

Introduction

The Abancourt Hours

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Books of Hours and Christian Prayer

From its earliest beginnings, Christian prayer was to be “without ceasing” (1 Thess 5.17; cf. Acts 6.4; Eph 6.18) – which was understood to mean both “at all times” and faithfully at particular times.

Prayer is a way of marking and sanctifying human lives and the life of the world within space and time. God’s people and God’s creation belong to God’s time – not one day out of seven but “24-7”, both on holy days, and ordinary days: each day of each human life.

This conviction has deep roots in Scripture, beginning with the Creator himself who divides the times and seasons, marking both “evening and morning” of each day of creation and setting aside the seventh day for the celebration of rest (Gen 1). The Psalms, which became the prayer book of both synagogue and church, honour God through prayer offered in the morning, at

noon, in the evening and at night time (e.g. 5.3; 30.5; 55.17; 59.16; 65.8; 92.2; 130.6; 141.2). “Where morning dawns and where evening fades, God calls forth songs of joy” (65.8).

Daniel specifically prays three times a day (Dan 6.10, 13), a pattern that also appears to be anticipated in the Psalms (note 54.16-17), and which relates to the times of the two daily sacrifices prescribed in the Torah (Dan 9.21). The Torah’s daily, Sabbath and Festival prayers were also significantly developed in the Dead Sea Scrolls. At least by the end of the Second Temple period, three daily prayers had become standard Jewish practice (cf. Mishnah, *Berakhot* 4.1); and two of these prayer times had been coordinated with the two daily morning and evening sacrifices.¹

The Jesus of the Gospels prays early in the morning (Mark 1.35), in the evening (e.g. Matt 14.23) and at night (Mark 14.17, 32-39; Luke 6.12). Similarly, the early church in Acts prayed both at the regular times (Acts 2.15, 46; 3.1; cf. 10.2-3, 30; 13.14) and at night (16.25).

¹ Cf. Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (trans. R. P. Scheindlin; Philadelphia and New York: Jewish Publication Society and Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993); Daniel K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 27; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 1998); Rubén M. Leikam, “The Liturgy of the Hours in the First Four Centuries,” in *Liturgical Time and Space* (Handbook for Liturgical Studies 5; ed. A. J. Chupungco; trans. L. A. Twomey; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), pp. 3-28.

Fixed hours for these Christian prayer times are difficult to confirm for the first three centuries, but the early church order known as the *Didache* or *Teaching of the Apostles* (c. AD 100) already assigned the Lord's Prayer to be prayed three times a day (*Did.* 8). A century later the Christian writers Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) and Tertullian (c. 160-225) affirmed that while believers ought to pray "without ceasing", there is nevertheless wisdom in praying at the third, sixth and ninth hours of the day as the earliest believers found these times especially blessed in the Book of Acts (Tertullian, *On Prayer* 24-25; Clement, *Stromateis* 7:7). During the first three centuries, however, it is hardly possible to make a confident distinction between personal and corporate hours of prayer.

By the third and fourth centuries, orders for the regular conduct of common worship began to be much in demand in churches and, somewhat differently, in the emerging monastic orders. Journeying to the Holy Land c. 381-84, the Spanish nun Egeria commented in her journal about the weekday Liturgy of the Hours she observed in the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem: at cockcrow, 9am, noon, 3pm and vespers (*Pilgrimage of Egeria*, 27).

These regularly timed daily prayers (sometimes called the "cathedral office") eventually expanded to encompass the more frequent "monastic office". They became known as the liturgy of the Hours (*horologion*, Latin *Horae/Hora*). Partially anticipated in Hippolytus' third-century *Apostolic Tradition* 41, the Western Hours came to be regularized by St Benedict (c. 480-550): early Matins, Lauds, Prime (6 am), Terce (9 am), Sext (noon), the None (3 pm), evening Vespers and night-time Compline – all of

which are also explicitly represented in the Abancourt Book of Hours here being introduced.²

The standard structure of each occasion might include an opening invitation to prayer, possibly followed by a hymn; one or more psalms; a Scripture reading followed by another psalm said or sung responsively, the gospel “canticle” (the Song of Zechariah [Luke 1.68-79] for morning prayer and the Song of Mary [Luke 1.46-55] for evening prayer); some prayers including the Lord’s Prayer; a concluding prayer and the blessing.

