

THE MISSA MAJOR

Section III

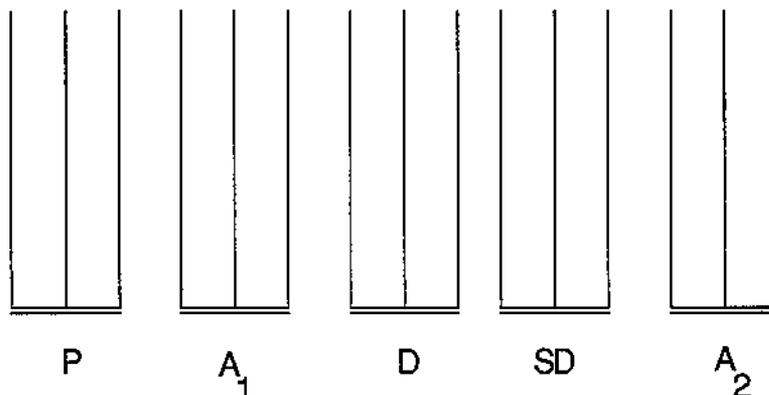
The Changed Nature of the Rite

One of my informants, ordained in 1975, was the first member of the Dominican Order in the English province to join the Order who did not encounter the Latin rite in any form. He underwent seven years' novitiate. He was not trained in how to say Mass at all. When I asked how he learned about how to celebrate Mass, his reply was, "One is there every day, so you pick it up as you go along". Moreover, I was told (and have observed) that the whole rite is now simplified and tends to vary from one celebration to another. Liturgically, the training of friars-preachers has changed. Perhaps more accurately, *there is no liturgical training*.

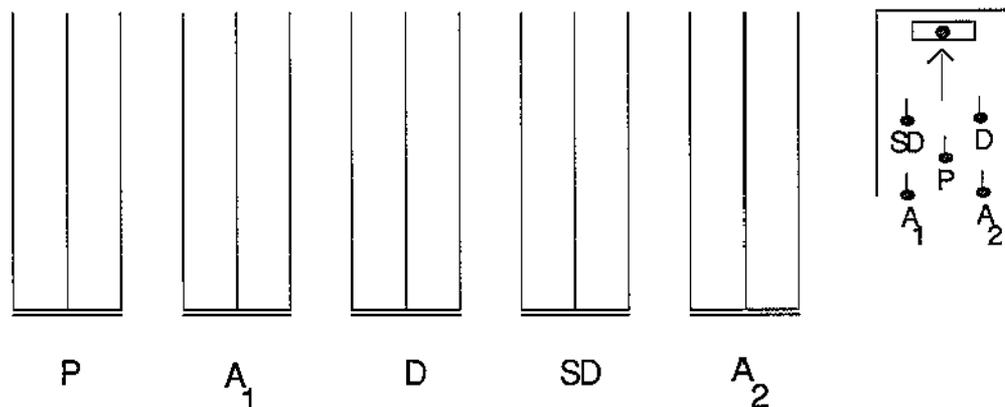
There was disagreement among younger priests about the old rite: some were happy it was a thing of the past, some were not. Those who felt they could do without it among the communities with whom I talked (principally Oxford and Leicester) pointed out that one of the main problems with the Missa Major was the complications, the "involvements" of it. When asked what that meant, I learned that formerly, there were priests and liturgists who tended to be over-scrupulous about the performance of the Mass. Their attitudes (and resulting narrow-mindedness) made things very difficult for those who didn't agree with them. One got the impression that arguments over these matters created considerable internal dissension. What is done now is considered to be an involvement with "what we are doing" rather than "external rubrics", as if "doing" is unconnected with thought processes. As a movement specialist, I found the statement difficult to understand, but, as the task at hand is basically that of *reportage*, the point need not be pursued.

About all that seems to have survived from the rite are the composite action structures, shown on p. 33 Section II, *supra*). These are the *participial* expressions of the actions of the Missa Major (and now, of modern Dominican Masses as well), however, they are not "acts" or "action signs" in the rigorous sense, as the extracts from the movement text shown on pp. 2 and 58 would indicate. Although the text on p. 58 shows embodied human acts, the text is not a complete extract from the written version simply because computer technology hasn't yet developed to the point where one can write the combined actions of all five ministers who enter from the sacristy *simultaneously*, as the diminutive version of a floor plan on p. 57 shows.

In the handwritten movement text (written on sheets of A-3 paper turned sideways), the arrangement of the staves looks something like this:

