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## Article

# Medial Ambiguity: Liturgical Books of the Latin Church and their Changing Status in Mediaeval Tradition\*

Felix Heinzer | Freiburg

It is hard to say whether or not Christian believers in the Middle Ages would have accepted the label of ‘People of the Book’, a designation applied in Islamic tradition to the Abrahamic religions that pre-date Islam. Although, as Jeffrey says, it was ‘first intended pejoratively, [such a designation] in Jewish tradition came to be accepted with pride as a legitimate reference to a culture and religious identity rooted fundamentally in Torah, the original book of the Law’,<sup>1</sup> it is likely that Christian theologians of patristic and early mediaeval times would have spoken of a plurality of writings or holy books by using plural forms such as *scripturae divinae*.<sup>2</sup> At any rate, rather than speaking of a book-based religion, early Christians would probably have preferred the idea of a religion of the *Word*, or rather, of the *Word of God*.<sup>3</sup>

To prevent any misunderstandings from the outset, I do not intend to insinuate a crude relativisation here, let alone an erosion of the status of the Bible, the central pillar of Christian religion, but rather to campaign for contextualisation. I shall do this by considering two different aspects. First of all, Christians would not regard the book

– or rather, the books – of Holy Scripture as the divine revelation in itself, but as a medium of revelation referring to God’s living word, without considering it to be the entirety of God’s self-communication. This is a minefield with regard to theological debates, of course, but if we disregard the intransigent partisans of an extreme *sola scriptura* position, it can be said that Christian theologians of all periods are unlikely to have excluded any additional forms of divine revelation: God personally speaking to individuals such as prophets and saints, and His self-manifestation by means of the world He created. Augustine – who seems to have been the inventor of the long-lasting notion of a second book in addition to the *liber scripturae*, namely the *liber naturae*, a metaphor of the ‘readability’ of the world pointing to God as its ‘author’, as it were<sup>4</sup> – even claimed in one of his letters that the created world serves a role as an instance of verifying the promises made in the Bible:

Certe non chartis veteribus, non archivis publicis, non gestis forensibus aut ecclesiasticis agamus. maior liber noster orbis terrarum est; in eo lego completum, quod in libro dei lego promissum [...].

By all means, let us stop arguing from ancient manuscripts, public archives or the acts of courts, be they civil or ecclesiastical. We have a greater book: the world itself. In it I read of the accomplishment of the promise I read about in the Book of God.<sup>5</sup>

\* This article is largely based on a talk I gave at Sonderforschungsbereich ‘Manuscript Cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe’ at the University of Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), on 26 November 2015. I am grateful both for the invitation to share my reflections about a subject I have been dealing with for a considerable time in such an inspiring context and for the stimulating suggestions made during the discussion of my paper, which equally benefits from comments I received after further presentations of the topic at Ohio State University and UC Berkeley in April and September 2016. I would particularly like to thank Irina Wandrey for her patient help with the formal shaping of my article and Carl Carter, my proof-reader, for his endeavour to grapple with my English.

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey 1996, XIII.

<sup>2</sup> Even if it now seems less than clear whether the expression *biblia*, which is at the heart of the corresponding terms in many modern Western languages (*bibbia*, *bible* etc.), should really be considered a form of the plural, Greek βιβλίον, it might actually stem from the term *bibliotheca* used at least until the ninth century to denote the aggregate of holy books. Cf. Stotz 1996–2004, vol. 1, 582 (part IV, sect. 25.10) and vol. 4, 17 (part VIII, sect. 7.6).

<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey 1996, XII–XIII.

<sup>4</sup> A typical and frequently quoted instance is found in *Contra Faustum* 32:20: ‘at si uniuersam creaturam ita prius aspiceres, ut auctori deo tribueres, quasi legens magnum quendam librum naturae rerum ...’, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera* 6:1 (ed. Zycha 1891, 782, ll. 7–10). Regarding the topic as a whole, cf. Blumenberg 1981 and more recently Fuhrer 2013, 235–236.

<sup>5</sup> Augustine, *Ep.* 43:25, (ed. Goldbacher 1895, 107). Cf. Fuhrer 2013, 236.

The mediaeval career of this concept is substantial – allow me to quote the particularly elegant formulation in the famous *Rhythmus alter* of the great twelfth-century poet Alanus ab Insulis (taken up, purposely, by Umberto Eco in the chapter of his novel *The Name of the Rose* concerning the first day):

Omnis mundi creatura  
quasi liber et pictura  
nobis est, et speculum  
...<sup>6</sup>

A second contextualisation which is even more relevant to our topic concerns the embedding of the Bible in the realm of Christian cult performance. Angelika Neuwirth recently referred to an analogous situation in Islamic tradition which was more a matter of everyday devotional practice than official cult when she insisted on the fact that the Koran's presence in the context of daily life would have mainly been one of sound, i.e. of recitation in different forms of *cantilena*, rather than a 'textual' manifestation.<sup>7</sup> Hence the Koran – and here I quote from Navid Kermani's speech in praise of Angelika Neuwirth, given at the award ceremony for the Sigmund Freud Prize of the German Academy for Language and Literature in Darmstadt in October 2013 – is:

a text intended to be read out loud. The written word is secondary, and until well into the twentieth century it was, for Muslims, little more than an aide-mémoire. God speaks when the Koran is recited: in the strictest sense, one cannot read it, one can only hear it. In this context, Angelika Neuwirth speaks of the sacramental character of Koranic recitation. Although Islam does not use this term, it is essentially a sacramental act to take God's word into one's mouth, to receive it through the ears, to learn it by heart: the sacred is not simply remembered, the faithful physically take it into their bodies [...] (This, incidentally, is why singers are supposed to clean their teeth before declaiming the Koran.)<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Alanus ab Insulis, *Opera omnia* (ed. Migne 1855, vol. 210, col. 579A). Cf. Speer 1995, 30.

<sup>7</sup> Neuwirth 2010, 34: 'Viel lebendiger als in seiner mit den anderen heiligen Schriften geteilten textuellen Erscheinungsform war und ist [der Koran] im täglichen Leben klanglich präsent, wo er in verschiedenen Formen der Kantilene verlaubar wird.'

<sup>8</sup> Kermani 2014.

Now, an ambivalence of the holy text between the poles of scripturality and silent reading on the one hand and what we might call a physically sounding presence produced by recitation or even singing affects biblical textuality as well, as I would like to show hereafter. This is where liturgy and its books – especially chant books – enter the stage.

