

I risultati sono — mi sia lecito fare uso di un neologismo — *tranzisciplinari*. Superano cioè ogni singola disciplina e costituiscono un *quid unico*. Per cui si può capire — a nuovo titolo — che il *metodo* non esaurisce la *metodologia*, e questa si apre ad una *metodica* "sui generis".

E allora che dire della metodologia comparata o comparativismo liturgico?

### 3.5. Metodologia comparata / comparativismo

Quasi come conclusione mi sia permesso ricordare solo quattro enunciati per illustrare i quali necessitano tempo e spazio ulteriori, per non dire monografie adeguate. Gli enunciati in pratica sono concatenati l'uno all'altro.

Il comparativismo liturgico ha percorso un itinerario tanto da divenire *l'anima di una metodologia comparata*. Essa a sua volta sta sulla rampa di lancio per percorrere le distanze che vanno:

- (1) Dalla sua genericità, alla sua specificità
- (2) Dalla sua specificità, alla sua opportunità
- (3) Dalla sua opportunità alla sua peculiarità
- (4) Dalla sua peculiarità, alla sua perennità.

E questa riporta il discorso fuori dall'utopia, verso il concreto. Il comparativismo *non è sinotticismo*, ma lo ingloba; *non è interdisciplinarietà*, ma la postula, tanto che *non è qualcosa di parallelo* ma corre di pari passo con la interdisciplinarietà. Esso è *tavola di prova* delle ipotesi di lavoro e si pone come linea discriminante tra l'ambito scientifico e quello divulgativo.

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## EVALUATING LITURGIES OF THE REFORMATION: THE LIMITATIONS OF THE COMPARATIVE METHODS OF BAUMSTARK

### *Introduction*

Amongst the stories told of the origins of the Sikh religion is that of the visit of Guru Nanak to the sacred Kaaba at Makkah. Tired after his journey, Nanak laid down to sleep, but was awoken by an irate Muslim who chided him for having gone to sleep with his feet facing the sacred Kaaba — an insult to the divine presence of Allah. The apologetic Nanak asked the Muslim to oblige him by moving him so that his feet faced the direction where the divine presence was not. Every time the Muslim moved Nanak's feet, the Kaaba also had miraculously moved to the same direction. Thus Nanak taught that no place is holier than another, because the divine is found everywhere.

In liturgical studies the name of Baumstark features rather like the divine presence of this Sikh story. It is difficult to point — in this case one's finger, — in the direction of any twentieth century historical liturgical study which does not in some way or other presuppose and utilize, consciously or more frequently, unconsciously, the laws and methods of comparative liturgy which were codified by Anton Baumstark.

Baumstark was of course not the first to use comparative liturgy. Already in the Reformation disputes we find the Eastern liturgies being cited in a polemical context to support a position, or to discredit the position of the opposing side.<sup>1</sup> Rather more sophisticated use is found in Thomas Brett's lengthy essay appended to his collection of liturgies.<sup>2</sup> Brett explains his working hypothesis that what is common is derived from Apostolic tradition, whereas what is peculiar to a liturgy is lacking such antiquity.<sup>3</sup> However, as Martin Stringer has re-

<sup>1</sup> B. D. Spinks, *Western Use and Abuse of the Eastern Liturgical Tradition*, Rome and Bangalore 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Th. Brett, *A Collection of Principal Liturgies*, London 1720. The edition used here is Rivingtons, London 1838.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-5.

cently pointed out, early attempts of a more scientific study of liturgy are usefully represented by the works of William Palmer and John Mason Neale.<sup>4</sup> With Palmer we find a concern for shape and structure, and the use of models. Neale claimed that his papers in *Essays in Liturgiology and Church History* were the first attempt to elucidate comparative liturgiology to appear in the English language.<sup>5</sup> He drew on the methods of comparative anatomy or taxonomy. All liturgies are within a species, but share not structure, but style. With Baumstark, however, we encounter a much more thoroughly worked out methodology, which as Fritz West has elucidated, was based on the more recent disciplines of comparative philology, and then of botany and zoology.<sup>6</sup> Baumstark stated that the forms of liturgy are subject by their very nature to a process of continuous evolution, and the laws which he formulated after discussion of evidences are somewhat analogous to conclusions which Darwin postulated at various points in his book *On the Origins of Species*.<sup>7</sup> The law of "organic development," together with his concern for shape and structure of units have been very fruitful in probing the evolution of many of the classical rites, and particularly those of the East. Baumstark had employed these methods to make significant progress on understanding the Daily Office, and others have taken this further. One may cite just as one example Professor Gabriele Winkler's essays on the Armenian Night Office, where comparison with East Syrian, Maronite and Byzantine rites, enables her to reconstruct for us its probable stages of development and evolution.<sup>8</sup>

In Baumstark's discussion of laws of liturgical development, he postulated a movement from simplicity to richness, together with diversity to uniformity; but there was also a counter movement, which

<sup>4</sup> M. Stringer, "Antiquities of an English Liturgist: William Palmer's Use of Origins in the Study of English Liturgy," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 108 (1994) 146-56; "Style against Structure: The Legacy of John Mason Neale for Liturgical Scholarship," *Studia Liturgica* 27(1997) 235-45.

<sup>5</sup> J. M. Neale, *Essays on Liturgiology and Church History*, Saunders, Otley & Co., London 1863, 123-4.

<sup>6</sup> F. West, *The Comparative Liturgy of Anton Baumstark*, Alcuin/GROW 31, Brambray, London 1958, 1.