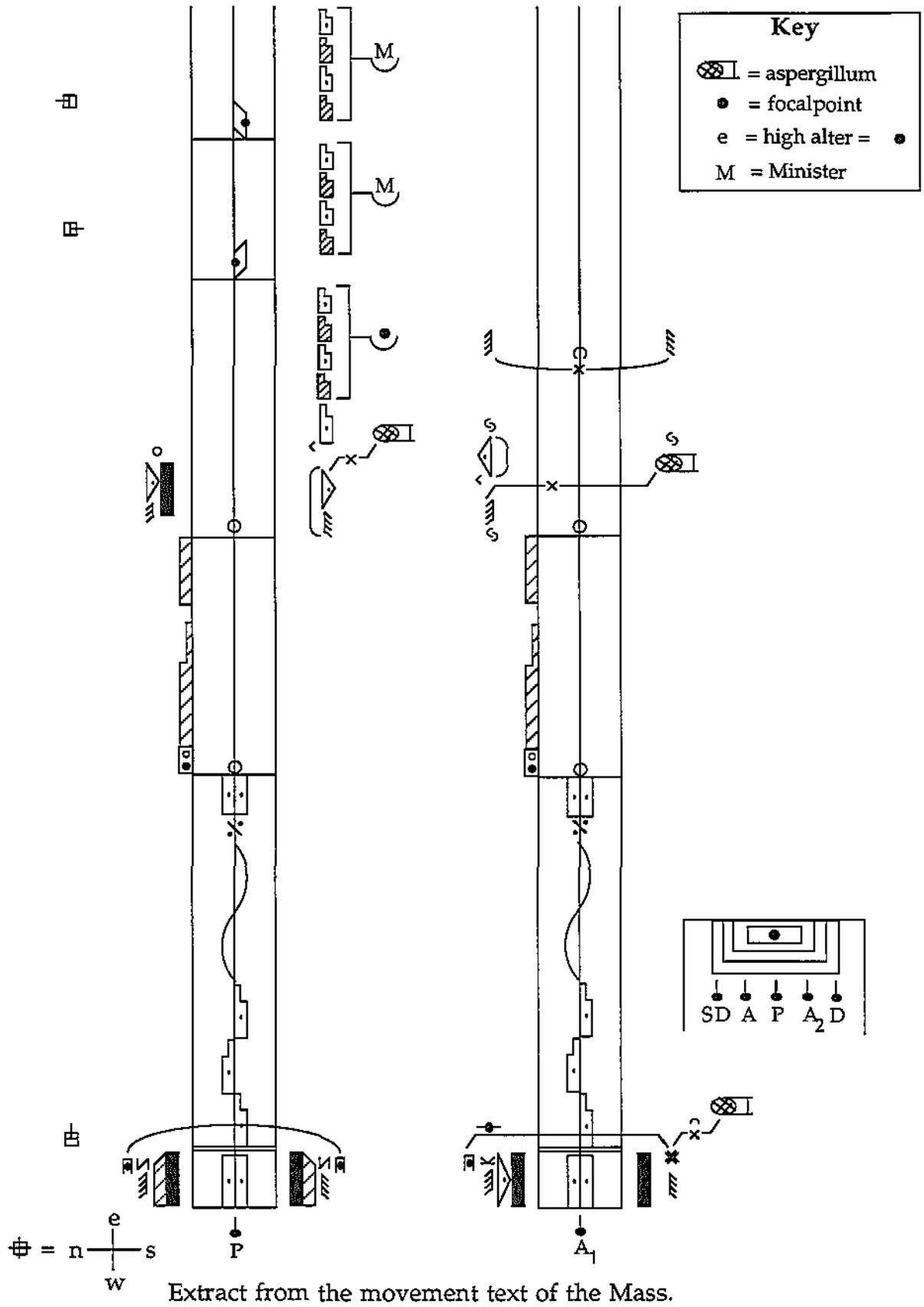


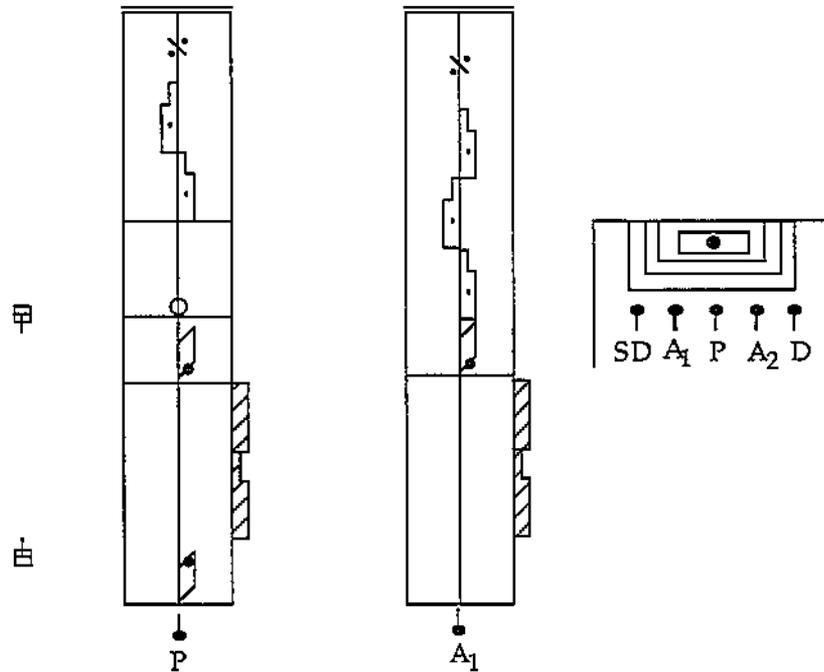
In greatly reduced form, this is what one page of the written text of the Mass looks like: five ministers enter at the same time, proceeding from the Sacristy towards the High Altar. The next diagram (again in reduced form) shows the addition of the first floor plan:



In the diagram on pp. 58-59, I have written the movements of the celebrant [P] and the first acolyte [A₁]. From that small example, I hope readers can see something of how all action signs are written in a full movement text.

This kind of text is read from the bottom of the page to the top. It is well to remember, too, that *for every action* written in this script, it is possible for someone who is literate *to perform all the moves*, to see *the relationships* between (in the case illustrated on pp. 58-59) the priest and the first acolyte. One can see *how* the acolyte is holding the *aspergillum*, *when* he hands it to the celebrant, etc.





[Continuation from the text of the Mass]

In other words, just as it is possible to articulate a conventional kind of text with one's voice, one can articulate with one's whole body the kind of script written here. Also written on page 58 at the bottom of the page in the left-hand corner, is a sign indicating the concept of $L = \{e, w, n, s\}$, i.e. the sign including '⊕'. A continuation of the stretch relevant to the 'aspersing' section at the beginning of the Mass on p. 58 is given at the top of this page.

Specific *positions* can be notated in Laban's script, i.e. the action sign, *in persona Christi*, which we encountered on p. 5, or any other single, complete bodily gesture (semasiologists call them "kinesemes") of any of the celebrants' bodies. It is to be hoped, too, that readers can visualize from the small example given, how each movement and gesture of the ministers is recorded over long stretches of action signs as well.

From this brief explanation of what the complete text of the Missa Major consists, I would now want to say it would scarcely be possible in 1994 to find informants who could produce the necessary information to enable an investigator to write a movement text of the Missa Major. Through no fault or design of my own, the text has become a rather rare type of historical document. Given that trends away from this rite continue, as they have for the past 30 years, there will be no more living Dominican friars who know the Latin Mass.¹[see p.76] Even now, in many localities, it would

would require a reader-notator to reconstruct the Latin Mass as it was commonly done before 1960.

Given that Dominican novices no longer learn Latin, and given the ambiguities of written verbal accounts of actions, the rite couldn't possibly be reconstructed in the form in which it was written without referring to the movement text itself. Transmission of liturgies largely depends on oral tradition, even in literate societies, just as transmission of the performing arts do. Transmission of the Latin liturgy was orally conveyed from one priest to another. There are, of course, a few iconic symbols (including, more recently, photographs) of priests drawn in books, which are attempts to describe how the rite was meant to be performed, but these are inadequate because still photographs do not capture the *moving* body and *moving* hands. The written movement text does.

The loss of meaning is, I think, to be deplored. Even if rites are changed or amended, as in the cases under discussion, it seems reasonable to suggest that desired changes might be made conscious.² That is, we need to know *why* the changes were (and are) made and of what they consisted, for *changes entail consequences*, the import of which are rarely understood.

With all due respect to members of the second Vatican Council, I do not think the changes made regarding the Missa Major *were* consciously made changes in the sense in which I mean 'conscious'. Nor do I think Council members were aware of the possible consequences of the spatial alterations brought about within the rite, especially with reference to the actions involved. I don't think enough was understood at that time about *deictic* features of human spatial orientation and identities, or the *indexicalities* of gesture and their importance to congregations. I am convinced these features of the old Latin rite were so taken for granted that few, if any, paid attention to them. An educated guess has it that if such things *were* brought up in opposition to the changes, they were rejected on the grounds either of sacramentalism or conservatism.³

Since 20+ years have elapsed since the research was done on the Latin rite, I feel constrained to say that I see no outstanding advances in the study of Catholic liturgies in general up to now, and I'm not aware of any studies of the depth and scope I would recommend during the time period involved. I remain as uneasy now as I was in the early nineteen-seventies with aesthetic, symbolic, literary criticism, or artistic models of what liturgies consist. And, I'm dissatisfied with the fact that although many people *talk about* actions, acts, rituals, incarnation, ceremonies, etc., the conversa-

tions, essays, etc. are flawed by a characteristic abstraction of the body, such that a condition of disembodiment results in the literature.

