ABIDING IN THE FIELDS: PASTORAL CARE AND SOCIETY IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

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By

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IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

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A candidate for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

I was twelve years old when a school acquaintance announced to his parents that my family's home was "weird" because it was "full of books." Both then and now, I think that be "full of books" is a basic reason to live. With love and gratitude, then, I thank my sister Diane Hill, my mother Ellen Singer, and my late father David Singer for their love of reading and for much else besides.

My partner of twenty-three years (and marriage partner since 2011) Larry Bauer has heard me out as I grumped, complained, and conjectured my way across two states and through three degrees to finally complete my education, something that he was convinced I could do long before I gathered the courage to try. To him, with love, I dedicate this work.

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Introduction: The Conversion of England and Social Change

At its most basic, the conversion of England to Christianity was a royal affair. Whatever else may be connoted by the act of *conversio*—of an individual or group turning from adherence to the tenets and practices of one religion to that of another—all of those who examine the history of the English conversion acknowledge that English sources identify the island's sixth- and seventh-century kings as the primary recipients and patrons of the Christian missions and their message. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* says the series of events through which the English became Christian began in 597, when King Æthelberht of Kent (r. *c.*560–616) allowed the Roman missionary Augustine, his Frankish translators, and his clerical entourage to come ashore on the island of Thanet, and ended in 655, when the people of the kingdom of Mercia accepted Christianity after the death of their bellicose and long-ruling pagan king Penda (r. *c.*632–655). Kings were recognized as key throughout this process, not only in England but also in Rome. Bede records that Pope Gregory I (r. 590–604), to whose impetus and direction he credits the conversion of England effected by Augustine and his followers, wrote to the newly-converted Æthelberht that he should take as his model the emperor Constantine, who had not only turned his own heart but also submitted "to Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ … all of the nations under his rule."[1]

Following Gregory's confirmation of Æthelberht's central role in bringing all those

[1] "omipotenti Deo Domino nostro Iesu Christo secum subdidit, seque cum subiectis populis tota"; Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (=*HE*) i.32, in *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors and Bertram Colgrave, trans. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 112.

under his control into the Church, the subsequent progress of conversion depended on seventh-century English kings' faithfulness to and support of Christianity. The Church's influence expanded when Rædwald of the East Angles (d. *c*.624) converted (most likely under Æthelberht's sponsorship),[2] and when the Kentish king's nephew Sæbehrt (d. *c*.616), himself king of the East Saxons, became a Christian, a new bishopric was established in his lands at London with its seat at the cathedral of St. Paul that was newly built by Æthelberht.[3] Conversely, the bishops who succeeded Augustine almost abandoned their mission when Æthelberht's then-pagan son Eadbald (r. 616–640) took the throne, and Paulinus archbishop of York, under whom Edwin of Northumbria (d. 633)) accepted Christianity, fled to the south after Edwin was killed in battle in 633. Even faithlessness by Christians themselves could lead to disaster during these days of conversion, as the monks of Bangor who had stubbornly refused to recognize Augustine's archiepiscopal authority fatally learned when their Christian defenders for whom they were praying abandoned them to the pagan king Æthelfrith's (r. *c*.592–616) attack at Chester.[4] Moreover, for Bede and other insular Christian writers, both the spiritual health and the physical security of the island's people depended on the moral rectitude of their secular rulers. Gildas (d. *c*.570) accused the fifth-century British "tyrant" Guthrigern/Vortigern and his followers of letting their vices blind them to the

[2] N. J. Higham, *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 102.

[3] *HE* ii.3, 142.

[4] *HE* ii.2, 140.

danger of inviting Saxon mercenaries into Britain,[5] while Nennius (early 9th century) condemned Guthrigern as both indolent[6] and incestuous.[7] In all, it is not surprising that, as Patrick Wormald trenchantly observes, even Bede's detailed account of the conversion of the English reduces to little more than, "at this time the *A* people received the Faith from Saint *B* under the rule of king *C*."[8]

Undoubtedly, our sources' royal and episcopal perspective shapes our understanding of what happened during this initial period of conversion. Under those sources' influence, though, questions about how the English became Christian are often reduced to considerations of power: of a missionary's power to urge and compel belief, and of a king's power to use the authority and institutions of belief to meet his own political needs. In his classic 1972 examination of the Christianization of England, Henry Mayr-Harting conjectures that Æthelberht found "having the notice of the pope and being drawn close to the civilized and wealthy axis of Mediterranean life" to be useful political benefits of accepting Christianity from and giving his own patronage to the Augustinian mission. Mayr-Harting goes so far as to suggest that the Kentish king may have resisted converting earlier, as he presumably might have done through interaction with his wife Bertha's Frankish bishop Liudhard, because he was cautious of the specter of "political

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[5] *De Excidio Britonum*, cap. 23-24; in Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom (London: Phillimore, 1978), 26–27.

[6] Nennius, *Nennius's "History of the Britons,"* ed. Arthur W. Wade-Evans (London: S.P.C.K., 1938), 58.

[7] Nennius, 61.

[8] Patrick Wormald, "Bede, Beowulf and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy," in *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Robert T. Farrell, British Archaeological Reports 46 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1978), 33.

dependence" that his accepting Christianity from a Frankish cleric might raise.[9]

Along the same lines, Nicholas Higham's 1997 *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England* focuses explicitly on the political considerations that kings such as Æthelberht, Edwin, and Oswald could have faced when weighing whether and from whom to accept Christianity. Considering the political benefits that kings might gain from aligning themselves with either the "Roman" or the "Irish" church, both of which employed well-developed governmental institutions and techniques (such as literacy) and asserted historical claims of being able to grant spiritual power and material success to their adherents, Higham says that in some ways, Christianity was adopted in England because its inherent "systems of authority and organisation … offered attractive solutions to political problems confronting powerful kings."[10] Nearly a decade later, Barbara Yorke agreed that political considerations on both sides influenced religious conversion, saying that not only might English nobles have decided "whether to accept or reject Christianity or to support variant tendencies within the church" on political grounds, but also that missionaries realized that "the cooperation of rulers and the nobility was a prerequisite for establishing the structures that would allow a broader diffusion of Christianity within society."[11] Even someone like Marilyn Dunn who explicitly sets out to study the Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons

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[9] Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to England* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 63.

[10] D. P. Kirby's review in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49, no. 4 (1998): 716-717 briefly summarizes what is most interesting about Higham's admittedly speculative approach, while David Rollason says that "the evidence is simply not sufficient for what Higham wants to do with it" in his review in *History* 85, no. 277 (January 2000): 118; Higham, *The Convert Kings*, 27.

[11] Barbara Yorke, *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain c.600-800* (Harlow, UK: Pearson/Longman, 2006), 2.

from a conceptual and anthropological perspective—as the "interaction between imagistic [pagan] and doctrinal [Christian] modes of religiosity"[12]—looks at the initial introduction and acceptance of Christianity in England in the light of political relations between Anglo-Saxon and Frankish kingdoms. Based on Pope Gregory's diplomatic letters to Bertha and to the Frankish kings Theuderic (r. 595–613) and Theudebert (r. 595–612), who Gregory implies are the "kings and lords" of the English,[13] Dunn suggests that Bertha may have failed to support the Augustinian mission because she perceived it "as being linked with a rival court."[14] Given all these examples, it does appear that the initial introduction to and acceptance of Christianity in seventh-century England depended as much on English politics as much as it did on Christian message.

Of course, none who give the question any thought think that conversion, much less Christianization, simply means kings and their followers pausing their conflicts long enough to be baptized. Even Bede did not limit his understanding so. In the *Ecclesiastical History*, he uses *conversio* and *converto* not only to describe a non-Christian's acceptance of the Gospel and of baptism but also when talking about those who took monastic orders, as witnessed by his inclusion of the Council of Hertford's ruling that monks must "remain obedient to what they promised at the time of their conversion" unless "properly dismissed by their abbot."[15] He also described some as being converted to a different or

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[12] Marilyn Dunn, *The Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons, C. 597-700: Discourses of Life, Death and Afterlife* (London: Continuum, 2009), 4–5.

[13] Ep. 6.51, in Gregory, *The Letters of Gregory the Great* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2004), 438.

[14] Dunn, *Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons*, 52–54.

[15] "nisi per dimissionem proprii abbatis, sed in ea permaneant oboedientia quam tempore suae *conversionis* promiserunt"; *HE* iv.5, 350.

deeper understanding of the tenets of their faith; to this end, as Wilfrid asserted at the council of Whitby, "all of the Church throughout the world was converted" to observing Easter at the proper time by the example of St. John.[16] Bede understood conversion as something that might be motivated from without but which arose from within, as his telling of the story of Cædmon, the illiterate but divinely-inspired English lay brother, shows. He says that Cædmon, after learning Holy Scripture by hearing it spoken in his own language and ruminating over it "like some animal chewing the cud," converted that Latin Christian learning into "the sweetest of" English religious song.[17] This is conversion at the deepest level: that of the creative imagination.

The story of the unlettered Cædmon converting the Latin words of scripture into Anglo-Saxon words of praise underscores that which we know must be true, even though it is hard to glimpse in Bede's or others' histories. When a king and his followers professed public adherence to Christianity and participated in Christian baptism, that event marked the *beginning* and not the end of conversion.[18] The behavioral, emotional, and intellectual process through which Anglo-Saxons society became substantially, rather than nominally, Christian—that is to say, through which Christianity's rituals, ethos, and understanding of the world became normative for the people of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms—took far longer. Bede himself knew that Christian baptism guaranteed neither understanding of nor faithfulness to Christian doctrine and that a Christian king bending

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[16] "omnis per orbem ecclesia *conversa est*"; *HE* iii.25, 302. Wilfrid likely meant "all excepting Colman and the recalcitrant Irish."

[17] "quasi mundum animal ruminando, in carmen dulcissimum *convertebat*"; *HE* iv.24, 418.

[18] Ludo Milis, "La conversion en profoundeur: un processus sans fin," *Revue du nord* 68, no. 269 (June 1986): 488.

under the weight of a calamity like plague could be "converted to apostasy (*ad apostasiam conuersus est*)," taking at least some of his people with him.[19] "To convert" signifies for Bede the undergoing of a significant personal change that often had social effects.

English sources also show us that what were understood to be "pagan" practices did not disappear from England during the seventh century or later and that monks, bishops, and other clerics strove to eliminate idolatry, sooth-saying, and other practices rooted in the pagan past from among those under their pastoral care. Surviving documents produced or used in England before 1100 that describe Christian ministers' opposition to "pagan" practices as part of their ongoing pastoral care include letters, sermons, counciliary records, ecclesiastical laws, and nineteen penitentials and collections of penitential canons that range from the 457 *Synodus I. Sancti Patricii* to the tenth-century *Confessionale Pseudo-Egberti*, which "under the name *Scrift Boc* (*c.*950–*c.*1000) … is the oldest penitential in Anglo-Saxon."[20] Some of these texts, such as sermons against fortune telling by Caesarius of Arles (468/470–542), were often-copied chestnuts of anti-pagan polemic, but a few appear to authentically record religious or "folk" practices specific to at least some of the non-Christian English. Certainly each mention of idolatry in a manuscript does not equal an incidence of that practice being observed at the time and in the place that manuscript was written, and clerics derived their interpretations and descriptions alike of pagan and "superstitious" practices from literary sources such as the

[19] As did Sighere of the East Saxons in 664; *HE* iii.30, 322.

[20] Bernadette Filotas, *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005), 375.

writings of Caesarius, Martin of Braga (*c*.520–580), and others.[21] However, that English clerics expended the materials, the time, and the effort to copy and preserve these texts, that their councils made rulings based on categories of behavior derived from them, and that kings such as Wihtred of Kent (690–725) proclaimed laws against "sacrific[ing] to devils"[22] and Athelstan (924–939) against "witchcraft"[23] all strongly suggest that what these men were observing among the English for at least three centuries after the conversion of the Mercians brought to a close the first phase of Christianization convinced them that they must continue to battle pagan practices.

It is clear, then, that Wormald is right to say that Bede's approach to how the English became Christian, and too often our own as well, is frequently based on "far too concrete a conception of the process of conversion" that misleads "historians of conversion [to] think instinctively of the wholesale exchange of one set of values for another."[24] He may stray from the mark, though, when he criticizes the "underlying assumption that the set of values abandoned for the [Christian] faith were as comprehensive and coherent as Christianity itself" as giving rise to a generic conception of an Anglo-Saxon 'paganism' that "may not have very much to do with heathen cult at all."[25] There is no doubt that what little was recorded of that cult by English clerics and

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[21] It is worth noting, however, that Martin's model sermon condemning sixth-century "Iberian popular culture and paganism" (Filotas, 48-49) does not survive in English manuscripts of the period studied.

[22] Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), I:363.

[23] Cap. 6; Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, I:382–383.

[24] Wormald, "Bede, Beowulf and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy," 65.

[25] Wormald, "Bede, Beowulf and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy," 65–66.

what material remains of its practice have survived the centuries do not present a clear picture of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon religion no matter what analogues and interpretations are applied to them. As an isolated, "comprehensive, and coherent" religious system, Anglo-Saxon paganism lies beyond recovery.

Even so, the assumption that the pagan religion of the pre-Christian Anglo-Saxons *was* a religion and that it was not replaced because it was imperfectly realized remains a necessary starting point for examining the Christianization of the English. Neither Christianity nor Anglo-Saxon paganism was merely a collection of rituals, of beliefs, or even of symbols that set one people off from another. Instead, each of those elements was inherent to them *as religions*. Neither were these religions, nor any others, concerned only with "spiritual" matters. Raymond Firth, whose study of the conversion of the inhabitants of the Polynesian island of Tikopia from their traditional religion to Christianity influenced Mayr-Harting's later understanding of the Anglo-Saxon conversion,[26] says that "any religion is concerned with problems of meaning [and] is part of man's attempt to attribute order and sense to human existence, to see pattern in the relation of man to his fellows and to the external world."[27] Firth adds that "the religion of a people is concerned with their basic notions of ultimate reality,"[28] notions that engage social issues such as the prestige of leaders and the prosperity of individuals and groups as well. Belief and practice together comprise religion, and the Tikopia's religion

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[26] Henry Mayr-Harting, *Two Conversions to Christianity: the Bulgarians and the Anglo-Saxons*, The Stenton Lecture 1993 (Reading, UK: University of Reading, 1994), 13–15.

[27] Raymond Firth, *Rank and Religion in Tikopia: A Study in Polynesian Paganism and Conversion to Christianity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 17.

[28] Firth, *Rank and Religion in Tikopia*, 18.

"provided both objectives and instruments of action to groups and individuals pursuing both private and public ends."[29] Likewise, even the little bit we know about Anglo-Saxon paganism—that it could involve sacrifice under the sponsorship of rulers, that its priests were connected with those rulers' courts, and that it could involve a number of individual practices related to sickness and healing, rituals for the dead, and divination—points to its being comprehensive and coherent as well.

This study of the Christianization of England is based on the idea that religion and society are intrinsically interrelated. In that, it owes a fundamental debt to the work of Émile Durkheim, whose study of Australian aboriginal religion led him to conclude that, because it and other religions represent "an integral system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things… that unite into a single moral community, called a 'church,' all those who adhere to it," religion must be "eminently a collective thing."[30] As Graham Ward puts it, "Marx was only half right: religion is a social production, but the social is also a religious production."[31] These two domains are intellectually discrete but materially interconnected, so that the more thoroughly the pagan religions system of the Tikopia "enter[ed] into the social and economic affairs of everyday life, the more did it seem to hold the thoughts and emotions of those who practiced it."[32] These are generalizations, and certainly not all members of a culture respond to religious ideas in

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[29] Firth, *Rank and Religion in Tikopia*, 23.

[30] "Une religion est un système solidaire de croyances et de pratiques relatives à des choses sacrée… qui unissent en une même communauté morale, appelée Église, tous ceux qui y adhèrent…. la religion doit être une chose éminemment collective"; Émile Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: le système totémique en Australie* (Paris: Librairie Générale française, 1991), 108–109.

[31] Graham Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11.

[32] Firth, *Rank and Religion in Tikopia*, 24.

the same way. The irreligious must have existed among the Anglo-Saxons just as they must have among the Tikopia, though in a society in which hardship, disease, and violence are much more prevalent than most in the modern West are used to and interdependency is consequently more vital, it is likely that many of the less reverent kept up a normal appearance of piety. Nevertheless, when considering the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, it is clear that, if their pre-Christian religious practices were at all typical of those observed and recorded throughout history, then that conversion must have represented something much deeper than a change in external affiliation and public rites.

For the purpose of this study, then, religion and culture are considered to be inherently interconnected mental constructions and social practices that form the basis for individual and group identity and that are understood to provide effective ways to influence the natural, the social, and the spiritual worlds. From that assumption comes this basic guiding question: if religion and culture are so intimately joined and so mutually reinforcing, then how do cultures change their religion? What must happen for a society to decide to treat different combinations of objects, actions, and ideas as sacred while rejecting its previous notions of sacrality? To explore those processes, this study examines the spread and development of Christianity in England between the end of the sixth and the middle of the ninth centuries, or effectively from the beginnings of wholesale Christianization with the landing of the Roman mission at Thanet until the overwintering of Vikings there signaled the disruption of the first period of English Christianization. It assumes that changes in the Anglo-Saxon religious matrix as the English became Christian would have been linked with changes in how English men and

women thought about themselves and their world. Moreover, given that the sources for the history of this period suggest that these changes in the main came about through agreement rather than coercion, it assumes that these religious and social changes must have involved interaction and negotiation between those advocating older ideas and values and those speaking for newer ones. If society and religion are closely linked in human culture and thoroughly internalized in the human psyche, lasting change could not have occurred merely by clerical or by royal fiat. The lord's hall, the village assembly, and the minster church must have all been forums for these negotiations, which should in turn have shaped the productions of the pulpit and the scriptorium that provide the evidence on which we base our understanding of this period of early English history.

If the conversion of Anglo-Saxon England to Christianity included cultural negotiation and adaptation as well as the adoption of specific religious doctrines and practices, then the evidence for liturgical, intellectual, and institutional elements specific to the Anglo-Saxon church should reveal something about both its Christian and its Anglo-Saxon wellsprings. Along with evidence drawn from the archaeological exploration of church, monastic, and burial sites in England and Ireland (whence came much of the impetus for the Christianization of England north of the Humber in the seventh century) and from histories such as Bede's and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, there remain nearly 190 manuscripts—liturgical documents, prayer books, treatises, and collections of penitential and legal rulings in both Latin and, notably, Old English—that were produced and used in England during the two and a half centuries after Æthelberht and Augustine greeted each other. Actively engaging these sources for the centuries-long process of the Christianization of England with an understanding of religion's place in

human society and with attention to the processes of religious and cultural change should make it possible to describe how that change occurred.

Christianization and Inculturation

The study of religious conversion is not unique to Anglo-Saxon England, and the modern understanding of religion's interrelation with culture and of interaction and negotiation as necessary for religious and cultural change has led some contemporary Christian theologians, particular those involved with Roman Catholic missions in Africa and Asia, to describe the process of ongoing conversion and Christianization as one of *inculturation*. This term, first used by Joseph Masson, S.J. in 1962 and brought to prominence by other Jesuits including the order's then-Superior General Pedro Arrupe in the 1970s,[33] takes the sociological processes of acculturation and enculturation as models for understanding conversion. However, though the idea of inculturation arose in part from these theologians' attention to the social sciences and their growing sensitivity to and willingness to account for the often-deleterious effects of Western colonialism and missionary activities on native cultures, inculturation privileges the theological, seeking to describe a conscious social activity whose goal is the embodiment of the Christian message within a particular culture. Ghanaian bishop Joseph Osei-Bonsu says that the social sciences concept of "acculturation," which is the "contact or encounter between two or more cultures and the [mutual] changes that result," does not accurately describe the on-going conversion of a culture to Christianity because it is not consistent with the Church's belief that its universal nature and mission are "bound to no particular culture."

[33] Joseph Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa: Antecedents and Guidelines from the New Testament and the Early Church* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2005), 19.

Likewise, "enculturation," which denotes the process through which someone learns the values, mores, and behaviors expected by a new culture (or, as a child, of their native culture), fails to account for and value the culture that converts already possess.[34] For Osei-Bonsu and others, "inculturation"—the incarnation (Lat. *incarnatus*, "to be made flesh") of Christianity within a cultural system—represents "the dynamic relation between the Christian message and culture or cultures" and an "ongoing process of reciprocal and critical interaction" though which "Christian teachings and practices are integrated into the given culture, and the local culture and practices in turn are integrated into the Christian message."[35]

With this conception of Christianization as an interactive process, the interdependence of religion and culture articulated by Durkheim becomes the context in which, over time, adaptation to the behavioral exigencies of a new religion becomes a religious conversion "at depth" that forms a new social and religious conscience.[36] Moreover, if inculturation does describe how religious change happens within cultures, then it must have occurred in many places, with many individuals, and over a long period for the changes it produces to be felt and reproduced throughout a culture like that of the Anglo-Saxons. Carl Starkloff says that what distinguishes "authentic inculturation" from the mere syncretism between Christianity's and another religion's practices is that, at its deepest and most complete level, inculturation results from "a long and almost

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[34] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, 19.

[35] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, 20–21.

[36] Milis, "La conversion en profoundeur," 488.

imperceptible organic process not unlike" that of digestion and "bodily nourishment"[37]—an analogy the sentiment of which Bede, who described how Cædmon chewed the cud of the Gospel message and produced hymns of praise that nourished their hearers, might have approved.

Moreover, its advocates claim that, as a model of how religious conversion and social change may occur, inculturation not only has its roots in modern theology and experience but also may be discerned in the primary historical evidence for Christianity's earliest growth. Brian Stanley says that "from the beginning, Christians have understood Jesus in terms of the linguistic and cultural categories available to them from the world in which they lived," so that to call Jesus *kyrios* (Gr. "lord") connoted for Greek-speaking Gentile Christians that he, rather than any Greek divinity or Roman emperor, had ultimate authority, while for Jewish Christians it conveyed that Jesus was himself Yahweh since *kyrios* was increasingly being substituted for the name of God by first-century Jews.[38] Osei-Bonsu gives examples of similar adaptations and uses of Hellenistic concepts to communicate Christian ideas throughout the New Testament. For example, in 1 Cor. 9.24-27 and elsewhere, Paul adopts the image of an athletic "contest" (*agon*), which as "one of the oldest [motifs] in extant Hellenistic writings" was employed by "the moralists, Epictetus, Plutarch and Seneca" as well, and employs such athletic-related language as "prize," "competitor," "to exercise self-discipline," "beating the air," and

[37] Carl F. Starkloff, "Inculturation and cultural systems (Part 2)," *Theological Studies* 55, no. 2 (June 1994): 281.

[38] Brian Stanley, "Inculturation: Historical Background, Theological Foundations and Contemporary Questions.," *Transformation* 24, no. 1 (January 2007): 23.

"fail to qualify" as he exhorts the Greek-speaking Corinthians to live a Christian life.[39] Similarly, the seventeenth chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, traditionally attributed to Luke and most likely issued sometime before 70 C.E.,[40] presents Paul addressing the Epicureans and Stoics of Athens on the *Areopagus*, the site of the city's chief court. This speech, which is likely "a summary in Luke's language of the kind of thing that Paul said to Gentile audiences,"[41] says of God that "in him we live and move and have our being" (*en auto gar zomen kai kinoumetha kai esmen*). Osei-Bonsu points out that this phrase is strikingly similar to one that the ninth century C.E. Syriac writer Isho'dad attributed to Minos of Crete, who he says addressed his father Zeus with the words, "in thee we live and move and have our being," and its use indicates another way in which Paul accommodated the language and concepts familiar to his audience when describing God and God's relationship with man.[42]

Paul's speech in Athens, like similar passages in his letters and in other New Testament writing, shows how first-century Christians who participated in both Jewish and Greek culture employed Greek philosophical and literary concepts and terminology to the communication of Christian ideas. Nor did this adaptation and application of other cultures' beliefs and practices to those of Christianity end in the first century. Christian apologists such as Tertullian in the second and third centuries dealt with the question of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son by employing the "Logos

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[39] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, 43–44.

[40] I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 44–48.

[41] Marshall, *Acts*, 283.

[42] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, 33.

doctrine of the Stoics," a doctrine that associated *logos* with both the "immanent word" (*logos endiathetos*) or reason and with the "word uttered or expressed" (*logos prophorikos*).[43] Later, after Constantine I's fourth-century recognition and elevation of Christianity to *de facto* "imperial" status within the Roman Empire, Cappadocian theologians such as Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa were equally committed to the defense of both orthodox Christianity and their own Hellenistic culture. As beneficiaries of the Greek *paideia* whose educated writing "preserved … basic tendencies of the classical mind around which the [Christian] ideas of their own age could crystallize,"[44] these men made "a clear distinction between 'our [Hellenistic] philosophy' and the 'outside philosophy'," a distinction that clearly favored the former as "an expression for the true Christian Faith [and] the basis and criterion for a hermeneutic of culture."[45]

Many more examples of this cross-cultural interaction between pagan Greek and Christian concepts can be drawn. Indeed, the Hellenistic influence on Judaism by means of the Septuagint predates Christianity and was "not one of the consequence of Christian mission, but rather one of its preconditions."[46] Add to this the institutional influence of the Roman state on the Roman Church, the influence of Roman social ideas of patronage

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[43] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, 62.

[44] Werner Wilhelm Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 85.

[45] Kondothra M. George, "Cross-cultural Interpretation: Some Paradigms from the Early Church," *International Review of Mission* 85, no. 337 (April 1, 1996): 222.

[46] Georg Kretschmar, "The Early Church and Hellenistic Culture," *International Review of Mission* 84, no. 332/333 (1995): 35–37.

and the practice of memorials for the dead on the developing cults of Christian saints,[47] and even such simple but potentially meaningful (for those who knew their Roman origins) Christian liturgical fixtures as the Mass-priest's wearing of a chasuble adapted from the common Roman form of sleeveless outer cloak,[48] and it becomes clear that Christianity has adapted, incorporated, and given new meaning to features derived from the cultures of its adherents. Since "the Gospel was being proclaimed and the faith was being lived successively in different cultural contexts: Palestinian-Aramaic, Diaspora, Hellenistic, etc." throughout the first centuries of Christianity's existence,[49] it makes sense that inculturation, if it is as it is described, would occur through these interactions. If that is so, then inculturation should have resulted from the interaction of Anglo-Saxon, British, Irish, and Roman cultures in England as well.

It takes almost no effort, though, to produce many examples of cultural and even religious change proceeding not by means of consideration for the language of others and through the give and take of negotiation but instead by imposition and force. Cultural hegemony must be considered as an element of the dynamic of cultural change, and certainly the first-century Palestinian Jewish missionaries approached the Greek intellectual and the Roman political establishment from a much different position of power than did Roman missionaries presenting themselves and their message to the king of Kent. Examining dynamics of power and exploring how the different institutional and

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[47] Seminally explored by Peter Brown in *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[48] Sarah Larratt Keefer, "Anglo-Saxon Church Vestments," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, ed. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, vol. 3 (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2007), 16.