### 1. Christian liturgical books and the Bible

The texts of Christian liturgy – I shall focus on the tradition of the mediaeval Western (i.e. Latin) Church here – are deeply permeated by Holy Scripture, in the Eucharistic celebration and in the Liturgy of the Hours. A statement of this kind is, of course, rather trivial for the biblical readings themselves, both in the Mass Liturgy and in the Liturgy of the Hours, especially in the latter's nightly readings of biblical and hagiographical sections. It is interesting to note that the shaping of specialised books for the various modes of proclamation of the biblical message superseded an earlier practice of simply using entire manuscripts of the Bible completed by adding lists or other secondary material that indicated the textual passages scheduled for a given liturgical occasion, if not just by marginal signs in the Bible itself.<sup>9</sup> The same is true, yet less evident, for the meditation and appropriation of this biblical message by the liturgical community. The Book of Psalms occupies a dominating position here. Psalmody itself (the singing of psalms, which actually builds on Jewish traditions) is the backbone of Divine Office, which, by its cadence of fixed-hour prayer, structured the life of mediaeval monks, nuns and clerics and deeply informed their spiritual and aesthetical culture.<sup>10</sup>

The role of the Bible goes far beyond this, however, as it affects other fields of sacred chanting as well. Actually, the biblical imprint of the core repertory – not only of Office chants besides psalmody itself, but of Mass Liturgy as well – is simply overwhelming. The so-called 'Gregorian' repertory, considered to be a result of inspiration including even the melodies (Fig. 1), is drawing to a large degree on the Bible, or more precisely on the Old Testament (adduced in a typological perspective), and here again, mostly on the Psalter, especially in the context of Holy Mass. The roots of this impressive predominance can be found in what James McKinnon called the 'psalmodic movement' of the closing decades of the fourth

<sup>9</sup> See Palazzo 1998, 87–88.

<sup>10</sup> See the summarising remarks about this in Heinzer 2013, 18–21.





Fig. 1: Abbey Library of St Gall, Cod. Sang. 390 (Codex Harker), Antiphonary, St Gall, end of the tenth century, fol. 13'. Pope Gregory inspired by the Holy Spirit (symbolised by the dove on his shoulder) dictates his notarius Petrus Diaconus neumed chants.



century, which were ‘a time of unprecedented popularity for the singing of biblical psalms’. According to McKinnon, ‘there is no evidence that anything so pervasive and intense existed before this time, nor that anything quite like it would be witnessed again in the history of Christianity’.<sup>11</sup> This phenomenon marked the liturgical chants of the Latin Church persistently, not only in the Roman tradition of Late Antiquity, but up to its reception and redaction in the context of the Carolingian reform movement, which turned out to be determinant for further Western European traditions of liturgy. A few numbers will serve to illustrate this evidence for the most important genres of Mass chanting, borrowed from David Hiley’s *Handbook of Plain Chant*: more than half of all Communion chants and roughly three quarters of all introits are taken from the Psalter, while the proportion of psalmic texts is even higher for graduals and offertories: 90 per cent for the former and almost 100 per cent for the latter.<sup>12</sup>

Such statistics might give us an idea as to what extent the presence of the Psalter – and to a certain degree that of the Bible as a whole in the cultural life of the Middle Ages, especially in cultic performance – exceeded the boundaries of personal reading and study of it. We might even say that the Bible had its greatest impact in the communitarian context of liturgy, and in fact not only by means of readings, but most of all in association with the performance of chants and thus with a stronger emotional effect thanks to the enhancing alliance with the component of music.

To mention just one random example from the Carolingian period, I would like to point out the repeated use of the wording *angelus magni consilii* in John Scotus Eriugena’s treatise on Ps. Dionysius’s *Celestial Hierarchy*, while he draws on the famous passage about the messianic child in Jes. 9:6 (‘For to us a child is born...’), not following the Vulgata, as one might expect, which has *admirabilis consiliarius* instead, but an older version known as the Vetus Latina.<sup>13</sup> Deducing from this evidence that Eriugena would still have been a staunch adherent of the Old Latin translation of the Bible is certainly untenable, though; he simply had a very prominent liturgical chant in mind: the introit *Puer natus* from the third mass for Christmas taken directly from Jes. 9:6, but as huge layers of

the Gregorian mass repertory, drawing on the Vetus Latina.<sup>14</sup> Texts seem to be more ‘appealing’ when they are sung than when they are read from a book!<sup>15</sup>

From this perspective, and bearing the reflections in mind that were mentioned at the beginning of this paper, we might conclude that what Angelika Neuwirth underlines for the Islamic reference book can also be applied to the presence and efficacy of the Bible, which – at least for mediaeval Christianity – is predominantly a matter of textuality becoming bodily resonant in the sense of acoustic performance:

Will man [...] von einer Verkörperung des Wortes sprechen, so wird man diese nicht, wie mit ‘Inlibration’ vorausgesetzt, in einem Schrift-repräsentierenden Buch suchen, sondern in einem organischen Resonanzraum, der [...] gesprochenes Wort und Kantilene aufzunehmen vermag.

If one chose to speak of an embodiment of the Word [...], then one would not look for it in a book that represents Scripture, which is a prerequisite for ‘inlibration’, but in an organic resonance chamber which [...] is capable of accommodating the spoken word and cantilena.<sup>16</sup>

This is of substantial importance for the books used in Christian liturgy: if, in their function as a means of cultic response to divine self-communication, they show such a considerable amount of textual overlap with the Bible itself as the material embodiment of this revelation, these books can naturally claim a considerable degree of participation in the sacred status of the Bible, from where they obtain their own dignity.

This is almost self-evident for the Book of the Gospels, which is not only a genuine part of the Christian Bible, but even claims to represent the ‘Logos’, the incarnate Word of God. This representational aspect also explains the notorious material preciousness and artistic quality of most of these manuscripts (Fig. 2).<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, the Evangeliary’s role on the liturgical stage is twofold: if the reading and hearing of the Gospels is done in the ritually enhanced context of a sacred

<sup>11</sup> McKinnon 2000, 39.

<sup>12</sup> Hiley 1995, 109 and 122.

<sup>13</sup> Johannes Scotus Eriugena (ed. Barbet 1975), 81–82.

<sup>14</sup> Pfisterer (2002) worked out that besides Advent, this repertory is based completely on Old Latin texts for the rest of the liturgical year.

<sup>15</sup> For more discussion of these dynamics, see Heinzer 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Neuwirth 2015, 238.

<sup>17</sup> Lentjes 2005, Heinzer 2009 and Reudenbach 2009.



Fig. 2: Nürnberg, German National Museum, Ms. 156142, Codex Aureus Epternacensis, Book of the Gospels, Echternach c. 1030–1050, front cover.

space, from the opened codex, which is used as a book for public recitation at that moment, enhanced by musical intoning,<sup>18</sup> then the *plethora* of ritual actions before and after the recitation<sup>19</sup> address the closed codex as an object, or more precisely the auctorial reality behind it: God's own Word. Consequently, the material body of the Evangeliary can be promoted to a sign of Christ's presence even outside Mass Liturgy, for instance in the context of public processions or during a ruler's ceremonial entry, often in conjunction with other signs of representational claim such as relics and crucifixes.<sup>20</sup>

In this context, we might also mention evidence of magical applications of holy books, be it the Bible as a whole or parts

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Hiley 1995, 55–57.

<sup>19</sup> As the processional conveying of the book to the ambo including its ostentatious elevation in the sense of a mimetical representation of Christ ascending to preach on the mountain, accompanied by various body-language signals such as standing up, kissing the book, veiling the hands of those who hold the book and the like, but also the Byzantine-rooted symbolism of candlelight and incense. Cf. Heinzer 2009, 44–52.

<sup>20</sup> Lentjes 2005, 141–146, and Heinzer 2009, 52–56.



Fig. 3: Stuttgart, Regional Library of Württemberg, Cod. bibl. fol. 46, Würzburg, Psalter from Benedictine Monastery Comburg, c. 1220–1230, front cover.

