

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Spread of Cistercian Culture

13.1. THE MAIN PERIODICALS OF THE ORDER

(by Dom Armand Veilleux)¹

In this brief presentation on the main periodicals of the Order—which does not claim to be exhaustive—we will speak mostly about the periodicals of the OCSO. However, we must mention from the outset an important publication of the OC, whose origin goes back to the period before 1892.

Cistercienser Chronik

The German periodical *Cistercienser Chronik* was founded at Mehrerau in 1889 by Fr. Gregory Müller, who continued as its director until he reached the age of ninety-three. This review described itself, first of all, as a sort of family newsletter of the Cistercian Order; but early on it also became interested in the history of the Order, as well as in various aspects of Cistercian spirituality. Today it bears the subtitle *Forum für Geschichte, Kunst, Literatur und Spiritualität des Monchtums* (Forum on Monastic History, Art, Literature and Spirituality).

It is published today by the abbey of Wettingen-Mehrerau, and members of our Order contribute articles to it. Sister Magdalena Aust, nun of Maria Frieden is one of the editors.

Collectanea

It is fitting to spend a little more time on *Collectanea* than on the other periodicals, since it is the only one that was an official review of our Order, at least during a certain period.

¹ Abbot of Scourmont, Dom Armand is presently the director of the publication *Cîteaux, Commentarii cistercienses*.

When the 1933 General Chapter agreed to begin publishing *Collectanea*, it was not a new idea. It had been proposed several times in the past but had met with many objections, mainly for fear of a certain kind of intellectualism into the Order. The project received the approval of the General Chapter when the Abbot General himself, Dom Herman Joseph Smets, took responsibility for it and presented it to the Chapter. He personally took charge of all the details of the first issue, including the choice of typeface (he had once been in charge of the printing press at Westmalle). But it was obvious that the Abbot General could not take on the publication of a review along with all his other responsibilities. Dom Anselme Le Bail, abbot of Scourmont, to whom this review meant so much and who, more than anyone else, had been its initiator, proposed as editor Fr. Camille Hontoir, a monk of his community. Fr. Camille edited the review for more than twenty years, from 1933 to 1954.

The editorship was then taken over briefly by Dom André Fracheboud of Tamié, from 1955 to 1959, and by Dom André Louf of Mont-des-Cats from 1959 until his election as abbot in January 1963. It then returned to Scourmont for another period of twenty years, under the responsibility of Fr. Charles Dumont, from 1963 to 1971, and Fr. Gabriel Ghislain, from 1971 to 1984. At that point the editorship went once again to Mont-des-Cats, where it was a joint effort by Fr. Yvon Petit, responsible for the articles, and Fr. Jacques Delesalle, responsible for the bulletin.

Collectanea began as an *official review* of the Order. The 1933 General Chapter set up a “doctrinal reading committee” composed of seven abbots, “in charge of censorship, without prejudice to the rights of the Definitory, whose job it was to apportion the material and judge the advisability of publishing it.”² From 1965 on, *Collectanea* lost its official character. The Definitory no longer assumed its direction, and a “Board of Directors” composed of six persons was formed. From then on, the inside of the cover page bore the notation: “The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors alone.” This Board of Directors took on several other members in 1982.

Since *Collectanea* no longer depended on the central authority of the Order, it became necessary to give it legal status. Thus, a non-profit organization called *Collectanea Cisterciensia* (later simplified as *Cisterciensia*) was established, the purpose of which was “to publish reviews of spirituality.” This non-profit Association has had legal responsibility for *Collectanea* ever since. At the beginning Fr. Maur Standaert was its president; then it was Dom Thomas Vilain until his death in 2000; since then, the current abbot of Scourmont is its president.

A slight restructuring of the review in 2000 introduced an Editorial Board,

² Acts of the General Chapter of 1933, p. 18.

one of which is Editor-in-Chief. Fr. Bernard-Joseph Samain of Orval had this job for several years; the editorship was then passed on to Sr. Marcelle Bodson of Clairefontaine. At present this Editorial Board includes, apart from Trappists and Trappistines, a monk of Lérins and a Bernardine nun of Esquermes, emphasizing the review's roots in the Cistercian Family.

Collectanea was originally conceived in the spirit of the *Charter of Charity* as a medium for fostering communion, with the goal of reinforcing the bonds of fraternity among communities. Its purpose was to stimulate interest in Cistercian spirituality, history, and liturgy, through teaching adapted to monks and nuns of the Order, in order to enlighten them and sustain them in their vocation. In his introduction to the first issue, Dom Herman-Joseph, no doubt responding to fears expressed by certain capitulants, affirmed that *Collectanea* in no way sought to be erudite, but simply wanted “to assist souls in their ascent toward the love of God.”³

In reality, in spite of this fear of erudition, the review published, from the beginning, several articles of great scientific value on various Cistercian Fathers and on numerous liturgical and juridical aspects of the Order. This orientation was evidently due to the personality of the first Editor, Fr. Camille Hontoir, a man of great culture, to whom Dom Anselme Le Bail had passed on a love of the Cistercian tradition. In addition to these basic articles, there were announcements of important events in the Order and, most importantly, the annual chronicle of each monastery, along with bibliographical notes.

