

For it is the remaining two chapters of this study which, along with its copious bibliography, make it an invaluable guide to its sources. Here we have a richly documented overview of the thought of the major (and some minor) figures of the Liturgical Movement, along with an account of the principal liturgical Congresses and Roman commissions that sought to give that thought practical effect. Reid's provision of copious citations (in English in the body of the text, with original language versions in footnotes), together with his own analytic summaries, enable us to see what is going on. His research confirms the view of those who have maintained that the predominant orientation of the Liturgical Movement shifted seismically in the later 1940s. In its earlier phase the Liturgical Movement had sought above all the engaged participation of the faithful in the received Liturgy, for enhanced fruit-bearing in life. In its later phase, the Movement became revisionist; not in the benign sense of seeking occasional judicious pruning and careful augmentation of the rites, but in a sense far more radical that placed homogeneous development at risk. 'Organic development can include a proportionate measure of simplification and change': this, and not the root-and-branch measures of the post-Conciliar *Consilium*, is all the Second Vatican Council mandated. But by 1969 many liturgists were minded to find 'the quickest and easiest route to liturgical participation, regardless of objective liturgical tradition'. The *periti* who worked to this end had two supreme instruments at their disposal: 'selective scholarly antiquarianism' and Ultramontanism. Their combination was all too effective. Mining the work of the liturgical scholars, they lit the fuse at the desk of the Pope.

Reid makes the valid point that the Liturgy is not a fit subject for reconstruction precisely because it is not a suitable target for deconstruction. In matters of defining doctrine we are all, since Vatican I, Ultramontanes now. But the charisma of infallibility does not underwrite prudential decisions in questions of the Liturgy, while the pastoral office of the Pope is concerned with, above all, the guardianship of the rites, not their manipulation.

As those responsible for the re-translation of the Roman Missal into English are discovering, dumbing down may take generation change to clear up. Meanwhile, we still await the actual 'organic' reform the Council Fathers requested.

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**PRAYER** by Marcel Mauss edited by W.S.F. Pickering, translated by Susan Leslie, *Durkheim Press/Berghahn Books, Oxford, 2003, Pp. 158, £17.00 pbk.*

A doctoral thesis, never completed, whose opening sections were privately printed (1909) in six copies, might hardly warrant a review. Yet occasionally heroic failures in scholarship are more important than successes, and Mauss's effort to realise a purely sociological account of prayer is a case in point. As Durkheim's nephew and heir to his intellectual estate, and as author of the famous *The Gift*, Mauss's foray into the issue of prayer, though inchoate, is as unexpected as it is significant. In keeping with other productions from the British Centre for Durkheimian Studies at Oxford, Pickering has produced a highly scholarly and indispensable volume on Mauss on prayer. Impeccably translated, with an array of footnotes and with some concluding reflections on the place of the thesis in anthropology by Howard Murphy, this will be the standard reference for Mauss on the topic of prayer.

Divided into two sections, the first on characterizing prayer in sociological terms is of far greater interest than the second, on efforts to locate the topic in Australian ethnography. Prayer might seem the sole property of religion and theology, an act far beyond the sociological pale. The value of this work is to remind sociologists that prayer is also an issue of vital importance in the sociology of religion. Apart

from Mauss, the only other major sociologist to deal with prayer was Georg Simmel, and his approach is entirely different from that of Mauss: for Simmel, prayer was an inward act, a spiritual action that required an external manifestation in and through some social form that gave it a characterizing shape; by contrast, Mauss approached prayer in purely external social terms, in ways that are confined to religion and are rendered devoid of theological implication. Uncle Emile's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* casts a long shadow over Mauss's approach to prayer. As an act embodied in rite, prayer is directed towards the sacred, what is hallowed and marked off from the profane. In this realm, the social so deified rules all, hears all and answers all. What Mauss and Durkheim anticipate are the self-justifying forms religion and spirituality sometimes currently take in New Age forms. Far from being irrelevant, ritual and prayer fulfil decidedly important functions indispensable for the needs of solidarity and harmony. Their current re-inventions in forms removed from the authority of institutional religion seem to affirm their purely sociological defence whose basis can be traced back to Durkheim and Mauss.

Mauss was concerned to wrest prayer from Christianity. By tracing prayer back to its most elementary form, Mauss hoped to find its factual basis, but also the way in which reason could be applied to trace its evolutionary form in arrangements that moved from the mechanical to the organic. In detaching prayer from an issue of subjective preference, Mauss hoped to display its power in objectified terms in ways that would affirm its ubiquity but also its indispensable significance in petitionary rites. Mauss would find agreement with theologians that nobody prays alone (p. 33). In form and ritual practice, prayer can be linked back to a ritual milieu, and to that degree the act has an inherited social dimension. In that context, prayer takes on a property of fact, one that imposes a constraint over the individual, and it is this power that forms the basis of Mauss's purely sociological characterization. It is not the truth or falsity of the act of prayer that matters, but rather its efficacious functions to be found by reference to the social milieu.

The indispensable link between prayer and the social should stimulate theologians to ponder this work carefully. Although the linkage between prayer and petition is made, it is not clear from this purely sociological approach why anybody should feel the need to pray. There is no emotion, no spirituality, no self, and no urge to pray in this account. This means that what is apparent as a sociological function is decidedly unapparent when reduced to the individual. Although Mauss claims to provide an account devoid of reference to Christian understandings, there is a decidedly sacramental property running through the account. This arises in the link made between act and efficacy, where acting in the direction of the sacred effects changes amongst those who pray (pp. 54–7). Teleology has always been the weak strand of functionalism. Is the minded purpose of prayer to be found in the evolutionary basis of the act, where reason and fact regulate characterizations, or might there be a figure lurking outside these processes who is transcendent, receiving and controlling? In the end, attitudes to the outcome of prayer and its domain purposes defeat Mauss. These difficulties emerge in his efforts to secure an analytical distinction between magic and religion. As Murphy indicates, incantation and prayer become confused in ways that muddle distinctions between the individual and the collective (p. 146.)

Although a fragment of what might have been uncovered, Mauss's famous sociological excursion into the issue of prayer should secure the concept a place in the sociology of religion. Sociology has its own priesthood and Mauss looms as too large a figure to ignore what he consecrates as fit for sociological deliberation.

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