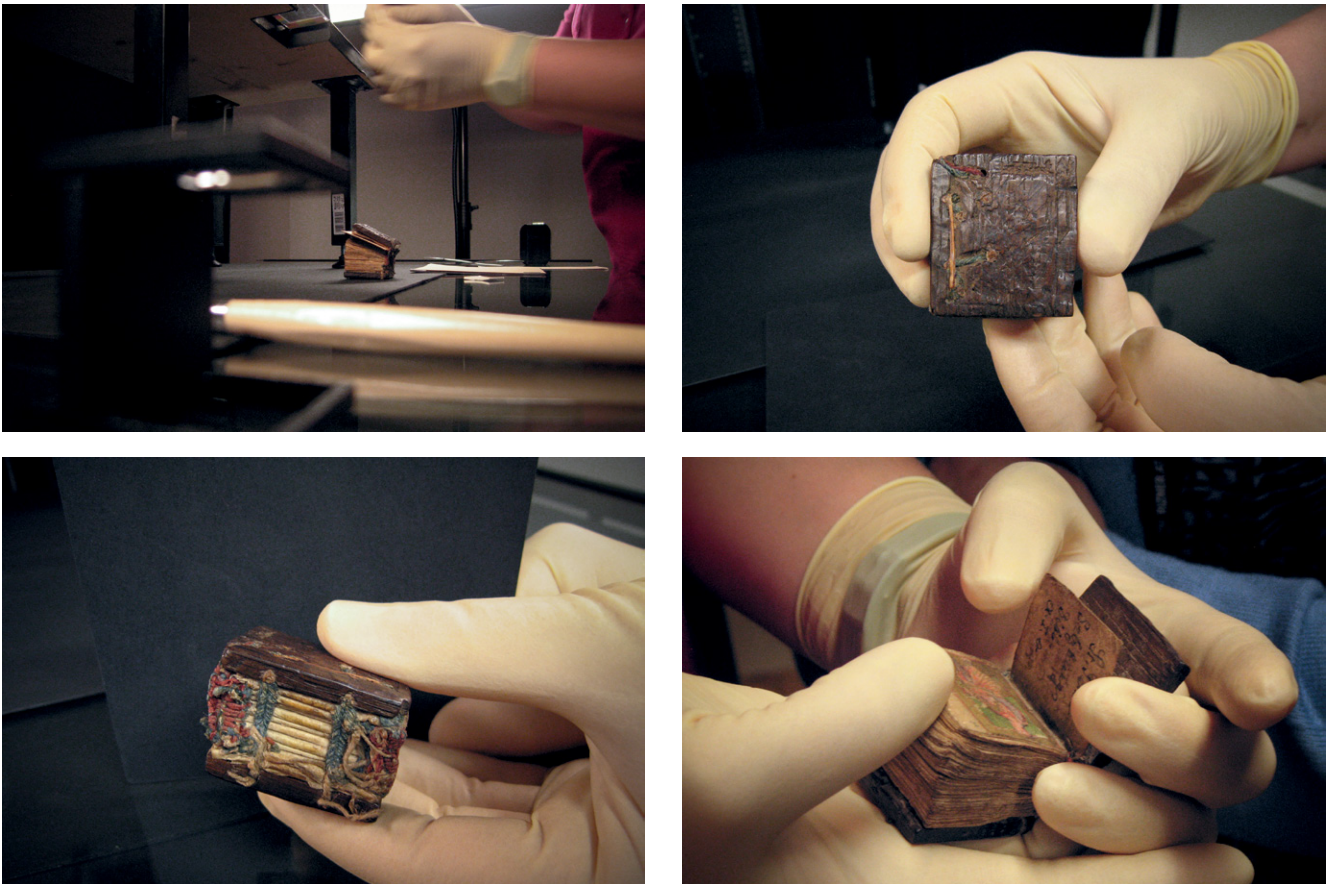
of it like the Gospels – or even smaller snippets such as the highly regarded prologue to St John's Gospel (*In principio erat Verbum* – 'In the beginning was the Word'), particularly popular on account of its apotropaic qualities.<sup>21</sup> Yet the dominating biblical book in such circumstances is, again, the Psalter, used for divinatory practices or as an instrument in the context of ordeals etc.,<sup>22</sup> and also worn as an amulet, especially in earlier periods – either attached to a dead person's body to accompany them in the afterlife, as attested by archaeological finds such as a Coptic Psalter manuscript from c. 400 CE discovered as a burial object near Cairo,<sup>23</sup> or carried by living persons, as in the case of the famous 'Cathach' or 'Battler' of St Columba, an early seventh-century Irish Psalter traditionally associated with Columba

<sup>21</sup> An impressive dossier with regard to such practices has been assembled by Schreiner 2002, 315–322.

<sup>22</sup> Regarding this aspect, richly documented evidence has, again, been provided by Schreiner 2002, 308–315; see also Vezin 1992.

<sup>23</sup> Vezin 1992, 103.





Figs 4a–d: Salzburg, St Peter's Archabbey, Ms. a I O, *Psalterium sancti Ruperti*. Photographs taken during facsimile process by Helge Kirchberger Photography Salzburg for Zierys Faksimiles Regensburg.

of Iona, enclosed in a shrine by its later owners to accompany them into battle.<sup>24</sup> Another very interesting example of such use of the Psalter is in a miniscule manuscript known as the *Psalterium sancti Ruperti* from the third quarter of the ninth century, now housed in St Peter's Monastery in Salzburg (Ms. a I O) (Figs 4a, b, c, d).<sup>25</sup> The size of this book is a mere 37 by 31 mm, with no less than 18 lines per page. Apparently, this tiny work contained not only the entire Psalter, but also two prologues, a full-page author's portrait of David and three full-page initials following the standard tripartite division of the Psalter, while the beginnings of the Psalms and of the individual verses are marked by smaller initials in gold. At the principal subdivisions of the text, the scribe employed gold ink for an entire page on several occasions, and in one case, he wrote on a purple background. This miniature book was probably not made for reading at all, but to be worn around the neck or girdle of its owner

– perhaps a high-ranking member of the Carolingian royal family – as a talisman. Used in such a way, the small book would probably have been closed most of the time, yet to be magically effective, it had to be a true Psalter with regard to its content, not just its appearance.

## 2. Hierarchies of sacrality?

Considerations of this kind raise a rather tricky question, which is the object of the second part of my article: is it possible (and reasonable) to scale the 'degree' of sacralisation with regard to different categories of liturgical books? Actually, if we roughly differentiate liturgy in terms of its three main sectors or components, viz. reading (and listening), praying, and chanting, it is obvious that the sacrality of the Gospels as a 'subset' of the Bible is beyond debate. The same is true of the Epistolary, if only to a minor extent, and, of course, of the Psalter.<sup>26</sup> The case

<sup>24</sup> De Hamel 1986, 22 and plate 12.

<sup>25</sup> Mütterich 1988.

<sup>26</sup> Its consistent Christological interpretation also generates a corresponding iconographical 'outfit' of the book, which tends to promote bindings of Psalter manuscripts often made to emulate those of Gospel books (Fig. 3):

of the Sacramentary is particularly interesting here: despite its general, non-biblical contents, the book enjoyed a similar amount of prestige to the Evangeliary, apparently because the *Canon Missae*, which is considered to be the very core of Mass, and hence of the Sacramentary, is centred on the words of Eucharistical institution spoken by the celebrant in persona Christi to ‘produce’ Christ’s sacramental presence, as it were (Fig. 5). Such a claim was never associated with chant books used as tools of praise and worship. Consequently, the illustration of these ‘practical books’ generally attracted less artistic elaboration and even less material luxury than Gospel manuscripts and Sacramentaries did, as Eric Palazzo has emphasised.<sup>27</sup> a gradation probably depending on different degrees of Christological representation.

