendiants nourrissent leur vermine

Nos peches sont tectus nos repentirs sont laches
Nous nous faisons payer graslement nos aveux
Et nous reatrons gaiement dans le chemin bourbeux
Croyant par de vils pleurs laver toutes nos taches

Sur l'oreiller du mal est **Satan** Crismegyste
Qui berce longuement
Et le riche metal de notre volonte

Et tout vapote par ce savant chimyste
C'est le **Diabole** qui tient les fils qui nous remuent
Aux objets repugnants nous trouvons des appas
Chaque jour vers l'**Enfer** nous descendons d'un pas
Sans l'horreur a travers des tenebres qui puent

Aussi qu'un debauché pauvre qui boit et mange
Le sein martyrise d'une antique carni
Nous volons au passage un plaisir clandestin
Que nous pressons bien fort comme une vieille orange

Merre fourmillant comme un million d'helminthes
Dans nos cerveaux ribote un peuple de **Demons**

Et quand nous respirons la
dans nos poumons

Desceud fleuve invisible avec de sourdes plaintes
Le viol le poison le poignard l'inceudie
J'ont pas encor brode de leurs plaisants deslins
Le canceras banal de nos piteux deslins
C'est que notre ame helas n'est pas assez hardie

Mais parmi les chacals les pantheres les lices
Les singes les scorpions les vautours les serpents
Les monstres glapissants hurlants grognants rampants
Dans la menagerie infame de nos vies

Il en est un plus laid plus mechant plus unimonde
Quoiqu'il ne pousse ni grands gestes ni grands cris
Il ferait volontiers de la terre un debris
Et dans un hayllement avalerait le monde

C'est l'**Emmu** l'œil chargé d'un pleur involontaire
Il reve d'echafauds en fumant son houka
Tu le connais lecteur ce monstre delicat
Hypocrite lecteur mon semblable mon frere





I chose to launch this first issue by an interview with Charles Boisart, from Le Scriptorium de Cassiodore. Installed in Quimper, in Brittany (France), Charles is specialized in Gothic calligraphy. He produces all types of orders, from the diploma to the large-scale mural, including creations of literary works entirely calligraphicated by hand. Its universe, which has undeniably Gothic roots in the contemporary sense of the term, reinvests classic gestures in order to create works that reinvent calligraphic practice. Abstraction arises from his understanding of ductus specific to Gothic calligraphy, and he mixes his influences from poets like Baudelaire, erotic comics, and illumination in creations where black, red & gold dominate. Charles is above all a friend, who accompanied me in my anxieties of apprentice calligrapher and was able to advise me in the choice of supports and inks. An outstanding interlocutor with whom to discuss our practices, our ways of considering calligraphy, and art in general. In short, common sensitivity, and shared values. Follow me in his lair, you can only be touched by the precision of his works & convinced of one thing: Calligraphy is not dead!

Can you tell us about the origins of your calligraphic practice?

The origin of my calligraphy practice dates back to my very young childhood. My father, calligrapher and engraver, put my first calligraphic pen in my hands at the age of eight, and never left me. It quickly became a hobby and a passion, a thunderbolt of beautiful letters. Over the years, I practiced. Aimlessly. I was improving by myself over time. My father advised me, but having divorced parents does not help in contact father - son. So I learned mainly in self-taught. I had the good calligraphic gestures from my childhood, so learning was done naturally. It was at the death of my father, 7 years ago now, that I had to transmit this art to future generations and those around me. Without giving lessons, but to share what I do.

« MY FATHER,
CALLIGRAPHER AND
ENGRAVER, PUT MY
FIRST CALLIGRAPHIC
PEN IN MY HANDS AT
THE AGE OF EIGHT »

You specialize in Gothic calligraphy, can you tell us about your meeting with this one & tell us what makes her so special for you?

When I had my first calligraphic pen in my hands, I started with Gothic calligraphy. Directly. Without having any base. This writing spoke to me from the start. A thunderbolt. Gothic writing allows so much and creativity. She crystallizes for me all the other Scriptures. It can be straight and severe, round and soft, angular and jerky. It allows rigor as extravagance. This is writing as much as abstraction.

I would like you to tell us the story of an order that particularly gave you joy.

