

Inscribed in the Book of Life: Liturgical Commemoration in Merovingian Gaul 

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Abstract and Keywords

The present chapter discusses the ritual of reciting names in the public performance of the Merovingian mass and studies the prayers accompanying this ritual based on sources dating to the late seventh and early eighth centuries. This study focuses on how membership of the Christian community was defined and, more specifically, on the composition of the liturgical assembly that gathered on Sundays and feasts for the public celebration of mass. The effort to create and strengthen the idea of membership in and belonging to the Christian community in this complex time of great change was not marked by the development and consequent use of an entirely new vocabulary, but rather by the reuse of existing terminology, derived from ancient and biblical discourse concerned with citizenship and belonging. The public celebration of the cult is one of the *loci* in which this vocabulary was filled with new, sometimes radically changed, meanings.

Keywords: book of life, citizenship vocabulary, intercession, liturgical community, membership, offertory ritual, participation, recitation of names

The past decades have witnessed important shifts in the scholarly approach to medieval public worship, or liturgy.¹ The traditional focus on liturgical texts of the early medieval West as evidence of the development of Christian theology and doctrine, often chosen by scholars with a confessional background, has made way to a contextualized study of texts that takes into account their social, cultural, and political context (Palazzo 2008). An increasing awareness of the fragmentary character of the transmitted texts, which often lack any indication of performance and practice (Symes 2016), has incited the inclusion of related sources, both textual and material, in order to win insight into the nature of the communities that produced and used these texts. Thus, liturgical evidence has become more and more an instrument to study the complex societies of the early Middle Ages.

In a recent article, Yitzhak Hen characterizes the church in sixth-century Gaul as “perhaps the most secure and stable institution in an ever changing political, social and cultural reality.” Hen ascribes the qualities of the church, as well as the strength of Merovingian culture in general, to the tendency in this period to provide cultural institutions in-

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herited from Antiquity with new meaning (Hen 2016, pp. 233–234). In the present chapter, I examine how the Merovingian church reused terms and terminology rooted in ancient concepts of cultural institutions in order to answer the needs of new social, political, and religious circumstances.

One of the most important means the church had available to redefine existing and inherited concepts was through its public worship, or liturgy (see also Bailey, Chapter 44, this volume). To the liturgical community of the Christian Church belonged those men and women who were baptized as well as those who prepared for the initiation rite of baptism or were interested in becoming a Christian through membership of the church. Although the latter group had only partial access to the celebration of mass as the core (p. 1013) element of Christian worship,² liturgy was not a purely clerical concern in which only the “ritual experts” would play a role. During the celebration of mass, both laypeople and the clergy contributed in their own way to the fulfillment of the religious rituals (Rose 2019).

During liturgical gatherings in the early medieval period, the character of the celebrating community was expressed through rituals and was particularly conveyed in texts. Christianity, as a “religion of the book,” is a text-oriented religion, and each ritual performed in the early medieval liturgy was accompanied by texts of chants and prayers. Although the written documents that give evidence of liturgical practices are relatively scarce for the Merovingian period, the sources that have been preserved give us the possibility to form an idea about the way the church “infused” new meanings into inherited concepts and institutions, as Hen phrases it (2016).

One such process of reuse involving inherited concepts in a new social, cultural, and religious setting is the issue of membership: of belonging to and participating in a public community. This chapter concentrates on the way Christians defined their membership of the Christian community, more specifically of the liturgical assembly that gathered around the celebration of the sacrament of the eucharist (or mass). The focus is on the role of the public recitation of names of those participating in this celebration, a fixed part of the early Christian mass. The ritual recitation of the names was a characteristic element of the Merovingian liturgical tradition, the form of which became subject to change in the late eighth century. During the Merovingian period, the names of those participating were recited aloud in each mass celebrated on Sundays and feast days, and for every mass a proper prayer to accompany the ritual was composed. These prayers offer ample material giving evidence of the way membership of, and participation in, the community of faithful of the Merovingian world were characterized. As we will see, the prayers accompanying the recitation of the names illustrate the Christian community’s efforts to create and strengthen ideas of belonging in this complex time of many changes. These texts reused ancient terminology defining membership of the community and infused this vocabulary with new, sometimes radically changed, meaning.

The Importance of Names in Christian Liturgy

Two early Christian and medieval liturgical rituals in particular involved the listing and public pronouncement of names: baptism and the eucharist. In a recent publication, Claudia Rapp has indicated baptism, the Christian ritual of initiation—during which the newborn or newly converted receives his or her Christian name—as a rite that brought about a transformation of people’s identity and belonging. Rapp points to the fourth-century bishop of Antioch, John Chrysostom (349–407), who in his catechetical treatises impresses on his baptismal candidates the awareness that after they will have (p. 1014) gone through the ritual of baptism, they will be inscribed as “citizens in heaven” (Rapp 2014, p. 160). The notion of baptism as changing one’s “civic identity” is brought forward even more poignantly in a canon most likely connected to the third Council of Seville, which was probably held under the episcopacy of Isidore (560–636) in 624, as Wolfram Drews suggests (Drews 2002, p. 190). The canon defines the relationship between Christians, Jews, and “pagans,” creating a chasm between the world of those baptized and those not. This division, according to Drews, coincides seamlessly with what is regarded as the “public” sphere and its counterpart, which is basically to be understood as a position of “illegality” (Drews 2002, p. 202; see Drews, Chapter 6, this volume). In this construction of a negative identity of those to be marked as nonmembers, baptism and membership of the Christian community would become a highly political issue (Drews 2002, p. 207).

