

MANUSCRIPTA



March 1972

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Published by

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Three Times Annually

MARCH

JULY

NOVEMBER

Subscription per year \$5.00

Single Issue \$2.00

PRINTED BY
KLENE PRINTING CO.
HANNIBAL, MISSOURI
U. S. A.



MANUSCRIPTA

VOL. XVI

MARCH 1972

No. 1

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contains was then completed.⁷

There is another reason—one which Jean Richard has not pointed out—to believe that the Paris manuscript is in some way related to the first draft of Vincent's *Speculum Historiale*. Before its arrival at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. 17550 was part of the library of the Paris Black Friars.⁸ We know that the latter inherited a part of Louis IX's library. The King's will reads: "Libros vero nostros, quos tempore decessus nostri in Francia habebimus, praeter illos, qui ad usum Capellae pertinent, legamus Fratribus Praedicatoribus, et Fratribus Minoribus Paris. Abbatiae Regalis Montis, et Fratribus Praedicatoribus Compend."⁹ Among the books which the Royaumont Abbey received, there was the Dijon No. 568 manuscript. It is quite possible, therefore, that Paris B. N. Lat. 17550 also came to the Black Friars as a legacy from Louis IX. If this is so, then the Cambron manuscript, which according to Professor Guzman's research resembles B. N. Lat. 17550, would have to be considered one of the important witnesses in understanding Vincent's manuscript tradition. Still it must be clearly stated that no definite link has yet been drawn between the Dijon manuscript which presents the first draft of the first part of the *Speculum Historiale* and Paris B. N. Lat. 17550 to which the Cambron manuscript is related.

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Microfilming the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polit"

During the summer of 1967, Saint Louis University and Vanderbilt University cooperated in a microfilm project to bring back to the United States what is generally thought to be one of the finest and most important libraries of Ecuatorian government documents. This library was the creation of the Jesuit,

⁷ In his letter to the King, prefixed to the Dijon *Historiale*, Vincent writes that he cannot send the remaining parts of the *Speculum* until "prius fuerit diligenter correctum, et eciam in fine per quasdam parcium concordancias elucidatum breviter atque distinctum." C. Oursel, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

⁸ At the *Couvent des Jacobins de la rue Saint-Jacques*. Léopold Delisle, "Inventaire des manuscrits latins de Notre-Dame et de divers petits fonds conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale sous les Nos 16719-18613 du fonds latin", *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, XXXI (1870), 463-565.

⁹ F. Duchesne, *Historiae francorum scriptores*, V (Paris, 1649), 438.

Father Aurelio Espinosa Polit, who himself was an internationally known classical scholar. Over a period of several decades, he painstakingly gathered together a library of documents which covered the history of Ecuador from shortly before the period of Independence down to the twentieth century. His collection contains books, newspapers, journal articles, but most important of all, a series of government documents of wide extent and great importance. The formal title of the library is Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polit."

A team of historians from Saint Louis University did the actual microfilming with the very helpful assistance of Fr. Julian Bravo, S.J., the director of the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polit." Fr. Bravo with the help of a number of clerks sorted out the materials and arranged them in relatively strict chronological order under various subdivisions such as "Independencia," "Republica," Período Garciano," etc. The documents were generally filed in manila folders and each year included a certain number of *piezas*. These *piezas* might vary in length from one or two to more than a hundred pages for some items; and so, the description on the manila folders, e.g. "1821 (152 piezas)," does not give one a very accurate idea of the total number of documentary pages involved.

To photograph these documents some 7100 feet of 35 mm non-perforated negative microfilm was used and it was generally the practice to photograph two pages at a time. Ordinarily this would mean something like 140,000 pages of documentary materials within such a quantity of film, but very often in a two-page document one of the pages was blank so that the actual total amount of documentary materials was quite a bit less. Usually the materials were quite legible, and the writing free of abbreviations. In some few instances, however, the documents had been damaged either by mildew or by water so that they were practically illegible; but even such pages were photographed in the hope that something at least might be made out from the photographic reproduction. Sometimes a deep blue stationery had been used and this added difficulties to the photography.

The Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polit" at the time of microfilming was housed in the Jesuit Noviciate and Juniorate buildings at Cotocollao, a suburb just outside the capital city of Quito. Because the electrical wiring in this old wooden structure was not adequate for the electric cameras used, a temporary microfilming room was set up in the Jesuit residence at the Pontificia Universidad of Quito. The precious

manuscripts were transported each day by taxi and then returned to the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana immediately after they had been filmed. Additional technical difficulties had to be overcome, such as the possible variation of electrical current and the problem of the development of the microfilm, for there were then no facilities readily available for developing this type of microfilm. After some test strips had been made, it was decided to film the materials at one definite light meter reading and to send all the exposed microfilm to Graphic Microfilm of New York for special processing there. This plan worked out excellently and all the processed rolls came out quite well.

Four copies of the materials have been made to date, one for Saint Louis University, one for Vanderbilt, one for the Library at Cotocollao, and one for Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Illinois. A brief index has been made for the chief divisions of the materials so that the researcher has something with which to begin. As noted before, the divisions of the collection thus far microfilmed are chiefly chronological beginning with 1800 and continuing down to 1894. The number of *piezeas* or documents vary greatly for the different years; and, as has been noted, the word "piezea" itself gives no indication of the number of pages involved in each one of the documents. A second section of the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana is composed of special collections of materials about various important persons in the history of Ecuador. Probably the most important of them is the collection of materials about Garcia Moreno which is comprised largely of letters to, from and about him. This is a fairly large collection and contains several hundred items and is of considerable importance.

The materials which have thus far been described constitute the larger and more important part of the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polit." However, there is still a considerable amount of unphotographed documentation referring to the colonial period as well as to that of "Liberalismo." Within the next two or three years the universities involved hope to conduct further expeditions in order to microfilm these remaining parts of the collection and thus to bring them back to the United States for the use of American scholars who otherwise would probably never have access to these important documents.

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