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THE LITURGY OF THE LIBERATION JERUSALEM

Jerusalem fell on Friday, July 15, 1099, about midday. The victorious crusaders turned immediately to the Temple Mount, massacred there the soldiers and the civilians who tried - in vain - to find refuge in the two mosques; and while the forces of Raymond de Saint-Gilles were still storming the Citadel, the exalted victors rushed towards the Saint Sepulchre, the veritable aim and destination of the Crusade. The *Iter Sepulchri* culminated, appropriately, with the Office of the Resurrection celebrated on the Tomb of Christ. We can still perceive the intense emotions that were expressed in that celebration through the account of Raymond d'Aguillers, chaplain to Raymond de Saint-Gilles, a participant in and witness to this event: "Quomodo plaudebant exultantes et cantantes canticum novum Domino. Etenim mens eorum Deo victori et triumphanti vota laudum offerebat, quae explicare verbis non poterat. Nova dies, novum gaudium, nova et perpetua leticia, laboris atque devotionis consummatio, nova verba, nova cantica, ab universis exigebat".

Raymond saw this victory as "totius paganitatis exinanitio, christianitatis confirmatio, et fidei nostre renovatio"; he emphasised the profound significance of the conjunction of the Liberation with the *Divisio Apostolorum* - the circle that opened with departure of the Apostles from Jerusalem closed with the return of the Crusaders vindicating their lawful heritage, "filii Apostolorum" coming back "[ad] urbem et patriam quam iuravit patribus". And he insisted on the regular character of this celebration. It was not an isolated event, but a regular celebration which was held for seven days and it closed on its Octave (July 22) with the election of the first Latin King of Jerusalem: "Hec inquam dies celebris in omni seculo venturo".

A new liturgy was thus instituted, *Festivitas sancte Hierusalem*, or *Dies liberationis Hierusalem*; but did it become indeed a regular feature of the liturgical year in Latin Jerusalem? The evidence of William of Tyre, about half a century later, is conclusive: "Ad majorem autem tanti facti memoriam ex communi decreto sancitum omnium voto susceptum et approbatum est, ut hic dies apud omnes solemnus et inter celebres celebrior perpetuo haberetur".

And we possess, finally, the account that John of Wursburg sent home during his pilgrimage to Jerusalem about 1165. He describes in that document the High Mass celebrated annually on 15 July to commemorate the dedication on that date of the Holy Sepulchre church, and adds that the Liberation of Jerusalem from the hands of the Saracens "longe iam anteriori tempore" is commemorated on the same day in the morning Mass. The second day of the Octave is dedicated to the memory of all the dead, and in particular to the memory of the fallen crusaders who were buried near the Golden Gate, while the third day of the Octave was consecrated to the memory of Godefrid of Boulogne, "illius sancte expeditionis principis et magistri stirpe alemannorum oriundi", who died on that date in 1100. By 1165, consequently, the liturgy, initiated in 1100, and evolved through the intervening decades became a fixed feature of the liturgical year in Latin Jerusalem.

The exact forms and content of that liturgy are known through liturgical manuscripts that were copied in Holy Land Scriptoria during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries and through later copies of these sources. I have identified some thirteen Breviaries and Missals, all that remains of what was once an important copying enterprise. Scattered abroad through the hazards of war and commerce, they have been preserved in various collections - Florence, London, Paris, the Vatican, Vienna, but also Barletta, Lucca, Chantilly. These are manuals, service books intended to be used in actual worship, and they provide us, as such, with the normative perspective: what was the norm in the Holy Sepulchre in regard to the Liberation on a given historical date? Yet arranged in a chronological series they furnish us with an excellent means to treat our subject, diachronically. They prove the permanence of the Liberation liturgy in the Holy Land and reflect its evolution since it was introduced, on the Liberation of 1099 and up to the final collapse of the Latin Kingdom in 1291.