I think it would be the one of diplomas. I felt my work really valued. I saw one morning in my mailbox, a message from a Canada guy asking me if I could create diplomas for his school. At first, I did not pay attention to it and then I recalled this person. He was a stereotomy teacher. Totally new word for me. This is the study of the

framework of churches, the construction of spiral stairs etc. He is a professor at the Companions of Duty. So I called him. And from there, one of my best orders came to date. The creation of three diploma matrices for his school. This order forced me to be even more meticulous in my work and to take up a challenge that I had not yet exceeded. So I surpassed myself to create this.

Do you have a favorite letter, and one, on the contrary, which gives you a hard time?

This is a very good question, I will not speak of a letter but of writing. Gothic calligraphy is therefore my favorite, but round writing is the writing that I have the most difficulty in achieving. Perhaps it is due to my everyday writing which is just disgusting. I do not know how to apply myself in this calligraphy there as much as I apply myself in Gothic, caroline, cursive etc.



« THIS ORDER FORCED
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NOT YET EXCEEDED. »

In the Charles workshop, diplomas are on the calligraphic operating table!

A tool, an ink, a color & a favorite support?

The tool, I would simply say a very wide automatic pen which allows freedom and ease in the gesture comparable to any other tool. I really like sennelier inks, which are out of peer when they dry on the support. Ink based on arabic gum. Made in Brittany (France) !!!! The dark red color obviously, for everything that represents me. And watercolor paper for the support. I really like the texture of ink on this paper. And the fluency that the pen also to slide on this paper even if it can have grains.

A historical figure of the calligraphy that inspired you?

I think the one who inspired me was my father. Obviously. But I would say for the historical question, Cassiodorus obviously again. The scribe inventor of the scriptorium.

Despite us one of your works whose creation has filled you.

I will still say the diplomas, because it has gathered all the techniques that I practice, from drawing to calligraphy, passing by illumination afterwards. And it's a work that looks like me too.

A project that makes you dream?

I never thought about it, but working for a historical film could be great !!!!

A word, a quote that you wrote a lot to exercise you.

A poem. *The death of lovers* by Baudelaire. I love this text. And I never tire of calligraphing it.



Diploma created by Charles for the Compagnons du Devoir of Canada, Stereotomy School, A2 format, Chinese ink on paper.

The Professional School of Practical Stereotomy
 City of Ottawa the National Capital in the Dominion of Canada
 The President and Dean of the Professional School of Practical Stereotomy
 acting on the recommendation of the advanced Fellows, Masters and with consent of the Board
 of Overseers, have conferred on



Diploma created by Charles for the Compagnons du Devoir of Canada, Stereotomy School, A2 format, Chinese ink on paper.



Justine, II, text by Françoise Rey, & drawing inspired by Guido Crépax, 50 x 65 cm, Chinese ink and leaf gilding on paper.



Time, abstract composition from textura gothic, 50 x 50 cm, Chinese ink & leaf gilding on watercolor paper.

A DREAM WOULD
BE TO GO AND
WRITE IN A
MONASTERY FOR A
FEW WEEKS TO BE
IMPREGNATED
WITH THIS SILENCE.

A advice to give to those who would like to start on calligraphic practice?

Ah soooo you're going to make me be a little teacher anyway... !! I think the advice I would have to give is not to practice too much without asking for the advice of a teacher or a calligrapher. I think I never make ranges of letters at home. Because you can make ranges without having the right gestures. And the brain records these incorrect gestures. You can train obviously, but as soon as you have a doubt, ask for advice.

Something you would like to tell & that has not been discussed?

Many people may be wondering if you work quiet to be focused. For my part, no. Or else I have to be in an environment of silence. A dream would be to go and write in a monastery for a few weeks to be impregnated with this silence. But at home, or I put very violent music like metal, or classical music, these are the two styles of music that calm me the most with also film and Gothic music.

Thank you very much Charles for lending you to the game of the interview & for having sharing your practice and images of your work, I am sure that your vision of calligraphy will enrich the perception of this often unknown discipline!

