

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE MASS: MOHLBERG'S LEONINE SACRAMENTARY AND OTHER ITEMS

The event of a generation, in the publication of liturgical texts, took place in Rome in the fall, when the Herder firm brought out with its characteristic quality the long-awaited Mohlberg edition of the Leonine Sacramentary, *Sacramentarium Veronense*, or *MS LXXXV (80)* of the Chapter Library, Verona, one of the oldest and by all odds the most baffling Mass-book in the world.¹

"My closer acquaintance with sacramentaries," writes Dom Mohlberg at the head of the Introduction, "began in 1911." He goes on to tell how, for himself, the intervening decades have been filled mainly with editorial work looking towards "definitive" editions of them, the Leonine most of all. For a scholarly edition of that manuscript was so desperately in demand: the last edition by Feltoe (1896) was wholly inadequate to start with and has been out of print for many years.² Mohlberg's projected edition of the Leonine, so often announced in one connection or another, so many years delayed by war and cold war, has now been aided in completion by the collaboration of his Benedictine confrères, Leo Eizenhöfer and Peter Siffrin, and the Pontifical Academy of San Anselmo is assuming the lead in this and allied editions, the *Missale Francorum* being next on its list.

But for all the long delays the present work much more than makes amends with its manifold excellencies; it is the last word in learning, a veritable encyclopedia of all that many-sided research has slowly won from the manuscript. Mohlberg has enormously shortened the remaining tasks in the study of the Roman Mass between its turning into Latin about 380 and its final form about 600.

The codex, here accurately and modestly designated merely as *Sacramentarium Veronense* from its home in the Chapter Library of Verona, is a gigantic, almost pell-mell congeries of almost 1400 Mass-prayers for relatively few occasions, some favorite ones, like Sts. Peter and Paul, having a score of alternate forms. For all its surface disarray the work in part collects materials laid out on a month-by-month arrangement. The first part of the codex is lost; what we have commences abruptly in mid-April and

¹ L. C. Mohlberg, *Sacramentarium Veronense: Cod. Cap. Ver. LXXXV (80)* (Rome: Herder, 1956; cxv + 453 pp., 6 plates). Additional bibliographical detail: L. Cunibert Mohlberg, O.S.B., Leo Eizenhöfer, O.S.B., and Petrus Siffrin, O.S.B., *Sacramentarium Veronense (Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, cura Pont. Athenaei S. Anselmi de Urbe edita, Series maior: Fontes)*.

² C. L. Feltoe, *Sacramentarium Leonianum* (Cambridge: University Press, 1896).

goes on through December. There is no canon of the Mass, if there ever was one. In the so-called Gelasian Sacramentary the canon comes near the end; in the Gregorian it stands right at the front. There may have been a canon in the now-lost section, but since the collection was not made for use at the altar, no canon would have been needed in a library manual.

Ever since the discovery of this manuscript two centuries ago, it has been loosely styled the Leonine Sacramentary, from its many minor echoes of the writings and sermons of St. Leo I (440-61), but few have seriously suggested a date that early for the whole collection. Paleographers are quite agreed with Lowe in dating the manuscript as late sixth century, with additions made in the seventh, and written in all likelihood right there in Verona.³

At Rome a vast collection of *liturgica*, containing some elements a hundred years old or so, were gathered into book-form about the end of the pontificate of Vigilius I (538-55), perhaps under his immediate successor, Pelagius I (555-61).⁴ The materials thus reflect and vividly recall the terrible times at Rome, which the future Gregory I (590-604) lived through while growing up. At Verona this Roman collection of liturgical prayers, with additional elements from here and there, was copied out to form our Leonine Sacramentary before the end of the century. The last folio of the original codex (here reproduced as Plate VI) was continued in a handwriting Lowe ascribes to the seventh century.⁵ These additions were made after Gregory's own pontificate had passed a reforming hand over the liturgy of Rome, one day to emerge as the liturgy of the West. Edmund Bishop long ago suggested that we can see the mark of Gregory in the additions made to the Verona codex, presumably from the Gregorian Sacramentary, which had meanwhile appeared.⁶

Liturgists for two centuries have struggled with the problem of the date and precise character of the Leonine prayers. Much of the positive achievement of recent times was arrived at by following a hint made by Louis

³ E. A. Lowe, *Codices latini antiquiores: A Paleographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts prior to the Ninth Century 4: Italy-Perugia-Verona* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947) 32, n. 514: "Saec. vi²; origin, uncertain, possibly Verona. Early connection with Verona is attested by the script of the seventh-century liturgical additions and confirmed by probationes pennae."

