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**THE CREATION OF THE *EDITIO VATICANA*:**

The Monastery of Solesmes, Dr. Peter Wagner, and a “Quarrel of Monks”

N.B.

This paper is a **WORK IN PROGRESS!!!**

It is posted only to open discussion among scholars. I have plans to post a much larger (more accurate) work online, as soon as I finish it.

“The melodies of the Church, so called Gregorian, will be restored in their integrity and purity in accordance with the true text of the most ancient codices, in such a way, however, that due attention be given to the true tradition contained in the manuscripts throughout the centuries, and to the practical usage of contemporary liturgy.”

-Pope Pius X, *motu proprio* of April 25, 1904

The major development of the twentieth century with regard to Gregorian chant was the publication of the *Editio Vaticana* (during the years 1905-1911), which was the only edition ever imposed upon the Catholic church, and is, by far, the most widely consulted edition of Gregorian chant by musicians the world over. The history of its creation is quite complicated and often misunderstood.<sup>1</sup>

It is crucial to understand, if only in brief, the state of chant scholarship preceding the *Vaticana's* publication. The implementation of *organum* (and later polyphony) into the liturgy alongside Gregorian chant changed the way many musicians of the time viewed the art of plainsong, leading ultimately to “corruption” of the melodies. Ironically, the culmination of this “corruption” was made possible by the esteem in which Palestrina was held as a Church musician, since the impact of two major works was due mainly to association with the name and authority of this master. The first work was the 1582 *Directorum chori* of Guidetti, a student of Palestrina, which popularized a mensural performance of the now “corrupted” chant. Guidetti's work was used in conjunction with the second work, the *Editio Medicaea*, an edition of the *Graduale* created by Palestrina's associates according to his principles.<sup>2</sup> The *Medicaea*, first published in 1614 by Raimondi, was reprinted by Frederick Pustet in 1870, having been edited by Franz Haberl,<sup>3</sup> who supplied the *Antiphonale* and *Kyriale* from other sources.<sup>4</sup> While researching the works of Palestrina,

- 1 For example, Robert Fowells, “Gregorian Semiology: The New Chant. Part I,” *Sacred Music* 114, no. 2 (1987): 18. “Every syllable of every chant for the church year, both the Mass and the office, was charted with columns showing the versions from as many as twenty-five or more different significant manuscripts. From these charts, the monks deduced what was to become the official chant for the entire Church in 1904.” This is absolutely wrong, in many ways, as this paper will hopefully bring to light (even the date is wrong!). However, Fowell's view is prevalent. Even Apel confuses things. See Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), 153.
- 2 Giovanni Palestrina and Annibale Zoilo were commissioned on October 25, 1577, by Pope Gregory XIII, to make a revision of some of the liturgical chants, conforming to the textual changes found in the revised Missal and Breviary issued after the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The composers proceeded to a complete recasting of the chant (to rid it of “barbarities”), conforming the melodies to modern tonality and placing the melodies in agreement with the accentuation and quality of the Latin syllables. Furthermore, they eliminated the *melismas* of the Gradual and Alleluia verses. When this was discovered by the Pope their project was abandoned. See Robert Hayburn, “Pope Saint Pius X and the Vatican Edition of the Chant Books,” D.M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1964, 23; David Hiley, *Western Plainchant* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 616; and Apel, 288.
- 3 Franz Xavier Haberl, friend of Liszt, student of Proske, and leader of the *Caecilian* Movement, was influential in completing the collected edition of Palestrina, a thirty-year project finished in 1908.
- 4 The *Medicaea* only contained the *Graduale*. Sources differ concerning the Manuscripts on which Haberl based the *Antiphonale*, *Kyriale*, and Propers for new feasts. On this, see David Bucknum, “The Influence of Friedrich Pustet and Sons, Publishers, on the Cecilian Movement,” Ph.D. Diss., Indiana University, 2004, 28 and 76; Hayburn

Haberl had become convinced that the *Medicaea* reproduced the unfinished edition of Palestrina and Zoilo, and “searched all his life” for evidence to confirm this.<sup>5</sup> Pustet and Haberl prevailed upon Pope Pius IX to declare this edition (often called the *Ratisbon Edition*) to be the Church's official version.<sup>6</sup> Pius IX acquiesced in 1868, granting Pustet a thirty-year privilege, and raising objections from some quarters as to the accuracy of Haberl's work and to the fairness of the printing monopoly.<sup>7</sup> The controversy over the *Ratisbon* would rage until the expiration of the monopoly in 1900, and one cause of its demise came when Haberl's claim that the *Ratisbon* was the “work of Palestrina” was finally discredited.<sup>8</sup> As will be seen, the *Vaticana* was the Pope's answer to this controversy.

However, in contrast to those working on the later, “corrupt” chant editions, certain parties in the nineteenth century were attempting to recover earlier versions of chant. The “Rosetta stone” that gave momentum to this movement was the 1847 discovery of the *Antiphonarium Tonale Missarum* (MS. H. 159), by the librarian at the School of Medicine in Montpellier, France. This priceless manuscript is “bilingual,” containing Greek letters<sup>9</sup> below the adiastematic neums, whose pitches would otherwise have remained a mystery. As Peter Wagner said, this manuscript “put beyond a doubt for us the pitch of the individual neums.”<sup>10</sup>

The first of these editions to be published was the 1851 *Rheims-Cambrai*. Based on Montpellier 159, Hayburn notes that it was “in some cases identical with that later produced by the Solesmes monks,”<sup>11</sup> for reasons that will be treated below. However, Combe contends that Solesmes, which would not start

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D.M.A., 29; and Pierre Combe, *The Restoration of the Gregorian Chant*, (CUA Press: Washington D.C., 1969) 6. All sources note that many melodies were composed by Haberl. However, it is important to note that, often, when authors refer to a *Graduale*, the *Kyriale* is included, and this practice is retained for this paper.