[49] Pedro Arrupe, "A Letter to the Whole Society of Jesus on Inculturation," *Acta Romana Societatis Jesu* 17, no. 1 (1978): 270.

intellectual practices of the Irish and Roman churches influenced the development of the church in England is a part of this study as well. However, it is critical to remember that conversion, inculturation, religious ritual and all other processes by which meaning is communicated and modified are advanced not through "the circulation of anonymous cultural forces but [through] intentional acts done from specific subject positions with respect to defined institutions."[50] What this means is that Anglo-Saxon culture and religion changed because bishops, priests, and deacons, monks and nuns, kings and queens, husbands and wives, warriors, farmers, and merchants all communicated and reacted to specific events and ideas, within specific places and social contexts, from the basis of their individual cultural and religious understandings. The main thrust of this study is that power and belief exist and can only be understood within the context of human interaction and community and that the interaction that characterized the ongoing Christianization of England was that of pastoral care.

Pastoral care, which included preaching, instruction, and correction, was carried out by men (and likely a few women as well) acting in a number of clerical roles through English institutions whose seventh-century foundation and provision in many ways represented "ad hoc" ecclesiastical experimentation marked by "improvisation and lack of definition."[51] Within that loose and developing framework, pastors sought to Christianize the behavior and belief of Anglo-Saxons by deriving moral and behavioral norms from theological doctrine and communicating those norms to those under their

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[50] Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, 8.

[51] Alan Thacker, "Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, 1992), 151.

care. They then, as part of their pastoral role, assessed and sanctioned violations of those norms through the practice of private confession and penance (which had developed as part of monastic practice in Ireland and was brought to England not long after the conversion), through preaching, and by enforcing ecclesiastical law and influencing secular law. The statement and restatement by clerics and, increasingly, by the laity themselves, of norms derived from Christian belief enabled those norms to replace ones that had been traditional among Anglo-Saxons but were now identified as sinful or even as pagan. It was not coercion, then, but rather consistent feedback through pastoral care[52] that Christianized Anglo-Saxon culture.

Moreover, if inculturation is dependent on communication and feedback, then the process by which Christianity was inculturated within and became part of Anglo-Saxon culture also depended on negotiation rather than imposition. In many ways, England became more, not less, Anglo-Saxon as the result of its conversion to Christianity, since that change in religion brought with it new ways to transmit and preserve Anglo-Saxon culture. This is suggested in part by the texts produced and used in England after the conversion. Even though Anglo-Saxons were not literate before the advent of the Augustinian mission, almost immediately after Latin literacy was introduced into England clerics began to produce documents containing Old English and even to add Old English to existing documents. These vernacular and bilingual texts were generally not the secular ones that kings taking advantage of these new techniques for recording their words and deeds might have been expected to value and have produced but instead religious ones. Though fewer than 150 extant manuscripts produced before 1200 were

[52] Milis, "La conversion en profoundeur," 494–495.

written entirely or mainly in Old English,[53] this is far more than exist for this period in any other European vernacular language. Latin and Old English coexist in many ways in many different kinds of manuscripts: as different texts within the same document, as Old English interlinear gloss within Latin texts, as bilingual glossaries, and even as single words scratched in drypoint in the margins of Latin texts. Sometimes Old English was added to texts that had long been in use, and sometimes manuscripts were clearly planned to include both languages from the beginning. Apparently, even the most "Roman" or "Irish" of pastors in England frequently needed to understand and communicate religious ideas in the language of those under their care, so that in the late ninth century King Alfred could write that even though many priests no longer knew Latin, "nevertheless many could read English writing."[54]

In summary, in order to determine to what extent the conversion of the English involved clerics and lay persons alike in social negotiation, and to explore the relationship between religious conversion and social change, this study takes as a fundamental element of Anglo-Saxon England's conversion from paganism to Christianity the pastoral relationship between the bishops, priests, and monks resident in England and the lay English men and women under their spiritual care. It explores what the church and the laity alike expected of clerics as teachers of Christian doctrine and correctors of the sinful by examining the development of pastoral roles and authority from the first through the fifth centuries. It considers the topographical context for

[53] N. R Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), xiv.

[54] "ðeah monege duðon Englisc gewit arædan"; Alfred the Great, "Introduction," in Gregory and Alfred, *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. Henry Sweet, 1871 (Millwood, N.Y: Kraus Reprint, 1978), 6.

pastoral care by looking at how and according to which models English minsters were established, and it examines evidence for the interaction of clergy and laity in the manuscripts produced and used in England from the beginning of Augustine's mission through the mid-ninth century when the Scandinavian invasions of England disrupted ecclesiastical development. Finally, it examines how well the concept of inculturation describes the social and historical processes by which England became Christian and considers what that conversion reveals about the relationship between religion and society in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

England was not the first place in which Christianity and culture interacted. Christianity's doctrines, methods, and institutions all developed and adapted in response to its cultural environment, a process that began when the first churches were founded in Palestine and the Hellenistic Roman world. The next chapter explores how the role of "pastor" and the idea of pastoral leadership initially developed within that context.

CHAPTER 2: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

> The deeds of the bishop must surpass those of the people, just as the life of the shepherd stands apart from that of the flock.
> –Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* (590)[1]

The idea that the one in charge of a religious group is its "pastor" (from the Greek *poimēn*, "shepherd") did not originate with Christianity. Throughout the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds, the image of the shepherd herding his flock, keeping it together, and protecting it from harm was a common metaphor for those who directed groups of believers and ensured their cohesiveness and adherence to shared rites and practices. Orpheus, like Christ, was the "shepherd of his followers," and his priests acted in his name and embodied his divinity and authority as earthly shepherds of his worshipers who were his flock.[2] To be a pastor, then, was to follow a divine model.

This idea of pastoral leadership was not confined to the temple. In Sumer and Babylon as well as among the tribes of Israel, the king was called the shepherd and guard of his people. Sovereignty, justice, and authority of divine origin all participated in this image of leadership; the Sumerian king Šulgi (2094-2045 B.C.E.), who called himself "the true shepherd of Sumer," emphasized his association with the "boat god" Ištaran who was a divine judge and arbitrator,[3] while Hammurabi erected *stele* that proclaimed

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[1] "Tantum debit actionem populi actio transcendere praesulis, quantum distare solet a grege uita pastoris"; II.1, in Gregory, *Règle Pastorale*, ed. Bruno Judic and Floribert Rommel, trans. Charles Morel (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992), 1:174.

[2] Ernst Maass, *Orpheus: Untersuchungen zur griechischen, römischen, altchristlichen Jenseitsdichtung und Religion* (Munich: Ch. H. Beck, 1895; Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1974), 180–181.

[3] Christopher E. Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet of Nabû-apla-iddina Revisited," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 56 (2004): 72 and n. 248.

him "the deliverer of his people from affliction, who provides secure foundation for them in the midst of Babylon; the shepherd (*rêû*) of the people."[4] Early Mesopotamian texts say that Enlil and Inanna, the king and queen of the gods, first brought kingship from the heavens to earth when they sought a man to serve as "a shepherd of his people."[5] Cognate forms of the Biblical Hebrew word for "shepherd" (*nagid*) appear in early Mesopotamian languages as titles for kings and for the elders of a city as well.[6] Clearly, this image of a pastoral leader as a shepherd given divine charge over his followers had deep roots in the cultural soil from which Christianity grew.

Understanding from where the idea of the pastor originated and how particular roles and responsibilities came to be associated with it as Christianity developed will help us identify how those who provided pastoral care in England during the seventh through the ninth centuries expected to interact with their flock and expected their flock to respond. Moreover, if we want to assess how pastoral interactions shaped and were shaped by early English society, we must select from among the pastors' wide-ranging roles and responsibilities those that we can clearly see, accurately describe, and validly propose as contexts for the communication and inculturation of transformative social ideas.

This chapter, then, has two goals. The first is to establish discrete elements of

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[4] M. E. J. Richardson, *Hammurabi's Laws: Text, Translation, and Glossary* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 39.

[5] Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society & Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 237.

[6] J. J. Glück, "Nagid-Shepherd," *Vetus Testamentum* 13, fasc. 2 (April 1963): 144.

pastoral care—evangelization,[7] catechesis and instruction, and correction (both through preaching and through the administration of confession and penance)—that, because they emphasize interaction between clergy and laity, are the best foci for studying the relationship between pastoral care and social change. The second is to look at the early church's development of a distinct form of pastoral leadership—the bishop—that emphasized both divine and earthly power.

The Bishop's Burden: Authority and Pastoral Interaction

That Gregory the Great called pastoral care a "burden" (*pondera*)[8] may not reflect his affectation of authorial humility but rather his consideration of everything that phrase could encompass. Recent histories of pastoral care describe the care or "cure" of souls (*curae animarum*) as "the sustaining and curative treatment of persons in those matters that reach beyond the requirements of animal life," or as "helping acts, done by representative Christian persons, directed toward the healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns."[9] Almost any action by a priest that requires him to interact with others would seem to fall within the domain of pastoral care, including his conducting liturgy, preaching sermons, teaching, giving advice, correcting behavior, assigning penance, and, in the case of those clerics whose authority extended beyond to the soul to the body as

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[7] Considering evangelization in this context may seem mistaken since the initial presentation of the Gospel is to those who are not Christian and who therefore are not yet in a pastoral relationship. Its inclusion in the context of early Anglo-Saxon England is justified, though, as will be shown.

[8] *Epistulae praefatio*, in *Règle Pastorale*, 1, 124.

[9] John T McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls* (New York: Harper, 1951), vii; William A Clebsch and Charles R Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective* (New York: J. Aronson, 1983), 4.

well, passing judgment. A quick review of the contents of representative collections on the history of pastoral care in the Western church like G. R. Evans's *A History of Pastoral Care* (2000) and John Blair and Richard Sharpe's *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (1992) bears out this impression. For these editors and their contributors, studies of monastic and secular clergy, of baptism, confession, and penance, of homiletics and catechism, of councils and law-codes, and of church-building and ecclesiastical organization all have a place in the discussion of pastoral care.

Obviously, the scope of inquiry must be narrowed before any meaningful investigation into pastoral care and its effect on English society can be accomplished. However, choosing to limit this study's considerations to evangelization, teaching and catechesis, and correction does much more than merely produce a (slightly) more manageable topic, for that choice emphasizes that all three of these activities are grounded in pastors' communication of Christian mores. Clergy in England conveyed Christian behavioral norms and the ideas associated with them to their Anglo-Saxon listeners first by preaching the Gospel message and then by providing ongoing instruction in Christian doctrine, and they enforced those norms through correction and, especially once the practice of private confession that had developed in Ireland was adopted in the English church, the imposition of penitential sanctions. Moreover, confession by its nature absolutely and evangelization and instruction in practice invite listeners to interact with the pastor rather than just to be passive recipients of his message. As Bede tells it, even after Edwin of Northumbria ceased swearing by and sacrificing to the gods of his pagan religion, he engaged in a long period of instruction from and interaction with Bishop Paulinus before agreeing to propose that he and his people should convert to

Christianity.[10]

It is tempting to exclude evangelization from the discussion of pastoral care simply on denotative grounds. Pastors obviously cannot lead those who do not agree to follow them, so it would seem that those who are not Christian and to whom evangelism is therefore directed cannot be recipients of pastoral care. The marker for Christian conversion, however, was the reception of baptism. Baptism in turn was only performed after some period of catechesis (though the exact period varied),[11] and those who identify conversion as a process of inculturation say that this catechesis "should be thought of as transmission at the level of culture and not merely as instruction in doctrine."[12] Taking as an hypothesis, then, that conversion and Christianization are part of an extended but unitary process by which individuals change their ideas of the world and themselves, evangelization is identified as the inception of a continuing process of pastoral interaction and instruction, just as "Christianization" can be understood as continuing the process of conversion and of the "turning" of the believers' values and understanding away from those they had held and toward those Christian ones the pastor seeks to foster. Moreover, though new texts were created in England to support liturgy, devotional practice, and the teaching and understanding of Church doctrine in later centuries, many basic sources for pastoral care remained much the same. Manuscripts used and created in England during the seventh century include such mainstays of instruction and devotion as scripture

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[10] *HE* ii. 9, in *Ecclesiastical History*, 165-7.

[11] Sarah Foot, "'By water and the spirit': The Administration of Baptism in Early Anglo-Saxon England," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 176. Catechesis is discussed specifically in Chapter Five (see pages 212–224).

[12] Arrupe, "A Letter to the Whole Society of Jesus on Inculturation," 272–273.

(particularly Gospel books), scriptural commentaries, and ecclesiastical histories. Conversion and Christianization draw from the same sources, and for the purpose of this study, both the initial pastoral interaction of evangelization and the instruction and correction that follow fit comfortably within the category of pastoral care.

Long-term interaction would seem to be critical part of fostering a change as radical as that of the alteration of a culture's religious conception and cult, as one modern example shows. The Forest Tobelo of Indonesia, a tribal group of foragers who had heretofore resisted intermittent attempts by their neighboring agriculturalist villagers to convert them to Christianity, became Christian in the late 1980s through a well-planned missionary campaign by the American evangelical New Tribes Mission. This campaign included five years of language training for the missionaries as well as "literacy programs, Indonesian language lessons, medical care, and medical training" for the Tobelo. These tribalists' "continuing interaction with the missionaries" who themselves actively sought to understand both the Tobelo language and culture is credited for chipping away at "the foundations of the Forest Tobelo's [non-Christian] world view, while at the same time producing a positive response of trust and commitment to the missionaries."[13] This is not to say that in the late sixth century either Pope Gregory or the missionaries he sent engaged in the sort of "pre-evangelism ethnographic study" that these twentieth-century missionaries consciously undertook to support their conversion of people of a different culture. As we shall see, though, the ecclesiastic institutions these first churchmen in England established and the texts that the English church procured and

[13] Christopher R. Duncan, "Untangling Conversion: Religious Change and Identity among the Forest Tobelo of Indonesia," *Ethnology* 42, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 311–312.

produced were engaged in the similar kinds of cultural interaction that pastoral care required.

Of course, pastors in early Anglo-Saxon England did much more than preach, teach, and exhort. Those with sufficient individual or collective (synodical) authority imposed their understanding of Christian morality as well, either by controlling Christians' access to the church or by influencing secular authorities. Abbots and bishops as agents of Christianity might also have authority that is more direct over those who lived and worked on lands held by a church or monastery. In addition, as a basic part of their pastoral mission, those ordained as priests performed the liturgy of the church. Are all these things not components of pastoral care that might be studied for their potential effect on social change? The answer is that to act as a *sacerdos* and an *episcopus* are among some pastors' duties, but what makes it possible for those actions to *communicate* the ideas that foster conversion is that they provide opportunities for evangelization, instruction, and correction.

Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* again provides a good example of how all these elements might work together in the context of pastoral care. After the Christian king Sæberht died, his still-pagan sons took over his leadership of the East Saxon people. Bede relates that these sons demanded during the celebration of that mass to know why Bishop Mellitus would not offer them the "fresh bread" (*panem nitidum*) of the Eucharist that he had given to their father and now was giving to the congregants. The bishop "admonished them diligently again and again" that they must first receive baptism before he could

share that sacred offering with them.[14] At least as Bede reports this exchange (or as it was reported to him), Sæberht's sons were affronted by Mellitus's excluding them, as leaders of their people, from participation in a "trivial" *res populo*. As a pastor, Mellitus's response was not only to assert his ecclesiastical authority by denying them the Eucharist but also to try to lead Sæberht's sons to recognize that they must first perform a ritual action (baptism) based on their acceptance of his preaching of the Gospel message that they must be cleansed from sin. This doctrine of salvation was central to both Mellitus's authoritative and his ritual actions, and if he had not sought to convey that message, those actions would have been neither truly pastoral nor necessarily efficacious toward conversion.

For a pastor to say "be baptized and join the others" would not be enough, given that the injunction was to believe and be baptized (Mark 16:16). This is why Alcuin objected to the coerced baptism of defeated Saxons, saying that because those who were forced to undergo that sacramental ritual without ever having "held in their hearts the foundations of faith," could not understand and subsequently threw aside the sacrament.[15] Alcuin and Bede both insisted that a fundamental understanding of Christian doctrine, rather than mere participation in ritual forms or compliance with ecclesiastical authority, was necessary for conversion. For a pastor to know how well those whom he led understood those fundamentals, he not only would have to know the various ways to approach them as outlined by Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*, but also would have to have

[14] "cumque diligenter ac saepe ab illo essent admoniti nequaquam ita fieri posse, ut absque purgatione sacrosancta quis oblationi sacrosanctae communicaret"; *HE* ii. 5, 152.

[15] "idcirco misera Saxonum gens toties baptismi perdidit sacramentum, quia numquam habuit in corde fidei fundamentum"; Alcuin, *Epistolae* 113 l.25–26, in *MGH Epistolarum Tomus IV, Karolini aevi II,* ed. Ernest Duemmler (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), 164.

the type of insight that depended on personal interaction. The Christianization of England, then, must have depended, at least in part, on these pastoral relationships.

Finally, this emphasis on communication leading to understanding may well underscore an important difference between Christianity and the essentially unrecorded pagan religion of the Anglo-Saxons. The primary responsibility of many of those identified as priests throughout pagan Western Europe appears to have been to act as *sacerdotes* who, in Weberian terms, performed rituals to influence the gods as members of a specialized group involved in "the continuous operation of the cultic enterprise."[16] Bede says that Edwin's Saxon priest Coifi claimed to have been "most faithful in guarding the temple of our gods" (*studiousius ... ego culturae deorum nostrorum*),[17] while within the pagan state religion of Rome, the favor of the gods "was won and held by the correct performance of the full range of cult practices inherited from the past,"[18] practices that included sacrifices and public feasts. In the Roman West, priests and all persons of every social level sought to gain the favor and protection of the divine through performing appropriate acts of worship and observing particular religious laws.[19]

While correct ritual performance was necessary in Christianity as well, it in contrast had developed from its strongly textual basis of Second Temple Judaism as a religion that

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[16] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff, 4th ed. (London: Methuen, 1965), 30.

[17] *HE* ii.13, 182.

[18] Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 163.

[19] "Das Motiv, durch entsprechende Kulthandlungen und die Einhaltung bestimmter Gebote die Gunst und den Schutz des göttlichen zu erhalten, scheint in allen Schichten verbreitet gewesen zu sein"; Daniel König, *Bekehrungsmotive: Untersuchungen Zum Christianisierungsprozess Im Römischen Westreich Und Seinen Romanisch-Germanischen Nachfolgern (4.-8. Jahrhundert)* (Husum: Matthiesen Verlag, 2008), 529–530.

depended on the spread of doctrine as well as of *praxis*. To simply erect an altar for Christ next to the traditional one for his pagan gods, as Bede claims Rædwald of East Anglia did,[20] was not only offensive but also demonstrative of Rædwald's basic misunderstanding of Christian doctrine. Because of this, the pastor's role in Christianity and in the Christianization of England was both authoritative and instructional; he was responsible for the actions and the understanding of those under his pastoral care. Weber says that "the full development of both a metaphysical rationalization and a religious ethic requires an independent and professionally trained priesthood, permanently occupied with the cult and with the practical problems involved in the cure of souls,"[21] and by the time Christianity came to England it certainly had developed all of those features.

The Development of the Pastoral Role in the First Century of the Church

> When they had finished breaking their fast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Peter replied, "Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Then feed my lambs."
> –John 21:15[22]

Christianity originated within Judaism and retained many of its most common practices, including initiation through baptism, communal meals, and the reading of scriptures. By 100 C.E., the "baptism of proselytes [from the Greek *prosēlytos*, "one who has come over from paganism to Judaism"] was included in the rituals during which

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[20] *HE* ii.15, 190.

[21] Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 30.

[22] Unless otherwise noted, quotations from the Bible are my own translations of the text given in *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgata versionem*, ed. Bonifatius Fisher et al (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

[they] were received into Judaism,"[23] while "scripture-reading, hymn-singing, prayers, [and] common meals" were practiced by Jews and Christians alike.[24] Christian worship arose from Jewish antecedents,[25] and Christian clerical roles originated in the Jewish synagogues of the first century as well. However, the Christian pastoral role was not part of that inheritance. Even though Judaism was "a community of faith with an established priesthood," and while "the fundamental model of pastoral care, that of the sheep and the shepherd, comes from Ezekiel 34," no roles within the Jewish religious and community hierarchy combined leadership, instruction, and correction as did the pastoral role that developed within Christianity.[26] Clerical roles were not transplanted root and branch from Judaism to Christianity; instead, both developed and diverged from their common socio-religious origins.

Proceeding from that understanding, it is important to emphasis that, at least in the first Christian century, both synagogues and churches were communities rather than buildings. The synagogue, "as a center of prayer and worship (*beth tefillah*), as a center of study (*beth midrash*), and as a center for communal assembly (*beth knesset*)" was independent of particular structures or "externals of any kind."[27] Of the mere six securely

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[23] William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Fourth ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), s.v. *prosilytos*, 722; Niels Hyldahl, *The History of Early Christianity* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1997), 55.

[24] Tessa Rajak and David Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*: Office, Title and Social Status in the Greco-Jewish Synagogue," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993): 77.

[25] James Tunstead Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 190–191.

[26] J. W. Rogerson, "The Old Testament," in *A History of Pastoral Care*, ed. G. R. Evans (London: Cassell, 2000), 16.

[27] Eric M. Meyers, "Ancient Synagogues in Galilee: Their Religious and Cultural Setting," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 43, no. 2 (Spring 1980): 97.

identified synagogue buildings dating from the second century B.C.E. through the sixth century C.E., five were renovated private homes while the one large public building, a third-century C.E. basilical hall found at Sardis in Asia Minor, "was not originally designed as a synagogue" and was not, according to Josephus, the original synagogue of that city.[28] For Christians, holding meetings of their religious community in private homes, as Acts 2:46 says the apostles did in Jerusalem and as the churches founded and visited by Paul in Romanized urban centers throughout Greece and Asia Minor did as well, must have been part of a "recognizable and acceptable" pattern of ecclesiastical organization they shared with synagogues.[29]

That pattern changed over the course of the first centuries of the common era, though. Jewish synagogue communities in the century before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. had been organized around a traditional council of elders (Hebrew *zeqēnim*, Greek *presbyteroi*) that served to "legitimate community policy" either by formulation or by ratification.[30] Though some "separatist" sects, such as the one whose documentation is found at Qumran, gave precedence to priests (Heb. *kohanim*, Gr. *hiereis*), mainstream synagogues like those found in urban areas were not led by their priests, who performed certain ritual actions in the community but who received "no further deference."[31] Those priests filled just one of the community's socio-religious roles, which included community teachers and administrators as well.

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[28] L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996), 1:62.

[29] White, *Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, 1:104.

[30] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 228.

[31] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 254–255.

From the first century on these separate roles became more sharply delineated as Jewish communities continued to redefine themselves within and in response to their surrounding culture. One result of this was the development of the role of *archisynagogos*, a term that Tess Rajak and David Noy say would appear in Christian scripture and patristic writings as part of their "Gospel demonology" of Jewish leaders, which included "the Pharisees, the scribes and the high priests" as well. Outside of that particular Christian context, though, *archisynagogos* appears in inscriptions and in Roman law as the chief community officer of a synagogue.[32] The *archisynagogos* was not solely or even necessarily a religious leader. A child could inherit that title from his father, just as the wives of early Christian clerics could be known by their husband's title.[33] Instead, the *archisynagogos* was the community executive who acted under the direction of the community's elders, and his position, like many such administrative positions in the "honor-driven" hierarchy of the Greco-Roman world, depended more on social standing than on any particular competency.[34] James Burtchaell says that though the synagogue "was an institution that, as it matured, took on lineaments which were political, liturgical, educational, financial, eleemosynar and ethnic," it remained presbyterial, "influenced (though not always governed) by a class or college of elders" who guarded the people and their traditions.[35] Especially in foreign lands and Roman cities after the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem, and also as Judaism had to maintain its

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[32] Rajak and Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*," 78–81.

[33] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 244; Anastasius C. Bandy, "Early Christian Inscriptions of Crete," *Hesperia* 32, no. 3 (September 1963): 228.

[34] Rajak and Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*," 84–85.

[35] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 204–205.

identity against the encroachment of the sects of Christianity, "Jews had to have their own settlements lest they cease to be Jews."[36] The synagogue and its elders, who included its *archisynagogos* as one of their number, was that community settlement.

Though they had their origins in the community and presbyterial context of the Late Temple synagogue, and though they developed in response to the same social and to similar political pressures that led Judaism to emphasize administrative over liturgical roles, early Christian communities developed differently. They did this in part by choosing what to call themselves. As Burtchaell explains, both *ekklēsia* and *synagōge* were used in Greek to designate Jewish social and religious assemblies. The Septuagint employed *synagōge* to translate the Hebrew *keneset*, designating local communities, while *ekklēsia* was used to translate *qahal*, designating "plenary gatherings of the community." However, Christian writings, especially those of Paul, restrict the use of *ekklēsia* to Christian assemblies, even replacing the original term *synagōge* with *ekklēsia* when quoting Psalm 73 (at Acts 20:28) "in order to make it applicable to the Christian community." In the developing Christian usage, *synagōge* not only identified Jewish community and its meetings but also was employed as a pejorative, such as in the reference to "the synagogue of Satan" in Revelations 3:9.[37] Even while affirming the tradition from which Jesus of Nazareth and his Jewish followers came, the earliest Christian writers employed that tradition to define themselves as distinct from mainstream Judaism.

As did the Judaism of the synagogues, early Christians identified their own

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[36] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 205.

[37] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 277–278.

community leaders from out of the "elders" of the nascent assembly, elders whose descriptive roles eventually were stylized as institutional titles.[38] The assembly of a Christian *ekklēsia*, though, had to bind together more disparate social and religious forces than did an urban *synagōge* seeking to maintain its members' Jewish identity in the midst of a city of Gentiles, or even than did those Jews seeking to form a "nativist" community on the shore of the Dead Sea at Qumran.[39] Christian communities not only needed to provide a common meeting and worship space, but also needed to secure themselves and their members in the face of persecution and to support each other in common while remaining as much apart from the world, which was soon to pass away with the *parousia* of the Lord, as possible.

Along with providing that mutual security and support, early churches as voluntary rather than an ethnic organizations in which some members actively sought to fulfill the commission to "go teach all peoples and baptize them in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19) also had to train and incorporate new members. Since, as the narrative of Acts and many of Paul's letters show, some Christian churches drew their membership mostly from out of the Jewish community while others were composed in large part of those whose background was Hellenistic and Roman paganism, church members brought different experiences and understandings to the task of establishing group boundaries and identity and to the working out of who was Christian and how they became so. Paul's assertion to the church in Rome was clear—"There is no distinction of

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[38] Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 275–276.

[39] Wayne A. Meeks, "Social and Ecclesial Life of the Earliest Christians," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, ed. Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M. Young, and K. Scott Bowie (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 147.

