THE EUCHARIST IN EARLY MEDIEVAL EUROPE

Celia Chazelle

In 843 or 844, Pascasius Radbertus, a monk of the Carolingian royal monastery of Corbie and its abbot from 843 to c. 847, presented King Charles the Bald (d. 877) with a special gift: a treatise about the Eucharist that Pascasius had written for Corbie's mission house of Corvey between 831 and 833.[1] Located in the eastern Carolingian territory of Saxony, Corvey had been founded from Corbie in 822 to help cement Christianity, and with it Carolingian rule, among the Saxons whom Charlemagne (d. 814) had forcibly converted from paganism around the turn of the ninth century. Pascasius must have recognized the significance of his gift's timing, made either at Christmas (843) or at Easter (844).[2] One of the key precepts expounded in this work, the first Latin treatise specifically on the Eucharist, is that through the Mass, bread and wine are inwardly, mystically changed into the historical flesh and blood of Christ. The sacrament that the king received in the feast honoring the incarnation (Christmas) or resurrection (Easter) was holy food and drink, the source of eternal salvation, because it contained the very body born of Mary in Bethlehem and crucified in Jerusalem.

Pascasius wrote *De corpore et sanguine Domini* ("On the Lord's Body and Blood") in the midst of the rebellion of the three older sons of Emperor Louis the Pious (d. 840). By 843, the civil strife this unleashed had torn the Carolingian Empire apart;[3] when Louis' youngest son,

[1] I am very grateful to numerous friends and colleagues for generously sharing their knowledge and offering advice on earlier drafts of this article. My thanks especially to Michelle Brown, Helen Foxhall Forbes, David Ganz, Gary Macy, Rosamond McKitterick, and Craig Rubano, and to John Munns and Alan Thacker for arranging opportunities to speak at Emmanuel College Cambridge and the University of London, in February 2009. A special thank-you to Fr. Joseph Hlubik for pushing me to write this essay, and for much helpful bibliography and information on ancient and modern eucharistic practices.

[2] David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance* (Beihefte der Francia) 20 (Signmaringen, 1990), pp. 14–35, esp. 25–26, 28 (on Corvey's founding), 31 (on Pascasius' gift to Charles).

[3] The civil strife caused problems for Corbie: *Pascasius Radbertus De corpore et sanguine Domini cum appendice epistola ad Fredugardum*; CCCM 16, pp. vii–viii, 3–4; see Ganz, *Corbie*, pp. 29–30.

Charles, visited Corbie, the Treaty of Verdun dividing the Carolingian provinces between him and his half-brothers, Lothar and Louis the German, had been signed for less than a year. Lothar held the imperial crown, a dream that Charles only realized for himself toward the end of his life, in 875.[4] Pascasius' presentation to Charles of a treatise composed at Corbie, a monastery under the king's protection, for its sister monastery of Corvey in the realm of Louis the German, was perhaps also meant to recall Corbie's spiritual bonds with the eastern kingdom and the loss of imperial unity. Seen from this perspective, the presentation aligned the treatise's proclamation of unity between the Eucharist and Christ's incarnate body, the foundation, according to Pascasius, of the unity of Christ's body the Church, with hope for the restoration of unity in the political sphere.

Probably a decade or so later, Ratramnus, also a Corbie monk, sent Charles a copy of his own treatise on the Eucharist. This begins by thanking the king for the question that allegedly prompted its composition and praises him for wanting faith to be unified. All Christians should hold the same truths, Ratramnus notes, yet "some people" wrongly believe that Christ is physically and visibly present in the bread and wine, whereas others disagree, and the quarrel has caused "great schism."[5] Without identifying Pascasius he goes on to argue that, while the Eucharist is indeed Christ's body and blood, its contents are spiritual, not physical, and thus different from the incarnate blood and flesh.

[4] Janet L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), pp. 132–35, 242.

[5] Ratramnus, *De corpore et sanguine Domini* 2; ed. J.N. Bakhuizen Van Den Brink, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam, 1974), p. 43: "Dum enim quidam fidelium, corporis sanguinisque christi [misterium] quod in ecclesia cotidie celebratur dicant, quod nulla sub figura, nulla sub obvelatione fiat, sed ipsius veritatis nuda manifestatione peragatur, quidam vero testentur quod haec sub misterii figura contineantur, et aliud sit quod corporeis sensibus appareat, aliud autem quod fides aspiciat, non parva diversitas inter eos esse dinoscitur. Et cum apostolus fidelibus scribat, ut idem sapiant et idem dicant omnes, et scisma nullum inter eos appareat, non parvo scismate dividuntur, qui de misterio corporis sanguinisque christi non eadem sentientes elocuntur." Translation in *Early Medieval Theology*, ed. and trans. George McCracken (Library of Christian Classics) 9 (Philadelphia, 1957), pp. 109–47. The same volume contains a partial translation of Pascasius' treatise (pp. 90–147). Ratramnus' concern that Christ is believed to be visibly present in the bread and wine is tied to the doctrine, discussed below, that his body and blood change into bread and wine. See Ratramnus, *De corpore* 2; ed. Van Den Brink, p. 43. Cf. Pascasius, *Ep.ad Fredugardum*; CCCM 16, p. 147 ll. 66–70 (expressing a similar concern).

Several Carolingian writings discuss the nature and meaning of the Eucharist, a few addressing at some length the issue of whether the sacramental presence is identical with the incarnate, historical body and blood of Christ. Among the most important of these additional works to survive, in terms of articulating clear theological perspectives on the sacrament, are a treatise by Gottschalk of Orbais and a portion of a second;[6] the commentary by John Scottus Eriugena on the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Pseudo-Dionysius;[7] and a treatise on vices and virtues written for Charles the Bald by Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, who was possibly with the king when he visited Corbie in 843/44.[8] Two further writings by Pascasius defend his doctrine that the eucharistic bread and wine spiritually or inwardly become the historical flesh and blood, implying he was aware of criticisms.[9] Ratramnus says little in his treatise to indicate when it was written; yet all the other texts noted were completed around the middle of the ninth century or in the following two decades, and I would tentatively suggest, therefore, that he probably wrote near 850 or perhaps in the following few years. By then, a number of Carolingian theologians were expressing divergent opinions on the eucharistic presence, a circumstance reasonably seen as one aspect of the "schism" to which Ratramnus refers. Although he may be referring to a quarrel internal to Corbie, it seems more likely from the wording of his comment that he has in mind a wider controversy extending beyond the monastery.[10]

These texts testify to the first known period of sustained theological speculation on the Eucharist in the Latin Church. Many modern studies have analyzed the doctrines set out in this literature, especially by Pascasius and Ratramnus, traced antecedents in patristic and post-patristic sources, and discussed its contributions to later doctrinal

[6] Gottschalk, *De corpore et sanguine Domini, Item de corpore et sanguine Domini*, in *Oeuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais*, 23, ed. D.C. Lambot (Louvain, 1945), pp. 324–37.

[7] John Scottus Eriugena, *Expositiones in Ierarchiam Coelestem*; CCCM 31.

[8] Hincmar, *De cavendis vitiis et virtutibus exercendis*, ed. Doris Nachtmann (MGH Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters) 16 (Munich, 1998).

[9] The passage on the last supper in his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, written after 849, and a letter of the early to mid-850's sent to Fredugard, probably a monk of St.-Riquier: *Pascasii Radberti Expositio in Matheo libri XII*; CCCM 56B (*In Math.* 26:26–29), pp. 1288–98; and *Ep.ad Fredugardum*; CCCM 16, pp. 145–73.

[10] See Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 211–13, although I now feel less confident about dating Ratramnus' treatise than when I wrote this book.

developments such as the eleventh-century controversy over the teachings of Berengar, scholastic treatments of transsubstantiation, and post-Reformation Protestant and Catholic theologies.[11] There is no doubt we have learned much from this scholarship. Yet as Rachel Fulton has recently observed, the common tendency to treat Pascasius' treatise as if it were a contribution to the dispute that only began, it seems, in the mid-ninth century, and pay little attention to the circumstances in which he wrote his work seventeen or so years earlier, has obscured significant features of its thought.[12]

The motivation to write "On the Lord's Body and Blood," Pascasius states in the prologue, came from his former student, Warin, who had requested help teaching his own monk pupils at Corvey the "necessary things" about the Eucharist. The prologue refers to Warin's students as "unlettered," implying they were novices in the early stages of acquiring Latin literacy.[13] Most or all of them likely came from Saxony, and some or all may have been young oblates. A range of sources shed light on the rapid development of liturgical studies in the principal monastic and cathedral schools of the Carolingian Empire, in the late eighth and ninth centuries, and on the centrality of the Eucharist and the Mass to this interest.[14] There are several factors behind this development, but one with a particular bearing on Corvey is the changing pastoral role of male religious. Western European monasteries and convents had

[11] The controversy had an echo in tenth-century England: Charles L. Wrenn, "Some Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Theology," in *Studies in Language, Literature and Culture of the Middle Ages and Later*, ed. E. Bagby Atwood and A.A. Hill (Austin, 1969), pp. 182–89.

[12] Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York, 2002), pp. 9–59, esp. 13–16. Although my reading of Pascasius' treatise and its background differs from Fulton's, I have drawn enormous inspiration from her study, which so far as I know is the first to try to connect his teachings to the situation in contemporary Saxony.

[13] Pascasius, *De corpore, Prologus*; CCCM 16, pp. 4–5: "Quod ideo placuit communius stilo temperari subulco et ea quae de sacramento sanguinis et corporis tibi exigis necessaria tui praetextatus amore ita tenus perstringere, ut ceteri quos necdum unda liberalium attigerat litterarum, uitae pabulum et salutis haustum planius caperent ad medelam et nobis operis praestantior exuberaret fructus mercedis pro sudore, quia pecunia uerbi, sicuti plenius nosti, quantos repleuerit suis sumptibus auditores, tantis copiosius in sese amplificatur meritorum opibus."

[14] On aspects of this development with references to earlier literature, see Christopher A. Jones, *A Lost Work by Amalarius of Metz: Interpolations in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, Ms. 154* (London, 2001); Celia Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*: Spirit and Vision in Carolingian Liturgical Thought," in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Giselle de Nie, Karl F. Morrison, and Marco Mostert (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 327–57; see Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 27–28, 151–53.

long been centers of spiritual life for Christian laity in the early Middle Ages (ca. 500 to ca. 900 CE), but beginning in the eighth century, monasteries in Frankish or Carolingian regions increasingly took on the responsibility to offer votive Masses, often on behalf of lay benefactors. The proportion of monks ordained as priests grew, and altars multiplied in the churches of the larger houses, allowing several members of one community to perform Masses simultaneously.[15] To the extent that convents were not associated with the offering of Masses, it has been argued, their prestige as pastoral centers diminished.[16] The training of male oblates led with increased frequency to priestly ordination, and among other consequences, this created a new imperative to teach them carefully about the meaning and nature of the Eucharist.[17] Perhaps nowhere during the civil conflicts that began in the early 830s was this concern more strongly felt than in Saxony, where, since the reign of Charlemagne, the drive to extend and deepen Carolingian rule was so closely tied to efforts to spread the Christian faith.[18]

Like most Carolingian theologians, Pascasius borrows frequently from patristic authors to express his ideas, yet as will be discussed later in this essay, he shapes this material in new ways to assist Warin in instructing his students. Despite Charlemagne's program of forced conversion of the Saxons, the Carolingian Christianization of Saxony was thereafter a gradual process, but the Corvey novices must have come from communities and (probably noble) families that, by the early 830s, had basically accepted the new faith.[19] Educated clergy like Pascasius and Warin—who was part-Saxon—knew, however, that the hold of Christian ritual and doctrine, as they interpreted them, was

[15] Mayke de Jong, "Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. II c. 700–c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995) (henceforth *NCMH 2*), pp. 622–53, at pp. 647–49.

[16] Gisela Muschiol, "Men, Women and Liturgical Practice in the Early Medieval West," in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300–900*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M.H. Smith (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 198–216, at 209–10.

[17] Ganz, *Corbie*, p. 84.

[18] Peter Johanek, "Der Ausbau der sächsischen Kirchenorganisation," in *799 Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit: Karl der Grosse und Papst Leo III. in Paderborn*, 2 vols. (Mainz, 1999), 2:494–506; Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 251–56.

[19] Christopher Carroll, "The Bishoprics of Saxony in the First Century after Christianization," *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999), 219–45, esp. 224–26. Also see, indicating a fairly deep penetration of Christianity in Saxony in the second quarter of the ninth century, David Appleby, "Spiritual Progress in Carolingian Saxony: A Case from Ninth-Century Corvey," *The Catholic Historical Review* 82 (1996), 599–613.

tenuous in this formerly pagan region.[20] By and large, early medieval Europe lacked strong centralizing institutional structures, religious or secular; even the main exception, the Carolingian government, had difficulty making authority felt at the lower social levels.[21] As recent histories have shown with new clarity, throughout the early Middle Ages groups at those levels, especially when living at some distance from the principal cathedrals, monasteries, and courts—in the households of rural nobility away from the centers of elite power and wealth, on the lands they controlled, in small towns and peasant settlements—developed their understanding of Christianity to a large extent independently of the prevailing ideologies in elite circles.[22] Attitudes were shaped by some exposure to learned doctrine, for instance through itinerant clergy, but they also owed much to conversations among neighbors, their local experiences of custom and belief, and the interpenetration at the local level of a wide variety of Christian with non-Christian conventions.[23] These situations affected belief and practice among not only laity in such communities but innumerable clergy, monks, and nuns with limited Latin literacy and little access to books, who were drawn from the same populations and provided the laity with their principal pastoral care.

Pascasius and Warin, I think, recognized that the Corvey novices came from a cultural environment roughly comparable to what I have just sketched, and Pascasius seems to have meant his treatise to address problems—in his view—that this heritage posed for their understanding of the Eucharist. We can acquire new insight into his teachings and how he presents them if, before discussing the treatise

[20] Pascasius knew this from not only his contacts with Corvey but life at Corbie, where some monks were Saxon: Ganz, *Corbie*, p. 28; Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, p. 12.

[21] Janet L. Nelson, "Kingship and Royal Government," and Chris Wickham, "Rural Society in Carolingian Europe," in *NCMH 2*, pp. 383–430, 510–37.