5 Robert Hayburn, *Papal Legislation and Sacred Music*, (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1979), 150.

6 The *Ratisbon* was often interpreted in a mensural interpretation akin to Guidetti's, especially in Germany. The Pope took special measures to abolish this practice, as can be seen by a letter from the Prefect for the Congregation of Rites to Haberl, dated 18 February, 1910. Due to space constraints of this paper, a difficult but necessary decision was made not to include any of the controversy regarding chant rhythm, as it pertains to the history of the *Vaticana*. Indeed, only a book could do justice to this complex subject.

7 Hayburn D.M.A., 48. There are conflicting dates for the publications and granting of the privilege. See Bucknum, 28 and 93 vs. Combe, 6. It seems that the privilege was granted in 1868 and sanctioned in 1871, and renewed for two years, before expiring in 1900. The *Graduale* was published in 1871 and 1873, the *Antiphonale* in 1878.

8 Combe, 6.

9 Added to the eleventh-century manuscript by a thirteenth-century scribe, for pedagogical reasons, these letters indicate the *precise* pitch, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

10 See Peter Wagner, “The Attack on the Vatican Edition: A Rejoinder,” *Caecilia* 87 (1906): 34.

11 Hayburn D.M.A., 16.

publishing chant books until the 1870's, never sang out of the *Rheims-Cambrai*,<sup>12</sup> mainly because the editors had modified certain phrases and had notated the chant in the mensural notation of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>13</sup> In 1858, Fr. Louis Lambillotte published an edition based on the many ancient manuscripts he had collected or copied.<sup>14</sup> His edition was printed in ancient and modern notation, notated in a “heavy and accented” rhythm<sup>15</sup> “in measure suggesting a march or a modern dance.”<sup>16</sup> Michael Hermesdorff, between 1878-1882, published a critical edition based on ancient manuscripts, but his death stopped the project before its completion.<sup>17</sup>

Having noted the most important editions based on earlier sources, one more edition must be noted, even though it was based on “corrupted” chant.<sup>18</sup> In 1856, the publisher Marquis Campana proposed to generate an edition of the *Medicaea* held to a higher standard of accuracy. Pope Pius IX approved this project, accorded Campana a privilege of fifty years, and formed a commission to edit and approve the work.<sup>19</sup> Campana could not garner enough support from dioceses to cover the printing costs, causing the project to be terminated, but, in a certain way, Campana's project could be looked at as a failed precursor to the *Vaticana*.

At this point, it would seem appropriate to point out some of the special problems involved in the Gregorian restoration. The major problem involved is the lack of manuscripts that have come down to us over the centuries. With the exception of the Montpellier 159, the manuscripts from the “golden age” of Gregorian chant are written in adiastematic notation, similar to the below (fictitious example):

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12 Combe, page 18. Katherine Bergeron, in *Decadent Enchantments* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998) seems not to be aware of this, 39. Many older encyclopedias claim that Dom Pothier followed the *Reims-Cambrai* edition as far as possible, to shelter himself under the authority it still possessed, which is not true. However, Pothier did utilize the Montpellier 159, as did all chant scholars.

13 Not surprising, in light of the influence of Guidetti's *Directorum chori*

14 This redoubtable church musician and chant scholar had published, in 1851, a lithograph of the adiastematic St. Gall MS. H. 359, which he had paid a calligrapher to create, and which created much excitement among musicologists (prompting a second printing in 1867). The lithograph was rather inaccurate, but it was later discovered that most of the inaccuracies were the result of the lithographer, not the calligrapher. See Bergeron, 74-75.

15 Combe, 22.

16 Hayburn D.M.A., 17. Lambillotte's edition has proven impossible to obtain.

17 With the exception of an overwhelming application of the “teutonic” DO, there is not much difference between Hermesdorff's edition and *Vaticana*. Hiley (pg 623) points out that Hermesdorff was Peter Wagner's choirmaster and teacher.

18 As were so many editions of the nineteenth century. Hayburn has a rather complete listing (see Hayburn DISS 14), much better than Combe's survey (on page 5), which only describes the various editions in terms of how well they match those of Solesmes. This is typical for the viewpoint of Combe's BOOKKKKKKKK

19 Hayburn D.M.A., 14.

✓ . m π u ✓ .  
 Every time the sun doth rise.

Since there are no pitches indicated, both of the following (fictitious) versions are entirely possible:

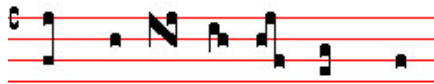


Eve-ry time the sun doth rise.



Eve-ry time the sun doth rise.

The method to be adopted by the Monastery of Solesmes would be to line up all manner of variants of a chant, put them into neumatic table, and apply the rule of Abbot Guéranger: “When manuscripts of different periods and countries agree upon a particular reading, we can safely assert that we have discovered the Gregorian phrase.”<sup>20</sup> It will be noticed that this way of thinking assumes that in every case there was only one reading.<sup>21</sup> So, using the above (fictitious) examples, and weighing in such subjective elements as which manuscript is closer to the “pure” Gregorian style (which is not always synonymous with antiquity, according to Solesmes) they might arrive at a phrase like this:



Eve-ry time the sun doth rise.

