A New Drawing by Jean Cousin the Elder for the Saint Mamas Tapestries

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ALTHOUGH JEAN COUSIN THE ELDER (ca. 1500–ca. 1560) was a central figure of the French Renaissance, few firmly documented sheets by his hand survive, and the appearance of a new one is a noteworthy event. The Metropolitan Museum of Art was fortunate to acquire last year a well-preserved and previously unpublished compositional study by this rare draftsman (Figure 1). It had already been attributed to Cousin at the time it was offered to the Museum and has not been doubted since. Indeed, the drawing in its technique and figural types bears all the hallmarks of Cousin’s style, known to some degree from other securely attributed sheets, but primarily from the translation of his designs into other media, such as tapestry, stained glass, and prints. The subject initially presented a mystery but can now be proposed as Amya Petitioning Faustus for the Custody of Saint Mamas, a design for a lost tapestry in Cousin’s Saint Mamas series. The identification of the subject and its textual source as well as the iconography of the series as a whole will be discussed below.

The Saint Mamas tapestries woven for the Langres cathedral are among Cousin’s most admired works. Nonetheless, a connection between the project and the New York drawing did not instantly suggest itself. For one, the tapestries are generally square in format while the drawing is decidedly horizontal. Second, in contrast to every other known composition relating to the tapestries, the figures in the Metropolitan’s sheet do not have halos, leaving open the possibility that the scene was drawn from a historical rather than a biblical source. Ultimately, a close reading of the legend of Saint Mamas revealed an episode of his early life that explained all the unusual elements of the museum’s drawing.

Saint Mamas was a child martyr who lived in Cappadocia, in Asia Minor, in the third century. He was born to a pious patrician family in Paphlagonia. His father, Theodotus, and his mother, Rufina, would also become saints. Theodotus, for his zealous devotion to the Christian faith, was brought before the tribunal of Alexander, governor of the city of Gangra. When methods of torture did not shake his steadfast refusal to sacrifice to idols, Theodotus was sent to Faustus, governor of the province, who immediately had him imprisoned. Rufina, who was pregnant, loyally followed her husband to jail. As a result of harsh treatment, Theodotus died shortly before the birth of his son. Mamas was born before term to the anguished Rufina, who died shortly after, leaving the infant alone in prison crying over his parents’ corpses. According to the legend, God then sent a vision to a wealthy widow named Amya, who lived nearby. She was directed to petition Governor Faustus for permission to adopt the child. She was further instructed to bring the bodies of his parents home and give them a proper burial.

The Metropolitan’s drawing depicts Amya carrying out the directives of her divine vision. She kneels in the foreground, holding the infant Mamas. Seated before her, surrounded by his soldiers, is Governor Faustus, gesturing in acquiescence to her requests. To the left of Amya can be seen the dead body of Theodotus being carried out of prison; to the right, Rufina’s body is being placed in a coffin. In the background, three other events from later in Saint Mamas’s life have been sketchily indicated.

The Saint Mamas series is a rare example of an early, fully documented tapestry commission in France. Claude de Longwy, cardinal of Givry and bishop of Langres, commissioned Cousin to provide designs for eight panels to decorate the choir of the Langres cathedral. Dated July 14, 1543, the contract was first published by Maurice Roy in 1914. Two interesting points are contained in the document. The first sentence, “Jehan Cousin, maistre paintre demourant a Paris, confesse avoir promis et promect a Monsgr le Reverendissime cardinal de Givry, a ce present, de faire pour led. sgr Reverendissime huit pieces de patrons de la vie saint Mames selon la legende...”
et description dud. St Mamès qui lui a esté baillé’” (emphasis added), makes specific mention of a description of the life of Saint Mamas given to the artist for the purpose of executing the cartoons. It is further specified that the cartoons will follow “ung petit proyect en pappier qui en a esté fait, lequel a esté signé des notaires soubscriptz.” It is not known what such projects on paper signed by notaries would have looked like, but their very existence points to the importance of drawings in obtaining approval for works in progress.

A separate contract, dated January 29, 1544, between Pierre Blasse and Jacques Langlois, master weavers in Paris, and the cardinal de Givry allows us to know with certainty the weavers of the series. The patron here inserts an unusual request of the weavers: that they take special care of Cousin’s cartoons, “lesquelz ilz seront tenuz de conserver et garder le myeulx qu’ilz pourront et en la fin les rendre aud. Sgr Reverendissime.” As Henri Zerner has suggested, the possibility that the cartoons would have been needed for a second weaving on a subject as rare as the life of Saint Mamas is quite remote. Givry’s desire to retain the cartoons in good condition must reflect his valuation of them as aesthetic objects.9

Weaving of the first panel began in February 1544. The project was apparently finished by May 1545, and the presence of the tapestries in the Langres cathedral is noted in several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century inventories.10 The set was dispersed at the time of the Revolution, and only three panels are known today: two that have been returned to the Langres cathedral (Figures 3, 5) and one in the Musée du Louvre (Figure 4).