Still, there are common features with regard to all these books. I might mention the fact that even in the late Middle Ages, when paper was increasingly replacing parchment, the production of liturgical manuscripts almost always stuck to the traditional (albeit more expensive) writing material, which was usually of the best quality available – clearly an indication of the prestige and dignity ascribed to such books.<sup>28</sup> Equally significant is the generally established practice of storing manuscripts destined for liturgical celebration separately from other books: while the latter were housed in the institution’s library, the usual place where liturgical codices were kept was the treasury of the abbey or cathedral, where these books were stored together with paraments, liturgical vessels and relics, hence in a context of decidedly sacral dignity<sup>29</sup> – a situation which also explains the striking absence of such books in most mediaeval library catalogues we know of. To illustrate this significant differentiation, it may suffice to remember the arrangement in the famous St Gall Monastery plan of the ninth century



Fig. 5: Paris, National Library of France (BnF), Ms. lat. 9428, Drogo Sacramentary, Metz, c. 850, front cover.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Das Buch der Psalmen wird [...] mit Hilfe der Ikonographie zum veritablen Evangelium erhoben’ (Lentes 1998, particularly 332) – an aesthetical upgrading that has its theological counterpart in the striking statement made by Peter Lombard, who confers on David – the presumed author of the work – the status of *propheta* and even that of a ‘fifth evangelist’, because unlike other prophets who only spoke obscurely and *per aenigmata* about Christ and his mysteries, David, the most excellent of all the prophets, spoke so clearly ‘that he seems to evangelise rather than to prophesy’ (*ut magis videatur evangelizare quam prophetare*); Petrus Lombardus, *Commentarius in Psalmos* (ed. Migne 1854, col. 57D).

<sup>28</sup> Palazzo 1989, 79.

<sup>29</sup> Lyall 1989, 12 (based on evidence from English sources, yet applicable to the situation in general).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. the general remarks on treasure manuscripts by Palazzo 1997.

(Codex Sangallensis 1092),<sup>30</sup> where to the north of the apse the inscriptions indicate a building with two storeys, one for the scriptorium and the other for the library (*infra sedes scribentium – supra bibliotheca*), whereas to the south we have the sacristy (*subtus sacratorium*), which exactly corresponds to the other building in terms of its layout and dimensions (without the windows, though, which were necessary for the scribes, but not for the sacristy, of course) (Fig. 6). Although liturgical books are not specifically mentioned, unlike the paraments (*vestes ecclesiae*) kept on the upper floor, plenty of other sources attest the fact that the sacristy was partly employed as a multifunctional storeroom, mostly so the inventories of mediaeval church treasuries.

A glance at the first volume of the *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse*, covering the period from Charlemagne until about 1250, is actually very telling in terms of this juxtaposition, but at the same time it reveals evidence of the aforementioned gradation between different genres of manuscripts. Retrieval

<sup>30</sup> See *Carolingian Culture at Reichenau & St. Gall*; Tremp 2014.







of the index focusing on books shows – unsurprisingly, of course – the numerical predominance of lemmata such as *Biblia*, *Evangelium* and *Plenarium* (seemingly indicating in most cases the full liturgical lectionary, at least in earlier lists) and a considerable number of entries for *Missalis* (most probably indicating the Sacramentary), but significantly less evidence for *Antiphonarium* and *Graduale*, i.e. for the two main chant books used for Office and Mass (with the well-known terminological blurring for Antiphonary).<sup>31</sup> An even greater predominance of Gospel books is observable with regard to book covers, as is clearly shown by a look at the index of Frauke Steenbock's seminal work on luxury bindings.<sup>32</sup> This is particularly evident in the extensive list from the Abbey of Prüm (about 50 km north of Trier) made in 1003 at the behest of Emperor Henri II. Embedded in an extensive series of liturgical garments, tapestries and vessels and an impressive array of highly precious reliquaries, we find a remarkable list of liturgical manuscripts: four Gospels (one of them a gift from Carolingian emperor Lothar I, buried in Prüm), a Mass book (probably a Sacramentary), a Lectionary, and eventually two chant books, namely an Antiphonary and a Troper (including sequences, as the manuscript itself, which is now housed in Paris, shows). The document explicitly mentions the precious bindings (none of which have survived), showing the material luxury of such 'vestments of the books' enveloping and protecting the body of the book and at the same time visualising its role and dignity, much as garments do with humans,<sup>33</sup> hence clearly providing evidence of differences in hierarchical status.<sup>34</sup> While the Gospel bequeathed by Lothar, written throughout in golden ink, as the note *totum interius et exterius aureum* ('all golden inside and outside') indicates, but also the

Lectionary and the Sacramentary are mentioned as being covered with gold and gems, and even the everyday Gospel Book (*cottidianum*) had a silver cover, the chant books were bound in ivory diptychs (*cum tabulis eburneis*), a choice for a material deemed less precious than gold and gems, which is not an isolated case and seems to indicate a differentiation of sacrality, as it were. This, however, is not only a matter of material value and its semantics,<sup>35</sup> but equally of iconographic features. Consequently, representations of the crucified Christ are predominant in Evangeliary bindings (Fig. 2) and also occur on Sacramentary bindings, albeit more rarely.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of chant books, however, Christological iconography almost never occurs, the ivory plaques being mostly Late Antique *spolia* reused and sometimes reshaped for their new religious purpose. To take just one outstanding example, the venerable Monza Gradual from c. 800, originally from northern France, the oldest known copy of the Gradual, sumptuously written in gold and silver ink on purple parchment,<sup>37</sup> was adorned with a consular diptych of the early sixth century. In the process of 'recycling' the plaques, the two dignitaries have been slightly reshaped in some respects, such as Gregory's tonsure, and explicitly renamed as 'David' and 'Gregory' in two captions, while the Pope's representation on the upper cover was additionally accompanied by the first two verses of the famous poem *Gregorius presul* on his authorship of this body of chants.<sup>38</sup> By employing such a suggestive parallelisation of the two figures, Gregory and the repertory named after him are thus embedded in the reference tradition of cultic praise par excellence, that is, the biblical singing of psalms attributed to David – a remarkable confirmation of what has been said about the psalmic foundations of the normative repertory of Mass chant ascribed to Gregory the Great.<sup>39</sup> We are thus clearly in the presence of an author's portrait, yet of

<sup>31</sup> *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse* 1967, 159, 163, 179, 185 and 190 (cf. Steenbock 1965, 233).

<sup>32</sup> Steenbock 1965, 233.

<sup>33</sup> Ganz 2015.