<sup>7</sup> A. Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy*, Revised by B. Bonte, ET. F. L. Cross, Mowcote, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> See "The Armenian Night Office I: The Historical Background of the Introductory Part of Gišerayin Žam" and "The Armenian Night Office II: The Unit of Psalmody, Canticles, and Hymns with Particular Emphasis on the Origins and Early Evolution of Armenian's Hymnography" in Gabriele Winkler, *Studies in Early Christian Liturgy and Its Context*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot 1997.

resulted in curtailment and often suppression of the more ancient features. Baumstark did not pass any value judgment on this, though his work hints that the primitive is preferable. This was counter to the comparative method in biology, where the primitive gives way to higher forms as progress — indeed, that was the conclusion of the method used by Neale who regarded the medieval rites as exciting and rich developments. But there is also an underlying presumption in Baumstark that liturgical history is essentially a history of text.

What of Reformation rites? Baumstark did not attempt to use his methods with these rites. At a basic textual level, that of "rhetorical antecedence,"<sup>9</sup> the comparative method appears to work as well as it does for classical rites. F. E. Brightman's *The English Rite* is an excellent example for the textual sources of the successive Books of Common Prayer of the Church of England.<sup>10</sup> In his study of the Geneva *Form of Prayers* of 1556, W. D. Maxwell was able to show the derivation from the rites of Strasbourg and Calvin's rites.<sup>11</sup> One can compare the baptismal rites in the first Taufbuchlein of Luther, 1523 with that of Leo Jud of Zurich of the same year. It is difficult in terms of publication to know which was first, and the similarities suggest borrowing. On balance, it would seem that Jud borrowed and adapted Luther's rite — though he must have done so with remarkable speed with a printing house ready to go. Or the prayer in Calvin's baptismal rite which begins "Lord God, Father eternal and almighty, since it has pleased thee by thine infinite mercy to promise us that thou wilt be our God and the God of our children" is derived from Farel's rite of Neuchatel of 1533, which in turn was taken from the Bern rite of 1529.<sup>12</sup> But there is more to evaluating liturgy than mere textual pre-history, and it is with evaluations beyond the mere text which raise questions of the usefulness or otherwise of the methods and laws of comparative liturgy. That is true of liturgy in general, but particularly pertinent to the rites of the Reformation.

Dom Gregory Dix made no reference to Baumstark in his book *The Shape of the Liturgy*, though he claimed to be using the methods

<sup>9</sup> Suggested by D. Hilbom, "The Pragmatics of Liturgical Discourse" Ph.D. dissertation, Nottingham University 1994, and derived from Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Antecedent genre as rhetorical constraint," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (1975) 406-15.

<sup>10</sup> F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, 2 vols, Rivingtons, London 1915.

<sup>11</sup> W. D. Maxwell, *The Liturgical Portions of the Genevan Service Book*, London, Faith Press 1965.

<sup>12</sup> B. D. Spinks, "Calvin's Baptismal Theology and the Making of the Strasbourg and Genevan Baptismal Liturgies 1540 and 1542", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48 (1995) 57-78.

found in comparative religion, and made reference to the scientific methods of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* in Germany.<sup>13</sup> Stringer notes that Dix seems to combine the concern with structure found in Palmer with a development of strata dependent upon Baumstark.<sup>14</sup> Dix had no problem in making judgment values. Primitive was best; medieval was full of overgrowth, and gave rise to unhealthy forms of private devotion which centred on the passion. Reformation rites were simply extensions of this obsession with the passion. Thus turning to Cranmer he wrote:

It is the undiluted tradition of medieval extra-liturgical devotion in which he had always lived, but transferred by him from the sphere of private devotion to become the very substance and meaning of the liturgy itself.<sup>15</sup>

Though he admitted that the Reformers did not have access to many early liturgical documents, and that this meant they did not share his insights, nevertheless he proceeded to chide Cranmer for having disrupted an ancient shape, and for omitting ancient material. Thus he wrote:

With an inexcusable suddenness, between a Saturday night and a Monday morning at Pentecost 1549, the English liturgical tradition of nearly a thousand years was altogether overturned.<sup>16</sup>

The phrase "inexcusable suddenness," when combined with rhetoric such as "a horrible story all round" and "enforcement by penal statutes of a novel liturgy," are indications that Dix has a clear set of criteria in place by which he evaluated his own inherited Anglican rite. The primitive shape and classical rites were the norm by which later rites were to be judged.

Of course, since liturgical scholars are human, our work carries a subjective element, and we have our favourite epochs and liturgical rites, compared with which, all others seem to us a little less successful or appealing. But my concern here is to outline the limits which mere comparison of texts, units and structures, brings to the Reformation era, and the demonstration of the need to work always with wider and more diverse methods of evaluation.

<sup>13</sup> G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, A & C Black, London 1945, xiii.

<sup>14</sup> Stringer, "Style against Structure," 244.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 622.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 686.

1. *The more conservative structure is not always the more conservative liturgy.*

Here I take the examples of the rites of the divine office and mass of Thomas Müntzer and Martin Luther. Although Luther had called for reforms in the mass as early as 1519, and even gave strong hints to how this could be successfully carried out, it was not a priority. However, to Luther's extreme anger, it was Kaspar Kantz, Andreas Karlstadt and Thomas Müntzer who seized the initiative, and put into practice what Luther had advocated. Modern scholarship has rescued Müntzer from Marxist hagiography to reveal a dedicated if naive theologian. Born in Stolberg c.1488, he studied first at Leipzig, but by 1512 was at the new university at Frankfurt an der Oder. He had been ordained priest by 1514, and already between 1516-17, when confessor to the convent of Frohse, drafted an office for the patron saint, St. Cyriacus. Of this liturgical compilation Gordon Rupp noted:

Each of these consists of three Nocturns with Antiphons, Responsories and Versicles, and there is a much abbreviated Sequence. A similar text has been found in the Breviary of John of Hildersheim (1480) and the Book of Hours of Bishop John of Lubeck.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, in this special office, we have something new, but structurally and in its content in agreement with received tradition. It was not, and was not perceived to be, an innovation or break with liturgical tradition.