TO FOLLOW CHARLES :

ON FACEBOOK : [LE SCRIPTORIUM DE CASSIODORE](#)

ON INSTAGRAM : [LE SCRIPTORIUM DE CASSIODORE](#)

HIS WEBSITE : WWW.CASSIODORE.COM

TO WRITE HIM : CASSIODORE@YAHOO.COM

By discovering Charles' answers to my questions, I was somewhat « hungry ». What do you mean ? Don't we approach Justine?! However, he sent me images of these superb gildings! So by insisting a little ... I managed to have its secrets delivered to the illuminator of modern times which is hidden in its scriptorium (and I am very proud of it, because the work is worth the detour in my opinion !):

Justine ...

Justine?

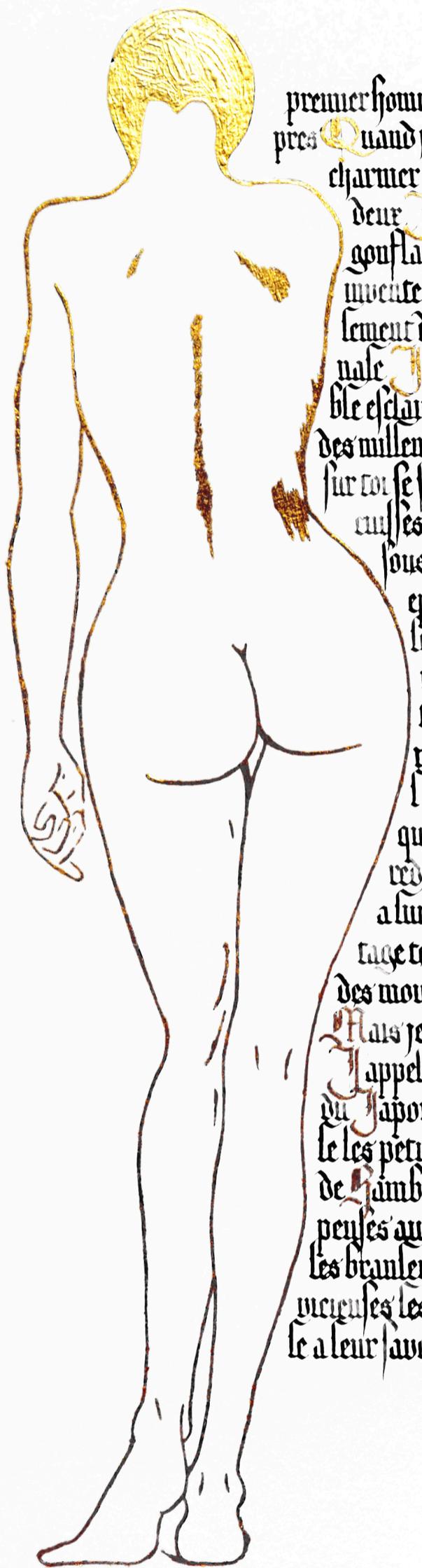
Who is Justine?

How was Justine born? What does she represent?

Justine is a character from the writings of the Marquis de Sade. But why am I talking about her tell me? This name came to describe erotic gilding. I was writing a text by Françoise Rey, and I illustrated it by drawing the cover of the comic strip "Justine" by Guido Crépax, on the Justine of Sade. Justine describes this universe mixing calligraphy & eroticism. This illustration, I gilded the lines to bring out the drawing. All the character. When sharing calligraphy, we called this triptych work "Justine", with Noémie. Justine is for us the future and the renewal of illumination. Modernizing this art is important. And what could be more natural to sublimate it with the curves of women?



Justine, I, text by Françoise Rey, & drawing inspired by Alex Varenne, 50 x 65 cm, Chinese ink and leaf gilding on paper.