⁴ A. Chavasse, "Messés du Pape Vigilius dans le Léonien," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 64 (1950) 161-213; 66 (1952) 145-219.

⁵ Lowe, *loc. cit.*

⁶ G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945) pp. 567-68: "And, most surprising of all, there are clear indications that its compiler knew the authentic text of the *Gregorian Sacramentary* compiled c. A.D. 595. Cf. the cases noted by E. Bishop, *Lit. Hist.*, p. 94 n.—which do not stand alone." The work cited is Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica historica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918).

Duchesne in 1889, in showing how a certain Mass supplied the information for knowing it was written for Easter Sunday, April 4, 538. He pointed out that Mass-formulae "dated" for having been written for a definite occasion are "datable" by us in searching out the events that fit the situation. Lietzmann in 1915 repeated Duchesne's earliest date for the Leonine as 538, without going into the argument; being challenged on the point, he restated the evidence with precision and emphasis in 1921.⁷ Canon Chavasse found a short cut in this way: during the pontificate of Vigilius I (538-55) Rome was under constant grinding between barbarian invaders and a resurgent imperial power at Constantinople; twice, for protracted intervals, the city was subjected to the starvation of protracted siege. The commander at Rome was making his reports in Greek to Constantinople; that Greek story of the siege is the hand that gives support and shape to the plucky Masses being written in the papal city for Romans attending church on Sundays in the few places accessible in the siege.⁸

What is said here in a sentence or two was learned by scholars in the course of two centuries, as one can now conveniently consult the tables set out in this edition, listing articles, from more than fifty writers, ranging from 1748 to 1954. Besides the basic problem of the true date of these materials, and the precise character of the collection as such, a good many of the folios asked their own puzzling questions in the matter of *sigla*, corrections, *marginalia*, abbreviated Tironian notations, and the like. All of these, too, have been collected and zealously studied by the editors. Here also they have embodied everything that is now known of the Leonine and all that is in it.

A further feature of the work that greatly enhances its value as a desk-reference is the section detailing to the last prayer the presence of the Leonine prayers in any of the important early Mass-books, as well as the fact that 246 of these forms still stand in our Roman Missal and Roman Pontifical.

Lastly, let a final word be said in praise of the detailed excellence of the indices, of which there are four: *initia*, Scripture passages or echoes, words, and persons and things, exhaustively tabulated to facilitate any sort of consultation.

The Leonine had use in the sixth and seventh centuries. A turning-point second to none in the history of the Mass was the despatch, about 784, of "that Sacramentary which our predecessor of immortal memory, Hadrian

⁷ H. Lietzmann, *Petrus und Paulus in Rom* (Bonn: Marcus und Weber, 1915); subsequently, "Zur Datierung des Sacramentarium Leonianum," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 2 (1922) 101-2.

⁸ A. Chavasse, *Ephemerides liturgicae* 64 (1950) 213.

I, sent to the [future] Emperor Charlemagne," as Pope Pius XII refers to it in the Bull of the Assumption (1950). The book in question was edited by Alcuin before its publication in the North. Liturgists have long worked at reconstructing the papal book just as Hadrian sent it, and before Alcuin had made the alterations and additions Charlemagne demanded. By good fortune two separate researches have lately added much security to our knowledge of the papal book.