From 1517/18 Müntzer began an association with the Wittenbergers, and considered himself a disciple of Luther. Like Luther, he was influenced by the sermons of Tauler. However, his own preaching developed a pronounced polemical style, which took the form of anti-clericalism. First at Jüterborg, then at Benditz and Zwickau, Müntzer managed to cause unrest which resulted in iconoclasm and destruction of church property. Fleeing Zwickau, he emerged at Prague and arranged a form of disputation, though he used the theses which Philipp Melancthon had defended in 1519. However, the comment by Hans-Jürgen Goertz is important:

Müntzer now developed fundamental principles which had already been hinted at in Brunswick, Jüterbog and Zwickau: vehement anti-clericalism, traces of mystical piety centred on the spirit and on the Passion, and an apocalyptic understanding of history. Features which at first had

<sup>17</sup> G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, Epworth, London 1968, 306.

stood independent of one another were now clearly connected in a properly articulated theological chain of thought.<sup>18</sup>

In March he arrived in Allstedt, where he was appointed pastor of the main church of St. John in the New Town, and it was during this pastorate that he compiled his Reformation liturgies in German. In place of the Latin Daily Office, Müntzer provided a double service of Matins and Lauds, and a service of Vespers, appropriate for five seasons of the calendar — Advent, Christmas, the Passion, Easter and Pentecost. Plainsong was retained. The structure was little altered from the Latin Office, and all the material has parallels in the Breviary of Halberstadt, as tabulated in the Kirn and Franz edition of Müntzer's works. Matins for Advent thus begins with the traditional votum, an invitational and antiphon from the first Sunday of Advent. The first psalm is 25, followed by another Advent antiphon. Müntzer followed the structure of the tradition he inherited, and used material from the tradition.

In his German mass we again encounter a fairly traditional structure and content. The Introit is a whole psalm — Psalm 45 — though he also provided Isaiah 45:8 and Psalm 19:2. The ninefold Kyrie was reduced to a fourfold Kyrie, but in his commentary Müntzer defended this unit on the grounds that "the friends of God, realising his eternal mercy, may praise and glorify his name."<sup>19</sup> The Gloria in excelsis was retained, with the greeting before the collect, collect, epistle, alleluia, Gospel and creed. An Offertorium was also provided, though gone are the prayers of the "Little Canon" — surely Dix would have approved of the removal of third strata material! But Müntzer retained the sursum corda, with preface, proper preface, sanctus and benedictus. Then comes the words of institution, the Lord's Prayer, pax, Agnus Dei, collect and blessing. Following Luther's suggestions, Müntzer removed the canon missae because of its pronounced supplicatory and sacrificial terminology, and replaced it with just the words of institution — though Aquinas and the canonists would have recognised this as a valid, if irregular, consecration. Since the canon was normally recited silently, the laity would have been none the wiser regarding its abolition. On the whole, the structure and most elements remained intact. It is little wonder that overall, Gordon Rupp was able

<sup>18</sup> H.-J. Goertz, *Thomas Müntzer. Apocalyptic Mystic and Revolutionary*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1993, 83.

<sup>19</sup> *The Collected Works of Thomas Müntzer (CTM)*, translated and edited by P. Matheson, T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1988, 170. See also *Thomas Müntzer. Schriften und Briefe*, edited by P. Kirn and G. Franz, G. Mohr, Gutersloher, 1968.

to describe Müntzer's work as "conservatively creative," but Cranmer's as the more radical abbreviation.<sup>20</sup>

It was the reforms made by Müntzer which spurred Luther into action with the publication in 1523 of the Formula Missae with directions for the divine office. 1526 saw the Deutsche Messe, with further advice about the daily office.<sup>21</sup>

In the divine office Luther was structurally as cautious as Müntzer, and apart from the scripture readings, he retained Latin and followed the traditional structure and content — three psalms with one or two responsories at both Matins and Vespers, with lessons. Non-biblical canticles such as *Te Deum* was retained. The precise details though he left vague. In 1526 he advised as follows for Sundays:

At five or six o'clock in the morning a few Psalms are chanted for Matins. A sermon follows on the Epistle of the day, chiefly for the sake of the servants so that they too may be cared for and hear God's word, since they cannot be present at other sermons. After this an antiphon and the *Te Deum* or the *Benedictus*, alternately, with an *Our Father*, collects, *Benedicamus Domino*... At Vespers in the afternoon the sermon before the *Magnificat* takes up the Old Testament chapter.<sup>22</sup>

For weekdays he suggested a few psalms in Latin before the lesson "as has been customary at Matins hitherto." Three chapters from the New Testament are read in Latin, followed by the same chapters in German. Then an antiphon, a German hymn, the Lord's Prayer, collect and *Benedicamus Domino* "as usual." For Vespers he advised:

Likewise at Vespers they sing a few of the Vesper Psalms in Latin with an antiphon, as heretofore, followed by a hymn if one is available. Again two or three boys in turn then read a chapter from the Latin Old Testament or half of one, depending on length. Another boy reads the same chapter in German. The *Magnificat* follows in Latin with an antiphon or hymn, the Lord's Prayer said silently, and the collects with the *Benedicamus*.<sup>23</sup>

The words "as usual" and "as heretofore" indicate the conservative nature of the reform.

With the 1523 mass we find simplification and omission. Still in Latin, the rite has a whole psalm for the introit, together with the

<sup>20</sup> Rupp, *Patterns*, 323.

<sup>21</sup> See texts in *Luthers Works (LW)*, ed. J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Vol. 53.