The recitation of names in the context of the eucharist or mass has been evaluated in traditional scholarship as a spiritual membership of the heavenly afterlife rather than as an expression also of political and social relations in the here and now. Thus, Leo Koep links the ritual of the recitation of names in early Christian mass liturgy to similar customs to create lists of membership in the ancient world, referring to Greek and Roman as well as Jewish antecedents, and identifies the Christian lists of names as “heavenly citizen rolls” (“himmlische Bürgerliste”; Koep 1952, pp. 68–69). According to Koep, insertion in the Christian book of life was directed toward “eine konkrete, religiös-jenseitige Wirklichkeit” (Koep 1952, p. 69), a spiritual reality in the hereafter that had little to do with lists counting persons for practical administrative reasons in earthly society (Koep 1952, pp. 38–39). Even when Koep links the inscription of a Christian in the book of life to his or her deeds (Koep 1952, pp. 72–80), he discusses this relation from the perspective of the future salvation of the Christian’s soul, rather than making it relevant to community life in the here and now.

In contrast to interpretation of the book of life as predominantly concerned with the life to come, more recent historiography on intercession connected to the listing and recitation of names in and outside the liturgy of the mass makes a deliberate effort to relate such practices to the sphere of human cohabitation in the here and now (Oexle 1976, 1983; Schmid and Wollasch 1984), and to matters of identity with regard to religious communities (Raaijmakers 2006, 2012). These studies focus mainly on the early Carolingian development of the *liber vitae* or confraternity books. In these documents, monastic houses listed the names of their members (both the living and those already deceased), as well as the names of inhabitants of related monastic houses and of their benefactors. The

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Merovingian practice of reciting names in public during the celebration of mass is seen, from this perspective, as a “preliminary stage” of the Carolingian *libri vitae* (Oexle 1976, p. 70).

The present chapter focuses on the ritual of reciting names in the public performance of the Merovingian mass as a phenomenon worth studying in itself because it informs us about issues of membership and belonging in this specific period. Studying the ritual from the perspective of the texts that accompanied it also grants us the opportunity to reevaluate previous interpretations based on a predominantly spiritual understanding or, conversely, an exclusive focus on communal life in this world. We shall see that the (p. 1015) ritual of the names redefined the identity and belonging of the members of the eucharistic communities in Merovingian Gaul in a way that connected concerns about the future salvation of the faithful indelibly with their life in the community here and now.

The Ritual of Names in the Merovingian Mass

The recitation of the names of those participating in the eucharistic celebration is a distinctive feature of the Merovingian liturgy. The ritual was a fixed component of every mass. Numerous examples of the prayer that accompanied it, indicated as “collect (prayer of gathering) after the names” (*collectio post nomina*), were transmitted by service books known as sacramentaries. These books provided the prayers for mass to be recited by the celebrant (i.e., the priest or bishop).³ Only later, as a consequence of Carolingian liturgical reforms, did this practice come to an end. It was then stipulated that the public recitation of names should be replaced by the insertion of a commemorative ritual in the eucharistic prayer (*canon missae*), as this chapter will describe.

Most eastern liturgies and the Roman rite inserted the recitation of names in the eucharistic prayer itself (Taft 1991, p. 24), once the gifts of bread and wine were brought in during the offertory ritual. The liturgical tradition as it developed in late-antique and Merovingian Gaul, however, situated the recitation of names during the offertory ritual, as was also the custom in early medieval Spain (Taft 1991, p. 24). This positioning expresses the close connection that was assumed between those who offered the gifts to be consecrated (the faithful) and those to whom the sacrifice of the mass and the related intercession was dedicated: the beloved dead.⁴ In Merovingian Gaul, it was still the practice for lay members of the community to contribute to the eucharist with the material gifts needed to celebrate this liturgy: bread and wine. The faithful prepared their bread at home and took it with them to hand over to the deacon, who collected the gifts in the appointed space (McKitterick 1977, p. 144; Foley 1997, p. 210; Smyth 2003, pp. 348–349). Once the liturgy of the word, comprising the readings from the scriptures and its accompanying chants, and the general prayers of intercession were completed, a solemn offertory procession was formed to bring the gifts to the altar where, through the words of the eucharistic prayer, they were presented, thanked for, and consecrated by the celebrant. During the offertory, the deacon recited the list of names, at least as far as time would allow,⁵ after which the celebrant recited the “collect after the names.” The custom of in-

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cluding the recitation of names as part of the offertory ritual, in which the people had an important role, changed during the Carolingian period. Two issues seem to have stimulated this alteration: the first related to the internal logic of the ritual, and the second to implications for religious practice.

First, the Carolingians took up an old discussion that questioned the relevance of associating a public recitation of names with those who bring in their gifts. Jerome sharply (p. 1016) condemned the custom (Jerome, *In Hieremiam* II.11 and *In Hiezechielem*, VI. 18,5-9; cf. Taft 1991, pp. 38-39). He considered the ritual to be an act of self-glorification by those who participated in it while being oblivious of the parable of the widow who had nothing but a penny to throw into the box (Lk. 21, 1-4). Pope Innocent I (401-417) also criticized the custom, which he knew was observed in several regions outside Rome, but his objection was for different reasons. He considered a public recitation of names to a God to whom nothing is unknown (*quamvis illi incognitum sit nihil*) to be superfluous (*superfluum sit*), as he wrote in a letter to Bishop Decentius of Gubbio (dated March 19, 416).⁶ To mention the names of the offerers before the offering itself was to put events in the wrong order. Rather, according to Innocent, the names should be included in the prayers that gave thanks for the gifts and that asked for their transformation into Christ's gift of salvation (*sacra mysteria*), "in order to open through the consecration the way to the subsequent intercession" (... *ut ipsis mysteriis viam futuris precibus aperiamus*). Rather than serving a purely informative function, the recitation of the names should have a performative role in such a way that the intercession of, and for, those involved in the eucharist would be heard. Whether Charlemagne and his liturgical advisors agreed with Innocent that the names should be encapsulated in a performative context of intercession, or whether they just wanted to copy the Roman practice that they deemed authoritative, the fact is that, in reference to Innocent's statement, they repeatedly called for the abandonment of the old practice connecting the names to the offertory and promoted its replacement with the new practice of including the names within the eucharistic prayer itself.⁷