[22] See Julia M.H. Smith, *Europe after Rome: A New Cultural History, 500–1000* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 40–50; Mayke de Jong, "*Imitatio Morum*: The Cloister and Clerical Purity in the Carolingian World," in *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York, 1998), pp. 49–80, esp. 52–53. On the reach of "popular" beliefs and practices in early medieval societies, across social class, see the wonderfully rich and insightful study by Bernadette Filotas, *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature* (Toronto, 2005).

[23] James C. Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity: A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation* (New York, 1994); Smith, *Europe after Rome*, esp. pp. 231–39.

further, we take a fresh, careful look at the evidence for early medieval thought and ritual pertaining to the Eucharist outside the ranks of his intellectual peers. One of my aims here is to show, on the basis of some of this material, how slippery were the concepts of "Eucharist" and "Mass" for many early medieval Christians, including probably Warin's students.

It is important to note that there are major obstacles, greater than faced by historians who study later centuries, to investigating religious thought or practice in the non-elite populations of early medieval Europe. Not only do fewer sources of any kind—textual or non-textual—survive from this period than the later Middle Ages; what the extant writings most directly convey are the viewpoints of the learned monastic and clerical authors and scribes who produced almost all the written material. Wherever they claim to describe ideas or practices outside the circles of their peers, we must remember that we are reading through a filter created by them and perpetuated by similarly educated copiists and authors who preserved their work in later centuries. The answers we can propose to questions about Christian spirituality in more "ordinary" early medieval populations—questions, for example, about what *they* viewed as acceptable belief and practice—thus remain tentative and often fragmentary. Yet the difficulties should not distract us from the evidence that does exist, sometimes partially hidden beneath the surface rhetoric of our texts.[24]

When Is a Ritual a Mass?

It is best to begin with what the monastic and clerical elites thought other Christian faithful *should* understand and be taught about the Eucharist, as indicated by surviving written sources. First and most obviously, a great variety of early medieval writings—commentaries on the New Testament, liturgical texts, poetry and hymns, expositions

[24] For studies that show us how much can be learned by careful handling of the sources, see Mayke de Jong, "Religion," in *The Early Middle Ages*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (The Short Oxford History of Europe) (Oxford, 2001), pp. 131–64; Yitzhak Hen, "Converting the Barbarian West," in *Medieval Christianity*, ed. Daniel E. Bornstein (A People's History of Christianity) 4 (Minneapolis, 2009), pp. 29–52, esp. 48–52; Julia M.H. Smith, "Religion and Lay Society," in *NCMH 2*, pp. 654–78; Lesley Abrams, "Germanic Christianities," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Vol. 3 Early Medieval Christianities, c. 600–c. 1100* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 107–29.

of the Mass, and other works—provide clear evidence of a consistent basic definition of "Eucharist," though allowing more room for variation than historians sometimes seem to realize.[25] Different terms are used to designate the sacrament (sacrifice, Eucharist, oblation, communion, the Lord's body and blood, etc.); yet there seems universal acceptance of the principle that the prayers and actions of Mass liturgies effect a transformation such that bread, bread and wine, or wine mixed with water are in some sense Christ's body and blood. We will consider the language in which this change is described further shortly, but for now it should be noted that while bread seems invariably an ingredient of the sacrament, wine was not always considered necessary. Written Mass liturgies commonly refer to the cup or chalice, but not its contents,[26] and stories of miraculous transformations of water into wine or the miraculous increase of wine may be clues that churches and monasteries, particularly in northern regions, found it hard to maintain their supply.[27] In some cases, water or another drink was substituted. A church ruling from the seventh-century Spanish peninsula condemns priests who replace the wine with grapes or milk.[28] A sixth-century decree from Auxerre forbids eucharistic drinks of water mixed with honey; the tenth-century scholar Regino of Prüm warns against the use of honey and milk.[29] And *The Heliand*, a ninth-century

[25] The classic studies of early medieval eucharist theology are Henri Cardinal de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages, Historical Survey*, trans. Gemma Simmonds (London, 2006); J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, 2 vols. (New York, 1951); Josef Geiselmann, *Die Eucharistielehre der Vorscholastik* (Paderborn, 1926). The best surveys of early medieval liturgical sources are Cyrille Vogel, *Introduction aux sources de l'histoire du culte chrétien au moyen âge*, rev. ed. (Spoleto, 1975), and Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century* (Minnesota, 1998). Other scholarship and primary sources are cited below.

[26] This is in accord with Jesus' words over the cup in the New Testament Last Supper narratives: Matthew 26:27, Mark 14:23, Luke 22:17, 1 Cor. 11:25.

[27] Adamnan, *Vita S. Columbani*, 2, PL 88, cols 725–66, at 743; Adamnan implies that the community used water in these circumstances. For other, similar miracles, Giselle de Nie, *Views from a Many-Windowed Tower: Studies of Imagination in the Works of Gregory of Tours* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 112–13. On wine in early medieval trade: Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, AD 300–900* (Cambridge, 2001), esp. pp. 653–54, 609, 699. Donald Bullough notes the problems in northern England obtaining olive oil for chrism and wine: *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden, 2004), p. 161 and n. 96, p. 310.

[28] Concilio de Braga 3 (a. 675), in *Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos*, ed. José Vives (Barcelona, 1963), p. 372.

[29] Synodus Autissiodorensis a. 561–605, c. 8, *CCSL* 148A, ed. C. de Clercq (Turnhout, 1963), p. 266; Regino, *Libri duo de synodalibus causis* L. 1, c. 62, p. 53 [thanks to Ian Levy for the reference to Regino]. The source of the milk and honey traditions lies at least partly in the notion of four paradisal liquids: milk, honey, wine, and oil. See Jennifer O'Reilly, "The Hiberno-Latin Tradition of the Evangelists and the Gospels of Mael Brigte," *Peritia* 9 (1995), pp. 290–309, esp. pp. 293–95. Also note the close relationship between blood and milk in medieval thought; see Caroline W. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, 1987), pp. 269–76. The substitutions for wine just noted are discussed in an important, as yet unpublished essay by Gary Macy, "Bloody Marvelous: Discussions of the Wine in Medieval Eucharistic Theology." My thanks to him for kindly permitting me to reference his work.

poem on the life of Christ in Old Saxon, refers to fruit or apple wine (*thiu scapu uuârun lîdes alârid*) at the feast of Cana. The poet uses the term wine (*uuin*) for the last supper, but the implication is that alternatives to grape wine were accepted in his milieu, as well.[30]

As for the bread, certain Carolingian statutes restrict its preparation to clergy; yet this was customarily women's work, and a few writings imply that their bread-making was an integral part of the ritual of confecting Christ's body and blood. In a "first" stage, it seems, women turned wheat into bread; in a second stage, men—the clergy—were responsible for effecting body and blood from, or in, bread or bread and wine.[31] Those who brought the bread usually carried it forward to the altar during the offertory with other oblations, additional gifts

[30] *Heliand und Genesis* (henceforth *Heliand*) 24, 26, ed. Otto Behaghel (Tübingen, 1958), ll. 2015–16, 4633, pp. 72, 160.

[31] Gisela Muschiol, *Famula Dei: Zur Liturgie in merowingischen Frauenklöstern* (Münster, 1994), p. 195 and n. 23 quotes a rule for nuns that permits the preparation on Saturday of the "oblation" (*oblacio*) for Sunday. The ruling suggests a similar view of the relation between the bread baking and the eucharistic consecration as the unpublished commentary on the Mass in Munich, Clm 6398, fols 68r–68v. The Munich text implies a smooth transition, as if these are two parts of a single process. My thanks to Christopher A. Jones for sending me the text of the Munich exposition with drafts of his translation and commentary; he is preparing the commentary and edition for eventual publication. The passage reads, "Precor fraternitatem tuam ut ea quae scripsi pridem recolens quæras locum illum, ubi de pane sacramenti dominici dixi eum, cum coquitur, hoc designare, quod per mortem nobis transeundum est ad illum panem caelestem. Notesque diligentius locum quia aliud tunc dixi quam intellegi uellem. Nam cum coquitur igne signum est quod in baptismo spiritu sancto exsiccatur ab omni amara aqua quo ante inundauit ut appareat arida. Cum uero in sacrificio frangitur, hoc mortem corporis uniuscuiusque designat. Unde et pars mittitur in calicem, hoc est anima ad deum, pars uero sumitur /68v/ a nobis qui terra sumus et uel hoc significat, quod caro terrae redditur, aut quod hic remanet illius panis semper usque ad finem mundi pars, quae illuc secutura est." On the Carolingian restrictions, Arnold Angenendt, "Das Offertorium," in *Zeichen-Rituale-Werte*, ed. Gerd Althoff unter Mitarbeit von Christiane Witthöft (Münster, 2004), pp. 71–150, at pp. 82–85. On other Carolingian reforms that increased restrictions on women's participation in the Mass, see Suzanne Wemple, *Women in Frankish Society: Marriage and the Cloister, 500 to 900* (Philadelphia, 1985), pp. 143–48.

to God that could include a variety of foods, as well as money and other items.[32] An eleventh-century ordeal ritual stipulates that the accused should eat bread and cheese—presumably both brought in the offertory—that were distributed from the altar in the midst of the Mass ceremony; the judicial process and the Mass liturgy are so tightly intertwined that they seem to involve the same bread (and cheese).[33] Earlier writings indicate that at the conclusion of Masses, any extra gifts should be divided into portions for the clergy, the upkeep of the church, and the poor.[34] Since Masses were often celebrated in conjunction with feasts, some of the offered food and drink might be consumed in those gatherings. The ninth-century Carolingian scholar Walafrid Strabo, tutor to the young Charles the Bald, condemns the presentation of gifts besides the bread and wine, and in particular the custom of laying lambs—presumably killed—under or near the altar at the offertory to be blessed ("consecrated") during the Easter liturgy and then eaten before the start of the following festal meal.[35] Some sacramentaries contain special prayers of consecration for Mass offerings besides bread or wine, such as grapes and beans.[36] The boundaries

[32] Ganz, "Giving to God in the Mass: The Experience of the Offertory," in *The Languages of Gift in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 18–32, with references to earlier literature; Angenendt, "Das Offertorium," pp. 78–82, 88–94. My thanks to David Ganz for providing me with a copy of his article prior to its publication. Walafrid Strabo in the ninth century and Burchard of Worms in the tenth century note prohibitions on offerings other than bread and wine and list a variety that were evidently customary: Walafrid, *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum*, 19, ed. Alice Harting-Correa (Leiden, 1996), pp. 106–08; Burchard, *Decretum*, 5.8; PL 140:754 (my thanks to Gary Macy for the Burchard reference).

[33] The Anglo-Saxon ordeal by *corsned* is referenced in the laws of Ethelred II (d. 1016): "Corsned," *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. *(Oxford, 1989)*. For the ritual, see Nos. 238–39, *A Source Book for Mediaeval History*, ed. and trans. Oliver J. Thatcher, Edgar H. McNeal (NY, 1905), pp. 409–10 (MGH LL 4to, 5, pp. 691, 630–31). The bread and cheese ordeal, like the use of milk as the eucharistic drink, echoes ancient bread and cheese eucharists. See Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 95–107.

[34] Ganz, "Giving to God," pp. 30–31; Angenendt, "Offertorium," pp. 97–98.

[35] Walafrid, *Libellus*, 19; ed. and trans. Harting-Correa, pp. 108–09: "...quidam agni carnes in pascha iuxta vel sub altari eas ponentes benedictione propria consecrabant et in ipsa resurrectionis die ante ceteros corporales cybos de ipsis carnibus percipiebant, cuius benedictionis series adhuc a multis habebetur" ("...some people used to consecrate the flesh of a lamb with a special blessing at Easter, placing it near or under the altar, and on the Day of Resurrection received some of that flesh before other bodily foods. An offshoot of this blessing is still practised by many people....").

[36] Derek Rivard, *Blessing the World: Ritual and Lay Piety in Medieval Religion* (Washington DC, 2009), pp. 51–53.

around bread and wine Eucharists were in a sense permeable, then; eucharistic consecration and communion could blend fairly smoothly into the offering, blessing/consecration, distribution, and consumption of other food and drink.[37]

Still, the extant literature indicates a consensus on the ideal, at least, that the Eucharist consists of bread or bread and wine, and that the Mass effects the presence in and through these elements of Christ's body and blood. What did educated monks and clergy expect less educated Christians to learn about the Eucharist besides this definition? To move toward an answer to this question, we should first consider the instruction offered them through the performance of Mass liturgies. Edward Schillebeeckx's observation concerning the Eucharist today holds for the early Middle Ages, as well: it acquires meaning not in isolation, but through ritual speech and actions.[38] The learned monks, nuns, and clergy of early medieval Europe wanted other Christians to experience the sacrament within the context of Masses as they did, and to draw meaning from that experience.[39] All Christians, no matter how little Latin they understood, would have been expected to grasp something of what transpired in the liturgy from participating in it and listening to the clergy's explanations.

In trying to gain a sense of these experiences, though, especially at lower levels of society, we need first to recognize the diversity of the forms for early medieval Masses reflected in extant writings, particularly in liturgical manuals. A few sacramentaries and missals giving Mass prayers, ordinaries outlining ritual, and biblical manuscripts with liturgical references survive from the seventh and eighth centuries, along with a much larger number of sacramentaries, missals, lectionaries, and other liturgical codices from the ninth-century

[37] A decree in the fifth-century Gallican *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* forbidding excommunicated monks (who could not receive the Eucharist) from bringing oblations in the offertory also suggests the closeness of meaning: *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua*, 49 (93), in *Concilia Galliae a. 314–506*, ed. Charles Munier, CCSL 148 (Turnhout, 1963), p. 174; Ganz, "Giving to God", p. 21. Note, too, the fluid transition from offertory to consecration in the Gelasian Scramentary, as if these involve the same act of gift-giving: "post haec offert plebs et confitiuntur sacramenta": *Liber sacramentorum Romanae aecclesiae ordinis anni circuli*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg, 3rd ed. (Rome, 1981), p. 59.

[38] Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist* (London, 1968), pp. 144–45.

[39] Louise P.M. Batstone, "Doctrinal and Theological Themes in the Prayers of the Bobbio Missal," in *The Bobbio Missal: Liturgy and Religious Culture in Merovingian Gaul*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Rob Meens (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 168–86, at 186.

