Analysis of Glaser Codex: Index

The Glaser Codex is a manuscript of unknown origin recently acquired by MIT. A limited number of surviving folios and heavily damaged covers and binding are all that remain to determine the history of the codex, which would provide another piece to the puzzle of understanding early music and its influence. The following is an analysis of the index of the Glaser Codex, which survives glued to the inside front cover. The focus is on the contents of the index and the order they are listed in, which lead to predictions about the location and point in time of the creation of the codex.

The top of the index reads “Index Missarum, que in hoc tomo continentur,” which translates to “Index of masses which are contained in this book.” There are 29 masses listed in the index, and they are split into two sections by a peculiar numbering scheme. The first section consists of the first twelve lines of the index. Here the masses are in numerical order, reading top-to-bottom of the left column first, and then switching over to the right column. In general the order of the masses by folio number also matches their chronological order based on the liturgical calendar. Ignoring the mass for St. Agatha, which will be discussed later, the codex begins with a mass for the feast of St. Andrew. This feast is on November 30, right around the beginning of the liturgical year or the first Sunday of Advent (whether or not the feast of St. Andrew falls within Advent depends on the date of Easter, which varies. This variation causes Advent Sunday to range from
November 27 to December 3 in any given year). The subsequent masses are in liturgical order all the way to the feast for All Saints, on November 1, in the Sundays after Trinity.

There are two exceptions in the ordering: the celebrations for St. Joachim and the Triumph of the Cross (which today is synonymous with the Exaltation of the Cross). Both appear in the index earlier than expected based on their recorded dates. The masses may simply have been celebrated on different days as a result of local practice—in fact, because the Exaltation of the Cross is also listed in the index, it looks like there was another mass for the Triumph of the Cross that was on a completely different date that may have been lost over time. In the case of the mass for St. Joachim, it could just be that the scribe accidentally jumbled the order. It appears that he did so below the first twelve lines of the index, where the masses are not clearly ordered by folio number or date of celebration.

The last three lines of the index are a clear indication that this manuscript was made with the folios from at least two separate books. It seems that the five masses listed at the bottom were added in the most convenient way possible, with no thought to their relation to the previous masses in the book. Sometimes masses without a universally fixed date, such as the Dedication of Church, were listed last in the index regardless of their place in the actual manuscript. It was done this way so that the order of the Sanctorale would remain intact, and could be easily transferred to other manuscripts. Whether or not this practice was used in the Glaser Codex is debatable. The only mass without a fixed date is the Dedication, and it is neither listed last in the index nor the last mass in the codex.

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Additionally, given the physical appearance of many of the surviving folios, it is quite obvious that folio numbers or even the music and words have been changed.

The first mass for St. Agatha may provide hints about the church that this manuscript belonged to. Observation of f. 2 by classmate Jose Cabal-Ugaz reveals references to music on f. 19. Because there is are seven folios between the beginnings of the masses for St. Joachim and the Chair of Peter (the masses on either side of f. 19), compared to a typical gap of less than five folios between masses, Jose suggests that there is a second mass for St. Agatha in-between that is not listed in the index. A second mass for St. Agatha could be on February 5, the day that it is traditionally celebrated, which fits in chronologically with the other masses in the manuscript. Two masses for St. Agatha might be an indication that this manuscript belonged to a church dedicated to her.

If the manuscript truly is for a church dedicated to St. Agatha, perhaps it is the Church Sant’Agata dei Goti in Rome, which was restored in the 16th and 17th centuries. These dates seem reasonable for the age of the manuscript, and make sense when the order of the masses is compared to the dates that they were added to the calendar. For example, according the order in the manuscript, the mass for St. Joachim is celebrated early in the year, which means the manuscript was likely written in-between 1584 and 1738.²³ It would also seem that a restoration is a fine occasion to update a church’s library of chants.

It is possible that the number of celebrations for a given saint bears greater significance than their placement in the codex. According to the index, the only octave celebrated is for St. Lawrence. Perhaps he was of local importance to the church that the

The size of the initial at the beginning of a mass can also serve to indicate the rank the feasts by importance. If this is the case, the extravagant lettering on f. 76v (Fig. 1) would suggest that Saints Jerome and Augustine were of local importance to the church. Further research on the lives of the saints and the extent of their influence could point to locations where they were especially celebrated, and thus lead to possible geographical origins for the Glaser Codex.

The following are the masses, listed by folio number in the index of the Glaser Codex, and the date or dates on which they have been celebrated according to other church records. Below this list is a table that matches the appearance of the index. The table includes only the date of each mass that makes the most sense given the rest of the manuscript.