The second issue that might have played a role in replacing the recitation of the names is related to changing ideas about the role of the people in the offertory ritual in general, in particular the increasing emphasis on the purity not only of those who celebrated the eucharist, but also of the gifts that were offered. This development changed the entire outlook of the oblation of the gifts. A letter written by Alcuin and dated 798 (Alcuin, *Epistula* 137) stresses the importance of the most pure state (*mundissimus*) of the eucharistic bread, which was preferably unleavened bread (*absque fermento*). Purity requirements would eventually exclude the laity from preparation of the bread, although the role of the people in the offertory and the gifts seems not to have ended before the tenth or even eleventh century (Bishop 1909/1967, p. 101; McKitterick 1977, p. 144).

Whatever the rationale for transferring the recitation of names to the eucharistic prayer proper, the Carolingians adopted Innocent I's preference to incorporate the people involved in the eucharistic offering into what was increasingly experienced as the most holy of prayers.⁸ The Carolingians copied this practice in their effort to model the Frankish

custom on the Roman example. This adaptation did not, however, mean that the solemn recitation of names came to an end—far from it. One could argue that it brought the names of the participants even closer to the heart of the eucharistic ritual.

In the Merovingian liturgical sources *stricto sensu* there are no explicit indications of the ritual of reciting the names. The sacramentaries, preserving the prayers recited by the priest, only provide the “collects after the names” which would have followed the recitation. These collects enable us to retrieve the meaning behind the so-called “ritual (p. 1017) of the diptychs”⁹ as it developed in the Merovingian liturgy. How do these prayers reflect the relevance of the recitation of names? How do they characterize the eucharistic community and the participation of both living and dead members? And how does the expression of membership of, and the sense of belonging to, this eucharistic community make use of ancient concepts and terms by granting them a new meaning? To answer these questions, the “collects after the names” will now be discussed.

Source Material: The “Collects After the Names”

Collects that accompany the recitation of the names are found in masses in a number of service books dating to the late seventh and early eighth centuries, most importantly the *Gothic Missal*, the *Bobbio Missal*, the *Missale Gallicanum Vetus*, the *Missale Francorum*, the *Irish Palimpsest Sacramentary*, and the set of seven masses known as Mone Masses.¹⁰ Of these, the *Bobbio Missal* and particularly the *Gothic Missal* are the most detailed sources. The analysis of prayers in the following sections is based primarily on material offered by the *Gothic Missal*, or *Missale Gothicum* (Vat. Reg. lat. 317), a sacramentary made in Burgundy in the final decades of the seventh century most probably for use in an urban cathedral community, most likely Autun (*Gothic Missal*, 2017, pp. 14–15).

A sacramentary, as is the case with all early medieval liturgical service books, gives only a fragmentary view of what the liturgy of the mass actually looked like. This is because the sacramentary is a book of texts, leaving out practically all indications of the performance of the ritual. Moreover, in the *Gothic Missal*, as in other sacramentaries, not all mass orders include the same prayers. Some orders are longer than others, and high feasts are given different prayers than feasts of minor importance.¹¹ The “collect after the names” is, however, a constant feature: no feast or Sunday mass in the *Gothic Missal* lacks this particular prayer. This yields a sum total of sixty-nine collects after the names in this sacramentary alone, with few repeats.¹²

Collects after the names focus on the names of those seen as participants in the eucharistic celebration, both living and dead. They also have an intercessory function, formulating a prayer or request and asking for God’s benevolence toward the oblations offered by the people and toward those who benefit from this sacrifice. In that sense, many examples of “collects after the names” in the *Gothic Missal* could also be considered as “prayer over the gifts” (*oratio super oblata*), as service books from other Western liturgical families la-

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bel the prayer that closes the offertory ritual:¹³ praying that God graciously accept the offering and procure the salutary *effectus* of the sacrifice for both living and dead.¹⁴ As both the living and the dead are included, the intercessory part of the collects *post nomina* is essentially twofold (Rose 2017, pp. 4–10). Moreover, the large number of unique collects after the names in the *Gothic Missal* reveals the proper (*proprium*) character of these prayers. Instead of being one unchanging text for (p. 1018) all occasions, each mass has its own variant, often dealing with the theme of the Sunday or feast celebrated, particularly in the case of saints' feasts. The element that primarily interests us here is the part of the collect that expresses the membership of the people involved in the eucharistic ritual: the living who offer their oblation and the dead for whom the oblation is brought in. However, the three main elements (recitation of names, offertory intercession, and theme of the feast) are intrinsically related as we shall see in the following.

Saints and Their Co-Citizens

What, then, lies behind the mention of names in the Merovingian liturgy of the mass? How, and in what terms, does the ritual of the recitation of names define the character of the eucharistic assembly or, more broadly, the Christian community? A first answer to these questions lies in the way the ritual of the names and the accompanying collects express the intrinsic quality of the liturgical community. Even though much of recent scholarship studies the ritual of the names from the perspective of the commemoration of the dead,¹⁵ the essential quality of the community that gathers in the celebration of the mass is its inclusion of all members of the eucharistic assembly, both the living and the dead, as we have seen. This is made clear by the frequent reference to recitation of the names of both groups alike: those who bring the offer and the beloved dead. An important role in linking these two categories of members is played by the saints, which comes to the fore particularly (though not exclusively) in “collects after the names” for masses in commemoration of saints in the *Gothic Missal*.