Jew and Greek, for the same Lord [is] over all" (Romans 10:22)—but that such a statement needed to be made shows that distinctions were being drawn and likely not always amicably. Early Christian churches had to forge a common identity as religious groups, and they did that through their adoption of values, principles, and social behaviors (such as calendars, rituals, and dietary restrictions) that set them apart from the society around them and their development of tdistinctive structures of organization and authority.[40] Two documents that demonstrate the formation of those structures in its early stages are a letter from the Christians of Rome to those of Corinth that is known as *1 Clement*, and the *Didache* ("Teaching" or *The Teaching of the (Twelve) Apostles*.

Written about 95–97 C.E.,[41] *1 Clement* gives advice about on-going struggles over authority within the Corinthian church. Niels Hyldahl says that Clement was not a bishop and that both his church in Rome and the church in Corinth were organized along the lines of the Greek popular assembly (*ekklesiā*)[42]—in other words, as *synagoges*. The letter bears out that interpretation, for while it lists a number of roles associated with the church, it speaks at all times in support of the authority of the *presbyteroi*. *I Clement* says that strife has arisen in Corinth as the result of their growth, including contention between "the young and the elders [*presbyterous*],"[43] and that the Corinthians no longer live "in accordance with the laws of God, submitting yourself to your leaders and giving to the

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[40] Rajak and Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*," 77.

[41] Michael W. Holmes, "Introduction" to *The Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians Commonly Known as First Clement* [*=1 Clement*] in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 23.

[42] Hyldahl, *The History of Early Christianity*, 277–278.

[43] *1 Clement* 3.1 and 3.3, 31–33.

[elders] among you the honor due them."[44] What is notable is that the writer of this letter invokes the Temple rather than the community hierarchy in order to reinforce the supremacy of the *presbyteroi* in the hierarchy of the Corinthian church, saying that just as "to the high priest the proper service has been given, and to the priests the proper office has been assigned, and upon the Levites the proper ministries have been imposed[, so] the layman is bound by the layman's rules."[45] He says as well that the apostles "appointed their firstfruits," the first converts "in the country and in the towns," to be bishops (*episkōpon*) and deacons (*diakonon*) on the authority of Isaiah 60:17, which he translates as "I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith" rather than the more accurate "I will make peace your guard and the whole of the laws your overseer,"[46] an interpretation that further reinforces his emphasis of the divine origin of episcopal and presbyterial authority.

In the end, the writer of *1 Clement* says that those who "laid the foundation of the revolt must submit to the presbyters and accept discipline leading to repentance," learning to subordinate themselves to those who lead them.[47] It appears that there was no one individual in Corinth to whom those who sought to usurp power in the church should submit; instead, they were to return to the state of obedience to their community's elders as is mandated by God. The use of a generic term signifying collective rather than individual authority is congruent with evidence for the organization of churches and

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[44] *1 Clement* 1.3, 29.

[45] *1 Clement* 40.5, 73.

[46] *1 Clement* 42.4–5, 75 and n.104.

[47] *1 Clement* 57.1-2, 93.

synagogues alike during the first centuries of the common era, when the broad range of titles such as "*archon*, *gerousiarch*, *presbyter*, father or mother of the synagogue, *grammateus*, [and] *phrontistes*" used in inscriptions to designate those notable within the synagogue indicates that there was "a spectrum of positions within the community" rather than a single presider.[48]

The *Didache* identifies different titles and domains of authority in the early church as well, though determining to what end it does so presents a challenge. This text's moral teachings are found in many other Christian writings from the first through the fifth centuries, some of which seem to be dependent on the *Didache* and others of which appear to be drawn from an earlier common source.[49] Though many dates have been proposed for the *Didache*, André de Halleux convincingly argues that Jewish parallels with its version of the "Two Ways" teaching, its "use of a pre-Matthean gospel source, and the clear descent of [chapters one through six] from common sources place this text in Palestine, Antioch, or Mesopotamia around the end of the first century."[50]

As we now have it, the first part of this composite text contains the "Two Ways" teaching, which states that believers must choose between two ways of life: either obedience to God which is life, or disobedience of God which is death.[51] As already noted, this binary presentation of moral instruction had a long life, especially in

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[48] Rajak and Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*," 77.

[49] Michael W. Hodges, "Introduction" to *The Didache*, in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. Michael W Holmes (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1999), 246–247.

[50] André de Halleux, "Ministers in the Didache," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A Draper (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 317–318.

[51] Robert E. Aldridge, "Peter and the 'Two Ways,'" *Vigiliae Christianae* 53, no. 3 (August 1999): 233–234.

association with baptism. In the fourth century, Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 293 – 373) recommended the "Two Ways" portion of the *Didache* as "appropriate reading for baptismal candidates,"[52] and in two eleventh-century manuscripts containing the Latin "Doctrine of the Apostles," which shares a common source with the initial chapters of the *Didache*, the "Two Ways" teaching follows a sermon by Pseudo-Boniface on the renunciation of Satan in the baptismal liturgy,[53] perhaps reflecting similar "liturgical and catechetical practices brought to southern Germany by St. Boniface in the eighth century."[54] If that is so, then the *Didache* may well be one of the earliest witnesses to pre-baptismal instruction, for it ends its moral instruction with an abrupt shift to liturgical instruction, beginning, after an awkwardly placed line (chapter 6.3) that seems to be tied to the later discussion of fasting, with instruction on the performance of baptism.

The rest of the *Didache* is taken up with matters of ritual practice and community organization. Chapters seven through ten discuss the proper performance of liturgy, giving instructions for how water for baptism should be obtained, which days are appropriate for fasting, and listing specific elements of the liturgy for the Eucharistic rite, while the last six discuss churchmen in their different roles, including apostles, prophets "who speak in the spirit,"[55] teachers (*didaskaloi*), bishops, and deacons. While these

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[52] Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Assen, Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, 2002), 86.

[53] S. Bonifacius Moguntinus Episcopus, Sermo XV "De abrenuntiatione in baptismale," *PL* 89, 870B–872A.

[54] "Ces deux lectionnaires du monde germanique méridional attestent de cette manière, semble-t-il, les pratiques liturgiques et catéchétiques qui devaient marquer l'apostolat de saint Boniface dans ces régions au viiie siècle"; Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier, ed. and trans., *La Doctrine Des Douze Apôtres (Didachè)*, second ed. (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1998), 206.

[55] *The Didache,* 11.7, in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. Michael W Holmes (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1999), 265.

chapters have been identified as a "church order," Georg Schöllgen is certainly right to point out that, if that is so, then it is a remarkably selective one. It does not address questions known to have been common sources of controversy among early Christian churches, such as the proper qualifications for baptizers and baptismal candidates, and it regulates only specific elements of the Eucharist (which, it seems, was being offered to the unbaptized).[56] However, if this section of the *Didache* does represent only "the clarification of particular contested issues," then its not covering all aspects of liturgy and organization does not, despite Schöllgen's suggestion, limit its value as a source.[57] Instead, because the "Two Ways" material remained a highly valued if non-canonical source of teaching and inspiration, and as a result of that teaching being joined to a treatise or epistolary source that corrects one church's variant performance of the rite of baptism, the *Didache* survived to bear witness of how Christians in authority responded to specific issues within late first-century Christian communities.

A major concern for the writer of the *Didache* are the itinerate Christians who, it seems, claimed support from and authority within Christian communities. That concern was both material and spiritual. Chapters eleven through fifteen describe whom the community should welcome, how it should evaluate those welcomed, and how much authority it should ascribe to them within the community. For those it calls "apostles," the test is simple; every one of them should be welcomed "as if he were the Lord," but if one of those welcomed stayed in the community for more than two days or asked for money,

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[56] *The Didache,* 9.5, 261; Georg Schöllgen, "The *Didache* as Church Order: An Examination of the Purpose for the Composition of the *Didache* and its Consequences for Interpretation," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A Draper (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 48–50.

[57] Schöllgen, "The *Didache* as Church Order," 44.

he should be considered a "false prophet."[58] Schöllgen notes that so brief a stay would make it impossible for that apostle to teach at any length, to preach, or to do any other work in the community.[59] He was instead identified as one "who comes in the name of the Lord" and should be assisted on his way if he is "merely passing through,"[60] perhaps as a messenger (one meaning of *apostolos*) or possibly as an evangelist or missionary.

While an apostle was only allowed to visit the community for a carefully circumscribed period, others men who were identified in the *Didache* as "prophets" and "teachers" could enter from outside the community and remain to become its leaders. A prophet was one who spoke "in the spirit" (*lalounta en pneumati*) or with the spiritual gift of ecstatic speech that could be understood.[61] When speaking thus, he might teach or tell the community to perform acts of charity by giving money to or preparing meals for the poor, and he might even do things that "act[ed] out in an earthly fashion the allegorical significance of the church."[62] The spiritual gifts of such a man was not to be tested or evaluated so long as he taught (and lived by) what the community knew to be true.[63] Prophets did not even have to follow the *Didache*'s recommended prayers when leading

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[58] *Didache,* 11.4–6, 263–265.

[59] Schöllgen, "The *Didache* as Church Order," 53 and n.56.

[60] *Didache*, 12.1–2, 265.

[61] Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v *pneuma* 6.e, 684.

[62] This alternate reading is given by Holmes, who notes that the passage "may refer to the acting out of some symbolic action intended to convey spiritual truth" through behavior that "may have seemed to some members of the community to be of doubtful propriety," as Old Testament prophets like Hosea did; *Didache* 11.9–12, 265.

[63] *Didache,* 11.7, 10, 265.

the Eucharistic rite but could instead "give thanks however they wish."[64] True prophets and teachers who settled in the community were to be supported by the community's "first fruits ... for they are your high priests,"[65] which is certainly a reference to the Torah's mandate of material support for the Levitical priests in Deut. 18:3–4 and another example of how the early Church looked for scriptural validation of its hierarchy.

Prophets and teachers were not the Christian community's only offices, though. The *Didache* also instructed the church to

> appoint for yourself bishops (*episkopoi*) and deacons worthy of the Lord, men who are humble and not avaricious and true and approved, for they too carry out for you the ministry of the prophets and teachers. You must not despise them, for they are your honored men, along with the prophets and teachers.[66]

Bishops and deacons were not described as equivalent to "high priests" as the prophets were. They were not supported by the community's first fruits, which instead were collected and given to the poor if the community had no prophet to receive them.[67] Instead, the bishops and deacons named in the *Didache* appear to be a community-selected assembly of respected elders much like the *presbyteroi* of the synagogue. The opening of Paul's first letter to the Philippians likely reflects this same level of organization, using as it does the descriptive titles of "overseers and ministers" (*episkopoi* and *diakoni*) that would later become specific ecclesiastical roles.[68] The *Didache* says

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[64] *Didache,* 10.7, 263

[65] *Didache,* 13.1-7, 267.

[66] *Didache*, 15.1–2, 267.

[67] *Didache*, 13.3, 267.

[68] Margaret Mary Mitchell, "Gentile Christianity," in *Origins to Constantine*, 113.

that a community may not have a prophet and warns the community to be careful of false prophets, but it clearly intends that the community was expected to appoint bishops and deacons to carry out the same ministries: teaching, directing acts of charity, and presiding at the community's rites.

What the *Didache* depicts, then, as the structure of the Christian churches of the late first and early second century is a community order in which both prophets and inspired teachers who served as "individual bearers of charisma who by virtue of [their] mission proclaim a religious doctrine or divine commandment"[69] and who shared authority with both non-charismatic bishops and deacons who performed the same ecclesiastical functions and with a defined collective body of presbyters or elders. The development of ecclesiastical structure and organization almost certainly varied from place to place throughout the early Christian world, but in general, as early Christian communities grew, the loose designations and overlapping roles seen in the *Didache* became fixed as ecclesiastical titles designating specific ranks and duties. In particular, as these recommendations about the relationship between prophets and bishops were being composed, in some churches bishops were consolidating the prophets' status and authority with that of the presbyterial leadership to create for themselves a nascent pastoral role. Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch (d. before 117) who likely wrote his letters to churches in Asia Minor in the same period as the *Didache* was composed,[70] told the Ephesians in his letter to them that he "received in God's name your whole congregation

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[69] Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 46.

[70] Michael W. Holmes, "Introduction to the Letters of Ignatius," in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. Michael W Holmes (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 131.

in the person of Onesimus ... your earthly bishop"—a designation that certainly, as Holmes says, draws a parallel between that earthly pastor and Christ, who is the Good Shepherd and "heavenly" bishop of the church.[71] Ignatius also tells the Magnesians in another letter that he "was permitted to see you in the persons of Damas, your godly bishop, your worthy presbyters Bassus and Apollonius, and my fellow servant, the deacon Zotion; may I enjoy his company, because he is subject to the bishop as to the grace of God, and to the presbytery as to the law of Jesus Christ."[72] Though this may be one of the first literary associations of the three offices—bishop, presbyter/priest, and deacon—of the early church, "presbyters" here and elsewhere in Ignatius' letters still likely designates a corporate body like the synagogue's *presbyteroi*, for in fact Ignatius tells the Magnesians that they should "do everything in godly harmony, the bishop presiding in the place of God and the presbyters *in the place of the council of the apostles*" (emphasis mine).[73] The bishop is not an *archisynagogos*, though. While both roles developed from a presbyterial basis, the bishop (*episkopos*) had duties and a connection with divine power that went far beyond being a community executive officer as the *archisynagogos* seems primarily to have been. Instead, Ignatius depicts the bishop as a Christian community's earthly rallying point and focus for leading a united Christian life. As he tells the Trallians, "when you are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, it is evident to me that you are living not in accordance with human standards but in

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[71] Ignatius of Antioch, "To the Ephesians," 1.3, 137.

[72] Ignatius of Antioch, "To the Magnesians," 2.1, 151–153.

[73] Two recensions of the text read "after the model" for "in the place" of; Ignatius of Antioch, "To the Magnesians," 6.1, 153 and n.34.

accordance with Jesus Christ."[74]

Why and how did the bishop, who was to become the primary figure in the implementation and oversight of pastoral care throughout most of the Christian world well into the Middle Ages, come to embody both secular and spiritual authority? In part, the formation and elevation of this role occurred as Christianity developed its identity and ecclesiastical structure within the context of the Jewish and the Greco-Roman worlds. Wayne Meeks says that while the universalizing tendencies Christianity inherited from and shared with monotheistic Judaism and its followers' access to Roman communication and cultural networks produced "an empire-wide complex of [ecclesiastical] institutions which in some ways mirrored the empire's own provincial bureaucracy," Christianity's propensity to create "both local and translocal institutions did not ensure early uniformity of structure;" instead, the early church as witnessed in the New Testament and in writings like *1 Clement*, the *Didache*, and the letters of Ignatius are witness to both "considerable variety and experimentation" and "frequent conflict not only between different figures and groups, but also between different modes of authority."[75] Sectarian division and conflict over who could speak and teach authoritatively must have been particularly troubling for the early church because Christianity defined itself as universal in its revelation and its application, so that variant teachings like those condemned in the *Didache* might actually be seen as calling the veracity of the religion into question.

Many of the same centrifugal forces that threatened unity within Christianity threatened the unity of Judaism as well. Moreover, both Jews and Christians found the

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[74] Ignatius of Antioch, "To the Trallians," 2.1, 159-161.

[75] Meeks, "Social and Ecclesial Life": 152–153.

Roman state to be a host far from benign, as the martyrdom of Ignatius, the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, and the siege at Masada all demonstrate. For Jewish synagogue communities, part of securing their identity was their creation of a more fixed hierarchy and of the office of *archisynagogs* in response to Roman laws that assumed ethnic assemblies such as theirs would have a leader. Another step away from the threat of sectarianism was taken by Jewish leaders meeting in Jamnia c. 90 C.E., who established the Hebrew Old Testament canon and revised the prayer *Shemoneh 'Esreh* to "reflect a segregation from the Gentile world which enabled the Jews to survive as a people with Judaism as their common identity."[76] The twelfth "benediction" (*berakhoth*) of that prayer, from the recension published in 1898, reads, "For apostates let there be no hope; and may the insolent kingdom be quickly uprooted, in our days. And may the Nazarenes [Christians] and the heretics perish quickly; and may they be erased from the Book of Life; and may they not be inscribed with the righteous."[77] So, in the first and second centuries, Jewish assemblies not only established officers who could act to promote internal and external unity, but also adapted their liturgy to support that unity as well.

Christianity also developed a hierarchy of ecclesiastical leaders who sought to enforce identity and doctrinal unity. It is likely that bishops and other ecclesiastical officers of early churches came from the upper social ranks of their communities, just like Jewish synagogue patrons and leaders whose inscriptions identify them as *archisynagogoi*. For example, Rodney Stark, who contends that early urban Christianity

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[76] Hyldahl, *The History of Early Christianity*, 250–251.

[77] *Shemoneh 'Esreh*, "The Palestinian Recension," cap. 12, in Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, trans. and ed. by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1979), II: 460–461.

was largely "middle-class" in its membership, convincingly cites Adolf von Harnack's conclusion that Ignatius of Antioch likely asked the Christians in Rome not to interfere in his martyrdom because in fact they had the social and political power to do so.[78] Many Christian leaders were educated in a way that speaks of at least a middling level of wealth and social status. Not only Paul[79] but also Clement could employ the language and imagery of the Stoics,[80] while Tertullian (*c*.160–*c*.220) was a practicing lawyer. It would be a mistake, though, to see these men as coming from the same background as or holding the same levels of status and power demonstrated by a later "senatorial" bishop like Sidonius Apollinaris (*c*.430–489) who "became bishop after a major secular career without any obvious preparation."[81] In fact, fourth-century episcopal lists show that even after Christianity was permitted and promoted at an imperial level, it was not men of senatorial rank who became bishops but instead those of the *curiales* or decurions whom Constantine exempted from statutory municipal obligations in exchange for their ecclesiastical service.[82]

Like Sidonius, however, many early bishops seem to have made good use of their Roman education and of the Roman cultural and communication networks. Though the Empire's only "postal service" was restricted to official correspondence, men employed letter carriers (*tabellarii*) from their own households, while bishops used priests and,

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[78] Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997), 32; Ignatius of Antioch, "To the Romans," 1.2, 169.

[79] As discussed in my introduction, pages 15–16.

[80] In 20.1–12 and with the military allusions in 37.1-3; Holmes, "Introduction" to *1 Clement*, 25.

[81] Ian N. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751* (London: Longman, 1994), 25.

[82] Frank D. Gilliard, "Senatorial Bishops in the Fourth Century," *The Harvard Theological Review* vol. 77, no. 2 (April 1984): 153–154.

especially, deacons to carry their letters.[83] Ignatius, traveling under guard to his martyrdom, was able to send and receive letters along his route, and in the mid-third century Cyprian bishop of Carthage (d. 258), in hiding during a period of persecution, wrote letters to Rome and Carthage, "controlling, warning, directing, and exhorting, and in every way maintaining his episcopal superintendence" despite his physical absence from the churches he oversaw.[84] Letters, which were almost always read aloud and could therefore influence the literate and illiterate alike, were both "a routine means of public and private communication at all levels and a literary form," so it is not surprising that those produced from the earliest centuries of Christianity demonstrate all "the standard categories of Christian literature as a whole: exegetical, moral-ascetical, and dogmatico-polemical" while addressing "problems of ecclesiastical organization, administration, and jurisdiction" as well.[85] From the first, correspondence was among the tools that ecclesiastical leaders used to encourage and enforce unity. In the second vision recounted in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Hermas is told by the old woman who is "the Church" to write two books containing the prophecies he has received, with one of those books to be given to the bishop Clement (who "may well be the Clement of Rome of *1 Clement*"[86]) so

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[83] Martin R. P. McGuire, "Letters and Letter Carriers in Christian Antiquity (Continued)," *The Classical World* vol. 53, no. 6 (March 1960): 185.

[84] Robert Ernest Wallis, "Introduction," *The Writings of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage*, trans. and ed. Robert Ernest Wallis, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1868), x.

[85] Martin R. P. McGuire, "Letters and Letter Carriers in Christian Antiquity," *The Classical World* vol. 53, no. 5 (February 1960): 150.

[86] Michael W. Holmes, "Introduction," to *The Shepherd of Hermas*, in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 331.

that he might send it to the cities abroad "because that is his job."[87]

Secular governance was not the only job of the bishop, however; he was responsible for the moral behavior of his charges as well. The *Shepherd of Hermas* (which Athanasius recommended along with the *Didache* to pre-baptismal catechumens) provides an early example of this episcopal mandate to teach and correct. This text is a collection of visions and parables that the Muratorian Canon of 180x200 says was written by the brother of Pius, bishop of Rome (c. 140–154), but which may contain material dating from the end of the first century.[88] Though his character is obscured by the complicated visionary nature of the text, it becomes clear that the narrator Hermas is a bishop. The woman who is the Church gives him the book of prophecies to read to the city and "the elders (*presbyteroi*) who preside over the church"[89] and tells him to sit beside her before those elders are seated.[90] Hermas not only takes precedence over the elders, but also is charged with bearing responsibility for those of his family who have sinned. When he asks the shepherd who is the "angel of repentance"[91] to relieve him from the torment of "the punishing shepherd," he is told that he is being afflicted for his family's sins as well as his own, so that they "too might repent and cleanse themselves

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[87] *The Shepherd of Hermas*, 8.3, in *The Apostolic Fathers*, 345. I use the newer chapter-based numbering of *Hermas* in these notes; a table for conversion between this system and the older one, which divided and numbered the work by sections, is given by Holmes, "Introduction" to *The Shepherd of Hermas*, 333.

[88] Homes, "Introduction" to *The Shepherd of Hermas*, 330–331.

[89] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 8.3, 347.

[90] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 9.8, 347.

[91] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 49.1, 417.

from every desire of the world."[92] By divine mandate, Hermas is the *paterfamilias* of his church and is responsible for the behavior of its members, much like in the later but equally Roman social and religious equation the Benedictine abbot is the *paterfamilias* of his monks.[93]

The bishop Hermas follows the shepherd of repentance (whose model clearly is Christ the Good Shepherd) through a complicated series of symbolic scenes that repeatedly stress the need for moral purity and repentance for sin. He works with the shepherd as he plants, waters, and examines the willow twigs that are the laws of God put into the hearts of believers,[94] seeing if they have borne fruit and may be brought into the tower of God that is the church. At the end, the seven virgins in charge of that tower, named by the woman who is the Church as "Faith, Self-Control, Sincerity, Innocence, Reverence, Knowledge, and Love,"[95] are entrusted to Hermas and his house, and he is told to "carry out [his] ministry manfully."[96] Even as early as the second century, *The Shepherd of Hermas* presents the pastoral ministry of evangelization, catechesis and instruction, and correction in a way that associates the social context of the Roman *familia* with Jewish and Christian religious and ecclesiastical ideas.

By the second century, then, the Christian bishop had assumed the role of pastor of his church community. While at least some of those early communities retained

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[92] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 66.2, 449.

[93] David I. Rankin, "Class Distinction as a Way of Doing Church: The Early Fathers and the Christian *plebs*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 58, no. 3 (August 2004): 311–313.

[94] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 69.3, 457.

[95] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 16.7, 361.

[96] *Shepherd of Hermas*, 113.5–114.1, 525.

presbyterial forms, increasingly the bishop was seen to have a particular mandate from God to receive and promulgate religious instruction, and he was held responsible for the behavior of those he led. He was a community leader in the way that Romans could understand, but his community leadership was religious, not social, in ways that were new in the Roman. As Christianity grew and spread throughout that world, its leaders would continue to define the secure their pastoral leadership as well.

CHAPTER 3: LEADING AND FOLLOWING: ROMAN RELIGION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN PASTORAL AUTHORITY

When seeking to understand the growth and spread of Christianity, looking at how it developed from first- and second-century Judaism is both a natural and a comfortable place to begin. Examining its spread and evolution in the Roman world of the second century and beyond, though, expands the purview of that inquiry and complicates determining how pastoral care and its agents participated in that expansion.

According to generally accepted estimates, by the mid-second century when the *Shepherd of Hermas* was circulating among house-based churches in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, Christians numbered around 40,000 and represented less that one-tenth of one percent of the empire's population. One hundred and fifty years later, probably ten percent of the population, or more than six million Romans, professed adherence to Christianity.[1] With that growth in numbers naturally came growth in the number of churches and changes in their internal and external organization. Those occupying pastoral roles and performing the tasks of conversion, instruction, and correction, tasks that in time were associated not only with bishops but also with presbyters (priests) and deacons, acted out those roles within ecclesiastical structures that codified pastoral responsibilities and methods. While a pastor was still charged with

[1] Rodney Stark's estimate that the number of those identified as Christians expanded forty percent per decade through the mid-fourth century (in *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996), 7) is at least tacitly accepted even by those who do not agree with the reasons he gives for that growth; see Leif E Vaage, ed., *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006) chapters 9–12. Stark cites a number of estimates agreeing that Christians comprised about ten percent of the population of the Empire at the beginning of the fourth century (Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, 6), a figure that Keith Hopkins traces back to Arnold von Harnack; Keith Hopkins, ""Christian Number and its Implications," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 2 (1998): 191–192 and 225 n.11.

leading his flock, that flock had increased in size, variety, and complexity so that his leadership took on even more elements of *familia*, patronage, and political administration as well.

As this chapter will show, the second through the fifth centuries brought about the Romanization of Christianity[2] and the Christian *ecclesia*, and interactions between Christianity and Roman society influenced religious institutions and those who led them. Interaction and influence continued in the centuries following, so that the Christianity that was brought to the people of England expressed itself in Roman, Gallic, and Irish ways that, though essentially unified in doctrine, often varied in the specifics of their practice. England's becoming Christian, then, entailed the continuation of the process of interaction and adaptation we see throughout earlier Christian centuries. This chapter shows how the early stage of that process by exploring how small, pastorally led church communities based on Jewish social models and operating as private foundations in the Roman world of the first century grew and changed, developing a self-governance that supported internal coherence and enabled Christianity and Christian institutions to interact with Roman social and political ones. It describes the stages by which church communities recognized the separation between laity and clergy and established ranks and orders among the latter, and it looks at how their roles and authority within the structure of the church contrasted with their roles and authority in Roman society.

Identifying similarities and tracing influences and adaptations among primarily religious communities like synagogues and churches, as was done in the previous

[2] Understanding Romanization in this context to include both the Eastern and Western Roman Empire rather than referring specifically to Roman Christianity, which is how the Latin-based Christian church in the Western Roman Empire will be named herein.

chapter, is a fairly straightforward process. Evaluating influence and adaptation between a wide community of religious belief and practice and the complex society in which it resides is more difficult. We have previously said that religion and culture represent inherently interconnected mental constructions and social practices that form the basis for individual and group identity and that are understood to provide effective ways to influence the natural, the social, and the spiritual worlds. If inculturation is a useful model for describing how conversion and Christianization progressed in late Imperial Rome, then looking at how religion functioned in Roman society and at how Christian pastoral roles and ecclesiastical structures continued to develop during this period should provide evidence indicating those social and religious interactions at work.