premier homme et unique mon miroir mon double a quelque chose
pres **Q**uand j'ai touché ta différence elle s'est émue J'ai voulu la
charmer je l'ai longuement flattée de la main et même des
deux Je l'ai étirée je l'ai palpée massée branlée plus elle
gonflait plus elle me fascinait **L**e serpent c'est moi qui l'ai
inventé **E**t nous revola pour un remake plus récent de tel
lement de siècles cependant si semblable à la version origi-
nale Je suis à genoux entre tes jambes ta servante ton hum-
ble esclave et pourtant ta maîtresse et mes mains se rappellent
des millénaires de savoir faire de savoir plaire **E**lles courent
sur toi se séparent se rejoignent **C**haque sur l'une de tes
cuisses elles remontent à la même vitesse et se retrouvent
sous tes testicules en soulignant la forme ronde en les
épousant d'un geste de prière ou d'offrande tes coul-
les semblent faites pour reposer dans la coquille de
mes mains. **E**ncore que reposer ne semble pas le
terme tout à fait adéquat car je les sens bouger dans
mes paumes durer un peu comme mûrissant sous
l'effet d'une puissante alchimie **T**on manche aussi
que je roule entre mes doigts mûrit Je le lâche pour
redescendre à tes cuisses que je force un peu je reviens
à lui en m'égarant d'abord dans le sillon intime qui par-
tage tes fesses je l'attrape je le sers très fort je m'amuse à
des mouvements de coulisse qui visiblement le survoltent
Mais je le veux plus gros encore plus tendu plus impérieux
J'appelle mentalement à mon secours toutes les geishas
du Japon lubrique toutes les masseuses de légende j'appel-
le les petites puttes chinoises aux doigts si délicats les filles
de Hambourg d'Amsterdam de Berlin les suceuses les pi-
peuses aux gestes sans scrupules aux ordures démoniaques
les branleuses de Saïgon qui se laissent enculer toutes les
vieilles les tapineuses dont le métier est l'homme j'en appel-
le à leur savoir à leur science à leur art...



Gothic writing, a calligraphy with a thousand & one gestures

Towards the end of the 11th century, Caroline writing was plagued by "alterations", as Claude Médiavilla so nicely says in his book *Calligraphy*, published by Editions de l'Imprimerie Nationale in 1993. Indeed, it is necessary We must realize that the history of the formal evolution of writing should be envisaged over a long time. Over the gestures, passing from hand to hand, the letters evolve gradually. What the historian of our century calls "Gothic" is the equivalent of what we call "Middle Ages", a way of understanding each other when we discuss, by simplifying what cannot be intelligible without these categories.

Also according to Médiavilla, the characteristics specific to the so-called "Gothic" writing would partly come from the use by the Anglo-Saxon scribes of bevelled quills on the left. This impression of angularity specific to the Gothic letter would be the consequence of this tool, inducing a distribution of this specific full. The author also evokes other causes: the acceleration of the rhythm of writing, the development of universities among others. Citing Charles Higounet (*L'écriture*, Paris, PUF, 1964, p. 102), Médiavilla also evokes an issue that still affects us today, the aesthetic research: "The coincidence between the breakdown of writing and the generalization of the broken arch in architecture is too striking for having been entirely fortuitous. ». And how to imagine that it would not? It seems obvious that the scribes lived fully in their time, and that their expertise was itself influenced by the

artisanal practices that gravitated around them. Just as fashion, architecture & art influence each other today, it seems completely relevant to imagine that these mechanisms were also happening before.