In addition to the three surviving tapestries, a drawing in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Figure 2), was recognized by J. Beaudoin Ross in 1978 as a preparatory design for a lost panel.11 Even before Ross’s identification of the subject, the attribution of the sheet to Cousin had been confirmed by
Sylvie Béguin and Philippe de Montebello on the basis of style. The Bibliothèque Nationale drawing depicts one of the trials of Saint Mamas before his final martyrdom. With a large weight tied to his neck, he is suspended from a bridge by soldiers poised to drop him into the river, as shown in the background. He is saved from drowning by an angel, before whom he kneels in grateful supplication. The Bibliothèque Nationale drawing, like the Metropolitan's, is more horizontal than the woven tapestries. In its compositional strategies, however, it is wholly of a piece with the woven designs in terms of its figural types, architectural elements, and inclusion of different moments in the narrative as background vignettes.

If the Bibliothèque Nationale drawing (along with the three surviving tapestries) brought the number of known compositions to four, then the Metropolitan's recently discovered sheet increases the number to five. While no visual evidence survives of the three remaining panels in Cousin’s Saint Mamas series, their subjects can be guessed at on the basis of contemporary textual sources and later descriptions and inventories, as will be discussed below.

To create detailed compositions depicting the life of Saint Mamas, Cousin would undoubtedly have referred to a source, and the mention in the 1543 contract of a legend and description of the life of Saint Mamas that was given to the artist has long tantalized art historians, who have searched without success for such a text. In fact, a plausible source was identified in a thesis published in Dijon in 1926. However, since the thesis concerned not Cousin but his patron, Claude de Longwy, cardinal de Givry and bishop of Langres, it was overlooked by art historians. Louis Marcel, author of the thesis, pointed to and published excerpts from a 1536 breviary of the Langres cathedral held in the Réserve of the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris. Given the rarity of the book and its importance for Cousin scholars, the entire section relating the life of Saint Mamas is
reprinted here in the appendix in its original Latin with an English translation. It is not known whether Cousin could read Latin; it is possible that the translator who provided the French text that was woven in a cartouche in the border below each scene could have given the artist a translation as well. The text in the lower border of the tapestries does not seem to be in itself sufficiently detailed to have provided the artist with enough information to create the designs.

Using the legend of Saint Mamas recounted in the Langres breviary, it is possible to order the known compositions from Cousin’s series and to speculate on the subjects of the three missing pieces. The panel to which the Metropolitan’s drawing corresponded would presumably have been the first in the series, illustrating the events directly following the deaths of Mamas’s parents in prison. The textual source for the foreground scene reads, “the Lord, remembering the groans of those shackled, in order to set free the child of the slain: announced through a vision to a certain matron, whose name was Amya, of outstanding and rich family but without any descendants that she should ask the duke Faustus for the bodies of the saints to bury them and adopt the baby son as her own.” Vignettes in the background depict other moments in the narrative of the story temporally conflated within a pictorially continuous space. Sketchily indicated with brush and gray wash in the middle ground to the left is Saint Mamas’s baptism on the porch of a classical building: “after she had finished all that had been ordered when the little baby boy would be taken to the sacred font of Baptism; and when the priest asked what name they wished to impose on him: the baby himself, who did not yet know the use of language, answered, ‘Mamas is my name.’ When again and still a third time the priest asked: with an open voice the boy said again, ‘Mamas is my name.’ Since this was done by the Lord, those knowing this did not presume to change his name.” The grouping in the background at center is the most difficult to read. It may represent a woman seated on stairs with a small child standing near her, perhaps with arms outspread. This may relate to the passage devoted to Mamas’s upbringing and precocious learning: “Amya nourished the infant thus adopted by her, educated (him), and embraced him as the son of her womb and the most gracious support of her old age. And the more the little boy grew, the stronger grew the mother’s love for him. In him such a desire of doctrine, such a capacity for remembering, and at last
such an inborn genius appeared so that shortly he surpassed all his contemporaries in erudition.” For the figures grouped in the middle ground toward the right-hand margin, Cousin has switched to pen and brown ink. A man, with a faintly visible halo, walks down a few stairs. He is reaching out to offer something to the outstretched hands of a small group of figures seated on the ground—two men, a woman holding a baby, and a young child. This may make reference to Saint Mamas distributing cheese to the poor, an act of charity taken from later in the narrative.

One of the missing panels would likely have occupied the second place in the series, depicting perhaps one of the subsidiary episodes from the background of the New York drawing (the baptism or the education of Mamas) or his first encounter with a Roman official, Aurelianus, who called Mamas before him for refusing to follow his edict requiring veneration of the Roman gods. In the brevity text the account of Aurelianus’s threats and Mamas’s steadfastness directly follows the description of Mamas’s education.

The drawing preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Figure 2), would have been preparatory to the third panel. The text reads, “Then the furious tyrant (ordered) the naked body of Mamas first to be burned with torches and then pounded with stones. And when he saw that he was not affected by any torment, he commanded that a leaden sphere be hung around his neck and that he be thrown into the depth of the sea. But God, however, was not forgetful of Mamas. For an angel struck the executioners with such terror that all were put to flight; and he snatched Mamas and recommended to him to live on a mountain near Caesarea.” After he had abstained from food and drink for forty days, a heavenly voice came to him saying, ‘Mamas, take a staff, and with it strike the earth.’ When he had done this (wonderful to relate) the earth, splitting open, brought forth the gospel.”