<sup>22</sup> *LW* 53:68

<sup>23</sup> *LW* 53:69

Kyrie, Gloria in excelsis, collect, epistle, gradual with alleluia and Gospel. The only change was the suppression of the sequence or prose, "unless the bishop wishes to use the short one for the Nativity of Christ, Grates nunc omnes."<sup>24</sup>

The creed is retained, but a sermon is mandatory. But as in Müntzer's rite, out go the prayers of the "Little Canon." Sursum corda and preface remain, but no proper prefaces. Like Müntzer — who after all was only following Luther's earlier advice, the canon missae was removed, to be replaced by the words of institution — intoned to the same chant as the Lord's Prayer. The sanctus and benedictus came at the end as a termination of the consecration, with the then traditional ceremony of elevating the elements. The Pater noster, Agnus Dei and final collect with dismissal are retained, though the Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6:24-27 may be used. Although the place of sanctus and benedictus had been textually changed, in larger churches with choirs it was not uncommon for these chants to be sung while the celebrant completed the canon; in terms of visual performance, the change would hardly be perceived.

Rather more changes were made in 1526. Now in the vernacular, a hymn may replace the psalm as introit. The kyries are reduced to threefold. The gradual is a German hymn, and a German paraphrase of the creed is used. The main changes, however, are that a public paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer replaces the sursum corda and preface, and the words of institution — now chanted to the Gospel tone — may be divided, with administration of the bread taking place before the words relating to the wine are chanted. The elevation was retained.

Compared with subsequent Reformation rites, those of Müntzer and Luther seem conservative. Of the two, however, using comparative methods in relation to the medieval catholic antecedents, Müntzer is by far the more conservative. Yet that is almost certainly an erroneous reading. Why did Luther denounce Müntzer's reforms with such anger? Was it merely pique that Müntzer got in first, and that Luther didn't think that plainsong was suitable with German?

In her thesis entitled "The Theological and Social Dimensions of Thomas Müntzer's Liturgical Reform," Joyce Irwin observed that Müntzer's apparent traditionalism in liturgy was not based on any high ecclesiological sense, but rather on sound psychological under-

<sup>24</sup> LW53:24

standing of the people for whom the liturgy was intended.<sup>25</sup> Because of the composition of his congregation — mainly cloth weavers and miners — his main goal was to make the gospel and liturgy available for the masses of the poor people in their own language. Müntzer wrote:

Hateful envy, however, has moved some learned men to take this exceeding ill of me. They have done their best to prevent them (i.e. his liturgies) being used, for they have come to the conclusion that I am trying in this way to bring back and justify the old papal ceremonies, masses, matins and vespers. Their accusation in fact runs clean contrary to my aims and intention, which is to rescue people's poor, pitiable, blind consciences by producing a shortened form of what the devious, false priests, monks and nuns had previously chanted and read in the churches and monasteries in Latin, thus withholding it from the masses of the poor laity, to the destruction of the faith, the gospel, the word of God, and contrary to the clear, lucid teaching of the holy apostle Paul in 1 Cor.14.<sup>26</sup>

Irwin urges that the "poor folk" were the inspiration not only for the fact but also the manner of Müntzer's translations. He delighted in the use of colloquial and vivid expressions. The use of *Geschnitz* (cannon) rather than *Bogen* (bow); singular becomes plural — "Lord, come quickly and help us"; he translates in order to remove the distinction between clergy and laity, with the consequent placement of spiritual authority in the community of the elect. Müntzer abandoned differences in translation of "enemy," "sinner" and "righteous"; all are rendered either "elect" or "godless." And in Psalm 48:14, God is now "our Duke." Irwin notes that in the Offices for Advent, it is the fear of God which is stressed, for the elect are known by their fear of God. And the Office of the Passion is no mere meditation on the last days of Christ's life, but an exhortation for the elect to imitate his suffering in the present. Wisdom 2 is chosen as a Lenten reading, with condemnation of worldly wealth. The combination of mystical piety and suffering with the birth pangs of an apocalyptic upheaval led to his conviction that the princes to whom Luther could appeal had forfeited their role in the struggle for the kingdom, and power was to be given to the people. Müntzer provided liturgies which encouraged the poor, humble and meek to expect immanent exaltation, while the rich were to be sent empty away. They carried a call to fear God, prepare for suffering of the present age in transition, and the expectation of the

<sup>25</sup> J. Irwin, "The Theological and Social Dimension of Thomas Müntzer's Liturgical Reform," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University 1972, 8.

<sup>26</sup> CTM, 180.

ushering in of the final age when social roles would be reversed. No wonder they terrified Luther. Luther's need for the support of the princes, and his doctrine of the two kingdoms, had no place for civil unrest or forcing Armageddon. He looked at Müntzer's liturgies, and saw the road to Frankenhausen. Pace Rupp, once we get beyond the limitations of comparative liturgy, we find in Müntzer not creative conservatism, but one of the most radical eschatological liturgies ever authored.

2. *Liturgical action, iconography and theology provide crucial contexts for understanding a text.*

In both liturgical studies and sacramental theology, Ulrich Zwingli has received a bad press. Partly thanks to Dix who caricatured Zwingli's eucharistic doctrine as a "real absence," in informed liturgical circles Zwinglianism is a position to be avoided by anyone with sense and good taste. Horton Davies has recently said:

Luther's contemporary is remembered as a memorialist, an iconoclast, and a Humanist. While he might have regarded these descriptions as honorable, they are the measure of the opprobrium of today.<sup>27</sup>

Zwingli was responsible for two revisions of the mass. The first, *De canone missae epichetresis* 1523, seems to have been more of a discussion paper. After attacking the supposed antiquity of the Roman canon missae, Zwingli presented a new mass with four prayers replacing the canon. On the whole, however, this rite followed the traditional structure. However, with the rite of 1525, *Action oder Bruch des Nachtmals*, we encounter what by comparative methods alone seems to be a considerable reduction of the rite. Brilioth commented:

When we compare it with the other German rites then in existence, its radical character is apparent; the Preface and *Sanctus* have disappeared, and also the lections and the *de tempore* principle as a whole. This is the beginning of the abandonment of the liturgical year, which has been the main cause of the lack of variety in the Reformed service, and a monument of the anti-historical rationalism which watched over its cradle.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> H. Davies, "The Zwinglian Rites Reconsidered," in ed. H. Murray Elkins and E. C. Zaragoza, *Pulpit, Table, and Song: Essays in Celebration of Howard G. Hageman*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham and Folkestone, 1996, 33-52, here: 33.

