

International Workshop

MINUSCULE TEXTS AND EARLY MEDIEVAL LITURGICAL PRACTICES

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University of Oslo, Blindern

Arthur Westwell (University of Regensburg), *Masses in the Margins: Mixed Liturgical Traditions in Non-Liturgical Manuscripts*

The medieval manuscripts that contain prayers for the mass (mostly categorised as sacramentaries and missals) are often grand and weighty, conveying permanence and authority. Close analysis of their content, however, reveals how much the tradition was continually in flux, and how much experimentation medieval compilers employed in recreating the mass book as a useful resource in each new copy. The manuscripts, however, purposefully veil this experimentation, and it has rarely been fully appreciated by scholars. An exciting opportunity to explore an area in which scribes had such surprising freedom is afforded, however, by the mass texts found outside the authoritative context of the mass book itself: i.e. masses entered into spare folios or margins of books that are not themselves mass books. The only example of this phenomenon studied in any depth is one copy of the Old English Bede (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41), copied in the eleventh century. The numerous masses spread through the margins seem to come from diverse traditions, and the explanation has been offered that a scribe was using these spare places to begin to put together a new and innovative structure of mass book, perhaps a significant waypoint in the opaque development of the latter. This talk will take on this exciting suggestion and explore more widely the copies of masses found in such surprising places. It will note various experiments in combining distinct liturgical traditions and genres from 700 to 1100, the visible composing of new or reworking of old texts, vernacular interjections, as well as the often bizarre orthographical and palaeographical features which accompanied them. It will posit these places as the venue for particularly bold experimentation, which helps to unlock the genuine excitement behind the serene dignity of liturgical volumes.

John F. Romano (Benedictine College), *Roman Mass Fragments as “Spiritual Merchandise”*

Investigating mini-texts that are formulae from Masses originally composed in Rome calls to mind the conclusion of Umberto Eco’s novel *The Name of the Rose*. The main character described the scraps of manuscripts he sought out as “a library made up of fragments, quotations, unfinished sentences, amputated stumps of books,” and he despaired at the possibility of learning any lesson from them. At least from the perspective of the Roman clergy, these mini-texts are indeed fragments: They are ripped from their original context in the stational system and the ecclesiastical year, they often only provide the three proper prayers of the Mass (and sometimes not even all of these), they often do not always identify for what feast they are intended or that they are Roman, and they could be repurposed for new celebrations. From the perspective of the recipients of these mini-texts North of the Alps, however, these writings acquired a different meaning. I borrow from Bede’s discussion of Benedict Biscop the classification of “spiritual merchandise” (*spirituales merces*), a loose category that encompassed relics, papal letters, and images acquired from Rome. All communicate the widespread veneration of Rome, but the liturgical material did not necessarily have to be employed in worship to be considered useful; it may have been enough to preserve it, even in

manuscripts without other liturgical texts. To study this theme, I am investigating a “corpusculum” of mini-texts, and especially Munich, Universitätsbibliothek, 4° Cod. MS 3 [clm 23], fols. 111v-112v, 124r-124v (with Gregorian Type II formulae).

Melissa Kapitan (University of Oslo), *Hidden Customs: The Marginalized Evidence for Prime and Chapter in the Early Middle Ages*

Studies on early medieval monasticism have long sought to disentangle the perception of norms expressed in monastic rules and the reality of the acceptance and rejection of those same rules, as well as experimentation by individual monastic communities. Minuscule texts uncover new opportunities to explore this dynamic, drawing us away from modern editions and normative texts to the development of the Divine Office on the page. Throughout the early middle ages, each of the liturgical hours accrued supplemental prayers and versicles, called *capitella* or *preces*, but the office of Prime was especially laden with devotions beyond the text of monastic rules. This supplemental material for Prime included the extra office of chapter, which by the eighth century had become a daily assembly of the monastic community for communal reading and correction of faults. To date, however, there has been no comprehensive study of the development and spread of this supplemental material for Prime. While this paper does not purport to be comprehensive, it will introduce substantially new evidence of the development of Prime and Chapter, hidden in the margins and flyleaves of manuscripts. Much of the early history of Prime and Chapter has been surmised by comparing high and late medieval ordinals and breviaries to eighth- and ninth-century normative sources. I have uncovered at least ten detailed ordines for Prime, many also with ordines for Chapter, dated between the second half of the eighth century and the beginning of the eleventh. These minitexts for Prime reveal a core of shared material that had already spread to several regions of Carolingian Francia by the middle of the ninth century. This paper offers a preliminary investigation of these remarkable testimonies of an unexplored aspect of the Divine Office.