Understanding Religion in Society

As the previous chapters' referencing the work of Max Weber and Émile Durkheim signals, the approach taken herein considers religion to be intrinsic to society and posits that both religion and society can be examined separately but must be understood holistically as fundamental parts of human culture. Religious ideas therefore are not merely epiphenomenal, in that they not only arise from material conditions but also affect how men and women interpret and respond to those conditions. At the same time, the study of the historical development and influence of religion as social and mental phenomena is necessarily grounded in the material representation of religious ideas—in looking at how people act and what they create in response to their religion. Weber says that even though material and ideological interests directly determine human actions, the religious ideas that inform an individual's world-view "have, like switchmen, determined

the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest" and that, when we consider a religious concept such as "redemption," we find that "*from what* and *for what* one wished to be redeemed and, let us not forget, *could be* redeemed, depended upon one's image of the world."[3] Religious ideas, then, can be separated neither from the human needs that drive their expression nor from the understanding of the world that shapes and validates that expression.

Given its persistence and power, that directive religious world-view Weber describes must be firmly rooted in the human psyche. Moreover, it must be both strong *and* malleable, for if that world-view cannot change in response to new ideas, then we cannot make sense of religious conversion. A way of thinking about these characteristics that accounts for both the depth of religion's roots and the plasticity of its forms is that developed by Pascal Boyer, who has drawn from ethnographic work and from developmental and cognitive psychology to develop a model of religion that identifies religious ideas with cognitive domains resulting from the evolution of human intelligence. Among the domains Boyer identifies with religious ideas are those involved with the production of ontological assumptions related to "the existence of non-observable entities," to the set of "ideas and assumptions about causal connections between the entities described in the ontological repertoire, on the one hand, and observable events and states of affairs on the other," to the classification of the types of events that connect ontological and causal ideas with particular outcomes (such as

[3] Max Weber, "Introduction: The Social Psychology of the World Religions: Steps toward a Comparative Sociology of Religion [*Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen. Vergleichende religionssoziologische Versuche*]," 1915–1919, in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1922), I.252, quoted in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans Heinrich Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 280.

specific ritual actions), and to the understanding that certain men and women have an inherent special ability to fill religious roles.[4] Boyer's model has been criticized by some as "reductionist"[5] and "unapologetically hostile … toward religion,"[6] and he acknowledges that his empirical approach consciously disregards political, historical, and other factors affecting religious expression and transmission, not because those are unimportant but because he wants to limit his assessment to the viability of religious concepts arising from "the connection between intuitive ontologies and cultural input."[7] If his explanations of how religious ideas are "wired" into the human brain are valid, then they would help explain as well how different religious images and practices might express the same fundamental religious conceptions. Likewise, if he is substantially correct that religious ideas are tied to the basic structures of thought, then this would help account for those ideas' power to transform individuals and societies alike.

Ideas in isolation change nothing, though. Even if we accept the inherent power of religious ideas, we still need to describe how their reproduction, transmission, and reception can transform culture. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz's seminal essay on "Religion as a Cultural System" provides a model that makes that transformative power intelligible. Geertz envisions culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings

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[4] Pascal Boyer, "Explaining Religious Ideas: Elements of a Cognitive Approach," *Numen* 39, no. 1 (June 1, 1992): 35–36.

[5] John Polkinghorne, "Review: Some of the Truth [review of *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought* by Pascal Boyer]," *Science* 293, no. 5539, New Series (2001): 2400.

[6] Kelly Bulkeley, "Review: *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought* by Pascal Boyer," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71, no. 3 (2003): 671.

[7] Pascal Boyer, "Reply" to Erika Bourguignon, "Critique of the Anthropology of Religion: Review of *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religious Ideas* by Pascal Boyer," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 2 (April 1, 1995): 388.

embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."[8] Religious symbolic forms vary widely, encompassing "elaborate initiation rites, as among the Australians; complex philosophical tales, as among the Maori; dramatic shamanistic exhibitions, as among the Eskimo;"[9] and, as we will see in the Roman practice of Christianity in third century, the physical arrangement of participants in the celebration of the Mass. Geertz asserts that examples like these of cultural symbols that are complex in form and rich in information reflect the human need to understand the world within "psychobiological and social contexts" and that the study of these symbolic systems helps us understand the "moral, aesthetic, and other normative activities" of the human culture that symbols express and regulate.[10] Like Boyer, Geertz understands religion as a phenomenon that is rooted deep in the human understanding of the social and physical worlds.

Geertz' description of the symbolic nature of human culture has its critics as well, some of whom raise objections that are particularly relevant to the study of religious conversion and social change. Kevin Schilbrack has identified some critics, among them Nancy Frankenberry and Hans Penner, who claim that Geertz assigns to cultural structures like religion illegitimate epistemological value by crediting them with the ability to immediately impose meaning and value on raw experience. These critics say

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[8] Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.

[9] Clifford Geertz, "Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 132.

[10] Geertz, "Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," 141.

that Geertz's treatment of "religion as a conceptual scheme through which believers experience the world" by means of symbols that are "intended to be representations that somehow picture or parallel or correspond to nonsymbolic entities" fails because those "nonsymbolic" entities are already mediated and organized.[11] Essentially, Frankenberry and Penner object that Geertz mistakenly ascribes cultural significance and affective depth to religion by crediting religious symbols with the ability to assign meaning to phenomena when those phenomena have already been made meaningful through language and through other social structures. If their objections are valid, then to predicate an historical study of the interaction between religion and society on the assumption that this interaction is especially significant to human culture and ideas would be a mistake because religion simply may not be that important to the human understanding of the world.

In addition to these epistemological concerns, Schilbrack also identifies other objections to Geertz's work based on post-structuralist and post-colonial approaches to questions of religion and culture. He says that anthropologist Talal Asad has criticized Geertz for failing to recognize that religion generates a "false consciousness"[12] that obscures its operation as a method of social discipline. "Power," Asad says, "constructs religious ideology, establishes the preconditions for distinctive kinds of religious personality, authorises specifiable religious practices, [and] produces religiously defined

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[11] Kevin Schilbrack, "Religion, Models of, and Reality: Are We Through with Geertz?," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73, no. 2 (June 2005): 442–443.

[12] Talal Asad, "Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz," *Man* 18, no. 2, New Series (June 1, 1983): 249.

knowledge."[13] To address power and authority is critical for understanding conversion, for the conversion of England in part must have proceeded not only by the conversion of those in authority (kings and elites) but also and more fundamentally by the missionaries' presentation of themselves and their listeners' acceptance of them as men wielding divine authority. Ludo Milis's discussion of "conversion at depth" similarly emphasizes that the long-term normative process of Christianization is essentially coercive. Public behavior was controlled and sanctioned by ecclesiastical courts—and, given that there was "no very clear separation between secular and spiritual power" (*il n'y as pas de séparation très nette entre le pouvoir laïc et le pouvoir spirituel*), by other courts as well—while private behavior was managed by the castigation given and the penance imposed by the confessor.[14] Both private and public control of individual behavior are possible only if the Church and its representatives are understood to have power over others. Because of this, understanding the development of ecclesiastical structure and authority in the second through the sixth centuries is critical for understanding the relationship of pastoral care to conversion and Christianization. Milis's and Asad's work raise questions about religious power and its validation, such as whether religious ideas and the world-view they create have the ability to transform culture because of the information they convey or because of the power they grant those who communicate those ideas, that are important for this understanding.

In the end, though, these objections do not invalidate the insights into cultural and

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[13] Asad, "Anthropological Conceptions of Religion," 237.

[14] Milis, "La conversion en profoundeur," 495. While Milis admittedly disregards the historical development of private confession, his schema for a mechanism of the Christianization of both behavior and consciousness nevertheless invites consideration and response.

religious symbols and systems that Geertz's model supports. Schilbrack asserts in response to Frankenberry and Penner's epistemological critique that Geertz's description of religion as a symbolic system in fact does not assign to religion the power to make intelligible "prelinguistic or nonconceptualized noumena" but instead tells the religious practitioner "what to think and to do" about those already intelligible experiences. In Schilbrack's assessment, Geertz depicts religion as "a gloss upon the mundane world."[15] Moreover, though he agrees with Asad that Geertz's "interpretive theory of religion … largely ignores religion's social or material aspects," Schilbrack points out that Asad makes assumptions about the metaphysical or meaning-producing aspect of religion that reduces that aspect to an intellectualized and "self-conscious mode of reflection," one that also fails to consider the social and historical contexts within which the relationship among power, authority, and religious practice can be effectively studied.[16]

Geertz's understanding of religion forms a good complement to Boyer's, in that the intrinsic operation of cognitive domains proposed by Boyer can be seen as providing the foundation supporting the extrinsic cultural symbolic patterns that Geertz claims enable individuals to understand, assign values, and function within the world.[17] Their ideas illuminate the kinds of social and even interpersonal forces that shaped pastoral interaction, conversion, and Christianization during the period studied. Within the context of the historical analysis of pastoral ideas and agency within late antique and Anglo-Saxon societies, though, their models are suggestive, not directive. They help give shape

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[15] Schilbrack, "Religion, Models of, and Reality," 445.

[16] Schilbrack, "Religion, Models of, and Reality," 441.

[17] Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," 99.

to assumptions about how human societies and human interaction work, but they do so only as adjuncts to the examination of specific societies—Jewish, Christian, Hellenistic, Roman, Gallic, Irish, and Anglo-Saxon—and specific interactions as revealed by textual and material sources.

Although this excursus at first may seem to discuss theory only in order to dismiss it, that is neither its intention nor truly what it accomplishes. Studying human actions and motivations requires not only the careful description of structures and events, but also sensitivity to what those meant to their contemporaries. In many ways, history is ethnography plus time, and disciplines like anthropology and sociology that seek to create universally applicable models based on the observation of human behavior necessarily inform historical interpretation. Those models can aid that interpretive endeavor by establishing definitions, challenging assumptions, and pointing out areas of inquiry. However, in parallel with what Schilbrack says about Geertz's model of religion and its relationship to the world, anthropological and sociological models have *interpretive* rather than *epistemic* priority when employed to aid historical interpretation.[18] Boyer's depiction of religious ideas as expressions of a variety of fundamental cognitive functions and Geertz's emphasis on those ideas' symbolic depth and structural organization direct us away from a simplistic and misleading view of conversion as replacement, in which the roles, rites, and mores of a new religion are swapped tit-for-tat with those of the old. To talk about religious conversion and its significance, we need to acknowledge the complex interrelationship between religion and culture (particularly the social and political framework of that culture) as we look at the

[18] Schilbrack, "Religion, Models of, and Reality," 445.

ideas through which members of that culture understand themselves and their world.

Roman Religion and Roman Society

Throughout its history, Rome's religion and its systems of authority were closely linked. That authority could be military; since Roman soldiers lived among conquered peoples for long periods of time, Rome's syncretism and assimilation of other cultures' deities and practices often traveled in harness with its military conquests.[19] That authority could also be civil, and worship as a public action was subject to civil control. Cassius Dio gives an example of this with his description of how Julius Caesar (r.49–44 B.C.E.) banned Egyptian cults from performing their rites within the *pomerium*, the "ritual boundary that defined the city as a sacred public entity."[20] Moreover, whatever ideas about religion an individual Roman citizen held, public participation in religious rites was *de rigueur*. Though in Cicero's dialogue *De natura deorum* a highly educated Roman like Cotta could advocate personal skepticism in the face of different philosophical schools' speculations about the nature of the gods, "in matters of positive religious worship" he chose to adhere to "the old Roman tradition as an integral part of the entire political system of the *res publica*."[21] He tells the Stoic Balbus that

> the religion of the Roman people comprises ritual, auspices, and … all such prophetic warnings as the interpreters of the Sybil or the soothsayers have derived from portents and prodigies…. Romulus by his auspices and Numa by his establishment of our ritual laid the foundations of our state, which assuredly could never have been as great as it is had not the fullest

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[19] Arnaldo Momigliano, "Roman Religion: The Imperial Period," in *On Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 178–179.

[20] Kimberly Diane Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 38.

[21] Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 43.

measure of divine favor been obtained for it.[22]

The rites of the Roman public religion, which were said to have been established in the city's legendary infancy, may have been rationalized by such philosophical interpretations as the skepticism of Varro and the materialism of the Stoics,[23] but even a skeptic who participated in public and private religious practice acknowledged by that participation both ancestral authority and his or her own Roman identity. Roman religion might be more for some practitioners than socially prescribed rites, but still those rites were its core.

Roman religion, then, was both culture-supporting and culture-defining. Kimberly Bowes describes it as "the cultic result of [Rome's] social order" and even as the "spiritual exhaust" of its familial and political structures.[24] Participation in the civic religion took many forms, including attending public sacrifices and festivals, taking part in *collegia* and other religious associations with their own rites and feasts, and performing rites within the home that were addressed to the deities associated with the *familia* at all its levels, and all of these approved forms referenced and reinforced Rome's social order. "Approval" is key here. The Roman understanding of religion as a collective expression of society's relationship with the divine formed a framework in which those rites that were judged to be genial to that relationship could be embedded as elements of an individual's "profile of religious commitment" within the overall structure "formed by

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[22] M. Tullius Cicero, *De natura deorum*, III.ii.4-5, in *De natura deorum; Academica*, trans. H. Rackham (London: W. Heinemann, 1933), 281.

[23] J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 35–36.

[24] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 30.

the public and civic religion of city and state."[25] Those who participated in religious cults that were thought to foster political disorder, such as the Egyptians cults banned from the city by Julius Caesar, or who were thought to stubbornly advocate exclusivity and "atheism" (i.e., the refusal to acknowledge the gods and take part in the rites of the civic cult) could be sanctioned as threatening Roman social values and the *pax deorum*.[26] Religious practice, conceived as the obtaining of divine favor for the *res publica*, was necessary for the public good; in the introduction to his dialogue on public religion, Cicero worried that the disappearance of piety toward the gods under the onslaught of philosophical doubt and speculation would "entail the disappearance of loyalty and social union among men."[27]

Religion permeated Roman society, so examining Rome's religion illuminates its social structure. In the broadest of terms, religion in the Imperial period had both public and private aspects, with public ones revolving around rites sponsored by governmental institutions and private ones supported by both families and private religious associations (*collegia*). Support rather than access defined "public" and "private" in Rome. Public religion took place "in the name of the *populus*, [… was] financed with money from the people," and regulated "the relations between gods and the whole *populus*" through public festivals, while private religion took place "in the name of individuals, families,

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[25] Hans-Joseph Klauck, "The Roman Empire," in *Origins to Constantine: Cambridge History of Christianity Vol. 1*, ed. Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M Young, and K. Scott Bowie (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 79–80.

[26] William R. Schoedel, "Christian 'Atheism' and the Peace of the Roman Empire," *Church History* 42, no. 3 (1973): 310–311.

[27] *De naturae deorum*, I.ii.4, 7.

and clans" as well as *collegia* and their members.[28] Private as well as public religion was under the jurisdiction of the *ius publicum*. By law, public religion "was limited to a fixed number of gods and public feasts" that had been examined and approved by the Roman priests of *quindecimviri*, while any god could be worshiped privately as long as that worship did not lead to public disorder.[29] Worship in private could fall under suspicion and be officially restricted or forbidden, but that condemnation arose from the fear that actions such as murmuring secret prayers, seeking private auguries, or communicating with fellow practitioners through secret signs and symbols as the Christian writer M. Minucius Felix's (fl. second-third century) pagan apologist Caecilius accused Christians of doing, demonstrated seditious intent.[30] "Private" religion, then, remained under the purview of the Roman state.

Moreover, private religious practice included corporate rites and feasts under the auspices of *collegia*. These organizations underscore the need to be careful with categories such as "public" and "private" when thinking about Roman society and religion. Because a *collegium* formed by private individuals for private ends became a single legal entity, it had the rights of an individual under they law.[31] After many of these private associations were implicated in the Civil War, all *collegia* were regulated and,

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[28] Jan Theo Bakker, *Living and Working with the Gods: Studies of Evidence for Private Religion and its Material Environment in the City of Ostia (100-500 AD)* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1994), 1–2.

[29] Bakker, *Living and Working with the Gods*, 2. The *quindecimviri* were the keepers of the Sybelline books, and *privata sacra* are said by Festus to be established by approval of the auguries; Sextus Pompeius Festus, *Sexti Pompei Festi: De verborum significatu quae supersunt cum Pauli epitome*, ed. Emil Thewrewk de Ponor (Budapest: Academiae Litterarum Hungaricae, 1889), 316.

[30] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 46–48.

[31] Wendy Cotter, "The Collegia and Roman Law: State Restrictions on Voluntary Associations, 64 BCE–200 CE," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996), 75.

from the time of Augustus (r. 28 B.C.E.–14 C.E.), any *collegium* dedicated to the worship of a particular deity was subject to the approval of the emperor himself.[32] Though their representatives took part in public festivals, *collegia* themselves and their rites were properly private—not only because those rites were held in the privacy of the group's *schola* or *templum*, but also because they were carried out by a corporate body of private citizens, and were supported by and propitiated the gods on behalf of the subsection of the populace who were members of the *collegium*. Whether it was as a specifically religious organization or as a "trade guild" that provided religious rites as part of its activities, a *collegium* "provided fellowship, sociability, communal burial, and a collective social identity," including collective acts of devotion or worship, to its members.[33]

As noted, Roman authorities often suspected *collegia* of being potential hotbeds of sedition. Trajan (r. 98–117 C.E.) refused an imperial petition conveyed to him by Pliny the Younger (61-c.112) on behalf of the people of Nicaea to allow a firemen's *collegium* with a warning to Pliny that "men who are brought together for a common [social] end will nevertheless become a political association before long."[34] Despite those fears, from the time of Julius Caesar on Jewish synagogues were usually exempted from edicts restricting the activity of *collegia* even though their private membership, corporate identity, regular meetings, and religious focus frequently led them to be recognized by Romans as being of the same type of organization. What appears to have distinguished

[32] Cotter, "The Collegia and Roman Law," 79.

[33] Emily Hemelrijk, "Patronesses and 'Mothers' of Roman Collegia," *Classical Antiquity* 27, no. 1 (April 2008): 118.

[34] Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* 10.34, quoted in Cotter, "The Collegia and Roman Law," 82.

synagogues from other *collegia* in Roman eyes was that they were the organized assemblies of an established homogenous community whose members entered by birth or through exclusive dedicatory commitment rather than being an open and voluntary association of individuals whose identities were enhanced, not defined, by their membership and attendance at religious rites.[35]

Along with its prevalence in private and public life and its legal and social subjection to the assessed needs of the state, Roman religion was focused primarily on *praxis* and on maintaining the proper performance of rites of devotion and divination. Arnaldo Momigliano says that many Romans seemed to be genuinely satisfied by that emphasis—among elites, at least, religious education of a "theological" type was by no means common—and were commonly tolerant of the practices of other religious cults as well. Nevertheless, Roman authorities throughout the empire demonstrated "continuous attention to the approval of [and] participation of the gods in the public life of Rome," and this attention to *praxis* "committed the ruling class to the preservation of religious tradition."[36] Like Cicero's Cotta, Roman elites considered the demonstration of piety according to custom to be necessary for both good fortune and good public order. Given that focus, the Roman priest, whose primary concern was to communicate that a particular god "had power and wanted a specific ritual offering," could then "leave large categories of beliefs to the discretionary interpretation of the worshiper" once those

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[35] E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 133–134.

[36] Arnaldo Momigliano, "Some Preliminary Remarks on the 'Religious Opposition' to the Roman Empire," in *On Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 123–124.

concerns were satisfied.[37]

Religious practices arise from a culture's basic understanding of the structure and the operation of the world. Roman religion reflected an understanding that divine favor obtained through the keeping of shrines and performing of rites was necessary for the peace and success of the state and the "stabilizing of the world," but it also conveyed distinct ideas about what individual worshipers could gain by participating in religious rites. Some might gain "participation in divine benefits" such as prophecy, healing, status, and daily success, others might experience "moral transformation," and yet others might seek an Orphic "transcending of the world."[38] Unity was secured among these various goals through emphases on orthopraxis and *pietas*, which was the Roman conception of piety as reciprocal obligation. Luke Johnson describes *pietas* as "the filial disposition of reverence and respect for one's ancestors…, for the laws, and for those who administered the laws in the city-state," a disposition that was "intimately, indeed, inextricably, linked to reverence and respect toward the gods" who inhabited the everyday world.[39] Examples of both *pietas* and of what Roman worshipers might expect from their gods are found in Cato's *De agricultura*. In that work, Cato describes the Roman "practice to be observed" (*more sic oportet*) when cutting wood from a sacred grove as a religious rite that combined the sacrifice of a pig to and a prayer for mercy and grace from (or to avert divine retaliation from) whichever god had charge of the grove

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[37] Charles King, "The Organization of Roman Religious Beliefs," *Classical Antiquity* 22, no. 2 (October 2003): 297–298.

[38] Luke Timothy Johnson, *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2009), 46–49.

[39] Johnson, *Among the Gentiles*, 35.

and the right to receive that sacrifice. This rite did not seem to assume that the farmer knew to whom the grove is dedicated, since the sample prayer given has no place for inserting the deity's name, only that he knew the location itsself was sacred. Moreover, that rite depended on correct performance. The farmer was to repeat thw prayer on some part of the land each day until all work on the land was finished, and he was required to make a new expiatory offering (*piaculo*) if he missed a day or if a public or familial feast (the prayers and rites of which must have taken preference over this agricultural ritual) intervened.[40] Cato did not need to explain how a god or goddess might be intimately connected with and protective of a natural location like a grove; instead, he emphasized that this tacit connection must be acknowledged through daily *praxis* in order to gain favor or avoid retaliation for disturbing that location.

De agricultura reveals other details about *pietas* in practice as well. As we saw in the discussion of Asad's objection to Geertz's characterization of religious structures, religious ideas are often understood to underpin, maintain, and justify the use of power within an existing social hierarchy. That is true, but as Charles King's analysis of the land-purification rite that follows the wood-cutting one in that chapter demonstrates, Cato's recommended prayers do more than reinforce the Roman landholder's social position as *paterfamilias* (though that celebrant's repeated petitioning of "Father Mars" to render blessings "to me, my house, and our household" (*mihi domo familiaeque nostrae*)[41] certainly does just that). What these prayers reveal in addition are "an

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[40] Cato, *De agricultura*, CXXXIX–CXL, in *Cato and Varro On Agriculture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), 120-121.

[41] Cato, *De agricultura* CXLI. 2, in *Cato and Varro: On Agriculture*, 120-121.

interlocking set of beliefs, not merely that the deity Mars exists, but also that he is paying attention to the actions of the person praying, that he can grant requests, that it is possible for the one praying to persuade the god to grant a request, and that Mars wants a sacrifice of a particular type."[42] Furthermore, as with the rite for cutting the grove, this prayer to Mars is one of appeasement, and Mars was expected to communicate his acceptance of that prayer in such a way as could be determined by augury. Cato therefore recommends additional prayers be made along with a second sacrifice if favorable omens are not obtained from the first.[43] Apparently, these rites could fail to win the necessary favor from the gods frequently enough that having to make additional petitions might be expected.

Along with this understanding of the gods, their interests, and their relationships with worshipers and the natural world, Roman rites and prayer reveal other core beliefs: that individual human beings survived as distinct personalities after death;[44] that *pietas* was non-exclusive, so that "a Roman could maintain multiple pious relationships with multiple gods without that implying disloyalty;"[45] and that all elements of Roman religion—public festivals, the rites celebrated in *collegia*, and the sacrifices and prayers of individuals —played "a necessary part in securing the *pax deorum*."[46] It was within and in response to this Roman ontological and social framework that Christianity

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[42] King, "The Organization of Roman Religious Beliefs," 282.

[43] Cato, *De agricultura* CXLI.4, in *Cato and Varro: On Agriculture*, 122-123.

[44] King, "The Organization of Roman Religious Beliefs," 289–290.

[45] King, "The Organization of Roman Religious Beliefs," 305.

[46] Roger Beck, "The Religious Market of the Roman Empire: Rodney Stark and Christianity's Pagan Competition," in *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity*, ed. Leif E. Vaage (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 243.

developed its theological and ecclesiological doctrines in the centuries before and after the Edict of Milan.

Roman Religion and Authority at Home and in the World

As we shall see, over the course of the patristic period[47] Christian pastoral authority took on forms that were both congruent with Christian doctrine and comprehensible and acceptable within the Roman religious and social context. Some "religious" elements of Roman society, such as public festivals, continued long after Christianity became the Empire's official religion and even outlived the Empire itself. In 743, the Anglo-Saxon bishop and missionary Boniface complained to Pope Zacharias about the "dancing according to the custom of the pagans" and "sacrilegious songs" of those celebrating the Kalends of January in Rome.[48] Even those practices that did not survive the transition to Christianity are worth examining, though, in order to gain a better idea of what the Romans valued in their religion. Two elements of Roman religious practice that would seem to be most at odds with Christianity, those of the domestic cult and of the imperial cult, deserve particular attention.

The Roman domestic cult centered on veneration of the *lares* (sg. *lars*, from the Etruscan *las*),[49] the *penates* or gods of the storeroom, and the *genius* that represented the

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[47] Taken here to mean the period of Christian literary activity from the earliest writings up through those of Gregory the Great (d. 604); Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 1 (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1966), 1.

[48] Boniface *Epistolae* XLIX, in *Patrologia Cursus Completus*, Series Latina [=*PL*], 221 vols., ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: 1841–1864), 89:747A.

[49] Charlton Thomas Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), s.v. "Lāres." Daniel Harmon says this derivation "is not now in favor" and instead proposes that *lares* is from the stem **las*- and Greek *lenai* and Latin *lascivus*, denoting "good-natured, even 'playful' divinities of a minor order;" Daniel P. Harmon, "The Family Festivals of Rome," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, ed. Wolfgang Haase, II.16.2 (Walter de Gruyter, 1978), 1594.

"guiding *numen* of the continuity of the family, the living force of the *paterfamilias*."[50] These deities were depicted in wall paintings or as small freestanding statues placed in a household *lararium* or shrine. The forms of some *lararia* may have been derived from Etruscan models, since both fourth-century B.C.E. Etruscan urns and later reliefs depict small shrines similar to the free-standing "miniature temples," called *aediculae*, that are the most elaborate of the type. Most of the household shrines took the form of rectangular or arched wall niches, sometimes elaborated with an *aedicule*-like stucco or masonry frame, in which statues of the *genius*, the *penates*, and other deities were placed.[51] These may not have been permanently displayed in the *lararium* but instead arranged there as needed for particular rites. George Boyce's catalog of the *lararia* at Pompeii notes that the bronze statuettes of the *genius* and *lares* that together with a marble one of Venus Anadyomene were found at location V, iv, 3 were not in the *lararium* itself but instead in the remains of two cupboards in an adjoining room.[52] Brass handles from both hallway and cabinet doors were found with the assemblage of statuettes assumed to be from the *lararium* in Vilauba as well.[53] If statues were arranged in the *lararium* according to the rites being performed, then those found *in situ* in Pompeian *lararia* may have been there because worshippers neglected or failed to rescue them when the eruption interrupted

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[50] David Gerald Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: A Study of the Roman Household Deities and their Shrines at Pompeii and Herculaneum," PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1972, 45.

[51] Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: Roman Household Deities," 85-90.

[52] George K. Boyce, *Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1937), 40 n.1.

