

LES ENLUMINURES

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Gradual, with noted Mass texts for select feasts

In Latin, decorated manuscript and stenciled book on parchment and paper with musical notation

Western France, Maine (Château-Gontier?), c. 1480-1520; 1607; 1747

v (paper) + 76 + xxvii (paper, blank, ruled for music), folios on parchment (among the 76 leaves with content, 68 leaves are parchment, six leaves, ff. 48-49 and 58-61, are paper), watermark on ff. 58 and 60 of crossed arrows, Briquet 6283, Troyes, 1578, unusual seventeenth-century alphanumerical pagination in red or brown ink in the top corners on the recto and verso of the leaves, now missing the first quire paginated AI-AVIII and beginning with AIX-AXII, BI-BXII, (...), K1-KXII (ending on f. 61v), eighteenth-century alphanumerical pagination stenciled in black ink in the bottom corners on the recto and verso of the leaves, AI, B7, C1, DI, D2, D3, (...), N6 (ending on f. 76v; regular from DI onwards), modern foliation in pencil, 1-76, lacking one quire in the beginning (collation i⁸ ii⁶ iii² iv¹⁰ v⁶ vi⁴ vii⁶ viii⁴ [-4, lacking one leaf, without loss of text] ix-x² xi-xvi⁴ xvii³), ruling in light brown ink (justification 243 x 152 mm.), compiled in parts over a long span of time: ff. 1-35v written in brown ink in gothic textualis bookhand, music in square notation on four-line red staves, 8 staves per page, rastrum 15 mm., rubrics in red, 1-line cadell initials in brown with red and yellow wash alternating with 1-line initials in red, one 2-line initial (44 x 54 mm) in red and black with a smaller red initial inside a larger black one in strapwork on a ground with a dead person lying in a graveyard next to a crucifix and a flower in the foreground (f. 16); ff. 36-45v, 50-61v written in dark brown ink in gothic textualis bookhand, music in square notation on four-line red staves, 9 to 10 staves per page, rastrum 13 mm., one 2-line initial (58 x 58 mm.) in black decorated with a man's profile, touched with green and red wash (f. 58), one 3-line initial (86 x 82 mm.) in-filled with a rose in red, blue, green and yellow (f. 55v); ff. 46-47, written in dark brown and red inks in an upright book hand modelled on Roman type, music in square notation on four-line staves, 8 staves per page, rastrum 15 mm., 1-line initials in red; ff. 48-49, paper, written in dark brown ink, music in square notation on four-line staves, 7 staves per page, rastrum 17 mm., 1-line initials in dark brown; ff. 62-76v stenciled in dark brown and red inks in humanistic bookhand, music in square notation on four-line staves, 7 staves per page, rastrum 13 mm., stenciled decoration added on f. 1 (fleur-de-lis and tear droplets), signs of frequent use, stains, ink fading, small tears, repairs, but in overall good condition. Bound in the eighteenth or nineteenth century in brown calf over wooden boards, blind-tooled with a panel design, spine with six raised bands, leather slightly broken at the top of the spine, a few wormholes on the spine, stains on the back cover, but in overall very good condition. Dimensions 309 x 213 mm.

Containing the sung portions of the Mass, this remarkable Gradual was the liturgical lifeblood of a community in Western France for over 250 years. Hymns and prayers were added over time, revealing liturgical changes as well as technical shifts in bookmaking and musical notation. As the pages turn, handwritten hymns from the medieval portions of the book give way to stenciled text and music from the eighteenth century. A hybrid of time and technology, this volume demonstrates how books are living objects that evolve and adapt with their community.

PROVENANCE

1. A complex manuscript that now includes texts produced over a span of more than two hundred years. The first part of the manuscript, ff. 1-35v, was copied in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, c. 1480-1520. In the second part of the manuscript, ff. 36-45v, 50-61v, the date "1607" is included in the rubric on f. 55v

(further corroboration for this date is provided by the watermark evidence from the paper leaves, ff. 58-61). The final part of the volume, ff. 62-76v, and the text added to the blank space on ff. 14v-15, are stenciled, and date from 1747, the date inscribed at the end of the text on f. 76v. The manuscript was copied for use in a church founded by the Canon Jean Le Boucher from Maine or Le Mans (the capital of the historic county of Maine), as recorded in the rubric on f. 37 (see below, Text).