As soon as he assumed editorship of the review, Dom André Louf introduced the *Bulletin of Monastic Spirituality*, which provides lists and reviews of key publications in the field, and which remains to this day one of the gems of *Collectanea*. Another important gift of Dom André to the review was to enlarge its horizon to Christian monasticism in general (not just Cistercian) and to ecumenism.

The new spirit stirred up in the Church by the Council and in the Order by the beginnings of postconciliar renewal led the review to rethink its orientation and its objectives, all the more since other reviews were beginning to appear in the Order, each having a somewhat different orientation. The first issue of 1965 approached this question head-on, first in an editorial by Dom André Louf, member of the Board of Directors and abbot of Mont-des-Cats, then in an article in English by Fr. Louis (Thomas) Merton on “The Role of a Monastic Review.” Dom André described the orientation of *Collectanea*—which, let us remember, was no longer the “official review” of the Order—in these words: “Today, thanks be to God, after many vicissitudes, the Review can take a fresh start. It seems capable

³ *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorem*, 1 (1934) pp.6–7.

of humbly taking on its little role today's monastic renewal. By opening its pages wide to the, at times chaotic, but very fervent and promising spiritual upsurge almost everywhere in the monastic Order, it can hope to be more effectively present to an evolving Church in dialogue."⁴

Cistercium

Founded in 1949 and published under the authority of the Cistercian monasteries of the Strict Observance in Spain, *Cistercium* is a review of Cistercian and monastic history, art, and spirituality. In recent years, with Fr. Francisco Rafael de Pascual of Viaceli as Director and Fr. Jeremias Palacios of La Oliva as Editor, it has opened up to other themes as well, especially to the fundamental aspects of the religious and mystical life.

Cîteaux, Commentarii Cistercienses

Cîteaux, Commentarii Cistercienses is a multilingual and international review that publishes scientific articles on all the aspects of Cistercian history: art, architecture, archeology, law, music, liturgy, intellectual life, etc. Indications on the state of progress in academic research in these areas are also found there.

The two tireless initiators of this review were Frs. Roger de Ganck of Westmalle and Edmond Mikkers of Achel. The first issue, which appeared in 1950, was entitled *Mededelingen over het Cisterciënser leven in de Nederlanden* (Papers on the Cistercian Life in Holland). From the second issue on and in all the following issues up to the ninth, the title was *Cîteaux in de Nederlanden. Mededelingen over het Cisterciënser leven van de XII^e tot de XVIII^e eeuw* (Cîteaux in Holland. Papers on Cistercian Life from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century). As indicated in the first issue, it had to do with the former "Low Countries," which included the present territory of Holland, Belgium, and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, as well as Northern France.

From 1950 on, the review was called *Cîteaux, Commentarii Cistercienses*. It was then transformed into a high level international review. Even if it was never an "official" review of the Order, the 1951 General Chapter intervened to approve its passage from a review *pro manuscripto* to a review *publici iuris*.

Beginning in 1962 (when Fr. Roger de Ganck left for America to serve as chaplain at the foundation of Redwoods), Fr. Edmond Mikkers was the sole editor until 1985. At that time he passed the torch to Br. Jean-François Holthof of the abbey

⁴ *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 27 (1965): 6–7.

of Cîteaux. Since 1993 Madame Terryl Kinder has been Editor-in-Chief, assisted by an Editorial Board of specialists from the Order and the academic world.

Hallel

The English review *Hallel* began at the abbey of Mount Melleray, in Ireland, in 1960. At that time it was a question of sharing liturgical texts when we had gone to the vernacular (from which came its name of *Hallel*, which means “praise”). The editorship passed on to the abbey of Roscrea, and, in 1968 this publication became a “Review of Monastic Spirituality and Liturgy” (see p. 157, above).

Monastic Studies

Begun at the OCSO monastery of Berryville, USA, in 1963, the review *Monastic Studies* was a follow-up on several volumes of *Cistercian Studies* published at the same monastery during the years 1961–1962. It was a review of monastic spirituality destined for English-speaking monasteries of the OCSO. However, it was transferred to the Benedictine monastery of Mount Saviour, USA, in 1965.