And these manuscripts reflect another reality. They indicate a very wide distribution outside the limits of the Latin Kingdom. Manuscripts traveled to and inside Europe in a network that connected Holy Land churches and the centers of the military Orders on the one end, with affiliated churches and subordinate houses on the other end. The Holy Sepulchre Breviary of the Santo Sepolcro in Barletta is a good example of the first type, for the church of Barletta was organically associated with the Holy Sepulchre, while Paris BN, *Nouvelles acquisitions latines ms. 1689*, a fourteenth century Missal produced by and for the use of the Hospitalers of Autun, provides an excellent example of the second type of liturgical transmission. Both examples illustrate organized, institutional channels of transmission, and we can safely assume that transmission as well as preservation depended heavily on institutional networks. We would be utterly wrong, however, if we were to dismiss the role that private individuals played in this process, pilgrims who brought back or sent home while still on their pilgrimage, detailed descriptions of the liturgy they witnessed in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land. This "private channel", a well-established phenomenon by 1099, served as the main means of transmission throughout the Early Middle Ages. The detailed liturgical diary written by Egeria as early as the fourth century, is perhaps its best known example, but the general veneration of Jerusalem, its churches and liturgical usage, can also be seen in the general spread in the West of the Good Friday's Improperia and the architectural style of the round church in imitation of the Holy Sepulchre Rotunda. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem was certainly increased since 1099, with a corresponding intensification of the process or private transmission by pilgrims/crusaders, such as Peter the Hermit, or John of Wurzburg, writing back home to his "dilectus socius et domesticus suus Diethricus". Knowledge of the Liberation liturgy in the West depended, consequently, on both institutional and non institutional channels of transmission, and it led, eventually, to the implantation of the Liberation liturgy, which was originally a local commemoration in Jerusalem, into European usage.

How should we proceed in order to identify these liturgical grafts, discern their specific content, and appreciate their expansion? We can apply three criteria of identification: the date of 15 July, a specific rubric and a proper service. All three are usually found in the manuscripts produced in the Holy Land. Let us take BN ms. lat. 12,056, a Holy Sepulchre Missal copied during the second half of the twelfth century. Its Calendar indicates for the date 15 July the rubric "Festivitas Ierusalem quando fuit capta a Franci"; the Gospel Reading proper to this Mass is given the rubric "In liberatione Ierusalem", and the three (proper) Mass prayers (Collect, Secret and Postcommunion) appear under a similar rubric - "Missa de Ierusalem". In cases such as this we have a complete unity of date, rubric and office, and, consequently, an absolute identification. The Western manuscripts, on the other hand, are not that explicit. They offer rubrics, dates and service which could indicate both our Feast of Liberation, and other liturgical commemorations associated with the Holy Sepulchre, either directly or indirectly (e.g. in chapels dedicated under the title of the Holy Sepulchre), perhaps even prior to 1099. The correct identification of the Feast of Liberation will depend, in these cases, on the relative importance of the explicit criteria against the more ambiguous criteria in all their possible combinations (three, two and single criteria). Such identifications will be more uncertain, probably more difficult, but certainly not impossible.

I have been able to identify twenty-two Western manuscripts of this type, produced between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries. Eighteen of them - a very impressive proportion - are of French provenance. Furthermore, they originate from an area which resembles a triangle, whose base follows roughly the Valley of the Loire from Nevers to Nantes, passing by Orleans, Tours and Fontevault, with a bulge to the South which includes Bourges and Limoges. Laon is at the northern extremity of this area, and in between we find Reims, Beauvais, Paris and Chartres. The Feast of the Liberation of Jerusalem, in other words, is documented in the West mainly in the Centre and the Centre-North of France, the historical "pays" of Limousin, Berry, Nivernais, Orléanais, Touraine, Anjou, Ile-de-France, and Laonnais. It is completely absent in the West, the East, and in the South of France.

And this is, precisely, the Langue d'Oïl region, the homelands of the Capetian monarchy. Should we assimilate geographical, cultural and political markers and conclude that the heart of the Capetian monarchy functioned also as the main centre of the Crusading enterprise in the West?

One must be a natural saint to resist such a temptation, and there is indeed much truth in it. And yet. A careful examination of the evidence should result in much more balanced conclusions. Paris, in the first place, far from being the natural centre of the Liberation festivities occupies in this respect only a secondary place, far behind Bourges, Anjou and Touraine.