However, some have pointed out that this “philological” method may well produce “a mode of singing which has never and nowhere existed.”<sup>22</sup>

Chant scholarship at the Monastery of Solesmes was initiated under Dom Paul Jausions, and in 1860 Abbot Guéranger assigned him an assistant who as destined to have a greater influence on Gregorian chant

<sup>20</sup> Hiley, 628.

<sup>21</sup> Just as it assumes that, with the fragments of manuscripts we now possess, we can recover the original reading. This is by no means a proven fact, and, despite the scorn that has been so often cast on the *Ratisbon* edition (defended by Haberl), Haberl's defensive argument may prove to be correct after all. This two pronged argument is summarized by Mocquereau (Combe, 106): (a) that the Solesmes editions could not contain the chant of St. Gregory, because that chant had been lost; and (b) that even if it were found, it was impossible to decipher the manuscripts that contain it. See also Bucknum, 83. Even Dom Mocquereau admitted that the earliest codices we have may or may not represent the chant of St. Gregory, although it initially the St. Gall MSS. Were thought to be that same *Graduale* that Charlemagne had requested from Rome (Lambillotte published his works with this claim).

<sup>22</sup> Wagner, 43. Fr. De Santi, the Pope's special advisor on Sacred music, finally caught onto this concept while working on the Commission for the *Vaticana*, admitting that he detected “a subjective element in archaeology itself.” (Combe, 331) His realization becomes more interesting in light of another of his comments: “My studies do not me any special competence to decide in favor of one version rather than another.” And this from someone who was incredibly instrumental in the creation of the *Vaticana*! See Combe, 318.

than any other figure of the last two centuries.<sup>23</sup> This was Dom Joseph Pothier, who had only just joined the Solesmes congregation, in 1859. Pothier's extensive scholarship of chant (as well as his journeys in search of manuscripts) allowed him to publish, in 1883, his *Liber Gradualis*, based on the earliest manuscripts.<sup>24</sup> This work, central to this paper, was remarkable not only for the accuracy with which it reproduced ancient melodies, but also for the Gregorian fonts themselves,<sup>25</sup> which were echalons ahead of any other printed version in terms of legibility, aesthetic beauty, and historical sensitivity<sup>26</sup>. The printing of Gregorian fonts has not changed to this day.

Although Pothier's *Liber Gradualis*, the *Antiphonale* of 1891, and the subsequent reprints were not the official version of the Church, nonetheless, the Solesmes research was not discouraged by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) or Leo XIII (1878-1903). An example of this can be seen below:

Second letter of Pope Leo XIII to Dom Pothier, May 3, 1884.

Although in the reply that We made to your letter of December 24th of last year, praising the skill with which you and your brothers explained the ancient monuments of sacred music, We only considered the Gradual edited by you as a work concerning the history and science of sacred music and written from the viewpoint of erudition.<sup>27</sup>

The point to grasp here is that Solesmes was unhappy with the typical edition, and nothing could stop them from researching and publishing their own editions. However, on top of this, they were also encouraging various groups to adopt Pothier's *Liber Gradualis*, for example the French seminary Santa Chiara in Rome.<sup>28</sup> Pustet was the first to be disturbed by these things, and arranged a meeting with Dom

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23 In 1904, when Fr. De Santi acknowledged the presence of Dom Pothier at the Gregorian Congress, to which the greatest chant scholars in the world had come, he referred to him as "the master of us all."

24 It was reprinted in 1895 (and 1896 in the *Liber Usualis*), but with very few changes made.

25 See Bergeron, 36-37.

26 However, Pothier was not quite correct in calling his notation "traditional" and that of Pustet "modern." Every manner of notation imaginable is found in the manuscripts created since the tenth century. Pustet could have been more imaginative, but the fact of the matter is that Pothier was taking advantage of the most recent developments in printing technology. For more on this, see Bergeron, 40.

27 Hayburn D.M.A., 82.

28 Combe, 129. It is important to note that any Catholic choir was free to adopt the Solesmes books, because the *Ratisbon* was never canonically imposed upon the Church, as the *Vaticana* would be. Even the Sistine Chapel choir adopted Pothier's *Liber Graduale*, in May of 1899 (Combe, 175-177), causing protests from the *Ratisbon* supporters. And T. A. Burge, "The Vatican edition of the Kyriale and its critics." *Caecilia* 86 (1959): 343, takes it for granted that his adversary, Bewerunge has "probably been singing from the Solesmes editions for years." However, many Bishops had felt obligated to accept the *Ratisbon* for their dioceses, because Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII earnestly entreated them to do this. After all this, it is easy to understand the consternation of the Archbishop of Dublin, when the Pope had adopted "a new path" at the turn of the century, forsaking the *Ratisbon*. He said to Fr. De Santi (who, himself, had recently been exiled and silenced for favoring the Solesmes editions over the *Ratisbon*), "I no longer understand what is going on in Rome. How is it that a few years ago you were inviting us *vehementer* to use the *Medicaea*, and now the preference is all in favor of Solesmes? Yesterday, the Cardinal Vicar himself was telling me that the Pustet edition, the edition of Rome, was the worst of them all." See Combe, 144.