<sup>34</sup> *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse* 1967, 81<sup>54–59</sup>: *Evangelia III<sup>or</sup> cum eo quod dominus Lotharius dedit, ex quibus unum totum interius et exterius aureum, argenteum... Missalem I cum auro et gemmis. Lectionarium I cum auro et gemmis paratum. Antiphonarium I cum tabulis eburneis. Troparium I similiter cum tabulis eburneis*. The famous Lothar Gospels still exist (now Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. theol. lat. fol. 260; see Fingernagel 1991, XIII and 73–76 [cat. no. 75]), while the second Evangeliary could be Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. theol. lat. fol. 733, from Tours). As for the chant books, only the Troper has survived, albeit without the ivories (now Paris, National Library of France (BnF), Ms. lat. 9448); see Wittekind 2011. For some more general remarks on bindings of troparies, see Palazzo 1989, 79–80.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Ganz 2015, 75–76.

<sup>36</sup> The binding of the famous Drogo Sacramentary (Fig. 5) is a special example, as the decoration of its binding relates episcopal rites, thus moments of liturgical practice, to episodes of the Saviour's earthly career, centring the whole arrangement on the risen Christ in the midst of his disciples; cf. Reynolds 1983 and Palazzo 1989.

<sup>37</sup> Monza, Tesoro della Basilica S. Giovanni, Cod. CIX. Cf. Huglo 2001, 86, 97, 100, and Ganz 2015, 70.

<sup>38</sup> Steenbock 1965, 72–73, no. 7 and fig. 9, proposes a dating of the adaptation of the diptych, hence of the addition of the Gregory caption of around 900). Cf. also Palazzo 1998, 79–80. On *Gregorius presul*, see Hesbert 1935, 2, Stäblein 1968 and McKinnon 2001.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Stiegemann and Wemhoff 1999, 831–834.

a divinely inspired human writer and not of the divine Word itself, as in the Gospel book.

### 3. Compromised dignity?

If, in the understanding of pre-modern culture, liturgical books are considered and venerated as avatars of transcendental sacrality, they are nevertheless historical objects and hence are not exempted from historical change or even from diminution of their meaning and prestige.

A first aspect I shall deal with in this section of my paper (if only briefly) is a crucial phenomenon with a considerable effect on European religious culture: the increasing – and rather controversial – opening of chant repertories to textual elements of a non-biblical character since the ninth century, a discussion which seems to have stirred up the Eastern Church in Late Antiquity as well.<sup>40</sup>

One of the paradigmatic figures of this debate is Walafrid Strabo of Reichenau with his *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum*, a kind of *Handbook of Liturgical History* (c. 840–842).<sup>41</sup> In a particularly interesting chapter of his work, Walafrid deals with liturgical hymns as a long-established chant genre, now obviously under siege in the contemporary discussion of non-biblical liturgical poetry.<sup>42</sup>

Walafrid underpins his plea for the legitimacy of *ymni compositi* by adopting an interesting strategy of historicising the innovation which is under discussion. Specifically, he does the following:

1. he highlights the value of the genre by referring to authors of hymns who are above suspicion, such as Ambrose, Hilarius of Poitiers and John Chrysostome,
2. he proposes an understanding of hymns as an emulation of biblical psalms by invoking the semantic identity of *hymnus* and *psalmus* in the Jewish tradition of the Hellenistic age (Philo of Alexandria, for instance) and

consequently in the New Testament with Eph. 5:19 und Col. 3:16 as well-known instances of synonymic use of the two terms we may equally observe in the *Laodicea Canon* of 363/4, quoted in note 39,

3. he eventually insists on the position that it is not the biblical origin of the text, but rather its orthodoxy that legitimates a newly composed item: ‘it is clear that there are many things newly composed for the Church which are not to be rejected as long as they are not inconsistent with the true faith’ (‘si a fide veritatis non abhorreant’).

Walafrid’s focus on hymns might be due to the fact that Carolingian monastic reform, which was actively fostered by his former patron Louis the Pious, strongly promoted hymn-singing.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Walafrid, without explicitly naming his objective, probably had a specific standpoint in mind, that of Agobard, the Archbishop of Lyon (d.840), who rigorously insisted on banning this practice from his church – an interdiction which lasted until the twelfth century.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly enough, the Laodicean canon (see note 40) plays a considerable role in this context if we look at the ‘Liber de divina psalmodia’, a polemical treatise against Bishop Amalar of Metz from c. 835–838, hitherto ascribed to Agobard himself, while the modern editor of the work argues for an attribution to the Archbishop’s influential ‘spin doctor’, Florus. The author, at any rate from Agobard’s inner circle, shows a clear awareness of the terminological overlap between ‘hymn’ and ‘psalm’, but exploits it in a radically different sense: referring to the ‘venerable councils of the fathers’, he admits that there might be some evidence of homonymy between hymns and psalms, even in the biblical tradition itself, but the former had to be branded as *plebeios psalmos*, i.e. as popular, non-biblical songs, and thus rejected.<sup>45</sup> The wording ‘popular psalms’ refers, of course, to the *ἰδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοί* of Laodicea, a text obviously known

<sup>40</sup> In the discussion of my Hamburg lecture, Alessandro Bausi kindly drew my attention to canon 59 of the Council of Laodicea (c. 363–364) on non-biblical books – confirmed by the Ethiopian tradition, as Bausi underlined – forbidding the use of non-biblical ‘psalms’ composed by private individuals (*ἰδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοί*): LIX. Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἰδιωτικὸς ψαλμὸς λέγεσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ οὐδὲ ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία, ἀλλὰ μόντα τὰ κανονικὰ τῆς καινῆς καὶ παλαιᾶς διαθήκης. (ed. Lauchert 1896, 78–79).

<sup>41</sup> Walafrid Strabo 1897, Appendix, 473–516. An English translation with a commentary has been made by Alice L. Harting-Correa 1996.

<sup>42</sup> For more details, see my forthcoming study: ‘The Poet as a Historian. Walafrid Strabo on the Shaping of Office Repertory’.

<sup>43</sup> Bullough and Correa 1990; cf. also, with some critical remarks, Gneuss 2004, 72–74.

<sup>44</sup> Huglo 1979, 113. One might remember here that even the traditionalism of the Cistercians did not challenge the legitimacy of the hymn as such, but only implied a restriction to the corpus attributed to Ambrose himself (albeit misinterpreting the term *ambrosianum* in the *Regula Benedicti* – an issue already brilliantly discussed and qualified by Walafrid: ‘In officiis quoque quae beatus Benedictus abba [...] ordinavit, ymni dicuntur per horas canonicas quos ipse [Benedictus] Ambrosianos nominans vel illos vult intellegi quos confecit Ambrosius vel alios ad imitationem Ambrosianorum compositos’, Walafrid Strabo 1897, 506.

<sup>45</sup> ‘Sed et reuerenda concilia patrum decernunt nequaquam plebeios psalmos in ecclesia decantandos et nihil poetice compositum in diuinis

in Lyon thanks to its reception in the Dionysio-Hadriana collection, brought into the Frankish realm from Rome under Charlemagne in 774.<sup>46</sup>

The explicit plea of the Reichenau monk for a dynamic liturgical repertory that harboured not only biblical texts, but poetical additions represents an important and influential cultural opening, which also included musical aspects.<sup>47</sup> It stands for a thread of aesthetical enhancement of cult and worship in Christian tradition, which was taken up by Walahfrid's St Gall neighbour Notker I and his *Liber Hymnorum*<sup>48</sup> and by many others besides: a subversive momentum which was to put a distinct mark on religious and cultural traditions in Western Europe, even if it was criticised again and again by fundamentalist milieus in different periods. One only needs to think of Cluny or the Cistercians and other monastic groups – even the Tridentine Council, ultimately. ‘In sancto quid facit aurum?’ (‘What is gold doing in the sanctuary?’) asked Bernhard of Clairvaux provocatively in his *Apologia*,<sup>49</sup> and although this utterance concerns a different field, namely the pictorial enrichment of the sacred, it goes straight to the heart of what is at issue here: the intricate relationship between cult and culture.

