

CHAPTER III

A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LITURGY AND OF THE LITURGICAL CHANT IN THE MIDDLE AGES. 1

The development of Ecclesiastical Chant from the beginnings which have been so far described was completed in the Greek and Latin Churches in different ways. Yet until the Great Schism (about 1050) there were influences on the Latin Liturgy from the Greek, *i. e.* the Byzantine, which were not without musical results. The question how much the Latin Liturgies in their oldest forms are on the whole indebted to the Greek has not yet received comparative investigation.

There are two facts to be especially borne in mind with respect to this: first, until the end of the 3rd century the liturgical language in Rome was Greek, and Latin was only secondarily thus used. S. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans in Greek, not in Latin, and all the religious documents preserved to us from early Christian Rome are written in the Greek language. Accordingly at first the Liturgy at Rome was performed in Greek, and thus they sang in Greek.

Secondly, the first and most complete development of the liturgical chant took place, as we know, in the countries of the East; it was from thence that the alternate chant of the psalms and the antiphons penetrated to the West, into Italy, Gaul and Spain; and the hymns also. Many roots therefore of the liturgical chant of the West extend to the East, to Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople.

1 The sources for the material which occupies the following chapter on the history of the Liturgy in the Middle Ages are the following: the *Ordines Romani*, the old Roman books of ceremonial (printed in *Patr. Lat.* vol. lxxviii), the Gregorian mass book, the *Liber Sacramentorum S. Gregorii Magni* (*ibid.*); the writings of the medieval liturgists, Amalarius (*Patr. Lat.* vol. cv.) etc. Of connected compilations I again mention the valuable works of Cardinal Tommasi; the *Origines du Culte Chrétien* (*Christian Worship*) by Duchesne; the Histories of the Breviary by Bäumer and Batiffol; Gerbert *De Cantu* vol. i. also contains much material.

Under these circumstances it would be surprising if the chant of the Latin Church at first had been of an opposite nature to that of the Greek Church. On the contrary, everything points to a near relationship between them. Even after the introduction of antiphonal psalmody and hymnody, the chant of the Latin Church did not remain absolutely unaffected by the Byzantine; and it is easy to define the different stages of the development.

On investigating the texts especially of the Roman Mass, the fact emerges that they are with few exceptions drawn from Holy Scripture, especially from the Psalter. ¹ But whence come the others? There is good reason for saying that most of them are translations of a Greek original; especially the circumstance that the Masses to which they belong may be proved either to be derived from the East or to be in many ways composed of Greek elements. Their melodies may be divided into two classes: those which follow the musical laws of the remaining chants which have their texts drawn from the Bible, and those which have melodic peculiarities of their own, especially modal ones. Without doubt the chants of the first class were already known in Rome; when the Mass-music was set in order, and the arranging of the liturgical chant, the fixing and correcting of the melodies extended to them. They have been welded into an organic unity with the other parts of the book of the Mass-music, and are not musically distinguishable from them. To this class belong the Introits *Ecce advenit* of Epiphany, *In excelso throno* of the following Sunday, and probably also the Christmas Alleluia Ψ . *Dies sanctificatus* etc. ²

Entirely different circumstances attended the second class of Mass-chants, which can be proved to have been first taken into the Latin liturgy under the Greek Popes of the 7th and 8th centuries, after the settlement of the Roman Ecclesiastical chant. According to the *Liber Pontificalis* ³ Sergius I (687—701) introduced a procession before the Mass on the four feasts of the Blessed Virgin, the Annunciation, Assumption (*Dormitio*), Nativity and Purification. At the procession of the Purification our most ancient manuscripts ⁴ still contain antiphons which are very instructive as to the point in question. One of them runs Χαῖρε κεχαρισμένη, *Ave gratia plena*, θεοτόκα παρθένε, *Dei genitrix virgo*, ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἀνέτειλεν, *ex te enim ortus est*, ὁ ἥλιος τῆς δικαιοσύνης, *sol iustitiae*, etc. As verse to it is sung

¹ More of which later.

² On the Greek origin of the corresponding feasts

cf. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, 257.

³ *Liber Pontif.* ed. Duchesne, i, 371. foll.

⁴ *Patr. Lat.* lxxviii, 653.