Carolingian Empire.[40] These guides again point to certain basic norms consistent across time and place. Masses, they indicate, included both fixed prayers and actions and variable prayers, readings, and music special to the different observances of the liturgical calendar. Typically, as represented in these sources, the ceremony began with the clergy's ritual entrance or procession to the altar, then a series of prayers with readings from scripture, the church fathers, or hagiography, then possibly a homily.[41] Another set of prayers was recited until the offertory, and then catechumens and penitents, who would not receive communion, were separated from the rest of the congregation. After this came additional fixed and variable texts to complete the consecration of the bread and wine, leading up to the Lord's Prayer;[42] this section of the liturgy is conventionally known as the canon. Then the bread was broken, communion was distributed, and the service ended with a final prayer or prayers.

But there is a notable variety again within this frame. Not only do the variable prayers in the surviving sacramentaries and missals change to fit the different observances; we need to be mindful of the tremendous local and regional diversity.[43] Throughout the early Middle Ages, Rome's prestige was significant and liturgical books written outside the papal city often imply emulation of its customs; but even Carolingian sources show diversity, despite strong expressions of the ideal of unity

[40] Palazzo, *History*, pp. 38–56; Vogel, *Introduction aux sources*, pp. 31–187.

[41] Yizhak Hen notes the "fondness of Merovingian liturgists for apocryphal texts" for the readings: "The Liturgy of the Bobbio Missal," in *Bobbio Missal*, ed. Hen and Meens, pp. 140–53, at p. 149. This missal is published in *The Bobbio Missal: A Gallican Mass-Book (Ms. Paris lat. 13246)*, ed. E.A. Lowe (Hentry Bradshaw Society) 58, 61 (Woodbridge, UK, 1920, 1924).

[42] On the absence of the institution narrative from some Mass liturgies, see below.

[43] The Bobbio Missal, for instance, contains seventy-six different *Contestationes* (one of the variable prayers) for sixty-two Masses: Batstone, "Doctrinal and Theological Themes," p. 176. The Old Gelasian Sacramentary contains 289 different Masses: Yitzhak Hen, *The Royal Patronage of Liturgy in Frankish Gaul To the Death of Charles the Bald (877)* (London, 2001), p. 31. As Batstone remarks concerning the Merovingian material, "The diversity that existed in the liturgical traditions of local churches and the church more widely was a feature of the liturgy that was both accepted and expected. Gaul's Catholic church was a champion of local traditions and responded keenly to local situations": "Doctrinal and Theological Themes," p. 186. A good sense of the regional variety is gained from the articles in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01394a.htm): "Ambrosian Rite," "Gallican Rite," "Mozarabic Rite," "Celtic Rite."

and adherence to Roman norms.[44] Those individuals who witnessed Masses celebrated in different churches, even close by one another, according to the directives of different liturgical guides, would have noticed dissimilarities. Monasteries and churches conducted different votive Masses and observed different saints' feast days.[45] Manuscripts were revised as they changed hands to suit local needs; the Stowe Missal, an Irish service book probably written originally for an itinerant cleric in the early ninth century, shows substantial alterations to the order of the Sunday Mass when a different community acquired it not long after its completion.[46] Other books assign the same variable prayers and readings to the Masses of different days, or different texts to the same liturgical event.[47] Narrative sources make clear that individual clergy and centers had their own arrangements for processions, seating, music, utensils and vessels, and other ritual features.[48]

Even regarding the "narrative of institution," a supposedly fixed element of western liturgies based on the New Testament accounts of the Last Supper, there were divergent practices. The narrative itself comes in different versions, and although its inclusion in varying forms can be traced back to the ancient church,[49] a few early medieval guidebooks for Masses leave it out entirely. Most notably, it is lacking in most manuscripts of Mozarabic liturgies.[50] In his exposition of the Mass, the seventh-century Spanish bishop, Isidor of Seville makes no mention

[44] Hen, *Royal Patronage of Liturgy*, esp. pp. 42–95; Felice Lifshitz, "A Cyborg Initiation? Liturgy and Gender in Carolingian East Francia," in *Paradigms and Methods in Early Medieval Studies*, ed. Celia Chazelle and Felice Lifshitz (New York, 2007), pp. 101–17, esp. p. 102. I discuss a case of creative adaptation of Roman materials in a forthcoming article, "Art and Reverence in Bede's Churches at Wearmouth and Jarrow," in *Intellektualisicrung und Mystifizierung mittelalterliche Kunst*, ed. Martin Büchsel and Rebecca Müller (Berlin, 2010), pp. 79–98.

[45] On the Merovingian situation, Hen, "Liturgy of the Bobbio Missal," passim.

[46] Sven Meeder, "The Early Irish Stowe Missal's Destination and Function," *Early Medieval Europe* 13 (2005), pp. 179–94, at 181–85.

[47] Hen, *Royal Patronage*, pp. 28–33.

[48] Muschiol, "Men, Women, and Liturgical Practice," pp. 203–13. Another notable example of creative ritual is discussed in Susan A. Rabe, *Faith, Art, and Politics at Saint-Riquier: The Symbolic Vision of Angilbert* (Philadelphia, 1995).

[49] Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 2:194–201.

[50] E.g. London, British Library, Add. 30844, Add. 30845, and Add. 30846, analyzed in Rose Walker, *Views of Transition: Liturgy and Illumination in Medieval Spain* (London, 1998), pp. 154–73, see esp. 161–62; see Marius Férotin, *Le Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum et les manuscrits mozarabs* (1912; repr. Rome, 1995), pp. 108–10 (xx–xxii). Walker maintains that the words of institution were omitted either because they were known by heart or too sacred to be written, but it is possible the manuscripts reflect an older tradition in which they were not recited. Some Syrian liturgies also evidently lacked the narrative: Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 2:194–95 n.1. On

of the narrative and implies that in the tradition familiar to him, the consecration moves smoothly through a series of prayers culminating with the Lord's Prayer.[51] In a letter to Bishop John of Syracuse, Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604) maintained that consecration with the Lord's Prayer alone was the practice of the apostles. Although early medieval Roman Masses included some version of the words of institution, Gregory's comment is ambiguous, and one can imagine some medieval readers of his letter believing it to mean that he followed the supposedly apostolic custom.[52] Thus it is possible that some clergy outside Rome, perhaps relying on books like the Mozarabic missals just noted or on Isidor's outline of the liturgy, celebrated Masses with no institution narrative, in which the culminating formula of consecration was the Lord's Prayer. In so doing, they may have thought they were following Roman or Gregorian norms.[53]

variants in the narrative itself, Raúl Gómez-Ruiz, *Mozarabs, Hispanics, and the Cross* (Maryknoll, NY, 2007), p. 62.

[51] Isidor, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, 1.15, CCSL 113, ed. Christopher M. Lawson (Turnhout, 1969), pp. 17–18.

[52] Although Gregory refers to his usage of a "canon," he does not describe its content in the letter and makes no reference there specifically to an institution narrative. The passage seems best translated as follows: "We say the Lord's Prayer immediately after the prayer [the context indicates Gregory means the "canon"], since it was the custom of the apostles that they would consecrate the oblation at the Lord's Prayer alone. And certainly it seems to me unsuitable that we should say some prayer composed by a scholar over the oblation and not say the tradition which our Redeemer composed [ie., the Lord's Prayer, a prayer 'handed down' and thus traditional vs. newly composed] over his body and blood." ("Orationem uero Dominicam idcirco mox post precem dicimus, quia mos apostolorum fuit, ut ad ipsam solummodo orationem oblationis hostiam consecrarent, et ualde mihi inconueniens uisum est, ut precem quam scolasticus composuerat super oblationem diceremus et ipsam traditionem quam Redemptor noster composuit super eius corpus et sanguinem non diceremus....") Gregory, *Registrum, Ep.* 9.26, CCSL 140A, ed. Dag Norberg (Turnhout, 1982), p. 587.

[53] Gregory's letters were read outside Rome by the eighth century. Bede was one of their early readers and in a number of his writings stresses the importance of emulating both the apostles and Gregory's Rome, the period, in his belief, of the height of papal virtue. The classic study of this aspect of Bede's thought remains Paul Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great* (Jarrow, UK, 1964). In his letter to Egbert, Bede comments that all clergy should know the Lord's Prayer by heart, in the vernacular if they do not know Latin: Bede, *Ep. Egberti*, 5, in *Venerabilis Baedae Historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum, Historiam abbatum, Epistolam ad Ecgbertum, una cum Historia abbatum auctore anonymo*, 2 vols., ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford, 1896), 1:408–09. The Council of Clofesho (747) issued a similar ruling: "English Church [Council of Clovesho, AD 747]," 2.10, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. A.W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1869–71), 3 (1871), 366; see Catherine Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650–c. 850* (London, 1995), pp. 99–100. On later discussions of the Lord's Prayer and Gregory's letter, Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West* (New York, 2008), pp. 44–46. If the letter inspired this understanding of the "Gregorian" Mass, one aim behind the diffusion of so-called Gregorian sacramentaries in the Carolingian Empire may have been to offset such ideas.

As this should indicate, it is also critical to recognize that experiences of Masses varied more than is revealed in the surviving liturgical texts. Here we need to give thought to the overall scarcity of such guides. Liturgical manuscripts and manuscript fragments make up a sizable portion of extant early medieval writing in any genre, and there have obviously been huge losses over the centuries; many more books were produced than have come down to us.[54] None of the early manuscripts, though, presents a complete set of the materials needed to perform the Masses outlined—readings, prayers, and directions for ritual. Further, regardless of losses, the number of available books was certainly small, especially before the ninth century, and there must have been discrepancies in access. The largest monasteries and cathedrals, elite centers of learning and wealth, would have been well-equipped, whereas many smaller monasteries, convents, and churches would have had few liturgical manuals and incomplete sets of scripture, a situation that limited the choice of biblical lections.[55] Whether or not clergy had correctly memorized Mass rituals and fixed prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer, the lack of guides almost certainly meant diverse practices for variable prayers.[56] In many cases, they must have been recited imperfectly from memory, improvised, or omitted.

Another factor to consider is that the contents of those books that were available probably varied more than is apparent today from the survivals. Although the manuscripts we have are diverse, the ones preserved were usually valued for some reason in later centuries; books containing liturgical forms eventually judged to be incorrect were

[54] Vogel, *Introduction aux sources*, pp. 1–2, estimates that about ten percent of all surviving early and later medieval manuscripts are liturgical.

[55] Patrick McGurk, "The Oldest Manuscripts of the Latin Bible," in *The Early Medieval Bible: Its Production, Decoration and Use*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 1–23; on the situation in early Anglo-Saxon England, Richard Gameson, "The Royal 1.B.vii Gospels and English Book Production in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," *ibid.*, pp. 24–52, esp. 43–52.

[56] See below, on legislative rulings that bishops examine their clergy for their knowledge of the Mass prayers. The penitential ascribed to Theodore of Canterbury stipulates that Christians should not receive communion from priests who cannot correctly recite the Mass prayers and lessons: "Penitential of Theodore," 2.10, *Medieval Handbooks*, p. 200.

likely discarded.[57] The decree of Charlemagne's *General Admonition* (789) complaining that prayer is sometimes based on "uncorrected" books and enjoining diligence in the copying of missals hints at these conditions.[58] Some Mass prayers of Frankish (Merovingian) sacramentaries declare their liturgies to be "legitimate," a term that Louise Batstone has plausibly argued reflects a strong desire, in the face of such circumstances, to assure correct ceremonial.[59] Also deserving of note are the rulings that clergy should be properly appointed and educated, including about Mass ritual, and should conduct the liturgy correctly, or that condemn "false" priests and bishops. These directives count among the evidence of repeated disagreements over who held clerical status and the right to perform liturgies, and, again, over what constituted proper liturgical conduct.[60] So, too, do the sources reflecting efforts to suppress women ministers. A letter from three sixth-century Gallican bishops objects to the female *conhospitae* ("housemates," possibly wives) of two Breton priests, noting that the women administered the chalice, and a few other early medieval writings that condemn women ministers imply they celebrated Masses or concelebrated with men.[61] We should bear in mind that the targets of all these condemnations had supporters who saw these liturgies and their celebrants as legitimate.

Moreover, whatever the availability of "correct" liturgical books and "properly" appointed or trained clergy, most early medieval Christians probably had limited exposure to such Masses, however "imperfectly"

[57] As Macy notes regarding sources for women's ordination: *Hidden History*, pp. 50–53.

[58] *Admonitio generalis* (henceforth *AG*) 72, MGH *Leges* 2, *Capitularia* 1, ed. A. Boretius (Hanover, 1883) (henceforth MGH *Capit.* 1), pp. 59–60.

[59] E.g. *legitima eucharistia*: Batstone, "Doctrinal and Theological Themes," pp. 181–82.

[60] *Concilium Germanicum A. 742*, Praef., 1, 3, 4, MGH *Leges* 3, *Concilia* 2, ed. Albert Werminghoff (Hanover, 1906) (henceforth MGH *Conc.* 2), pp. 2, 3; *Concilium Francofurtense A. 794*, 29, MGH *Conc.* 2, p. 169; *AG* 2, 53, 54, 70, 72, MGH *Capit.* 1, pp. 54, 57, 59; *Concilium Arelatense A. 813*, 3, 4, MGH *Conc.* 2, pp. 250–51; *Karoli Magni capitulare primum (c. 769)*, 8, MGH *Capit.* 1, p. 45; "Council of Clovesho," 2.10, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, 3, p. 366. The correspondence of St. Boniface contains numerous references to problematic clergy and ritual actions: *Die Briefe des Heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl, MGH *Epistolae* 1 (Berlin, 1916), English translation in, *The Letters of Saint Boniface*, trans. Ephraim Emerton, with a new introduction and bibliography by Thomas F.X. Noble (New York, 2000).