Yitzhak Hen (Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem), *Politics and the Use of Liturgical Minitexts*

During the last decades of the sixth century and, more evidently, during the first half of the seventh century a new doctrine of kingship evolved in the Merovingian kingdoms, and Christian themes came to dominate ideas of rulership and government. One manifestation of this shift of emphasis was the emergence of liturgical patronage, and consequently chants and prayers became an instrument for the dissemination of political ideology. This interest and concern of the later Merovingian kings and queens in liturgy is amply attested in the sources from the seventh century onwards, and especially in prayers *pro rege*, *pro regibus*, or *in pace*, which beseech God to protect the kingdom’s peace, to secure its stability, and to grant victory to the ruler. In this paper I shall trace the evolutions of such a use of liturgy through numerous minitexts that set this trend in motion.

Ildar Garipzanov (University of Oslo), *Missa pro regibus as a Minitext (Verdun, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 69)*

Minuscule texts often do not comply with normative liturgical books. By doing so, they allow us not only to discern variability of local liturgical practices in early medieval Europe but also, in some cases, question earlier scholarly arguments relying on studies of standard liturgical sources. *Missa pro regibus* added at the end of Verdun, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 69 containing the Penitential of Egbert, probably in the second quarter of the ninth century, is a proof to those both points. This unique mass transcribed in a double monastery in Eastern France predates versions of a similar mass recorded in St Gall and Reichenau in the third quarter of the ninth century and previously viewed as their original creation echoing the militarized ethos of the East Frankish court of Louis the German. Our minuscule text voids the latter supposition, and the textual analysis of that mass shows that it is a product of the earlier Frankish Gelasian liturgical tradition and was created out of relevant orations found in the Frankish Missal and the Gelasian Sacramentary (Reg. lat. 316). Its textual prototypes connect the origins of this royal mass with male and female convents east of Paris. This Gelasian mass was probably created around mid-eighth century by a convent such as Chelles, Jouarre, Faremoutiers, and Rebais with close connections with the court of Pippin the Short. This minuscule text thus displays us glimpses of the heterogenous and non-linear development of royal liturgy that the earlier normative editions of liturgical sources often fail to show.

Rebecca Maloy (University of Notre Dame), *Liturgical Minitexts in Visigothic Script*

Among the minitexts considered in *Minuscule Texts: Marginalized Voices in Early Medieval Latin Culture*, are several liturgical materials written in Visigothic script, some of which were written before or contemporaneous with the oldest liturgical manuscripts. This presentation will contextualize these texts, placing them in dialogue with the history and surviving witnesses to Old Hispanic Rite. These texts shed new light on the transmission of liturgical materials between the seventh century, a formative period for the Old Hispanic rite, and the ninth century, which saw the transition to the Roman Rite in some regions. Considered together, the minitexts bear early witness to some practices that continued into the tenth century. In other cases, however, they provide a further witness to a diversity of practice within the Old Hispanic rite.