Κατακόσμησον τὸν θάλαμόν σου, Σιών, *Adorna thalamum tuum, Sion, καὶ ὑπόδειξι τὸν βασιλέα Χριστόν, et suscipe regem Christum, etc.* The Latin verse is still prescribed for the forementioned procession. Most of the chants of the feasts of the Elevation of the Cross imported by the above mentioned popes, and many chants of the Palm-Sunday Procession, the antiphon *Crucem tuam*, and the Good Friday *Improperia* in which the choir still answers the complaint of the Saviour to His thankless people with the exclamation *Agios o Theos, Sanctus Deus etc.*, came under the same category. The melodies of these chants, as handed down in the Medieval MSS. entirely betray their Greek character, and shew that they were later additions to the Latin Mass. They follow modal laws which are throughout different to those which govern the other Latin chants.

In addition, we meet in the oldest documents of the Latin chant numerous Greek elements. The most ancient ceremonial book of Roman origin, the first *Ordo Romanus*, prescribes for Easter Even the performance of the lessons and chants in Latin and Greek;¹ for the Easter Vespers the Alleluia verse Ὁ κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν (*Dominus regnavit. Ps. 92*) with the Ψ. Καὶ γὰρ ἐστερέωσε (*Etenim firmavit*); for the vespers of Monday in Easter week the Alleluia verse Ὁ ποιμαίνων τὸν Ἰσραήλ (*Ps. 79 vv. 1, 2, 9 & 10*) and the same for Tuesday, Friday and Saturday of the same week.² Manuscripts of non-Roman origin but of the Roman Liturgy confirm the use of Greek chant in the Latin Church. Not infrequently we find the Greek *Gloria* and *Credo* (usually written in Latin character); I refer to *Cod. S. Gall.* 381, 382; the MS. 9449 of the National Library at Paris etc. Also at S. Blasien in the Black Forest the *Gloria* was sung both in Latin and Greek.³ A troper of Montauriol even has the Greek *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* provided with neums.⁴ The above mentioned Paris MS. (it belongs to the 11th century) has a number of chants in the Greek language⁵ for the Mass of Pentecost, in addition to which

1 *Patr. Lat.* lxxviii, 955.

2 *Ibid.* 965. Likewise in the *Liber responsalis Gregorii M.* (*Patr. Lat.* lxxviii, 772). In the first half of the 12th century it was still the custom in Rome at the assembly following the Easter Vespers, in which the Pope entertained the company present, to sing a Greek sequence, Πάσχα ἱερὸν ἡμῶν σήμερον. *Ibid.* 1045.

3 Gerbert, *De Cantu* I. 382. As to the celebrated Greek Mass which was celebrated until the 18th century in the Abbey of S. Denis at Paris (*cf.* Fleischer, *Neumenstudien*, ii. 54.) the connexion of the psalm-verse with its melody at the Introit undoubtedly points to a redaction which cannot be earlier than the 16th century; it is probably a question of translation from the Latin.

4 *Cf.* Daux, *Deux livres choraux monastiques des 10me et 11me siècles.* (Paris, Picard, 1899). *pl.* ii.

5 The scribes seldom knew Greek, and so these renderings of Greek texts in Latin

the *Codex 1235 nouv. acquis.* of the same Library, of the 12th century, indicates for the Circumcision the Alleluia verse *Dies sanctificatus* in Greek.¹

The Greek rites have exerted a yet more lasting influence on other Latin liturgies. Hitherto but few detailed investigations have been made about it. The results of enquiry up till now give good grounds for supposing that further interesting and important discoveries are to be made in this way as to the history of Church music as well as to the Latin liturgies.²

The invasion of the Latin Church by Byzantine music which had the most important consequences took place in the time of the Carolingians: from the 8th century onward in Gaul and Germany we meet with Byzantine music and theory at every turn. As we shall presently see, even the sequences and tropes may perhaps be founded on the Byzantine music.

After the Greek Church had thus from the first given manifold support to the Latin chant and assisted in developing it, the sub-division of the two Churches followed, which led to their final separation. Since the Greek schism the liturgical relations of both churches have ceased, and in Church music they have each gone their own way, the Greek to experience the very deplorable influence of Turkish music, the Latin, while resting on the foundation of the Gregorian Chant, to bring the resources of the musical art to a wonderful development.