The Paris drawing follows the text closely. In the background, the naked Mamas, with a circular disk tied to his neck, is being suspended by his ankles from a bridge. An angel flies down toward him as the soldiers, struck with terror at the sight, take flight to the left. In the foreground, the angel with a pointing
gesture orders Mamas to go live on a mountain, while the kneeling saint (now dressed) expresses his gratitude. Summarily indicated in the background on the right, Mamas strikes the earth with his staff, bringing forth the gospel from the ground.

One of the surviving tapestries, held in the Langres cathedral, *Saint Mamas Preaching the Gospel to Wild Beasts* (Figure 3) would have been the fourth panel. In the narrative, this episode directly follows the account of the attempted drowning: “Mamas, taking it [the gospel] up, made an oratory for himself from palm fronds. While he was in it reading the gospel, all kinds of wild animals flocked to him. He milked the females of them in the same way as the tame. Thence he made cheeses keeping a few of them for himself for nourishment. He used to distribute them to the poor as he was going down into Caesarea. Alexander, governor of Cappadocia, was scared to death by the news of this strange event, and sent soldiers onto the mountain; in order to bring Mamas to him in chains.”21 The tapestry in Langres, again by temporally conflating different moments in the narrative, stays close to the text. The foreground is occupied by Mamas calmly reading the gospel to an assembly of attentive and apparently gentle beasts, including a unicorn by his feet. In the upper left corner, he stands in a rustic structure—presumably his oratory built of palm fronds, perhaps making cheese. Just below, he is seen milking the wild animals. Vignettes along the right edge may refer to his distributing cheese to the poor and his encounter with Alexander’s soldiers.

This meeting is further elaborated in the Louvre’s tapestry, *Saint Mamas at the Tribunal of the Governor of Cappadocia* (Figure 4), panel five, which illustrates the following text:

Meeting them on the way and leading them to his house, he refreshed them sumptuously with bread, cheese, and water. And after the reading of the Gospel, they began to shake with fear at the gathering of the wild beasts. “Don’t be afraid,” he said, “I am Mamas whom you seek. Go back to the governor, I will follow you promptly.” After a short time, with those waiting for him at the gates of the city, Mamas, following along with them, came into the governor’s presence. Looking at him, Alexander said, “Are you the one who by your magic has so charmed the wild-

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*Figure 5.* Pierre Basse or Jacques Langlois, *Saint Mamas in the Furnace.* Tapestry woven ca. 1544–45 from a design by Jean Cousin the Elder. Wool and silk, approx. 14 ft. 3½ in. x 15 ft. 7 in. (435 x 475 cm). Langres Cathedral
ness of the beasts that speaking with them is almost the same as speaking with men?" To him Mamas (replied), "I am a servant of Jesus Christ who hates all the magicians and evildoers, and detests them as (they were) sacrileges. But the beasts themselves revere God (whom you struggle against) and offer obedience to His servants whom you torture." Then the irate governor ordered him suspended on the rack and torn to pieces. Totally intent on heaven he looked upon his torturers with such a happy (expression) on his face that nothing could be seen of suffering. And while the governor was urging the butchers to more bitter (efforts) to tear him to pieces, a voice from heaven was heard comforting the martyr in such a way that he would not fear the torments.  

Again, Cousin packs his composition densely to accommodate the narrative. At the upper left, Mamas serves the soldiers at a table in his palm-frond oratory, encircled by his tamed beasts. In the middle ground along the left margin, Mamas has the soldiers return to the city, saying he will follow. In the foreground, Mamas, accompanied by his lion, turns himself in to the governor’s soldiers at the city’s gate. At center, visible through the archway of an ornate building, the governor can be seen urging on his torturers while Mamas is relieved from suffering by the presence of an angel.

In the Langres breviary, Alexander’s failure to convert Mamas by beating is directly followed by the account of his next attempts, illustrated in the second panel at Langres (Figure 5):

[H]e commanded that Mamas be released into prison. He [Mamas] found there forty starving people in chains. After saying a prayer, he satiated them with milk and honey brought from heaven. He also released them from prison and their chains. However, when the furnace was fully fired, the judge sent for Mamas and attacked him. "We have shown favor to you, so that you may take care of your interests, but if you are unwilling—see how the furnace is fired up and the altitude to which it takes itself. I will no longer attack you by means of words, but with beatings and flames." To him Mamas (said), "Just now I opened my will to you, governor. What could you answer back on this same subject." After these words, the boy was immediately thrown into the furnace, but God protecting (him), it was as if he were walking around in a flowery garden, so he sang hymns and thanks.  

The tapestry depicting this episode is perhaps the most dramatic of the series. A domed furnace, with a tranquil Mamas visible within, occupies the center of the composition, with flames spewing from every window and opening. Five soldiers in active, twisting poses fill the foreground, adding logs and stoking the fire. Mamas’s release from prison takes place in the upper left corner.

For the final two panels of the series, neither tapestry nor drawing is known to survive. Early texts, descriptions, and inventories, however, allow us to hypothesize about their subjects. Logic dictates that the penultimate panel would have depicted the final martyrdom of Saint Mamas, and a poem written by P. Claude Perry in 1659 supports this hypothesis. The poem’s subject is the life of Saint Mamas and the tapestries after Cousin are praised.  