2. A late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century inscription in the margin of f. 40 provides further evidence for locating the book in Maine. A certain Guillaume Guinoiseau indicates that the prosa (that is a hymn sung during a Mass), "Ecce panis," should be sung at the moment of saluting the host during the Mass: "Loco. O salutaris hostia dicitur haec sequentia Ecce panis etc. Ex fundatione Guillelmi Guinoiseau." A Guillaume Guinoiseau is documented in La Motte in Maine in 1572 (*Bulletin de la Commission historique et archéologique de Mayenne*, 21 (1905), p. 152). He is also documented in the local archives in a series concerning regular clergy: a register from 1646 informs of the rents due by his heirs to the priory of Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Château-Gontier, some 50 km south of La Motte (Archives départementales de la Mayenne, H44). It seems possible that the church where our manuscript was used was located near La Motte or Château-Gontier, some 80 km west of Le Mans, perhaps a dependency of the priory of Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Château-Gontier.
3. Armorial bookplate with the motto "CONSTANTER" of Giulio Costantini. The date 1970 is inscribed on the bookplate in Roman numerals in pencil: "MCMLXX."

TEXT

I. ff. 1-35v:

ff. 1-19v, [Chants for the Office of the Dead, beginning with Vespers], incipit, "*Officium mortuorum. Antiphona. Placebo Domino in regione vivorum...., ... Requiescant in pace. Amen*"; ff. 14v-15, [stenciled text with the lesson from the book of Maccabees and the *Kyrie eleison*, added likely in 1747 in the space that had been left blank], *Lectio libri Machabaeorum, ...*"; ff. 16-19v, [the text for the Requiem Mass continues in manuscript as before], incipit, "*Requiem eternam dona eis Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis, ... Communio, Lux eterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in eternum: quia pius es*" [Huglo, 2005, p. XIX 15].

ff. 20-32v, [chants for Masses in honor of the Virgin Mary, including readings], incipit, *De beata maria. Introitus, "Salve sancta parens...; Sapientie, Ab initio et ante secula create sum ...; Benedicta et venerabilis es virgo maria...; Alleluia Versus. Post partum virgo inviolata permanisti..."*; [for the Assumption], incipit, "*Vera fides Geniti purgavit crimina mundi ...; Salus populi ego sum ...*"; ... f. 32rv, incipit, "*Marie virginis laudes intonant christiani, ...*";

ff. 33-35v, [chants for Masses during the Easter season, followed by readings for the Easter week from the epistles to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians], incipit, "*Alleluia Angelus domini descendit de celo...*";

II. ff. 36-45v:

ff. 36-37, [Chants for the Mass of St. Phocas], *De sancto foca. Martyre. Introitus*, incipit, "*Justus ut palma florebit, sicut cedrus Libani multiplicabitur...*"; "*Beatus vir qui timet Dominum...*";

The chants derive from the Common of Saints for a confessor who is not a bishop.

ff. 37-41v, [Chants for the feast of St. John before the Latin Gate to be sung during the Mass for the founder of the church, the Canon Jean Le Boucher], incipit, *In festo sancti johannis apostoli et evangeliste ante portam Latinam dicitur una missa dedie ex fundatione do. io. Leboucher canonici cennomanensis* [Le Mans or Maine] *et ecclesie nostre. Introitus*, incipit, "In medio ecclesie aperuit os eius..."; [followed by a reading from the epistle to the Corinthians and a prayer to St. Sebastian];

ff. 42-45v, [Mass chants for the feast of St. Julian], *De beatissimo juliano. Introitus.*, incipit, "Statuit ei Dominus testamentum pacis...";

III. ff. 46-49, Inserted leaves copied in upright scripts designed to mimic Roman type, perhaps dating from the seventeenth century:

ff. 46-47, [Mass chants for Sts. Peter and Paul], incipit, *DIE OCTAVA APOSTOLORUM PETRI ET PAULI. Introitus*, incipit, "Sapientiam sanctorum narrent populi..."; [f. 47v, blank];

ff. 48-49, [inserted paper leaves], incipit, "Gaudeamus omnes in Domino..."; [f. 49v, blank];

II. ff. 50-61v, continues the section on ff. 36-45v, dated 1607 on f. 55v:

ff. 50-52v, "Libera me domine de morte...";

ff. 52v-55, [Chants for the Mass of St. Louis of France], *De sancto Ludovico. Introitus*, incipit, "Os justi meditabitur sapientiam...; *versus*. Felix corona francie Ludovici ...; *Prosa*. Ludovico pangamus corde pudico alleluia ...";

ff. 55v-57v, [Chants for the Mass of St. Thomas the Martyr], *Missa de sancto Thoma martyre* <one line expunged> ... *anno domini* [in black] 1607, incipit, "Laetabitur justus in domino...";

ff. 58-61v, [Paper leaves], *Credo*, incipit, "Patrem omnipotentem, factorem celi et terre ..."; *Gloria et honore coronasti eum ...*; *Communio*, *Qui vult venire post me ...*; *Avete omnes anime fideles...*"; [followed by prayers and readings];