Mocquereau, and both sides clearly stated their positions.<sup>29</sup> Because of the papal monopoly enjoyed by Pustet during the latter half the *Ratisbon* until 1900, it is sometimes hard to It must also be noted that a confusing terminology surrounds the “Solesmes editions.” This is because, in 1893 Dom Pothier, with regret, had to leave Solesmes, as he was appointed Prior of Ligugé, a Solesmes daughterhouse. Then, in 1895, he became Abbot of St. Wandrille, another Solesmes daughterhouse. In light of these facts, it will easily be seen how such phrases as “Solesmes editions” and “Benedictine chant” easily lead to confusion.<sup>30</sup>

In 1889 came the first volume of a major work concerning the history and science of Gregorian chant: the *Paléographie Musicale*. This epic work, originally undertaken to prove the validity of Pothier's *Liber Gradualis* and crush the *Medicaea*,<sup>31</sup> contains explanations, comparative charts, and, most importantly, facsimiles of hundreds of chant manuscripts. Pothier was always opposed to the project. According to Mocquereau:

Dom Pothier was opposed to this publication. He had many arguments to oppose it, one of which he repeated in thousands of ways: “Yes,” he said, “at first sight this project seems very seductive and full of promise. However, the closer you look at it, the sorer the results will be. It could ruin the Gregorian restoration that we are attempting at Solesmes . . . we will see a harvest of the most extravagant theories on its origin, on the reading of neumes, on rhythm and the modes of the Gregorian melodies, etc.; in short, there will be fights, controversies, and battles that will certainly delay the restoration for many years, if not ruin it outright.”<sup>32</sup>

Leo XIII, a prince by birth, died on July 20, 1903, and Cardinal Sarto, the unsuspecting son of a poverty-stricken mailman, was elected soon after as his successor, choosing the name of Pius. He noted that, due to the controversies over the *Medicaea* and the recent advances in chant scholarship, Leo XIII had taken a “new path” with regard to the chant (which was especially evident in the 1901 *Nos Quidem* brief that

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29 Combe, 129. Basically, Pustet (himself not a trained musician) admitted that the *Ratisbon* had room for improvement, but contended that it could be sung well. Mocquereau argued that it could not be sung well, showing the irrational extremism into which he so often fell. For anyone who cares to look, there are pages and pages of the *Ratisbon* that are nearly identical with Mocquereau's own editions; the time has come to admit that the *Medicaea* was not the abomination so many authors claim.

30 The main distinction being between the work and theories of Pothier and those of Mocquereau. To be absolutely clear: although Pothier had left Solesmes in 1893, his works were still the ones promoted by Solesmes until 1903 (when Mocquereau's *Liber Usualis* was published).

31 Speaking of why he created the *Paléographie Musicale*, Dom Mocquereau explains that what they needed was a “war machine. . . powerful, invulnerable, and capable of crushing all the enemy's reasoning.” (Combe, 106). Reading sentences like these, many have drawn parallels between the French monks fighting Pustet and the French fighting the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War.

32 Combe, 110. Combe (111) says that Pothier was “afraid . . . that the new collection constituted a revision of his Gradual,” but does not explain how he formed this opinion. In any event, it was agreed that Mocquereau was to publish explanatory notes, along with the *Paléographie*.

Leo sent to the Abbot of Solesmes, encouraging his monastery's work).<sup>33</sup> On November 22, 1903, Pius X promulgated *Tra le Sollecitudini*, the famous *motu proprio* on Sacred music.<sup>34</sup> The relevant sentences from this *motu proprio* appear below, with emphasis added:

These qualities are to be found most perfectly in Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently the proper chant of the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and **which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity**. . . . The ancient traditional Gregorian Chant must, therefore, in a large measure be restored to the functions of public worship. . . .<sup>35</sup>

The Congregation of Sacred Rites, by order of Pius X, made patently clear that the *Ratisbon* books no longer had any force whatsoever by a decree on January 8, 1904, but said:

His Holiness has been pleased to allow that these more recent forms of the liturgical chant may be lawfully retained and sung in these churches until within the briefest delay the ancient Gregorian chant according to the codices may be put in their place.<sup>36</sup>

Some authors claim that the “original wish” of Pius X was to have the Solesmes editions adopted by the Church.<sup>37</sup> The only evidence I have seen of this is a letter of Dom Gatard (November 13, 1903), quoting the Archbishop of Westminster, who supposedly said “I have seen the Holy Father on the subject of the Cathedral of Westminster, and he said to me that he was happy to know that the chant of Solesmes had been adopted there, and that he wished to see it adopted universally, and that it will no longer be necessary to hold to the chant of Ratisbon.”<sup>38</sup> However, it seems quite possible to me that the pope could have been

33 Combe 221-222. It will be remembered that the Pustet printing monopoly had expired three years before the election of Pius X. See Bucknum, 93.

34 However, the document was not made public until late December; sources differ as to when precisely. See Combe 424, 232, and 227. Hayburn seems to suggest that the December 8 letter to Respighi, which stated “We desire therefore that the ancient Roman chant be again introduced into all the colleges and seminaries of this holy city” was also delayed. See Hayburn D.M.A., 206.

35 The New Grove article claims that the phrase in bold refers to the work of Solesmes. However, this seems quite unjust to, for instance, Dr. Michael Hermesdorff, who, it will be remembered, had published an edition in 1876 that without question conforms to Pius X's statement.

36 Hayburn D.M.A., 208.

37 For example, see Hayburn D.M.A., 234.

38 Combe, 222. In this study, one must be prepared to hear many conflicting statements that start with, “The Holy Father told me,” or, “The Holy Father made it clear to me that . . .” These are further complicated by the fact that, often, letters sent by official persons were often drafted by musicians (who knew more about the subject matter). For example, the memorandum of March 23, 1901, that Dom Delatte sent to Leo XIII (eliciting his *Nos Quidem*) was written by Mocquereau. The *Votum* which became the *motu proprio* of Pius X was written by De Santi. Many musicians (including Pothier and Mocquereau) were involved in drafting the *motu proprio* of April 25, 1904. The problem for the historian comes when, regarding these documents, it is claimed that certain phrases (due to their insertion by a certain party) secretly mean certain things. A case in point is the disputed phrase about “legitimate tradition” which Combe (264) claims was added by Pothier, but gives no proof to support. The significance of this assertion will be apparent below. An even worse crime of “reading things in” to the text is committed by Hayburn, when he interprets a letter from Pius X to Dr. Wagner (January 10, 1904) as being a condemnation of mensural chant performance, when all the letter entails is an Apostolic greeting!

speaking, not of the Solesmes books in particular, but merely editions based on older manuscripts.