The reason for undertaking a different kind of analysis of the Catholic rite than that of, say, Victor Turner, was simply because his work, valuable though it may have been, has long been superseded by others. Some fields of study in social anthropology have moved on to embrace more rigorous models of description and explanation than functionalist, or structural-functionalist anthropologists were able to achieve. There has also been an increase in the numbers of anthropologists of literate cultures (see Jackson, 1987, especially Hastrup, 1987 and Mascarenhas-Keyes, 1987). Different notions of 'objectivity' are available (see Varela 1994 and Megill 1994).

The Analysis of an Event

This section is the one to which I alluded in the Preface (p. xi). It is basically mathematical, therefore structural, in nature. It is 'difficult' only if readers are unfamiliar with set theory, but it represents certain key conceptual schemata used to analyze the rite of the Mass. It may be read or skipped according to readers' individual inclinations.

The Roman rite involves two distinct, although related spatial sets; the geographical space, indicated as $G = [N,S,E,W]$ and the liturgical space, indicated by the formula, $L = \{e,w,n,s\}$. The L set is *embedded* in the G set, but *the elements of the set are not interchangeable with the G set* in a mathematical sense, nor are they amenable to substitution. They are not equal. This is because $\{e\}$ = the High Altar, which equals the focal point of the rite, hence its *identity* as an event. This means that no other direction can be substituted for it. The L set of elements identifies the semantic space internal to the rite itself. Although this identification is primary, it is only a start. Other fundamental questions are these:

1. What are the structural elements of the rite relevant to the paradigmatic (p-structural) continuity of its visible (s-structural) components of action signs?
2. What are the sets of "things" (i.e. physical objects) involved in the rite? The major sets of embodied "things" are (a) cups, plates, cloths, cruets, etc.; (b) people (ministers) and (c) people (brethren and congregation).
3. What are the properties of these sets of things?

4. What are the relevant relations among these sets of things?

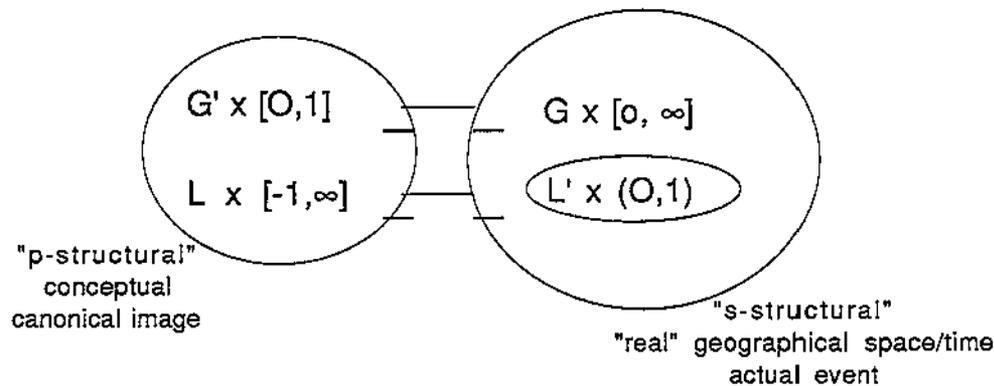
With regard to question 1. (i.e. What are the structural elements of the rite relevant to the paradigmatic (p-structural) continuity of its visible (s-structural) components of action signs?), a further answer than the simple statement of the sets of spatial elements, G and L, is required. That is, the following two equations are relevant:

$$G' \times [0,1] \longrightarrow G \times [0,\infty] \quad \text{and} \quad L' \times (0,1) \longrightarrow L \times [-1,\infty].$$

Written in statement form; " $G' \times [0,1] \longrightarrow G \times [0,\infty]$ " means "the G set of elements (*primed*), (in other words, a *canonical image* or *conceptualization* of the event of the Mass) is mapped onto 'x' in set G (i.e. real geographical space) as an event which has existed from '0' (an unknown time) to ' ∞ ' (infinity), which indicates some unspecified, and unpredictable time in the future".

The second equation, $L' \times (0,1) \longrightarrow L \times [-1,\infty]$, means "The L set of elements, primed (in other words a canonical image of the semantic space of the Mass) is mapped onto 'x' in set L (a real manifestation of the rite stated in terms of its internal space), which is conceived to have begun from '-1' (an event called 'the Last Supper' in historical time) to ' ∞ ' or some unspecified, unpredicted time in the future connected, eschatologically, with Christ's return to earth".

These equations express *mappings*, shown in the diagram below:



[N.B. The G' elements are conceptual, where the G elements are "real". The L elements, in contrast, are conceptual, where the L' elements are "real"].

In the diagram, the larger circle represents the totality of geographical space, or 'the world'. The small, enclosed ellipse in the larger circle represents a manifestation of the L space of any given instantiation of the rite. We already know that the G space consists of the elements [N,S,E,W], and we now possess additional information, i.e. this space has existed from some point 'o', depending upon what astronomical or cosmological theory is held, to ' ∞ ', assuming that the G space will continue to exist, or, in other words, the G space represents a continuum.

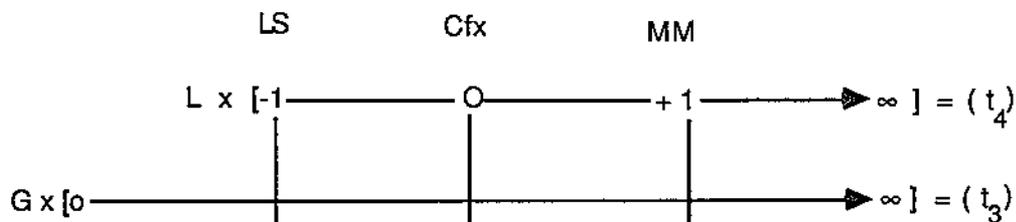
With regard to the rite under examination, we identify the time it requires to perform the Mass in the ordinary "real time" terminology of human historiography, as "one hour" or $G' \times [0,1]$.

We already know that the spatial (i.e. the deictic elements of) orientation of the Mass consists of {e,w,n,s}, and we have provided texts for the justification of these. Moreover, we have stated their *signata* in oppositional terms, i.e. the "vertical axis" of the written figure $\dagger = \{e,w\} = F[ront]/B[ack]$, and the horizontal axis of $\dagger = \{n,s\} = L[eft]/R[ight]$. But, because the set L is comprised of the elements of space *internal to* the rite, we use the symbol ' \bullet ', to indicate the relationship in the written movement text of the Mass.

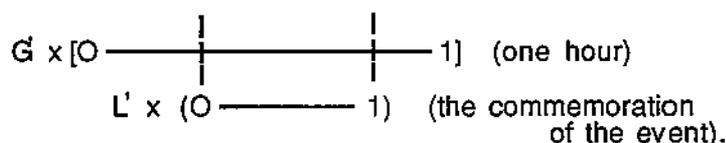
We may say that this L space has

1. a canonical image, i.e. a written movement text, from which all the actions can be reproduced accurately, and that
2. all of the actions, words, and such which are notated in the movement text refer to an event, the Last Supper (LS), which preceded another event, the Crucifixion (Cfx), which the rite commemorates, *but does not reproduce* (in the sense that a passion play might be thought to reproduce such events), and which still continues.

