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Recent recordings of plainchant

JEROME F. WEBER*

It was commonplace decades ago that the *Liber Usualis*, and its underlying editions of the gradual (1908) and the antiphonal (1912), did not meet the standard of a scholarly critical edition with an apparatus of sources and variant readings. While the monks of Solesmes based their editions on the critical comparison of hundreds of medieval manuscripts which they copied and compared in their paleographical library, the published editions were intended primarily for liturgical use, which made such details superfluous. As far back as 1948, the monks announced their intention of preparing a critical edition, the late Michel Huglo being one of the original members of the research team. After the Second Vatican Council, the need to revise the liturgical books in light of the new calendar distracted their attention from this project. Even so, the Council had called for a 'more critical edition' of the chants in the Constitution on the Liturgy (1963). This challenge was taken up by students of Dom Eugène Cardine in the formation of the International Association of Gregorian Chant Studies (AISCGre). As early as 1979, Dom Godehard Joppich published his own revisions of some principal chants of the Mass along with recordings in a three-record album for Christophorus and, a couple of years later, made further revisions of some of the same chants in a five-record album for Archiv. By 1996, AISCGre began to publish 'restitutions' of Mass chants in the journal *Beiträge zur Gregorianik*, showing the Vatican edition with a line of corrections on a staff above it. Early in 2011, ConBrio (the publisher of *BzG*), in association with Libreria Editrice Vaticana, published *Graduale Novum, Editio Magis Critica iuxta SC 117: Tomus I, De Dominicis et Festis*.

In anticipation of this publication, Johannes Berchmans Göschl (the president of AISCGre since 1999) began to record Mass chants from this edition in 2009. This appears to have been a response to a publication by Alberto Turco, a member of the Italian section of AISCGre, for in 2009 Turco published *Liber Gradualis 1* (no. 1 in the list below), an edition of the Mass chants of Advent with two CDs. It was followed by *Liber Gradualis II* (no. 2) for Christmas and Epiphany with two CDs, *Liber Gradualis III* (no. 3) for Sundays of Lent with two CDs, and *Liber Gradualis IV* (no. 4) for Holy Week with three CDs. These were published by Melos Antiqua 'for private use'. Turco's first volume was reviewed in *BzG*, Band 48 (2009) by Heinrich Rumphorst, a member of the editorial team, who also reviewed the second volume in Band 50 (2010), comparing the gradual *Speciosus forma* as edited in Turco's volume

*jfweber1@verizon.net

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2 and in *BzG*. In *BzG*, Band 53 (2012), Turco defended his 'editio magis critica' and Rumphorst wrote a rebuttal.

It is not my place to comment on the editions, which have not been submitted to this journal for a book review, but only to focus on the recordings. Both Göschl and Turco have been among the leading directors of chant recordings in semiological interpretations since 1986, as noted in past issues of this review. Some of Turco's editions here are identical to *BzG*, while others are different. His recordings use soloists (two or three or four) drawn from his men's schola, Nova Schola Gregoriana, and his women's schola, In Dulci Jubilo.

The Advent discs have forty-four chants, including the Sunday Masses, alternate choices for Sundays, and four ferias (formerly Ember Days). The Christmas discs have fifty chants for the vigil, three Masses of Christmas, the Holy Family, Mary Mother of God, the Second Sunday after Christmas, Epiphany, and the Baptism of the Lord. The discs for Lent have thirty-three chants for the first five Sundays. The Holy Week discs have forty chants, including Palm Sunday, the three ferial Masses, four selections for the Chrism Mass, Holy Thursday with the *mandatum* antiphons, and Good Friday. Three very familiar chants are also printed with the 1974 melodies. Everything in the four booklets is recorded, although neither the Improperia nor *Crux fidelis* of Good Friday are sung complete.

One of the most striking ways that the *Graduale Novum* diverged from centuries-old practice was the introduction of E flat, F sharp and C sharp. Turco does not use these notes. Many have certainly noticed that the *Graduale Novum* alters the melody on the very first word in the book, using only the initial note on 'Ad (te clamavi)' instead of a clivis descending a fourth; Turco uses a clivis descending a whole tone. This is indicative of the difference between the two critical editions, in which Turco adopts the *BzG* readings perhaps half the time while making his own changes otherwise.