In the breviary, Mamas’s death is preceded by one last trial imposed by the governor: Alexander “ordered that [Mamas] be led into the amphitheater and devoured by a leopard and a bear (which had torn many to pieces). As they were throwing themselves at Mamas’s feet, they expanded the sense of duty they were able to show. At last the most ferocious lion was released, but to the holy one, he brought not suffering but consolation. Seeing this and gnashing their teeth the people were saying, ‘Away with evil and evildoing!’ Since it seemed that he was not hurt at being covered up by the stones being thrown, the desperate governor thrust an iron trident into his viscera. That truly (caused) a flow of blood from his viscera, and carrying himself the shame of Christ, outside the city walls he offered his own sacrifice to the Creator.  

In the iconography of Saint Mamas, he is most commonly depicted holding a trident in one hand and his own entrails in the other.

The final panel would have shown the patron, Claude de Longwy, kneeling in prayer. An inventory of the church dated 1709 (at which point knowledge of Cousin’s authorship had been lost and the series attributed to a student of Raphael) made passing reference to the last panel, where the “cardinal magnifique y est dépeint avec une grande prudence.” The cardinal may plausibly have been kneeling alongside a vision of the saint’s apotheosis, described in the final lines of the breviary’s legend of Saint Mamas: “A voice came down to him, it said, ‘Mamas, ascend into heaven where Christ is waiting to crown you.’ And immediately that blessed soul was freed from the bonds of the body, to ineffable delights and unsurpassed glory—to God may praise be raised. Amen.”

With the addition of the Metropolitan’s Amya Petitioning Faustus, the oeuvre of solidly accepted sheets by Jean Cousin the Elder grows, allowing us to gain a better knowledge of his style as a draftsman. Aside from a small—and variable—corpus of drawings accepted by scholars on the basis of style, the Metropolitan and Bibliothèque Nationale sheets are the only two drawings given to Cousin that can be connected to a documented commission. While not identical in technique, they have much in common. Both the Paris and New York Mamas drawings have as their
foundation a loose sketch in black chalk. In both, foreground episodes are treated with a high degree of finish, with details of expression and clothing highly legible. Subsidiary episodes are much more sketchily indicated in various techniques. Architectural elements are drawn freehand at times and with a straight edge at others. The architectural vocabulary in both sheets is reminiscent of the plates in Cousin’s Livre de perspective (Paris, 1560). In fact, the building at right in the Metropolitan’s sheet is very close to one on the left in the Bibliothèque Nationale sheet.

The figures in both drawings exemplify Cousin’s elegant style. They are described in a serpentine ink line, full of coiled energy and decorative embellishments, even while demonstrating an awareness of classical antiquity. The main characters are posed in simple, angular poses, with earnest, classical features, tapering limbs, and graceful hands and feet. Decorative touches can be found in the long curly hair and beards and beautifully detailed costumes, loosely knotted and draped to reveal the body. Minor characters, typically at the margins, are contorted into more Mannerist poses.

From the free underdrawing and lack of finish in the background vignettes, one can assume that these are the premières pensées—Cousin’s first articulation of his ideas, not yet conforming to the near-square dimensions of the tapestries as they were ultimately woven. In its technique, the New York sheet is more painterly and reliant on wash than any works previously associated with Cousin. Not only is gray wash used to articulate and model many areas of the composition, but a white gouache, applied both as wash and—with the point of the brush—as hatching, is used extensively to add highlights, producing convincing effects of light and shade. With a greater knowledge of Cousin’s style as a draftsman and a reprinting of the life of Saint Mamas from the Langres breviary of 1536, it is hoped that more drawings relating to the Langres tapestry commission will be identified.
APPENDIX

Breviarii Lingonense
Paris: J. Amaeur, 1536

Notations

(m) indicates reconstructed abbreviations
(honored) indicates words inferred from the context

Latin Transcription31
Legenda (beati Mammetis martyris)
De nativitate/vita et passione ejusde(m) gloriosissimi
Mammetis.

Lec(tio) • i.
Sanctus Mammes gente Capadocus/et Syris/et Grecis
literis megalomartyr/hoc est magn(us) testis vulgo
nuncupatus/nobilitate generis et fidei puritate prec-
larus effulis. Pater ejus Theodot(us) et mater Rufina
(fuernat)/moribus/et vita (patritii) generis sui celsi-
tudinem decorabant. Quippe qui divino favore
succes(n)s/ pietatis officia solicite proseque(n)tes/
quoting ad Christi fidem (accersire) potera(n)t : ex
infidelitatis lacu traheba(n)t. Hinc apud Alexandrum
Gange prefectum accusati cum nec diis libare/nec
aurem quidem prefecti dictis velle(n)t admonere :
ipse (qui sine imperatorio permisso (patritioru)m) filio
torque re non licebat) eos cesareae fausto duci
discutiendos emisit. Quos ille susceptos mox in
Cesareae co(n)jici Fausto.