[61] *Les Sources de l'Histoire du Montanisme*, ed. Pierre de Labriolle (Collectanea Friburgensia, n.s.) 15 (Fribourg, 1913), pp. 227–28. See Macy, *Hidden History*, pp. 61–63.

conducted, and less opportunity than we might expect to grow familiar with their rituals and prayers. Until the eighth century, monasteries and convents, centers of pastoral care not only for their residents but for lay communities, gave less weight to Masses than to the office, which did not require priests.[62] The Rule of St. Benedict is ambivalent about the admission of priests into monasteries and the appointment of resident monks to the priesthood, implying fear that the position encouraged arrogance; priests—and hence regular Masses—were by no means thought necessary for a well-ordered house.[63] Benedict nonetheless stipulates that monks should receive communion every Sunday, yet the Eucharist could have been reserved from Masses performed earlier by visiting clergy, and there is evidence that bread may have been brought to the monasteries already consecrated.[64] The rule of the eighth-century Irish movement of the Céli Dé (Clients of God) also implies that Masses were a minor concern in the monks' devotion: it instructs that brothers be admitted to communion gradually, progressing from reception of the bread alone once a year, to weekly communion only after seven years.[65]

The increase, from the eighth century, in the offering of votive Masses in Frankish monasteries, and accordingly in monks ordained to the priesthood, expanded the opportunities for both monks and laity living nearby to hear Masses and receive communion. By the

[62] Angelus A. Häussling, *Mönchskonvent und Eucharistiefeier: Eine Studie über die Messe in der abendländischen Klosterliturgie des frühen Mittelalters und zur Geschichte der Messhäufigkeit* (Münster Westfalen, 1973), pp. 30–31, 156–59.

[63] *Regula sancti Benedicti* (henceforth *RSB*) 60, 62.

[64] See *RSB* 17, 38. The meaning of *missa* changed over time; early usages (*missa, missae*) have sometimes been misconstrued as necessarily references to Masses. *RSB* 17 calls for *missae* at every canonical hour, but only in the reference to Sunday (*RSB* 38) is the term combined with a notice that the monks should receive communion. It is only in the eighth century that the term clearly began to be used specifically for the eucharistic service: Josef A. Jungmann, *The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey* (Collegeville, MN, 1975), pp. 64–65. The meanings of *communio* and related words seem to have similarly evolved. Muschiol sometimes assumes the references are to Masses and Eucharists when this seems unlikely from the contexts: *Famula Dei*, pp. 192–93 and n. 4, 197–98. Penances for dropping consecrated hosts on the ground or allowing them to get dirty or decay, or be eaten by beasts, suggest they were carried from church to church and, probably, stored for later services: "Preface of Gildas," 21, "Penitential of Theodore," 12.6, 8, "Penitential Ascribed by Albers to Bede," 14.2, 3, *Medieval Handbooks*, pp. 177, 195, 230.

[65] Michael W. Herren and Shirley Ann Brown, *Christ in Celtic Christianity: Britain and Ireland from the Fifth to the Tenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 35–38, 125–30.

ninth century, daily Masses and daily reception of the Eucharist by monks were likely standard in the larger Carolingian monasteries; but nuns would have heard Masses less often. As for laypeople, nobles with churches on their property had the easiest access to Mass liturgies,[66] whereas many rural peasant settlements probably received only occasional visits from itinerant clergy like the original owner of the Stowe Missal.[67] Conciliar decrees note that the faithful should come to churches on Sundays and receive the Eucharist at least a few times a year, but the need to rule about this implies attendance was generally less frequent. Writing in the early 730s, Bede suggested that three times a year was the norm among "more religious" (*religiosiores*) laity. The ninth-century abbot of Fulda and later archbishop of Mainz, Rabanus Maurus, among other early medieval authors, wrote of the dangers to the soul of communion in a state of sin.[68] The preaching of this idea may well have discouraged laity from attending Masses and perhaps also explains the reluctance of certain priests, too, according to the *General Admonition*, to receive the Eucharist.[69] If enforced, the various injunctions that women should not enter churches or take communion if menstruating or after childbirth, and that they should never approach the altar, further limited their participation.[70]

When lay men or women did come to churches, judging by condemnatory texts, they might pass the time socializing, telling stories, and singing songs, and sometimes stayed for only a portion of the Mass.[71] Walafrid Strabo accuses lay people of roaming from church

[66] Janet L. Nelson, "Church Properties and the Propertied Church: Donors, the Clergy and the Church in Medieval Western Europe from the Fourth Century to the Twelfth," *English Historical Review* 124 (2009), 355–74. Church legislation sought to curtail the performance of Masses and other Christian rituals in homes, probably in part because the home was a major site of traditional, non-Christian ("pagan") religious activity. See Filotas, *Pagan Survivals*, pp. 211–15.

[67] According to Willibald, itinerant clergy inspired the young St. Boniface: *Vita S. Bonifacii*, PL 89:603–34, at PL 89:605. Bede describes the journeys of Cuthbert into remote areas in *Historia Ecclesiastica* (henceforth *HE*) 4.27, ed. Plummer, pp. 269–70.

[68] Rabanus, *De institutione clericorum libri tres*, 1.31, ed. Detlev Zimpel (Freiburger Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte) 7 (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), p. 331; Bede, *Ep. Egberti*, 15, ed. Plummer, p. 419. On lay reluctance to receive communion, Smith, "Religion and Lay Society," pp. 661–63.

[69] *AG* 6, MGH *Capit.* 1, p. 54.

[70] Muschiol, *Famula Dei*, pp. 208–10; *idem*, "Men, Women, and Liturgical Practice," pp. 206–07.

[71] *Conc. Baiuwaricum* 3, MGH *Conc.* 2, p. 52; "Council of Clovesho," 2.12, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* 3, p. 366. Further sources noted in Smith, "Religion and Lay Society," pp. 663–64.

to church, remaining only for the offertory in each, since, he claims, they want to make numerous oblations of their own, believing them more important than receiving the sacrament.[72] The frequent blending of Masses with other ritual may have left some witnesses unsure where one ceremony ended and the other began. The processions of the relics of Saints Marcellinus and Peter described by the ninth-century Carolingian courtier, Einhard, flowed into and out of Masses celebrated before crowds in churches and the open air.[73] Bede cites Gregory the Great approvingly for the idea that when pagan animal sacrifices coincide with the feasts of martyrs, Christians, too, may sacrifice animals if the intention is to honor the saints, and—presumably after the Mass—the meat can be eaten.[74] A Frankish decree of 742 implies similar customs when it condemns sacrifices for the dead, along with "prophecizing, divinizing, auguries, incantations, and animal sacrifices…by stupid men in pagan ritual near churches, in the name of saints, martyrs, or confessors."[75]

On the other hand, many early medieval Christians may have encountered the Eucharist more often outside the Mass than within a "Mass" liturgical frame—in other ritual settings that would have lent the bread and wine a different range of meanings. By the eighth century, the custom of a Good Friday "Mass of the presanctified elements" is attested, a communion service with bread and wine held over from the Thursday Mass, or previously consecrated bread mixed with unconsecrated wine.[76] Two eleventh- or twelfth-century Italian manuscripts contain orders for communion services led by female celebrants (nuns) that likely had antecedents in earlier centuries. The orders imply the use, again, of previously consecrated elements; they lack the words of institution, and the prayers ask God's blessing on the participants rather than the bread and wine. In other respects, though, they so closely recall written Mass liturgies that one can wonder if such

[72] Walafrid, *Libellus*, 23, ed. Harting-Correa, pp. 138–41, 148–49. Some rules for nuns set penalties for arriving late or leaving early: Muschiol, *Famula Dei*, pp. 199–200.

[73] Einhard, *The Translation and Miracles of the Blessed Martyrs, Marcellinus and Peter*, e.g. 1.12, 14; 2.6; 3.1, 4, in *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard*, ed. and trans. Paul E. Dutton (Petersborough, ON, 1998), pp. 81–82, 89, 92, 94.

[74] Bede, *HE* 1.30, ed. Plummer, pp. 65–66.

[75] *Conc. Germanicum*, 5, MGH *Conc.* 2, pp. 3–4; see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895* (London, 1977), p. 120.

[76] Gerhard Römer, "Die Liturgie des Karfreitags," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 77 (1955), pp. 39–93, at 86–93.

rituals were not sometimes used in convents as "Masses" when priests were unavailable.[77]

The Eucharist was also consumed at baptisms and in deathbed rites, which many Christians must have attended far more frequently than Masses. The *viaticum*, the communion given to the gravely ill or dying, and sometimes, evidently, to the "half dead," seems typically to have consisted of previously consecrated bread.[78] Baptisms were traditionally performed during the Easter and Pentecost vigils, just before the festival Mass when the newly baptized would receive communion; but already prior to the Carolingian period, it became customary to baptize the ailing and infants on other days of the year, and give them communion as soon as possible after their anointing. The baptismal orders generally do not refer to the celebration of a Mass.[79] And what was done in urgent situations—in birthing rooms, say, with dying babies and mothers, where only women were usually present? Although the sources are silent on this issue, it is reasonable to think that in circumstances like these, too, given the fluidity and variety of practices already seen, rites of communion or "Eucharist" might be performed to comfort the dying and ease their transition to the next life.[80]

Finally, we should note that the eucharistic bread and wine and aspects of Mass ceremonial are mentioned in supposedly "magical" contexts. These practices, too, provided early medieval Christians with

[77] Jean Leclercq, "Eucharistic Celebrations Without Priests in the Middle Ages," *Worship* 55 (1981), 160–68; André Wilmart, "Prières pour la communion en deux psautiers du Mont-Cassin," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 43 (1929), 320–28.

[78] See Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1990), pp. 39, 75. As Caedmon lay dying, he asked if the Eucharist was at hand, and the bread was quickly brought to him; no Mass is mentioned. Those attending him imply that only someone about to die would ask for the sacrament, suggestive of the infrequency of lay communion: Bede, *HE* 4.24, ed. Plummer, pp. 261–62; also see *HE* 4.14, ed. Plummer, p. 235. On the *viaticum* for the "half-dead," see "Die Hirtenbriefe Aelfrics in altenglischer und lateinischer Fassung," ed. Bernhard Fehr, *Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa* 9 (Hamburg, 1914), *Briefe* 1, 3, pp. 19, 150–51; cf. Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, p. 33, on the Roman practice of placing a coin in the mouth of the dead. The Christian practice evokes the medieval view of the transition from life to death as gradual and the boundary between the two states as indefinite, in contrast to our own, more "binary" views. My thanks to Joseph Hlubik for this insight and Helen Foxhall Forbes (February 2009) for references to Aelfric.

[79] Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame, 2002). On the shift to infant baptism throughout the year, 1:156–58, see 2, passim, for the orders.

[80] I am very grateful to Michelle Brown for emphasizing this to me (February 2009).

alternative frames of reference, different from "standard" Mass liturgies, for understanding what the Eucharist was and its significance.[81] Women are often associated with magic in early medieval literature; whether or not their interest indeed surpassed that of men, it may have been encouraged by the restrictions on their roles in the liturgies our sources define as Christian. The preponderance of the evidence (magic + Eucharist or elements of the Mass) comes from the eleventh and later centuries, but a number of writings of earlier centuries refer to divination by gazing into chalices, altars used as sites of judgment, bread ritually endowed with magical powers, potions containing consecrated wine, incantations incorporating scripture or liturgical prayer, and so on.[82]

Preaching and Teaching

For early medieval faithful who did regularly witness some version of the Mass liturgies indicated in the surviving liturgical guides, and had some understanding of the Latin prayers or received explanations from the clergy, the visual and aural tapestries of these ceremonies must have exerted a profound influence on their thinking about the Eucharist. Interwoven with the ritual actions of procession, offertory, blessing, consecration, and communion, the spoken and sung texts would have reminded them of Old Testament foreshadowings of the sacrament, Christ's triumph over death and Satan in his resurrection and ascension, and his future return in glory; but the biblical events

[81] As Paul Bradshaw has observed regarding the situation in ancient Christianity, "...the abstraction of the elements from the eucharistic action [of Masses] as a whole would inevitably encourage people to think of them as somehow special in themselves": *Early Christian Worship: A Basic Introduction to Ideas and Practice* (Collegeville, MN, 1996), pp. 58–59. My thanks to Joseph Hlubik for the reference.

[82] An especially rich source is the *Lacnunga*, a "magical" handbook of the ninth to eleventh century containing both Christian and seemingly non-Christian prayers and rituals. A good portion of the material would fit well into a sacramentary. The handbook is published in J.H.G. Grattan and Charles Singer, *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine* (London, 1952). Also see Filotas, *Pagan Survivals*, pp. 122–23, 141, 243, 307–09; Jolly, "Medieval Magic," pp. 36–37; Valerie I.J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, 1991), pp. 149–50, 226–39, 254–55 and n. 4; and on women and magic, Don C. Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (University Park, PA, 2006), pp. 235–36 and n. 1. A Carolingian capitulary implies that bread made for magical purposes was being brought to churches for the offertory: *Capitula cum Italiae episcopis deliberata*, 3, MGH *Capit.* 1, p. 202.

most forcefully recalled were his Last Supper, passion, and death on the cross. Recorded Mass prayers fuse evocations of these episodes with thanksgiving and supplication, confirm the offer of sacrifice, and announce the presence of God's power. God assures that the great mystery and miracle sent from heaven to earth and mediated back to heaven through Christ is the same food enjoyed by the angels and saints, a foretaste of the heavenly feast, and a source of purification, eternal life, and unity with other faithful, the heavenly throng, and God.[83]

To any extent that early medieval monks and clergy tried to elucidate the significance of Masses for others in their care, a range of prose and poetical literature suggests additional likely themes of instruction. Besides the precept that the Mass prayers and actions create the presence of Christ's body and blood, three broad refrains are especially prominent.[84] One is the divine power miraculously revealed in and through the Eucharist: the omnipotence of God effecting the presence of body and blood and the sacrament's manifestation of this same spiritual power. Early medieval authors move easily among modes of conceptualizing the body of Christ; praise of the Eucharist merges with references to the incarnate, crucified, and resurrected body, the body of the Church or Christian community, the heavenly Christ, the Christ of the apocalypse and last judgment.[85] The sacrament, they announce, bestows divine grace, removes sins, wards off evil in the present, and brings the promise of future salvation to those who consume in faith, or judgment to anyone who receives in a state of sin or disbelief.[86] Verses by Theodulf of Orléans describe the Mass as a "sacred banquet" and "heavenly food and drink," the "blood and flesh of the lamb who brings fear to the dragon, conquers the lion, and bears away the world's ancient sins."[87] Prayers for the Easter vigil and Mass, in the sacramentary that Pope Hadrian sent Charlemagne, praise Christ's destruction of the chains of death, his victory over sin, death, and