Furthermore, the observance of the Liberation was obviously common to the Capetian kings of France together with the Angevin kings of England. Moreover, this festivity was not exclusively and necessarily centred on the crusading enterprise. It transmitted a wide gamut of ideas and sentiments, spread between the contrasting poles of the Earthly and the Heavenly Jerusalem, between veneration coloured by the Crusading experience on the one hand and worship evolved well before 1099 on the other hand. And, finally, our documentation does not consist of complete series reflecting a long-term evolution. It provides us, at best, with snapshots, with particular moments cut out from the complete, diachronically evolving process. The simple equation: Liberation observance in the West = Capetian homelands = Crusading enterprise is just that: too simple, not to say simplistic, to reflect the true historical reality of the actual observance of the Liberation festivity in the West.

A good illustration of this can be seen in the case of Beaulieu-les-Loches, an abbey in Touraine that was founded by Foulques Nera, Count of Anjou, on his return from his second pilgrimage to Jerusalem (in 1008). Consecrated under the title of the Holy Sepulchre, it treasured a piece of the actual Tomb, which that unusual pilgrim brought from Jerusalem. He obtained it under somewhat unorthodox circumstances, according to the local traditions: employing ruses worthy of a Gargantua beleaguered by the doctors of the Sorbonne he gained entry into the church of the Holy Sepulchre and there, according to the chronicler – “*Moxque duritia lapidis in moliciam versa, divinum sensit imperium, comesque deosculato sepulchrum dentibus maximum evellit et abscondit frustum quod, delusis et ignorantibus gentibus detulit secum*”. When his mortal remains were examined in the last century, the examining pathologist was only too happy to report that Foulques’ denture was found to be complete and perfectly healthy. The abbey became an important local centre of Holy Sepulchre cult, and Foulques’ descendants maintained the family traditions; Foulques V went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1120, returned there again to marry Melisande, daughter and heiress of Baldwin II, inherited the crown in 1131, and ruled the kingdom until his death in 1143. He was buried by the hill of Calvary, within the precinct of the Holy Sepulchre.

With this history in mind one would expect the abbey of Beaulieu to maintain a strong tradition of a Crusading Feast of Liberation; and the liturgical manuscripts that document its observance indicate, indeed, a feast on the right date, 15 July. But its rubric is too vague for comfort (“*Servicium Sanctissimi Sepulchri*”), and its Office – although it was composed in the twelfth century – ignores the Liberation of 1099 in particular and the Crusaders in general. It concentrates, however, on the earthly Jerusalem, on the physical – not to say – sensual – reality of the Holy Sepulchre, and this was certainly the attitude that launched the First Crusade. And with the story of Foulques Nera’s tribulations in Jerusalem this Office elaborated the concept of Christian Jerusalem in captivity, under the persecuting rule of the Muslim. The Beaulieu Liberation rite was essentially a pre-1099 creation. It was updated after 1099 through the new dating to 15 July, but this seems to have been the only concession to the new reality of the Crusaders’ kingdom of Jerusalem. Eventually, history caught up with conservative monks of Beaulieu, but not before 1187; their Office regained its primitive pertinence with the renewed subjugation of Christian Jerusalem, and its new relevance might perhaps explain why it was further retained, at least until the fifteenth century.

For knowledge of the various elements that composed the Feast of Liberation and for appreciation of its underlying ideas and sentiments – for these we should turn to its source and origin, to Jerusalem. Easter was been the main pilgrimage attraction in the Holy Land, of course, but even when Easter fell on its latest possible date (25 April), the pilgrim who came to Jerusalem could still delay their departure home for quite a long time, before the sea traffic became too dangerous in autumn, and they usually used this opportunity to visit other pilgrimage centres in the land and to take part various local events – secular as well as religious. The Liberation Feast was certainly among the most popular of these events.