<sup>28</sup> Y. Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice, Evangelical and Catholic*, SPCK, London 1930, 163.

Zwingli's liturgical work was discussed by Dix only briefly. For Dix, Zwingli reduced sacraments to bare signs of our faith. The eucharistic action was reduced to "a vivid mental remembering of the passion as the achievement of 'my' redemption in the past."<sup>29</sup> This he suggested was the basis of the 1525 Zurich rite, and most clearly expressed in the words of the communion exhortation. More recent studies, however, seem to suggest that Dix had misunderstood Zwingli's understanding of memory, which in fact, contrary to Brilioth's comment, was the very opposite of being anti-historical.

In a paper entitled "Transcendence and Community in Zwinglian Worship: The Liturgy of 1525 in Zurich," Dr. Bruce Gordon correctly notes that the main service in Zurich, following its pre-Reformation popularity in many parts of Switzerland, was derived from the medieval preaching service, the Prone.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, Zwingli's version even retained the *Ave Maria*. On those occasions when communion followed — four times a year in line with the Catholic communicating practice — it followed immediately on from the preaching service, giving a tripartite service. Thus there was preaching with readings and prayer, followed by fixed lections concerning the eucharist, and then exhortation, the Lord's Prayer, prayer of approach, institution narrative and communion. Gordon notes of this:

The Zwinglian liturgy was moulded as a narrative; it was the narrative of the Last Supper and the Passion of Christ, and those attending this service were not spectators, but disciples. This drama did not lack movement, for each of the images culled from Scripture was intended to serve the believer in the imitation of Christ. This was Zwingli's concept of recollection, for memory is movement and through the liturgy the community comes to its defining memory, that Christ offered himself as the bread of life. Hence the centrality of John 6 to Zwinglian worship. Within this drama Zwingli employed a range of images and formulations which would have been familiar to the people; these images were not static; and in themselves had no purpose other than to serve as stimulants to individual and collective consciences in their journey of recollection.<sup>31</sup>

Gordon notes that the title of the 1525 liturgy, *Action*, is no accident but a vital clue for interpreting Zwingli's rite, designed for use in Zwingli's own church, Grossmunster. For the sermon in the preaching

<sup>29</sup> Dix, *Shape*, 632.

<sup>30</sup> Given at the Ecclesiastical History Conference at St. Andrews, June 1997. R. N. Swanson (ed.), *Continuity and Change in Christian Worship*. Studies in Church History vol. 35, Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge 1999, 128-150.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 130-1.

service, the minister was raised above the people in a prophetic role as an outsider. The word is alien, and comes as a gift revealed in history by prophets and preachers. When that was accomplished, the minister descended to the table set near the people, no longer as prophet, but as host — indeed, *in persona christi*. The fixed eucharistic readings were designed to link the prophetic sermon with the table, as important visual statements about the connection between the promises contained in scripture and the experience of the Lord's Supper.

In an important article in 1993, Lee Palmer Wandel had drawn attention to the importance of woodcut prints found on the cover of Zwingly's 1525 liturgy, and on the title page of his *Eijn klare derrick-tung vom nachtmal Christi*, 1526.<sup>32</sup> The former, published by Christoph Froschauer, is of the Last Supper with Christ and the disciples gathered at a round table, in ordinary dress, and with wooden beakers and loaves of bread. The second, published by Hans Hagar, has four pictures: Jews celebrating the passover meal; the incident of gathering manna in the wilderness; the loaves and fishes feeding miracle; and the Last Supper. The two woodcuts, she suggests, enter into a hermeneutical circle with the Zwinglian communion and its transformation of the Roman mass.<sup>33</sup> The woodcuts make explicit what it meant to substitute bread for wafers. Most obviously, bread is food, and this is reinforced by the Hagar woodcut of 1526, with its scenes of divine feeding. Each is a moment of the divine presence. These woodcuts, argues Wandel, are not exact representatives of the Zurich liturgy, but are in dialogue with it. She writes:

The two woodcuts gave visible definition to the nature of Christ's presence at Zwingly's communion, the *Aberdarmahl* or "evening meal." They specified his location, his relation to the bread and wine on the table, his relation to his disciples, and more obliquely, to the Christian community over time. They suggested the ways in which Christ would be present at Zwingly's reenactment of the Last Supper. They made visible how and where Christ was to be found in Zwingly's communion.<sup>34</sup>

Christ is present, though not in the elements. Rather, as the community reenacts in narrative the history of the supper, he is there in his divinity, with the community. It is a spiritual presence, though with a rich and forceful understanding of the spiritual. It had no

32 L. P. Wandel, "Envisioning God: Image and Liturgy in Reformation Zurich," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993) 21-40.

33 *Ibid.*, 29.

34 *Ibid.*, 36.

physical location, but could be envisioned by those who reenacted the narrative. Gordon, building on Wandel, points out that it was Bullinger who insisted that the words of institution be read over the bread and wine before distribution. Zwingly's original intention was that they should be read over the communicants as they came to the bread and wine, and had hoped, like à Lasco, that the communicants might be seated. The words were the essential catalyst for the community's recollection of its true nature — the body of Christ at supper with Christ as host of the banquet. Thus one of the prayers of the new canon of 1523 had prayed:

O Lord, draw our hearts by your gracious light, that we may worthily and faithfully join in the sacred banquet of your Son, of which he himself is both our host and our most delectable food.