[83] Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 27–32, 139–42.
[84] See the index under "liturgy" and "Mass/eucharist" in Chazelle, *Crucified God*.
[85] De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, pp. 13–36.
[86] E.g. Rabanus, *De institutione clericorum* 1.31, ed. Zimpel, p. 331; Walafrid, *Libellus* 18, ed. Harting-Correa, pp. 104–07; Candidus, *De passione Domini* 5, *PL* 106, col. 70A/B.
[87] Theodulf of Orléans, *Carmen* 58, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 1, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin, 1881), p. 554.

the devil, and the return of light to the world.[88] In *The Heliand*, Jesus begins his blessing of bread and wine at the Last Supper by thanking the Creator, and then reminds the disciples that his body and blood "is a powerful thing" (*thit is mahtig thing*).[89] While certain texts imply that the bread and wine possess power because they are changed into Christ's body and blood, a large number of writings reverse the action and describe Christ's power to "transform," "transfigure," or "convert" his body and blood into bread and wine.[90] Some Mozarabic prayers imply that the transformation is a two-way process; through the Holy Spirit, the body and blood are "transformed" into bread and wine while—an idea echoed by Isidor of Seville—bread and wine are "conformed" to body and blood.[91]

Early medieval writers also frequently refer to the sacrament and the Mass as a sacrifice commemorating and re-presenting Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross. Although this theme grows more pronounced in ninth-century Carolingian literature, it is found in earlier prose and poetry, as well.[92] At times the imagery of humility is entwined with reminders of omnipotence, in other instances Christ's suffering and death are set in the foreground. Gregory's fourth *Dialogue* narrates a series of miracles illustrating the power of Masses to free both the living and the dead from suffering and sin, and he explains that this power is rooted in our sacrifice imitating that of Christ. Those who "celebrate the mysteries of the Lord's passion" should also offer themselves "in contrition of heart," in order "to imitate what we do; for then there will truly be a sacrifice for us."[93] According to Bede's commentaries on Luke and Mark, Christ's breaking of the bread at the last supper

[88] *Le Sacramentaire grégorien* 1, ed. Jean Deshusses (Spicilegium Friburgense) 16, 3rd. ed. (Fribourg, 1992), nos. 359–91, pp. 182–93.
[89] *Heliand*, 56, ed. Behaghel, l. 4645, p. 161; see Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, pp. 47–48.
[90] Latin terms include *transformare, transfigurare, uertere, conuersio*, and variants. On both the Irish and other texts, Martin McNamara, "The Inverted Eucharistic Formula *Conversio corporis Christi in panem et sanguinis in vinum*," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 87C (1987), pp. 573–93.
[91] Isidor, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* 1.15; CCSL 113, p. 17: "Porro sexta exhinc succedit confirmatio sacramenti, ut oblatio quae deo offertur sanctificata per spiritum sanctum Christi corporis ac sanguinis conformetur." For other texts, as well, see P. Rinaldo Falsini, "La 'Conformatio' nella liturgia mozarabica," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 72 (1958), 281–91.
[92] Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 32–37, 142–64.
[93] Gregory, *Dialogus* 4.59; PL 77:428: "Sed necesse est ut cum haec agimus, nosmetipsos Deo in cordis contritione mactemus, quia qui passionis dominicae mysteria

signaled that his body would be broken because he willed it, just as he willed his resurrection.[94] In his allegorical commentary on the liturgy, the *Liber officialis*, the ninth-century Carolingian scholar Amalarius declares that the bread and wine place Christ's passion "on display";[95] for Amalarius' opponent, Florus of Lyons, Masses recall Christ's lowliness, since "unless he were humble, he would not be eaten or drunk."[96] The commentary on the Letter to the Hebrews by the ninth-century theologian, Haimo of Auxerre, recalls Melchisedech's offering of bread and wine as a prefiguration of Christ's sacrifice in the Eucharist, and the humanity of Christ's tears in Gethsemane and obedience unto death.[97]

A final, pervasive refrain of early medieval writing on the Eucharist to note is that the bread and wine signify and strengthen ecclesiastical and Christian unity.[98] According to Rabanus, the Mass is a "binding between God and men," when the priest, who has the "office of binding," offers the people's prayers to God.[99] An important vehicle of such ideas was feasting imagery. While we do not know how much bread and wine (or other drink) were generally consumed in early medieval Eucharists—the quantity likely varied and was probably often greater than is common today—and although other food could be presented in the offertory, the spartan character of the sacrament relative to other meals no doubt reminded many participants of fasting. Isidor of Seville asserts that the term *ceremoniae* for all liturgical rituals comes from *carendo*, and he links this to the Old Testament injunctions to

celebramus, debemus imitari quod agimus. Tunc ergo vere pro nobis hostia erit Deo, cum nos ipsos hostiam fecerimus."

[94] Bede, *In Lucam* 6.22, *In Marcum* 4.14; CCSL 120, pp. 378, 611.

[95] *Liber officialis* 3.25.1, in *Amalarii episcopi opera liturgica omnia* 2, ed. John M. Hanssens (Vatican, 1948–50), p. 340: "In sacramento panis et vini, necnon etiam in memoria mea, passio Christi in promptu est." See also Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*," pp. 344–45.

[96] Florus, *De expositio missae* 3; PL119:17: "Dominus itaque noster Jesus Christus in corpore et sanguine suo voluit esse salutem nostram. Unde autem commendavit corpus et sanguinem suum? De humilitate sua. Nisi enim esset humilis, nec manducaretur, nec biberetur."

[97] Haimo, *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos* 5; PL117:855–56.

[98] Gary Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period: A Study of the Salvific Function of the Sacrament According to the Theologians c. 1080–c. 1220* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 20–21. On the interplay between the ideas of communion (building community) and expiation through sacrifice, Nancy Jay, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion, and Paternity* (Chicago, 1992), pp. 17–29.

[99] Rabanus, *De institutione clericorum* 1.32, ed. Zimpel, p. 338. See Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 160–61 for other Carolingian literature.

abstain from certain foods.[100] Rabanus' defense of the use of bread rather than "more honorable" food for the Eucharist implies concern about criticisms of its simplicity.[101] But in accordance with the basic liturgical identification of the Mass as a feast, expressions of the belief that it creates and celebrates community often allude to feasting. The commentary on John by Alcuin, an Anglo-Saxon adviser to Charlemagne, to give one example, draws on Augustine to describe the union of the faithful with God and each other through the body that is the living bread from heaven. The Son of God descended from heaven to the cross in order to provide mortals with the source of eternal life. By "spiritually" eating and drinking his body and blood, the Christian is united with the savior who himself has two natures united in one person. Like the loaf of bread made from many grains and wine from many grapes, the shared food and drink of the Mass join faithful recipients together as members of the one body of Christ.[102] An implicit corollary is the exclusion from this community of non-believers, heretics, and penitents, who are not allowed to share the feast because of their separation from the body of Christ.

Responses

Assuming that early medieval monks and clergy (and probably nuns), even with limited education, taught other faithful along these lines, how might their audiences have responded to this instruction and thought about its relation to their own experiences of Eucharists, Masses, and other "eucharistic" rituals? Although the written sources do not offer straightforward evidence to assist with this question, we can make some plausible guesses if we reflect on a few ways that the ideas and practices outlined so far likely seemed, to early medieval Christians, in harmony with other customs and traditions perhaps more familiar to them than "correctly" performed Mass liturgies. Among these, we should first note some of the allegedly magical practices besides those that made use of the eucharistic bread and wine or Mass utensils and prayers. Particularly significant for understanding Pascasius' treatise,

[100] Isidor, *Etymologiae* 6.19.36–37; PL 82:255.

[101] Rabanus, *De institutione clericorum* 1.31, ed. Zimpel, pp. 328–29. Similarly, Walafrid, *Libellus* 17, ed. Harting-Correa, pp. 104–05.

[102] Alcuin, *Commentaria in S. Joannis Evangelium* 3.15; PL 100:834–37.

I think, was the prevalent belief, which clergy again condemned, that creatures could supernaturally change or "transform" (*transformare*) their physical forms through shape-shifting; the example best known to us is no doubt the werewolf.[103] Additionally, as Karen Jolly has observed, analogies can clearly be drawn between prayers, rituals, and the objects of Masses, on the one hand, and on the other hand non-Mass formulae that allude to the spiritual/supernatural presence of deities in effigies or idols or empowered food, drink, and talismans.[104] If Walafrid is correct that the laity attached more importance to their own oblations than to receiving communion, this was probably in part because they were so familiar with rituals—Masses and others—of votive offering and sacrifice. Access to Christian holy things like chrism, holy water, relics, and crosses may have reinforced ideas that the Eucharist is one type of spiritually empowered substance among others offering comparable benefits.[105] The three spells copied at the end of the Stowe Missal, at an uncertain later date, illustrate how early medieval clergy might regard Masses, Eucharists, and "magical" formulae and acts as elements of a common devotional sphere.[106]

Also relevant are the many writings, and some archaeological remains, that shed light on early medieval meal rituals. In a recent study focusing on Gaul, Bonnie Effros has beautifully demonstrated the symbolic complexity of feasts in early medieval communities and the multiple functions they served. Among other roles, feasts were the preeminent means to give thanks for abundance, honor the dead, and celebrate important life events. Like the "feast" of the Mass, they were a critical mechanism for preserving and building social bonds in a community and distinguishing its members from those on the outside—those excluded from the celebration or, if invited, ritually honored as guests.[107] The Anglo-Saxon epic poem, *Beowulf* says little

[103] Filotas, *Pagan Survivals*, p. 50, quoting Burchard of Worms (who uses the verb *transformare*), also pp. 77 and 312–17 citing Regino of Prüm and Burchard, and other related sources. The tradition of mumming implies similar ideas: Filotas, *Pagan Survivals*, pp. 156–62. For analogies in modern African popular culture, with reference to the Eucharist, http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0706/p09s01-coop.html.

[104] Jolly, "Medieval Magic," pp. 36–37.

[105] An equivalent penance is imposed for losing any "consecrated" object, including incense, thuribles, and tablets, as well as consecrated bread, in "Penitential Ascribed by Albers to Bede," 15.1, *Medieval Handbooks*, p. 230.

[106] Meeder, "Stowe Missal," pp. 180–81.

[107] Bonnie Effros, *Creating Community with Food and Drink in Merovingian Gaul* (New York, 2002). See Christina Lee, *Feasting the Dead: Food and Drink in Anglo-Saxon Burial Rituals* (Woodbridge, UK, 2007); Margorie A. Brown, "The Feast Hall in Anglo-Saxon Society," in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, ed. Martha Carlin and Joel T. Rosenthal (London, 1998), pp. 1–13. There are countless ethnographic and anthropological studies of feasting rituals in traditional societies that present interesting analogies. To note one example: *Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, ed. Michael Dietler and Brian Hayden (Washington, DC, 2001).

about the food served in the feasts described but tells at length about the songs and story-telling, gift-giving, speeches, and the women's carefully choreographed presentations of drink.[108] Other texts refer to feasts with Christian participants in which ritually killed meat was served. Whether or not the intention was to offer animal sacrifices, the clergy who condemned the events worried this was the meaning. The food of Christian-led feasts was customarily blessed; saints' lives recount miraculous multiplications of blessed food and drink to provision crowds, and the miraculous destruction of drinking vessels causing drunkenness when signed with the cross.[109] For many listeners, episodes like these, in literature that might be read aloud to audiences, must have recalled the power attributed to Mass liturgies, priests, and Eucharists. Some early medieval eating and drinking ceremonies, such as *agape* meals and the monastic drink ceremony of the *caritas*, were more overtly liturgical and thus Mass-like. An Anglo-Saxon decree of 787, probably reflecting in part a concern to distinguish Masses clearly from feasting rituals, forbids priests to wear secular dress when celebrating Masses (they should not have bare legs). It further warns that the laity should not bring crusts for the offertory, and horns should not be used to fabricate patens or as chalices "for sacrificing to God" because these things are "bloody"; the concern with blood suggests an association with animal sacrifice.[110] A number of texts imply that Christian

[108] *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, trans. Roy M. Liuzza (Peterborough, ON, 2000), ll. 491–661, 1008–1237. Cf. Hugh Magennis, "The Treatment of Feasting in the 'Heliand'," *Neophilologus* 69 (1985), 126–33, esp. 128–32.

[109] Effros, *Creating Community*, pp. 9–11, 13–17, 18. Individual blessings for meals appear e.g. in *Liber sacramentorum romanae aeclesiae ordinis anni circuli (Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 316/Paris Bibl. Nat. 7193, 41/56) (Sacramentarium Gelasianum)* 86–87, ed. Leo C. Mohlberg, Leo Eizenhöfer, and Peter Siffrin, 3rd ed. (Rome, 1960), p. 232; *Bobbio Missal*, p. 171.

[110] "English Church [Legatine Synods] AD 787," 10, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, 3, pp. 451–52: "Decimo capitulo: Ut ne quislibet ex ministris altaris, nudix cruribus ad missam celebrandam accedere audeat, ne turpitudo ejus appareat, et offendatur Deus.... Oblationes quoque fidelium tales fiant, ut panis sit, non crusta. Vetuimus etiam ne de cornu bovis calix aut patina fieret, ad sacrificandum Deo, quia sanguineae sunt." Condemning *agape* meals, Burchard of Worms, *Decretum* 3; PL 140:690 (Council of Laodicea); see Filotas, *Pagan Survivals*, p. 215. But prayers for

laity sometimes held feasts deliberately emulating Mass ceremonial—or at least that is how they are described. Venantius Fortunatus notes that the sixth-century Merovingian Queen Radegund hosted meals for priests on Sundays at her convent in Poitiers. Those who served her the Eucharist were in turn served from her table.[111] Gottschalk opens one of his treatises on the Eucharist by recalling a banquet where his Bulgarian host offered a toast, "in love of the god who makes his blood from wine."[112] The tenth-century historian, Richer of Reims describes a dinner given by Duke Charles of Lorraine for his archbishop, Adalbero. In a reversal of their roles at the Palm Sunday Mass earlier that day, Charles presents the cup containing broken bread and wine to Adalbero. As he does so, the king reminds the archbishop of his earlier presentation of the Eucharist, and utters words recalling the warnings to sinners against reception of communion "to judgment." "Drink this as a sign that you will hold and keep faith," Charles says, "But if you do not mean to keep faith, do not drink, lest you repeat the horrible image of Judas, the traitor."[113]

Among the other differences, one distinction to emphasize between Masses and many other feasts lies in the roles of women. Although

agape rituals are found e.g. in the *Sacramentarium Gelasianum mixtum*, ed. Klaus Gamber (Regensburg, 1973), pp. 74–75; and in the *Sacramentarium Gelasianum*, ed. Mohlberg, pp. 205–06. A Frankish order, probably late eighth-century, outlines a complex "liturgy" for a monastic meal presenting analogies to Masses: *Ordo* 19, in *Les Ordines romani du haut moyen âge*, ed. Michel Andrieu, 5 vols. (Louvain, 1931–60), 3 (1951), 217–27. On *caritas* drinking ceremonies and the decree of 787, see the very informative study by Carol Neuman de Vegvar, "A Feast to the Lord: Drinking Horns, the Church, and the Liturgy," in *Objects, Images, and the Word*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, 2003), pp. 231–56 (pp. 235–36 on *caritas* ritual). The horn cup or chalice also had magical connotations: *Lacnunga*, 5a, *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine*, p. 99.