A fitting example is from the mass for the feast day of the Burgundian saints Ferreolus and Ferrucio (June 16), martyrs of Besançon. The collect in this mass mentions both the living (*fratrum*) and the deceased (*carorumque nostrorum*)¹⁶ when it invokes the help of the saints to make the faithful inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem:

365 AFTER THE NAMES. Now that the names of our brothers and beloved (*fratrum carorumque nostorum*) have been enumerated, let us pray for the mercy of the Lord, that he will bring about that in the middle of Jerusalem, in the congregation of the saints, these names will be enumerated to him by the angel of sanctification, to the beatitude of eternal joy, and that through his power he will sanctify this offering of ours after the prefiguration of Melchisedek. And that he will also mercifully grant the prayers of those who offer in this oblation, that through the commemoration of the blessed martyrs Ferreolus and Ferruccio and all the saints, and assisted by their prayers, they are deemed worthy to obtain not only protection for the living but also rest for our beloved deceased.¹⁷

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The first part of the text is a remarkable patchwork using elements taken from three prayers that are part of the *canon missae*. This fixed series of collects became the regular (p. 1019) eucharistic prayer from the ninth century onward and is often referred to as “the Roman canon,” although it is found first in Merovingian sacramentaries (Hen 2004, pp. 150–152). Yet the “collect after the names” in the mass for the martyrs of Besançon in the *Gothic Missal* does not cut and paste without further interference (*Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 302). Instead, the author (or compiler) of this prayer changed the texts of the *canon*, which he must have known, in a significant way. In the prayer *Supplices* of the *canon missae*, it is the angel of God who is asked to carry the gifts from the altar to the heavenly altar to expose them to God’s countenance:

We humbly ask you, almighty God: grant these [gifts] to be carried through the hand of your holy angel to your exalted altar in the countenance of your divine majesty so that every time we have obtained by our participation in this altar the most sacred body and blood of your son, we may be filled with celestial blessing and with your mercy.¹⁸

In the “collect after the names” for Ferreolus and Ferrucio, however, it is not the gifts that are asked to be carried up on high and transformed into the body and blood of Christ, as the *Supplices* formulates. Rather, it is the names of those participating in the eucharistic ritual. And they are not just asked to be read before God’s countenance, but instead “in the middle of Jerusalem, in the congregation of the saints (*in medio Hierusalem in congregacione sanctorum*).” Thus, the names of the faithful, be they the living members of the community on earth or those who have passed away, are not only to be recited during the celebration of mass in the earthly liturgy, but are also believed to resound in the congregation living together in the heavenly city, where “the saints” receive and carry on the names of the faithful living on earth.

The image of the inhabitants of the heavenly city who receive the earthlings as “co-citizens” is expressed in an even more pronounced way in a prayer that is not a “collect after the names”, but one of the collects in the great Easter intercession in the *Gothic Missal*:

239 COLLECT FOLLOWS. Return, O Lord, to the travellers the ground of the fatherland which they long for, so that through the contemplation of your mercy, while for this life they give thanks for your benefits, they eagerly desire to be “fellow citizens of the saints (*ciues sanctorum*) and members of your household” (Eph. 2, 19).¹⁹

The preceding *oratio* (238), or exhortation to pray, formulates the intercession for “all our brothers and sisters who are subjected to the necessities of travels.”²⁰ The nature of these travels remains ambiguous in the collect itself, suggesting with the word “return” (*restituere*) that the travelers are homebound, yet at the same time changing the *peregrinatio* into a spiritual journey, of which the goal is the heavenly city where the saints await their co-citizens (*Gothic Missal*, 2017, p. 214). Similar “co-citizenship” is granted to the members of the eucharistic assembly gathered in commemoration of

Ferreolus and (p. 1020) Ferrucio. Their “civic identity” is redefined through their participation in the ritual of mass, in particular the ritual of the names.

Membership and Exclusion

The examples discussed so far express the identity of the eucharistic assembly as a community in which the living and the dead are held together, and as a bond that unites as co-citizens those dwelling on earth with the saints who live in the heavenly city above. The following example, the “collect after the names” in the second Sunday mass (490) in the *Gothic Missal*, explicitly employs the terminology the ancient Roman authors used to distinguish between those who were full members of the civic community and those who were strangers or outsiders to it. The context of the eucharist infuses new meaning in the terminology inherited from the ancient world. The collect phrases the prayer that none of those for whom the eucharist is celebrated (*pro quibus holocausta franguntur*) be excluded (*muneris sui exterum esse paciatur*), and that the sins and merits of both living and dead are regarded in the light of grace (for the living) and forgiveness (for the dead):

490 AFTER THE NAMES. Now that we have heard the enumeration of the names, most beloved brothers, let us pray to the God of love and mercy, that he graciously receives what has been offered, [and that] he does not allow that one of those for whom the offerings are broken is ever excluded (*exterum*) from his gift, and that as he considers the merits as well as the sins of the living and the dead, he commands that the last pertain to grace, the first to forgiveness.²¹

The prayer is important because of the word *exterum*, a term Suetonius and Cicero used to denote, as a synonym of *alienus* and *peregrinus*, foreigners and foreign cities in contrast to citizens.²² The word is not frequently used in the Bible, but it occurs in patristic writings, most relevantly in a letter by Bishop Cyprian of Carthage († 258) discussing the possibility for lapsed bishops to do penance and the impossibility that they will regain clerical ordination (Cyprian, *Epistula* 67.6.2; see Blaise 1954 and Souter 1949, s.v. *exterus*). The words *exterarum gentium* (foreign peoples) are used here not to distinguish between “citizens” and “strangers” in the way Roman authors would understand these two (legal) categories in the context of defining citizenship, but, rather, to evoke the unbridgeable distance between members of the church and those “outside.” The term emphasizes notions of religious inclusion and exclusion with the help of terms used in ancient Rome that denote the boundaries between those who were part of the civic community as citizens and those who were not. Thus, ancient citizenship vocabulary is reused in a radically new semantic context. In the context of the collect in the second Sunday mass, the word *exterus* is used positively to pray for the inclusion of all members of the eucharistic community, which holds the world of the living and the dead together so that nobody becomes a “foreigner.”