Horton Davies rightly notes that the simple wooden patens and the wooden chalice, as also the recommended sitting posture for reception, were intended to reproduce the historical circumstances of the Lord's Supper in their original simplicity. He adds that the effect was to produce a rite that had more affinity with the agape than with the apostolic eucharist.<sup>35</sup> Not only does such a comment presume that we know what the difference was, but it also entirely misses the point that it was the agape dimension of the eucharist which Zwingly intended to stress. Brilioth, using other methods of assessment, was nearer the mark when he said that every detail of the *Acticon oder Bruch* helps to express the character of the action, as a social meal in remembrance of the great fact upon which the unity of the congregation is based.<sup>36</sup> But we need to add that it was Zwingly's concept of history, and the conviction that he stood in succession to the apostolic church, which made that remembrance rather more dynamic than has been hitherto realised.

Zwingly's rite, therefore, has to be understood in a much wider context than comparative liturgy and Dix's caricature. Bruce Gordon rightly observes:

As the central, public act of the church, the early liturgies of the Reformation articulated the tangled web of convictions, needs and requirements of communities in transition. Liturgies cannot be separated from either the beliefs which created them or the physical space in which they were performed. The ordered rhythm of words and actions in a particular

<sup>35</sup> Davies, "The Zwinglian Rites," 40.

<sup>36</sup> Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith*, 162.

locality was intended to engage the intellect and senses, drawing out responses at once emotional and cognitive. If we can glimpse something of the experience of worship, whether positive or negative, we shall have an insight into the mental world of the early Reformation.<sup>37</sup>

3. *When textual comparisons are made, the texts must be contextually comparable.*

In 1627 there appeared in England *A Collection of Private Devotions or the Hours of Prayer*. Though no author was named, it was common knowledge that it was the compilation of John Cosin, a protégé of Lancelot Andrews and John Overall. There are two stories regarding its origin — either at the request of the ladies at Court via the King, for an English book comparable to the Catholic primers of Queen Henrietta Maria and her ladies, or at the request of the Countess of Denbigh.<sup>38</sup> The book was licensed on 22 February 1627, and entered in the Stationer's Register on 1 March 1627, to Robert Young. In addition to a calendar and table of feasts and fasts, with the duties of the commandments and seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, it gave offices for Mattins, the third, sixth and ninth hours, Vespers and Compline, with a host of prayers and other devotions. Quite properly, P. G. Stanwood, in his 1967 edition observed:

The *Devotions* is properly described as a Primer, and belongs, therefore, to an old tradition of Christian devotion, while the provision it makes for the observance of the canonical hours of prayer associates it with an even older and more universal tradition.<sup>39</sup>

Indeed, Cosin himself drew attention to his use of the *Orarium* and *Preces Privatae* issued in 1560 and 1564 by Elizabeth I. But he also drew on the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, and, as his contemporary critic William Prynne claimed, also on a number of Roman Catholic sources, such as Laurence Kellam's *Manuel of Prayers*, Douai 1624, and *Our Ladies Primer in Latine and English*, Antwerp 1604.<sup>40</sup> It used traditional and ecumenical sources, and since primers had been is-

<sup>37</sup> Gordon, *op. cit.*, 128.

<sup>38</sup> See (ed.) P. G. Stanwood, *John Cosin, A Collection of Private Devotions*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1967, xxxiv-xxxv, from John Evelyn — allegedly from Cosin himself, and from Peter Heylyn.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi.

<sup>40</sup> See W. Prynne, *A Briefe Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozens His Couzening Devotions*, London 1628.

sued for use in the Church of England in the previous century, it is possible to see Cosin's work as both traditional and as creative liturgy ahead of its time. According to the Anglican liturgist H. Boone Porter, since their publication, Cosin's Devotions have been the classical English order of the Canonical Hours, and they have a unique place in the Anglican tradition; next to the versions of the Prayer Book itself, the Devotions have been the most important liturgical compilation since the Reformation.<sup>41</sup> But what Boone Porter and modern Anglican hagiography fail to point out is that at the time it was not regarded as being a proper form of private devotion at all, and was regarded as socially subversive.

William Prynne was not one to mince his words. In his view Cosin and his Devotions should both be suppressed, for it was necessary "to plop off those putred, gangrend, festred, and contagious members, who are like to putrifie, leaven and infect the whole intire body of our Church."<sup>42</sup> The period was one which was still hostile to all things Roman Catholic, but there is more to this than anti-catholic polemic.

First, in writers such as William Perkins and Samuel Hieron, we find a careful differentiation between public prayer and private prayer.<sup>43</sup> Public prayer is in Church, led by a minister, but private prayer takes place in the household or in the closet. Public prayer was the Book of Common Prayer, attended on Sunday, feasts and fasts. Private prayer was recommended twice everyday, morning and evening. So Perkins advised:

The times of this service are these: The morning, in which the family comming together in one place, is to call upon the name of the Lord, before they begin the works of their callings... The evening also is another time to be used in prayer, because the family hath seen the blessing of God upon their labours the day before, and now the time of rest draweth on, in which every one is to commend his body and soule into the protection of the Lord.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> H. B. Porter, "Cosin's Hours of Prayer: A Liturgical Review," *Theology* 56 (1953) 54-58.

<sup>42</sup> Prynne, *Survey*, Introduction to the Reader.

<sup>43</sup> W. Perkins, *Cases of Conscience*, Book 2 in *Works* 1616-1618, 2:66; S. Hieron, *A helpe unto Devotion, containing certair Moulds or Formes of Prayer, fitted to severall occasions*, 10th edition 1618, To the Christian Reader.