As the events referred to above do not correlate with the formulation for the geographical space/time, i.e. nothing existed before the Last Supper (LS) in diachronic, historical time (t_3) which could be called "a Mass" (MM) by a Roman Catholic, the notation $L \times [-1,\infty]$ is necessary. Diagrammed, the relation can be expressed thus:



Semantically meaningful time constituents in the Missa Major (MM) do not refer to the "real time" of the continuum in which they, as observable physical acts, are performed which could be any time at all according to a clock, thus we had to differentiate (cf. the small circle above in the $G \times [0, \infty]$ set) between 'one hour' of 'real' clock time and the liturgical time to which the canonical image of the rite refers, i.e.



We now possess the additional information that this canonical image of events (L') has been mapped onto⁴ the geographical space in a variety of s-structural forms for several centuries. It probably needs to be said as well that any empirically observable, composite, syntagmatic stretch of events that maintains the essential p-structural rules prescribed in the canonical image of the Mass will count in this discussion as "a Mass". Any event which does not is seen as something else, but not a Mass.

In order to show which p-structural elements comprise the identity of a Mass beyond those stated above, I will use certain lines of reasoning and suggestive ideas which originated in the mathematical language of topology.⁵ In this context, however, *the topological ideas are reinterpreted* so that they are consistent with groups and sets and the theoretical apparatus which I have expounded in greater detail elsewhere (see Williams, 1975).

Topological Ideas and the Importance of Continuity

Further to this point, I would also want to say that historically, the subject of topology arose because of some abstruse problems and counter-examples in calculus which displayed difficulty with the intuitive notion of *continuity of functions* with which Newton, Cauchy and others had worked for many years. These counter-examples took a long time to turn up and much of the actual vocabulary of topology is in response to these

problems. The language of topology itself does not, therefore, provide the best framework for the research in hand.⁶ Topology is certainly not as useful as the analytical languages I formulated for general use in semasiology because it does not compare in power and flexibility with group and set theoretical terms. The main reason for the use of these terms is connected with the notion of continuity.

The important contribution which acquaintance with topological ideas made to the study of action sign systems is connected with the notion of 'distance'. One of the characteristics of a topological space is that *the existence of a metric cannot be assumed for it*. In a *metric space*, the metric which is usually defined for it is one of *distance*, measurable in inches, metres, feet, miles and such. In a metric space, *continuity depends upon distance*. In the case of the Mass, we are at the outset dealing with a structured, semantic space in which *continuity does not depend upon the function of distance* either in time or in space. This point cannot be overstressed.

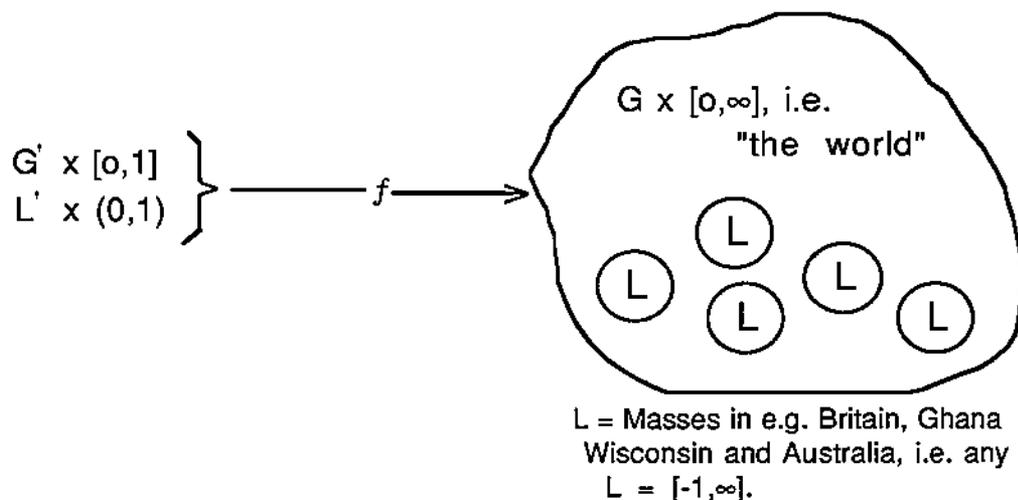
It is useful to look at the matter in this way: any L space of a Mass is embedded in a G space, i.e. any given Mass can be located latitudinally, longitudinally, etc. and any amount of distance metrics could be stated with regard to it. One could, for example, measure the length of the priest's footsteps, or the distance between the sacristy door and the altar, the height of the ceiling of the cathedral and so on, but we may ask, "why do this kind of thing?"

Presumably, the fact that we *can* do that kind of thing makes the research on the rite in some way scientifically respectable, but once having shown that distance metrics (d-metrics) can be used, we can get on with the notion of topological kinds of spaces *in which metrics are not assumed*, for in fact, topological spaces, like Dedekind's formulations about the square root of 2, are of a *higher order* nature than d-metrics, and they provide the means whereby we can talk about any spatial arrangement of the Mass with impunity without reducing its semantically-laden features or its importance as a part of human religious and spiritual life.

In the light of these concepts, we may say that, in general, $f: L' \times (0,1) \rightarrow G \times (0,\infty)$ if there exists $C > 0$ such that $d(f(a), f(b)) \geq C \times d(a,b)$. This proposition is diagrammed on the next page. Relevant statements about the diagram are these:

1. L' is co-valent⁷ with G' in $G \times [0,\infty]$,

2. L' is mapped *into* the G space,
3. L' is not empirically perceivable, but L is,



4. L' consists of the conceptual structures of plans and intentions which determine the s -structures written in the movement text,
5. The human "conceptual structures of plans and intentions" are the p -structural elements which determine the relationships of the L space in the empirically perceivable rite, and
6. Round and not square brackets are used for the L' space because they are meant to indicate the time/space of the world-line of the rite.

The above diagram (and the preceding proposition) states that the manifest, empirically visible, s -structural rites of the Mass are *continuous mappings* from the L' (conceptual or "p-structural") space *onto* the G space.

The liturgical space of the Missa Major is always the same and the directions in it are determined by where the High Altar is (hereafter known as 'H'). The direction 'east' in the L set is H. H determines where {e} is. The set L refers to a bounded canonical co-ordinate space and it refers to "a piece of ground". Thus, the L space of the Mass can be seen to be structurally always and everywhere the same, as it is determined by an Identity or 'zero point' which is H (or • in the movement text).

