

Roberta R. Ervine, ed., *Worship Traditions in Armenia and the Neighboring Christian East: An International Symposium in Honor of the 40th Anniversary of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006), 346pp.

The rich and complex Armenian liturgical tradition occupied the attention of numerous scholars in the late twentieth century. *Worship Traditions in Armenia and the Neighboring Christian East* provides a representative sampling of some excellent liturgical scholarship on themes in Armenian studies as well as other Eastern Christian traditions. This compilation results from a scholarly symposium in 2002 marking the fortieth anniversary of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New Rochelle, New York. The international representation at the symposium was outstanding, but unfortunately not all of the speakers submitted their work for publication. Still, this excellent volume provides both highly developed scholarly articles and less developed ones on the Armenian and neighbouring Eastern Christian traditions.

The book has three sections of almost equal size. The first section, "Liturgy in History: The Development of the Liturgy in Armenia and Her Neighbors," leads off with an article by the world renowned Byzantine liturgist Robert F. Taft. His article "Was the Eucharistic Anaphora Recited Secretly or Aloud? The Ancient Tradition and What Became of It" is a fascinating historical overview and in forty-five pages provides a tour-de-force of the compelling early testimony regarding oral recitation of the anaphora. Taft's article will remain a central contribution to this discussion in Eastern as well as Western liturgical study for years to come. The next work by Gabriele Winkler, "On the Formation of the Armenian Anaphoras: A Preliminary Overview," provides important historical information whetting one's interest in the origins of Armenian anaphoras. Hans-Jürgen Feulner's presentation, "On the Preparatory Rite of the Armenian Divine Liturgy: Some Remarks on the Ritual of Vesting," provides a cursory overview of an often neglected area of liturgical study, demon-

strates cross-pollination of liturgical families, and invites a re-evaluation of the concept of Latinization.

The second section, "Liturgy in Context: Liturgy's Effect on Sacred Architecture, Arts and Letters," contains a similar sort of combination of articles. It includes articles like Sebastian Brock's excellent work, "Some Distinctive Features in Syriac Liturgical Texts," and also Abraham Terian's "Mandakuni's 'Encyclical' on Fasting," which provide important insights into the various factors contributing to the full realization of liturgical life throughout history.

The last section, "Liturgy Yesterday and Today: The Interplay of Faith, Liturgy and Change," attempts to provide a modern appreciation or application of liturgical study. Boghos Zekian's "Armenian Spirituality: Some Main Features and Inner Dynamics" and Arshen Aivazian's "The Question of Modern Liturgical Reform in the Armenian Church: A Clergyman's Perspective" present a good glimpse into the current Armenian situation. Other articles focus more on the Byzantine tradition and further round out the study of current liturgical experience.

This wide ranging compilation of essays provides an important contribution to liturgical studies of the Armenian as well as other Eastern traditions. A compendium of this nature is invariably mixed and depends upon the strengths of the individual scholars; the jewels to be found in this volume shine luminously enough to make up for the less spectacular articles, ensuring that the book as a whole warrants a serious read.

Mark M. Morozowich
Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