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List of masses by folio number, with possible dates and pertinent information:

I St. Agatha

The Church of Sant’Agata dei Goti in via Mazzarino in Rome was dedicated to St. Agatha in the late fifth century. In the sixth century the church was adapted to Arian Christianity, and later was re-consecrated by Gregory the Great. The church was restored in 16th and 17th centuries.

III Vigil of St. Andrew (November 29)

VI Feast of St. Andrew November 30

XI Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle, July 3 or December 21

XIII Conversion of St. Paul, January 25

XVI St. Joachim

1584, added to General Roman Calendar: March 20
1738, transferred to Sunday after the Octave of the Assumption of Mary (August 15)
Pope Pius X transferred to the day after the Assumption: August 16

* Second Mass for St. Agatha * February 5

XXIII Chair of Peter (Cathedra S. Pietra)

St. Peter’s Chair at Rome: January 18
Chair of St. Peter at Antioch: February 22

XXXII St. Gabriel, Archangel

September 29, March 24 depending on source

XXXV St. Philip and St. James

May 1, May 3, May 11 depending on source

XL Finding of the Cross (Inventio Crucis), May 3

XLIII Vigil of St. John the Baptist (June 23 or August 28)

XLVII St. John the Baptist

Nativity, June 24
Beheading, August 29

LI Vigil of Peter and Paul (June 28)

LV Peter and Paul, Apostles, June 29

LVIII Commemoration of St. Paul, June 30
LIX Triumph of the Cross, September 14

LXV St. Peter in Chains, August 1

LXV Vigil of St. Lawrence (August 9)

LXIX St. Lawrence, August 10

LXXVII Octave of St. Lawrence (August 17)

LXXVII St. Jerome and St. Augustine
   St. Jerome, September 30
   St. Augustine, August 28

LXXX Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14

LXXXIII St. Michael, Archangel, September 29

LXXXIX Solemnity of All Saints, November 1

Last five masses, in apparent disorder:

XCIV Dedication of the Church (date unknown; if the date was unknown to the church, it was celebrated on the first Sunday in October or the last Sunday after Pentecost)

XCVIII St. Martin
   de Porres, November 3
   of Tours, November 11
   Pope, November 12

CI St. Clement, November 23

CIV St Raphael, Archangel, October 24

CVI Feast of the Guardian Angels (Angeli Custodis), October 2
   First observed in the 16th century; added to the Roman calendar in 1615
Table of masses in the format of the index:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St. Agatha</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Jun. 28</th>
<th>LI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vigil of Sts. Peter and Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 29 Vigil of St. Andrew</td>
<td>III</td>
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<td>LV</td>
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<td>Sts. Peter and Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 30 St. Andrew</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Jun. 30</td>
<td>LVIII</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commemoration of St. Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 21 St. Thomas Apostle</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Sep. 14</td>
<td>LIX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Triumph of the Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 25 Conversion of St. Paul</td>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>Aug. 1</td>
<td>LXV</td>
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<td>Peter in Chains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 20 St. Joachim</td>
<td>(X)VII</td>
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<td>LXV</td>
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<td>Vigil of St. Lawrence</td>
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<td>Feb. 22 Chair of St. Peter</td>
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<td>St. Lawrence</td>
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<td>Mar. 24 St. Gabriel Archangel</td>
<td>XXXII</td>
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<td>Octave of St. Lawrence</td>
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<td>May 1 Sts. Philip and James</td>
<td>XXXV</td>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>LXXVII</td>
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<td>Sts. Jerome and Augustine</td>
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<td>May 3 Finding of the Cross</td>
<td>XL</td>
<td>Sep. 14</td>
<td>LXXX</td>
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<td>Exaltation of the Cross</td>
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<td>Jun. 23 Vigil of St. John the Baptist</td>
<td>XLIII</td>
<td>Sep. 29</td>
<td>LXXXIII</td>
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<td>St. Michael</td>
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<td>Jun. 24 St. John the Baptist</td>
<td>XLVII</td>
<td>Nov. 1</td>
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<td>All Saints</td>
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<td>Oct. 24 St. Raphael</td>
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<td>XCIV</td>
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<td>Dedication of the Church</td>
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<td>Nov. 11 St. Martin</td>
<td>XCVIII</td>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>CI</td>
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<td>St. Clement</td>
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<td>Oct. 2 Guardian Angels</td>
<td>CVI</td>
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10 The “X” in “XVI” for the mass for St. Joachim does not actually appear in the index, but was likely left off by the scribe.