Since the Pope, at the end of 1903, had said that the more traditional melodies were to be restored, the immediate question was which books should choirs be singing from? Understanding this dilemma is crucial to correcting certain myths. For instance, Hayburn claims that:

The actual commencement of the revision of the chant books for the whole Church was undertaken through De Santi. In December, 1903, De Santi, music director of the Civitá Cattolica, requested unofficially of the Abbot of Solesmes, in behalf of the Holy Father, to have the books which were needed prepared by his monks.<sup>39</sup>

However, in reality, De Santi made these urgent requests because he gravely doubted the prospect of a new edition ever being made.<sup>40</sup> He desperately hoped that, in the light of *Nos Quidem* and Pius X's pronouncements, the Solesmes editions would become the standard Church editions by default,<sup>41</sup> especially if the new Solesmes books were adopted in Rome quickly.<sup>42</sup> De Santi's plan, however, seems to have gone unfulfilled, despite Dom Noetinger's promise,<sup>43</sup> with the exception of the Gregorian congress in Rome, for which Solesmes did prepare books.<sup>44</sup>

Hayburn states that:

Dom Mocquereau wished to give to the Church the most perfect edition possible. For this reason he considerably increased the number of copies of manuscripts, which were photographed at every possible library. Tables of comparison were made for each single piece of chant which was to be placed in the

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39 Hayburn D.M.A., 236. Hayburn (118) is quoting Combe for this, but that was Combe from 1953, and he later corrected this. See Combe, 231.

40 See Combe 226-231

41 De Santi's opinion (that only the Solesmes books fit the requirements of the November 22 *motu proprio*) is confirmed by Combe's words, (260-261) and it must again be stressed that neither seem to take into account the possibility of projects such as of Hermesdorff's (not to mention the disunity that would result if everyone in the Catholic church was free to make their own "authentic" chant editions).

42 In November of 1903, Mocquereau's new *Liber Usualis* (or *Parossien Romain*), corrected in the light of many new manuscripts, had already been published. However, according to Combe (226), De Santi was awaiting the edition with instructions in Latin, which came out "a few months later" (Bergeron, 127). This may explain Berry's reference to the *Liber Usualis* of 1904 in the program notes for the Gregorian Congress records. However, Combe later contradicts himself (230), saying that De Santi wanted, not the Latin edition, but a completely different edition, without rhythmic signs and printed in a larger format.

43 See Combe, 229. Noetinger was the Cellarer of Solesmes.

44 And the rhythmic signs had been removed from the books the clergy saw! Hayburn (236-239) completely misunderstands all of this, thinking that De Santi's requests have to do with the Vatican edition (236), that a choice between Mocquereau's and Pothier's work had to be made (237-239) for the Vatican edition, and that (237-239) the rhythmic markings were chosen against being in the Vatican Edition. Perhaps this can partly account for Crocker's (and others') misunderstandings of this fact (See Crocker, 166-167), although nothing can excuse Crocker's complete misunderstanding of the whole origin of the *Editio Vaticana* or the ridiculous dialogue he imagines on page 167 of his book. (He actually switches the perspectives of Wagner and Mocquereau with regard to scholarship and archaeology, and questions whether they ever met each other!) But, again, to be clear, Hayburn's statements, such as "The acceptance of the 1895 edition of the chant and the rejection of that of 1903 meant the rejection of Mocquereau's theory of rhythm, since his rhythmical signs were to be omitted," (Hayburn D.M.A. 239) can only be described as is off-the-wall, and quite confusing. Combe (253 and 236) makes this patently clear.

proposed books. What had been done in the case of the chant *Justus ut Palma* was now to be done with the different versions of the various chants.

However, neither Hayburn nor Combe explain how Solesmes first knew of a forthcoming official edition. One possible cause of the above actions was a precedent set in 1901, when steps had been taken toward an official edition, involving the monks of Solesmes and Dom Pothier. The project had ultimately been abandoned.<sup>45</sup> In any event, the next documented step in the *Vaticana's* development came from Pothier,<sup>46</sup> who had made an unexplained journey to Rome.

. . . wrote to the Pope in February of 1904 and offered him his services for the work of revision. On the fourteenth of the same month the Pope honored him with [a] letter, in which he says "We welcome this purpose of yours with fatherly affection. . . ."<sup>47</sup>

After forty-four years, Pothier's hour had indeed come. Hayburn<sup>48</sup> asserts that:

Pothier wished to make use of the Solesmes research and indicated to the Pope this desire. In the following months, Dom Pothier requested of the Abbot of Solesmes, in an official manner, through the intermediary of the Holy Father's personal secretary, Monsignor Bressan, that the Abbot also offer his help to the Pope. Dom Delatte answered by putting the works of his Abbey at the disposal of the Holy Father, and by renouncing his rights over the Benedictine editions, thus contributing to the establishment of the Vatican edition.