Churches and monastic communities tended to have at their disposal small libraries of books to help with this order of the daily office. By the early Middle Ages, books produced specifically to aid in these regular prayers had begun to provide a manual and guide for the liturgy of the “Hours” also known as the Divine Office. At the same time, Books of “little hours” for lay people began to appear in the 10th or 11th century, in many cases with an additional devotional focus on the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit, certain Saints and an Office of the Dead. For about 250 years (1275-1525) these books, written in Latin or sometimes in the vernacular, were to become a dramatically popular instrument of devotion. They began to be increasingly

2 See further Szabolcs Anzelm Szuromi, “The Systematic Development of the Liturgy of Hours During the First Centuries – Based on the Jewish and Christian Tradition,” *Folia theologica et canonica* 4 (2015), pp. 153-161; Andrew Brian McGowan, *Ancient Christian Worship: Early Church Practices in Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014); Gregory W. Woolfenden, *Daily Liturgical Prayer: Origins and Theology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

lavishly and colourfully illustrated, sometimes deploying the finest decorative skills and exceedingly costly materials like gold, silver or lapis lazuli.

Whether or not luxuriously presented, these illustrated Hours had the effect of making the church's prayers more accessible for individual use by lay people with differing levels of literacy or knowledge of Latin. They enabled lay participation in Christian worship, bringing the Psalms, Gospels and Saints into the spirituality of the home, and joining the rhythms of ordinary life with the church's presence to the worship of Heaven. Whether their rich illustrations also encouraged and aided in the teaching of literacy is somewhat debated. But the power of their Scriptural iconography invited lay people to a participation in all parts of the Divine Office. The Hours did so at a time and in a region of considerable renewal of popular devotion and piety that had also produced famously influential spiritual writers like Jan van Ruusbroec (1293-1381) and Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471: *The Imitation of Christ*) in connection with movements like *Devotio Moderna* and the Brethren of the Common Life. Many of these books affirm a particular Marian focus in their illustrations and piety, as our present example also does.³

3 See further Rachel Fulton Brown, *Mary and the Art of Prayer: The Hours of the Virgin in Medieval Christian Life and Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); Marie Christine Vilmain, "The Liturgy of the Hours: Praying the Psalms and Confessing the Faith," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 50 (2015), pp. 307-317; Roger S. Wieck, "The Book of Hours: The Medieval Best Seller," *Bible Review* 4 (1988), pp. 22-27; Mary Beth Winn, "Printing and Reading the Book of Hours: Lessons from the Borders," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 18 (1999), pp. 177-204.

Although most easily suited to a literate audience able to afford these exquisite and prestigious treasures, in fact they became the most widely produced and owned books of this era. Thousands of examples survive in libraries, museums and private collections around the world, and “Books of Hours” are today the best-known cultural artefacts of the later middle Ages. Fifteenth-Century Northern France and the Low Countries represent the heyday of these beautifully developed private Books of Hours, of which our Abancourt manuscript constitutes a very fine example.⁴

The Abancourt Manuscript

This Book of Hours, made up of 83 folios, with some missing leaves, has not been formally published. It contains over two dozen richly decorated miniatures and was commissioned by a lady who appears together with (perhaps) her daughter on folio 4v, next to the Virgin Mary who is holding her deceased Son at the foot of the Cross (the motif traditionally identified as the *Pietà*). This is part of an extensive Marian cycle of Gospel extracts and miniatures, many within a design of traditional border motifs. Relevant rubrics and images concern the full-page illustration of the Annunciation (folios 8r and 11r), Visitation (folio 7r) and the Virgin’s Assumption to Heaven (folio 9r),

4 See further John P. Harthan and Maurice Dubies, *L’âge d’or des livres d’heures* (Paris: Elsevier Séquoia, 1977); Virginia Reinburg, *French Books of Hours: Making an Archive of Prayer, c. 1400 1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

as well as the Nativity (folio 23r) and several other related traditional scenes (folios 26r, 28r, 30r, 32r).