Jesse D. Billett (Trinity College, University of Toronto), *A Deeper Look into the Marginal Office Chant Lists in the Old English Bede (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41)*

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Ms 41 contains the Old English version of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, written in the first half of the eleventh century by two scribes at an unknown centre. The Mercian dialect of the putative archetype has been modified in this copy to Late West Saxon, and the scribes show unfamiliarity with place names beyond the bounds of Wessex. Frances Wormald assigned the original decorations to his "Winchester School" and dated them 1020x1050. A bilingual donation inscription identifies this as one of the books given by Bishop Leofric to the library of Exeter Cathedral, which must have happened sometime between 1069 and 1072. Sometime before the book was acquired by Leofric—and probably *not* at Exeter—a single scribe made numerous marginal additions, with no obvious relation to the main text, in an "awkward and seemingly idiosyncratic script" (Mildred Budny). The greater number are Latin liturgical texts: there are many sets of Mass orations, which were copied from at least two different sacramentaries; there are also hundreds of Office chant incipits, several of which are partly notated with Breton neumes. The scribe added several substantial vernacular texts, in both prose and verse: six homilies, the verse "Solomon

and Saturn,” and several sections of the “Old English Martyrology” that are uniquely attested here. A selection of charms, a recipe for eye salve, the *Sator arepo* word square, and some runes round out the collection.

This paper offers a targeted exploration of one segment of the marginalia, focusing on the lists of Office chant incipits, which I argue must have been copied from an antiphoner that contained an East Frankish chant repertory perhaps introduced to England as much as a century earlier, in the reign of Æthelstan.

Laura Albiero (Musik Akademie, Basel), *Sacred Margins: Exploring Liturgical Annotations in Medieval Manuscripts*

Within liturgical codices, marginal additions often served practical purposes such as clarifying or correcting the main text, indicating variations in ritual practice, or accommodating local customs and traditions. They reflect the dynamic nature of liturgical practices, which were subject to regional variations and evolving theological interpretations. On the other hand, the presence of liturgical marginalia in manuscripts unrelated to liturgical practice raises questions about their purpose and significance. These additions may have been made for a variety of reasons, ranging from accidental copying errors to intentional scholarly annotations or personal reflections. They highlight the interconnectedness of textual traditions and the fluidity of manuscript transmission, as manuscripts were often repurposed, reused, or adapted for different contexts over time.

This paper endeavours to explore the customs associated with marginal annotations of liturgical nature, seeking to unveil the motivations and objectives behind such practices. To accomplish this objective, we examine the library of one of the most important medieval monastic establishments: Fleury Abbey. As Marco Mostert demonstrated, the library of Fleury housed a vast collection of manuscripts, reflecting the abbey’s intellectual pursuits and scholarly interests. In addition to liturgical texts, the library contained a diverse range of works, including classical and Christian literature, legal texts, and scientific treatises. By analysing the liturgical marginalia found in Fleury’s manuscripts, we can gain a better understanding of the abbey’s intellectual culture and its role in the transmission of religious knowledge.

Sinead O’Sullivan (Queen’s University Belfast), *Empire of Prayer: Collects in Carolingian Psalters*

The creation of Carolingian psalters comprising prefaces, psalms, glosses, collects, canticles, creeds, prayers, litanies, and illustrations finds its counterpoint in Carolingian books of Vergil with their prefaces, poems, glosses, commentaries, diagrams, and excerpts. Carolingian psalters manifestly demonstrate efforts to consolidate materials around canonical texts. But with their liturgical and non-liturgical elements, psalters also raise questions about function and use. Short orations known as collects are a case in point. Seeking mediation through Christ, these short texts written in minuscule script at the end of each psalm were ubiquitous in Carolingian psalters. Collects formed part of the Carolingian reception of the Psalms, a work recited in its entirety each week in monasteries and cathedral schools as part of the prayers, chants, and readings intoned during the Divine Office. By the ninth century, collects were regularly copied in psalters.

Either added after the systematic annotation in the marginal space deployed for the glosses or transcribed like the psalm verses in the central space reserved for the main text, collects challenge the notion of a clear boundary between gloss and addition, text and minitext. My paper shows that in Carolingian psalters, the collects were not stand-alone minitexts. Nor indeed was their purpose purely devotional. These prayers, originally perhaps serving a liturgical purpose, must be read in conjunction with the other materials on the manuscript page. Text, gloss, and prayer operated in tandem. Private study and public devotion went hand in hand. Reading and praying were interconnected. More broadly, my paper spotlights the importance of prayer in the Carolingian Age, arguing that an empire of prayer had emerged in Carolingian Europe.