The transcriptions of movements written into the text of the Mass are based upon the above propositions and principles. Practically, what this means is:

1. The movement text *is not* transcribed relative to one church in one locality. The text could be used to reconstruct the rite in any architectural space whatsoever. The written movement text could be used to reconstruct the rite in any case where there were the requisite number of legitimate ministers and an altar.
2. The movement text *is not* transcribed relative to any one priest's performance of it through physical space/time. It is not a transcription of "Father X" celebrating the Missa Major.⁸
3. The movement text of the Missa Major *is not* transcribed in a time metric, as a ballet would have been because of the music. If it had been, then required times for utterances of the verbal acts would have to have been included in their entire form, and one would have had to have imposed an external measure of time, as e.g. a stop watch or metronome, to have made the transcriptions.
4. It will be noticed, starting from the Glossary of symbols of the movement text that all directions given in the text are relative to the L space and the Identity point 'H', which is written,

$$\begin{bmatrix} e \\ \cdot \end{bmatrix}$$

Sub-sets of the L-space

The essential sub-set of the L space is the 'ministerial' set, which is designated 'M' (for Ministers) to avoid confusing it with other usages of 'p', which is used not only for the 'priest', but for 'p-structures'. [The set] M consists of three major and four minor ministers, i.e. celebrant, deacon, sub-deacon, first acolyte, second acolyte, cross-bearer and thurifer, thus $M = \{c, d, sd, a_1, a_2, cb, t\}$. Many of the properties of {c} of M have been defined in the previous sections of this essay. The elements {d}, {sd}, {a₁}, {a₂} are included in M in their order of ecclesiastical rank which can be expressed as a mapping:

$$f: \{c\} \cup L \rightarrow \{0,1,2,3,4\}, \text{ explained as } f\{L\} = 0, f\{c\} = 1, f\{d\} = 2, f\{sd\} = 3, f\{a_1, a_2\} = 4.$$

The one indispensable, irreducible element of M is {c}.⁹ The elements {d}, {sd}, are extensions of the powers and capacities of {c}, and a₁ is an extension of {d}, whilst a₂ is an extension of {sd}. The elements {cb} and {t} are of similar although slightly less order as {a₁, a₂}.

There is an hierarchical order of the M set. There are elements of *deixis* involved, i.e. there are either actual physical steps up to the high altar or comparable invisible zones of space surrounding the altar. The first, or highest zone is the *predella* -- called the "priest's step". The second two zones have no specific names, but they are occupied (in cases where there are actual physical platforms) by the deacon and sub-deacon. The step (or zone) between choir and sanctuary is the *presbytorium*, and the zone (or step) between Nave and choir is the *chancel* zone.

The whole church is a sacred space; that is, in a Catholic sense, the whole building is consecrated. Whether the spaces around the High Altar in any given church were marked off by physical, elevated platforms, making the visible distinction of up/down with regard to approaching the altar, or whether the boundaries of space are regarded as zones which people pass through, there is a sense in the old Mass that something is approached.¹⁰

The hierarchical order of the M set is also expressed in the 'paths' (the track data) of the spatial moves of the Ministers. In the old Mass, {d} cannot pass in front of {c}; but can pass in front of any other member of M.

The sub-deacon {sd} cannot pass in front of {d}, but can pass in front of every member of set M who is lower in rank. Expressed in numerical terms, {4} cannot pass between {3,2,1} and {3} cannot pass in front of {2,1} and so on.

All of the elements of the M set are males; a mapping onto the total population of the G space which is asymmetrical, but justified by the nature of the role/rule relations of people towards the rite, which requires the priest to be *in persona Christi* -- and Jesus was a male. The finite intersection of M and L is H = {e}, both in terms of 'place' and 'reference' with regard to all actions written in the movement text of the rite.

A further sub-set of M would be the set of actions of the celebrant, as without these there simply is no Mass at all. It is necessary here to make note of the fact that in order for a Mass to be celebrated, the minimum elements required are {c} = {a priest}; H (or a designated table or whatever which can be defined and used as {e}, and a piece of bread and some wine. In technical theological language, this would represent a considerably low degree of a *Missa deprivatus*, but analytically, one has to know what one is working with as irreducible elements.

Another sub-set of the L space is the set of elements designated as 'C', the congregation, i.e. C = {m,f}, which is to say the set is comprised of males

and females. It is with regret that I could not, owing to a shortage of time and money, present a movement text for the congregation or for the choir of brethren in the Doctoral thesis, but I hope to be able to rectify these omissions sometime in future. Nevertheless, one may specify the properties of C briefly thus:

1. they are designated as 'lay people', or 'communicants',
2. the finite intersection of the M and C sets are two elements of the 'T' (for 'things') set of elements, i.e. bread and wine.
3. Historically, there has been a correspondence between elements of this set and the liturgical directions {n,s}, i.e. {n,s} = {m,f} respectively.
4. This set need not be present for a Mass to occur, but if they are not, it would be considered sacramentally as a *Missa deprivatus* .

A complementary set to the C set is that of 'C_r', i.e. the choir of 'religious', which, in the Dominican case are either brethren, who are all males, or, in a monastery of nuns, C_r = {f}). The choir of sisters or brethren usually occupy the space between the Nave and the sanctuary in most churches. In the Dominican Order, they have quite complex movements for their Offices and they also sing the Mass. In some Masses they were the communicants, or they can be looked upon as "the congregation". No more will be said of them here, however.

The final set of elements with which we are concerned with regard to the rite is also a sub-set of the L space: the T set, or set of 'things' (in the sense of material objects) that are involved. For a full listing of these, it would be necessary to consult the Glossary of Symbols in the movement text.¹¹

Of the whole set of objects, the elements comprising the covered chalice are the important ones, together with cruets of wine and water. Aside from the remarks already made about the bread and wine (Section II) and the levels of signification involved in the Missa Major, a few comments about the actual vessels involved are perhaps appropriate. First, there are two ways of looking at the "sacredness" of the vessels used:

1. they become 'special' or consecrated by *repeated use* in the ritual, or
2. they are consecrated by *direct actions* of blessing and consecration by Bishops or priests.

Things used in the Missa Major, according to my informants, were usually kept in the Sacristy. Occasionally a vessel used domestically might be used in a ceremony, as in one example related to me where a specific church didn't have a baptismal font. In this case, a large silver basin commonly

used to serve punch was brought into use.¹² In general, it is the repeated use of an object, that is to say, its specific history of being used in the context of a Mass, which renders it special in any way. There is a value distinction made between the sacredness of the *chalice* and *paten*, or the *ciborium* and *monstrance*, which derives from their contacts with the host and wine. Until recently (i.e. until the late 'sixties), the latter two objects could not be touched except by special ministers.

It is extremely difficult, if not in the end impossible, to convey the ultimate *immateriality* of things religious. A Muslim, for example, faces Mecca to pray, a Jew, Jerusalem, a Catholic faces liturgical east, not any specific geographical direction. And why not? When all is boiled down, the religious practises of people are concerned with life and death from a psychological or spiritual standpoint, not biological survival. There are many significances connected with the word, 'survival', as anyone would agree. And in any case, in a Christian sense, religious matters turn around faith, which, as defined by the writer of Hebrews, connotes a relationship to things unseen.

Two Further Generalizations

Having addressed the four questions on p. 61, we can move on to consider two final generalizations about the sets defined above. For example, if the set 'T' is looked at only as 'things' or 'objects', then the transformations involved are basically *syntactical* and mainly dependent upon elements of ordering with reference to their 'tracks' or 'paths' through space.

Only by studying the movement text does it become apparent *what* semantic changes are brought about by *which* syntactical moves. And it is here that the new set of meanings emerges -- the set of more recondite elements mentioned earlier on. Moreover, it is only through studying a movement text (or knowing the rite from a movement literacy standpoint such that it can be appropriately visualized) that we can perceive the shifting boundaries of meanings, because some of the elements of the set 'T' become *semantically different entities* at different points in t_4 . *From the time the objects enter the L space, they are in a process of changing into different semasiological entities.*

With reference to the M set (and paraphrasing the comments of informants) something quite different happens to them while celebrating the Missa Major. For a start, in the L space of the rite, their attention is directed, as it were, *focused*, to a much greater extent than it was ordinarily. They tell me they were *absorbed by* the ritual actions. They were at times

listening, at times uttering prayers and they were performing prescribed acts which in the context have specific meanings. There was, of course, simply the sequence of things which had to be done with others which certainly had a secular counterpart, but the difference for them seemed to lie in the *finality* of it all. That's to say that celebrating the rite was prayer and meditation AND NOTHING ELSE, for 'to do' *and* 'to say' in the context of the Mass had the value of prayer. The actions are thus not accurately described as 'routines'.