(p. 1021) **Ancient Terminology Obtains New Meanings**

The collects quoted above make clear that the Merovingian practice of reading and listing names displayed strong interest in the coherence and unity of the Christian assembly, including living and deceased members. The word *exterus* in the final collect in the previous section echoed citizenship vocabulary by implying that those included in the ritual and its salutary effect are the opposite: insiders, members. The present section explores how this “membership” is further articulated.

The most central image of membership and being registered as a member in the “collects after the names” is the prayer for inscription in the heavenly register. This central notion occurs in twelve of the sixty-nine collects *post nomina*. The heavenly register referred to in these prayers is indicated in the *Gothic Missal* by use of different terms: “book of life” (*liber vitae*: 177, 182), “heavenly book” (*caelestis pagina*, also plural: 172), “eternal book” (*aeternalibus pagines*:²³ 294), “heavenly register” (*litterae caelestes* 1). Although these indications echo various ancient religions (Koep 1952), they reflect biblical usage as well (Koep 1954, pp. 726–728). The “collect after the names” in the sixth Lenten mass (193) does not mention the book or register itself, but speaks of a *titulo aeternitatis*: the label of eternity. The combination of words has a ring of heavenly bookkeeping all the same, given Cassiodorus’s use of *titulus* to refer to “an item in an account book” (Souter 1949, s.v. *titulus*).

Apart from the noun that denotes the heavenly register or book, the relevant verbs to describe the act of inscription are also significant. There are many variants of *scribere*. It is used only once as a simple verb (in collect no. 15). Compound alternatives are more frequent, mainly *adscribere* (177, 182), *inscribere* (in *inscriptio* 188), and, particularly, *conscribere* (1, 172, 427). These forms evoke the association of the Christian book of life with the *patres conscripti*, a term referring to the senatorial register in the Roman Empire (Koep 1952, pp. 120–123).²⁴ Other verbs make clear that the inscription of names was experienced as a public event. Not only were the names read aloud (*recitare* 172, 177, 182, 376, 391, 427, 438; *patefacta sunt* 427) in church, they were also thought to be “made public” in heaven, as the verb *intimare* (“to make public,” “to announce” 391, 439, both in the context of “to be announced in the heavenly Book”) suggests. Both in heaven and on earth the Christian community expresses itself as a public body with a “controllable registration.”²⁵

Finally, the reference to the public recitation of names with the verb *recensiri* (“enumerate” 365) stands out. This word, which also occurs in the stock *incipit offerentium nominibus recensitis* or *auditis nominibus recensitis* (160, 490, 501, and 534: “Now that the names of those who offer have been enumerated” or “Now that we have heard the enumeration of the names”) echoes the task and activity of the Roman censor, the official responsible for the assessment of citizens and their properties (Lewis and Short 1951, s.v. *recensio*). The verb occurs twice in the “collect after the names” in the mass for

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Ferreolus and Ferrucio (365). In this collect, no mention is made of a book or list, but the verb (p. 1022) *recensiri* is used both with regard to the earthly ritual of public recitation and in the context of the public recitation of the same names in the heavenly Jerusalem. The idiom of imperial taxation and census is even more present in the verb phrase *ut ... censeas deputare* in the “collect after the names” in the mass for Peter and Paul (376): “... that you consider the names of those that have been recited worthy to be counted in the Book of Life.”²⁶ In this prayer, God is depicted as the heavenly censor who is implored to open his register to those who are publicly announced as members in the earthly ritual.

Although the word *civis* or *civitas* is not mentioned explicitly in the collects that speak of the heavenly book of life, terminology used by ancient Roman authors to mark the boundaries of citizenship is reused in a new semantic context. In particular, terms that resonate with the ancient Roman practice of enumerating citizens (*recensiri*) and their properties (*census*) imply that the members of the Christian community, the living and the dead, were all counted as belonging to the same “city,” involved as they were in the one ritual of the eucharistic offering. While their names were enumerated publicly in the mass ritual of the church community on earth, the image of a similar enumeration in the heavenly city in the assembly of saints was evoked.

A close reading of the “collects after the names” in the *Gothic Missal*, as one of the service books that best represents the Merovingian liturgical world, shows how the ritual of a public proclamation of the members of the eucharistic community literally “intertwines” (*texuit*, a word used in “collects after the names,” nos 78 and 84) the living and the dead to one common destiny: to be counted among the elect (*inter electos iubeas adgregare* 78, 84). At the same time, the collects in the *Gothic Missal* make clear that the implication of membership of the Christian community is not simply a longing for an otherworldly celestial city, but a genuine concern for the commonwealth of the living. Being enrolled in the “citizen lists” of the heavenly city is not only a privilege but also assumes the conversion to a Christian way of life that such membership implies. This will be the topic of the final section of this chapter.

