

MEDIEVAL CLASSICS: TEXTS AND STUDIES

EDITED BY

JOSEPH SZÖVÉRFY AND JOSEPH F.-M. MARIQUE S.J.

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Peter Abelard's Hymnarius Paraclitensis
in two volumes

1. INTRODUCTION TO PETER ABELARD'S HYMNS

ALBANY N.Y. AND BROOKLINE, MASS. 1975
CLASSICAL FOLIA EDITIONS

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PETER ABELARD'S
HYMNARIUS PARACLITENSIS

AN ANNOTATED EDITION WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

Joseph Szövérfy

I. Introduction to Peter
Abelard's Hymns



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Hymns for Marian Feasts

- #77 1. Noct.
Theme: Christ's birth and Passion should not be lost upon us.
Christ is God's coeternal Son, not a creature, Divine Wisdom. The world was created through Him and redeemed by Him. He, the future Judge, should forgive us.
- #78 2. Noct.
Theme: God came to us through Mary.
Mother of piety and grace, she should bring us to Christ, who is our gateway.
- #79 3. Noct.
Theme: Mary possesses a singular dignity.
"Fulfill our expectation, you are called not without reason God's mother; He would not offend you by refusing your intercession: thus you may obtain everything."
- #80 Lauds
Theme: Mary was born to help the world; she is therefore obligated to fulfill this duty.
"The sinners call upon you; you gained a dignity; you became the gate of Life, undoing Eve's action. After God, you are our hope; placate God."

Hymns for the Feasts of the Angels

- #81 1. Noct.
Nowhere in the world and at no time does God's praise cease: Angels praise Him in Heaven; we should do it on earth. God is Creator of angels and humans; He is ruler and absolute authority.
- #82 2. Noct.
Nine ranks of angels were left with God after Lucifer's Fall; they are the nine drachmas of the parable. To restore this order, God having mercy on humanity, selected us to replace the lost ones.
- #83 3. Noct.
Michael is the powerful angel. The conqueror of Satan, who felled him from the heavens, thanks God.
The devil who used to accuse our brothers was expelled; praise and glory and power be to God.
- #84 Lauds
Michael has the name "Who is as God?" He is a powerful fighter and we beseech his help.
If he fights for us, we shall have peace of mind.

Apostles Hymns

- #85 1. Noct.
Theme: The apostles are the leaders and carry God's banner.
They are followed by the rank of martyrs, the knights of the heavenly army, and by the other saints (confessors), the foot-soldiers. Their high order brings us joy.
- #86 2. Noct.
Theme: God's name was once known only to the Jews; through the apostles, it spread all over.
The apostles are rightly praised in all parts of the world.
They received the gift of tongues, did miracles by deed and word.
- #87 3. Noct.
Theme: Unarmed people, a handful of them, defeated the powerful and sophisticated of the world.
They subjected to God the thrones, and the high places of learning of the philosophers. No means of their adversaries prevailed.
- #88 Lauds
Theme: Christ selected the lowly of the world.
The apostles did not possess the eloquence of rhetoric, nor the elegance of logic, only simple faith.
Cicero's eloquence and Aristotle were brought to silence by them.
The "rustics" are the legislators in the world.

Peter and Paul Hymns

- #89 *Hymnus prior*
Theme: This is the day of martyrdom of the princes of the world.
The Emperor bends his knees before the Fisherman and prays to God.
Paul, virgin and martyr with double crown, equals Peter in merits.
- #90 *Hymnus posterior*
Theme: "Doorkeeper of Heaven, open the gate for those whom you brought to God."
Apostolic prince, shepherd of the Lord, guard your flock.
Once upon a time, you were a fisherman but took up a better profession, fulfilling the Lord's prophecy.
- #91 *Hymn of St. Paul*
Theme: "God's mighty horn, with your thundering sound dispel the enemy and gather the citizens of Heaven."
"You became the Doctor of Gentiles, a vessel of wisdom, Benjamin, you who early set out for the prey. In the evening, you dispense a generous meal. With your spiritual food, you refreshen the world. Indomitable rhinoceros, drawing God's plough, you break the soil of the valleys."
- #92 *Hymn of John the Ev.*
Theme: Evangelist John, high flying eagle of God, found a nesting place with the Lord.
His sight enjoys happy visions; he looks into the Sun.
The warmth of love and the vine light please him.