In the Latin Church there early grew up four forms of the Liturgy: the *Roman*, the *Milanese* or *Ambrosian*, the *Gallican*, and the *Spanish*, later

characters teem with mistakes of every kind. In the Paris MS. 9449 the Introit *Spiritus Domini*, which is provided with rich tropes, is followed by the subjoined text (fol. 49): 'Natis thos o theos ke dios corpis this tesan ey extri autu keype thosan oy me sontes autu a proposo tu autu. Gratias agamus alme Trinitatis semper. Pneupma tu kyrriu. Doxa patri ke yo ke ayo pneumat. Ke nim Kea im ke ystus oco nathon oeo non amen. Pneuma tu kyrriu eplyros empti oygumenu alleluja. Keu thu tho tho sincraton panta tin nosin akyiphonis alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.' Then come other tropes to the same Introit, the Kyrie *Cunctipotens genitor Deus*, and the one of which the tropes begin with *Theoricam practicanque vitam*, also the Greek *Gloria in excelsis* (*Doxa in ipsisti: theo kepi gis eudokia*,) the Alleluia Verse *Emitte Spiritum* and its Greek translation, another Alleluia Verse 'Agalliate tho theon thon boyton ymon, halalazate tho theos Jacob, labethe psalmon termon metha cithara.' The other chants too of the same Mass have a text partly in Greek, partly in Latin.

1 *Fol. 123*: 'Ymera agios menin epiphanem ymon de utheenni kepros kenim ysatheton kyrriou othissi methos katelthinphos megalim epi thin gi.'

2 A beginning has been made by Dom Cagin in the *Pallographie musicale* vol. v. The most interesting example of such a borrowing from the Greek Church is offered by the *Sub tuum praesidium confugimus*, which Cagin gives in the form of the Greek original and in the Latin of the 10th, 12th and 14th centuries,

called *Mozarabic*. Each of these liturgies, following the primitive Christian practice, made prominent use of music. Thus in the Middle Ages there was a Roman, an Ambrosian, a Gallican and a Mozarabic chant. The question of their origin leads back to the question of the origin of the four liturgies. For a long time it has been acknowledged that the traditions of many Gallican and other churches, tracing their existence back directly to the Apostles and their immediate successors, are to be banished to the sphere of legends. As to details there is no agreement at present among liturgists. This can be easily understood, for it is only recently that interest of investigators has been directed to the history of the Liturgy and rites.

There is no doubt that the Latin Church was founded from Rome. We have a witness to this in a very old document, a letter of Pope Innocent I. to Decentius (416), in which he says: 'It is clear that in all Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa, Sicily, and in the islands which lie between these, Churches were established by those alone whom the venerated Apostle Peter and his successors had made priests.'¹ With this agrees the result of the comparative study of the most important formularies of prayer of the Mass, of the oldest constituent parts of the Canon: they betray a common origin. But does this common characteristic concern only their forms of prayer, or is it wider-reaching? Here investigators disagree. According to one view the different Latin liturgies had a broader common basis in the first place, a Latin primitive liturgy, whose chief peculiarities are preserved especially outside Rome in the so-called particular liturgies, while in Rome itself were adopted new rites, deviating much from the primitive Latin one. This view is put forward by G. Morin,² and particularly by P. Cagin,³ who confirms it with a great display of liturgical knowledge. Less different from it than appears on the surface is the view of Duchesne,⁴ who accepts two liturgical centres in the Latin Church, Rome and Milan, as the Gallican and Mozarabic liturgies were largely tributary to the Milanese. For us the difference is not of great importance. It is an unmistakable fact that the kinds of chant are very similar to each

1 Given in Ceriani's *Notitia liturgiae Ambrosianae*, p. 77. foll.

2 Morin, *Les véritables origines du chant Grégorien*. 3 *Paléographie musicale*, vol. v.

4 See Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, and an article in opposition to the *Paléographie musicale* in the *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses*, Paris. April, 1900, p. 31. Duchesne especially combats the idea that Rome has changed in liturgical matters while other Christians have kept more faithfully to the customs received by them from Rome. But the history of liturgical chant affords convincing proof of this. One need only think of Amalarius and the surprise caused him by his study of the Antiphoners of Corbie and Metz (more of which later). On the whole, no Church has been so fruitful in

other; they are like children of one father, and the expression 'dialects' applied to the different liturgical chants is a happy one. As far as we are acquainted with them—of the Mozarabic and the Gallican chant we do not know much,—the Ambrosian and Roman-Gregorian have been fully preserved for us—they agree essentially in the treatment of the words of the text, the modes, the rhythm, etc.