[53] Pere Castanyer Masoliver and Joaquim Tremoleda Trilla, "La villa Romana de Vilauba, Banyoles (provincia de Girona): excavación de un ámbito de culto doméstico," in *Madrider Mitteilungen* 38 (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1997), 167.

those rites.[54] *Lararia* have been found in both public and private areas of Roman houses and in places of business, and while most surviving examples are from Pompeii and therefore of the first century CE, others are found throughout Campania, in Ostia (dating from the first through the third centuries), and along the *limes* as well as in Britain.[55]

Lararia were the place in the home where Romans brought together and displayed symbols that evoked a number of ideas about gods, family, and society. The *lares* usually appear in pairs in the wall paintings associated with these shrines, flanking the central figure of a deity or of the *genius* of the household, which was often depicted as a serpent.[56] While there were a number of different *lares* associated with different locations—those of the *Compitalia*, for example, were celebrated both at urban crossroads and on the boundaries between families' lands[57]—in John Bodel's words the *lares familiaris* of the domestic cult appear to have been "more closely tied to the concept of 'home' rather than to 'house' and more closely associated with the idea of community than with place."[58] The domestic cult practiced at the *lararia* marked the stages of life such as marriage of family members through rites performed in the home under the aegis of the *lares* and *penates*. Moreover, these deities were part of what defined the Roman

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[54] Boyce describes a group of three statuettes that "were likely dropped in the course of … flight" in his Appendix I, item 9, 109.

[55] David G. Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: The Evidence of the Household Shrines," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, ed. Wolfgang Haase, II.16.2 (Walter de Gruyter, 1978), 1585-1590.

[56] Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: Household Shrines," 1579-1580; Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: Roman Household Deities," 103-5.

[57] Harmon, "The Family Festivals of Rome," 1594–1595.

[58] John Bodel, "Cicero's Minerva, Penates, and the Mother of the Lares: An Outline of Roman Domestic Religion," in *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, ed. John P Bodel and Saul M Olyan (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 264–265.

familia socially and legally. The *paterfamilias* chose which gods to worship in the household,[59] and in Ostia, the *lararium* was often located centered on a wall of the *atrium*, the room most likely to be used for formal public reception, where it could strongly signal to visitors "the presence of the traditional gods of the house" as "an element of status."[60] Cassiodorus's official letters use both *in laribus*[61] and *ad penates*[62] to mean "your homes" and "to your dwelling," and Justinian's *Digest* defines the legal home as the one where the *lares* for marriage were kept.[63]

One of the most significant functions of the *lararium*, then, was to integrate a wide range of secular and sacred concerns, blending the "structure and iconography" of the "agricultural and commercial, business and domestic, Foreign and Italic" spheres and bringing them into the center of Roman domestic life under the protection of traditional gods of the hearth and household.[64] Just as Cato depicted sacrifice and prayer as necessary for success in agriculture, the *lararia* of the domestic cult present the gods as both intimate and public components of family life—especially, given the nature of most material remains of these shrines and of the legal definition and standing of the *lares*, of the life of elite families. Tertullian among the Christian apologists condemned the figures

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[59] Bakker, *Living and Working with the Gods*, 206.

[60] Bakker, *Living and Working with the Gods*, 180–181.

[61] Cassiodorus (Magni Avrelii Cassiodori), *Variarvm libri XII*, I.17.4, I.39.2, III.21.1, ed. Å. J. Fridh, in *Magni Avrelii Cassiodori Senatoris Opera*, *pars* 1, *CCSL* XCVI (Turnholt: Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1973), 27, 44, 113; translation of the first and third instances (I.39 omitted in trans. edition) from *The* Variae *of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator*, trans. S. J. B. Barnish (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), 15 and 57.

[62] Cassiodorus, III.21.1, 113; Variae *of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senato*, 57.

[63] *Digesta* XXV.3.1.2, in Paul Krueger and Theodor Mommsen, eds., *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (Dublin: Weidman, 1967), I.365.

[64] Orr, "Roman Domestic Religion: Household Shrines," 1583.

displayed in the *laraium* as both material and profane, subject to being pawned, sold, or beaten into cooking pots or wash basins if that use proved to be of "more sacred domestic necessity,"[65] but even when Roman homes became Christian, this nexus of the domestic, the social, and the religious was not so easily discarded, especially from the homes of the elite.

Another part of Roman religion typically seen as inimical to Christianity was the imperial cult. The rites of the imperial *publica sacra* frequently linked the living emperor and his ancestors with the gods. The citizen of Forum Clodii north of Pisae sacrificed a calf on the birthday of the emperor Tiberius (r. 14–37 C.E.) "at an altar dedicated to the gods and [the late emperor] Augustus" and erected a temple where stood statues of Tiberius, his mother, and his adoptive father Augustus.[66] The senators who declared Augustus to be *divus* after his death and Augustus himself, who, though he refused to have public temples dedicated solely to him "even in the provinces," permitted them if they depicted him together with the goddess Roma (the personification of Rome as city and state),[67] associated the emperor and divinity within the public rites sponsored by the state.

However, just as the domestic cult involved far more than sacrificing to "household gods," the imperial cult must be understood as something more than "emperor worship." First, Romans had always coupled sacred and political authority as a way of legitimizing

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[65] Tertullian, *Apologeticum* XIII.4, in *Apology, De Spectaculis* (London: W. Heinemann, 1931), 71.

[66] *CIL* XI. 3303.5, *ad aram quae numini Augusto dedic(ata) est*; quoted in Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 241.

[67] Gaius Suetonius Tranquillius, *Vita Divi Augusti*, 52, in *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. Robert Graves, rev. Michael Grant (London: Penguin, 1979), 76; Duncan Fishwick, *"Numinibus Aug(ustorum)*," *Britannia* 25 (1994): 132.

the power of their leaders. The Etruscan kings of Rome wielded *imperium* based on their holding the "right to ascertain by divination *(auspicium)* the will of the gods,"[68] and this practice established the longstanding correlation between ruling a people and acting as a priest. Not only was the legendary king Numa said to have sacrificed as a priest of Jupiter,[69] but also priests would bear "the name of the king *(rex sacrorum*)" into the historical period.[70] This harnessing together of secular and divine power continued into the Republican period, when generals would celebrate their public triumphs dressed in a purple cloak, wearing a golden wreath, wielding an eagle-crowned scepter, and with their faces painted red—all symbols that invoked both the Etruscan kings and Capitoline Jupiter.[71]

In the Christian era, Roman emperors continued to be associated with divinity, though most emperors were careful to express that relationship in ways that avoided accusations of either hubris or tyranny while still reaping its benefits. An example of how complex and sophisticated this association could be is the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, the "Altar of Augustan Peace" that was erected in Rome between 13 and 9 B.C.E (see Figure 3.1 on the next page).[72] Even if Augustus did not himself sacrifice at this elaborate public shrine, he still ordered its construction and dictated the annual sacrifices to be performed

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[68] Mikhail Rostovtzeff, *Rome*, 1928, trans. J. D. Duffy (New York: Galaxy, 1960), 16-17.

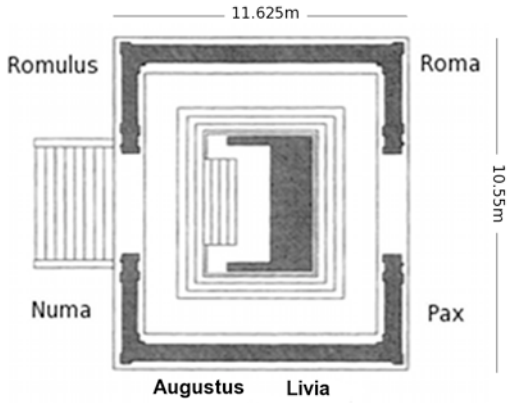
[69] Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita* 1.20.1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914), accessed at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Liv.+ 1.20.1.

[70] Rostovtzeff, *Rome*, 21.

[71] Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 34–35.

[72] Paul Rehak, "Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 190.

Figure 3.1. The *Ara Pacis Augustae* (constructed 13–9 B.C.E.), adapted from Paul Rehak, "Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae," *The Art Bulletin* vol. 83 no. 2 (June, 2001), 199.



there,[73] and the building itself embodies his care for the public cult and his own position within it. Paul Rehak has identified among the sculptural reliefs of the *Ara Pacis* the figure of Numa, which is placed opposite the front entrance from the relief of the first king Romulus. This relief of Romulus is paired on the opposite wall with one of the Goddess Roma, while Numa and the goddess Pax flank depictions of Augustus and Livia. The sculptural program of this shrine associates Augustus with deity, sacrifice, peace, and the founders of Rome, while the placement of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* on the Campus Martius associates it as well with both Augustus' mausoleum and the obelisk he had erected there.[74]

The imperial cult, of which the *Ars Pacis Augustae* represents an early mature

[73] Augustus became *pontifex maximus* in 12 B.C.E. while the temple was being built; Rehak, "Aeneas or Numa?": 198.

[74] Rehak, "Aeneas or Numa?" 199-201. Rehak's claim, based on the work of Edmund Buchner, that the altar's placement on the Campus Martius was determined by the shadow cast by the obelisk has been largely disproved by later excavations and analysis; see Peter Heslin, "Augustus, Domitian and the So-Called Horologium Augusti," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 97 (January 1, 2007): 1–20.

expression, was intended by the emperors and the others who promoted it to serve as a superstructure for the various domestic, local, and regional or *gens*-based religious cults practiced throughout the empire, especially in the provinces where Hans-Joseph Klauck says this framework of state religion "evoked the fact of Roman rule, gave an ideological foundation for it, and furthered its social acceptability, at least for members of the leading classes to whom new and honourable careers as provincial priests of the emperor cult were offered."[75] However, while sculpted images could be carefully controlled, the imperial cult and the extent to which it deified the emperor was neither uniform throughout the empire nor static over time. The most openly deified conceptualizations of emperors prevailed in the eastern provinces, where an inscription during the reign of Tiberius honors benefactors of a *collegium* at Ephesos who were priests of the "new Dioskoroi" (the twin sons of Tiberius' adopted son Drusus, identified with Castor and Pollux the sons of Zeus) and of "Sebaste Demeter Karpophoros," a title that links Sebaste the wife of Augustus with the *collegium*'s patron goddess Demeter.[76] While the imperial cult was strong in the east, in the west Seneca ridiculed the changes made during the reign of Claudius (41–54 C.E.) so as to include veneration of the *genius* of the living emperor within the *sacra publica*,[77] an innovation that linked it with the veneration of the *genius* of the *paterfamilias* in the domestic cult. It was not lost on Romans like Seneca that in the context of the domestic cult inscriptions containing a dedication to a living

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[75] Klauck, "Roman Empire," 72–73.

[76] Philip A. Harland, "Imperial Cults within Local Cultural Life: Associations in Roman Asia," *Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 17, no. 1–2 (2003): 90–91.

[77] Momigliano, "Roman Religion: The Imperial Period," 185.

man's *genius* were "invariably set up by his slaves or freedmen or clients,"[78] so that such dedications to the living emperor within the civic cult would imply religious and social subordination alike. Given that, it is not surprising that veneration of the *genius* of the emperor subsequently was rejected under Vespasian and Flavians, likely in 70 when the calendar was cleared of "flattery," only to be resurrected under Domitian (who was accused of *superbia*) as well as by those emperors who were later considered "bad."[79] The political anarchy of the third century in particular "destabilised the power and gravitas of the imperial cult,"[80] so that by the end of the third century Diocletian and Maximian, who were attempting to bring some order back to the imperial system, had to be careful to identify themselves "not as Jupiter and Hercules, but as Jovius and Herculius, that is, the protégés" of those gods rather than as gods themselves (through their *genius* or their person).[81]

Though far from monolithic, the imperial cult still served as one of the world-defining and world-stabilizing religious structures of Roman society. That religion was not only polytheistic but also polyvalent, permitting and expecting it adherents to participate in various rites addressing various gods for various purposes. Those rites were to be performed according to the specific requirements mandated by the gods they addressed, and those who participated in them expected their gods to respond according to natural and supernatural signs open to the perception of religious specialists. Roman

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[78] Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 99.

[79] Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 87–93.

[80] David Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), 33.

[81] Momigliano, "Roman Religion: The Imperial Period," 187.

religion had its basis in a practice of filial piety that was as much linked with political order and the social world as it was with deities and other supernatural powers.[82] Finally, it was a religion in which all religious practices were embedded in hierarchical social structures: in the home and the extended family (including both those related by blood or adoption and those associated through servitude or slavery), in the voluntary social and religious associations, and in the superstructure of rites that celebrated the divine origin, connection, and purpose of the state itself, as well as of its leader. It was within this Roman religious and social context that Christianity developed its pastoral and ecclesiastical hierarchy, and within this context that those pastors defined and taught Christian doctrines that conveyed its own view of religion and society.

The Shepherd's Oversight: Church Structure and Pastoral Instruction

As we have seen, during its first century Christianity developed its theology, community, and leadership within the context of post-Second Temple Judaism. Texts like the *Didache* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* illustrate how the role of bishop as the provider of pastoral leadership and care evolved in parallel with but differently from the role of the *archisynagogos* within the Jewish religious community, with the *episcopos* of the Christians becoming not only a community leader but also a leader with a liturgical role and prophetic authority. The relationship of Jewish and Christian communities with the Roman society around them diverged as well. While the practice of Judaism was for the most part officially allowed in the Empire as equivalent to the practice of civic religion within the *collegia*, before Galerius' edict of toleration in 311 the practice of Christianity

[82] Johnson, *Among the Gentiles*, 35.

was not. Both groups were periodically attacked by the Roman state or members of Roman communities, and the reasons behind and response to those attacks reflect this divergence and the different ways in which Romans understood their identities. As Keith Hopkins tersely states, "Jews rebelled, but Christians were persecuted."[83] Jewish rebellions in Palestine were understood to be political events that did not affect the practice of Judaism as a religion throughout the empire; for the most part, Jewish religious communities were not seen to be inherently seditious. Christian communities, which were more explicitly voluntary associations that recruited new members through evangelism, could seem more dangerous, and though the persecution of Christians and their church communities was sporadic and localized for most of the first two centuries, in the middle and late third centuries those persecutions were imposed by emperors themselves.

Within a century of Galerius' edict of toleration, however, the empire had socially and materially changed. Not only were the temples of the Roman state religion in which third-century Christians had refused to worship closed by imperial command, but also elites had abandoned the provisioning of the pagan civic infrastructure of baths, theaters and amphitheaters, and other public buildings that had made up the urban core in favor of erecting churches and distributing Christian charity to the poor.[84] How did Christianity, a religion with an exclusive monotheistic theology and a strict moral code seemingly at odds with Rome's polyvalent religious and social structures, develop during three

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[83] Hopkins, "Christian Number and its Implications," 225 n. 25.

[84] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 29–30.

centuries of disenfranchisement and persecution the means by which to convert the society around it into one congruent with its own values and mores? Did Christian bishops, as Peter Brown has said, conquer Roman cities in the fourth century "from the bottom up" by benefit of their exclusive religious authority and greater administrative acumen?[85] Or were Roman social changes largely independent of Christian actions, and did Christianity simply adapt and respond to the changing circumstances of the fourth century and beyond, just as it had responded to the circumstances of the centuries before?

Christianity was undoubtedly influenced by Roman social institutions; indeed, it had developed in its early centuries "an empire-wide complex of institutions which in some ways mirrored the empire's own provincial bureaucracy."[86] However, internal as well as external forces shaped the early church. The number of Christians expanded significantly during the second and early third centuries, a period during which the catechumenate was established as a formal course of preparation for baptism and entry in full membership and methods of public penance were implemented. These developments both fueled "an enormous growth in the need for pastoral care"[87] and drove the church to define and legitimize the roles of those providing that care. First- and early second-century texts like the Pauline epistles and the *Didache* record both "considerable variety and experimentation" among local churches and "frequent conflict not only between

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[85] Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200 - 1000*, 2nd ed. (Malden MA: Blackwell, 2003), 78.

[86] Wayne A. Meeks, "Social and Ecclesial Life of the Earliest Christians," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, ed. Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M Young, and K. Scott Bowie (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 153.

[87] Georg Schöllgen, "From Monepiscopate to Monarchical Episcopate: The Emergence of a New Relationship between Bishop and Community in the Third Century," *Jurist: Studies in Church Law and History* 66 (2006): 116–117.

different figures and groups, but also between different modes of authority."[88] By the third century, Christianity had developed an ecclesiastical structure comprised of churches whose membership was divided into clergy and laity and that were led by presbyters (priests) headed by a bishop and assisted by deacons.

Stages of this development appear most clearly in the *Kirchenordnungen*, the "church orders" composed in the third through the fifth centuries. Unlike the much earlier proto-order of the *Didache*, these church orders described a hierarchy of ranks and duties that organized the clergy, and they gave the rites used to ordain or install church members in those clerical leadership roles. Some scholars complain that these documents are merely prescriptive and represent only an ideal ecclesiastical structure,[89] but even if that is so that ideal itself is instructive. While they might not reflect the reality of day-to-day church organization, these church orders still show how those within the hierarchy of the church imagined that organization should look and function and reveal some of the basic models and assumptions about Christian authority and leadership they made.

Allen Brent has argued the developing hierarchy described in these church orders reflects similar organizational changes within the imperial cult during the same period.[90] That cult, serving as the superstructure for religious practice in Roman society, would also have served as the reference for Roman Christian writers seeking to establish a

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[88] Meeks, "Social and Ecclesial Life," 153.

[89] Alexandre Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie: les premières étapes du cursus clérical* (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1977), 76–77; Ute Verstegen, "Gemeinschaftserlebnis in Ritual und Raum: Zur Raumdisposition in frühchristlichen Basiliken des vierten und fünften Jahrhunderts," in *Religiöse Vereine in der römischen Antike: Untersuchungen zu Organisation, Ritual und Raumordnung*, ed. Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser and Alfred Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 265.

[90] Allen Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity Before the Age of Cyprian* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 8–10.

"universal" religion. These orders reveal stages of the process by which the "charismatic sanctity" of early Christianity, which had been challenged by the limits placed on the authority of prophets dictated by the *Didache* but validated by the visionary experiences and "forth-telling" role of the bishop depicted in the *Shepherd of Hermas*,[91] was "objectified not in the individual members" and leaders of the church, "but in the institution itself, in the priestly order and the sacramental *cultus*" over the course of the second, third and fourth centuries.[92]

As shown by Bruno Steimer (Figure 3.2 on the next page), four distinct church orders formed the basis for later versions and collections: the *Didache* (s. i ex.), the *Didascalia apostolorum* (*Didascalia*, s. iii[1]), the *Traditio apostolica* (*Apostolic Tradition*, s. iii[1]), and the *Constitutiones ecclesiasticae apostolorum* (=*CEA*, s. iv in.).[93] Of these, the *Didache* was originally written in Greek and the *DA* in Syriac, while the *CEA* survives in Greek, Syriac, and Egyptian/Coptic versions. The original text of the *Apostolic Tradition* no longer exists, but Latin, Sahidic, Ethiopian, Arabic, Bohairic, and

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[91] George Hunston Williams says that by the fourth century, and particularly as the orthodox church worked to establish its authority in the face of the challenge of Arianism, prophecy that had evolved from "a charismatic foretelling" to "authoritative *re*telling" became a "forthtelling" in the spirit of an Old Testament prophetic rebuke; "Christology and Church-State Relations in the Fourth Century (concluded)," *Church History* 20, no. 4 (December 1, 1951): 9.

[92] Joseph M. Bryant, "The Sect-Church Dynamic and Christian Expansion in the Roman Empire: Persecution, Penitential Discipline, and Schism in Sociological Perspective," *The British Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 2 (June 1993): 306.

[93] Bruno Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis: Die Gattung der altchristlichen Kirchenordnungen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 5–7. The primary editions of the church orders used are Michael W Holmes, ed., "The Didache," in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, trans. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1999), 246-269; R. Hugh Connolly, ed., *Didascalia Apostolorum: The Syriac Version Translated and Accompanied by the Verona Latin Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929); Gregory Dix, ed., *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome, Bishop and Martyr*, 1937, rev. by Henry Chadwick (London: S.P.C.K., 1968). The most recent edition of the *CEA* Steimer lists is of the Greek text; Theodore Schermann, ed., *Die allgemeine Kirchenordnung, frühchristliche Liturgien und kirchliche Überlieferung* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1914-16), 12-34.

Figure 3.2. Church Orders of the First through Fifth Centuries (from Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis*, 7).

			Independent core texts					Variants			
			Did	DA	CEA	"Traditio apostolica" group					CAp
						TA	[PA]	TD	CH	Ep	
Compilations	*Fragmentum Veronense LV* s. iv[2] (Steimer, 113)	Latin		Part 1	Part 2	Part 3					
	Constitutiones apostolorum s. iv[4/4] (Steimer, 121)	Greek	VII 1–32	I–VI			VIII 3–46				VIII 47
	Sinodos Alexandrinus s. v (Faivre, 43)	Sahidic			1–30	31–62	63B–78				-
		Ethiopian			1–21	22–47	51B–72				73–127
		Arabic			1–20	21–47	51B–71				72–127
	Octateuchus Clementinus "B"†	Bohairic			1–30	31–62	63B–79				1–71/85
		(Coptic)			I	II	IV–VI				VII
	Octateuchus Clementinus s. v ex. (Steimer, 146)	Syriac			III	-	V–VII	I/II			VIII
		Arabic			II	III	V–VII	I			VIII

Arabic numerals are line numbers; Roman numerals are books.

Did=*Didache*. s. i ex. (de Halleux, 317–318)
DA=*Didascalia apostolorum*. s. iii[1] (Connolly, xci)
CEA=*Constitutiones ecclesiasticae apostolorum*. s. iv in. (Steimer, 65)
TA=*Traditio apostolica*. s. iii[1] (Chadwick in Dix, g)
[PA]=The conjectured recension of TA used in the *Constitutiones apostolorum* and subsequently in other compilations.

TD=*Testamentum Domini*. s. iv ex. (Steimer, 100)
CH=*Canones Hippolyti*. s. iv mid (Steimer, 77)
Ep=*Epitome Contitutionum apostolorum VIII*. s. v in. (Steimer, 85)
CAp=*Canones apostolorum*. s. iv ex. (Steimer, 93)

† This text represents either a defective version of the *Octatechus Clementinus* missing the portion derived from *TD* or a version of the *Sinodos Alexandrinus* (Steimer 135–136), and its date is established accordingly.

Syriac descendants of that text survive.[94] Steimer is one of several to have judged as circumstantial at best the evidence offered by R. Hugh Connolly to claim the second-century Roman bishop and antipope Hippolytus as the author of the original text of the *Apostolic Tradition*,[95] though neither Henry Chadwick in his preface to Dix's 1937

[94] With the reconstruction by Dix being the first of these; Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis*, 46–47.

[95] Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis*, 35–39.

reconstruction of the text nor Bernard Botte in his later version see a need to depart from that identification.[96] Whether or not a Hippolytus wrote the original, the *Didascalia* and the other church orders each invoked apostolic tradition as validation of their hierarchical schemata. The Syriac title of the *Didascalia* calls it the "catholic *didascalia*, that is 'doctrine', of the twelve holy apostles and disciples of our Saviour,"[97] while the prologue of the *Apostolic Tradition* presents it as a tradition "that has continued" from apostolic times "until now."[98]

These documents' claims demonstrate that orthodox Christianity legitimized texts and practices based on their place in the historical tradition even though these documents do not reflect how churches actually were organized in apostolic times or in the century and a half that followed. The *Didascalia*, the *Apostolic Tradition* and their descendants all show that by the third century at least some churches were no longer communities led by a group of elders and served by part-time clergy but instead were large institutions headed by full-time religious professionals who were supported by the community they served and who were expected to provide that community with daily public prayer and instruction.[99] The traveling prophets and teachers of the *Didache* no longer appear as part of ecclesial structure, though those charismatic individuals did not disappear from Christian life even if they have no place within the "organized" church, as Peter Brown

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[96] Henry Chadwick, "Preface to the Second Edition," e-i, in Dix, *The Apostolic Tradition*; Bernard Botte, ed., *La Tradition Apostolique: d'aprés les anciennes versions*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1984), 14–17.

[97] Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 2.

[98] "usque nunc traditionem exponentibus"; Dix, *The Apostolic Tradition*, 2.

[99] Schöllgen, "From Monepiscopate to Monarchical Episcopate," 119–120.

has ably demonstrated.[100] Instead, what these church orders describe is a hierarchy of bishop, presbyter, deacon (and often deaconess), and lesser roles whose functions were defined, refined, and finally degraded or transferred to others of higher status and authority as the centuries progressed. Alexandre Faivre says that what is striking in these earliest church orders is that later documents based on them reveal a highly organized hierarchy of clergy with explicitly defined duties and roles that were "already present in greatly reduced form in the first canonical-liturgical documents," reflecting an impetus toward replacing "the free-play of the Holy Spirit" with hierarchical authority, developing "new auxiliary functions" assigned to those within that hierarchy, and giving birth to a clerical *cursus* "that may have been inevitable for a social group seeking to ensure its unity through systematic organization."[101]

These church orders also reflect an increase in ecclesial complexity that resulted from the sheer number of members, at least within some communities. Adolf von Harnack estimated that surviving sources from the first two centuries attest to around one hundred Christian communities by 180 C.E.,[102] an estimate that leads Hopkins to suggest that by then Christian "cells" existed in two to four hundred of the two thousand towns of the Empire. Hopkins further proposes that most of these Christian organizations were small "house" churches of fifty to one hundred members, though large churches with thousands of members and a hierarchy of professional clergy already existed in major

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[100] See Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (January 1, 1971): 80–101 as just one of a number of his works on this subject.

[101] "sont peut-être inéluctables quand une organisation veut garantir son unité par un systèm": Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie*, 332.

[102] Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den drei Jahrhunderten*, 4th ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1924), 622–628.

urban centers like Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Carthage.[103] The church orders of the third century and later, then, are likely to represent the clerical structure and liturgical practice of the largest churches with the most urbanized and likely most literate[104] membership.

Here is the ecclesial structure these church orders established. First, by the end of the second century the division between laity and clergy was clearly defined. Tertullian's instruction on baptism from this time, though acknowledging that all believers had the right to baptize, underscore how much more the "discipline of respect and restraint" applies to the laity as regards their right to perform that sacrament than to their betters (*maioribus*),[105] employing the language of Roman class and status to describe "the nature of clerical-lay relationships."[106] Though Tertullian acknowledges that neither bishop nor priest nor deacon were known among the first disciples,[107] by his time those offices existed, at least in the larger churches.

Next, these church orders describe the clergy who were set apart by ritual establishment of their ecclesiastical and liturgical roles. The bishop was first among these clerical peers, much like he had been in the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Rather than

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[103] Hopkins, "Christian Number and its Implications," 202–203.

[104] Hopkins proposes that it was not until the end of the second century that the Christian population was large enough to provide at least one literate member for each community; "Christian Number and its Implications," 212–213.

[105] who must themselves not assume the function (*officium*) of the bishop; Q. Septimii Florentis Tertulliani, *De baptismo liber*, 17.3, in *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism* [=*On Baptism*], trans. Ernest Evans (London: S. P. C. K., 1974), 34.

[106] David I. Rankin, "Class Distinction as a Way of Doing Church: The Early Fathers and the Christian plebs," *Vigiliae Christianae* 58, no. 3 (August 2004): 302–303.