<sup>44</sup> A Short Survey of the Right Manner of erecting and ordering a Family, according to Scripture, *Works* 3:670. See also L. L. Schucking, *The Puritan Family. A Social Study from the Literary Sources*, Schocken Books, New York 1970.



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Second, what is crucial here is *the family*, and the place it held in Elizabethan and Jacobean theology. Perkins could say, "Wherefore, those families wherein this service of God is performed, are, as it were, little Churches, yea even a kind of paradise upon earth."<sup>45</sup> William Gouge wrote:

What excellent seminaries would families be to the Church and Commonwealth? Necessary it is that good order be first set in families: for as they were before other polities, so they are somewhat the more necessary: and good members of a family are like to make good members of Church and common-wealth.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, Gouge lists a hierarchy of authority — servant to master to magistrate; wife to husband, the head of the household to magistrate, magistrate to King, and King to God.<sup>47</sup> Because of this concern for the family, and the importance of private family prayers, a vast number of manuals were produced, such as Edward Dering's *Godly private prayers for households to be saide for Christian Families*, which went through some twenty editions between 1576 and 1627,<sup>48</sup> Robert Hill's *The Path-way to Prayer and Pietie*, 1610, or Arthur Dent's *The plaine mans path-way to heaven*, 1612, which usually contained some prayers for morning and evening family prayer. Almost in direct competition with Cosin and more popular, was Daniel Featley's *Ancilla Pietatis, or The Hand-maid to Private Devotion*, 1626, which amongst many other things, provided family morning and evening services of scripture sentences, a hymn made from verses from various psalms, a prayer and a close from Scripture.<sup>49</sup> These, of course, were for literate families, but recent work on chapbooks and broadsheets reveals that a prayer for the morning and evening, or the Lord's Prayer and creed, were common amongst the trade in cheap print, and popular with less "bookish" folk.<sup>50</sup> Thus, when Stanwood comments that Cosin's Devotions was "a somewhat isolated phenomenon in relation to the popular devotional literature of the time," this is somewhat of an under-

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> W. Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, 3rd edition 1630, Epistle Dedicatory.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>48</sup> A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, *A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, The Bibliographical Society, London 1986 edition, Vol. 1, 299ff.

<sup>49</sup> This went through 6 editions between 1626 and 1639.

<sup>50</sup> T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640*, CUP, Cambridge 1991.

statement.<sup>51</sup> This so termed "classical English order" was neither of the style, or tone, or length of main stream English family-based forms of prayer. Not only was its format regarded as popish, but it was also elitist, and being Court-based, was tantamount to undermining family-based morning and evening prayers in the household gathered round the table. At best it was inappropriate; at worst it could be viewed as subverting the very basis of a godly protestant commonwealth. It was completely out of step with the private devotions of most English people at that time. Only subsequent Anglican liturgical hagiography, comparative liturgy and our modern concern for the more ancient sources of the daily office elevate Cosin's work to a place which it never had in the English Church of his day. Indeed, the King's dissolution of Parliament in 1629 prevented the Commons from voting on the public burning of the Devotions.<sup>52</sup> It has to be compared with contemporary manuals of private prayer, and not simply primers.

#### 4. *Social usage can transform the textual origin and theology.*

Here I take the example of the Churching of Women, or Thanksgiving after Childbirth, found in the successive books of Common Prayer of the Church of England. According to Franz, the medieval antecedents can be traced to the eleventh century, where certain European customs associated with the period after childbirth were formally linked with a liturgical formula, and given a biblical base.<sup>53</sup> Even amongst the medieval rituals there is an ambivalence as to whether this is a rite of purification for uncleanness, or blessing and thanksgiving for safe delivery. The English revision of 1549 followed the Sarum rite closely in content, and in its title. "Ordo ad purificandum mulierem post partum ante hostium ecclesie" becomes "The Order of the Purification of Women." With 1552 we have a shift to the alternative understanding of the rite, "The Thanksgiving of women after childre birth, commonly called the Churching of Women." The liturgical changes were slight. In 1549 one psalm and the sprinkling of water was omitted, and the woman entered at the beginning of the service instead of being at the door; and in 1552 she now came near where

<sup>51</sup> Stanwood, *John Cosin*, xxvii

<sup>52</sup> *Commons Debates for 1629*, ed. W. Notestein and F. H. Relf, University of Minneapolis, Minneapolis 1921, 100.

<sup>53</sup> A. Franz, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter*, Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1909.

the Holy Table stood, and could no longer offer a chrisom since none has been given. Yet the lineal descent is obvious.

During that period of Anglicanism which many historians now term the "Calvinist Consensus" — 1559-1630 — the rite came under considerable criticism from those clerics of a more Reformed position, seeing the rite as superstitious, popish, and derived from the Jewish law from which Christians had been freed.<sup>54</sup> More recently the rite in whatever recension has been portrayed as one means by which men have continued to rule and subjugate women. Will Coster could describe it as reflecting the "endemic mistrust of womankind," and Patricia Crawford concluded that it was an unpopular practice to which "the majority of women submitted."<sup>55</sup> Susan Karant-Numm's recent discussion of the Lutheran reforms of this rite tends in this direction, though she admits that each segment of German population — men, women, magistrates and ordinary citizens, clergy and people — had their own perceptions of churching, and its significance.<sup>56</sup> David Cressy, looking at the rite in England, finds that usage was far more important than origin and intention.<sup>57</sup> It was a very popular rite, because it celebrated a particular social status and the liturgical celebration formed part of a larger social ritual with complex secular dimensions. The "gossipings" as these were called, included a host of opportunities for hospitality, conviviality and display. A feast may have preceded or followed the rite, sometimes at a local tavern. Dressing for the occasion, wearing fresh clothes, gadding with gossips, and consuming food and drink, were important accompaniments to the ritual. Cressy cites from diaries that the Reverend Thomas Crosfield of Oxford went "gossiping" in 1626 at the house of a child he had baptised three weeks earlier, and stayed drinking until one o'clock in the morning; one Robert Woodford invited the minister and his wife and several close friends, both men and women, to share a din-