However, there is no evidence that anyone except Pius X was behind this message of Bressan. The letter requests Solesmes' assistance, asks them to transfer the copyright of their editions to the Holy See (as Pothier had already done<sup>49</sup>) and reminds them that they had already offered all the fruit of their labors to Leo XIII in 1901.<sup>50</sup> Solesmes' representatives transferred their rights to the edition on March 23, 1904, in the

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45 The reasons are rather unclear and convoluted, but the various publishing companies seem to have played a big role in the project's failure. See Combe, 196-200.

46 Combe (428-430) provides notes from De Santi, asserting that Pothier, "not being invited by anyone," came to Rome in February 1904 and was solely responsible for the *Vaticana* project, since, according to De Santi, the Holy Father had never thought "at all of publishing a Vatican Edition. . . ." However, it must be remarked that De Santi's private notes (on which Combe bases so much of his book) often present questionable statements which are confusing at best and contradictory at worst (a tendency found in many diaries). For example, as early as January 20, 1904, Haberl was campaigning for an official edition (Combe, 234).

47 Hayburn D.M.A., 242.

48 Hayburn D.M.A., 243-244, once again quoting Combe in 1953.

49 Combe, true to the Solesmsian tenor of his book, asserts that Pothier had no rights to his published works, stating three times that all Pothier's rights belonged to Solesmes, yet he gives no evidence for this opinion except to appeal to monastic law. I do not know the state of copyright law at the turn of the twentieth century, but I do know that, as an Abbot, Pothier would have been familiar with monastic law. It is a complex situation that involves the fact that the Solesmes monastery was displaced several times by the French government, and had to transfer their printing house and rights to Belgium (Desclée). Pothier also had problems with Solesmes Abbot's monastic policies (leaving aside music. See Combe, 336 and 367. Wagner (15) was not joking when he said, in 1906, "It is nothing less than misleading of public opinion, if people are told that differences within the Papal Commission were limited to the quarrel of a few monks."

50 See Combe, 242-243.

presence of the Pope, and Desclée gave their half on March 27.<sup>51</sup>

In early April, over a course of several days, De Santi put together an international congress to commemorate the thirteenth centenary of the death of St. Gregory the Great (alluded to above). On April 9, the *Editio Vaticana* was officially announced, and on April 11, a Solemn Mass was offered by Pius X. Special gramophone recordings were made shortly after this. Bergeron<sup>52</sup> notes that:

Both Berry and Combe . . . seem to suggest that Mocquereau's speech, as well as those of other participants, were recorded on location, as they were delivered at the Congress. Given, however, that the longest Gramophone record at this time still played for only about four minutes (an interval that insured the utmost brevity, as Edison well knew); and given, if only through the evidence of his writings, Mocquereau's penchant for long-winded exposition, it is difficult for me to imagine that the brief speech preserved for us by the Gramophone technicians represents anything but a synopsis prepared specially for a "studio" recording.

Bergeron surmised correctly, as is shown by this excerpt, taken from Mocquereau's lecture at the Congress, but differing in content from the four minute gramophone recording:

Every piece in the collection had its own dossier, that is, its own synoptic table, made by lining up every version of the piece—whether it agreed or disagreed with the others—underneath the preceding version, one beneath the other, grouped according to schools or place of origin, the whole thing being quite ingenuously arranged in parallel columns which permitted each perusal [sic] of the entire history of a particular neume, how consistent it had been, or how varied, or how many corruptions it underwent. Each table furnished, then, either the history of an entire piece, or the more particular history of each of its elements, one after the other. Any other procedure would have left only vague, disordered, incoherent impressions; there would have been no permanently definable basis upon which the new edition could rise.<sup>53</sup>

In this same lecture, Mocquereau said that "it would be inadvisable and premature to offer an edition as being definitive. Perhaps in fifty years such an edition may be within the realm of possibility. Not today."<sup>54</sup>

On April 27, a second *motu proprio* was issued by Pius X.<sup>55</sup> On April 29, those members of the Commission in Rome were received in a Papal audience, encouraged, and given medals and copies of the

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51 See Combe 251-252. This was shortly after they had been shown the draft of the second *motu proprio*, discussed below.

52 Bergeron, 162.

53 Hayburn D.M.A., 242. Without a doubt, Mocquereau is speaking of the work in preparation for the *Vaticana*.

54 However, Combe contradicts himself (259-260) on page 304, when he claims that Mocquereau was only speaking of "some less ancient pieces and certain irreducible variants." Furthermore, in the same month as the Congress, Mocquereau published an essay in a Roman journal and said the same thing (Bergeron, 149). This statement of Mocquereau's is usually given in the form found in Kelley's article. See Columba Kelley, "The Role of Semiology," *Sacred Music* 115, no. 2 (1988): 6. Dom Cardine told Kelley about "Dom Mocquereau's meeting with Pius X in the spring of 1904." (Perhaps May 11? See Combe, 275) The Pope asked "Just how long will it take you to produce a critical edition of the Gregorian repertory?" Mocquereau responded, "About fifty years, Your holiness." The Pope replied, "No, you will do it within the next few years." Incidentally, Kelley then goes on to give a fictitious history of the *Vaticana*, claiming Mocquereau and Solesmes to be the authors (which, as stated at the beginning, is common enough).