[107] *De baptismo liber*, 17.2, in *On Baptism*, 34.

emphasizing prophetic visions as that earlier text does, though, church orders like the *Didascalia* validate the bishop's superior position and role based on Old and New Testament scriptures. Being like Christ[108] both priest and shepherd,[109] the bishop was charged in the *Didascalia* to "supervise the presbyters of every church throughout [his] church district" (*pastor qui constituitur in visitatione praesbyterii et in ecclesiis omnibus et parrociis*).[110] He was compared to the Levites of the Old Testament and commanded to serve as a priest, prophet, prince, leader, king, and mediator between God and His faithful; furthermore, he was to be receiver, preacher, and proclaimer of the word of God, knower of Scriptures, and a witness to the will of God who would be called into account if those under his pastoral care did not obey that will.[111] The *Didascalia* also called the bishop, who it says "rules in the place of God," as the high priest through whom offerings are made to God, and it commanded presbyters and deacons to serve bishops as their priests and Levites[112] who were charged with guarding the priests and the tabernacle in Old Testament Judaism (Numbers 18:2–5). Finally, the *Didascalia* quotes Ezekiel 33:1–6 as canonical prophetic confirmation of the position of the bishop as the "watchman" set by God over the church so that he may blow the trumpet of the Gospel that warns the

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[108] who is called the "perfect High Priest" in Hebrews 3.1: *considerate apostolum et pontificem confessionis nostrae Iesum*. The Latin version of *Didascalia* cap. 9 found in the *Fragmentum Veronense* (see Figure 2) uses *principi sacerdotum* rather than *pontificem*, which is the word used for "high priest" in the Vulgate.

[109] G. R. Evans, "The Fathers and the early Church Councils," in *A History of Pastoral Care*, ed. G. R. Evans (London: Cassell, 2000), 72.

[110] *Didascalia* cap. 4, in *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 28.

[111] *Didascalia* cap. 8, in *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 80-81.

[112] *Didascalia* cap. 8, in *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 86.

people of God's judgment.[113]

Authority, then, was granted by the church orders to bishops through the invocation of Christianity's Jewish inheritance, but that inheritance was transmitted through the medium of scripture rather than being taken directly from the (different) institutional organization of post-Second Temple synagogues. Moreover, these church orders drew on other sources for their understanding of authority; in its ninth chapter, the *Didascalia* defined and established the bishop's authority by associating him with religious and political roles past and present. Among all these influences, the primary touchstone remained the Old Testament as mediated through a Christian understanding of Christ and His church as the fulfillment of those scriptures. *I Clement* said that the high priest, priests, and Levites remain part of the Christian church, all of them in their proper ministries as ordained by God,[114] and the *Traditio apostolica*'s prayer for episcopal consecration asked God to empower the bishop with "the princely spirit that you rendered to your beloved son Jesus Christ and gave to the holy apostles who established the church" so that the bishop might not only provide pastoral care but also serve as the high priest of God.[115] Even among those familiar with and influenced by other modes of power, Christian scripture and Judaeo-Christian tradition remained normative for bishops; in the fourth century, the great Hellenizer Gregory of Nazianzus (*c.*325–389) wrote of the priesthood (and of the bishop as its head) that a priest is "first and foremost … a man who is clothed in power; he is chief of the community" and ruler (*archos*) of the

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[113] *Didascalia* cap. 4; *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 36.

[114] *I Clement* 40-41, in *The Apostolic Fathers*, 73.

[115] "principalis sp[iritu]s quem dedisti dilecto filio tuo Iesuo Christo quod donauit sanctis apostolis qui constituerunt ecclesiam"; *Apostolic Tradition* iii.3, in Dix, *The Apostolic Tradition*, 4-5.

synagogue.[116]

In addition to establishing a scriptural basis of the bishop's authority, these church orders also depicted the other ecclesiastical roles as descending from and dependent on the particular spiritual power and authority of the bishop. Deacons had existed as community officers in the very first churches; they are mentioned both in the *Didache* and in the first letter to Timothy, where the *diacones* are ones who *ministrent*—who should serve the church (I Tim. 3:8,10). As churches and church communities in urban centers grew so that bishops could no longer perform all necessary liturgical and pastoral functions, other clerics—primarily presbyters and deacons, but also others in various places and times—took on the roles of secondary *sacerdotes*.[117] From at least the first half of the third century, church orders describe both "deacon" and "presbyter" as roles whose spiritual authority is derived from that of the bishop, the head pastor of the church. As we have seen, ecclesiastical leadership in the *Didache* had consisted of an "episcopal college" of bishops (much like "presbyters" of the synagogue) and deacons, but even that early work advocated granting these non-charismatic liturgical, charitable, and teaching ministers the same respect given the charismatic ones such as the "apostles."[118] By the third century, though, this charismatic, spirit-giving power belonged to the bishop alone.

The bishop's power is made particularly clear in the instructions for ordination of presbyters and deacons in the *Traditio apostolica*, in which both receive the spirit

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[116] Jean Bernardi, "Introduction," in *Grégoire de Nazianze Discours I-3* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978), 45.

[117] Jean Gaudemet, *Histoire du droit et des institutions de l'église en Occident*, Vol. III: L'Église dans l'empire Romain (IVe-Ve siècles) (Paris: Sirey, 1955), 101.

[118] de Halleux, "Ministers in the Didache," 313–314.

appropriate for their office by the imposition of the bishop's hands. This use of touch to convey power and authority derives from Judaism in which the ordination of rabbis included the laying on of hands. In the earliest churches, traveling charismatic apostles used the imposition of hand to pass on the Holy Spirit to the leaders of local communities,[119] but by the third century this church order emphasized the efficacy of this gesture by carefully restricting its use to specific clergy in specific circumstances. During the ordination of a presbyter, the bishops laid hands on the one being ordained to make that new presbyter a partaker in "the spirit of grace and counsel, that he may share in the presbyterate and govern Thy people in a pure heart,"[120] while the other presbyters present also laid their hands on him at that point of the rite "because of the similar Spirit <which is> common to <all> the clergy."[121] Presbyters could not by themselves lay hands on a presbyter or deacon as the bishop did, though, because their authority was only to receive and not give "holy orders" (Greek *cleros*). When performed by them, that gesture merely blessed or sealed the ordination given by the bishop.[122] The presbyters did not lay their hands on the deacon during his ordination by the bishop either, for a deacon was not seen as receiving "the spirit of seniority which the presbyters share" but only that spirit necessary for him to serve the bishop and "do only the things commanded by him."[123] Both the *Traditio apostolica*'s detailed insistence on the proper understanding of the

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[119] Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie*, 53–54.

[120] *Traditio apostolica* viii.1-2; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 13.

[121] *Traditio apostolica* ix.6; in *The Apostolic Tradition*, 16. Words in carets are added for sense in Dix's English translation.

[122] *Traditio apostolica* ix.8; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 17.

[123] *Traditio apostolica* ix.4, 2; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 15-16.

meaning of the imposition of hands and the *Didascalia*'s emphasis on the character, responsibility, and authority of the bishop (the description of which takes up nine of that work's twenty-six chapters) strongly suggest that these documents reveal early stages in the development of the understanding of these roles and the ritual practice symbolizing their authority. In time, both ideas and rituals appear to have been well-established; by the beginning of the fourth century, the instructions for the ordination rituals for presbyters, deacons, and others in *Constitutiones ecclesiasticae apostolorum* [=*CEA*] simply instructed the bishop to impose his hands on the one receiving ordination at the appropriate point without needing to explain or justify why.[124]

This development of rituals and roles continued throughout the early centuries of the church, and it did not progress uniformly. The *CEA* from the beginning of the fourth century, which was derived from a version of the *Traditio apostolica* (as shown in Figure 2), describes ordination rituals (each of which was presented as being personally introduced by one of Christ's apostles) as involving the laying on of hand not only for bishops, presbyters, and deacons, but also for deaconesses, sub-deacons, lectors, confessors, virgins, widows, and exorcists. However, the *Traditio apostolica* from the first half of the third century explicitly says that widows, lectors, virgins, and subdeacons were not ordained, and it does not mention deaconesses at all.[125] By the mid-fourth century and the *Canones Hippolyti* (another derivative of the *Traditio apostolica*), only bishops, priests, and deacons were ordained with the imposition of hands, while the ninth

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[124] *CEA* VIII.16-22; Marcel Metzger, ed., *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, vol. 3 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1985), 217-225.

[125] *Traditio apostolica* xi-xiv; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 20-22.

canon says that widows should not be ordained because that ritual is for men.[126] The councils of Antioch (341) and Laodicea (340–381) specifically required ordination only for bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and men in these roles had different standing within the clergy than did others. The collection of canons from these councils that was attached to the *CEA* states that these clergy were only deposed from office if they commited particular offenses, while subdeacons, lectors, and cantors who commited the same offenses were to be excommunicated just as those of the laity would be.[127] Those in "lesser," non-ordained roles were still counted among the clergy, though, as *CEA* VIII.4 indicates when it says that bishops and presbyters should share a portion of their church income with "the deacons and the other clergy."[128]

This setting apart of the three main orders of the clergy also can be seen in other elements of liturgy and in the physical arrangement of churches. Making distinctions in status among those participating in a communal meal was a familiar Roman practice, and public banquets and other forms of eating together typically emphasized such distinctions.[129] The Eucharistic meal of the Christian rite did much the same thing, for as the *Traditio apostolica* describes it, the bishop and all the presbyters together laid hands upon the oblation that the deacons brought to them at the altar, while the other lesser

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[126] Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie*, 70–73.

[127] Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie*, 140–142.

[128] *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, 277.

[129] Onno van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1997), 152–153.

clerics involved in the ritual, such as readers and subdeacons, did not.[130] In addition, as these church orders were being written, church buildings were being built or modified to provide separate areas for the clergy and their functions. Ute Verstegen writes that though the remains of fourth- and early fifth-century basilica churches do not reveal fixed altars, the basilica at Sufetula (Sbeitla in Tunisia) nevertheless had a square area in the apse that was partitioned off for liturgical participants, while the mosaics decorating the chancels at Verona and Zahrani laid out Christ symbols in a "centralizing or cross-shaped" manner that demarcate them as the location of liturgical action. Only the latest churches of this period display clear evidence for the rectangular floor plate and holes that would have been used to support a fixed altar table.[131] In other churches as well, decoration was used to show where those of special status should stand. As Zeno described the church at Verona, "the altar is a platform raised [slightly] above the meeting room, separated by [low] barriers and having its own sacred space defined," a demarcation of sacred space that was carried forward by such elements as mosaic patterning and decoration. For example, the laity in the nave would have been able to see no more than the edge of the distinct floor mosaic in the liturgical area of choir at Verona.[132]

Using architectural and decorative elements to signal the significance of different areas of a structure and those who use them is not unique to Christian churches, of course. The paintings and mosaics of *penates* and *genii* that had decorated the *lararia* of

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[130] *Traditio apostolica* xi.5, iv.2; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 21, 6. Though this might be read that the bishop and all of the presbyters "give thanks," the congregation's reply *et cum spiritu tuo* in the following line indicates only one speaker; iv.3.

[131] Verstegen, "Gemeinschaftserlebnis in Ritual und Raum," 275.

[132] Verstegen, "Gemeinschaftserlebnis in Ritual und Raum," 278–280.

the Roman *villae* (and which have parallels in the Christian-themed mosaics and wall decorations that served much the same purpose in later *villae*) and the statues and inscriptions erected in the meeting hall of a *collegium* likewise represent, in Geertz's phrase, visual and symbolic "stores of meaning"[133] that, charged through their associate with ritual, bring together religious and social ideas. Christian churches, however, were more hierarchically defined than Roman ritual structures, and the distinctly Christian development of hieracrhcical symbolic markers of sacred social space can be seen by comparing churches and the halls of *collegia*.

Though second- and third-century churches and *collegia* shared similarities—both performed private rituals, both suffered official suspicious and suppression, and both developed increasingly hierarchical structures—and though Constantine's laws would later treat a church as a kind of *collegium*,[134] these two religious institutions expressed substantially different social and religious conceptions. The *urbs* was the model of the *collegium*; like urban communities, *collegia* had *decuriones* and annual officers (*aediles*, *curatores*, *magistri*, or *quaestores*) supported by *scribae* or *viatores*, all of whom had authority over the rank-and-file *plebs* or *populus*.[135] However, differences between the assembly spaces of the Christian church and those of the Roman *collegia* reflect that, within the context of their community ritual, the membership of the *collegia* was much

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[133] Geertz, "Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," 127.

[134] Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 238.

[135] John R. Patterson, "The Collegia and the Transformation of the Towns of Italy in the Second Century AD," in *L'Italie d'Auguste à Dioclétien: Actes Du Colloque International Organisé Par l'Ecole Française De Rome et al., Rome, 25-28 Mars 1992*, ed. Claude Nicolet (Rome: École française de Rome, 1994), 234.

more homogenous than that of the church.[136] Though the *scholae* and other meeting rooms of these organizations displayed the inscribed tablets of the *alba collegii*, which listed members by rank,[137] and while the architectural forms and decoration schemes served in some instances to the wealth of *collegia* and their members, they do not display the same separation of space that was used in Christian meeting places to set participants apart according to status. The majority of *scholae* were single-room halls without niches or reserved areas for specific orders of participants,[138] and even those that were elaborately decorated placed their honorary statues in a central location of the main hall where they would be visible not only to all who entered but also to those who passed by the building.[139] These things advertised the organization's corporate status rather than establish a special *locus* of status and power for those leading ritual. Moreover, *collegia* became "increasingly respectable" and integrated into Roman civic life over the course of the second and early third centuries, especially as civil governments needed to forge new financial connections. During the same period, though Christianity still faced organized persecution, it also increasing drew its membership from among Romans of the lower-level elite who commonly participated in the traditionally conservative client associations and *collegia* and were "influenced by the norms and expectations of their social strata."[140] That the expectations and influence of these men and women did not shape the

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[136] Verstegen, "Gemeinschaftserlebnis in Ritual und Raum," 287–288.

[137] Hemelrijk, "Patronesses and 'Mothers' of Roman Collegia," 127.

[138] Beate Bollmann, *Römische Vereinshäuser: Untersuchungen zu den Scholae der römischen Berufs-, Kult- und Augustalen-Kollegien in Italien* (Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 1998), 103.

[139] Bollmann, *Römische Vereinshäuser*, 151–152.

[140] Wolfgang Wischmeyer, *Von Golgatha zum Ponte Molle: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Kirche im dritten Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 19.

development of Christian churches to be more like Roman *collegia* indicates that they saw them as two different things and that they accepted the pastoral expression of religious authority that prevailed in the Church.

Not all churches were urban, and, as we shall see, different expectations about social status and religious authority would lead to conflict between rural and urban Christian religious institutions. But within an urban setting, even those Roman Christians whose background and status would have led them to participate in the *collegium* as an expression of their *pietas* did not in their churches recreate the *collegium* along Christian lines. Instead, they discovered within the ritual and the instruction promulgated by the pastors of these urban churches whose authority they accepted expressions of ecclesiastical order and status that were congruent with their basic conservative expectations.

Knowledge and Power, Town and Country, High and Low: Understanding the Shepherd's Authority

When the *Didache* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* were written, early bishops focused on asserting their authority in the face of the challenges posed by both collective community leadership and charismatic individual leaders. Over the course of the creation of the church orders, though, and into the fourth and fifth centuries, bishops won that battle for authority within urban church communities. Moreover, since Christianity not only was tolerated after the third century but also in time was granted official status and support as the religion of the Roman state and people, it would be of no surprise to see the authority and power of the bishops integrated into the social and legal apparatuses of the Empire. Peter Brown says as much when he asserts that the increasing numbers of

Christians in the cities of the empire from the fourth century on had the effect of placing "the levers of power" into the hands of the bishops who were the leaders of burgeoning local interest groups—the urban church communities—on which imperial administration depended.[141] But though it seems reasonable that bishops would become powerful local leaders throughout the Empire as Christianity became the imperial religion, and certainly the lives and writings of figures like Gregory of Nazianzus, Athanasius, Ambrose, and Augustine of Hippo present compelling portraits of the intellectual, social, and religious authority of the late-antique bishop, recognizing that even the most powerful of bishops did not weild the same level of authority in every social domain is critical for understanding late-antique pastoral interactions as a whole.

The basis of the bishop's authority, as we have described it, was institutional rather than personal.[142] As a pastor, his authority was divinely derived and ritually enabled. Though as the shepherd of his church he took Christ the Good Shepherd as his model and was considered, at least by those (likely themselves bishops) who created church orders like the *Didascalia*, to be "set in the likeness … and place of God Almighty" as the one ordained to condemn and forgive sin, his power was limited to those he directly served.[143] Outside of that context, and especially in relation to the secular administrators of cities and to the elites who controlled rural settlements and territories, the power and reach of the bishop was often much more circumscribed.

Considering how important the late-antique bishop was and how important he was

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[141] Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 80.

[142] Bryant, "The Sect-Church Dynamic," 306.

[143] *Didascalia* cap. 5; *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 40.

seen to be by his contemporaries is vital to understanding the development of his pastoral role. A parallel to the bishop's special status as a religious leader can be seen in the practices of the Fang of Cameroon among whom Pascal Boyer did his ethnographic work. Among the Fang, those with religious authority performed divination, sang special songs, and healed, but those actions were not considered the source of their authority. These religious figures were instead thought to possess religious power and authority because they carried "an invisible [internal] organ called *evur*" that, though impossible to detect, innately set them apart from other men and women. Those around them recognized that religious leaders' roles were social, but they attributed the source of those roles to be forces present within the individual that were outside of and deeper than mere social order.[144] In much the same way, how much authority a bishop might have over those who were not Christian or who were subject to another's rule depended on both those people's understanding that such innate power existed and on their acceptance that the bishop participated in and manifested that power. Bishops and other ordained clergy were understood by their followers to be inherently "holy" and to wield divine authority and that when bishops and their followers alike communicated those ideas of authority they did so in ways intelligible and acceptable to others.

Social, religious and legal factors that had their source in how Roman society understood and communicated religious authority all contributed to the legitimization of bishops and other pastoral leaders. As Romans, Christians understood and used the symbols and language of rank and status. Examples of this permeate Christian writing.

[144] Boyer, "Explaining Religious Ideas," 38–39.

Clement employed *laos*/*laikoi*, "laity," as an equivalent of *plebs*,[145] and Tertullian not only used the Roman language of status to describe the hierarchical relationship between clergy and laity when writing about baptism[146] but also in his apologetic writing drew on and, as a consequence, reinforced the legitimacy of the concepts underlying the Roman ritual of the public triumph when he used that civic and religious ritual to illustrate Christianity's "relativistic treatment of social and political rank."[147] Contrary to outmoded depiction of early Christianity as a religion of the lower classes, as the number of church members increased over the second and third centuries, those members came from most if not all of the classes of Roman society.[148] Christians themselves likely realized that they represented a population not too different from that of Empire as a whole, and even if they understood themselves to not be "of" the secular Roman world, they still functioned within that world. As early as the second century, the anonymous *Letter to Diognetus* says that "Christians have no visible social or political group identity," for "Christians cannot be distinguished from the rest of the human race by country or language or customs…. What the soul is in the body, that Christians are in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world."[149] To be present in "all cities" was not as

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[145] Rankin, "Class Distinction as a Way of Doing Church," 182.

[146] See note 107 above.

[147] *Apologeticus* XXXIII.4, in *Apology, De Spectaculis*, 156; Wischmeyer, *Von Golgatha zum Ponte Molle*, 17.

[148] Rodney Stark's discussion of changing views on the class makeup of early Christianity concludes that the lowest classes were not more heavily represented among early Christians that was proportionate for the Roman population as a whole; *The Rise of Christianity*, 30-32.

[149] George, "Cross-cultural Interpretation: Some Paradigms from the Early Church," 221.

universal a claim as might be thought—after all, ninety percent of the Roman population lived outside the *urbes*[150]—but it was nevertheless a claim that set Christians firmly within the Roman world.

The clergy who led Christian congregations also were part of that world, but to what extent was their authority worldly as well? Peter Brown has argued long and well for understanding bishops, particularly in the eastern part of the empire, as wielding secular power derived from their pairing the mandates of pastoral care with the social expectations and authority granted by their participation in Roman culture. Among the social "levers" that he and others say came under the bishops' hands were those of *paideia*, a term that, especially in modern scholarship of Late Antiquity, extends beyond denoting "education" to encompass the literary, rhetorical, and ethical ideals and behavior that made a man a *philosophus* or part of the *intelligentia* of the Roman elite. Just as in Greek cities "the collective education of adolescents, as *epheboi*, implied participation in religious activities (for instance, singing hymns in festivals) which were a form of religious education,"[151] in the literature of the first centuries of the common era, the philosophical "care of self" that was in part *paideia* was "reserved for the elites" by benefit of their education.[152] This blending of religion, learning, and status influenced Christian thought in particular in the Hellenized East. Origen (184–253) considered *paideia* and the piety of the "Jewish–Christian movement of the first centuries" to

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[150] Géza Alföldy, *The Social History of Rome*, trans. David Braund and Frank Pollock (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 98.

[151] Momigliano, "Roman Religion: The Imperial Period," 191.

[152] Guy G. Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity*, trans. Susan Emanuel, American ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 17.

complement each other in a religious program that pursued "ethical perfection and … the soul's mystical union with God" in the way described by Philo of Alexandria (20 B.C.E.–50 C.E.).[153] Likewise, Gregory of Nyssa (*c.*335–*post* 394) also thought that *paideia* and Christianity together formed the proper method for the contemplation of and union with God.[154] Writing to the rhetor Eudoxe, Gregory of Nazianzus cast himself in the likeness of both a philosopher and an athletic coach, saying that "as bishop, [he] trains Christians to become 'philosophers,' that is to say, perfect Christians."[155] Kondothra M. George says that the fourth-century Cappadocian defenders of the orthodox faith after the Council of Nicaea, who included Basil of Caesarea along with the two Gregories and who had "received the best 'secular' education available in the [Roman] empire" while remaining "open to the best of the Hellenistic culture of the day," advocated a Christian faith informed by Hellenistic *paideia* as the expression of "true Christian faith" and "the basis and criterion for a hermeneutic of culture."[156]

The influence of *paideia* on Christian theology and teaching has been ably explored by Brown, Werner Wilhelm Jaeger, and many others. Most important for us, though, is the place of *paideia* in the thinking of the elites who held power in Rome's cities. Throughout the second and third centuries, these elites were not only *philosophi* but also *patroni* who acted as advocates and judges, supported public building, and contributed to and administered the distribution of food to the poor (though the *annona*). As such, their

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[153] Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 128–130.

[154] Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 90.

[155] *Epistolae* CLXXIV.3, in *Lettres*, vol. 2 (Paris: Belles lettres, 1967), 63 and 159 n.6.

[156] George, "Cross-cultural Interpretation: Some Paradigms from the Early Church," 222.

actions often had more direct effects on the populace of cities than did the actions of imperial administrators or even of the far-removed Emperor himself. Brown says that fourth-century bishops, who came from the same class as the growing number of well-to-do and educated Christian laymen and laywomen, thought that "they alone should be *patroni* of the publicly established Christian communities,"[157] a position in which, as we have seen, church orders and patristic texts on ecclesiastical structure had already established for them. These bishops as pastors to the Christian poor not only directed charity to but also advocated for them—advocacy that permitted bishops to have considerable and often direct social and political impact on civic life. Not only did a bishop like Basil present Christianity as a popular and universal philosophy equal in strength and integrity (and superior in truth) to that of the men of *paideia* whose language he understood and employed and whose role within the city he assumed,[158] but also he "exploited to the full his prestige as a local notable and man of *paideia*" in order to serve as patron for the urban populace Caesarea—something he did so well that, as Gregory of Nazianzus remembered in his panegyric to the bishop, armed guild members rioted in support of Basil during his confrontation with an imperial governor.[159]

Does this mean, then, that bishops took over positions of social and political authority in Roman cities in the fourth and fifth century based on their elite status, and that when bishops took Christianity throughout the empire and to Ireland and England

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[157] Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,, 1981), 32–33.

[158] Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 75.

[159] Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity*, 102.

they likewise held that a bishop's pastoral authority represented aristocratic social and political status? In essence, did bishops get others to listen to them because they were educated, high-class Romans? Brown does not go so far as to claim that bishops completely replaced the political elite, though others have assumed this was so,[160] but he does say that by the end of the fourth century, "the upper echelons [of the church] were occupied by highly cultivated persons, drawn from the class of urban notables."[161] What must be remembered, though, is that this class was not static. By the fourth century, the *curiales* of the cities were mainly drawn from the *decuriones* and *equites* who shared "the mark of an oppressed social stratum" by benefit of the burdens of public service imposed on them.[162] Prosopographical studies show that, outside of Gaul, fourth- and fifth-century bishops were primarily not of the aristocracy,[163] and the fourth-century state officials who are said to have come from among the same class as the bishops were of the educated middle class. Nor were most of those middle-class officials Christian, even under Christian emperors. Paul Petit has determined that between 354 and 393, five of the twelve *Comites Orientis* were known to be Christian, and among ranking officials in the eastern provinces of the eastern diocese (which included Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Euphratensis, Arabia, Egypt, and Sicily), ten of the twelve known officials under the Christian emperor Valentinian I (364-375) were pagan. As late as 390 under Valentinian

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[160] Frank Gilliard lists a number of scholars who have identified many Late Antique bishops as being of the "senatorial" class despite little evidence for that beyond the careers of a few notables like Ambrose and Sidonius Apollinaris; "Senatorial Bishops in the Fourth Century," *The Harvard Theological Review* 77, no. 2 (April 1984): 153 n. 1.

[161] Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity*, 76.

[162] Alföldy, *The Social History of Rome*, 177–178.

[163] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 219.

II (375-392), three of the seven known officials were pagan and two Christian.[164]

Imperial law also indicates that civic officials and Christian clergy did not use the same levers of power for the same ends. Wolf Liebeschuetz does see Constantine's legislation affecting Christianity as having in time "encouraged the formal organization of the civic churches into an imperial church whose structure of provinces and diocese paralleled the structure of the empire" and which made the urban bishop "an official of a second Empire-wide administration, with comparable access to the head of state."[165] However, Claudia Rapp convincingly points out that, at the time of their promulgation, these laws simply placed the Christian church on the same legal level as the *collegia* and the synagogues by allowing Christian clergy to be tried in ecclesiastical rather than civil courts and by extending to clergy the exemption from *munera* that was common among all religious leaders. She asserts that, in fact, since these laws addressed the status of *clerici* or *sacerdotes*, not *episcopi* or any of the other ecclesiastical ranks already established by the church orders, they demonstrate that "well into the fifth century, it is not clear whether these laws singled out the bishops, or whether they were addressed to bishops, priests, and deacons alike."[166] Later legislation did regulate ecclesiastic matters, but while public behavior such as advocating heresy could be forbidden and punished under the law as seditious, private behavior forbidden by Christianity, such as fornication

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[164] Paul Petit, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au 4e siècle après J.-C* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1955), 202.