While parts of the *Graduale Novum* have been recorded by Johannes Berchmans Göschl (2012, nos. 1 and 2, and below) using a schola of ten men, Turco uses solo singers drawn from his men's ensemble, Nova Schola Gregoriana, and his women's schola, In Dulci Jubilo. All of them sing the chants with deep interpretive skill and beautiful tone.

Göschl's third disc (no. 5) continues his presentation of the chants edited in *Graduale Novum*. His selection includes the Fifth Sunday of Lent, Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday Mass, and the Good Friday service. All the selections are included in Turco's fourth set except the chants for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, which will come in Göschl's next disc. This continues his superb traversal of the *Graduale Novum*.

We have also heard two recent collections of Mass Propers recorded from the *Liber Usualis* in the traditional Solesmes style. The set of thirteen discs sung by the monks of Triors (2012, nos. 6 to 17) is complete now, concluding with the latter part of Eastertide (no. 6). These constitute a systematic presentation of the Masses of the temporal cycle, beautifully sung by a schola of unaccompanied monks. The entire series has just been reissued on Studio S.M. in three boxed sets. The Advent to Epiphany series of three discs is on D 3109, the Lent to Eastertide series of five discs

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is on D 3105, and the rest of the Sundays of Ordinary Time is in a five-disc set, D 3108.

A similar set of fourteen discs directed by Bernard Lorber is already complete (2012, nos. 18 to 23, and earlier issues noted there), and additional issues in this series are appearing regularly. The latest (no. 7) is a two-disc collection called 'motets', chants of a later era for Eucharistic or Marian devotion drawn largely from *Cantus Selecti*. Most of these discs, including the newest, are accompanied discreetly on the organ. Further issues have already been announced. Lorber's recent discs use two or more professional singers, again including Hervé Lamy.

The latest recording from the ecumenical community on Cape Cod in Massachusetts is a varied selection of Marian chants (no. 8). There are three chants not recorded until now, and the Advent offertory *Ave Maria* comes with both verses. The four final antiphons are distributed through the programme in pairs (simple and solemn), and the programme ends with the sequence *Stabat Mater*. The members of the schola divided the responsibility of preparing and directing the chants. The singers have benefitted from many years of instruction from Mary Berry, who directed several of their earlier recordings. This was made in their new Church of the Transfiguration.

A disc devoted to four devotions observed in the city of Maastricht (no. 9) offers chants for St Servaas (Servatius), the Blessed Virgin under the title Star of the Sea, St Lambert, and the Black Cross of Wyck, this last a legendary relic brought back from the Holy Land in the thirteenth century. Some of the chants on this disc are proper to the local observance. The schola is typical of Dutch choirs in the excellence of their singing and interpretation. The disc concludes with modern settings of the four Marian antiphons, composed by Anthony Fiumara in 2010.

Two discs come from a fine schola in Nijmegen that has been noted here earlier. One disc that was overlooked earlier is a Requiem (no. 10), sung from the Graduale Lagal, an edition prepared by Fred Schneyderberg in 1984 using his own form of notation, although the record notes also cite all the usual Solesmes editions. Rather than omit the *Dies irae* (as the new *Graduale Romanum* does), it is placed at the end, adding an unfamiliar verse, 'Tunc pandetur et plectetur', to replace the sixth verse. 'Juste judex ultionis' is omitted, as is 'Lacrimosa'.

The same group's latest recording (no. 11) offers chants of virgin martyrs as a memorial to female victims of violence, a contemporary social issue. I cannot remember another chant record that tried to make such a statement. The chants alternate with readings (two from St Ambrose on virgins, the rest a variety of texts in English), and framing the programme is a litany, the first part invoking virgin saints, the second part petitioning against crimes against women. The chants, like all of Hollaardt's work, are well done in semiological style, and the political statement is a lofty one.