The celebration began inside the Holy Sepulchre with the Vespers of 14 July, the Feast's Vigil, and continued during the night through the Canonical Hours of Matins, Lauds and Prime. These Hours were proper to the Feast: their texts were carefully chosen for their relevance to the ideas that the Office was designed to propagate. Immediately after Prime the entire congregation went in procession, with the Patriarch at its head, to the Templum Domini, the present Dome of the Rock, and a solemn statio was celebrated on the esplanade in front of the church. The procession then left the Temple Mount through the Golden Gate, advanced along the city wall by the tombs of the crusaders who fell during the Liberation of Jerusalem, turned westwards and proceeded along the Northern Wall. It halted again on the exact spot where Godefroid de Boulogne and his men forced their way into the city in 1099. A great golden cross marked the place (now facing Museum Rockefeller) until it was thrown down by Saladin in 1188. A second statio with prayers and psalms was held there, the Patriarch preached a sermon and blessed the participants, and then the procession returned to the Holy Sepulchre, probably through St Stephen's gate and the old Maximus (named St Stephen's Road by the Crusaders), singing psalms along the way. The third statio, consecrated to the Virgin Mary, was celebrated in front of the Tomb of Christ inside the church. By now it was probably the Hour of Terce, and it was followed immediately by the High Mass of Liberation, entirely proper for that occasion. This was undoubtedly the climax of the entire day, although the celebration continued through the Hours of Sext, None and Vespers, all proper to this feast.

Some of the ideas that were embodied in the liturgical observance of the Liberation Day can be inferred from the material components of the service and from the actions of the participants. The particular route taken by the procession, for example, united symbolically the Old Hebrew Jerusalem of the Temple with the New Christian Jerusalem of the Holy Sepulchre. It united, furthermore, the Crusaders of 1099, the Founding Fathers of the Kingdom, with their descendants. Its composition, moreover, demonstrated the particular constitution of the society of Latin Jerusalem, an unusual melange of clergy and laymen, natives (Poulanis) and foreign Peregrini (Crusaders as well as Pilgrims), a society on march towards a holy goal. Such a study of the material components is still to be done.

And one can infer these ideas from the texts, the texts that combine with the act to form any ceremony. The Office of the Liberation consists, in fact, of a rich mosaic of texts of various types. One observes Biblical texts (usually adopted from other liturgical texts and open, consequently, to interpretation on three distinct planes - the original Biblical sense, the secondary augmentation due to the liturgical intermediary, and the final tertiary incrustation); one observes original liturgical texts (e.g. prayers and Sequences proper to the Mass of Jerusalem); and one observes, finally, sermons composed for and preached on that occasion, and although sermons are firmly anchored on the liturgical act they are also outside its ontological bounds (contrary to "pure liturgy") they do not share in the sacred, they exclusively address the attending audience, and they consciously evoke the commonplace and the mundane).

It would be ridiculous if I were to attempt any analysis of this kind *hic et nunc*; I obviously do not dispose of enough time for such a discussion. I shall try to illustrate these general remarks with two typical examples chosen out of that rich textual mosaic, the Office of the Liberation in the form preserved by MS London, British Library, Additional 8927. This form reflects, to my mind, the earliest version of this liturgy, the one closest to 1099.

A. Let us look at the Biblical texts first. The Vespers Office of the Vigil (14 July) opens with five psalms and the five antiphons attached to them: 1) *Letatus sum* (Ps. 121) + *Ecce nomen Domini* (Is. 30:27-28); 2) *Qui confidunt* (Ps. 124) + *Leva Ierusalem* (Is. 60:4); 3) *In convertendo* (Ps. 125) + *Levabit Dominus signum* (Is. 11:12); 4) *Super flumina* (Ps. 136) + *Elevare elevare* (Is. 52:1-2); *Lauda Ierusalem* (Ps. 147) + *Laetamini cum Ierusalem* (Is. 66-10).

One notices immediately that these are Psalmi graduales according to the original meaning of the term, and even the last two psalms (*Super flumina* and *Lauda Ierusalem*) which are not qualified as such in the versions *secundum Hebraeos* and *secundum LXX* (quite understandably with the *Super flumina*) are indeed qualified *canticum graduum* in variant H of the *Psalterium Romanum*.

They were chosen for this particular Office because of their literary genre, in the place, as songs sung by the pilgrims on their way up to Jerusalem and the Temple (making Aliya!).