Rest for the Deceased, “Correction” for the Living

Thus far, we have seen that the “collects after the names” in the *Gothic Missal* link the ritual practice of the recitation of names to the inscription of the members of the eucharistic community in the heavenly record, including the names of living and dead alike. Yet even if the living and the dead were brought and held together in this particular ritual and through the inscription in one register, they did not have the same position in the assembly, for the simple reason that the dead are dead and the living are still alive. In the following, we shall see that the inscription of all Christians in the book of life, making the living and the dead equal members of one community, was not purely spiritual, nor some-

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thing the dead enjoyed already as inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem. It was something for which the living still had to wait to become real.

(p. 1023) The differentiation of the two categories of members of the eucharistic community comes forward in the twofold intercession phrased in the “collects after the names” as we find them in the *Gothic Missal* (*Gothic Missal*, 2017, pp. 11–17). While rest and eternal consolation were invoked for the deceased, different “blessings” were requested for the living. In a number of collects, the intercession on behalf of the members of the community living on earth comes down to “correction” or “conversion” (*emendatio*) (Rose 2017, pp. 16–17). The word is present in the collects after the names for the mass for Our Lord’s Circumcision in the *Gothic Missal* (collect no. 53) and in the mass in commemoration of the martyr Leudegar in the same sacramentary (collect no. 427). Both collects ask, in the intercessory part, for correction (*emendatio*) for the living: “that these offers are as beneficial to the correction (*ad emendationem*) of the living as they help the dying to find rest” (53)²⁷; “that [the Lord] deigns to grant that the oblation of this sacred [feast] which is offered obtains correction (*emendationem*) for the living and remission of sins for the dead” (427).²⁸

The word *emendatio* had a special ring in the Carolingian period as a frequently used synonym of *correctio*, the *Stichwort* indicating the royal reform program that emphatically included the betterment of the laity (McKitterick 2008, p. 304). Yet the Merovingian world was just as well characterized by the efforts of the rulers to create a Christian people and improve its morals through *emendatio*. This point was emphasized by Giles Brown more than twenty years ago in an article in which he related the Frankish concern for moral improvement of the people to similar tendencies in Anglo-Saxon England (Bede) and Visigothic Spain (Isidore of Seville), and firmly rooted it in ancient Roman, early Christian, and biblical culture (Brown 1994). With regard to Merovingian Gaul, Brown points to a number of capitularies issued by the Merovingian kings of the sixth and seventh centuries to eradicate from the populace practices that the ecclesiastical point of view condemned as superstition and misbehavior (Brown 1994, pp. 6–8). At the same time, these royal capitularies instructed the clergy and made them responsible for the proper execution of a program of *emendatio* and *correctio* of the people. This correction should lead to a way of life (*conversatio*) coming forth from “love of righteousness” and leading to “peace in this life and salvation of the people,” as an edict issued by King Guntram and dated November 10, 585 phrases it.²⁹

Conversatio, emendatio: these terms refer to a way of life that was considered to be fitting or even typical of Christians on earth. As Guntram’s edict clearly expresses, this language was thought to contribute to the salvation of the people. Life in the here and now and life hereafter were indissolubly connected, both in the rhetoric of reform employed by the Merovingian kings and in the “collects after the names” in the Merovingian service books for the mass.

Liturgy as Expression and Impression of a Thought World

The ritual of mentioning names is almost as old as the Christian cult and is rooted in ancient religious practices. Although the “ritual of the diptychs” in the context of mass (p. 1024) as we know it from the Merovingian sources died out, it was transformed into other customs that identified members of the Christian community. Listing names had dangerous potential as well. From early Christian times, deletion from the diptychs was an equally impressive reality. Apart from creating membership, the listing of names was a powerful instrument in Christian excommunication practices (Koep 1952, pp. 110–111). This could be applied to clergy, as in Augustine’s sermon 356.14 (ed. Lambot 1950, pp. 141–142) where he discusses the case of a *clericus* who was to be excluded from the *tabula clericorum* because of his way of life that was not in accordance with Augustine’s standards for ecclesiastics. The sermon was reiterated in the Council of Aachen of 816 (ed. Werminghoff 1906, p. 393). Application of this practice of deletion to laypeople is also attested as, for example, in the Council of Elvira held ca. 305, at which it was forbidden to include possessed people (*energumanoi*) in the recitation of names (Laeuchli 1972, p. 129). Thus, excluding names from recitation affects both the living and the dead. Likewise, excommunication affected not only the living but could also affect the dead, as is illustrated by an example from the Greek Acts of Melania, where it was considered wrong to include the name of a dead woman whose orthodoxy had been questioned (ed. Delehaye 1903, p. 23).

In both its negative (excluding) and its confirmative (including) application, the public recitation of names in Christian rituals during the early Middle Ages was linked more directly to community life in the here and now than previous studies suggest. If we consider the “ritual of the diptychs” in the wider context of late-antique and early medieval culture, it comes to the fore as an integral and important element in the transformative processes that took place in this age of transition from the hegemonic Roman Empire to the patchwork of the new political communities that took over in the early medieval West. In this period, not all ancient models of community life were abandoned overnight. Instead they were gradually adapted to the new situation, while the ancient Roman terminology to indicate these models received new meanings in changed cultural and religious contexts. One of the ancient models preserved through this transformation made belonging and membership explicit. The ritual of the names in the context of the mass was a specific *locus* where issues of belonging were expressed in terms referring to ancient and biblical citizenship discourse, which overrode the division between categories of spiritual (hereafter) and mundane (here and now).