L(ε)c(tio) • ii.
Theodotus autem sue carnis infirmitatem et tyranni
sevitiam perpende(n)s/maluit honeste mori cum
co(n)jugue quam indignum quidam sue nobilitati
i(n)supplicis admittere. Itaque fusa oratione spiritus
in cem migrans/corpus in ceno carceris dereliquit.
Rufina vero tam graves angustias non sustine(n)s/
i(m)matre filiu(m) expulit. Quo Christo plurimum
commendato/et cura conjugis corpori quantum
valuit exhibita/completaque lachrymabili oratione
animam efflavit : solo inter glebas utriusque parentis
infa(n)tulo relict. Sed memori gemitus compedi-
tor(m)/ut solveret filium interemptorum dominus:

English Translation
Legend of Saint Mamas, Martyr
Concerning the birth, life and passion of the very glo-
rious Mamas.

First Reading
Saint Mamas, by race a Cappadocian; formally pro-
claimed a great martyr in both Syrian and Greek writ-
ings, that is, currently speaking, great witness, was
brilliant and famous from the nobility of his family
and the purity of his faith. His father was Theodotus,
and his mother, Rufina. They honored the distin-
guished status of their patrician family in both their
customs and way of life. Since they had so advanced by
divine favor, they diligently performed works of piety,
and pulled out of the lake of infidelity as many people
as they could make come to the Christian faith. At this
point they were accused in the presence of Alexander,
prefect of Gangra because they were willing neither to
make offering to the gods nor heed the prefect's
words of warning. He (the prefect) (who had no
authority to torture a son of patricians without imper-
ial permission) sent them to the duke Faustus at Caes-
sarea [Mazaca] so that they could be examined. He
(Faustus) adjudged them deserving of being thrown
into prison immediately.

Second Reading
Theodotus however carefully considering the weak-
ness of his flesh and the cruelty of the tyrant pre-
ferrred to die with honor with his wife rather than
admit to say whatever sort of unworthiness (sullying)
his nobility by tortures. And so, after an outpouring
of prayer, the spirit migrating into heaven left the body
behind in the mire of the prison. But Rufina was not
able to sustain such sufferings, and expelled her pre-
mature son. When he had been several times com-
mended to Christ, when she had shown as much care
of the body as was necessary, and when she had com-
pleted her tearful prayer, she breathed forth her soul;
per visum cuidam matrone prole carenti divitiis et genere precelle(n)ti Amie nomine intimavit/ut Fausto duce sanctorum(m) corpora peteret/ea sepeliret/et infantem sibi in filium adoptaret.

Lectio tertia.

Que protinus iussa co(m)plens/dum ad sacrum baptismatis fontem parvulus portaretur: et quod ei nomen vellent imponere sacerdos peteret: ipse qui nondum lingue usuram Mammes (inquit) est nome(n) meu(m). Quod cum iterum ac tertio sacerdos requireret: aperta voce puer rursus ait/Mammes est nomen meu(m). Prolinde factum hoc a Domino cognoscentes/mutare nomen ejus non presumptur. Infantillum itaque sibi adoptans Amia nutritiv/educavit/et amplexata est ut filium uterinum et sue senectutis gratissimum baculum. Et quo magis puellus crescebat eo matris amor in eum convallescebat. In quo tanta aviditas doctrine ta(n)ta capacitas memoriae/denique tantum acumen ingenii apparuit: ut brevi coetaneos omnes erudizione devinceret.

Lec(tio) ·iii·

Ea tempestate Romane rei apicem adeptus Aurelianus(us) edicto publico justit per universum orbem more patrum diis immolare: eisque ritibus in primis assequiier pueros quos ob etatis incaute teneritudinem ad impiatatem pius ad hanc materi moliebatur. At Deo deditus Mammes sprofet imperatoris decreto/coetaneos arcebat a sacrificiis: Christum solum verum Deum (qui cuncta creavit: co(n)dita nutu moderatur: et demu(m) penas aut premia singulis pro meritis red- det) affirmans ipsum solum colendum/venerandum/amandum. Eos autem quos impii deos appellaba(n)t inania simulachra esse turpitudinis/et ridiculi plena. Quod cum ad Democriti (qui Fausto successerat) notitiam pervenissent Mammem suo mox tribunali sistere jubit.

Third Reading

And after she had finished all that had been ordered when the little baby boy would be taken to the sacred font of Baptism; and when the priest asked what name they wished to impose on him: the baby himself, who did not yet know the use of language, answered, “Mamas is my name.” When again and still a third time the priest asked: with an open voice the boy said again, “Mamas is my name.” Since this was done by the Lord, those knowing this did not presume to change his name. Amia nourished the infant thus adopted by her, educated (him), and embraced him as the son of her womb and the most gracious support of her old age. And the more the little boy grew, the stronger grew the mother’s love for him. In him such a desire of doctrine, such a capacity for remembering, and at last such an inborn genius appeared so that shortly he surpassed all his contemporaries in erudition.