[111] Venantius, *Vita Radegundis*, 1.18; PL 72:657: "Venerabili vero omni Dominico die hoc habebat in canone vel aestate vel hieme, ut pauperibus collectis primo merum sua manu de potu dulci porrigeret, puellae postea committens, ut omnibus illa propinaret: quia ipsa festinabat orationi occurrere, quo et cursum consummaret, et sacerdotibus ad mensam invitatis occurreret, quos adhuc regali more ad propria cum redirent, sine munere non laxaret." The reference to priests implies the Sunday services were Masses.

[112] "...nam quondam in terra Vulgarorum quidam nobilis potensque paganus bibere me suppliciter petiuit in illius dei amore qui de uino sanguinem suum facit....": Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, p. 325.

[113] Richer, *Histoire de France (888–995)*, ed. and trans. into French by Robert Latouche, 2 vols. (Paris, 1964, 1967), 2 (1964), 214–19; translated into English and discussed in Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, 1992), p. 118.

early medieval writers often describe the Mass as a symbol of unity, the roles of the actors in these liturgies could mirror the class divisions in lay society.[114] In terms of gender relations, however, Masses cut across social class. While early medieval women did sometimes minister in Masses and other eucharistic ceremonies, the surviving written sources generally condemn any behavior that implies they are priests. Only men should consecrate the Eucharist, the authors of these texts clearly believed. Beyond this, various penitentials and other writings note that women should not sit between priests during Masses, or even sometimes next to laymen, receive the sacrament in bare hands, or, as mentioned above, take communion at all when menstruating or after childbirth.[115] In contrast, women might sit at feasts near men of the same social rank, hold the food with bare hands, and serve, as in *Beowulf*.[116] Some early medieval churchmen sought to restrict feasting in convents, possibly in part because the actions of the nuns presiding over the meal rituals, blessing, and serving so closely resembled the prayers and actions of clergy performing Masses. And some nuns may indeed have perceived the rituals as comparable.[117] Similarly, we can speculate, along with the frequently expressed concerns for clerical sexual purity in early medieval literature, another worry behind the rulings against women living in the homes of clergy was possibly that meals and Masses (with women "concelebrating") might converge.[118]

It is obviously impossible to do full justice to the myriad beliefs about the Eucharist and the Mass among non-elite Christian populations in early medieval Europe, yet the foregoing considerations help

[114] Higher level clergy tended to come from noble families; the earliest Franco-Roman order, for the Easter Mass in Rome, notes that the pope is to receive the offerings of the aristocracy while lesser clergy receive gifts from those of lower social rank: *Ordo* 1, *Ordines Romani*, 2, ed. Andrieu, pp. 65–109, at 103–06.

[115] Muschiol, *Famula Dei*, esp. pp. 202–10; *idem*, "Men, Women and Liturgical Practice," pp. 204–07. The penitential attributed to Theodore decrees (7.1) that women should neither "stand among ordained men in the church, nor sit at a feast among priests." For this see *Medieval Handbooks*, p. 205.

[116] See Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages*, paperback edition (London,1998), pp. 99–101, 108–09; Dorothy Carr Porter, "The Social Centrality of Women in *Beowulf*: A New Context," *The Heroic Age* 5 (2001), http://www.mun.ca/mst/heroicage/issues/5/porter1.html.

[117] See Effros, *Creating Community*, pp. 16, 39–54.

[118] On the developing opposition to married clergy, Paul Beaudette, "'In the World but not of It': Clerical Celibacy as a Symbol of the Medieval Church," in *Medieval Purity and Piety*, pp. 23–46; on the Carolingian period, esp. de Jong, "*Imitatio Morum*" (above, n. 22).

us, I think, envisage a spectrum of possible attitudes. Most early medieval Christians probably had some experience of ceremonies they identified as Masses and of the teachings on the Eucharist outlined earlier. Probably, belief was widespread that through these rituals, bread or bread and wine or another drink become in some sense Christ's body and blood. When eaten and drunk, this body and blood provide spiritual protection against dangers in the present life, cleanse the faithful recipient of sins, and assist him or her to reach heaven in the next life. The idea that the Mass is a sacrifice or oblation to God commemorating the crucifixion and a feast strengthening the Christian community, and variants on these themes, I suspect, were also widely familiar. But most laity and a good number of less educated clergy, monks, and nuns probably situated the Mass and Eucharist, however understood, within a mental panoply encompassing a plethora of other "magical" and spiritual aids and rituals, as well—talismans, holy water, chrism, food offerings, amulets, love potions, and so on. And many, if not most Christians, probably received the Eucharist or participated in Masses much less often than they turned to other resources from this wide array of possibilities.

On the whole, this assessment is in line with a large volume of modern scholarship exploring popular culture and the fusion of Christian with non-Christian customs in early medieval Europe. Usually, though, in such studies, "Mass" and "Eucharist" are treated as if they are fixed, essentially unchanging categories, even when the many differences among Mass liturgies or the use of eucharistic elements and Mass prayers in non-Mass contexts are noted. Guided by the extant writings of early medieval clerical and monastic elites, we assume that the definitions of Mass and Eucharist in place by the end of the Roman Empire continued to prevail unchallenged through the early Middle Ages. For educated circles, this seems generally reasonable, despite the variety of beliefs and practices their writings accept as orthodox. But for the majority of Christians in this period, the categories of Mass and Eucharist were probably much more flexible and, at times, quite ambiguous or uncertain. Especially in places removed from centers of power and learning, there must have been situations in which ceremonies blended together, definitions were fuzzy, and opinions differed over which ritual signified what, how to distinguish them, and who could perform them. The clear dividing lines that the writers of our sources envisaged between Masses, communion services, feasts, and other food and drink rituals, between the Eucharist and food or

drink blessed in other ways, between correctly appointed clergy and so-called Arian clergy, false priests, women ministers, or others supposedly lacking legitimacy—were surely less clear to many faithful and occasionally, perhaps, actively resisted. Do bread and wine blessed in another ritual than a "Mass"—perhaps another kind of feast—but with similar prayers provide similar spiritual benefits? How much can a Mass deviate from the local understanding of "correct" liturgy before the bread and wine are not Christ's body and blood, or celebrants should be deemed Arians or magicians? If Mass prayers are said by laymen or women—whether *conhospitae*, nuns conducting meal ceremonies, or midwives attending mothers in childbirth—do they create the sacrament or impart another blessing to bread, wine, or other food? Such issues must have been differently resolved from one community to the next, often in ways that deviated from the definitions of correct practice and doctrine promoted in the surviving literature. Gottschalk's story of the Bulgarian feast—assuming the event is not fictional—illustrates the potential for divergent attitudes. Although he identifies the nobleman who invited him to drink "in love of the god who makes his blood from wine" as a pagan (*paganus*), it is reasonable to wonder if the host himself, presiding over the feast, saw it as a form of Christian Mass, the food as Eucharist, and his own position as that of a Christian priest.[119]

Pascasius Radbertus

Pascasius' treatise, "On the Lord's Body and Blood," was meant to help the Corvey novices understand the Eucharist by, in part, leading their thoughts away from this cultural and religious landscape of confluent and overlapping oblations, talismans, meal ceremonies, and the like. Perhaps because he shared some of the same cultural heritage, or perhaps as a strategy for instructing the monks, his language sometimes resonates with that wider arena of customs and attitudes. Yet a critical aspect of his teaching, which underscores the difference, for him, between the Eucharist and other feasts, votive offerings, and so on, is its unique place in the biblical narrative of salvation history,

[119] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, p. 325.

a narrative that rejects the legitimacy of any other sacrifices after the crucifixion.

The opening chapter—the chapter headings may reflect questions Warin had heard from his students—discusses "why it must not be doubted" that the Eucharist is Christ's true body and blood.[120] Pascasius' insistence, throughout the treatise, that the bread and wine are spiritually, imperceptibly transformed into the historical flesh and blood probably mirrors both his and Warin's beliefs and the influence of their studies of patristic writers, especially Ambrose.[121] Since Christ is divine Truth, Pascasius stresses, his declaration that the bread "is my flesh for the life of the world" must have been perfectly true; the bread truly becomes his flesh.[122] But unlike the concept—possibly easier for some Corvey monks to accept—that Jesus changes his body and blood into bread and wine, taking on their physical forms, the doctrine outlined in the treatise clearly distinguishes the sacrament from notions of "shape-shifting" and the multiplicity of spiritually or supernaturally empowered objects likely familiar to the novices.[123] Whereas in shape-shifting, the agent acquires a different physical appearance, in the Eucharist, according to Pascasius, there is no alteration at the visible or material level, neither of Christ nor of the bread and wine. And yet Christ does not merely endow the bread and wine with spiritual force, since they are indeed, inwardly changed into entirely different entities from what they appear to be—not a new "body" and "blood," as if bodies could be repeatedly created, but the unique flesh and blood of the incarnation and crucifixion. To illustrate that God has the power to do this, Pascasius recalls the work of creation and then other divine

[120] Pascasius, *De corpore* 1; CCCM 16, p. 13: "Christi communionem uerum corpus eius et sanguinem esse non dubitandum. Quisque Catholicorum recte Deum cuncta creasse de [ex] nihilo corde credit ad iustitiam et ore confitetur ad salutem, numquam dubitare poterit ex aliquo aliquid rursus fieri posse quasi contra naturam aliud, immo iure naturae, quod necdum erat."

[121] Chazelle, "Figure, Character, and the Glorified Body in the Carolingian Eucharistic Controversy," *Traditio* 47 (1992) pp. 9–19; Celia Chazelle, "Exegesis in the Ninth-Century Eucharist Controversy," in *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, ed. Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 167–187, at 172–74.

[122] Pascasius, *De corpore* 1; CCCM 16, pp. 15–16, 18.

[123] Only once is there a reference in the treatise to the idea that in the Mass, Christ changes his body and blood into bread and wine, and this occurs in a quotation from the sixth-century *Verba seniorum* added to a "fourth" edition of the treatise, probably not by Pascasius: Pascasius, *De corpore* 14; CCCM 16, p. 89, ll. 116–17. The oldest manuscript of the fourth edition is eleventh century. See Beda Paulus, "Einleitung," CCCM 16, pp. ix–xii, xxxv–xxxvi.

contraventions of nature reported in scripture: Old Testament miracles like the parting of the Red Sea, the incarnation, and Jesus' miracles. The faithful must learn, then, "to taste something other than what is sensed with the physical mouth, to see something other than what is shown to the eyes of the body."[124] Perhaps aware of interpretations of the "Roman" or "Gregorian" Mass in which the main consecrating oration was the Lord's Prayer, Pascasius also affirms that only at the words of institution, spoken solely by the priest, does God effect this transformation. No other words sung or said in the liturgy by clergy or laity have this consequence, he indicates, and he quotes the institution narrative so there is no doubt about which text he means.[125]

The other precepts expounded in the treatise develop from and confirm these core concepts. One is that since Christ cannot die again, having offered on the cross the unique sacrifice of his body for all history, the Eucharist replicates that oblation. Although adumbrated in Melchisedech's sacrifice and other Old Testament oblations and miracles, and in this regard part of a long sequence of such acts, it alone contains the truth that bestows eternal life. In the Eucharist, it is Christ's passion that "is handed over in mystery," removing the sins we daily commit after baptism.[126]

Second, through a variant on Hebrews 1:3 borrowed from Ambrose, Pascasius argues that because of the identity with the incarnate flesh and blood, the bread and wine are the "characters" of those entities and thus analogous to written letters or texts.[127] This line of thought would have held special appeal to the Corvey novices if, as it seems, they were just learning to read. Like the shadows of Christian truth given the ancient Jews, the sacrament visibly points to another reality,

[124] Pascasius, *De corpore* 8; CCCM 16, p. 42: "Unde, homo, disce aliud gustare quam quod ore carnis sentitur, aliud uidere quam quod oculis istis carneis monstratur."

[125] Pascasius, *De corpore* 15; CCCM 16, pp. 92–96.

[126] Pascasius, *De corpore* 5, 9; CCCM 16, pp. 31–34, 53, see 52–60: "Et ideo qui cotidie labimur, cotidie pro nobis Christus mystice immolatur et passio Christi in mysterio traditur, ut qui semel moriendo mortem uicerat, cotidie recidiua delictorum per haec sacramenta corporis et sanguinis peccata [peccata per haec corporis et sanguinis sacramenta] relaxet."