Nigel Abercrombie, working on a *Life* of Edmund Bishop, has had much opportunity to familiarize himself with the ninth-century Mass-books with which Bishop was so much engaged. Time after time Abercrombie noticed that the text, arrangement, and content of one book in particular dating from 811 or 812, *MS 164 (159)* of Cambrai Public Library, differed from all other books of the period. By isolating these differences and studying them, he realized (1953) that *Cambrai MS 164 (159)* derives from a book that Alcuin had not touched.⁹ It could, therefore, only be a copy of "that Sacramentary which Hadrian I sent to Charlemagne." As Prof. Wallach says in *Speculum*: "Abercrombie proves that this manuscript is derived directly from the original copy sent by Hadrian I to Charlemagne, and not from Alcuin's version."¹⁰

At that stage Aumonier Robert Amiet of Lyons, in his preparation for a new edition of the Gregorian Sacramentary, made a first-hand study of the *Hucusque*-Preface, attached by Alcuin to his edition of the Gregorian Mass-book, to stand guard forever directly over two parts of the book, what had come from Rome, and what he had added at royal request. Subsequent editors and copyists had completely frustrated this intention by simply moving this dividing Preface farther back into their new editions! Amiet's 1953 report detailed his investigations up to that time.¹¹

Subsequent search brought Amiet to the Chapter Library of Cologne, where he had the good fortune to identify the two early sacramentaries, which Pamelius had used in his "first" edition of the Gregorian (1571). Pamelius had used his books so badly, had misrepresented them so thoroughly, had dated them so very far from the mark, that students have labored under needless handicaps. Amiet now furnishes an interim report on the *Hucusque*-tradition and lists the ten codices that are truest

⁹ N. Abercrombie, "Alcuin and the Text of the *Gregorianum*: Notes on Cambrai MS 164," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 3 (1953) 99-103.

¹⁰ L. Wallach, *Speculum* 29 (1954) 822.

¹¹ R. Amiet, "Le prologue *Hucusque* et la table des *Capitula* du Supplément d'Alcuin au Sacramentaire Grégorien," *Scriptorium* 7 (1953) 177-209.

to the genuine text.¹² We subjoin the list:

1. Rome, Vatican Lib.: *MS Ott 313*; made for Paris, ix¹.
2. Autun, Public Lib.: *MS 19*; made 845 at Tours for nearby abbey.
3. Paris, Nat. Lib.: *MS lat 12050*; made 853 for Amiens priest.
4. Le Mans, Pub. Lib.: *MS 77*; ix², for Le Mans Cathedral.
5. Paris, Nat. Lib.: *MS lat 2812*; ix^{ex}, for Arles.
6. Paris, Nat. Lib.: *MS lat 9429*; 925–50, for Beauvais.
7. Cologne, Chap. Lib.: *MS 137*; ix², for Cologne.
8. Cologne, Chap. Lib.: *MS 88*; ix², for Cologne.
9. Florence, Laur. Lib.: *MS Aedil 121*; probably in Rhineland.
10. Paris, Ste-Gen. Lib.: *MS 111*; 882, at Paris, perhaps for Senlis.

The half-disclosed item here following bears on Mass history at a little later period. The writer's information derives from a book review in *Worship* for September, 1956. The story *hucusque* bears noting. Cornelius Bouman of Utrecht, a deacon in holy orders, writes of a recent 48-page booklet by a Boniface Luykx, a Premonstratensian priest well known in America for his liturgy lectures at Notre Dame, whose booklet, *On the Origins of the Ordinary of the Mass* (1955), is already having far-reaching effects. Says the reviewer:

In the third edition of his *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955) Father Joseph Jungmann has given ample room to Father Boniface' conclusions, sacrificing an hypothesis of his own.

The author's conclusions can be summarized as follows: The full structure of the later medieval (and therefore our present) Common of the Mass found its origin in the Abbey of St. Gall (and not at Séez in Normandy, as Father Jungmann had previously thought).¹³

Bouman closes his review with a hope we heartily endorse: "We hope that Father Luykx will soon find the opportunity to give a full account of his findings in a book which will be accessible not only to those who are acquainted with his mother tongue."

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¹² R. Amiet, "Les Sacramentaires 88 et 137 du Chapitre de Cologne," *Scriptorium* 9 (1955) 76–84.

¹³ C. Bouman, in *Worship* 30 (September, 1956) 544.