ner of venison pasty to celebrate his wife's churching in 1639. In 1617 at Elstow, the wife of Richard Chaw, on finding that the minister had not kept the appointment, took a prayer book and churched herself.<sup>58</sup> Puritan clerics who refused to officiate at the rite were sometimes physically attacked. Sometimes there were disputes over whether the woman should wear a veil or not, either by the woman, or the officiating minister. Puritan clergy tended to object, whereas the later Laudian clergy tended to expect a veil to be worn. But whereas those women who wished not to be churched appear to have been able to opt out, it was simply not socially attractive to do so. The rite was officially jettisoned with the introduction of the *Directory for the Public Worship of God* in 1644, but it is evident that many clergy gave in to popular demand and used the Prayer Book rite of churching, or in the case of Richard Baxter, had to draw up their own rite of thanksgiving. Baxter was able to congratulate himself, saying "Every religious woman that was safely delivered, instead of the old feasting and gossipings, if they were able, did keep a day of thanksgiving with some of their neighbours, praising God, and singing psalms, and soberly feasting together."<sup>59</sup> But that was clerical rationalising. The social demand was too great to ignore. As Cressy notes, churching "signalled her new status as a mother or confirmed her status as a breeding woman. The ecclesiastical ceremony and the gossips feast which followed marked her formal public reappearance after the conventional month of seclusion. The ritual put her on display, as the centre of attention."<sup>60</sup>

It would seem a fair conclusion that the precise tone of the rite was not of great importance to most women at this time. Those in Kidderminster who could not have the Prayer Book rite made do with Baxter's rite. It was the social significance of the rite which was important. Puritan protests of its Jewish nature, or popish roots were as irrelevant as modern feminist critiques of the rite. Its textual antecedents and link with concepts of uncleanness appear to have been of no significance to the consumers. But we should not know this from the text, or, one might add, from contemporary clerical commentary on the text.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>59</sup> Cited by Cressy, *Birth*, 225. For use of the Prayer Book during the Interregnum, Judith Maltby, "By this Book": Parishioners, the Prayer Book and the Established Church," in ed. K. Fincham, *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, Macmillan, London 1993, 115-137.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>54</sup> Th. Cartwright in ed. J. Ayre, *The Works of John Whitgift*, 3 vols. Parker Society, Cambridge 1851-3, vol. 2, 557; H. Barrow in ed. Leland H. Carlson, *The Writings of Henry Barrow 1590-91*, Allen and Unwin, London 1966, 77-78.

<sup>55</sup> W. Coster, "Purity, Profanity and Puritanism: The Churching of Women 1500-1700," in ed. W. J. Sheils and D. Wood, *Women in the Church*, Studies in Church History 27, Blackwell, Oxford 1990, 377-387; P. Crawford, "The Construction and Experience of Maternity in Seventeenth Century England," in V. Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren*, Routledge, London 1990, 3-38.

<sup>56</sup> S. Karant-Numm, *Reformation of Ritual. An Interpretation of early modern Germany*, Routledge, London 1997, 87-8.

<sup>57</sup> D. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death. Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*, OUP, Oxford 1997.

like. The blind men began to touch the animal. The first exclaimed that the elephant was like a pillar (he had only touched the elephant's leg) and the second said it was like a lilly leaf ( he had touched an ear). The third, fourth and fifth gave their opinions too, each having only felt one part of the animal. The Indian sages told the story to teach that none of us ever have the whole truth. In terms of liturgical study, there is no single method which will yield the whole picture. That is not only a good lesson; it also comes close to being a fundamental methodological law.

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### Lessons?

Where does this leave us? I have presented four examples or lessons in Reformation liturgy, which point to the inadequacy of the comparative method as traditionally used when it remains limited to texts. The four titles of the particular examples are certainly not to be taken as new liturgical legislation; and yet neither am I advocating a liturgical antinomianism. I was trained in the comparative method, and it has served me well, and particularly when I have made sorties into the patristic era. It is becoming apparent, however, that much liturgical study is little more than an elaborate form of source criticism and form criticism. Biblical scholars have felt it necessary to employ in addition, redaction criticism, and beyond that, the insights of linguistic methodologies, narrative theology and social studies. Liturgy is worship of particular communities in particular places and times. We do need to know the text, and at times, particularly with paucity of evidence, we have to be content just with that. But particularly as we approach those epochs which historians call medieval and early modern, we have much more evidence of how liturgies were used, perceived and received, and to limit studies to just the text tells us less than we need to know, or have the tools to discover. The methods of the social historian and of the anthropologist can be fruitful, providing Christian liturgy can dialogue with those disciplines, and not be forced into some of their pre-conceived theories. Perhaps I may draw attention to the work on early American Methodist liturgy by my colleague, Lester Ruth. He tells of how he originally intended to study the changes in American Methodist eucharistic liturgy from 1784 through to the most recent texts. Hearing a fellow student defend a dissertation on Methodist history using the methods of the social historian, he was convinced that the texts must be the last place to start. He used primary sources of a different type — journals, diaries, letters, sermon outlines, circuit records, ministers' notebooks — to reveal an understanding into which the texts might finally, and sometimes awkwardly, be fitted.<sup>61</sup>

The examples I have given, and the lessons may sound obvious. But all too often liturgists seem to have that gift of missing the obvious. I began with a Sikh story. Let me conclude with the well known story from the Hindu religious tradition. One day a blind man and his blind friends came near a strange animal. They were told it was an elephant. Each of them wanted to find out just what an elephant was

<sup>61</sup> Lester Ruth, *A Little Heaven Below. Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2000.