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2. THE HYMNARIUS PARACLITENSIS - TEXT AND NOTES

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II. The Hymnarius Paraclitensis
Text and Notes



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2. Arte melius
utens pristina,
Piscans homines
trahe retia,
Complens Domini
sic policita.

3. Prote claviger
aulae coelicae,
Fores aperi,
manum porrige,
Quos ad Dominum
ducis, suscipe.

4. Perpes gloria [etc.].

3/1 fonte clavi(g)er in B (or forte clavier?)

3/6 ducit in C.

B fol. 93a. — C fol. 143a.

91. De sancto Paulo.

1. Tuba Domini,
Paule, maxima,
De coelestibus
dans tonitrua,
Hostes dissipans
cives aggrega.

2/1ff Peter the Divine Fisherman: see Szövérfy, "A Mirror" pp. 298f and 348f. with Scriptural references (ibid. pp. 219f: Matth. 4,18-22; Marc. 1,16-20; Luc. 5,1-11 etc.).

sic pollicita: cp. Matth. 4,19 and Luc. 5,10.

3/1ff prote: see Greek 'πρωτε'; was it not "bone" originally?
manum porrige: symbolic interpretation of the Lord's action, transferred here to Peter in the form of a request; see Matth. 14,31.

General remark: A number of features of this hymn are found in *Sermo XXIV* (PL 178.529-536).

1/1ff tuba: cp. Num. 10,2ff and Ps. 97,6; see also *Comm. in Ep. Pauli* (Buytaert, CC — Cont. Med. 11.49); see also Lauretus, *Silva* p. 1005.

maxima: because 'tuba' often denoted 'Apostles', 'preachers' etc.

tonitrua: Abelard quotes Jerome (*Ad Pammachium Ep. 49,19*, ed. Hilberg, *CSEL* 54.369-370) in his *Comm. in Ep. Pauli* (Buytaert, l.c. 11.50): "Et beatus Hierony-

2. Doctor gentium
es praecipuus,
Vas in poculum
factus omnibus,
Sapientiae
plenum haustibus.

3. Mane Benjamin
praedam rapuit,
Escas vespere
largas dividit,
Vitae ferculis
mundum reficit.

4. Hic rhinoceros
est indomitus,
Quem ad aratrum
ligans Dominus,
Glebas vallium
frangit protinus.

4/1 Sic in B (wrong initial).

mus . . . inquit: 'apostolum quotienscumque lego, videor non mihi verba audire, sed tonitrua' . . ." See also *Sermo XXIV* (PL 178.535).

hostes: usually a metaphor for the Devil but here probably "enemies of the faith" in general.

cives: sc. coelestis patriae.

2/1ff doctor gentium: cp. Rom. 11,13 and 15,16; Gal. 2,8 etc., also I, Tim. 2,7 and II, Tim. 1,11; this expression occurs also in the Ambrosian hymn 'Apostolorum passio' (AH 50.17; Bulst, *Hymni* p. 50) st. 8/3-4 but there is a controversy whether Ambrose means Paul or Peter (see: Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns* p. 97).

vas: sc. electum; cp. Act. 9,15; cp. *Comm. in Ep. Pauli* (Buytaert, l. c. 11.49).

in poculum factus: (cp. above #57.2/1f: "mortis poculum") "calix inebrians designat doctrinam et sapientiam" Lauretus, *Silva* p. 202. cp. Ps. 22,5 and Cant. 8,2.