Another major cycle of illustrations and decorated letter Initials relates to the Passion of Jesus (e.g. folios 4v, 51r–54v), including the striking symbolic and cartoon-like representation of the various objects and instruments of the Lord's passion (folio 75v).

A full elaboration of these and other artistic motifs must be commended to more expert analysis than the present writer can offer. In addition to those just noted, it is worth drawing attention to the traditional symbols of the Four Evangelists with scrolls bearing their names introducing the opening lines of John's Gospel (folio 5r), and to a number of attractive representations of Saints Christopher (folio 62v) and George (folio 63r), as well as other saints including Anne, Anthony, John the Baptist, and the Archangel Michael.

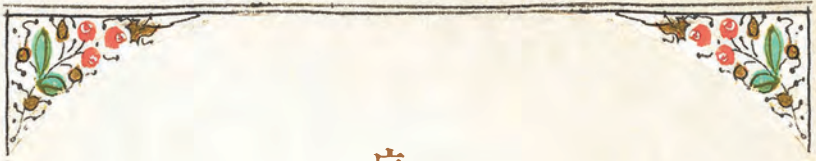
In terms of its liturgical use, our richly illustrated Book of Hours has been confidently related to the district and diocese of Rouen, the capital of the Duchy of Normandy. Some ambiguities are introduced by the fact that two different artists produced the illustrations, while an association with the city of Rouen itself is made less likely by an uncharacteristic liturgical calendar that omits the city's patron saint Romanus but incorporates regional saints from both Normandy (Dioceses of Lisieux and Sées, southwest of Rouen) and Brittany. A date in the later 15th century is uncontroversial, and comports well with motifs characteristic of the extensive production of Books of Hours

attested in Rouen beginning in the 1460's, surpassed only by Paris.

Prior to its acquisition for the family of Edwin Mok of Hong Kong, attested ownership of the book appears to have included the French d'Abancourt family in the 17th-18th centuries, the Spanish linguist Juan de Iriarte (1701-1771), and the English collectors Sir Thomas Phillips (1792-1872) and Baron Frederick Fermor-Hesketh (1916-1955).⁵

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⁵ I am grateful for comments on this text received from The Revd Canon Hugh Wybrew.



序一

這是一趟渾然天成的 創造之旅

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我很榮幸代表昇雯慈善基金有限公司 (E & R Foundation Limited)，向讀者呈獻這部意義非凡的漢譯中世紀《阿邦古日課書》(The Abancourt Hours)。這部仿皮裝全彩印刷的日課書，其出現和製作過程可說是渾然天成，甚至我很主觀地感到，是上主拉着我的手走過這趟意義非凡的旅程。我一直專注推動漢語神學運動，主持翻譯和詮釋歷代基督宗教學術經典的工作已近三十年，從未奢想過有天會主持翻譯和製作這類裝璜華麗、耀眼奪目的中古彩圖繪本。若沒有基金會主席莫華昇律師和研究所學兄溫偉耀教授的推波助瀾，我斷不敢貿然離開舒適區，步入全然陌生的領域，走上這趟驚險重重的旅程。所幸的是，我們與各

方學人及專業人士努力共謀下，得以完成這起來之不易的工程。經過三年多的編務和製作，受教於與眾多中外專家學者對譯文和彩圖繪本的細究，我對中世紀修道院和個人的禱告生活、節期日課、手繪本聖經插畫乃至裝飾花紋的理解，從最初一片混沌到現在有清晰的輪廓（受益於本書三篇專文），正是勇闖新域的意外回報。