Yet it is not improbable that the liturgy which was in use in Milan in the Middle Ages varied but little from the ancient Roman liturgy which originally spread all over Italy. As far as the music goes, the result would be that the Roman and Ambrosian chant were at first more or less identical. This supposition is supported by the fact that in the MSS. of the Roman liturgy Milanese and Roman elements have grown so closely together that it would be difficult to cut out the parts belonging to the Ambrosian without destroying the whole Roman collection. Pre-Gregorian and medieval Milanese resembled one another so closely that the remains of the pre-Gregorian chant, which till the 11th and 12th centuries were to be found at different places in the Italian Peninsula, were looked upon as regular Ambrosian pieces.¹ But while the Milanese chant came down almost unaltered far into the Middle Ages, the Roman further developed into the form in which the medieval MSS. present it, and which, as we shall see, is the work of the Roman *Schola Cantorum*.

The kinship of the forms of the chant of the four Latin liturgies is particularly striking, inasmuch as the root-forms of the liturgical chant prevail alike in all liturgies. All have *solo* and *chorus*-chant, and agree in giving to them the names of *Responsorial* and *Antiphonal* chant; in all, the responsorial chant is *richly developed melodically*, as is suitable for a soloist, while the antiphonal is simpler, more or less syllabic, as befits chants which are to be practicable for those who are not skilled singers. This contrast was so real in the Middle Ages that wherever in the MSS. an A (antiphon) is found marked at the beginning of a chant, a more simple melody may be looked for; but a rich one on the contrary wherever there stands an R (respond).²

liturgical innovation as the Roman. So there is often a contrast between primitive-Roman, *i.e.* the Roman use as it existed in Churches outside Rome, and the new-Roman, *i.e.* Roman rites as they appeared in Rome itself as the result of changes in the original use.

¹ Morin *l. c.* p. 13.

² It is necessary to keep quite distinct the performance, also by a soloist, of liturgical pieces such as the Versicles, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which belong

How can this remarkable fact be explained? The single possibility which can be seriously considered lies in the hypothesis that *both kinds of melody belong to the ancient constitution of the Latin liturgy. There must have been richer melodies for solo, and simpler ones for chorus, before the liturgy began to develop in different directions in different localities.* The common liturgical ground occupied by both forms of melody will not allow of any other explanation. But here we fall back to a very remote date, no later than the 5th century. As has been pointed out already, the beginnings of this movement go back to the 4th century, and as regards the responsorial chant they reach back to Apostolic times. ¹

The principal forms of the common worship of God are the Mass and the Office, the service of the Altar and the devotions for the Hours. Connected together at first, as a Vigil and with an Eucharistic celebration following, they were soon separated, and developed outwardly in a different manner. Their original connexion is however still apparent in the present form of the Mass, for the actual celebration of the Sacrifice is preceded by a section consisting of readings from Scripture, psalmody, and prayer, the same elements which originally composed the Vigil, and to-day still compose the Office. In the case of the music especially, the Mass and the Office have arrived at different results. The examination of these will make clear the destiny of the liturgical chant in the Middle Ages.

neither to the antiphonal nor to the responsorial chant, but to the class of the 'lesson' and are essentially different from the pieces of chant. The Lamentations stand in the Office of Holy Week in the place where in other cases a lesson is always to be found, and, like the lessons, are always followed by Responds; this is the best proof that they are not to be placed in the same class with the chant of the Office or of the Mass. On the *Responsorium* see later.

¹ In order not to be misunderstood I again emphasize the fact (*cf.* above, p. 31, note 1) that I do not wish to refer back to the 4th century that degree of melismatic music with which the solo chants of the Middle Ages are enveloped. Without doubt here also a development from simpler beginnings took place, the traces of which we can still follow. But it is only by ignoring the most certain facts of liturgical history, that the melismatic formation of melody can be made out (as has constantly been the case of late) to be the product of the 8th or 9th century. The question as to how the melismatic chant was dealt with in the Middle Ages will be treated of in the second part of the 'INTRODUCTION': it will suffice to remark here that the addition of *melismata* on the last words of the texts of the liturgical chant (*cf.* p. 34), which is mentioned as early as by Cassian, has throughout remained the most important form of the melismatic technique of the whole Middle Ages; and that a highly developed musical interpolation of this kind may quite well go back to the practices of the Jewish precentors,