Their communicative function was assured; nevertheless, by their texts even more than by their genre. The texts of the psalms transmitted images and stories that the assembly in prayer could relate to and thus define itself in the specific context of that Feast. The minor texts of the antiphons should be seen as something of an auxiliary to the psalms: they proclaim the psalms, reinforce their message and add their interpretation. It was from the texts of both psalms and antiphons, through their images and stories, that the assembly gathered in the Holy Sepulchre on that night of 14 July received the ideas and the sentiments proper to the Liberation Day.

What were these images and stories?

Those of pilgrims coming up to Jerusalem and to the Temple with an ineffable joy, with an exaltation which our pilgrims, crowded in the Holy Sepulchre on that night, undoubtedly shared: "Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi in domum Domini ibimus; stantes erant pedes nostri in atriis tuis Hierusalem..., illuc enim ascenderunt tribus...". The antiphon adds two new themes: that this enterprise is military in character, and that entails great distances (i.e. peregrinatio seen as a crusade rather than peaceful pilgrimage): "Ecce nomen domini venit de longinquo ardens furor eius et gravis ad portandum...".

The next psalm (124) repeats this theme and insists on the permanence and the stability of the New Jerusalem, a righteous city protected by God: "Qui confidunt in Domino sicut mons Sion, non commovebitur in aeternum qui habitat in Jerusalem". Yet its antiphon introduces a new theme, the return of the exiles, with another reference to the distances they had to cover on their return to Jerusalem: "omnes tibi congregati sunt, venerunt tibi filii tui, de longe venient".

Psalm 125 repeats the same melody, with a further development of the image/story of the return of the exiles to the liberated city: "In convertendo dominus captivitatem Sion facti sumus sicut consolati". Its antiphon maintains the same note: "Lavabit signum in nationes et congregabit profugos Israhel et dispersos Iuda colliget a quattuor plagis terrae".

The fourth psalm introduces a dramatic flash-back with memories of the bitter exile: "Super flumina Babylonis illic sedimus et flevimus cum recordaremur tui Sion... quomodo cantabimus canticum domini in terra aliena; si oblitus fuero tui Hierusalem obliviscitur me dextera mea..." (we almost hear the magnificent voices of the exiles from Verdi's Nabucco); and then the psalmist recalls the terrible destruction of Jerusalem by the Edomites: "Memento Domine filiorum Edom in die Hierusalem qui dicunt exinanite quousque ad fundamentum in ea" - and he predicts the punishment which will be inflicted on "filia Babylonis". The antiphon announces already the glory of Jerusalem, liberated and restored: "Elevare, elevare ... excutere de pulvere consurge sede Hierusalem".

The fifth and last psalm returns to the opening theme, to the restored and prosperous Jerusalem, to a peaceful Sion: "Lauda Hierusalem Dominum lauda Deum tuum Sion ... non fecit taliter omni nationi". The antiphon joins in on the same note: "Laetamini cum Hierusalem et exultate in ea omnes qui diligitis eam, gaudete cum ea gaudio universi qui lugetis super eam".

What were, therefore, these images and stories? They were characteristically Biblical: the destruction and the profanation of Jerusalem and the first Temple by the Babylonians, the exile of the Hebrews in Babylon, the return of the exile to Jerusalem, the restoration of Jerusalem and its purification, and, finally, the glorification of the liberated city. This cluster of images/stories is an excellent example of the role allotted to Biblical (Old-Testamentary) ideas and memories in the invention of the idea and the sentiments of the crusade.

The Christian dimension of this part of the Office does not depend, consequently, on the Biblical texts in themselves, but on the manner of their integration in the liturgical Office. I believed for some time that the author of this liturgy received his texts from one (or several) liturgical source[s]. But the consecutive order of the five psalms (121; 124; 125; 136; 147), and the fact that I have been able to identify only three of them in other proper Offices, convinced me, finally, that our author used the Psalter as his direct source. This does not eliminate the Christian dimension of these texts. I am quite convinced that both author of this Office and many people among the assembled audience were perfectly aware of the secondary liturgical uses of some of these texts, and, consequently, of their Christian dimension.