If the outstanding prestige of traditional liturgical books was undeniably challenged by such ‘culturalising’ tendencies, however, we probably have to look for other even more substantial reasons for this increasing diminution, which seemingly gets more and more momentous in later periods of the manuscript era.

#### 4. Text and presence

Even in earlier times, liturgy would never have been reduced to books, as it was not considered to be a matter of text, but rather a dynamic performance that amalgamated the spoken

and chanted word as well as ritual action.<sup>50</sup> Thus, in mediaeval liturgical practice, chant books always had a referential status as a medium which served vocal performance; the voice took priority over the book, as it were. This is also evident with regard to musical notation, at least in the first period of such recording practices. Unlike the modern Western European perspective accustomed to seeing musical notation as a prescriptive tool, early forms of music writing like neumes were rather descriptive – they were part of ‘a practice stored in memory’, as Susan Rankin has emphasised in her recent article on this pivotal issue: ‘These notations remind the reader of sounds that he has heard, but do not provide primary instructions as to how to *make* those sounds.’<sup>51</sup>

It may be interesting in this context to have a look at the well-known *Ursprungserzählung* linked to the famous *Cantatorium*, written and neumed around 922–925 in the St Gall scriptorium (Abbey Library of St Gall, Ms. 359), probably the oldest completely notated manuscript of the Gregorian Mass chants (like the aforementioned, but un-neumed Monza codex, a diptych covered with ivory plates)<sup>52</sup>. The adventurous story, told by Ekkehard IV in the mid-eleventh century in his *Casus sancti Galli*, addresses the topic of the relation between voice and book: the manuscript, allegedly copied in Rome from the *authenticum*, viz. from the original copy of Gregory's antiphony (!) and taken to St Gall by two Roman cantors according to Ekkehard, was placed on a kind of pulpit in the choir of the abbey church – not in order to sing from it, however, but to use this venerable work in cases of doubt about the correctness of a given chant – *in cantu si quid dissentitur* – as a reference work to consult if need be.<sup>53</sup> Again, it is not the book, but the voice – the vocal act of chanting – that it was all about.

Reservations of this kind about the role of books grew in the second half of the Middle Ages, mostly due to an increasing tendency towards privatisation and individualisation of piety. This is a significant difference compared to what Angelika Neuwirth has observed about the Koran's role in the daily life of Muslims (see note 7), because what is targeted by the following reflections does not regard the proclamation made

laudibus usurpandum’; *Flori Lugdunensis Opera Polemica* (ed. Zechiel-Eckels 2014, 36).

<sup>46</sup> The Dionysio-Hadriana collection is a collection of canon law initiated by Dionysius Exiguus (c. 470–c. 540) and revised by Pope Adrian I (r. 772–795); see Mordek 1975, 151–152, and Kéry 1999, 13–20.

<sup>47</sup> I would like to refer here to the seminal (and still very stimulating) reflections expressed by Arlt 1968.

<sup>48</sup> See my forthcoming study ‘Authorizing Liturgical Poetry. Notker Balbulus of Saint Gall (d.912) and his *Liber Hymnorum* between Biblical Tradition and Poetical Innovation’.

<sup>49</sup> Bernardus Claraevallensis 1963, 104.

<sup>50</sup> Häussling 1973, 178.

<sup>51</sup> Rankin 2011, 111 (my own italics).

<sup>52</sup> Ganz 2015, 302.

<sup>53</sup> Ekkehard IV, *St. Galler Klostergeschichte* (ed. Haefele 1980, 106–109). Cf. also Rankin, 1995, 371–376.





Fig. 7: Archive of Bishopric Osnabrück, Lower Saxony, Codex Gisle, Gradual, Cistercian Abbey of Rulle, c. 1300, p. 25, initial 'P' of *Puer natus est*.



in the holy text, as is the case in the Koranic context, but rather the realm of its meditation and personal appropriation by the faithful. This might also explain the difficulty of producing evidence about such ‘anti-book’ dynamics, which were substantially a matter of unrecorded personal experience. Hence I am obliged to argue in a very tentative way here, searching for indications and symptoms of such trends.

On the level of the book itself, one of these signs seems to be the substantial increase in the production of individual collections of prayers in Latin and in the vernacular in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, both in a monastic context and among laypeople: a ‘parallel world’, so to speak, next to official practices and repertoires of liturgical prayer. In the field of manuscript illumination, this shift is emphasised by the fact that official ritual books such as gospels and sacramentaries were increasingly superseded by private devotional books as privileged objects of artistic activities – not so much by the mostly rather modest und unpretentious prayer booklets, but by deluxe Psalter manuscripts, which were frequently commissioned by high-ranking lay customers, many of whom were women, and eventually by the Book of Hours – a descendent of the Psalter, as it were.<sup>54</sup> This is, of course, an interesting shift in the history of book art, but it should also be considered an equally revealing result of a change in religious and social habits.<sup>55</sup> Used as a personal prayer book, the Psalter became a broadly attested phenomenon in the context of an emerging courtly culture during the twelfth century, especially in the hands of women, as we can see if we look at the destination of a large number of the outstanding Psalter manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth century and also at numerous pictorial representations of noblewomen browsing and reading their Psalter. This interest can be seen in manuscript illumination and other areas of painting, but it is also evident in the field of sculpture, as in the case of the marvellous *gisant* effigy of Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of Henry II Plantagenet, on their joint tomb at Fontevraud Abbey.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Schmidt 1986, and Plotzek 1987 (especially the introductory part, pp. 9–64) can still provide some very helpful guidance regarding this process. Cf. de Hamel 1986, 168–198, as well, and Wieck 1988.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Green 1994, 14–19 (‘literate noblewoman’); Caviness 1996; Schreiner 2009; Heinzer 2013, 25–26.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Nolan 2003.

The increasing desire for internalisation did not spare monks and nuns living in an environment deeply marked by the rhythm of Divine Office, and it even seems that among these ‘professionals’ of liturgical celebration, at least since the twelfth century, the desire to translate into inner experience and re-enactment what they performed by speaking, hearing and not least by singing grew significantly.