Further to the last point, the *person* sets involved in the rite are *already semantically marked*. To parody the discursive forms of Behaviourism, they are not comprised of undifferentiated bodies emitting behaviour from which investigators are free to infer whatever they like. Where people go wrong with Behavioural styles of analysis is precisely reflected in their use of language which is meant to be 'objective', but which simply reduces human beings to physical 'things'. Semasiologically, we insist on treating them as socio-cultural entities. Distinctions must be made between persons and person categories. The people who participate in this rite are precisely *priests* or *brethren* or *Catholics*. This has a limiting effect upon what can be said about the accessibility and inaccessibility of the spaces internal to the rite.

Commitment, Profession, Obligation

The L space of the Mass, denoting space(s) internal to the rite itself is not accessible to someone who is (i) hostile, (ii) unsympathetic, (iii) sympathetic in broadly religious terms, but is him or herself, say, Hindu, Muslim, Taoist or of some other religious persuasion. One might more accurately say that it is not the L space or the G space which is inaccessible, for any person, regardless of religious commitment (or no religious commitment at all) might have entered a church while the Missa Major was being celebrated and no one would have kept them out. They might have sat with the congregation -- stood with them, knelt, etc. when they did -- but it is to a more recondite "space" (which I designate the R space¹³, for lack of a better term) to which I now refer.

In the deepest sense, any human ritual space is a discrete space. It is non-continuous from the standpoint of accessibility, just as the ritual spaces of a Muslim, an Ndembu, a Buddhist or Wanam rites and ceremonies are inaccessible to those who are not committed; who have not undertaken the obligations the rite entails. The same could be said of the 'R' spaces of any religious rites for that matter: ritual spaces are discrete, non-continuous spaces. Human structured spaces are not continuous merely

because they happen to be tied together by geography, biology or ecological fields. Put simply, we can't effectively participate in that which we do not know or practise.

Communities of (and by) Choice

It is surely obvious by now that, upon reflection, an entity like the 'form space' of a ballet or the L space of a religious rite is a discrete, non-continuous space of the same cultural genre. In order to penetrate the internal space of a ballet-dance, a person has to be, first of all, a professional ballet dancer. The criteria for entering a theatre via the back door, (the performer's door) rather than the front (i.e. the audience) door, are widely different and only relatively few people spend their lives acquiring the skills that permit such entry.

Similarly, to enter the internal space of the Missa Major from the Sacristy as a priest was a different entry point into the liturgical space of the Mass altogether. It implied different criteria of profession, commitment and obligation. However, to enter the space of the old Mass as a committed member of the congregation also permitted entry into the fullness of the rite, not as a priest, to be sure, but in different ways than non-Catholics could possibly do.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to tackle the many issues and concerns emerging out of consideration of human, non-continuous ritual spaces, and I cannot attempt unraveling those issues here. It is however, relevant to provide some comparative material regarding another aspect of L spaces. We have mainly discussed these up to this point in terms of the analytical features of orientation and direction. We have paid little attention to *the properties of an L space as a human spatio-linguistic field*, seen as a stable image of human spiritual (cosmological, or psychological) environment. It is to a few of those properties of an L space that we will now turn.

The Limitations of Physical Manifestation

The primitive Church did not, perhaps, need stable architectural images of their spiritual environment(s). As far as we know, most primitive Christians thought that a real man was going to appear out of the real city of Jerusalem. Because of this, they had no need to express their longing for the event in architecture, art and such. It became apparent after the passage of several generations (about three centuries), this was not literally going to happen. It could have been in this way that the need arose to fix

liturgies and to construct physical, architectural manifestations of the longed-for events, hence churches, icons, paintings, sculptures and the like. The process represented a kind of general coming to terms with history and literalism.

A Catholic church, whether it is Orthodox or Roman, is a *consecrated* space, which is to say it is an actual, metrically measurable space that gives a sense of veneration and of elevation that no other space had. It was a space where in the past, no demons or devils could enter, thus it was a space which was the realm of the *sacred*, where Divinity could be met in a unique way. It was also a secular sanctuary with reference to prevailing civil authority. The other-ness of the physical space of a Roman church was connected with the Blessed Sacrament and with the reservation of it. This was different from the Eastern Church, as we shall see.

It is doubtless true that the *mystique* of the consecrated *place* has been lost in our time, along with much else; many consider their destinies to be determined by sub-human or non-human agencies of atoms, genes, glands or waves of probability, as it were, from 'below', not from 'above', hence the many doubtful ethological and sociological theories of religion with which we are all familiar.

Semasiologically, this apparent process of change represents an interesting shift of the *locus* of human destiny from 'above' to 'below', for the emphasis in the recent, relatively short span of years between Vatican II and the mid-'seventies is on a *horizontal* plane, i.e. on the "sociological implications of the Incarnation", for example, whatever those might be. The *dichotomization* of the sacred and the secular has had some curious results, among them, perhaps, the loss of any spiritual content whatever of rites such as the Mass.

