Chapter 0

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Genesis of the project or: How I came to write a PhD dissertation about a completely unexpected finding I was not looking for to begin with.

Introduction

The most significant finding of the following dissertation is that the author who wrote the thirty-six case statements introducing the hypothetical cases that make up the second part of Gratian's *Decretum* is very unlikely to have been the same person as the author who wrote the *dicta* in the first recension of the *Decretum*. The method used to make this determination takes the statistical frequencies of common function words like prepositions and conjunctions in a sample of text as the basis for assigning probable authorship, and will be explained in considerable depth in Chapter 4.

I did not start work on this project thinking that the authorship of the case statements was in any way a research problem. I assumed that by definition the author of the case statements was one and the same person as the author of the first-recension (R1) *dicta*. It is therefore worth explaining in some detail how I came to write a PhD dissertation about a completely unexpected finding that I was not looking for in the first place.

I worked in information technology as a system administrator and manager for most of the twenty-three years after I graduated from UC San Diego in 1984 with an undergraduate degree in History. Stanley Chodorow had been the advisor for my undergraduate senior thesis on the role of the cardinals in the

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and I knew that he had written a book about Gratian's *Decretum*.[1] I was therefore aware of Gratian in a general sort of way, although the only use I made of the *Decretum* in connection with that project was to consult the Latin text of Nicholas II's 1059 decree on papal elections (D.23 c.1).

Stan encouraged me to use computer-aided typesetting for my thesis, and in this way I acquired a skill unusual at the time that led directly to my IT career. In the mid to late 80s I went on to take most of the required courses for the undergraduate Computer Science major at UC San Diego (e.g., Data Structures, Compiler Construction, Operating Systems) although I did not enroll in a degree program. During my professional career, I was never primarily a programmer, but from time to time my job responsibilities did include programming projects in C and Perl, and ultimately Java servlet-based web applications.

In October 2003, quite by accident, I became aware of Anders Winroth's *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*.[2] I had done a Google search for Stan's contact information and instead found his review of Anders's book in *The English*

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[1] Stanley Chodorow, *Christian Political Theory and Church Politics in the Mid-Twelfth Century; the Ecclesiology of Gratian's Decretum*, Publications of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, U.C.L.A., 5 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

[2] Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Historical Review.[3] It was immediately apparent to me on reading the review that there had been a revolution in Gratian studies. My wife Carol gave me the book for Christmas 2003 with the inscription "I'm sure you'll gulp this one down within 24 hours." I did. Some years later, Anders thanked her for buying a copy: "I'm sure I did something very useful with the money".

From September 2007 to May 2009, I was a student in the History of Christianity MAR program at Yale Divinity School. Among the courses I took was a one on Latin Paleography that Richard and Mary Rouse of UCLA taught in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in Spring 2009. Although I had a general interest in applying my computing background to my academic work, I do not think I had heard of Digital Humanities as an academic discipline before I graduated from YDS, at least not by that name.

In October 2009, David Ganz (then of King's College, London) suggested that I compare two texts of the *Capitulare Carisiacense* (873) in Beinecke MS 413. At first, I did not think of it as a digital project; it was simply a transcription exercise of the kind the Rouses had taught me to do. But within a month, I had created a custom text encoding format for my transcriptions and written a prototype textual difference visualizer in Perl to compare them. A January 2010 meeting with Barbara Shailor on the Beinecke 413 project was the occasion for the first use I can find in my own notes of the term *Digital Humanities*.

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[3] Stanley Chodorow, "Review of the Making of Gratian's Decretum by Anders Winroth," *The English Historical Review* 118, no. 475 (February 2003): 174–76.

In the summer of 2010, I taught myself to write Python web applications on the Google App Engine platform (learning Python was incidental to learning GAE, which is what I was really interested in), and in the first half of 2011, I developed Ingobert, a Python/GAE web application to visualize textual differences in Beinecke 413, in connection with an independent study project supervised by Ken Pennington and Jennifer Davis. Largely on the strength of the Ingobert project, Neil Fraistat of the University of Maryland hired me as a graduate assistant at the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH) to work as a Scala/Lift programmer on the Active OCR project.[4]

To the extent that I was looking in the first half of 2013 for a dissertation project with a Digital Humanities component, my focus was on the use of David Mimno's MALLET (MAchine Learning for LanguagE Toolkit) to topic model *dicta* and canon texts from the first and second recensions of Gratian's *Decretum* as a way to identify new topics added in the second recension.

I closely followed the DH 2013 conference at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln via Twitter, which was still very much at that time the town square of the Digital Humanities community.

Kestemont's approach seemed to offer a way past endless debates, based on indirect evidence like the Siena necrology, about whether there had been one Gratian or two. I would extract the first- and second-recension *dicta*, parts of

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[4] NEH ODH Grant number: HD-51568-12

the text of the *Decretum* thought to have actually been written (depending on whether you accept Ken's or Anders's argument) by the one Gratian or the two Gratians,[5] and run the same kind of analysis that Kestemont had run for Hildegard of Bingen and Guibert of Gembloux.