這部日課書的製作時間，估計是公元 1480 年左右。按可追尋的歷史文獻記錄，首名擁有者是一位來自阿邦古 (Abancourt) 家族的法語地區貴族。日課書 (Book of Hours) 是中世紀修道院或個別皇室貴族教徒使用的祈禱手冊，一般包含《舊約·詩篇》、由聖經經文組成的短歌 (canticle)、交替詠經 (antiphon)，以及向不同地區主保聖人祈求佑助的禱文。在印刷術尚未流行之時，每一部日課書均由修道院專職抄寫的修士或坊間專業的手繪師手作而成。每頁經書用牛皮或羊皮削薄成紙狀，用鵝毛筆和不同顏料繪上精美的微型聖經故事彩畫，再配上黑墨字體和複雜的花紋作書框或畫框。手稿的常用顏色是紫紅色、黑色、藍色和粉紅色，並以高超的技術鋪塗金箔。在中世紀後期，祈禱日課更不時添加滑稽的活物，夾雜於繁複的圖案以作裝飾；有學者指出，這顯示畫師嘗試把平民百姓的日常生活寫進神聖的閱讀空間，為聖俗並存的表現。這些設計精良的手抄本，對後世的書籍裝幀和字體設計產生

了莫大的影響。大部分日課書是用拉丁文寫成的（本書正是一例），到了中世紀中後期，因應不同地域的民族意識逐漸增強，不同地域語言的日課書應運而生。

古代大部分日課書都沒有特定的書名，但為使當代讀者有所識別，我們決定為這部日課書定名。經英文主編考據並得昇雯慈善基金有限公司首肯，決定以首名擁有者家族的名字為書名，定名《阿邦古日課書》。

另外，為了讓一般中文讀者可以閱讀本書的內容，我們耗用巨大精力，先從拉丁文譯為英文，再由英文參照拉丁文譯為中文。為使中文讀者在閱讀中譯時有貼近讀原著的感覺，我們邀請專業的設計師在排版和內文設計上，盡量貼近原書的版面設計，為此我們將中譯的文字，放入原書的版式內，盡量保留原書的所有圖案，甚至做到每頁拉丁文版的彩圖和文字是與中文版互相呼應，即每頁的中文內容，與同一頁的拉丁文內容大約一致。基於美工及版面考慮，每頁中譯首尾一兩行的內容或有少量調節。

細心的讀者或會發現，部分中譯的內容比原文多了一定的篇幅。這是因為原文用了許多的簡寫或略寫。例如頁49r，許多聖人名字後都緊隨着“or.”，其實是“ora pro nobis”（為我等祈）的簡寫。這些古書的讀者對中世紀修道院的

教父或神師的典故瞭如指掌，對一些簡寫或略寫都可以不言而喻。為了逾越這些文化的障礙，我們努力把這些簡寫或略寫還原，讓讀者一目了然。在此我要特別感謝本書的另一位編者，精研中古文獻學的意大利學人甘哲利博士 (Dr. Geri Della Rocca de Candal) 的精湛解說。

我要特別感謝莫華昇律師與我一起承擔出版總監的工作。2018年，在莫律師的主導下，我們一起安排英國牛津大學聖經歷史研究資深學者、牛津大學愛爾蘭教長紀念教席聖經詮釋教授博慕賀 (Prof. Markus Bockmuehl) 訪學香港和中國內地，期間莫律師主動邀約博慕賀教授為本書撰寫導言，詳論本書與聖經研究諸傳統的關聯和神學意涵，行文精闢，見解獨到，字字珠璣。莫律師更聘得精研中世紀文獻學的意大利學人甘哲利博士把本書的拉丁文譯為英文，並且提供一篇詳盡的文本說明和分析。他精細地爬梳不斷演變的中世紀日課書，並把本書的日課與當代的日課加以比較研究，其細膩的筆觸盡顯專家風範，由他出任本書主編之一，實在順理成章。溫偉耀博士與我們的團隊交情匪淺，由他把關譯文及確定相關研究論文的質量，實在恰如其分，他更從靈修神學的角度闡析本書對基督新教信徒的意義，逾越了馬利亞靈修學與基督新教之間的藩籬。

本書的中譯工作，本來意屬由專研中世紀神秘神學的

謝華博士出任，但因他在神學院的教學工作繁重，無法按期限交稿而婉拒，但謝博士提供了一個關鍵的譯文方向，使本來一度延擱的譯事得以向前邁進。中譯工作最後交由服務於德國天主教慕尼黑總主教區的杜海龍博士負責，他留學德國多年並且擁有慕尼黑大學法學博士。由於此書是中世紀的著作，我們議定譯文應以天主教教會通用的譯詞為準，按杜博士的學養和工作經驗，他實在是不二人選。