3/1ff Benjamin: "Hic quippe sicut ipse ait, de tribu Benjamin exordium ducens" (*Comm. in Ep. Pauli*, Buytaert l.c. 11.51 cp. Rom. 11,1; Philip. 3,5). See also: *Sermo XXIV* (PL 178.532ff).

praedam rapuit: "Beniamin lupus rapax mane rapiens praedam, vespere dividet escas", Gen. 49,27; see *Comm. in Ep. Pauli* (Buytaert l.c. 11.52): "Quod vero dicitur mane rapere praedam et vespere escas dividere, significat eum primitus persecutorem ecclesiae fuisse et postea spiritalis verbi refectionem doctrina suae praedicationis administrasse" . . .

4/1ff rhinoceros: (on the influence of Gregory the Great: see Buytaert, l.c. 11.34 and 36): "Ille divinis . . . loris ascriptus qui pristinam feritatem deposuit et Domini iugo deditus divinumque aratrum trahens glebam vallium frangere coepit . . ." *Sermo XXIV* (PL 178.529 cp. Gregory the Great, *Moralia*, cap. 31 [PL 76.589f] and Job 39,9-10).

5. Perpes gloria [etc.]

B fol. 93a. — C fol. 134b.

92. De s. Iohanne Evangelista.

1. Coelo celsius
volans aquila,
Ad dominici
sinus abdita
Nidi contulit
habitacula.
2. Solis intuens
illic radios
Summo iubare
beatissimos
Visum reficit,
pascit oculos.

General remark: on St. John, see Dreves p. 268f.

1/1ff *aquila:* see Hieronymus (*Praef. in Quattuor Evangelia*): "Quarta Joannem evangelistam, qui assumptis pennis aquilae et ad altiora festinans de verbo Dei disputat", quoted in *Sic et Non* CIV (PL 178.1493). The four Evangelists are compared with the four symbolic animals seen by the prophet (Ezech. 1, 10-14): John is identified with the eagle. See Augustine, *In Evang. Joh. tract. 36, no. 1, 12ff.*

dominici sinus: cp. Joh. 13,23 and 25; Abelard's *Sermo XXV* (PL 178.536ff) *nidi:* cp. Job. 39,29: "Aquila et in arduis ponet nidum suum".

2/1ff *solis:* sc. veri (i.e. visio beatifica Dei). For the rest, see Dreves, p. 269 and Augustine, *In Evangel. Joh. tract. 15, no. 1:* "Non rude est auribus caritatis vestrae Evangelistam Johannem velut aquilam volare altius calliginemque terrae transcendere et lucem veritatis firmioribus oculis intueri . . ."

visum reficit: while others are blinded by the rays of the sun, the sight of the Apostle John is sharpened by looking into the sun which is the Eternal Truth. There is a Platonic air about the imagery of this stanza . . .

3. Ex substantia
solis ignea
Calor prodiens
et lux genita
Oblectamina
praebet maxima.

4. Perpes gloria [etc.].

B fol. 93a.

93. In festo Evangelistarum.
In I. Nocturno.

1. Quadrigae Christi vehiculum
Torcular gestat dominicum,
Quo botrus pressus in poculum
Reficit corda fidelium.
2. Scripturae textum dominicae
Quadrigae corpus intellege,
Qua Dei verbum innumerae
Delatum tenent ecclesiae.

2/1 testum in B

3/1ff See hymns #11 and #12 ('sol', 'lux', and 'calor') and also the Pentecost hymns #69 and #70 above.

1/1-4 *quadriga:* traditional image for the four Gospels in hymns; see J. Szövérfy, "Ein Kreislauf von Ideen und Bildern", *Zeitschrift f. romanische Philologie* 77 (1961) pp. 289-298; cp. also: "quadrigae Dei sunt quatuor Evangelistae", Lauretus, *Silva* p. 300. Scriptural background: Habac. 3,8.

vehiculum: the NT.

torcular: see below (the mystical wine-press = the Cross) #94.1/1.

botrus: Christ (also see below #94.1/2) cp. Cant. 1,13 and Apoc. 14,18 etc.

in poculum: Eucharistic motif (together with 'reficit').

reficit: cp. above #14.9/1ff.

2/1ff *ecclesiae:* not the universal Church but the many "churches" in the world.