In his latest study, *Ransom of the Soul*, Peter Brown gives a harmonious picture of Christian community life in the early, pre-Constantinian period. The way Christians depicted their beloved dead, in a pastoral idyll where later notions of purgatory and anxiety were still far away, is in his eyes a reflection of their own tranquil life in the still small and familiar Christian community (2015, pp. 36–37). Brown’s impression that the conversation

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of the living with the dead indicates a close, “almost symbiotic” bond between the two categories (2015, p. 41), is highly relevant for the study of later ritual practices that focused on bridging the boundaries of life and death (on the afterlife, see also Moreira, Chapter 42, this volume). With the post-Constantinian and later postimperial changes in Western Christianity, the bond between living and dead remained strong, as the continuity of ritual practices that brought them together proves.

(p. 1025) To what extent can we, following Peter Brown, claim that the “collects after the names” in the *Gothic Missal* mirrored the world-view and beliefs of the inhabitants of, presumably, Autun in the late seventh century? Here two questions merge that are the subjects of ongoing debates. First, there is the matter of the “topicality” of liturgical prayers, which were often age-old compositions by the time they were either first codified, or codified in the way that they are transmitted to the twenty-first century (Bradshaw 2002, pp. 4–6). Indeed, the *Gothic Missal* includes prayers composed by known figures such as Eucherius of Lyon (380–449) and his fifth-century contemporaries—how “topical” were these texts in the late seventh century? The question seems to be less relevant when we reverse it. Liturgical texts do not necessarily express the mindset of the people that pray them or hear them recited. Rather, they impress this mindset and help to form the religious frame of reference of the community that uses them.

The second question concerns the accessibility of highly stylized prayers recited in the presence of a diverse group of laypeople in a language that gradually ceased to be a mother tongue for all, including the members of the clergy who performed the recitation. The *Gothic Missal* is an important source of spoken Latin and linguistic developments, testifying to the ongoing process in which the pronunciation of Latin performative texts adapted to regional usage (*Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, pp. 23–187). Whatever the outcome of the debate with regard to the accessibility of Latin texts in a performative public ritual, the recitation of the names and the subsequent “collect after the names” must have been a ritual that was very close to the lay members of the eucharistic community. The capitulary by Guntram (585), mentioned above, summons all faithful (*universae plebis coniunctio devotionis congregatur studio*) to come to church on Sundays and for all other solemnities (ed. Boretius 1883, p. 11). If the king’s authority was taken seriously, the people would have been present during the celebration of mass, to which they brought their offerings of bread and wine, and where they would hear the names of the community pronounced at the altar where the sacred oblations were collected. At the altar, clerics sounded their names and defined their membership in a community that was proudly envisaged as the heavenly city, yet firmly rooted in the earthly here and now.

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Notes:

(1.) On the nature and history of the term *liturgy*, see Symes 2016, pp. 239-241. A first draft of this article was written during my stay at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, where I was a member of the School of Historical Studies during the autumn term of 2015-2016. I thank the Institute, its director, staff, and library staff for their hospitality and support, and the Herodotus Fund for its financial assistance. For inspiration and critical comments, I am particularly grateful to Patrick Geary and the members of the medieval seminar of that term: Courtney Booker, Giles Constable, Albrecht Diem, Eric Goldberg, Michael Kulikowski, Jason Moralee, Eric Ramirez-Weaver, and Maria de Lurdes Rosa. In addition, I thank Janneke Raaijmakers for her helpful remarks. This article is published within the framework of the project NWO VICI-Rose 277-30-002 *Citizenship*

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(2.) On the difficulty of establishing whether or not the demarcation of the eucharistic rite only for those baptized was still regular practice in the Merovingian period, see Bernard 2008, pp. 148-149; 153-156.

(3.) On the liturgical books of the early medieval period, see Palazzo 1993, 1998.

(4.) On the close connection between the living and the dead members of the eucharistic community as expressed particularly in the ritual of the names, see Rose 2017, pp. 4-10.

(5.) On this practical issue, see Oexle 1976, 77-79.

(6.) The text of Innocent's letter is published in Cabié 1973, pp. 44-52, and included in Cabrol 1920, p. 1051. See also Bishop 1909/1967, p. 109; Taft 1991, pp. 28-29; Bernard 2008, p. 236.

(7.) *Admonitio generalis* 54: *Sacerdotibus. Item eiusdem, ut nomina publice non recitentur ante precem sacerdotalem*. Ed. Mordek et al. 2013, p. 206. In this passage, *eiusdem* refers to Innocent, whose *decretales* are mentioned in the preceding canon 53 concerning the kiss of peace; the use of *precem (sacerdotalem)* for the eucharistic prayer *stricto sensu* occurs already in the work of Augustine, Innocent I, and Gregory the Great: Blaise 1954, s.v. *prex*. The second admonition concerning the names is found in the Synod of Frankfurt (794), c. 51: *De non recitandis nominibus, antequam oblatio offeratur*, ed. Werminghoff 1906, p. 171.

(8.) For an example of the awe and reverence with which the *canon missae* was surrounded in the late eighth and ninth centuries, see the lavish decoration of the prayers in the *Sacramentary of Gellone*: Paris, BnF lat. 12048, f. 143v, now accessible through <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b60000317> (last accessed November 9, 2015).

(9.) Although the material form in which the names were presented to the deacon for recitation was only exceptionally the ivory diptychs that resemble the consular diptychs of the classical world, and of which only a small number of Christian reuses have been preserved (Bernard 2008, pp. 226-232), the ritual recitation of the names was still called the "ritual of the diptychs" in the tenth century: see, for example, Folcuin of Lobbes, *Gesta abbatum Lobiensium* 7, pp. 58-59 (*quae super diptica dicitur*).

(10.) The Mone Masses derive their name from their nineteenth-century discoverer, Franz Joseph Mone (Mohlberg 1958, p. 62). The *Missale Francorum* is an exception with examples of a collect *ante* instead of *post nomina* (no. 123, 141, 150). On the liturgical sources of late-antique and Merovingian Gaul in general, see Vogel 1986, p. 108.