IV. Stenciled leaves, dated 1747:

ff. 62-66v, [Chants for Masses on the Monday and Tuesday after Easter], *FERIA SECUNDA Post Pascha. Introitus*, incipit, "Introduxit vos Dominus in terram fluentem lac et mel...";

ff. 67-69v, [Chants for the Mass of St. Thomas the Apostle], incipit, *In Die Sanctae Thomae Apostoli Introitus*, incipit, "Mihi autem nimis honorati...";

f. 69v, [Chants for the Mass of St. Martin], incipit, *De Sancto Martino...*, incipit, "Alleluia. *Versus*. Hic Martinus pauper...";

ff. 70-72, [Chants for the Mass of St. Scholastica], incipit, *MISSA DE SANCTA Scholastica*, incipit, "Gaudeamus omnes in Domino...";

ff. 72v-73v, incipit, "Kyrie eleison ...";

ff. 74-76, incipit, "Inviolata, integra et casta es Maria...";

f. 76v, [Chant for St. Thomas the Apostle], *In Festo Sanctae Thomae Apostoli*, incipit, "... Alleluia Versus. In omnem terram exivit ...; [with the date, "1747" written following the text].

This book is a Gradual, the volume that contains the sung portions of the Mass, the Introit, Gradual, and Alleluia, all with square musical notation. This Gradual also includes some readings for the Mass (without music). This Gradual includes only selected feasts from the Temporale and Sanctorale. It begins with the Office of the Dead and the Requiem Mass, followed by chants for various feasts for the Virgin Mary and Easter. The feasts from the Sanctorale included here must have been particularly important at the church where the book was used. One of them is the relatively rare saint Phocas the Gardener, venerated especially by gardeners, sailors, and farmers. Further research will undoubtedly allow the identification of this church, which was founded by the Canon Jean Le Boucher. For a comparison with another local and contemporary manuscript, see e.g. MS 414 in the Bibliothèque municipale of Le Mans, an Antiphonal dated 1541 (digitized in full, cf. Online Resources). Our volume is a splendid illustration of how liturgical manuscripts were often assembled over time from sections copied by different scribes, to meet the need when new material was required for the liturgy of a particular parish.

The heyday of hybrid books that combine printed and manuscript texts extends from the invention of printing through the sixteenth and into the seventeenth centuries. Manuscript Choir Books continue well past this time period, because of the unique liturgical requirements of different institutions. This manuscript is an example of a very particular type of hybrid Choir Book combining stenciled and manuscript sections, which is almost certainly very rare, and has yet to be studied in the historical literature.

Stenciled manuscripts are curious hybrids. They are unique items, like handwritten manuscripts, but were produced with a mechanical aid, and in that sense are more like printed books. Stenciled liturgical books, many of the Choir Books with musical notation, often made in monastic settings, are known from the mid seventeenth century until the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and in some cases later. This practice probably began in France, and then spread around Catholic western and southern Europe, including the Low Countries (presently francophone Belgium), Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and possibly even Mexico. One example has been identified in England (I thank Mr. Eric Kindel for sharing his research, in correspondence, 2012). In Germany in the monasteries around Mainz were known for their stenciled books (see Schreiber, 1927; Gottron, 1938; Rodrigues, 1973; and Rosenfeld, 1973). Numerous stenciled books were also produced in France (François, 2010; O'Meara, 1933).

Gilles Filleau des Billettes composed an extensive account of the process for the "Description des Arts et Métiers" of the French Royal Academy of Science c. 1700 (edited in Kindel, 2013). In his description he suggests the practice was created by someone (name unknown) c. 1650, and specifically mentions that books for particular churches were written in this way, as opposed to printed books used more generally by the whole church ("C'est celui par lequel on

écrit les plus beaux livres d'églises particulières qui n'ont pas besoin d'être autant répandus que ceux qu'on imprime pour l'usage général du clergé ..."; quoted by François, 2010). Another early historian of these books, Fischer van Waldheim, writing c. 1800, suggested that they were invented by a Trappist monk in 1674.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Le Mans, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 414

https://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/consult/consult.php?REPRODUCTION_ID=3123

Briquet Online. *Dictionnaire historique des filigranes*

http://www.ksbm.oeaw.ac.at/_scripts/php/BR.php

Cantus Planus

https://www.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/phil_Fak_I/Musikwissenschaft/cantus/

Eric Kindel, Reading University, staff profile, with bibliography including his articles on stenciled books

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