[165] Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, 139.

[166] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 238.

and divorce, was not punished but merely regulated.[167] The authority of bishops did increase over time, especially as urban bishops adopted the roles of *judex* and arbiter and by doing so gained imperial jurisdictional authority within his diocese over Christians and non-Christians alike. However, even within that jurisdiction the bishop's approach offered mediation and reconciliation consistent both with Christian doctrine and the pastoral role.[168] Rapp stresses that these "episcopal tasks that were regulated by imperial law—notarizing manumission, sitting in judgment, providing asylum—have their origin in the pastoral care and spiritual leadership inherent in the idea of the episcopate."[169] For some time after Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, then, bishops, whatever their social status, remained primarily religious leaders under imperial law, and when they were allowed to perform civic duties it was with their religious ones in mind.

Moreover, although a philosophical education or *paideia* may well have been a marker of higher status (or pretense to status) among those who served the *civitas* and the *ecclesia* alike, neither education nor status was required of bishops and those things did not guarantee a man ecclesiastical office. A bishop's level of education was "determined by his social status prior to his accession to the episcopate" rather than being a prerequisite for his pastoral role.[170] Without question, some bishops seem to have obtained their sees in response to their social standing and their secular rather than

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[167] Sabine MacCormack, "Sin, Citizenship, and the Salvation of Souls: The Impact of Christian Priorities on Late-Roman and Post-Roman Society," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39, no. 4 (October 1997): 651–652.

[168] Jill Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 210–211.

[169] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 239.

[170] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 181–182.

religious accomplishments; after all, Ambrose in Milan (elected in 374) and Nectarius in Constantinople (381), both men of elite family, each ascended directly from the baptismal font to the bishop's throne. However, they remain exceptions among fourth-century bishops,[171] and even in later centuries aristocrats did not obtain episcopal office only by benefit of their status, education, and patronage.[172] Rapp instead identifies two clear paths from the *curiales* to the episcopate in Late Antiquity: one, a long period of higher education leading to positions in civil service and finally, usually late in life, a bishopric; and the other, a period of early education leading to withdrawal from the world and dedication to ascetic/monastic practice. Then, after being ordained to the priesthood "in large part as a confirmation of the credentials they had acquired through their monastic experience," they were elected to the episcopate, often after "many years in the rank and file of the clergy, as deacons and priests."[173] This ladder of corporate advancement represents the Church's development from the late fourth through the sixth centuries of a clerical *cursus* that paralleled but did not mimic the Roman civic one. By the time of Gregory the Great, that *cursus* required a candidate for bishop to have been previously ordained into a clerical office, either deacon or monk, that required an ascetic commitment—effectively, an office requiring celibacy.[174] While bishops and other clerics certainly had some amount of social privilege, and while bishops could also wield

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[171] Gilliard, "Senatorial Bishops in the Fourth Century," 175.

[172] Gaul is to some extent an exception, reflecting social and political developments there; see Simon Coates, "Venantius Fortunatus and the Image of Episcopal Authority in Late Antique and Early Merovingian Gaul," *The English Historical Review* 115, no. 464 (November 1, 2000): 1109–1137.

[173] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 186–187.

[174] Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie*, 368–370.

considerable social and political authority within their dioceses, the church itself seemed to focus on what was gained by ordination rather than by education or social standing as the basis of pastoral authority.

Church orders and other writings about their roles make clear that bishops were expected to take Christ's commanding of Peter to "feed my lambs" (John 21:15-17) literally, so that care of the poor was part of their pastoral mandate rather than a social expectation arising from the elite background some bishops shared. Care for and patronage of the poor was not only within the domain of churchmen, though, but also was practiced by those whose spiritual authority did not derive from clerical office. Some of these were the "holy men" of Egypt and the Roman East—men like Anthony of Egypt (*c.*251–356) and Symeon Stylites (*c.*390–495) who served as patrons and protectors of the poor around them because of their own connection to emperors and great landowners, as Brown has explored.[175] But while such religious figures certainly participated in social patronage, Brown himself has admitted that his early work exaggerated that patronage as the result of his failing to account for how much the posthumous *vitae* of these men stressed their dispensing of divine favor through miracles, prophecy, and other charismatic displays while minimizing how much material support they received in turn for such displays.[176] Moreover, while their influence looms large in the literature, it may have been more transient in fact; by the beginning of the fifth century in Egypt, for example, "twelve priests and five deacons," rather than a single charismatic holy man,

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[175] Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," 63.

[176] Peter Brown, *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 63.

came "out of the woodwork to impose a settlement on the distribution of water" in one village, an event that represents the inauguration of new clerical and lay oligarchies "grouped around the Christian church of each village" that were firmly established by the end of the fifth century.[177] Of course, the literary influence of saints and holy men lasted for centuries, with their asceticism shaping the monastic practices planted throughout the Christian world east and west—including, notably, in Ireland and England—and their *vitae* providing models for how to describe the manifestation of divine power in the world. Still, that power would for the most part be wielded by those within the church's hierarchy of clerical office.

There are exceptions, and one group of people that wielded pastoral authority in Late Antiquity *does* seem to have acquired religious authority based in part on their secular status and position. They are the owners of rural estates who promoted Christianity as a practice that they and not bishops controlled within their domain. Many places of Christian worship remained in private hands throughout Late Antiquity, and though dedicated church buildings had been constructed since the mid-third century, most churches by the time of Constantine still met in what were private residences that largely continued to be maintained and supported by individuals and families. Constantine's 313 Edict of Milan acknowledged both privately and corporately held churches and places of assembly and to some extent provided an example of how churches could be founded in both ways, but even during his reign "domestic residence continued to be converted into *domus ecclesiae* by private patrons as well as ecclesiastical prelates" while "family

[177] Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, 1971-1997," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 3 (1998): 272.

chapels slowly evolved into oratories which were still privately owned but open for public worship on the model of the diocesan *katholikai ekklesiai* (churches funded by bishops in their dioceses)."[178] Kimberly Bowes' study of these private patrons of Christian institutions leads her to assert that "house- and estate-based churches and shrines helped shape the early Christian topographies of both city and countryside in East and West," with domestic worship spaces, new forms of piety, and asceticism all flourishing under private tutelage as "the newly Christian elite brought with them a tradition of religious independence and a habit of integrating their private ritual into their civic lives."[179] Christian private domestic rituals were established early in the patristic period (Tertullian and Origen both recommended dedicating a room in the home for "private prayer"),[180] and the dedication of an area in the Roman home to Christian religious ritual and display would certainly have made sense to Romans used to *lararia*. Moreover, private shrines appear to have survived during the fourth century even in association with otherwise public worship spaces. A shrine room in the large fourth-century domestic complex on the Caelian Hill in Rome (now beneath the Church of Ss Giovanni e Paolo) that was once thought to form part of a house church was constructed by cutting into the stairway leading up from the residence on the first floor to the upper-story church hall. The resulting mezzanine-level landing contains a small area decorated with frescoes depicting martyrdom, worshiping figures with upraised hands that are known as *orantes*, and images of family donors, and this area (which only slightly more

[178] John Philip Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 24 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1987), 11–12.

[179] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 218.

[180] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 52–53.

than one meter square) has a niche on its back wall that likely held a reliquary. By its position and its decoration, this shrine was more likely to have been part of the residence below than the church above, though both shrine and church likely benefited from the patronage of the urban building's owner.[181]

Though home churches were usually urban phenomena, many of the private churches of the fourth and fifth centuries that Bowes explores were primarily rural. She says that these rural *villae* not only embodied the well-established idea of the Roman residence as "home, family, economic unit, and dependency network," but also "occupied a particular place in the Roman mind" as a location where ideas about "community and self" were established.[182] Such ideas had long been tied to religious belief and practice, as Cato's rituals for clearing and planting and the erection of shrines and temples to mark the boundaries of land holdings demonstrate. Those who became Christian still needed to establish their individual, family, and community identities in the social and religious context of the rural Roman world, and they did that by adopting and adapting Christian symbols and practices. Just as placing the *lararium* in line with the front door of residences at Ostia and the open view to passers-by of the statues gracing the *schola* at other sites served to advertise their owners' and patrons' religious commitment and social status, Christian owners of *villae* erected shrines and other religious structures within what Bowes characterizes as a "rural environment of heightened economic production

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[181] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 88–89. Though Bowes is surely right that the graves found below this "shrine" are medieval insertions given the intramural location of the residence, the presence of privately held relics certainly suggests the private family control of the graves or relics of those venerated as saints that Peter Brown explores in *The Cult of the Saints*.

[182] Kimberly Bowes, "'Christianization' and the Rural Home," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 147.

and elite self-display."[183] Such decorations as the six hundred foot square fourth-century Hinton St Mary mosaic, with its large roundel with a figure that likely depicts Christ wearing a bishop's pallium in front of a Chi-Rho symbol in one room and Bellerophon slaying Chimaera in the other,[184] represents this kind of adaptation and display, and other sites demonstrate even more explicitly how rural elites could value both Christianity and earlier forms of religious veneration. The "deep room" in the Roman *villa* at Lullingstone in southeastern England, which was occupied from the first through the fourth centuries, held portrait busts with containers for votive offerings, and libations continued to be made in that room throughout the life of the building even after the space directly above it was converted to a Christian shrine.[185] Similarly, throughout the western empire in the fourth and fifth centuries family mausolea that had formed a traditional part of the *villa* were adapted or rebuilt to a size and configuration that would permit Christian liturgical use while still being associated with the veneration of the family's dead. In the later fifth through the seventh centuries, in fact, *all* of these mausolea were converted to churches.[186]

Roman private locations with public Christian significance were not limited to *villae* or even to ownership by the secular elite; according to Eusebius (c.263–339), Christian cemeteries owned by bishops were "seized by the imperial government in

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[183] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 129.

[184] British Museum Registration 1965,0409.1; David S Neal and Stephen R Cosh, *Roman Mosaics of Britain* (London: Illuminata Publishers for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 2002), 2: item 172.1.

[185] Geoffrey Meates, *The Roman Villa at Lullingstone, Kent* (Maidstone: Kent Archaeological Society, 1979), 18.

[186] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 135–142.

Valerian's persecution of 257–260 and restored by his son and successor Gallienus (260–268)."[187] Clearly, though, some Christians continued to support private religious sites even after the establishment of an officially diocesan ecclesiastical structure, and Roman acceptance of the validity of both "public" and "private" religion as we described those in the context of *collegia* should be kept in mind when considering these sites. Like the *collegia*, private shrines and churches were also recognized and regulated in Roman law. Under Theodosius's code, extramural "customary" churches were to be preserved orthodox by the estate owners who controlled them, and those owners were to draw those churches' clergy from the estate's own workers.[188]

Though urban bishops often clashed with rural church patrons, they appear frequently to have relied on them as well. Bowes contends that, contrary to the image presented by those notable Roman bishops whose writings so influenced the Church's image of and approach to pastoral authority for centuries afterward, "the average late-antique bishop was a rather anemic creature with an uncertain job description and more authority than actual power" as demonstrated by the "limited financial resources, uncooperative elites and imperial bureaucrats, and … systemic inability to translate theological dictates into real-world practice" that plagued even Augustine and Ambrose.[189] This corrective does not appear to be overstated, at least not concerning the weakness of the late-antique bishop's influence on the rural population. In the late fourth

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[187] Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, 9.

[188] e.g. *Imperatoris Theodosiani codex* 16.2.3, 16.5.21, 16.5.34 etc.; Roland Delmaire, ed., *Les Lois Religieuses des empereurs Romains de Constantin à Théodose II (312 - 438)*, trans. Jean Rougé (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2005), I: 389, 392, 398.

[189] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 4.

and early fifth centuries, Maximus of Turin preached that "the *domini* [estate lords] had the duty to exercise control, because they would be held entirely responsible for idolatric practices on their estates,"[190] while privately held *villae* churches in Gaul so outnumbered those in *vici* that councils, like that at Orléans in 511, eventually banned the celebration of major liturgical festivals at *villae* churches, whose clergy were under the patronage of the estate's owner, in favor of the *vicus* church that would have a full contingent of clergy in compliance with ecclesiastical mandate and orthodox church structure.[191] Councils also forbade estate managers from entering the clergy, possibly because such men might remain too closely tied to their lord and his estate to be effectively subjected to episcopal control.[192] In the end, urban bishops succeeded in asserting their authority over private estate churches by characterizing those churches as dangerous places that harbored heretics,[193] and they promoted sixth-century edicts that banned baptism at estate churches while requiring that rite to be performed at the newly established parish churches that were more firmly within the episcopal orbit.[194]

Fourth- and fifth-century rural estate owners, then, engaged in a complex relationship with episcopal Christianity that involved social and pastoral authority, status, and Roman family and aristocratic tradition. Bowes summarizes the social basis for this

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[190] Rita Lizzi, "Ambrose's Contemporaries and the Christianization of Northern Italy," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 80 (1990): 167–168.

[191] C. E. Stancliffe, "From Town to Country: The Christianisation of the Touraine 370–600," in *The Church in Town and Countryside: Papers Read at the Seventeenth Summer Meeting and the Eighteenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 50–51.

[192] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 168–169.

[193] Bowes, "'Christianization' and the Rural Home," 165.

[194] Bowes, "'Christianization' and the Rural Home," 159.

relationship by saying that "for the pagan aristocrat of the high empire, the estate temple was simply the cultic manifestation of seigniorial power, and its worshiping community of both family and dependents echoed the social hierarchy of the *domus*."[195] Christianity seems to have fit as well with these aristocrats' Roman ideas of social and religoius control as household rites at the *lararium* and Cato's sacrifices to Father Mars had, for not only did these aristocrats act as leaders of rural church communities, but their peers and dependents accepted that they should do so. Insofar as they were responsible for the Christian behavior of those dependent on them, these *domini* also served a pastoral function. Even though this particular model of pastoral relationship and rural aristocratic community was brought to heel by the combination of episcopal and secular control, further exploration of what kind of Christian institutions could serve the extramural areas where most people lived can be seen both in the rural monasteries whose beginnings overlap its decline and, especially in regards to England, in aristocratically sponsored minsters, monasteries, and churches. Neither Bishop Wilfrid of York's (*c.*633–*c.*709) royally sponsored monastery nor the *Eigenkirche* of the Carolingian Empire may descend directly from late-antique private estate churches, but they nevertheless raise the same questions about the relationships among public and private institutions, social status, and pastoral authority.

The Shepherds within the Roman World

Bowes drives the nail true when she condemns the "tacit teleology" of studies of Late Antique religions and society that treat Christianization as a "swap sale [in which]

[195] Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values*, 7.

the senator exchanged his consular toga for a bishop's miter," the "civic bureaucracy was charged with building churches and hostels instead of amphitheaters and baths," and "rural elites like Ausonius replaced temple with church and seasonal fertility rituals with saints' feasts."[196] Starting from an understanding of the relationship between religion and culture that looks at social needs, structural correspondences, and the communication of significance rather, we have seen that, while the *familia*, the synagogue, the philosophical school, and the *collegium* all influence early Christian social community,[197] it was Christianity's emphasis on Old and New Testament scriptures and on Jewish and early Christian understandings of prophetic and pastoral authority that shaped that community and its institutions.

This does not mean that emperors and the imperial administration thought of the bishops' power and the church's institutions as something divorced from social life and political administration. Such thinking would have represented a change far more radical than anything Christianity imposed on the Roman world; indeed, both the most fanatical bishop and the most unrepentant pagan would have agreed that to remove the world from the reach of religion would represent nothing short of blasphemy. As Guy Stroumsa has said, especially during the reign of Justinian (527–565), emperors decided "to 'establish' religion, that is to say, to make orthodox Christianity (the version accepted by the emperor) the focal center of authority," and by doing so they "succeeded in giving Christianity the status and state role that had belonged to civic religion in pagan Rome … with the difference that Christianity, even as a state religion, remained a religion founded

[196] Bowes, "'Christianization' and the Rural Home," 152.

[197] Verstegen, "Gemeinschaftserlebnis in Ritual und Raum," 144.

on personal decision, repentance, and faith—hence, founded on the idea of religious community."[198] Even then, the bishops that led that universal community generally did not "replace" Roman officials. They instead rose within their own milieu to a level status and authority that was perceived to be legitimate and equivalent and from which they participated in civil administration. Such participation was not always easy, and bishops were often censured for using aristocratic means such as patronage and displays of wealth and status for ecclesiastical ends.[199] To refuse to work within the structures of Roman society, though, would have rendered a bishop powerless to fulfill the mandates of his office: to feed the hungry, comfort the afflicted, defend the poor, and teach, correct, and protect his flock.

Bishops and other clergy in the late Roman Empire—and, in the main, in the kingdoms that arose from the Empire in the West as well—neither replaced nor were absorbed into the civic administration. Instead, "they stood alongside the small body of leading citizens that increasingly monopolized leadership in civic matters,"[200] leading by benefit of the structures of authority that had developed within the church and that were accepted by the society around them. When those pastors moved to the new fields of Ireland and England, they took those ideas of their own authority and its basis and that experience of adaptation and change with them.

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[198] Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice*, 92–93.

[199] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 219.

[200] Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, 289.

CHAPTER 4: CLAIMING NEW FIELDS: PASTORS, SETTLEMENTS AND COMMUNITY IN EARLY MEDIEVAL NORTHWESTERN EUROPE

Gaining an understanding of the figurative "fields" of the Christian pastoral mission can be aided by considering actual ones. Since agriculture began, farms have adapted in response to the physical and human geography around them. One of the adaptations frequently found in Scandinavian farms of the Middle Ages was the shieling or "summer farm." This was typically a livestock corral and shelter for herders built near the summer grazing grounds that were located at higher elevations or further inland than the main farms they served.[1] Shielings are found throughout the North Sea region from before the Viking period, including in Iceland.[2] Though these sites primarily served agricultural purposes, they served social and political purposes as well. One such site was at Pálstóftir in the east central highlands of Iceland, a shieling that is dated to between 940–1070 C.E. and is the only one known from Iceland's first centuries of settlement. Pálstóftir's location, which is *c.*15–20 km from its closest possible "home farm" rather than the *c.*2–3 km typical of shielings elsewhere, and its limited period of occupation suggest that, rather than primarily supporting livestock production, it instead may have been built to make "a political statement about land claiming" through the seasonal occupation of a "planted outpost."[3] Pálstóftir served the agricultural needs of farms, shepherds, and flocks, but both its location and the context of the Icelandic settlement and *landnám* (ON "land-

[1] Guðrún Sveinbjarnardóttir, "Shielings in Iceland: An Archaeological and Historical Survey," *Acta Archaeologica* vol. 61, (1990): 74.

[2] Sveinbjarnardóttir, "Shielings," 74–5; Ditlev L. Dall Mahler, "Argisbrekka: New Evidence of Shielings in the Faroe Islands," *Acta Archaeologica* vol. 61 (1990): 68.

[3] Gavin Lucas, "Pálstóftir: A Viking Age Shieling in Iceland," *Norwegian Archaeological Review* vol. 41, no. 1 (2008): 95–99 and n. 2.

claiming") suggest that its primary significance was social.

Obviously, to draw a literal connection between a Christian pastor's and a pastoral herdsman's work would be absurd, but the parallel is suggestive of the processes and concerns underlying the creation of churches and other ecclesiastical foundations in England and elsewhere in Northwestern Europe in the early Middle Ages. Like the summer farm at Pálstóftir, the ecclesiastical places that missionaries and clergy founded in England were created in response not only to religious and pastoral but also to social and political forces. As sacred places and as settlements that managed and depended on the agricultural and artisanal labor of their secular tenants, ecclesiastical foundations where clergy lived in community in particular were rapidly established throughout England in part as a way to claim the English landscape for Christianity.[4] While Richard Morris warns that any statement of how many churches and monastic sites were founded before the thirteenth century represents at best "an attempt to conjecture quantitative dimensions for an unrecorded process,"[5] he still finds enough evidence to document that approximately fifty communal religious houses were created in England before 700, though better than a third of those would be gone—typically, "destroyed by Danes"—by

[4] It is hard to select from among the various terms applied to the largest of the British Isles and the people and polities found there from antiquity through the early Middle Ages without provoking confusion. In terms of this discussion, *Britain* is the name of the island, and the *British Isles* refers to the grouping of Britain, Ireland, and the smaller islands that are part of this Insular group. Britain during the Roman period is referred to as *Roman Britain* or *Britannia*. *British* refers not only to the things and people of the island but also specifically to those living in northern and western Britain as opposed to the *English* or the *Anglo-Saxons* who lived in *England* in the eastern part of the island. The language spoken by the English is most frequently referred to as *Old English* to avoid confusion with modern English. Also, *Gaul* is used to indicate the area of continental Europe that formed to the Roman province even after Roman control ended in the mid-fifth century.

[5] Richard Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London: J.M. Dent, 1989), 166.

the later part of the ninth century.[6] Moreover, because the English patrons and builders of these minsters and monasteries and of other English ecclesiastical sites had definite ideas about the significance of particular features and locations in the landscape, where they chose to build churches and monasteries reflects not only their involvement with the economics of settlement and of ecclesiastical support but also their engagement with the Anglo-Saxon, the Roman, and even the pre-Roman history of Britain.

Looking at the location and the material remains of these significant religious places is important for understanding how Christian pastors interacted with English society because these places are the most prominent surviving expression of the first two hundred years of English Christianity. Morris estimates, on the basis of place-names, archaeological remains, and documentary evidence, that there were around 800 ecclesiastical foundations in England by the middle of the ninth century;[7] conversely, Helmet Gneuss lists not quite 190 extant manuscripts or fragments used or produced in England for the same period.[8] Churches and monasteries were places that could supply and provision the pastors who supported the establishment of Christianity in England, and they were locations for interaction between the clergy and those English lay men and woman who either were the patrons of these new religious foundations or who were dependent on them as clients and tenants. The next chapter will examine how manuscripts were created and used in England during these centuries to support pastoral

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[6] According to the data published by David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972).

[7] Morris, 162.

[8] Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001). See appendix A (XXX) for a table listing these manuscripts.

care, but given how much effort was expended on building churches and monasteries in the first centuries after Augustine landed at Thanet and how necessary they seem to have been for the progress of Christianity in the early years of conversion and Christianization, these places warrant separate consideration.

How and to what extent Christian Roman Britain became pagan Anglo-Saxon England in the fifth and sixth centuries and how the "Celtic" Church of western Britain and Ireland and its approach to ecclesiastical organization and authority may have differed from the Roman one—and for that matter, what *any* of these distinctions may have meant in the early Middle Ages—are only a few of the questions raised by the exploration of how pastors in England effected conversion and Christianization in the seventh and eighth centuries. We have seen that as the role of Christian pastor had developed in the Eastern and Mediterranean Roman worlds, the pastor's authority was primarily religious even when it functioned within Roman legal and social structures. We have also identified those structures as ones whose development and expression were tied closely to the structures of urban social and political power on the one hand and to the equally hierarchical society of the rural *villae* on the other. Understanding how pastors who came from those backgrounds could effectively enter into Northwestern European cultures and wield pastoral authority and how they might, as a consequence, change those cultures and maybe even be changed by them depends on understanding the new cultural fields in which pastors found themselves and what they did there.

The first step in building this understanding is deciding where to look. There is simply not enough surviving textual evidence from which to produce a conventional narrative of the social and political history of sub-Roman Britain before the advent of the

Augustinian mission.[9] While Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* tells a story of the progress of Christianity in England, to assume that his openly didactic work describes how the whole of English society became Christian would be to ignore decades of scholarship about Bede and about religion and society as well. Moreover, looking at England in isolation is not enough. Even if some modern scholars have characterized the peoples who came to Britain from the continent in the fifth century and who are conventionally if not altogether accurately known as the Anglo-Saxons as the least Romanized and "most uncouth" of those who subsumed the western Roman Empire in late antiquity,[10] such characterizations in fact fail to consider substantial evidence for communication and influence among all the peoples of northwestern Europe in this period. Widening the scope of this exploration to encompass a broader northwestern European context that includes Ireland, the British areas of northern and western Britain, and northwestern Europe allows us to look at a range of "new fields" of Christianity in the fourth through the sixth centuries and to investigate a number of related issues: how the ecclesiastical development of Christianity in Ireland helped shape Christian institutions among the British and the English alike; how the religious, social, and political concerns of the pagan Anglo-Saxons are revealed by how and where they buried their dead; and how Roman influences, both those transmitted by clergy and those already known to the

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[9] I became aware of Robin Fleming's *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise 400 to 1070* (London: Penguin 2010) too late to incorporate her revision of the long-established Gildas- and Bede-derived narrative, a revision she makes by considering what archaeological evidence for the fifth and sixth centuries reveals about sub-Roman England. Fleming's work appears to be detailed and substantial, and I look forward to assessing how she handles similar objections to these about the interpretation of archaeological sources in the context of historial research.

[10] Richard Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe: From Paganism to Christianity 371-1386 AD* (London: Fontana Press, 1998), 108.

Anglo-Saxon English themselves, shaped the development of the institutions of the church in England.

Considering this northwestern European context for the critical interpretation of material evidence makes it possible to develop an image of English social and religious history during the sixth through the eighth centuries that both supplements and challenges that provided by the narrative sources. Still, the evidence for this period is primarily archaeological, and unsurprisingly attempting to use it to describe how churches, monasteries, and similar ecclesiastical places supported pastoral care requires grappling with the ambiguity and contested interpretations that arise from it. The archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England has changed considerably in the past few decades, though, and it certainly encompasses far more than attempts to arrange artifacts on a historically derived timeline according to different typologies.[11] Because this chapter primarily employs archaeological evidence and interpretations to support an historical interpretation of the social and religious contexts in which pastors in England successfully established ecclesiastical institutions to support their efforts of conversion, instruction, and correction, it is necessary to begin by considering how archaeology collects and interprets evidence for those contexts.