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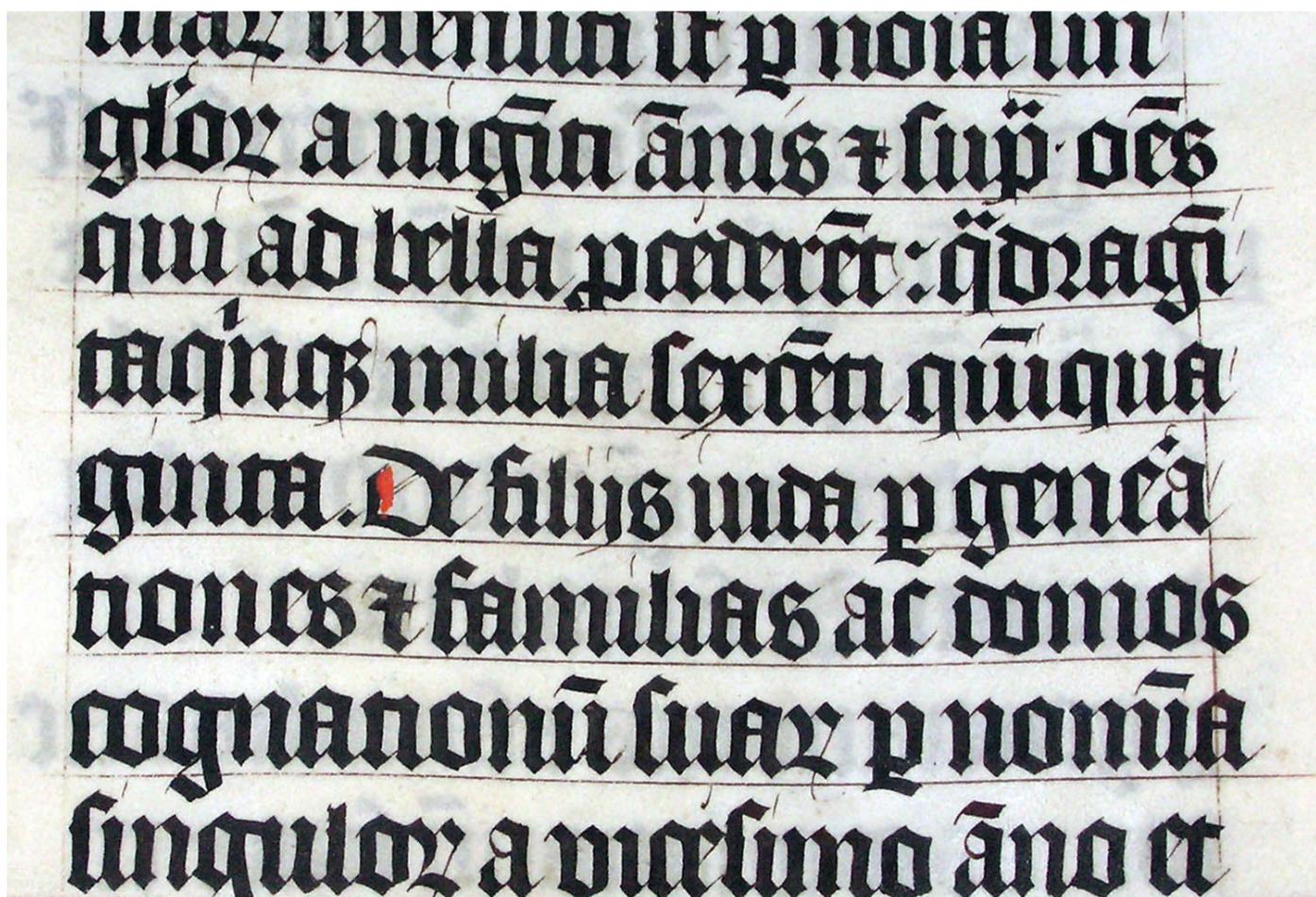
Charles Higounet

In order to enter through the body of one of the Gothic writing, it should be recalled that this style evoking the medieval period in the collective spirit has crossed the centuries. If the so-called "primitive" Gothic appeared in the 12th century, it will become textura Gothic in the 14th and 15th centuries, but also the Gothic cursive in the 14th, which will give the form which is called "bâtarde" in the 15th century. This century will also see the use of a round Gothic, called "rotunda". From the 16th century, Gothic "fraktur" appeared, allowing in the 18th century the appearance of Dutch Gothic, then in the 20th century of the Gothic called "Koch" and "fraktur grasse". (I refer readers to the formidable chronological frieze published at the end of the previously quoted work of Claude Médiavilla for a very didactic visualization of these developments).

If during the medieval period & until the XIXth century the Gothic writings were traced with a quill, we can now trace them with metal feathers, but also with a brush,

with a piece of cardboard or wood dipped in ink, or with special beveled nibs. Only the imagination limits calligraphic practices nowadays!

But back to the golden age of Gothic writing, and let us look more carefully about the so-called "textura" Gothic. This very tight writing, with slender vertical barrels creates a visual frame, an undeniably strong "texture". Regularity is essential because it is in the alternation of full & whites that all the power of this writing is expressed. Working the descending gesture is thus a prerogative of the calligrapher who wishes to excel in the textura: it is by the rigor of the well-rights barrels and in compliance with the bodies widths that the texture occurs. Gothic "textura" is still used today to create logos, posters, but also in the world of tattooing. It has the preference of many contemporary calligraphs having chosen the path of "calligraffiti", a practice investing in urban walls.