Fourth Reading

At this time Aurelianus, achieving the summit of Roman power, commanded by a public edict that throughout the whole world sacrifice was to be made to the gods according to the traditions of the ancestors: in the first place, by these rites, (it was ordered) to accustom more easily those boys who because of the tenderness of their reckless age he might drag more easily to impiety. But Mamas, dedicated to God, despising the emperor’s decree, prevented his peers from the sacrifices saying that: Christ alone was the true God (who created everything: he guided its founding by a nod: and finally he will give punishments or rewards to individuals according to their merits) and affirming him only to be worshiped, venerated, and loved. Those, however, which the impious called gods (are) empty statues of foulness and completely laughable. And when this came to the attention of Democritus (who succeeded Faustus), he ordered Mamas to present himself immediately to his tribunal.
Lectio -v-

Ubi primum de religione tactus et cur imperatoris parere detrectaret interritus majori quam soleat etas illa co(n)sta(n)tiua : Ego (ait) o dux vestras satis novi versutias. Deum verum deseritis : et surdis ac mutis simulachris immolatis. Absit a me ut vestris fraudibus captus vel in puncto a Christo meo recedam : vel quos-cunque ad Ipsum convertere potero vestris minis terri-tus desistam. Expavit dux pueri virtutem: sed minis acerbis aggressum ad Serapidis phanum pertrahi jus-sit ; Mam(m)es autem nihil femineum vel ignobile sapie(n)js. Non licet (inquit) te supplicis afficere tam preclaris pare(n)tibus progenitum/tam generosa matrona educatum. Cujus rei veritate comperta Dem-ocritus dux Mam(m)(e)m catenis vinctum ad Aure-lianum (qui in Egea civitate agebat) tra(n) smissit.

Lectio -vi-

Aurelianus autem (vafro ut erat ingeniou) Mam(m) am circumvenire satage(n)s. Si (I)nquit bone Mamma Serapidis ibaveris/primus/ apud me delitiis frueris. Si vero non acqueveri/te cruciatu(m) et discerptum flammis absumam. Cuiu(m) Mam(m)es. Nuncquam mihi co(n)tingat imperator adeo desipere ut simulchra tua quovis honore digna existimem. Desine ergo/vel mihi leta promittere/vel seva minari. Pretiosior est mihi mors pro Christo (quam) totius mu(n)di delitie. Ad hec fredens imperator/tenerum pueri corpus fustibus cedi precepta: quem cum hilari vultu persistere cerneret: dic (ait) solu(m)te velle sacrificare et liber eris. No(n) (ait puer) si multo graviara paraveris/ Christum corde vel ore negabo. Tunc fures tyrannus nudum Mammis corpus primum lampadib(us) uri/ dehinc lapidibus tundi. Et cum nullo eum tormento flecti videret plu(m)beam sphera(m) collo ejus appendi jussit : et in profundum maris mergi. Sed nec tamen quide(m) Mammatis oblivus est Deus. Angelus enim carnificibus ta(n)rum terrem incussit ut omnes in fugam vertenterur : ereptumque Mammem proximum Cesaree monte(m) incolere precepta.

Fifth Reading

At first, touching on (his) religion, and asked why he refused to obey the emperor he said, intrepidly and with a greater firmness than would have been normal for his age: he said, "O Commander, I know enough of your cunning tricks. You have deserted the true God: and sacrifice to deaf and mute empty statues. Let it be far from me that I be captured by your snares or withdraw even in the slightest way from my Christ: or in some way, I, even though terrified, can convert you to (Christ) Himself, by resisting your threats." The governor became very frightened by the boy's strength: but ordered him to be dragged by sharp threats to Serapis's temple. Mamas, however, knowing nothing of the womanly or the ignoble said, "It is not lawful to afflict with tortures an offspring of eminent parents educated by such a generous matron." When the truth of this matter became known, Democritus, the govern- nor, sent Mamas, bound in chains, to Aurelian (who was spending time in the city Egea [Egerdir?]).

Sixth Reading

Aurelianus, however (cunning as he was talented), was making efforts to circumvent Mamas. "If (he said), good Mamas, you sacrifice to Serapis, you will enjoy a delicious life. If, however, you will not agree—I will submit you to tortures and to destruction by flames." To which Mamas (responded)—"Emperor, (I hope that) it would never happen that I would be so insane that I find your statues worthy of any honor. So, stop promising me delights or threatening me with cruel treatments. It is more precious to me to die for Christ than to enjoy all of the world." The emperor, gnashing (with rage), (responded) to this by giving an order that the tender body of the boy be given blows. When he perceived that he persevered with a happy smile, he said, "Only say you wish to sacrifice and you will be free!" "No", said the boy, "even if you prepare much worse (tortures), I won't deny Christ in my heart nor with my mouth". Then the furious tyrant (ordered) the naked body of Mamas first to be burned with torches and then pounded with stones. And when he saw that he was not affected by any torment, he com-manded that a leaden sphere be hung around his neck and that he be thrown into the depth of the sea. But God, however, was not forgetful of Mamas. For an angel struck the executioners with such terror that all were put to flight; and he snatched Mamas and recommended to him to live on a mountain near Caesarea.
Lectio septima.