55 Please see Appendix I.

*motu proprio*.<sup>56</sup> Pius X declared, “With Dom Pothier, Dom Mocquereau, and Dom Janssens, we are a block of iron, and we are unafraid of our critics.”<sup>57</sup> On May 22, 1904, the Pope sent a famous brief to Dom Delatte, Abbot of Solesmes, asking his monastery to prepare the edition, which will be “examined and approved” by those whom the Pope had appointed.<sup>58</sup>

One of the most alluring prospects of researching this topic was the opportunity to learn more about what actually went on during the sessions of the Pontifical Commission. However, to describe the proceedings of these meetings would be useless, because they were chaos, and very few of the decisions ended up being implemented into the *Vaticana*.<sup>59</sup> There were three main sessions of the Commission. The first session (six meetings) took place in Rome between April 29 and June 27, 1904. During this session, Mocquereau stated that he would use the 1903 *Liber Usualis* as the basis for the *Vaticana*.<sup>60</sup> It was also decided that the *Kyriale* would be published first.<sup>61</sup> On August 8, 1904, Mocquereau received the first letter,

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56 Combe, 266-267.

57 Unfortunately for Pius X, those three monks ended up at each others' throats. Hayburn (252) seems to err, when he talks about commission being in Rome for the Gregorian Congress (which ended April 11). He also says that they were received by the Pope and encouraged (using the same words), but this seems impossible since Combe says they received copies of the second *motu proprio*, which wouldn't be issued for a few more weeks.

58 This brief, basically, makes everything official. Note that Mocquereau will be involved in both editing and approving the *Vaticana*. Hayburn (252), again quoting Combe in 1953, and speaking of the presidency of the Commission, asserts that “Dom Mocquereau, to whom this office had originally been offered, had refused it in favor of his elder and his master.” However, Combe (250) has changed his mind about this. One thing is certain: the history of chant would have been much different if Mocquereau had accepted the presidency!

59 For example, De Santi (Combe 313-314) and others in March of 1905 were very insistent that “rules of order” be drawn up, and records be carefully kept of the committee's decisions, especially regarding corrections made to Solesmes' proofs. Several times, the minutes record that **all were in agreement about this**, yet nothing was ever done about it! (See also, Combe 314-315 on this) Or consider two motions passed the at the “plenary session” at Appuldurcombe, and note whether they are not directly opposed to each other:

2. *The Commission expresses its desire that, in all cases where the information of the manuscripts is insufficient to establish a definitive reconstruction of the melodies, preference shall be given to the versions already used by Gregorian scholars and contained in the books of Solesmes.*

3. *The Commission expresses its desire that, in cases where paleographical research does not provide a definitive solution, aesthetic considerations may cause the most beautiful version to prevail, even if the study of the manuscripts may tend to favor another version.*

Or, consider that Combe (313-314) says that, after a long debate on March 12 and 15 about whether to prefer the “traditional” DO over the “archaeological” SI, “**everyone finally came out in favor of DO.**” Wagner spoke in favor of this. However, on April 30, 1905, Combe (345) quotes Cagin (quoting De Santi who is quoting Mocquereau), as saying “...the question of SI, which took up so much time and occasioned so much turmoil, has just been settled in Dom Mocquereau's favor unanimously. . . . All voted as on, Dom Pothier along with the others. . . . They have completely caved in. Wagner is no longer there. . . .” (Wagner had left Rome after the April 22 meeting). However, in the *Vaticana*, the DO won out after all!

60 Combe, 273. Wagner's article cites specific pieces (for example, Agnus Dei IV), and the version is completely different than that found in the 1903 *Liber*.

61 This was a terrible decision. The *Kyriale*, due to its late composition, was in many ways the most difficult part to edit. Furthermore, Solesmes was no where near being ready to send in the proofs (whereas the neumatic tables for

written by the Pope's Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val. These special letters, from the Pope, Cardinals, and even kings, gave Mocquereau's assistant monks the necessary permission to allow them to take photographs of manuscripts in libraries all over Europe. This was granted for the express purpose of editing the *Vaticana*.<sup>62</sup> Mocquereau had already taken many photographs for the Solesmes archives, but he now had the opportunity of collecting photographs from England, Austro-Hungary, and Spain. Taking advantage of new photography equipment, the monks sent back the photographs as soon as they took them, so that mocquereau could start mounting them on his neumatic tables. "The first journey for the Vatican Edition brought more than 15,000 photographic proofs to Appuldurcombe, and at that point, the workshop had more than 250 complete manuscripts."<sup>63</sup>

For the second session, in September, Hayburn elucidates:

At this time the Benedictines of Solesmes had been expelled, together with all other religious orders, from their homeland, by the French government. They took up residence on the Isle of Wight, first at Appuldurcombe, an old estate, and then at Quarr Abbey, built later. Dom Mocquereau was the only monk of Solesmes on the Commission, and in order to familiarize the members of the Commission with the work of Paleography, he invited them to come to the Isle of Wight and see for themselves what it involved. Since the Commission up to that time had not had a meeting at which all members and consultants were present Mocquereau thought it his duty to bring about the first complete session at Appuldurcombe. session at Appuldurcombe. The members and consultants met from September sixth through ninth in one of the large meeting rooms of the library of the monastery.<sup>64</sup>

During the periods between the sessions, the members of the Commission visited the section of the monastery dedicated to paleographical studies, containing a great number of manuscripts. They also examined the thousands of photographs reproducing chants from all parts of Europe. During the sessions at Appuldurcombe, Mocquereau asked, and was granted, three months, to finish preparing the proofs of the *Kyriale*.

The third session, held in Rome during 1905, comprised twenty meetings, held between February 12

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the *Graduale* were almost finished).