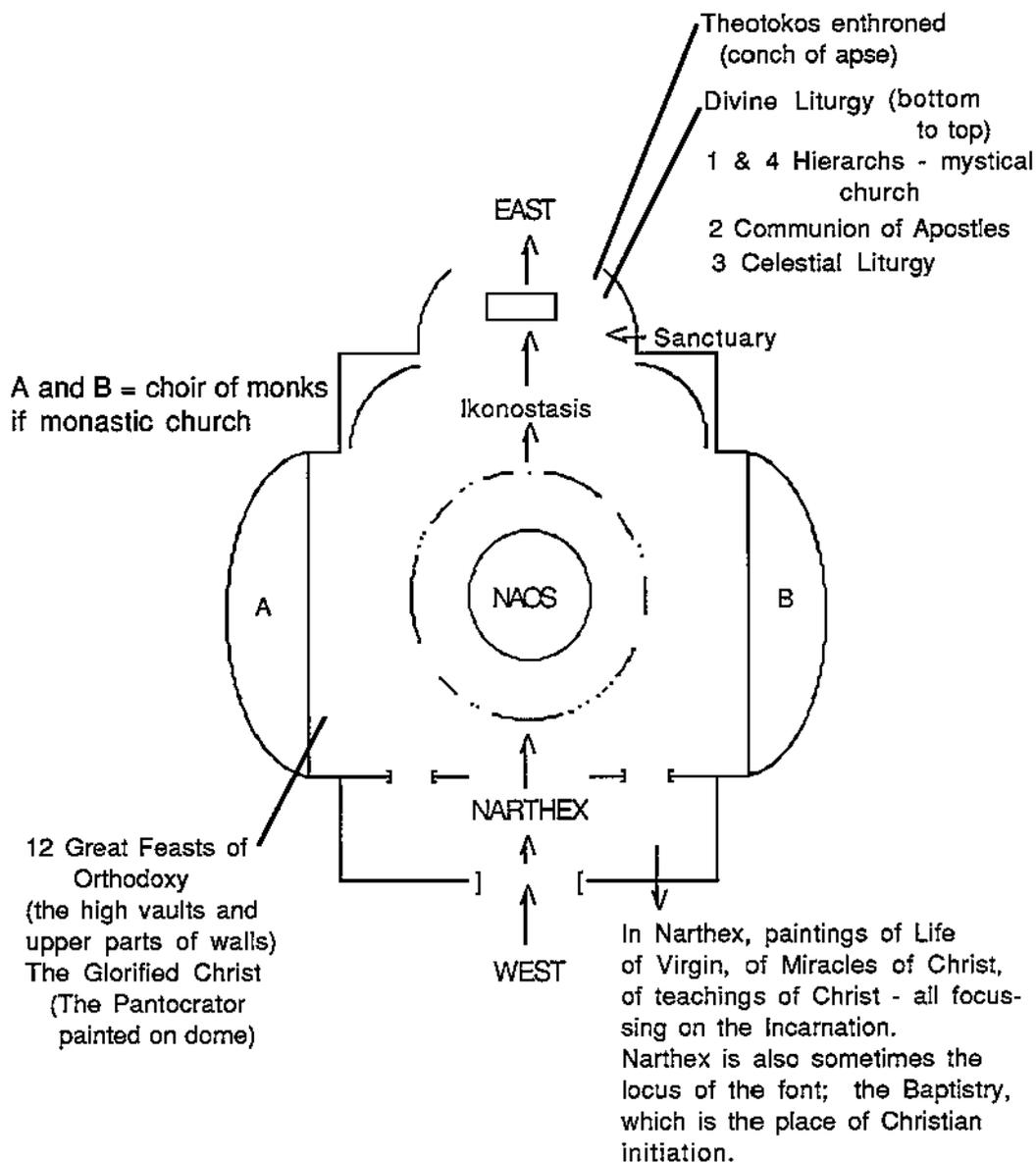
In eastern understanding, as reflected in the architecture and decoration of the church, it is possible to see a developed symbolism of the whole cosmology of the 'above'. In particular, attention is drawn towards *aionic time*¹⁴ or 'eternal time', a subject which cannot detain us analytically any further here. It is necessary, however, to look at, then to consider a model of this, expressed on the diagram (including brief notes) on page 81. It is best understood as a diagram of a history of salvation, for in the design and decoration of the Byzantine church, we can see parallels between the life of Christ and the (implied) spiritual progress of Christians.

A Greek church is based on the structures of squares and circles and the problems which were thought to inhere between those two forms. There

are unquestionably *two distinct dimensions of time* involved: in that L space the horizontal dimension is clearly represented in the {w} to {e} progression from the Narthex, where the baptismal font usually is, to the altar (the east) i.e. the 'seen', the representation of heaven, of anticipated eschatology. Co-valent with that is the vertical dimension, represented in three layers of iconography painted on the walls and this is the eternal pattern: the timeless one.

No matter what cosmological system we are dealing with, we encounter the limitations of the material physical world and natural conceptions of space/time. The Dominican Tridentine rite didn't refer to the three-dimensional world in passing time, but to an order of existence belonging to what might be called "higher space". From the OED (complete) we learn that *Æon* is not time, nor is it *time itself* but a kind of overshadowing Totality that comprehends *All* in itself. In the New Testament the Divinity is said to have created the *æons*.





Christology	3rd Level Celestial
Angels (Contemplative-theoretical)	2nd Level
Warrior Saints and Ascetics	1st Level (Actions-practical)

eternal patterns in levels of iconography painted on the walls of the Church.

[N.B. This diagram is not a scale drawing, D.W.]

NOTES:

¹ In fact, two major informants, Geoffrey Preston, O.P. and Osmund Lewry, O.P. have both died, and I'm sure many other members of the Oxford and Leicester communities are no longer with us.

² There is a problem here. The changes that were made were 'conscious' in the sense that the men who made them weren't unconscious, however, that interpretation doesn't capture what I mean. Someone can be conscious in the sense of being awake (i.e. not asleep or anaesthetized), but there is much that can be out of awareness in an ordinary state of wakefulness. It has been suggested that I use the phrase, 'heightened consciousness', but I find that unsatisfactory because I don't think the understanding of what movement and gesture consist requires states of heightened consciousness.

³ Not that I mean to imply that anyone in the early 'sixties, inside or outside of the Catholic Church, would have been cognizant of "indexicality and gesture" or the *deictic* nature of human spatial orientation and the role it plays with regard to human personal and social identities. My criticism of the Church fathers could -- and probably will -- be attributed to the wisdom of hindsight, but in the end, both criticism and any rebuttal that might be provoked are irrelevant. What happened, happened. It is to be hoped that in the present climate of increased liturgical interest and reform, such features of human movement studies will be taken into account.

⁴ Designated by the transformation arrows in the first diagram, i.e. \longrightarrow .

⁵ The word 'topology' comes from a Greek word meaning 'a place'. In mathematics, topology was formerly defined to be the study of situation; an alternative name was 'analysis situs' (Patterson, 1969: 1). A brief definition of a topological space is given by Simmons (1963) thus: A topological *space* can be thought of as a set from which has been swept away all structure irrelevant to the continuity of functions defined on it (Simmons, 1963: vii). A topological *property* is a property which, if possessed by a topological space X is also possessed by every homeomorphic image of X . If, for example, X and Y are homeomorphic, then their points can be put into a one-to-one correspondence in such a way that their open sets also correspond to one another. The two spaces differ only in the nature of their points and can be considered as identical (Simmons, 1963: 94). In order to specify a topological space, one must specify a non-empty set, tell which subsets are to be considered the open sets and verify that this given class of sets satisfies two conditions:

1. the union of every class of sets in T is a set in T
2. the intersection of every finite class of sets in T is a set in T

A topology in ' X ' is thus a class of subsets of X which is closed under the formation of arbitrary unions and finite intersections (Simmons, 1963: 92).

The continuity involved is mainly the continuity of fixed points, as in the 'rubber-sheet' cases, or as in a projection, say, of a slide of some *situ* which is then projected onto a draped piece of cloth which hangs in folds. It would not be going too far to say that one runs into the same problems one might encounter if one were restricted to a geometry of *planes*. As always, it is the multi-dimensional aspect of the human domain which haunts us in considering human structured spaces.

The property of continuity can be assigned to so many things, as e.g. the continuity of geological material as against the continuity of human material artifacts through time. We are concerned with neither of those here, and it was outside the scope of this study to speculate about *why* it is that human beings endow various types of marks, symbols or counters with meaning and then insist upon the continuation of those structures – but they do. And in one way of looking at it, it doesn't matter which model one is working with: liturgical, dramaturgical or agonistic. The s-structural realizations of events usually consist of the same vocabulary, the same 'vocables' and kinesemes, the same kinds of spaces, at the level of *la parole*.

⁶ Anthropologists will be aware that Edmund Leach became fascinated with "rubber-sheet geometry" as he called it, but he did nothing with it beyond observing that it was an idea that might prove useful to anthropology. Leach had been an examiner for my B.Litt. work, and I took his notion seriously.