Ubi cum quadrarginta diebus cibo potuque abstinuissit venit ad eum celitus vox inquie(n)s : Virga(m) suscipe mames : et ea terram percutae. Quod cum fecisset (miru(m) dictu) terra dehisce(n)s evangeliunm protulit : quod Mam(m) es assumens sectis fro(n)ibus oratorium sibi fabricavit. In quo dum evangeliunm legeret/undique affluere(n)s omnigene fere : quaru(m) feminas perinde atque cicaures mulgebant : et factos i(n)de caseos paucus sibi ad victum relictis in Cesareae descendens pauperibus erogabat. Cuius rei novitate percussus Alexander Capadocie preses miliates in montem misit : qui Mammetem sibi vincu(m) adducerent. Quos obvius Parmmes et in casam ductos pane/ caseo/et aqua dapsiliter recreavit. Et du(m) lecto evangeliun concursum perhorrescerent : ne formidentes : ait. Ego sum Mam(m)es quem queritis. Ad preside(m) redite/ego vos subinde consequar. Et paululu(m) preostolantes ad civitatis portas consecutus Parmmes/una cum eis ad presidem ingressus est.

Lectio -viii-

Quem intitus Alexander. Tune es (I(n)quit ille qui ferarum crudelitatem magia tua ita pellices ut cu(m) ipsis quasi cum hominis verseris. Cui Mam(m) es. Servus sum Jesu Christi qui magos o(mn)es ac maleficios odit/et ut sacrilegos detestatur. Ipsa vero fere Deum (que(m) vos conte(m)nis) reverentur : et famulis ejus quos torquetis osbqui(m) prestant. Tunc iratus preses/jussit cum in equuleo suspe(n)di et dilaniari. Ut celo totus intentus/vultu adeo hilaris tortores aspiciebat/ut nil doloris sentire videretur. Et dum preses ad acrius discerpendum carnifices instigaret : audita est vox de celo martyrem ita co(n)fortans ut deinceps supplicia non timeret. Quod cernens tyrannis fornacem jubet incendi. Sed aliis implicitus negotios interim precepit Mammem in carceri recludi : ubi quadrarginta vincatos fame tabescentes inveniens/facta oratione lacte et melle celitus delatis satiavit/et e carcerre ac vinculis absolvit. Accenso autem vehementer camino accessiturn Mammem judex ita aggregitur. Indulsimus tibi/ut rei tue consulas : quod si nolueris : vide in quantum accensa for nexus se tollat altitudinem. Ego te modo verbis no(n) aggrediar/2ed verberibus et flaskm.

Seventh Reading

After he had abstained from food and drink for forty days, a heavenly voice came to him saying, “Mamas, take a staff, and with it strike the earth.” When he had done this (wonderful to relate) the earth, splitting open, brought forth the gospel. Mamas, taking it up, made an oratory for himself from palm fronds. While he was in it reading the gospel, all kinds of wild animals flocked to him. He milked the females of them in the same way as the same. Thence he made cheeses keeping a few of them for himself for nourishment. He used to distribute them to the poor as he was going down into Caesarea. Alexander, governor of Cappadocia, was scared to death by the news of this strange event, and sent soldiers onto the mountain; in order to bring Mamas to him in chains. Meeting them on the way and leading them to his house, he refreshed them sumptuously with bread, cheese, and water. And after the reading of the Gospel, they began to shake with fear at the gathering of the wild beasts. “Don’t be afraid,” he said, “I am Mamas whom you seek. Go back to the governor, I will follow you promptly.” After a short time, with those waiting for him at the gates of the city, Mamas, following along with them, came into the governor’s presence.

Eighth Reading

Looking at him, Alexander said, “Are you the one who by your magic has so charmed the wildness of the beasts that speaking with them is almost the same as speaking with men?” To him Mamas (replied), “I am a servant of Jesus Christ who hates all the magicians and evildoers, and detests them as (they were) sacrileges. But the beasts themselves revere God (whom you struggle against) and offer obedience to His servants whom you torture.” Then the irate governor ordered him suspended on the rack and torn to pieces. Totally intent on heaven he looked upon his torturers with such a happy (expression) on his face that nothing could be seen of suffering. And while the governor was urging the butchers to more bitter (efforts) to tear him to pieces, a voice from heaven was heard comforting the martyr in such a way that he would not fear the torments. Noticing this, the tyrant orders the furnace to be fired up. But in the meantime, while he was occupied with other matters, he commanded that Mamas be released into prison. He [Mamas] found there forty starving people in chains. After saying a prayer, he satiated them with milk and honey brought from heaven. He also released them from prison and their chains. However, when the furnace was fully fired, the judge sent for Mamas and attacked him. “We
have shown favor to you, so that you may take care of your interests, but if you are unwilling—see how the furnace is fired up and the altitude to which it takes itself. I will no longer attack you by means of words, but with beatings and flames."