Again, detection of such phenomena is difficult (and making a description of them even more so).<sup>57</sup> Think, for instance, of pictorial additions to liturgical codices and of the aforementioned extensions and interpolations of the basic layer of the repertory as tropes or sequences. This is the case with a famous page of the Codex Gisle, a Gradual manuscript from around 1300 from the Cistercian nunnery of Rulle north of Osnabrück.<sup>58</sup> The wonderful initial of *Puer natus est*, which marks the introit for the third Mass of Christmas Day, presents the mystery of the feast, Christ’s birth, integrated in a highly suggestive framing: the upper register shows the angels’ response to the Saviour’s birth with their singing of *Gloria in excelsis*, while in the lower section the nuns are singing together from a chant book (Fig. 7). A closer look at the book reveals what they are meant to sing, viz. the Christmas sequence *Grates nunc omnes*, which they would actually perform a little later in the course of the celebration. The subtle point of this arrangement is the fact that the angelic speech also serves as the closing words of the sequence: ‘Huic oportet ut canamus cum angelis semper: Gloria in excelsis’ (‘To him we should continuously sing with the angels: Glory in the highest!’). Hence the image suggests virtual unison between the two choirs and thus an internalising of the heavenly message by those who receive it in the actual situation of earthly liturgy.<sup>59</sup> While such elements may indeed be interpreted as records of a specific appropriation of a common canonical heritage, as it were, they also tell us something about the cultural memory of a religious community in the long term. They reveal almost nothing about people’s individual experiences, however.

What is more promising here is evidence of actualisation we can find beyond liturgical books, for example in

<sup>57</sup> For the following considerations, see my tentative essay ‘*Clastrum non manufactum* – Innenräume normativer Schriftlichkeit’, Heinzer, 2014a.

<sup>58</sup> Dolfen 1926. See also Frings 2005, 422.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Kruckenberg 2006, 267–273.



Fig. 8: Karlsruhe, Baden Regional Library, Ms. Donaueschingen 106, fol. 4r showing Christ and the loving soul; theological multiple-text manuscript from Constance 1497.

writings on the interaction between liturgy and people's own imagination. There is, in fact, a rather narrow, but nevertheless quite vivid strand of tradition regarding this special mode of visionary experience which is 'triggered' by liturgy. Its origins go back to the mid-twelfth century and the Rhenish Benedictine nun Elisabeth of Schönau and the first layer of her *Liber visionum*.<sup>60</sup> the whole of this early part of the work refers directly to the celebration of liturgy, and mostly to specific liturgical chants – a dependence which, as Kurt Köster has put it, lends this first cycle of visions a character of 'ecstatic participation in the cycle of the ecclesiastical year, intimately linked to monastic liturgy'.<sup>61</sup> Through such experiences, Elisabeth seems to foreshadow later mystics like Gertrude of Helfta, Mechthild of Hackeborn and the mostly vernacular

collections of relations about mystical life in south German Dominican convents, known as *Schwesternbücher*.<sup>62</sup>

If all these narratives consistently draw on the liturgical celebration and its canonical repertory, they are also linked together by a latent, yet increasing tendency to devalue liturgy both as a communitarian and as a text-based practice – a tendency of levering out the official liturgical book, in other words. In a stimulating article from 1938, which has almost been forgotten now, Stephanus Hilpisch, a monk from Maria Laach, tried to detect this trend of internal subversion from its very beginnings in the twelfth century to its full development in the piety of the *Devotio moderna*. He came to an interesting conclusion about the changing status of liturgy, above all in late mediaeval convents: 'Liturgical celebration only provides the opportunity for unbound meditation now, without any relation to liturgical functions and prayers'.<sup>63</sup> In a rather flowery, but nevertheless felicitous formulation, which I quote here in its original German wording, Hilpisch also says this about the value of liturgy in the past: 'Die Liturgie war gleichsam die Musik, die das Liebeslied der Seele begleitete, das diese in ihrem Innersten dem Herrn sang'.<sup>64</sup> – liturgy cut back to the role of accompanying the soul's intimate love song, as the illustrator of one of the manuscripts of the vernacular poem *Christus und die minnende Seele* (Christ and the Loving Soul)<sup>65</sup> seems to insinuate while he presents a nun's nightly rising for the Office as a bedroom scene between the living soul and its divine groom (Fig. 8).<sup>66</sup>

Other rather odd yet interesting symptoms of this paradigm shift are found in evidence of the disturbance and disruption of liturgy by visions that nuns had while attending Mass or Divine Office, which are repeatedly related in the Dominican *Schwesternbücher*. During the requiem for one

<sup>62</sup> Heinzer 2014a, 156–160.

<sup>63</sup> 'Die liturgische Feier bietet [...] nur noch die Gelegenheit zu freier Betrachtung, die keinerlei Beziehung mehr zu den liturgischen Funktionen noch den Gebeten der Liturgie hat', Hilpisch 1938, 274.

<sup>64</sup> Hilpisch 1938, 269.

<sup>65</sup> Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Cod. Donaueschingen 106, written and illustrated in Constance shortly before 1500.

<sup>66</sup> For more information about the poem and its background, see *Handschriftencensus*, *Gesamtverzeichnis Autoren/Werke*, 'Christus und die minnende Seele' <<http://www.handschriftencensus.de/werke/2714>>. A digital reproduction of the awaking scene on f. 4r is available at Baden Regional Library, Karlsruhe, 'Sammelhandschrift - Donaueschingen 106', <<http://digital.blb-karlsruhe.de/blbhs/content/pageview/1234296>>.

<sup>60</sup> Heinzer 2014b, 85–94.

<sup>61</sup> Köster 1980, 490.



of their fellow sisters, for instance, some of the nuns of Engelthal near Nuremberg allegedly heard the angels joining in with the singing of the convent: so loudly, in fact, that they drowned out the nuns' voices ('do horten etlich swester daz die Engel die mess uber sungen').<sup>67</sup> In another case, one of the nuns from the convent of Töss north-east of Zurich ran through the choir while *Salve Regina* was being chanted, shoving the other sisters as she shouted to them: 'Singent, singent, Gottes mutter ist hie!' ('Sing, sing! God's mother is here!').<sup>68</sup>

The second of these two examples is particularly instructive, as it vividly emphasises the desire to overcome the gap of space and time by imagining the presence of the celestial figures invoked by liturgical chants. The desire for immediate perception thus seems to lead to a suspension of discursive distance, hence of a property that is intrinsic to texts, books and language in general. Actually, such attitudes claim to anticipate no less than the quality of eschatological presence, viz. the immediate encounter with the Divine – an experience that cannot be offered by liturgy, but in a mode of promise and foreshadowing.

In extreme cases like the example of frightening literalism related to a nun at St Katharinenthal near Constance, who was allegedly granted to see Christ offering himself as food to her by tearing off flesh from the palm of his hand, such expectations even claimed to transcend the sacramental mode of the Saviour's real presence in the Eucharist in terms of realism – an experience of communion without liturgy, as it were.<sup>69</sup> Cases such as this one emphasise the amazing potential of such female counterparts with respect to official, male-controlled (and book-based!) concepts of sacrality. As Caroline Walker Bynum says in her seminal work *Fragmentation and Redemption*, '[t]he alliance of Christ and recipient not only bypassed but also directly challenged



Fig. 9a: Stuttgart, Central State Archives, fragment J 522 E I Bü 469 S 1 of a liturgical manuscript which had been used as a book cover.

the authority of the priest and the monastic discipline'.<sup>70</sup> Statute liturgy seems dispensable, and even more so its books, as – to quote Stephanus Hilpisch again – 'it was all about the soul's internal experience'.<sup>71</sup> Such undermining of book-based authority was by no means the prerogative of Dominican nunneries, however. The founder of the other main branch of the mendicant movement, Francis of Assisi, was very reluctant to allow the possession of liturgical books, at least in his first 'unregulated' period: his brethren, because of poverty, should not have choir books like the traditional monks, he said.<sup>72</sup>

## 5. Epilogue

Three centuries later, the epochal turn of the Reformation would bring about a radical sharpening of such critical

<sup>67</sup> Already mentioned by Hilpisch 1938, p. 271. For the text, see Schröder 1871, 38, ll. 14–16.