本書涉及多方語言及各種專業知識，可幸的是，我們的編輯團隊雖然默默無聞但其實力量強大，當中有資深編輯主任殷子俊先生，諳習多國語言的外文編輯盧冠霖先生，還有剛從湖南長沙中南大學退休回港的簡浩恩、簡祈讚樂教授夫婦 (Prof. Håkan and Judy Granberg) 擔任英文編輯，大夥兒各盡其職，編輯和校對中外譯文。期間我們得蒙天主教北京總教區副主教趙建敏神父和香港天主教聖神修院神哲學校長蔡惠民教授擔任學術顧問，協助審定最終譯文，並且解答一些涉及天主教教會傳統用詞的專業問題。

負責是次美工設計的，是認識了三十多年的設計師胡嘉敏。沒有她的首肯，我是不敢承接這項工作的。基金會在選紙、彩印、仿皮精裝封面和釘裝方面，都有相當專業的要求。陽光印刷廠楊光耀先生非常有耐心地聽取我們的

要求，受全球疫情所累，當下紙張奇缺，他竭盡所能從全球各地搜羅訂購相關物料和特定紙張，並不斷嘗試製作，務求達至預期效果。他如同中世紀的製作商一樣，幫助我們克服重重的製作難關，使本書得以面世。

儘管本書耗時三年的翻譯和經過多重的編校，鑑於此書涉及多門古今中古外語及教內外譯名專詞，限於中文編者的學術水平，目前的中譯文難免有種種疏漏舛誤之處，敬希海內外讀者斧正賜教。

際此，腦海浮起了一句聖經經文：「萬軍之耶和華說：不是倚靠勢力，不是倚靠才能，乃是倚靠我的靈方能成事。」（《撒迦利亞書》4:6 下）

是的，這真是一趟渾然天成的創造之旅，這是神人同工的傑作，祈禱此書可以榮神益人，阿們！







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啓：上主！求你開啓我的口，
 應：**E**我的口要讚美你。
 啓：求你快來拯救我，
 天主！



應：上主！求你速  來扶助我。願光榮歸於父、及  子及聖神，起初如何，今日亦然，  直到永遠，於無窮世。

 亞孟！序經：萬福瑪利亞，滿被聖寵者，主與你同在！聖詠 [94]：請大家前來，我們要向上主歌舞，齊向救助我們的磐石高歌歡呼。一齊到他面前，感恩讚頌，  向他歌吟聖詩，歡呼吟詠。萬福瑪利亞，滿被聖寵者，主與你同在！上主原是尊高的天主，原是超越諸神的大主；因為他是我們的真神，我們是他牧養的子民。大地的深淵，全在他手。高山的  頂峰，為他所有。  主與你同在！海洋屬他，因為是他創造的，陸地也是他親手所形成的。請大家前來，一齊伏地朝拜，向我們的上主，屈膝示愛。因為他是我們的真神，我們是他牧養的人民，是他手所引導的羊群。



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Domine labia mea aperies. **E**t os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam. **D**eus in adiutorium



meum nitende. **I**ne ad adiutadū
me festina. **G**loria patri : filio : spiri
tū sancto. **S**icut erat in principio et
nunc et semper : in secula seculorū. ante.
Aue maria grāa plena. Dñs tecum. **P**
Venite exultemus domino iubile
mus deo salutarī nro. precāremur
faciem eius in confessione : in psalmis
iubilemus et. **A**ue maria grā plena dñs t
Quoniam d̄s magnus dominus :
rex magnus sup omnes d̄os. quoniam
non rexerit dominus plebem suam quia
in manu eius sunt omnes fines t̄re :
altitudines montium n̄r conspirat.
Quoniam tecum. **Q**uoniam ip̄ius
e mare : n̄r fecit illud : ardam fundave
runt manus eius. venite adoremus et
precādamus ante deum ploremus coram
domino qui fecit nos quia n̄r e dñs d̄s
noster nos autem populus eius : omnes