[127] Pascasius, *De corpore* 4; CCCM 16, pp. 27–31, esp. 29: "Unde Paulus de unico Dei Filio ad Hebraeos loquens ait: *Qui cum sit splendor gloriae et figura substantiae eius portansque omnia uerbo uirtutis suae purgationem peccatorum faciens*....Cum uero *figura uel caracter substantiae eius*, humanitatis designat naturam...." See Celia Chazelle, "Figure, Character, and the Glorified Body," pp. 1–36, esp. pp. 15–19, and correcting my argument, Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, pp. 50–52.

different from its physical features, since the material features of bread signify body and those of wine signify blood. But the things of the Old Testament were nothing more than shadows, whereas the Eucharist, Pascasius teaches, is like a written character or letter that contains the truth designated through its external traits, much as Christ's humanity is the visible figure and hence character of his veiled divinity. As is true of writing, he claims, the bread and wine set hidden "strength and power and spirit" before the eyes. We need to recall that Pascasius wrote for monks who believed, as he did, that spoken and written words and signs, from Christian and non-Christian traditions, contain genuine spiritual power: scripture, prayers, charms, magical inscriptions, inscribed crosses, and more. But unlike these forms of sacred or magical writing or inscription, the Eucharist is empowered by the imperceptible presence of the incarnate flesh and blood of the divine Word.[128]

Finally to note, since the Eucharist spiritually contains Christ's historical body and blood, it is food and drink of a unique feast, one capable of uniting faithful recipients in both body and soul with Christ. Chapter 14, titled "That these things [flesh and blood] often appear in visible form," paraphrases an episode from the "Miracles of Bishop Nynian" about a priest, Plecgils, who celebrated Masses at the saint's shrine and prayed to see "the appearance hiding under the form of bread and wine."[129] His request was fulfilled through a miraculous vision in which the bread on the altar became the baby Jesus. The resulting "union" between Plecgils and Christ is notably physical: Lifting his eyes to the altar, we are told, the priest saw the baby whom Simeon had carried; led by an angel, he took the child into his arms, "joined Christ's own breast with his breast," then "kissed God," pressing "Christ's pious lips to his own lips." When he set the baby back on the altar, it "refilled Christ's table with heavenly food,"

[128] Pascasius, *De corpore* 4; CCCM 16, p. 29: "Quid enim aliud sunt figurae litterarum quam caracteres earundem, ut per eas uis et potestas ac spiritus prolatione oculis demonstretur?" Regarding the Eucharist, see *ibid.*, p. 30: "Est autem figura uel caracter hoc quod exterius sentitur, sed totum ueritas et nulla adumbratio quod intrinsecus percipitur ac per hoc nihil aliud hinc inde quam ueritas et sacramentum ipsius carnis aperitur."

[129] Pascasius, *De corpore* 14; CCCM 16, p. 85: "Quod haec saepe uisibili specie apparuerint."

the baby turning back into the bread.[130] Like Plecgils, other passages of Pascasius' treatise indicate, Christians who consume the incarnate body and blood in the Eucharist unite their own physical bodies with Christ's; this union means hope for both the salvation of their souls and the restoration of their flesh "to immortality and incorruption."[131] In the Eucharist, Christ becomes "our feast and the dinner guest;"[132] we receive the fruit of the new tree of life that is Christ, foreshadowed in the tree whose fruit was forbidden to Adam and Eve.[133] Because of the presence of his historical flesh and blood, eating and drinking the bread and wine of the Mass joins the church to the incarnate Christ "from his flesh and bones" and makes them "two in one flesh."[134]

While Pascasius' teachings do not mean that other feasts—or, for that matter, oblations, talismans, and such—have no value at all, his treatise was unprecedented in the clarity with which it defended the mystical transformation of bread and wine into body and blood, and beyond this, into the flesh and blood of the incarnation and crucifixion. Thus he provided an exceptionally forceful defense of the sacrament's status as *the* sacrifice and oblation of the crucifixion, *the* sacred "writing" of the incarnate humanity, *the* feast of the crucified blood and flesh. The ties to the biblical history of salvation put the Eucharist in a class by itself; it is impossible for any other sacrifice, written incantation, or other object or ritual to have the same importance. The treatise seems to have quickly gained popularity after its initial publication in the early 830s; most of the surviving copies—more than 120 are extant—contain the first edition sent to Corvey.[135] One reason the work was appreciated was no doubt that it seemed so comprehensive and straightforward; the text must have helped many clergy in the ninth and later centuries to improve their understanding of the

[130] Pascasius, *De corpore* 14; CCCM 16, p. 90: "Tum sacerdos *caelesti munere fretus, quod dictu mirum est, ulnis trementibus puerum accepit et pectus* proprium Christi *pectore iunxit.* Deinde pro*fusus in amplexum dat oscula* Deo et suis *labiis* pressit pia *labia Christi.*" The italics indicate the words drawn from *Miracula Nynie episcopi*, MGH *PLAC* 4.4, ed. Karl Strecker (Berlin, 1923), p. 959.

[131] Pascasius, *De corpore* 19; CCCM 16, p. 101: "Denique non, sicut quidam uolunt, anima sola hoc mysterio pascitur, quia non sola redimitur morte Christi et saluatur, uerum etiam et caro nostra per hoc ad inmortalitatem et incorruptionem reparatur."

[132] Pascasius, *De corpore* 21; CCCM 16, p. 112, see p. 113: "...ubi profecto Christus conuiuium et conuiua noster."

[133] Pascasius, *De corpore* 7, 9; CCCM 16, pp. 39, 54–55.

[134] Pascasius, *De corpore* 7; CCCM 16, pp. 37–40, esp. 38 ll. 8–9, 40 ll. 56, 58.

[135] Paulus, "Einleitung," CCCM 16, p. ix.

Eucharist simply for their own benefit. Additionally, though, it offered them a new set of intellectual tools with which to persuade converts and Christians in the wider public sphere to move more fully into the devotional orbit to which their clergy belonged. To large measure, this arena was defined by the Mass rituals and prayers of consecration—culminating in the words of institution—that they asserted they alone were able to perform.

The Carolingian Eucharist Controversy

All the writings of the "Eucharist controversy," which seems to have arisen among Carolingian theologians about seventeen years after Pascasius finished his treatise, confirm that the Eucharist is body and blood of Christ and critical for salvation, and implicitly or explicitly, they all ground this theology in the Christian history of redemption through the cross. The divisive issue was whether, as Pascasius asserted, the eucharistic body and blood are identical with the flesh and blood of the incarnation. One evident catalyst for some of Pascasius' fellow ecclesiastics to write in opposition to this doctrine was the contemporary quarrel over the theology of twin predestination taught by Gottschalk of Orbais. As Gottschalk travelled around the Carolingian Empire and into the Balkans, he preached that God eternally predestines all mortals either to salvation or to damnation; virtuous behavior cannot change this destiny. The spread of his ideas raised fears they would jeopardize the clergy's efforts to encourage lay reception of the sacraments (including the Eucharist) and other virtuous behavior.[136] Gottschalk was condemned at a council that Rabanus convened in Mainz in 848. Rabanus then sent him to Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, who had him again condemned at Quierzy in early 849.[137] But other councils and individual theologians supported elements of Gottschalk's doctrine, and the controversy continued for at least another decade.

The Carolingian writings that present the most detailed reflections on the theology of the eucharistic presence, apart from Pascasius' treatise, are those noted earlier by Hincmar of Reims, John Scottus Eriugena, Gottschalk, and Ratramnus; I will summarize them briefly to clarify the main points of their disagreement. Pascasius responded to attacks on his teachings in a letter to Fredugard and his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, but these writings of the early 850s do not add anything significant to the doctrine of his treatise for Warin. We should keep in mind that we are now turning to literature written by intellectuals who seem primarily intent on communicating ideas to other intellectuals—learned monks and clergy as well as Charles the Bald, probably the best educated of the Carolingian kings.[138] On the whole, there is little evidence of concern with attitudes outside this circle.

The theologian who expresses by far the closest agreement with Pascasius is Hincmar, perhaps the most powerful ecclesiastic of the ninth-century Carolingian church and one of its most prolific writers. Several of his works in poetry and prose comment on the Eucharist in sufficient depth to give a fairly clear picture of his thought and the position he took in the controversy. Hincmar may have traveled with Charles the Bald to Corbie in 843/844 and likely read Pascasius' treatise soon after that visit; certain refrains of the treatise are echoed in poetry he composed in the late 840s.[139] The earliest writing in which he clearly affirms that the bread and wine contain Christ's incarnate body and blood, linking this doctrine to his theology of predestination, dates to 853–56; this is his poem plus prose commentary, the *Ferculum Salomonis* ("Solomon's Litter"), composed for Charles.[140] We will focus here, though, on his later treatise, *De cavendis vitiis et virtutibus exercendis* ("On Vices to be Avoided and Virtues to be Pursued"), written for Charles in the 860's or early 870's, since it discusses the sacrament at greater length, again bringing together Eucharist and predestination theology.[141] About ninety percent of "On Vices and Virtues" consists of quoted and paraphrased excerpts from the Church Fathers and scripture; little of the language originates with Hincmar.

[136] See Hincmar, *De praedestinatione Dei et libero arbitrio* 2; PL 125:84–85; Rabanus, *Ep.* 22, 42, *MGH Epistolae* 5, ed. Ernst Dümmler, Karl Hampe, et al. (1898–99), pp. 428, 481–82. On the predestination controversy, see Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 165–208, with references to earlier literature.

[137] Section 16. *Mainz (Oktober 848)*, Section 18; *Quierzy (Frühjahr 849)*, *MGH Conc.* 3, ed. Wilfried Hartmann (Hanover, 1984), 179–84, 194–99.

[138] Celia Chazelle, "Charles the Bald, Hincmar of Rheims and the Ivory of the Pericopes of Henry II," in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. Patrick Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 139–61.

[139] Chazelle, *Crucified God*, pp. 253–54.

[140] Hincmar, *Explanatio in ferculum Salomonis*; PL 125:817–34; *Carmen* 4.1, MGH *PLAC* 3, ed. Ludwig Traube (Berlin, 1896), pp. 414–15.

[141] Hincmar, *De cavendis vitiis et virtutibus exercendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, ed. Doris Nachtmann (Munich, 1998), pp. 226–66.

Yet the innovativeness lies in the seamless manner in which he glues these disparate borrowings with one another and occasional phrases of his own, to articulate ideas that cannot be traced in precisely the same form to his sources.[142]

The Eucharist is essential to redemption, Hincmar reminds Charles. Prefigured in the Passover lamb that freed the Jews, the mystery of the passion is transferred into the bread and wine, the source of not temporal but eternal life. The sacrifice on the cross once for all time released the blood and water that now washes in baptism and cleanses daily in the Eucharist, since mortals daily sin. The sacrament is identical with that crucified body and blood; immolated in the Mass, its reception strengthens the union of the faithful with Christ.[143] Yet the king is reminded that the Mass is also symbolic, both a commemoration of the one saving death in the past and a foretaste of the future revelation; in keeping with his concern about predestination, Hincmar urges Charles to link the sacrament with the final vision. Although inferior to the heavenly feast, the Eucharist leads faithful minds toward the light to come,[144] whereas those who approach the altar with evil thoughts, not recognizing that the sacrament is Christ's body, eat and drink to judgment.[145] Nonetheless, the foundation of Hincmar's theology of predestination was his belief that God desires universal salvation. Even though only some mortals are predestined to salvation, there can be no predestination to damnation, since this would contradict God's will that all be saved. Those who persist in evil will be damned, yet God foreknows their end without predestining them to it. Masses, therefore, make the saving body and blood—the body that was crucified—available to everyone. Anyone can turn at any time from vice to virtue, and all Christians who persevere in faith and virtue, including faithful reception of the Eucharist, have hope of reaching heaven.[146]

For Hincmar as for Pascasius, the inner transformation of bread and wine into Christ's incarnate body and blood is grounded in divine omnipotence. Like the water and blood that poured from Jesus' side only after he died, the presence of his body and blood in the sacrament

[142] Doris Nachtmann, "Einleitung," *De cavendis*, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 14–23.
[143] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 2, 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 225–26, 231–40, 256–62.
[144] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 227–28, 241, 244–45.
[145] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, p. 232.
[146] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 234–36.

proves God's power to contravene the natural order.[147] But more than Pascasius, Hincmar stresses that the miracle of the Eucharist demonstrates the perfection of Christ's humility, which extended not only to death but to the offering of his crucified body and blood as food and drink. Like the mother who feeds her infant with milk by "incarnating" the bread she eats, Hincmar tells Charles the Bald, divine wisdom, equal to God the Father, descended from heaven, becoming incarnate and "obedient unto death" in order to offer all mortals the bread that feeds the angels.[148] Above all, as Hincmar suggests in "Solomon's Litter," it is the "living blood of the copious redemption" that holds the key to salvation for the entire human race.[149] The copiousness of the blood flowing from Christ opened hell, released its faithful prisoners, and established the Church, manifesting the extension of God's love throughout human history.[150] The blood's presence in every chalice of every Mass proves it is infinite and a source of redemption for anyone who drinks in faith.[151]

Although both Pascasius and Hincmar use passages from Ambrose to describe the spirituality of the body and blood in the Eucharist, both employ language that sometimes borders on suggesting the Mass is a sacrifice in a corporeal sense. A striking passage occurs in "On Vices and Virtues," where Hincmar asks Charles to realize that in the Mass, "Christ is forever immolated for believers. Thus it is said: Go, bring forth the fatted calf! Preach him killed and offer him for sacrifice in his mystery! And kill! That is, believe him dead for sinners!"[152] In contrast to this rhetoric, John Scottus Eriugena, an Irish scholar affiliated with the court of Charles the Bald from the late 840s, presents an understanding of the eucharistic presence in which the reality of human body and blood sometimes seems to disappear almost completely from view. John, too, opposed Gottschalk's predestination theology; his treatise against this doctrine was written at Hincmar's request in

[147] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, p. 261.
[148] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 243–46, 251–52.
[149] Hincmar, *Explan. in ferc. Salom.*; PL 125:818, PL 125:826–27.
[150] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16.238–40.
[151] See Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, pp. 252–53.
[152] Hincmar, *De cavendis* 3, MGH *Quellen* 16, p. 247: "Semper Christus credentibus immolatur, de quo dicitur: Ite, adducite vitulum saginatum! Id est, praedicate occisum et offerte in suo mysterio immolandum! Et occidite! Id est, pro peccatoribus mortuum credite!"

autumn 850 or spring 851.[153] For John as for the archbishop of Reims, there is no divine predestination to damnation, but John's arguments are distinctive for the influence they show of Greek philosophical and theological thought, especially the theology of the Pseudo-Dionysius. (John was one of the few Carolingian scholars with a solid command of Greek.) The starting point of his own theology of predestination is that God can only will what is good. All human nature shares in the goodness of creation and therefore in the promise of salvation achieved through Christ's crucifixion, harrowing of hell, and resurrection; this end is in keeping with the divine will for universal salvation. The water from Christ's side, the "fount of salvation," washes sin from the entire world; his blood bathed the altar of the cross and now "purges, redeems, releases, leads us back to life."[154] Those who refuse to drink the blood will perish, but only in the sense that their sin is condemned. God does not damn anyone any more than God predestines to damnation; rather, that which is sinful chooses its own separation from the divine. At the end of time, this separation of evil from good will be fully revealed, and the goodness of human nature itself will be drawn back to God.[155]

John's Eucharist theology, outlined most clearly in his commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, owes much to a spiritualized conception of Jesus' glorified body again informed by his studies of the Pseudo-Dionysius.[156] In some respects this leads him along a similar doctrinal path as Pascasius. Even though the sacrifice on the cross was unique in human history, as Pascasius taught, the incarnate body and blood are invisibly present in the bread and wine of every Mass, while also remaining in heaven. Yet for John, as is not evident for Pascasius or Hincmar, this identity is possible because of the assimilation of Christ's resurrected humanity with his divinity, an act that in a sense sets the pattern for the future return of all human nature to God. The divinization of Christ's incarnate body and blood allows for the presence of the same entities in every Eucharist. Thus the Mass provides all faithful

[153] John Scottus Eriugena, *De divina praedestinatione*; CCCM 50.