<sup>68</sup> Vetter 1906, 28.

<sup>69</sup> Bynum 1991, 123. For the text of the source, see Meyer 1995, 105 ll. 8–11, commentary on 198–199.

<sup>70</sup> Bynum 1991, 139. Individual examples are provided in Heinzer 2014a.

<sup>71</sup> 'Die Seele erlebte ja alles innerlich', Hilpisch 1938, 270.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Van Dijk 1952, especially 178–195.



Fig. 9b: Stuttgart, Central State Archives, A 303 Bd 1328, two fragments of a liturgical manuscript re-used as book covers, still *in situ*.

attitudes while fundamentally challenging the status of traditional liturgy as a system of cultic mediation. This historically far-reaching caesura also led to wide-ranging dismantling of liturgical manuscripts in the territories which had been conquered by the new faith, especially in the German and Scandinavian areas (Figs 9a and 9b).<sup>73</sup> Consultation of the huge amount of material in the *Database of Medieval Fragments at the Stockholm National Archives* has indicated a remarkable ratio in this respect: it lists more than 22,000 fragments stemming from around 6,000 manuscripts, with no less than 75 per cent of the material being of a liturgical nature.

There can be no doubt that this high percentage should be considered a symptomatic manifestation of the changing attitude to inherited liturgy and its books, albeit with two important reservations. First of all, we should not ignore the role of a fairly pragmatic aspect: as already mentioned, the writing material traditionally used for service books was parchment, and such manuscripts used to be of considerable size, at least when designated for common celebration. The coincidence of these two factors – the material and format

– predestined liturgical manuscripts to be cut up and reused as archive wrappers (a quality they shared – at least as far as this rather technical aspect is concerned – with the characteristically large-size parchment volumes used in canon and civil law). Secondly, and even more importantly, in terms of the history of ideas, these practices of cutting and reusing the parchment need to be embedded in a broader perspective: if they may actually be seen in the wake of Protestant innovations of what we might call a theology of worship, this rupture with tradition can also be read as a ‘longue durée’ narrative, as it seems to be related to the slow but increasing undermining of the status of liturgical books in the religious mentality of the previous centuries. The medial status of pre-modern liturgical manuscripts is thus unveiled as changing and intrinsically ambiguous, as their promise of conveying divine presence which so thoroughly fascinated Christians of earlier times did not equally satisfy their later followers, especially in contexts of enhanced devotional enthusiasm: sacrality linked to books and texts was substantially jeopardised by the desire for immediate experience of the Sacred.

<sup>73</sup> For the following considerations, I have drawn on my essay ‘Cutting the Tradition – Changing Attitudes towards Liturgy’, 2005.

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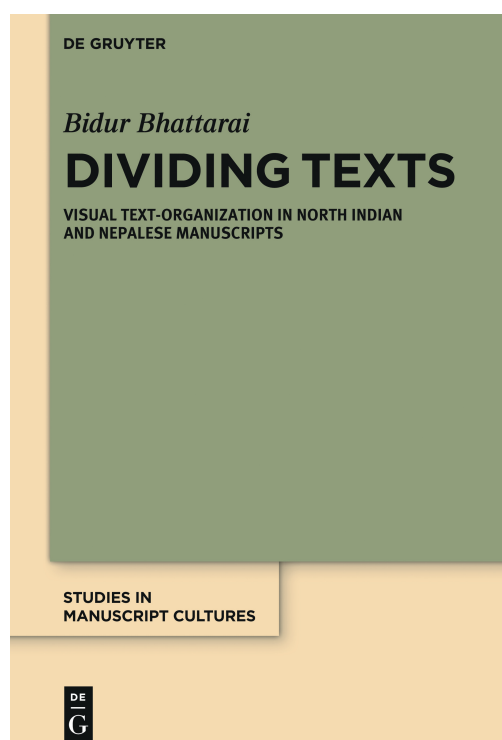
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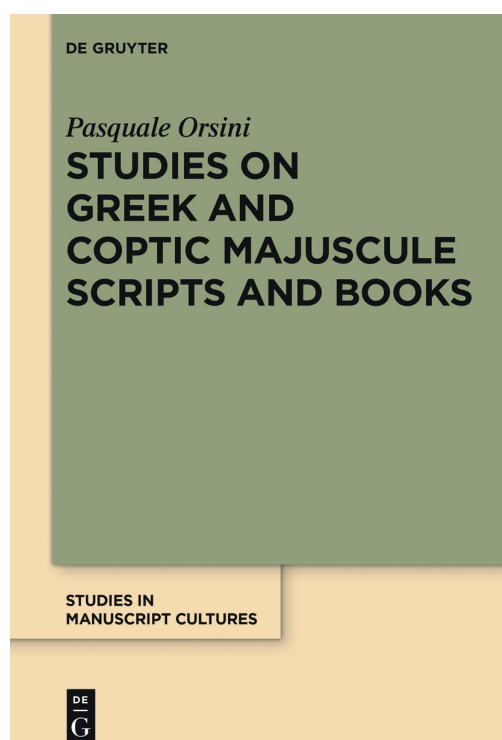
Forthcoming



## 10 - Dividing Texts: Visual Text-Organization in North Indian and Nepalese Manuscripts by Bidur Bhattarai

The number of manuscripts produced in the Indian sub-continent is astounding and is the result of a massive enterprise that was carried out over a vast geographical area and over a vast stretch of time. Focusing on areas of Northern India and Nepal between 800 to 1300 <sup>ce</sup> and on manuscripts containing Sanskrit texts, the present study investigates a fundamental and so far rarely studied aspect of manuscript production: visual organization. Scribes adopted a variety of visual strategies to distinguish one text from another and to differentiate the various sections within a single text (chapters, sub-chapters, etc.). Their repertoire includes the use of space(s) on the folio, the adoption of different writing styles, the inclusion of symbols of various kind, the application of colors (rubrication), or a combination of all these. This study includes a description of these various strategies and an analysis of their different implementations across the selected geographical areas. It sheds light on how manuscripts were produced, as well as on some aspects of their employment in ritual contexts, in different areas of India and Nepal.

Forthcoming



## 15 - Studies on Greek and Coptic Majuscule Scripts and Books by Pasquale Orsini

The volume contains a critical review of data, results and open problems concerning the principal Greek and Coptic majuscule bookhands, based on previous research of the author, revised and updated to offer an overview of the different graphic phenomena. Although the various chapters address the history of different types of scripts (i.e. biblical majuscule, sloping poitend majuscule, liturgical majuscule, epigraphic and monumental scripts), their juxtaposition allows us to identify common issues of the comparative method of palaeography. From an overall critical assessment of these aspects the impossibility of applying a unique historical paradigm to interpret the formal expressions and the history of the different bookhands comes up, due to the fact that each script follows different paths. Particular attention is also devoted to the use of Greek majuscules in the writing of ancient Christian books. A modern and critical awareness of palaeographic method may help to place the individual witnesses in the context of the main graphic trends, in the social and cultural environments in which they developed, and in a more accurate chronological framework.

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