Bible by Malmesbury, calligraphy in Belgium by Gerard Brils, in 1407.

(Source : Wikipédia)

Coming from an illustrious family, Cassiodorus was born in Calabria, Italy, between 470 and 480. He learned Greek, liberal arts and develops very deep religious feelings.

He attracts, through the nobility of his character and his great erudition, the favor and friendship of the great princes Ostrogoths. In troubled times when, on the ruins of Roman civilization, the Ostrogoth Empire develops, Cassiodorus is at the court of Prince Ostrogoth Theodoric the interpreter of classical culture as well as the spokesperson for the emperor to his Roman subjects.

After the death of his friend Théodoric, Cassiodorus flees the struggles of power and withdrew away from the world in the Vivarum monastery, which he himself founded in Calabre. He will spend the last thirty years of his life there to implement the transmission of the Greco-Roman heritage fallen in the hands of the Barbarians to Western.

At seventy years old, its activity is still as intense. The monastery becomes a real "city of studies". Cassiodorus skillfully introduces the secular sciences and the seven liberal arts are very largely taught there. Without being able to provide masters to his monks, he provides them with books. Then begins a very large period when the library will replace university.

For the use of his monks, he wrote the Institutiones, a sort of guide to the student in Holy Scripture; He introduces the liberal arts there which appear auxiliary disciplines of biblical science. Concerned about the preservation of books and the transmission of knowledge to future generations, Cassiodorus tries to standardize the codes of writing. The fall of the Roman Empire had indeed led to a true anarchy of language and the elementary bases of grammar. This

disorder, added to the shortage of competent copyists, risked making the cultural heritage disappear. Cassiodorus then establishes rules for copying and binding. The catalog of monastery books has thus arrived almost intact to us.

At the same time, he writes a large number of works which will be a source for the fathers of the church. Tireless worker, he invents a lamp system so that at night is not an obstacle to study.

At ninety-three, he embarked on the writing of a spelling treaty.

With Isidore de Seville, he helped transmit ancient culture to the West. After an exemplary life of a historian monk, minister, copyist, this "restaurateur des sciences" and "great hero of libraries", dies at almost a hundred years old.



SCRIPTORIUM

How to conclude this issue without exploring the etymology of the term "scriptorium"? It goes without saying that the question of the word of the season was immediately very resolved during the interview with Charles!

Here is what the National Center for Textual & Lexical Resources, CNRTL for friends gives us:

SCRIPTORIUM

HIST. Monasteries workshop in which copyists worked; p. Ext., School of scribes or illuminators found in particular during the High Middle Ages and in the Romanesque era in various ecclesiastical or lay centers (royal or imperial scriptoria) (from Encyclop. univ. t. 20 1975, p. 1751).

It is at the scriptorium that the parchment was prepared, put in notebooks then entrusted to the scribes and the illuminators (encyclop. Univ.). In a period when the Latin scriptoria follow different uses from those of the workshops of Greece or Asia, the Greek manuscript copied in Western Europe can only be done according to the own technique of Latin copy centers (J. Leroyds Codicologica, t. 2, Leiden, E.-J. Brill, 1978, p. 52).

Pronounce. and orth.: [skRiptɔ Rjɔm]. Plur. scriptoria (J. Leroy, loc. Cit.) or scriptoriums. **Etymol. and Hist.** 1852 (Lenoir, Archit. Monast., P. 45). Lat. mediev. scriptorium, as well as fr., in b. lat. "Style to write on wax" (v. Writer), de scriptorius "which is used to write", der. de Scriptor "secretary; writer, author".

A word which refers, by its Latin origin, to a very concrete, embodied gesture, that of writing using a "style" on wax. A source that reveals a writing functioning by remove of matter, falling under engraving. Another proof that language & linguistic wealth find root in experiences that are above all bodily & gestural!

ORIUM

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The artist gave us the use of these images to illustrate this issue.

Cassiodorus illustration:

Michel Wolgemut, Wilhelm Pleydenwurff (Text: Hartmann Schedel)

Nuremberg Chronicles F 143V 3.JPG / Creation: January 1, 1493 / Source: Wikipedia

Sincere thanks to Charles Boisart for his contributions
& the writing of the article on Cassiodorus, heroes of libraries.

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