[154] John Scottus Eriugena, *Carmina* 1, 2, *Iohannis Scotti Eriugenae Carmina*, ed. Michael W. Herren (Scriptores Latini Hiberniae) 12 (Dublin, 1993), pp. 58–59, 66–67.

[155] E.g. Eriugena, *Periphyseon* 5; PL 122:1001–03. Translation in *Eriugena, Periphyseon (Division of Nature)*, trans. I.P. Sheldon-Williams, revised by John J. O'Meara (Montréal, 1987).

[156] See Eriugena, *Exp. in Ier. Coel.* 1; CCCM 31, pp. 16–19, 93.

a true, yet purely spiritual immolation, which can only be received "intellectually, not dentally but mentally."[157] Perhaps thinking of contemporaries who believed that Christ becomes the bread and wine, John rebukes those "who want to assert that the Eucharist has no other significance beyond itself." The focus of faith should not be the visible aspects of the sacrament, but the greater reality it signifies: Christ who is, "in the unity of his divine and human substance, beyond everything that is perceived by corporal sense, above everything that is recognized by the power of intelligence, invisible God in each of his natures." This is the proper object of contemplation until the eschaton, when the goodness of humanity will return to God.[158]

The Carolingian texts presenting the most comprehensive rebuttals of the view that the Eucharist contains Christ's incarnate body and blood are the treatise and fragment of a second tract written by Gottschalk, sometime between his confinement in the monastery of Hautvillers in 849—following the condemnation at Quierzy—and his death in 868 or 869,[159] and the treatise that Ratramnus gave Charles the Bald. Gottschalk and Ratramnus agree with Pascasius that in the Mass, bread and wine are inwardly changed into body and blood, and they, too, situate the Eucharist firmly within the biblical narrative of salvation. The sacrament binds the faithful to the past by commemorating Christ's passion, while it sustains them until his return and the final revelation of God. But against Pascasius (and Hincmar), Ratramnus and Gottschalk assert that the eucharistic body and blood cannot be identical with the body born of Mary.

Gottschalk's first treatise on the Eucharist, which seems more or less complete (it ends with "Amen"), refers both to Pascasius' treatise and to Hincmar, who may have given Gottschalk a copy, but does not name either scholar.[160] Gottchalk's argument against their teachings is closely dependent on his theology of twin predestination. If the incarnate flesh and blood are present in the Eucharist, he maintains, every Mass must repeat Christ's suffering on the cross. Having suffered once

[157] "...et spiritualiter eum immolamus et intellectualiter, mente non dente, comedimus": Eriugena, *Commentarius in evangelium Iohannis* 1.31; CCCM 166, p. 72.

[158] Eriugena, *Exp. in Ier. Coel.* 1; CCCM 31, p. 17: "...sed propter incomprehensibilem ueritatis uirtutem que Christus est in unitate humane diuineque sue substantie, ultra omne quod sensu sentitur corporeo, super omne quod uirtute percipitur intelligentie, Deus inuisibilis in utraque sua natura."

[159] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 324–35, 335–37.

[160] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 325–27, 331–33.

for the elect alone, Christ would now suffer for the sins of other mortals, and the salvation accomplished through the passion would be available to everyone, even the wicked predestined (in Gottschalk's belief) to damnation. For Gottschalk this is impossible; the reprobate have no possibility of redemption, whether or not they receive the Eucharist, since they cannot in their sinfulness receive it in a state of faith.[161] God wills that only those predestined to salvation consume a Eucharist that is redemptive. Anyone predestined to damnation eats and drinks to the judgment God has eternally ordained for that person.[162] Yet neither the elect nor the damned consume the crucified body and blood. "Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of the many" (Hebrews 9:28), meaning—for Gottschalk—that the sacrifice of the historical flesh and blood occurred only at that point in time, and only to redeem those of true faith and virtue predestined to salvation.[163] When Jesus gave his "true body and blood" to his disciples at the last supper "before he suffered," the fact he was still alive signified that the Eucharist does not contain his crucified body.[164]

These views on both the Eucharist and predestination closely follow Augustine's teachings. More consistently than can be said for Pascasius or Hincmar, Gottschalk, like Augustine, envisages Christ's glorified body as retaining corporal qualities after the resurrection and ascension. The body born of Mary and crucified in Jerusalem cannot be in heaven and on earth at the same time; to be present in the Eucharist, it would have to be physically present, an idea Gottschalk rejects. Still, he maintains, Christ's body is daily consecrated "from the substance of bread and wine" at the words of institution. This body is then "transferred" into the body born of Mary presently in heaven, since angels carry the sacrament's spiritual contents to Christ, who then gives them back to earthly recipients.[165] The Eucharist is thus the

[161] Gottschalk *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 331–33. He is ambiguous on whether the body and blood are actually present in the sacrament that the wicked consume. On what the elect receive, *ibid.*, pp. 328, 330, 333–35.

[162] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 328, ll. 3–5, 330.

[163] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 331–32.

[164] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, p. 329 ll. 8–14; Ratramnus, *De corpore* 27–28, ed. Van Den Brink, p. 50.

[165] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 327–28: "...corpus domini quod ex substantia panis ac uini 'pro mundi uita' cotidie per spiritum sanctum consecratur quod a sacerdote postmodum deo patri suppliciter offertur.... Ad illa siquidem uerba domini: 'Hoc est corpus meum' fit corpus domini et tum supplicante sacerdote corpus domini sumptibile transfertur in corpus domini natum de uirgine quod est penitus inconsumptibile ut uidelicet inde nobis detur ab ipso Christo pontifice....." Cf. Pascasius, *De corpore* 7, 15; CCCM 16, pp. 38–39, 92–96; Jean-Paul Bouhot, "Extraits du *De corpore et sanguine Domini* de Pascase Radbert sous le nom d'Augustin," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 12 (1977), 119–173, at 138–39.

fruit of his crucified body, which, "having been sown in death as a grain or seed of life," rose up like the tree of life to offer its fruit "to those who take it," that is, to the elect.[166] Received back from Christ, the sacrament joins the church of the elect to his flesh or body. Flesh (Christ) gives his flesh (the Eucharist) to his flesh (the church)—three distinct species sharing one nature.[167]

Ratramnus' treatise on predestination is largely a catena of patristic excerpts in support of twin predestination, but he suggests a "softer" version of this theology than Gottschalk by implying there are different degrees of election. Some people, over the course of their lives, move in and out of the ranks of the elect. For some baptized Christians, the election manifested in baptism is temporary. Redemption is offered to the many, not everyone, and only those who persevere in faith and good works until death will finally be saved.[168]

Regarding the Eucharist, the doctrine that Ratramnus sets out in his *De corpore et sanguine Domini* ("On the Lord's Body and Blood") is also similar to Gottschalk's yet not precisely identical. There is no overt reference to the issue of predestination, but given the confluence of the two disputes indicated by the writings of Hincmar and Gottschalk, and Ratramnus' involvement in both quarrels, it is reasonable to think he wrote about Eucharist theology with some idea of the connection.[169] For Ratramnus as for Gottschalk, to assert that Christ's incarnate body and blood are present "in truth" in the sacrament is to say that they are physically and perceptibly present, since—Ratramnus argues—something counts as "truth" only when every essential characteristic is there; with the historical body of Christ, this clearly includes (in his belief)

[166] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 329–30: "Quod ob id eum credo dixisse ut ipsius domini humanum quod seminatum est in morte fuerit quasi granum semenque uitae atque postmodum de ipso resurgente tamquam de ligno uitae pullularet semper et pullulet sumendum nobis unde uitam aeternam in nobis manentem habeamus id est fructum uitae unde prorsus reprobis non licet sumere...."

[167] Gottschalk, *De corpore*, ed. Lambot, pp. 335, 337. In contrast, the sacrament's Old Testament foreshadowings do not share in the "nature" of Christ's body but are only figures, a doctrine with which Pascasius essentially agreed: *ibid.*, pp. 336–37.

[168] See e.g. Ratramnus, *De praedestinatione Dei*; PL 121:11–80, at PL 121:35–41.

[169] Ratramnus may be alluding to predestination theology in his repeated comments that the eucharist benefits the "faithful" [*fideles*]: e.g. *De corpore* 9, 26, 28, 31, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 45, 50, 51.

the characteristic of physicality.[170] Like Gottschalk, as this suggests, Ratramnus adheres to the view, derived from readings of Augustine, that Christ's resurrected body continues to have attributes of corporeal existence. But the contents of the Eucharist are spiritual; the sacramental presence is perceptible only to the mind or soul, and thus while it consists of spiritual body and blood, these entities must differ from the body and blood of the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Christ.[171] Through both the visible features of bread and wine and their spiritual contents, the Eucharist resembles and "figures" the historical flesh and blood and serves as a pledge and image of them until Christ reappears at the end of time.[172] Yet its role as figure again means the Eucharist is necessarily distinct from the incarnate flesh and blood, because by definition, Ratramnus asserts—drawing on Augustine and Isidor—a figure (unlike "truth") cannot be identical with the reality it signifies.[173] While Gottschalk suggests that the bodies of Christ in heaven and in the Eucharist, and the body of the Church, are distinct species sharing a common nature, Ratramnus posits a sharp distinction between the eucharistic and heavenly body of Christ. Like the sacrament's Old Testament foreshadowings, through which it was made available to the ancient Jews (Ratramnus argues), the Eucharist points to a truth completely separate from itself.[174] Christ was on earth in the past and will return on the last day, but for now, Christians only know and receive him spiritually, as they wait in longing for that revelation.

For Hincmar, the Eucharist provides everyone who receives it in faith access to the salvation achieved through the cross; as Pascasius taught, the bread and wine become Christ's incarnate and crucified flesh and blood. A sacrament that can be repeated daily, this is the

[170] Ratramnus, *De corpore* 8–11, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 44–45.

[171] Ratramnus, *De corpore* 13, 56–65, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 46, 56–59. In setting out this doctrine, he seems aware of contemporaries—possibly Charles the Bald or members of his court, possibly fellow monks at Corbie—who were claiming that Christ is visibly present in the elements because his body and blood are transformed into bread and wine, taking on their physical forms. Note the enigmatic reference to his "listener," who "rises and says that it is the body of Christ that is seen and the blood that is drunk, and it must not be asked why this is so but believed that it is thus made" ("Hic iam surgit auditor et dicit corpus esse christi, quod cernitur, et sanguinem qui bibitur, nec quaerendum quomodo factum sit, sed tenendum, quod sic factum sit."): Ratramnus, *De corpore* 56, ed. Van Den Brink, p. 56.

[172] Ratramnus, De corpore 86–89, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 64–65.

[173] Ratramnus, *De corpore* 7, 45, 78, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 44, 54, 62.

[174] Ratramnus, *De corpore* 20–25, ed. Van Den Brink, pp. 48–49.

infinite source of the "copious redemption" of sin, proof of God's will for the salvation of all humanity, even though many mortals choose to turn away from God. Christ died for everyone; no one is predestined to damnation. John Scottus also thought that God wills universal salvation and does not predestine to damnation, and that the Eucharist contains the crucified blood and body; yet he insists that the focus of faithful contemplation should be not the sacrament but Christ's heavenly existence in his assimilated humanity and divinity. In spite of their differences, and although only Gottschalk clearly ties his theology of twin predestination to his theology of the Eucharist, he and Ratramnus were in agreement that God does predestine to damnation. Salvation is offered to many, but not everyone, and the Eucharist does not contain the incarnate flesh and blood, since Christ will physically remain in heaven, beyond the reach of our bodily senses, until the last day. What the faithful receive in the sacrament is spiritual body and blood, different from the body they will see again at the judgment.

One point, though, on which all four theologians agreed with one another, Pascasius, and other Carolingian clergy: No one can be saved who does not consume the bread and wine consecrated in Masses conducted by priests like themselves—the sole means, in their belief, of creating the sacramental presence of Christ's body and blood. Until Christ returns and the faithful gain their heavenly reward, the Eucharist confected in those liturgies is the uniquely essential oblation, sacrifice, and feast.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Chazelle, Celia. *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion*. Cambridge, 2001.

Effros, Bonnie. *Creating Community with Food and Drink in Merovingian Gaul*. New York, 2002.

Filotas, Bernadette. *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures*. Toronto, 2005.

Fulton, Rachel. *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200*. New York, 2002.

Ganz, David. "Giving to God in the Mass: The Experience of the Offertory," in *The Language of Gift in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 18–32, eds. Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre. Cambridge, *forthcoming in* 2010.

Hen, Yitzhak and Rob Meens (eds.). *The Bobbio Missal: Liturgy and Religious Culture in Merovingian Gaul*. Cambridge, 2004.

Macy, Gary. *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination*. New York, 2008.

de Vegvar, Carol Neuman. "A Feast to the Lord: Drinking Horns, the Church, and the Liturgy," in *Objects, Images, and the Word*, pp. 231–56. ed. Colum Hourihane. Princeton, 2003.