62 With this knowledge, it becomes easier to understand Wagner (42-43): "It is a fine thing to have in one's work-room many valuable photographic reproductions of chant manuscripts, and I envy those who are in this fortunate situation. The Fathers of Solesmes possess, we are told, about four-hundred such photographs of manuscripts. For part of these treasures, they are indebted to the favor of the Holy See, whose letter of recommendation opened to them libraries which they would otherwise never have entered. So much the more could we expect that they would selflessly place their archival material at the disposal of the Holy Father. The Catholic world would have considered this as a quite ordinary gesture lending powerful support to the Papal project. Such is not the case. A promise was made, to be sure, by a highly placed person to one in a still higher position, but later the promise was not kept."

63 Combe, 303.

64 Hayburn D.M.A., 253-254.

and May 7. As detailed in the second *motu proprio*, the works thus prepared were now to be “examined and revised.” Throughout the session, there was an immense body of correspondence between Solesmes and the Pontifical Commission, due to a fundamental disagreement between Solesmes and certain members of the Commission. The second *motu proprio* had stated that “particular attention be paid to legitimate tradition as contained throughout the centuries in manuscripts.” Scholars such as Pothier, Wagner, and Janssens (the so-called “traditionlists”) insisted that the oldest Gregorian reading could sometimes be improved upon, by means of the “legitimate tradition,” while the Solesmes supporters (“archaeologists”) said “legitimate tradition” was only that which didn’t contradict the sources.

A letter was written to Pothier by the Cardinal Merry del Val on April 3, containing these words:

It would not be contrary to the wishes of His Holiness, if the Pontifical Commission for the Vatican edition of the Gregorian liturgical books should show some preference for a less ancient composition, provided that it preserves the genuine characteristics of Gregorian music. Indeed one would never find it possible to prove that the most ancient chant is always and necessarily the best to adopt in practice, since art itself and different circumstances of later times have brought about a rational development of the ancient melodies, or even added certain embellishments to them, without in any way detracting from their original purity.

Your Reverence will kindly communicate these authoritative explanations to the Commission over which you so worthily preside, so that its members may take them as rule and guide in their work, and thus justify ever more fully the confidence which His Holiness has placed in them.

The letter clearly sided with the traditionalists. However, the archaeologists now switched their approach: arguing that the Commission was completely disorganized, and needed “regulation.” After many meetings, the archaeologists finally decided on what was termed the “Mercati Regulation.” This Regulation gave all authority in the editorial process to Solesmes, keeping the Pontifical Commission in existence but only giving it power enough to make *suggestions* to the Solesmes’ drafts (which Solesmes was free to accept or reject). In a word, Solesmes wanted to create the edition . . . period.

At this point, the Vatican became fed up. Another letter<sup>65</sup> of the Cardinal Secretary of State effectively ended the involvement of Solesmes with the *Vaticana*. However, Rome appears not to have seen it this way: Pius X and his Secretary of State both insisted that nothing whatsoever had changed in the creation of the *Vaticana*. However, the Solesmes monks never again sent any drafts to Pothier, and to my knowledge Pothier never took advantage of the manuscript archives at Solesmes for the difficult task in front

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65 Please see Appendix II, with emphasis added.

of him (although he did repeatedly ask Dom Mocquereau for assistance in this regard, as the Monastery had promised). Mocquereau simply ignored his former master,<sup>66</sup> as did the archaeologist members of the Commission. The important figures who continued to work on the Commission with Pothier were Janssens, Gastoué, and Wagner. The *Vaticana*, when it was published (from 1906-1912) was nothing more than a revision of Pothier's original works, although he admits to using substantial “improvements” found in the 1903 *Liber Usualis*.<sup>67</sup>

In Wagner's brilliant 1907 response to Beverunge (who had attacked the *Vaticana Kyriale*), it can be observed that the *Vaticana* can at least hold its own against critics. However, I would suggest that the most interesting aspect of his article is the glimpse it gives us into what manuscripts the members of the Commission had at their disposal.<sup>68</sup>

In retrospect, it should not surprise us that the *Vaticana* was fraught with these problems, and ended up as it did. Leaving aside the “authenticity” questions (e.g. whether it is possible and desirable to turn back the clock 1,000 years, recovering ancient music unchanged), the fact of the matter is that under no circumstances would Solesmes have considered editing with respect to Gregorian tradition. So, no matter what compromises could have been reached, as long as Solesmes was responsible for preparing the drafts, there would have been conflict. Solesmes believes that neumatic tables will give us the melodies whispered into the ear of St. Gregory, and even to this day, their researches use the method laid down by Gueranger:

When manuscripts of different periods and countries agree upon a particular reading, we can safely assert that we have discovered the Gregorian phrase. . . .

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66 Combe, 366. “I shall no longer answer him [Pothier].”

67 The borrowings of Pothier constitute the only contribution of Solesmes to the *Vaticana*.

68 We find Wagner using phrases such as: “I cannot at the moment consider the testimony of the French manuscripts. The copies which I made for myself from the French documents are not available at this writing. . . .”; “Some years ago I copied in full this precious memorial [St. Gall MS. 381] . . .”; and “[In responding to Beverunge] I was limited to the material which I occasionally collected in the libraries without having the remotest idea that some of it would some day find use in a defense against attacks on a Papal chant edition.” Wagner also uses the *Paléographie Musicale* for many of his manuscript sources. The curious thing about these statements is that Wagner had more access to manuscripts than anyone else on the commission, except Mocquereau (and possibly Pothier); therefore, the advantage of Solesmes cooperation would surely have been invaluable. No matter how long Pothier had studied the manuscripts at Solesmes, he was still ignorant of the newest research, and certainly also ignorant of thousands upon thousands of photographs of manuscripts, which were inaccessible behind locked doors, even though they were tended to by the monks of the monastery where he was professed, and which he, more than anyone else, made famous.