They knew, for example, that the first psalm (*Laetatus sum* - 121) opens as an Introit the Mass of the Fourth Sunday in Lent, and that it appears again in the Tractus of that Mass. Now, the Fourth Week in Lent commemorates in its Office the Liberation of the Israelites from their captivity in Egypt, the given of the Law, the prophecy of the coming of the "Prophet", and the long march towards the Promised Land, the land of milk and honey. The Mass of this Sunday proclaims the realization of these "figures" under a clear Christian light, and, quite naturally, the statio of that Sunday is celebrated in the Roman church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, a church which represents, in a certain manner, Jerusalem on Roman soil.

Again, the fifth psalm (*Lauda Ierusalem* - 147) appears in the Vespers of the Anniversary of a Church Dedication. It is therefore a psalm which was very well known in this particular context of Dedication to any cleric in the audience. Furthermore, four of our five Antiphons were recited during Advent Time, and three of these four during the Second Week of Advent, whose Sunday Mass is celebrated - where else? - in the Roman church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme.

B. While the Office spoke mainly for the clerics in the audience, the Sequence in Mass allowed the crusaders to join in, and one literally hears the boots of the victorious warriors in this martial poetry: "*Manu plaudant omnes gentes ad nova miracula / Vincit lupos truculentos agnus sine macula / Paganorum nunc est facta humilis superbia / Quam reflexit virtus dei ad nostra servicia / O nova militia!*" It is a military march, a paean celebrating the victory of the army that God commands, and the poet refers to God, under the epithets *Summus Dux* and *Imperator*: "*O imperator unice quod incoasti perfice / Ut sub tua custodia pax crescat et victoria / Fac Christianos crescere et impios tabescere / Ut regna subdat omnia tua omnipotentia. Amen.*". This is no simple, common war, however. For the protagonists are the ferocious wolves on the side, and the immaculate lamb on the other, the *Superbia* of the pagans and the *Imperia* of the demons doing battle with the *Divine Virtus*. The term "*militia nova*", employed by Bernard de Clairvaux in his treatise *De laude novae militiae*, appears here for the first time. Bernard de Clairvaux advised the small group of crusaders established in the *Templum Salomonis* in Jerusalem how to combine the monastic and ascetic life with the military virtues in the ideal of the fighting martyr and in the institutional framework of the military Order. In the Order of the Templars twelfth-century Europe created indeed, its prototype and its most successful realisation. Our Sequence depicts, in its own way, almost the same ideal: "*Ecce signum est levatum ab antiqua presignatum / Profetia / Quisque portat signum crucis dum requirit summi ducis / loca pia / Redde sancta civitas laudes deo debitas. / Ecce tui filii et filiae de longinquo veniunt cotidie/ ... / Ecce honor debitus est sepulcro redditus. / Quod profetia presciens sic loquitur et sepulcrum eius honorabitur ... Adoremus resurgentem iter nobis facientem / ad regna caelestia.*".

The Scriptural inspiration of our poet is unmistakable. He evokes in particular Isaiah's prophecies on the liberation of Jerusalem, and presents the crusade and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem as full realization of these Biblical prophecies. He sings the praise of the warrior of God, the fighting martyr. And in his poetry we observe the glorification of the liberated and the restored city of Jerusalem not merely as the spatial setting for the central events in the Christian revelation, but also in its own right, to some extent, as a *City of the Sacred*: "*civitas sancta*", "*porta gloriae*", "*loca pia*", which opens before the peregrinus the opportunity to merit full absolution for his sins.

I believe that we shall all easily agree on the merits of our poet: he is no poetical genius. But his Sequence is of the utmost interest, nevertheless, in that it allows us to catch a glimpse of the more spontaneous, the relatively less formal expression of the Crusaders' mentality in the early stages of their establishment in Jerusalem.

Five psalm with their antiphons in the Office of Vespers, one Sequence in Mass: only minute portions of the rich mosaic of texts that opened up before the pilgrims on that Feast of Liberation. It was meant to transmit a particular message, and I believe that we can read it and understand it, even today, perhaps particularly today, within a community of experts on the crusade. But these are only minute fragments: the entire mosaic is still unread, and most of the work is still to be done.