The next logical step was the clericalization of the mass. The ordained priests alone were considered as having a legitimate active role in that miracle which made God present on the altars. The canon or Eucharistic Prayer of the mass became, in a sense, a “Holy of Holies,” silent, mysterious, approachable only by the high priest. To rule out participation by other than the priest, an interpolation was actually made in the very text of that hitherto “unchangeable” canon. The first remembrance prayer formerly read: “Qui tibi offerunt sacrificium laudis” (“all those here present who offer you this sacrifice of praise”). When the faithful became mere on–lookers in worship this expression seemed too bold, or even untrue, so the words “pro quibus tibi offerimus” (“for whom we, your ministers, offer”) were introduced. This practical exclusion of the laity from participation in the liturgy first appeared around the year 800 and was quite universal by the tenth century.4

It might seem naive or overly simplistic to aver that this stress on the divinity of Christ in opposition to the Arian concept of Christ our brother was the “root of all evils” liturgically; yet it certainly made its imprint.

Several other anti-communal or anti-participatory liturgical trends could be “blamed” on the reaction to Arian thought. The mass became almost magical since it was quite clearly a work of God. Private masses were multiplied since, if one mass is so very valuable, logically, many more would be that much more valuable. Private devotion(s), either to Christ in the “Blessed Sacrament” or to the more “human” and thus more approachable saints, became ever more popular since, with the mass now between the priest and God, the lay person sought a legitimate outlet for his natural inclination to be personally involved in worship.

Protestantism

It was with the debilitated and non-participatory, non-understood liturgy described above that Luther and the other sixteenth century reformers were familiar.

Firmed up over the centuries had been a mass almost totally priest-oriented, mostly silent, completely in Latin. By this time the people were no longer active in worship. Gregory Dix interestingly highlights this non-active stance by indicating that although those who were barred from Christian worship were formerly considered as “forbidden to offer,” they were by this time “forbidden to communicate,” or excommunicated, a passive or receiving concept.5 The scriptures were seldom explained to the people since the sermon had become unimportant, if not a rarity. With the grandiose emphasis on Christ’s divinity, the cult of Mary and the saints became increasingly overstressed since,

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