(11.) For an overview of the prayers that occur throughout the book and their functions, see *Gothic Missal*, 2017, pp. 44-74.

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(12.) See the table of concordance in *Missale Gothicum*, ed. by E. Rose, pp. 553–569. In the following, the numbering of prayers is according to the most recent edition: *Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose.

(13.) Particularly the books that follow the tradition referred to as “the Gregorian sacramentaries,” of which the sacramentary sent to Charlemagne by Pope Hadrian I in the late eighth century is the most famous example. Cf. Vogel 1986, p. 79.

(14.) On *effectus* in a liturgical context, see Diezinger 1961; Rose 2016.

(15.) For a summary of recent scholarship and its main directions, see Rose 2017, pp. 1–2.

(16.) It is difficult to establish a definite interpretation of *fratrum carorumque nostrorum*. I consider *fratrum* to be a reference to the living and *carorumque nostrorum* an indication of the deceased, although other “collects after the names” distinguish between the living and the dead by indicating the living as “our beloved” (*cari nostri*) and the dead with “the souls of our beloved.” See Rose 2017, pp. 7–8, with regard to *Missale Gothicum* 268.

(17.) 365 POST NOMINA. *Recensitis nominibus fratrum carorumque nostrorum oremus dominicam misericordiam ut in medio Hierusalem in congregacione sanctorum haec nomina sibi faciat ab angelo sanctificacionis in beatitudinem aeterni gaudii recensiri sacrificiumque hoc nostrum sicut in praeformacionem Melchisedech in uirtute sanctificet. Praeces quoque offerencium in hac oblacionem propiciatus exaudiat, commemoracionem beatissimorum martyrum Ferreoli et Ferrucionis omniumque sanctorum, ut eorum praecibus adiuti, non solum uiuentibus praesidia, uerum etiam defunctis caris nostris requiem obtinere mereantur.* *Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 489; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, pp. 257–258.

(18.) *Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, iube haec perferri per manus sancti angeli tui in suplimi altario tuo in conspecto diuine maiestates tuae ut quotquod ex hoc altari participacionis sacrosanctum filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus omni benedictione celesti et gracia repleamur.* Text according to *The Bobbio Missal*, ed. Lowe, p. 12. I leave the orthographic characteristics of this manuscript without comment here.

(19.) 239 COLLECCIO SEQVITVR. *Restitue, domine, peregrinis desideratum patriae solum, ut contemplacionem misericordiae tuae, dum ad praesens agunt beneficiis tuis gracias, ciues esse sanctorum ac tui domestici concupiscant.* *Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 443; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, p. 214.

(20.) *...fratres nostros ac sorores quicumque peregrinacionum necessitatibus subiacent.* *Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 443; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, p. 214.

(21.) 490 POST NOMINA. *Auditis nominibus recensitis, dilectissimi fratres, deum pietatis et misericordiae dipraecimor, ut haec quae oblata sunt, benignus adsumat. Nullum umquam ex his, pro quibus holocausta franguntur, muneris sui exterum esse paciatur, tam uiuencium quam defunctorum uel ad merita uel ad peccata respiciens alios iubeat ad*

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graciam, alios ad ueniam pertinere. Missale Gothicum, ed. Rose 2005, p. 531; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, pp. 295–296.

(22.) Lewis and Short (1951), s.v. *exterus* refer to Suetonius, *De vita caesarum*, 84: *non modo vestris civibus, verum etiam exteris nationibus* and to Cicero in various works to indicate *exterae civitates* or *exterae nationes*; note the similar use in Acts 26, 11: *exteras civitates* (foreign cities).

(23.) For *paginis*.

(24.) The image of the apostles as a heavenly senate also occurs in an eleventh-century poem in honor of the apostle Matthew composed by archbishop Alfanus of Salerno, who in the same poem refers to the citizens of Salerno as *cives Matthaei*: Alfanus of Salerno, *Apostolorum nobili victoria*, ed. Lentini and Avagliano, p. 85. On this hymn, see Rose 2009, pp. 198–206 and Rose 2013.

(25.) The self-representation of the early medieval church as dominating the public sphere in contrast with pagan or heretic milieus as “private groupings” is demonstrated by Drews 2002, pp. 197, 201–202.

(26.) *censeas*: “to assess, to tax, to esteem.” The word signals the relevance of the *census* and identifies the task of the *ensor* as the person who keeps records of the “registering and rating of Roman citizens, property, etc.”: Lewis and Short 1951, s.v. *censeo* I.A.1 and 2. *census*; see also Koep 1952, p. 71.

(27.) *...ut haec sacrificia sic uiuentibus proficient ad emendationem, ut defunctis opitulentur ad requiem; Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 371; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, p. 136.

(28.) *...ut concidere dignetur ut sacrae praesentis oblatio, quae offertur, uiuentibus emendationem et defunctis remissionem obteneant peccatorum. Missale Gothicum*, ed. Rose 2005, p. 513; trans. *Gothic Missal*, 2017, p. 279.

(29.) *Guntchramni regis edictum* (dated November 10, 585): *Guntchramni regis edictum* (dated November 10, 585): *Ad vos ergo, sacrosancti pontifices, quibus divina clementia potestatis paternae concessit officium, imprimis nostrae serenitatis sermo dirigitur, sperantes quod ita populum vobis providentia divina commissum frequenti praedicatione studeatis corrigere et pastoralis studio gubernare, quatenus, dum universi diligendo iustitiam conversatione praecipua cum omni honestate studuerint vivere, melius, cuncta rerum adversitate remota, coelesti beneficio concedatur tranquillitas temporum et congrua salvatio populorum. Boretius (ed.) 1883, pp. 11–12.*

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