Jaan-Eik Tulve has recorded chant with several groups. On his latest disc (no. 12), he directs his own Estonian vocal ensemble in chants as well as polyphony from several medieval sources. He adds in conclusion a Hebrew chant expressing the

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hope for a Messiah, quoting Isaiah. The offertory *Ave Maria* is outstanding, with both verses transposed up a fifth. All the soloists are excellent.

The next disc (no. 13) comes from a traditional congregation of nuns founded in 1984 not far from New York. They made two discs not reported here some years ago, but this one is new. The day in the cloister is represented by a few chants from Prime, Sext, the noontime Angelus, Vespers, a Holy Hour, and the complete Compline. For the Mass there is Mass VIII with Credo III, and the Holy Hour includes the complete Litany of Loreto. The nuns sing in tune in the traditional manner, and the programme is well organised.

The last disc (no. 14) has been assembled from a previously released recording and more recent tracks. Included are Mass IV (with Gloria IX) and Mass III, some Marian antiphons, some alleluia verses, and several seasonal chants, including the first recording of all fourteen verses of *Puer natus in Bethlehem* (since duplicated by the monks of Solesmes). The singing is quite out of tune, especially in the live recordings made in concert at Santa Fe.

All these discs, and virtually all those noted in this journal since the first volume, can be found in the database on the website www.chantdiscography.com. The complete contents of chants are listed there for each disc. This enhances and replaces *A Gregorian Chant Discography*, which has served this purpose since 1990.

Discography

All record numbers in the following list refer to the compact disc format unless otherwise noted; record retailers will be able to advise about the availability of other carriers. 'T' indicates that the accompanying booklet includes full texts of vocal works in the original language. Where translations are also supplied, these are indicated as follows: e English; f French; g German; d Dutch.

1 Liber Gradualis I – Tempus Adventus
Soloists, dir. Alberto Turco
Edizioni Melosantiqua LG I/1-2. (Recorded 2009) T

2 Liber Gradualis II – Tempus Nativitatis
Soloists, dir. Alberto Turco
Edizioni Melosantiqua LG II/1-2. (Recorded 2010) T

3 Liber Gradualis III – Tempus Quadrigesimae (in Dominicis)
Soloists, dir. Alberto Turco
Edizioni Melosantiqua LG III/1-2. (Recorded 2011) T

4 Liber Gradualis I V – Hebdomada Sancta
Soloists, dir. Alberto Turco
Edizioni Melosantiqua LG IV/1-2-3. (Recorded 2012) T

5 Hosanna Filio David
Schola Gregoriana Monacensis, dir. Johannes Berchmans Göschl
EOS EOSCD 7523. (Recorded 2011) Teg

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6 Temps Paschal II
Monks of Notre Dame de Triors
Ass. Abbé de Lessains BMT 14-D. (Recorded 2010) Tef

7 Les Motets Grégoriens
Schola Bellarmina, dir. Bernard Lorber
L'Année Liturgique ALGC 13 (two discs). (Recorded 2011) –

8 The Chants of Mary
Gloriae Dei Cantores men's schola, dir. various
Gloriae Dei GDCD 055. (Recorded 2012) Te

9 De Vier Stadsdevoties van Maastricht
Schola Maastricht, dir. Hans Heykers
Stemra RADG 03. (Recorded 2011) Tfd

10 Media Vita
Schola Cantorum Karolus Magnus, dir. Stan Hollaardt
Lindenberg LBCD 66. (Recorded 1997) Td

11 The Martyred Virgins
Schola Cantorum Karolus Magnus, dir. Stan Hollaardt
Brilliant 94314. (Recorded 2011.) Te

12 Filia Sion
Vox Clamantis, dir. Jaan-Eik Tulve
ECM 2244. (Recorded 2010) Te

13 A Day in the Cloister
Daughters of Mary, Mother of Our Savior
St. Joseph's Chapel no number. (Issued 2010) e

14 Blessings Peace and Harmony
Monks of the abbey of Christ in the Desert, Abiquiu, NM
Sony 88697-90204-2. (Recorded 1996 to 2011) –

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