**Lectio nona**

Cui Mamm(es). « Dudu(m) mea(m) tibi preses aperui volu(n) tatem. Quid rursus in eade(m) versaris. » Quo dicto mox puer in camino projicur : sed Deo protege(n) te quasi in horto flore(n) ti ambulans/hymnos et gratias decantabat. Post quinque vero dies, nec mortuo quidem parere volens, tyrannus/quicquid supererat e camino jussit extrahi. Sed cu(m) in martyre nec ignis vestigium nec adustionis signum videret: illum in amphitheatrum duci et devourandi leopardo et urso (qui multos laniaverant) dimitti preceptit. Ut Mammis pedibus provoluti/que poterant mansuetudin- nis officia impende(n) t. Dimissus demum ferecissimus leo : sancto consolatione(m) non supplicium attulit. Quod videntes populi frementes dentibus aiebant. « Tolle malum atque maleficum. » Cu(m) vero conjectis lapidibus obrutus minime iesus videretur preses desperans tridentem ferream in viscera ejus fecit infigi. Ille vero defluentia sanguine viscera/et improprium Christi portans sese extra urbem plas- matorii suo sacrificium obtulit. Ad quem vox demissa : ascend(e) (inquit) Mamma in celo ubi te Christus coronaturus expectat. Moxque illa beata anima vinculis corporis absoluta : ad ineffabiles delitias et supernor- rum civium claritatem : Deu(m) semper laudatura assumpta est. Amen.

Finit sanctorale partis hyemalis breviarii Lingonensis.

**Ninth Reading**

To him Mamas (said), "Just now I opened my will to you, governor. What could you answer back on this same subject." After these words, the boy was immediately thrown into the furnace, but God protecting (him), it was as if he were walking around in a flowery garden, so he sang hymns and thanks. After five days and not wishing to spare anything to the dead, the tyrant ordered that whatever was remaining should be removed from the furnace. But when he saw that on the martyr there was no vestige of fire nor sign of burning, he ordered that he be led into the amphitheater and devoured by a leopard and a bear (which had torn many to pieces). As they were throwing themselves at Mamas’s feet, they expanded the sense of duty they were able to show. At last the most ferocious lion was released, but to the holy one, he brought not suffering but consolation. Seeing this and gnashing their teeth the people were saying, "Away with evil and evildoing!" Since it seemed that he was not hurt at being covered up by the stones being thrown, the desperate governor thrust an iron trident into his viscera. That truly (caused) a flow of blood from his viscera, and carrying himself the shame of Christ, outside the city walls he offered his own sacrifice to the Creator. A voice came down to him, it said, "Mamas, ascend into heaven where Christ is waiting to crown you." And immediately that blessed soul was freed from the bonds of the body, to ineffable delights and unsurpassed glory—to God may praise be raised. Amen.

End of the sanctoral of the winter part of the breviary of Langres.
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NOTES

1. It has since been published in the Metropolitan Museum's Bulletin (Fall 2001), pp. 24–25 (entry by Perrin Stein), and in Thomas P. Campbell, Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 2002), under no. 56, p. 478 (entry by Pascal-François Bertrand and Thomas P. Campbell). I was researching this drawing at the same moment Tom Campbell was working on the entry on the Saint Mamas tapestries for his exhibition catalogue. I have benefited from our conversations and from his generous advice and assistance.

2. The drawing was offered to the museum by Alan Stone of Hill-Stone, Inc., on November 9, 2000. It had previously been with a fine-arts dealer in Belgium and, before that, in a European private collection.

3. The attribution was confirmed on the basis of a photograph by Dominique Cordellier (November 15, 2000).

4. Although it was not observed in the initial study of the drawing, a figure lightly sketched in the background does have a faint halo, as Bruno de Bayser later pointed out (conversation with the author, June 18, 2001).

5. An ancient town northeast of Ankara, in Turkey.


8. Ibid., pp. 7–8.


12. Le seizième siècle européen: Peintures et dessins dans les collections publiques françaises, exh. cat., Petit Palais, Paris (Paris, 1995), no. 92 (entry by Sylvie Béguin). Béguin notes in her entry de Montebello's observation that the detail, in the immediate foreground just left of center, of one square block leaning on another is a signature motif of Cousin's appearing in several prints.


15. Two other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sources for the life of Saint Mamas are worth noting as further indications of contemporary interest in the subject. They are a fifteenth-century manuscript breviary of Jean d'Amboise today in the Bibliothèque Municipale, Chaumont, and Alexandre Cordier, Histoire du grand martyr S. Mammès, patron de l'église de Langres, divisée en deux livres: Le premier contient sa vie et sa passion, le second, les diverses translations de ses reliques, par un chanoine et architecte de la même église (Paris, 1650). The publication date of the latter would preclude its use by Cousin as a source, unless it existed earlier in manuscript form.


17. Ibid., Third Reading.

18. Ibid.


20. Appendix, Sixth and Seventh Readings.

21. Ibid., Seventh Reading.

22. Ibid., Seventh and Eighth Readings.

23. As Bertrand and Campbell pointed out, the lion depicted in the tapestry is not mentioned in the text of the breviary (Campbell, Tapestry in the Renaissance, p. 480).


26. Appendix, Ninth Reading. Alternately, the scene of Mamas in the amphitheater with the leopard, bear, and lion may have constituted a separate panel in place of the missing second panel.


28. The inventory was published in the Revue de Champagne et de Brie, 1879–80, vol. 8, p. 110, and vol. 9, p. 130; it is cited in Roy, Artistes et monuments, p. 45.

29. Appendix, Ninth Reading.


31. The transcription and translation were provided by Reverend Richard Weaver and were edited by Florian Meunier.