Liturgie/Liturgy

In 1966 in the context of postconciliar liturgical reform, the OCSO Liturgy Commission decided to publish a Liturgy Bulletin in both French and English, having with the simple titles *Liturgie* and *Liturgy*. Fr. Armand Veilleux, then a monk of Mistassini, became the editor of the two editions from the beginning. He was replaced for the English edition by Fr. Chrysogonus Waddell in 1970, and for the French edition by Fr. Paul Houix of Timadeuc in 1972. The English edition remained under the direction of Fr. Chrysogonus until it ceased to appear, about ten years ago. As for the French edition, it was revived as a “Nouvelle Série” in 1972, under the aegis of the CFC (Cistercian Francophone Commission); since then it has had several editors. The present editor is Sr. Marie-Pierre Faure of the abbey of Chambarand.

In their early years, the goal of these two reviews was to communicate to the monasteries of the Order the decisions of the Holy See and of the Order regarding our liturgy, and the fruit of the work of the Order’s Liturgy Commission, which was very active during the years 1965–1977. After that, especially the French edition, they opened up to a much larger public than just the Order—notably to the monasteries of traditions other than Cistercian—and contributed in a significant way to the elaboration and the quality of the liturgy after Vatican II.

Cistercian Studies Quarterly

Even though *Collectanea* was essentially a French review, up to 1966 it occasionally included articles in English. After that date, the need for an English version of *Collectanea* was felt. Thus began *Cistercian Studies*. In the early years English translations of articles found in *Collectanea* were published. Gradually, however, the two reviews became independent of one another, and *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* became an important and autonomous monastic review. Besides reflections on various aspects of monastic life today, it also includes solid studies of a scientific nature written either by monks of our Order or by other researchers from the academic world.

From 1966 to 1981 the editorship of the review was at the abbey of Caldey, daughter house of Scourmont, which at that time was responsible for *Collectanea*. Since then, the editorship of CSQ has been held by various monks of the USA Region. The present editor is Fr. John Eudes Bamberger, abbot emeritus of Genesee.

Cuadernos Monasticos

This review is not solely Cistercian, even if numerous members of our Order have played and are playing an important part in it. It is a review of monastic spirituality from the Conference of Monastic Communities of the “Southern Cone” of Latin America (SURCO), which is made up of Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries of monks and nuns in Argentina, Chili, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

This review began in 1966. Since 1969 it has appeared four times a year. It has three main sections: a) articles having to do with Christian monastic life since the first centuries of Christianity, b) translations of monastic sources from the first centuries into Spanish, and, c) book reviews and bibliographical notices.

Monastieke Informatie / De Kovel

This review, begun in 1967, is also not exclusively a publication of our Order. It is an medium of information and exchange of opinions among Cistercian monasteries—of both Observances—and Benedictines from Dutch-speaking countries. First published in a mimeograph form, the review has become more and more professional through the years, in content as well as in typographical presentation. It includes news and reflections on a great variety of events and monastic themes.

In 2008 the review was given a completely new and beautiful layout, and was

even renamed. It is now *De Kovel* (The Cowl). Its subtitle is *Monastiek tijdschrift voor Vlaanderen en Nederland* (Monastic Review for Flanders and Holland).

13.2. ARCCIS–CERCCIS

The “Association pour le Rayonnement de la Culture Cistercien” (ARCCIS) was created on January 15, 1996, to make available, defend, and spread *Cistercian culture*, understood in its broadest sense, i.e., everything that gives life to a Cistercian community from the spiritual (spiritual literature) and material (architecture, economy, arts...) points of view.

Its orientation is:

- To promote the publication of texts dealing with Cistercian tradition and spirituality. Even though it is not itself a publishing house, it collaborates in publications by other publishing houses (particularly Bellefontaine) by providing academic expertise or editorial advice. About fifteen titles have already been published under its aegis.
- To distribute Cistercian writings published by other publishers, making them known, providing catalogues, bibliographies, data bases, and indexes. This distribution role includes all types of documents: books, cassettes, CDs, videos, etc.

This association has the advantage of including all elements of the Cistercian Family. Its Administrative Council includes representatives of the two Orders, OC and OCSO,⁵ the Bernardines of Esquermes, the communities of Collombey and G ronde (French-speaking Swiss), as well as lay Cistercians. It also includes guides to Cistercian sites, historians, and persons who contribute in one way or another to making Cistercian patrimony and culture better known. At its annual General Assembly, one day each year, most often at C teaux or at another Cistercian abbey, it brings together abbots and abbesses of various Cistercian Congregations to work at making their common culture better known and respected. The presidency is taken by turns. The Prior of S nanque has the honor for 2008. Today the Association numbers about one hundred members, principally representatives of monasteries in Europe, but also in Canada, Morocco, and Israel. Monasteries in Africa and Madagascar are also represented.

⁵ The Abbots General OC and OCSO each have a representative as ex-officio members of the administrative board.