⁷ Valency. 1869. [ad.L. *valentia* vigour, capacity, f. *valere*, to be well or strong]. *Physics*: 1. energy, active force; 2. *Chem.* the power or capacity of certain elements to combine with or displace a greater or less number of hydrogen (or other) atoms; atomicity 1876. b. a unit of this capacity. Usu. in place 1891" (Oxford Universal Dictionary, 1955 edition, p. 2331). This definition does not provide anything but a bare outline in 2. for what 'valency' means in a Saussurian sense, an Ardenerian sense, or in semasiology, however, it will have to suffice for this essay.

⁸ That is, Father Lewry's personal movement habits and idiosyncracies weren't written into the text.

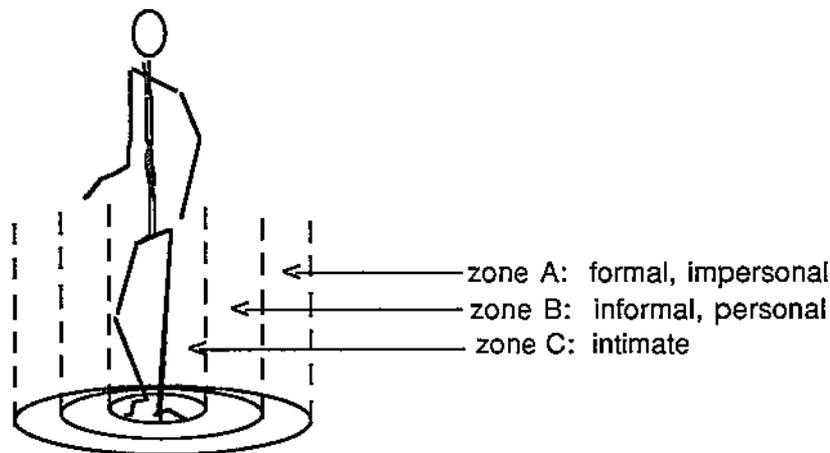
⁹ The Missa Major begins for the celebrant *before* it does for the congregation in the Sacristy. The following are translations of Latin prayers said during the investiture by the celebrant which were given me by one of my informants:

1. The priest washes his hands while saying: "Give power to my hands to be purged of all stain; that I may be strengthened to serve Thee free from any impurity of soul and body".
2. While covering his head with the *amice* he says: "Place on my head, Lord, the helmet of salvation, to fight off the intrusions of the devil".

3. While he puts on the *alb* he says: "Wash me, Lord, and cleanse my heart; that washed in the blood of the Lamb I may savour eternal joys".
4. While putting on the girdle he says: "Engirdle me with the cincture of purity, and extinguish in my loins the feelings of lust; that the virtues of continence and chastity may persist in me".
5. When putting the *maniple* on his left arm he says; "May I be worthy, Lord, to carry the maniple of weeping and sorrow; that with exultation I may receive the reward of labour.
6. While putting the *stole* round his neck he says: "Grant me, Lord, the stole of immortality, which I lost in the sin of my first parent, and though unworthily I approach thy sacred mystery, I may nevertheless merit eternal joy". (The priest kisses the stole before putting it on. It is the symbol of his priestly authority).
7. While he puts on the *chasuble* he says, "O Lord, who has said, "my yoke is sweet and my burden light", grant that I may so be able to bear it, that I may follow the promptings of thy grace".

The written text could have begun with the investiture, but I was preoccupied with the L space of the Mass itself, which is entered when the Ministers come through the Sacristy door.

¹⁰ It is as if the altar and the area immediately around the altar had special properties, as does the field surrounding a magnet. And there is nothing mystifying or nonsensical about this, nor is there anything mystifying about the notion in the terms in which we are all familiar with it every day, with regard to our own bodies, as in the diagram below:



The zones of space around the High Altar in the old Mass were similarly marked. The attempt is made here, of course, to demystify some of these notions. The structuring of the spaces in the *Missa Major* was consistent with the theological and social notions which determined them. The structured secular spaces with which we are all familiar have

similar markings, but this is not the place to enter into lengthy discussion. The above diagram is my own, but taken from the ideas of Proxemics (see Hall, 1966 and 1966a), and in that regard, I would have to say that semasiology does not tie the idea of proxemic zones of space into Hall's general bio-social models of explanation, where he connects such zones with the mechanism of critical distance in animals. Furthermore, it is the case that these zones differ in their semantic properties from one culture to another.

¹¹ The written movement text of the Mass has not been published. The only existing copy besides the original which I own is deposited in the Bodleian Library as Volume III of the Doctoral Thesis, and the few that graduate students copied from the original.

¹² There are an extraordinary number of things which could be said about what sort of *persona* that [set] T has, partly because Masses have been celebrated in certain circumstances with a cracked cup and a paper hankie instead of a chalice and a purificator. Things like this were known to happen, for example, in concentration camps in Europe during the second world war, where all that was available was some ordinary bread and wine (by wine, is meant juice of the grape). Ordinary bread can be used for a Mass, and any kind of wine. The vessels, in the above case, *did not nullify the event as a Mass*. However, in another extreme case where there was a "holy meal in memory of the Lord", but *not* a Mass, was in a concentration camp where the rite was celebrated with water and hardtack biscuit.

Further to the point of the *personae* of 'things': often in African countries, priests have a 'bush chalice'; one not made from precious metals, as the kind of metal makes no difference. I know of these through personal experience and observations during an extended association with the Dutch province of the SMA (Society of African Missions) in Ghana during 1967-1970, and in Kenya during the years 1991-1993.

Germane to this discussion is the earlier citation of a case of the young priest and the dying delivery-van driver surrounded by a truck-load of spilt bread loaves. In that case, a substitute *corporal* was used, but had the priest not had a clean white handkerchief, his defining the limits of an *imaginary corporal* to himself *in secreto* would have sufficed.

¹³ The *R space*, defined as "the fullness of the rite", mentioned earlier.

¹⁴ In Greek, the word that we know as "eternal" is *aionios*. Literally, the New Testament expression "eternal life" is "aeonian life". The Greek word, *aion* (or *aeon*) is often translated into English as "eternity". The definition given in the Oxford Universal Dictionary for the term is "Æon, eon. 1647. [a. L., a. Gr *aiwv*]. An age, or the whole duration, of the world, or of the universe; an immeasurable period of time; eternity. 2. The personification of an age. In *Platonic philosophy*, A power existing from eternity 1647. [1. Æons of æons Carlyle. 2. The Valentinian thirty Gods and Æons. Cudworth. Hence Æonial, Æonian adjs. everlasting]. The significances suggested are mainly those of a visible form of existence, i.e. a 'world'; or endless passing-time, as in "forever and ever".

On the whole, these definitions are not accurate for the understanding of higher order properties of the Missa Major, which, in terms of its further orders of reality does not refer to the three-dimensional world in passing time, but to an order of existence belonging to what might be called "higher space". *Æon* is not time, nor is it *time itself* but a kind of overshadowing Totality that comprehends *All* in itself. In the New Testament, God is said to have created the *æons* and He has been called King of the *Æons*.

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