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[5] To the extent that there is some one person we can point to as corresponding to our idea of "Gratian," it's the author of the first-recension dicta. "The *dicta* in Gratian's *Decretum* bring the reader closer to its author than any other part of the text." Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*, 187. **See if there is anything else that can be used to support this point in "The men behind the 'Decretum'", pp.175-192.**
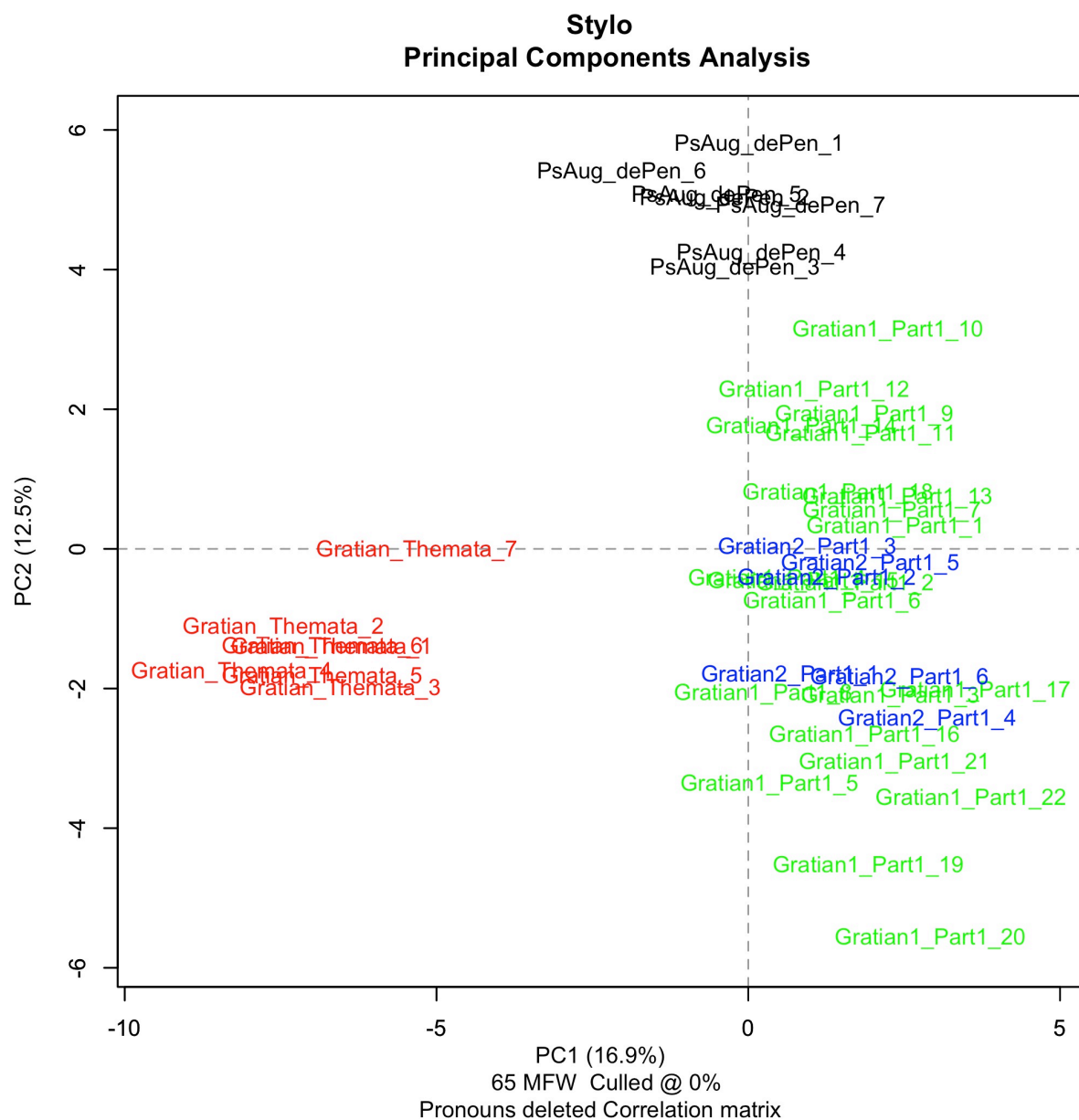
Stylo
Principal Components Analysis

Figure 1 10 Sep 2013

Note on Translations

I have, wherever possible, supplied for each Latin passage quoted the corresponding passage from a published English translation.[6] In cases where no such translation was available, or I considered the available translation seriously misleading, I have supplied my own translation, indicated with the notation **(trans. PLE)**. **Acknowledge Atria A. Larson.**

Bibliography

Chodorow, Stanley. *Christian Political Theory and Church Politics in the Mid-Twelfth Century; the Ecclesiology of Gratian's Decretum*. Publications of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, U.C.L.A., 5. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

———. "Review of the Making of Gratian's Decretum by Anders Winroth." *The English Historical Review* 118, no. 475 (February 2003): 174–76.

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[6] Katherine Ludwig Jansen, Joanna H. Drell, and Frances Andrews, eds., *Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Robert Somerville and Bruce Clark Brasington, eds., *Prefaces to Canon Law Books in Latin Christianity: Selected Translations, 500-1245* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1998); and Augustine Thompson and James Gordley, trans., *The Treatise on Laws: (Decretum DD. 1-20)*, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Canon Law, v. 2 (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1993) have been particularly helpful resources in this regard.

Jansen, Katherine Ludwig, Joanna H. Drell, and Frances Andrews, eds.
Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation. The Middle Ages Series.
Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

Somerville, Robert, and Bruce Clark Brasington, eds. *Prefaces to Canon Law
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