From the Ground Up: The Challenges of Archaeological Evidence and Interpretation

Most historians of Anglo-Saxon England have attempted at some point to account for the period between the first half of the fifth century and the end of the sixth that is

[11] The history of early Anglo-Saxon archaeology by C. J. Arnold in *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1997), 1–18 remains the best overview from the nineteenth through the twentieth centuries even though it predates new methods such as the developments in genetics and bioinformatics discussed below.

known as "sub-Roman Britain." The fascination of this period is undeniable, for Roman Britain as we know it at the end of the fourth century, with its urban centers, elaborate *villae*, and still-active Roman ecclesiastical, administrative, and military organizations employing Latin as their spoken and written languages, appears to have changed over a century and a half into a place where a largely English-speaking and almost wholly rural population was ruled by a number of peripatetic Germanic kings and strongmen. So much changed, in fact, that for many years the wholesale migration of Germanic peoples to Britain and their replacement of the original population was considered the only explanation that could account for it. Work on this question over the past century has led most scholars to discard that explanation in favor of considering a number of events and mechanisms for social change, and as a result most now explain the Anglo-Saxon "conquest" of Roman Britain and the creation of England as a combination of assimilation, acculturation, and change in political allegiance rather than as replacement of the Romano-British population. That this work has not produced a consensus about how important any one of these social and political factors may have been to the overall result underscores the methodological and interpretive challenges that arise from using material evidence to determine how England became England as well as how the Englihs Church established itself in later centuries.[12]

Merely collecting material evidence for this period is the first challenge. Much of the archaeological work in England is performed during brief windows of opportunity—

[12] Michael E. Jones, "Text, Artifact and Genome: The Disputed Nature of the Anglo-Saxon Migration into Britain," in *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 332.

at sites still in use, such as in churchyards and beneath the floors of churches and other buildings undergoing renovation or repair, during work on roads and rail lines, and when sites are being cleared for new construction. Three of the most recent excavations at St Peter's Church in Wearmouth, where time and urban development have "obliterated all above-ground remains" of both Bede's Anglo-Saxon monastery and its later medieval successor, took place first during work on the chancel floor in 1970, then in conjunction with repairs made necessary by the collapse of the vault under the church's north aisle in 1972, and finally in 1986 as part of the construction of a visitors' center.[13] Even intentional destruction can play a large role in archaeological discovery; the late seventh-century "Saxon Arch" set with Roman tiles that was built into the fabric of All Hallows-by-the-Tower Church in London and long hidden under later construction was only revealed in 1940 when the wall that covered it was destroyed (along with the rest of the later medieval church) during the Blitz.[14]

Fortunately, England's national and local governments and NGOs promote archaeological investigation and recovery, often in conjunction with urban and industrial development, and those efforts do lead to new discoveries. From 1997 until 2001, archaeological surveys in advance of the building of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link north of the village of Saltwood in Kent found 217 Anglo-Saxon graves, primarily of the late sixth through the early seventh centuries, distributed among three separate cemeteries in a

[13] Rosemary Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005), I.15.

[14] "All Hallows By the Tower | K Saxon Arch," http://www.ahbtt.org.uk/visiting/virtual-tour/k-saxon-arch/.

location with no previously recorded Anglo-Saxon finds.[15] Even while presenting the wealth of information this development has made available, though, the authors of the excavation report express frustration at the exigencies that interfered with the collection of material data from this site, including the problems associated with performing excavation

> over an extended timescale, in variable conditions, and within the context of a major civil engineering project. Difficulties inherent in identifying and interpreting archaeological remains on the loose natural sandy substrate of the Saltwood plateau were compounded by differing methodological approaches employed by [the Cambridge Archaeological Trust] and [Wessex Archaeology, which managed the site at different times], and by the piecemeal manner in which the site was acquired for excavation. Structural and stratigraphic sequences were not always fully recoverable, and inevitably a number of discontinuities and inconsistencies mar the site record, some of which cannot now be resolved.[16]

What makes that resolution impossible is that this site is now gone. Though their contents and data about them were preserved by four years of archaeological work, these Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were destroyed by the subsequent railway construction that prompted their discovery.

As well as these overall challenges, specific types of material evidence present their own challenges for recovery and interpretation. For example, skeletal remains in fifth- through seventh-century Anglo-Saxon furnished graves have made it possible for Heinrich Härke to determine that weapons burial likely was correlated with both ethnic

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[15] Ian Riddler and Mike Trevarthen, *The Prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel, Kent*, ed. Jacqueline Mckinley, CTRL335 (Oxford: Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture and London and Continental Railways, 2006), 26–27, doi:10.5284/1000230; *North Of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 98C Detailed Archaeological Works, Interim Report* (Canterbury, UK: Canterbury Archaeological Trust and Union Railways (South) Ltd, 1999), 3, doi:10.5284/1000496.

[16] Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, 1–3.

identity and genetic ancestry since those who were determined, on the basis of the studies those remains made possible, to be larger in stature and of Germanic descent were buried with particular weapons assemblages.[17] However, obtaining the skeletal remains needed for such analysis is uncommon. Only one of the sixty-three graves found during one phase of excavation at Saltwood produced enough human remains to make determining the age and sex of the occupant possible, and the summary report from all phases of excavation characterizes the site's overall bone preservation as "poor."[18] Other organic materials have poor rates of survival as well. Härke points out that at medieval Irish sites, "the largely aceramic and organic material culture …where vessels, tools and even decorations (such as hair-pins) were made of wood and leather, and houses were built in a light wickerwork construction [has] left few, if any, traces on the ground."[19] Even at sites where earth and stone works are preserved, organic evidence for what people did within them is often lost.

Loss of organic materials directly affects the investigation of Insular churches, monasteries, and other ecclesiastical buildings of the early Middle Ages because most of these structures were built of wood, not of stone. Brick and stone construction had declined in Britain from the late fourth century on,[20] and even though stone began to be used more widely in the later seventh century, wood remained the ordinary building

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[17] Heinrich Härke, *Angelsächsische Waffengräber des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts* (Köln: Rheinland-Verlag, 1992), 226–227; Mark G Thomas, Michael P.H Stumpf, and Heinrich Härke, "Evidence for an Apartheid-like Social Structure in Early Anglo-Saxon England," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 273, no. 1601 (October 22, 2006): 2654–2655.

[18] *North of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 98C*, 10.

[19] Heinrich Härke, "Invisible Britons, Gallo-Romans and Russians: Perspectives on Culture Change," in *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Nick Higham (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2007), 59.

[20] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 85.

material through at least the end of the tenth century. Sarah Foot points out that the Old English word for "to construct," *(ge)timbran*, derives from *timber*, which denotes not only wood but also building material in general.[21] Rubble foundations and postholes can provide material evidence for the timber-framed buildings, especially if they are examined in a site-wide context in which their relationship with other features aids interpretation. A prime example from the North Sea region is the Iron Age settlement at Uppåkra in southern Sweden, where numerous small finds indicating great wealth, the depositions of weapons (many intentionally destroyed) on raised stone slabs, and the discovery of both animal and human bones bearing evidence of sacrificial activity make it likely that the large and tall timber-framed structure whose foundations have been recovered and with which they are associated was a ritual center.[22] Another example is building D2 in the complex at Yeavering, which not only contains successive deposits of ox skulls suggesting sacrifice and feasting but also, as its postholes and foundation trenches show, was enclosed with another timber building in the early seventh century, a period coinciding with the conversion to Christianity of Edwin of Northumbria (616–632).[23]

That the size of building D2 at Yeavering and its placement in a site thick with remains likely promoted its discovery points up one last problem associated with recovering material evidence. For the Roman, sub-Roman, and Anglo-Saxon periods

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[21] Sarah Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England, c.600–900* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 115; J. R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), s.v. *timber*.

[22] Lars Larsson, "The Iron Age Ritual Building at Uppåkra, Southern Sweden.," *Antiquity* 81, no. 311 (March 2007): 15–19.

[23] Arnold, *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 150.

alike, what is most likely to survive, both in terms of small finds such as metal artifacts, ceramics, glass, and parchment, and as large-scale stone and earth construction, is evidence for the activity of the wealthy and the powerful. Especially for the sub-Roman periods when we have the least amount of textual evidence to guide us, the archaeological record often consists of what is recovered from large, well-furnished, and high-status sites. Such sites, especially those involved with the treatment of the dead and the promotion of power, are ones that Martin Carver wanrs contemporary "political interference is almost guaranteed" to have shaped,[24] so that something like the ship burial at Sutton Hoo may have been symbolically more complex as well as materially more ostentatious than most other furnished graves of the early seventh century. Just as we consider context, perspective, and bias in written sources, we need to do the same for material ones.

Even when material evidence is uncovered from sites, how it is handled and how exploration of the site itself is managed affects what information that can be drawn from it. In some cases, problems arise because excavators focus their work on a particular period of time or area of a site. Katharine Pretty says, for example, that much of the fifth-century post-Roman material recovered from sites in the Severn Basin in southwestern England has been poorly explored and recorded because it was "recovered by chance" in the course of excavations designed to investigate earlier Roman activities.[25] Errors and lack of attention during fieldwork can also irreparably harm the archaeological record, as

[24] Martin Carver, "Agency, Intellect and the Archaeological Agenda," in *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*, ed. Martin Carver, Alex Sanmark, and Sarah Semple (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), 5.

[25] Katharine Bridget Pretty, "The Welsh Border and the Severn and Avon Valleys in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries A.D.: An Archaeological Survey" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1975), 43.

the past century and a half of investigation at Hild's monastery at Whitby unfortunately demonstrates. Rosemary Cramp has said that even though that site is rich in material evidence, producing as much stonework and more metalwork than other major monastic sites like Wearmouth and Jarrow and Lindisfarne, incidents of sloppy investigation that have included starting to dig before a site grid was established and failing to record where artifacts were found have made it now "impossible to stratify finds from the site" and consequently to date them any more exactly than somewhere within a late-seventh through ninth-century range.[26] Recording the stratification, which is the "layering" of assemblages of material produced by multiple periods of deposition, of a site makes it possible to examine changes in occupation and use over time. Richard Rouse says that this stratigraphy is critical for determining if social changes—for example, the change from Romano-British to Anglo-Saxon cultures—was caused by such factors as the migration of peoples, by the indigenous development of cultural artifacts, or by cross-cultural interaction and influence because stratigraphy depends on

> the structure of sites rather than the structure of artifacts, that is, on the co-occurrences of the artifacts within assemblages and on the contextual relationships of the assemblages. Just as the structures of languages enable linguists to set up phylogenies, so also do the structures of sites—especially stratigraphies—make it possible for archeologists to establish chronologies.[27]

Whether the questions being asked are about the spread and influence of Christianity or about the means by which the Anglo-Saxons gained control over much of the British Isle,

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[26] Rosemary Cramp, "A Reconsideration of the Monastic Site of Whitby," in *The Age of Migrating Ideas: Early Medieval Art in Northern Britain and Ireland*, ed. R. Michael Spearman and John Higgitt (Edinburgh: A. Sutton, 1993), 64–68.

[27] Irving Rouse, *Migrations in Prehistory: Inferring Population Movement from Cultural Remains* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 160–161.

such chronologies are critical. The failure to adequately record stratigraphic sequences during excavation, which Rouse says was common in nineteenth-century archaeology[28] and which Cramp indicates happened in the twentieth century at Whitby,[29] has to be taken into account when archaeological data are used to construct an interpretation of the history of sub-Roman and conversion-period England.

Accurate recovery and recording of the surviving material evidence are only the preliminary stages of archaeological investigation, though. The archaeological record does not speak for itself any more than the historical record does; as Richard Morris warns, "there is no intrinsic *archaeological* difference between a church and any other type of site."[30] Grave-goods, sculptures, and the foundations of monastic churches and cells only provide evidence for peoples and their ways of life once they are interpreted, and the process of archaeological interpretation is subject to its own theories, rules, and debates. Treating archaeology simply as a material adjunct to history and failing to credit it as its own discipline invites misunderstanding what it can and cannot offer (and prompts irritation on the part of archaeologists). Taking the most basic of levels of interpretation as an example, some archaeologists argue that their discipline and historical

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[28] Rouse, *Migrations in Prehistory*, 167.

[29] While Cramp does not lay any specific blame for mistakes during excavations when she refers to the previous site reports by C. R. Peers and C. A. Ralegh Radford in 1943 and Philip. A. Rahtz in 1958 ("A Reconsideration of the Monastic Site of Whitby," 64), Rahtz's 1958 report does examine stratigraphic evidence and record each of the cuttings in detail while Peers and Radford's does not; "Whitby 1958," *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 40, no. 160 (1962): 610–611 and between 612–613. Andrew White's report based on the examination of small finds recovered from the site in 1867 and 1876 says that those and other objects now in museums and private hands might have come from unrecorded collection (i.e., pilfering) during the 1920–1928 excavations that were reported by Peers and Radford; "Finds from the Anglian Monastery at Whitby," *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 56 (1984): 33, 37.

[30] Richard Morris, *The Church in British Archaeology*, Research Report 47 (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1983), 1.

disciplines have different views of time. Richard Bradley writes in his reconsideration of the "royal" site at Yeavering that not only are "prehistoric archaeologists …virtually confined to investigating the *longue durée*," but also when archaeologist (and historians) attempt to assess continuity at a site like Yeavering that includes data from both prehistoric and historic periods, they must recognize that these periods use different time scales

> that cannot be compared directly. To quote Levi-Strauss,[31] it is "not only fallacious but contradictory to conceive of the historical process as a continuous development, beginning with prehistory coded in tens or hundreds of millennia, then adopting the scale of millennia when it gets to the fourth or third millennium, and continuing as centuries interlarded, at the pleasure of each author, with slices of annual history within the century …All these dates do not form a series: they are of different species."[32]

Yeavering, which has been identified as both a pagan religious site—David Wilson calls it the only post-Roman "temple" structure known to exist in England[33]—and the Northumbrian royal center during Edwin's reign, provides a particularly good example of how a close examination of the material record of a site over time can nuance (and complicate) how it is understood. Bradley says that Brian Hope-Taylor's interpretation of the significant activity revealed in the complex archaeological record uncovered at this site[34] commits the error Levi-Strauss warns against by failing to account for differences in chronological scales and mistaking proximity of evidence for continuity in activity.

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[31] Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966), 260.

[32] Richard Bradley, "Time Regained: The Creation of Continuity," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 140, no. 1 (January 1, 1987): 2.

[33] David Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Paganism* (London: Routledge, 1992), 176.

[34] Brian Hope-Taylor, *Yeavering: An Anglo-British Centre of Early Northumbria* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1977).

Bradley argues that because Hope-Taylor "seems to be making a direct comparison between the post-Roman sequence of the site, which is calibrated by documentary references, and the sequence of activity between the Neolithic and the Roman 'native' phases, which is measured in centuries and sometimes in millennia,"[35] he not only mistakenly proposes that Yeavering was in continuous use as a religious ritual site throughout these millennia but also fails to recognize what Anglo-Saxon leaders' seventh-century reuse of the site to legitimize their own power through association with the past reveals they knew about that past. Bradley's own analysis is instead that different physical features at Yeavering were emphasized at different periods from the Bronze Age through the post-Roman age. During the Bronze Age, a henge and a still-standing megalith in the southeastern part of the site and a stone circle with attendant burials located in the western part created a SE/NW axis to which features of the site were oriented. Burials near the stone circle ended during the Roman period and an agricultural field system was established using this same axis of orientation, activity that suggests that even though the physical structure of the site remained during Roman times, its ritual use ceased. Bradley then says that in the sub-Roman period, the orientation of the site shifted to a new axis anchored by the western stone circle and by another Bronze Age barrow due east of it that had not been part of the site's original Bronze Age alignment. Bradley says this shift shows that though Anglo-Saxon elites attempted "to renew links with the past through the reuse of the stone circle and the ring ditch," their creation of "a totally new axis for the buildings on the site suggest[s] that this was done with little knowledge

[35] Bradley, "Time Regained," 2.

of how the area had once been used."[36] In effect, those who reused this site understood that its prominent visible features bore significance that was independent of their previous use, a significance that they could "tap" by placing their own structures and graves in a particular orientation that included the features they selected for emphasis.

This explanation of why and how significant features at Yeavering were adapted and reused over time reflects this chapter's approach to the material evidence for the advance of Christianity in the fifth through the eighth centuries in northwestern Europe. This approach reflects Colin Renfrew's assertion that "if people's actions are systematically patterned by their beliefs, the patterning (if not the beliefs as such) can become embodied in the archaeological record."[37] We have already seen an example of this patterning in the mosaics used to hierarchically organize liturgical space in the fourth- and early fifth-century basilical churches at Verona and Zahrani, and the organization of space at Yeavering along the axis formed by prominent features is another example of how patterns can make beliefs visible. If the material remains found for this period in northern Gaul, Ireland, and Britain are collected with attention to patterns of deposition and to the structure of sites over time, and if they are analyzed using methodologies that value interpretation over mere description, then they can reveal evidence for the creation, arrangement, and formal manipulation of symbols that Renfrew identifies as the material remains of cognition.[38] Two ideas related to this approach underlie the examination that follows.

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[36] Bradley, "Time Regained," 7.

[37] Colin Renfrew, *Towards an Archaeology of Mind : An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University of Cambridge on 30 November 1982* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 12.

[38] Renfrew, *Towards an Archaeology of Mind*, 16–23.

The first of these is that the archaeological record contains patterns that may make it possible to identify socially and religiously significant places in the absence of textual documentation. Among the material components and their "behavioural correlates" that Renfrew identifies as common among such places are that they have special, natural associations such as with springs or hilltops or are "special building[s] set apart for sacred functions."[39] These ritual sites may contain evidence of conspicuous public display and the investment of wealth in offerings, structure, and facilities. The architecture or moveable elements of the site may serve as focuses for attention. There may be representations of a cult image of power, and there may be special facilities or portable equipment for ritual (such as benches and altars). Such a site may have evidence of food and drink being offered or burned as well as being consumed. Finally, the area will be richly symbolic, often containing repeated or redundant symbols that relate to the deities worshiped and their myth, and those symbols will often be associated with funeral and passage rites.[40]

Such a list opens up a broad field for understanding sites in Britain and elsewhere where documentary evidence of any religious association is scanty, confused, or absent, but it also raises a cautionary flag in that, except for those final, explicitly symbolic elements, all of these material components could be found at sites whose significance was primarily political rather than religious. Anglo-Saxon halls could be temples or could be chieftains' homes, and the same symbols and significant element might be active in each

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[39] Colin Renfrew, *The Archaeology of Cult: The Sanctuary at Phylakopi* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 18.

[40] Renfrew, *The Archaeology of Cult*, 18–20.

in a number of sophisticated ways.[41] However, by looking for patterns of significant elements, and by keeping in mind Renfrew's caution that what we identify as a society's religious sites or assemblages "should not be explicable in [wholly] secular terms in the light of what we know of that society,"[42] we can still frequently describe how elements of sites conveyed religious associations that were likely explicable to pagans and Christians alike.

The second idea, and one of the main conclusions drawn from the last three decades of archaeological investigation of the British Isles in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, emphasizes that these islands were not isolated but instead embedded in a wider European cultural context. Similar patterns of use of monuments and monument types (decorated pillars, crosses, etc.) from Rome to England to Slavic sites like Perynia and Khodosoviche attest that Europe, and especially Northern Europe, was "a zone of shared ideas, where imitation and rejection [were] part of the dialogue of peer polities"[43] and within which any number of images could be selected and employed when people buried their dead, raised a monument, or marked off and set apart of a site or building for religious ritual. This wealth of symbolic possibilities is not always helpful for those trying to make sense of it, for it can threaten to overwhelm attempts to coherently assess its transmission and use. Howard Williams says regarding burial practices, for example, that because "we can identify so many early medieval death-ways, in terms of the deployment of artifacts, structures, technologies, spaces, monuments and the landscape,

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[41] Carver, "Agency, Intellect and the Archaeological Agenda," 14.

[42] Renfrew, *The Archaeology of Cult*, 20.

[43] Carver, "Agency, Intellect and the Archaeological Agenda," 13.

found in both non-Christian and early Christian communities" that "to distinguish and ascribe 'pagan' and 'Christian' labels to the diverse and contingent set of shifting responses to death and disposal that we find in the early archaeological record" is both difficult and potentially misleading.[44]

Still, within the context of the historical investigation of the types of significant places that Christian pastors and their English flock would have recognized, this varied symbolic repertory encourages exploring all parts of the constructed landscape to see where significance may be found and to identify how it may have been employed. Doing this removes the Anglo-Saxons from the artificial vacuum into which the paucity of written sources has placed them and connects them with the rest of Europe in ways that likely reflect their actual experience of the early medieval world. In his contribution to the *festschrift* celebrating Rosemary Cramp, Martin Carver, himself one of the most active archaeologists of Anglo-Saxon England and director of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, points out that both material and literary sources from the fifth through the eighth centuries reveal that "the Anglo-Saxons knew about the Romans, the Irish, the Picts, the British, the Franks, the Swedes, the Danes, and the Norwegians at both a general and a personal level." Moreover, Carver says that studying the elements and forms they adopted from other cultures reveals that Anglo-Saxons "were not 'eclectic' in the sense of taking motifs at random from some workshop floor or exotic street scene. They were not indiscriminately 'influenced' by things they had seen in the halls of Danish relatives or on trips to Rome. They were creative …selective …[and] choosy," making choices

[44] Howard Williams, "Introduction: Themes in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Death and Burial," in *Early Medieval Mortuary Practices*, ed. Sarah Semple and Howard Williams, Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History 14 (Oxford: University of Oxford School of Archaeology, 2007), 8.

that "must have meaning."[45]

Selecting and employing symbolic elements to create sacred spaces and support religious practice is something that the earliest missionaries to England from the Mediterranean cultural world and those who continued the work of conversion and Christianization after them would have understood. The fundamental difference between the Mediterranean and northwestern Europe regions was not the process by which Christian meaning was constructed but instead the repertory and arrangement of symbols through which that meaning was expressed. We turn first, then to what among those symbols is most visible in the archaeological record: the organization of space within ecclesiastical buildings and sites.

Christian Sites in Northwestern Europe: Churches and Monasteries

By the first half of the fifth century, Northern Gaul and the islands of Britain and Ireland represented the farthest extent of Christianity in the west. Both Britain and Gaul, as part of the Roman Empire, almost surely had Christian churches and bishoprics established in their cities by the end of the fourth century even though its earliest record of episcopal dioceses in Gaul likely dates from the sixth century.[46] In 314, the Council of Arles recorded bishops in attendance from three of the four British provinces: one from *Flavia Caesariensis*, whose seat was likely at York; one from London in *Maxima Caesariensis*; and one from Colchester or (more likely) Lincoln in *Britannia Secunda*. In

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[45] Martin Carver, "Why That? Why There? Why Then? The Politics of Early Medieval Monumentality," in *Image and Power in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Britain: Essays in Honour of Rosemary Cramp*, ed. Helena Hamerow and Arthur MacGregor (Oxford: Oxbow, 2001), 3.

[46] Jill Harries, "Church and State in the *Notitia Galliarum*," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 68 (January 1, 1978): 36.

addition to these, the British priest and deacon mentioned in the council's record may have represented the fourth province of *Britannia Prima*.[47]

Christianity was established in both Britain and Gaul during the second and third centuries, but there is little evidence of how that happened. Congruent with Renfrew's discussion of the elements of cult sites, pagan sites in Gaul were associated with significant *loci* such as high places, groves, and bodies of water. These sites pre-dated Roman control of Gaul and received monumental structures in the Roman style as that control was established. However, many of these structures appear to have been destroyed or abandoned "before or during the first wave of barbarian invasions and the accompanying military anarchy in the mid-to-late third century" at a time when Christianity in Gaul was essentially urban, small in scale, and "topographically invisible."[48] With the revival of order in the fourth century, Roman Christianity was established and Roman imperial power was reestablished "in tandem" in northern Gaul, where Trier became both "a centre of orthodox Catholicism and a magnet for Catholic thinkers" like Athanasius and Hilary of Poitiers (who fled there in exile) and Martin of Tours.[49] It is only at the end of the fourth century that large-scale Christian sites appear in Gaul, though.

Roman Britain's trajectory was much the same during this period, but it never

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[47] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 37–38.

[48] Bailey Young, "Sacred Topography: The Impact of the Funerary Basilica in Late Antique Gaul," in *Society and Culture in Late Antique Gaul: Revisiting the Sources*, ed. Ralph W Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 175–176.

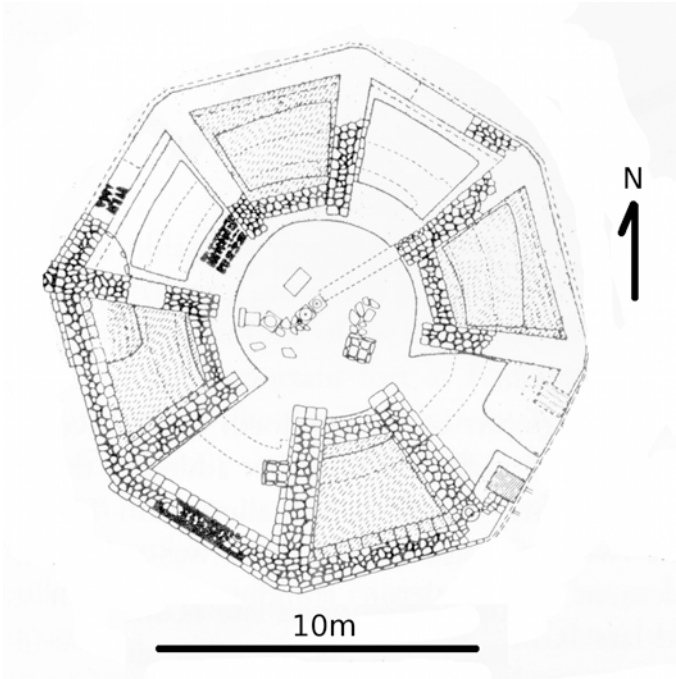
[49] Jonathan Barlow, "The Legitimisation of the Franks: Continuity and Discontinuity in Religious Ideology in Late Antiquity," in *Religion in the Ancient World: New Themes and Approaches*, ed. Matthew Dillon (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1996), 1–2.

received the large-scale Christian ecclesiastical sites that were established in Gaul. Instead, the search for ecclesiastical buildings in Britain has produced "very few urban episcopal churches" and about the same number of structures that may have been churches on rural estates. Kimberly Bowes says that the villa at Lullingstone that was described in the previous chapter "is one of the only positively-identified Christian churches in the whole province, while the …villa at Bradford-on-Avon may have produced the earliest extant monumental baptismal font."[50] Like Gaul, British towns had temples dedicated to the imperial pagan cult, such as the temple of Claudius at Colchester, but after imperial support was transferred to Christianity those temples did not become Christian churches and there is little evidence for Roman religious structures in Britain being remodeled as Christian ones. One seeming exception is the Romano-British octagonal temple of Apollo at Nettleton in Wiltshire, which was altered in the first half of the fourth century by blocking up the entrances to four of the eight niches formed by its interior walls so as to create a cruciform interior space. (See Figure 4.1 on the next page.) However, David Petts says that the interiors of those "blocked" spaces were decorated with plaster in such a way that makes it likely they could still be seen from the center of the building and suggests that, in the case of this structure, its fourth-century cruciform reconstruction may represent practical structural changes (e.g., the building of load-bearing walls) that were needed "to keep the building upright" rather that rebuliding to relect "a change in religious affiliation."[51] While some smaller structures in Britain that have been identified as baptisteries were associated with established burial sites or

[50] Bowes, "'Christianization' and the Rural Home," 156–157.

[51] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 71–73.

Figure 4.1. "Cruciform" temple of Apollo at Nettleton. Adapted from David Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), 73 figure 23.



were likely converted from pagan use, the few securely identified Romano-British churches are all from the late fourth century at the earliest and are all oriented on the east-west axis that is an important marker for Christian ecclesiastical sites.[52] It is because of this that the temple of Claudius at Colchester, which lacked that necessary east-west orientation, is unlikely to have been rebuilt as a church, especially when "a large church has been found elsewhere in the city."[53]

Roman Britain is thought to have established both public Christianity and churches at about the same time as Trier and other Christian centers were founded in Gaul. In both

[52] Morris, *The Church in British Archaeology*, 14–15.

[53] P. J. Drury et al., "The Temple of Claudius at Colchester Reconsidered," *Britannia* 15 (1984): 31–34.

places, though, these early churches were small in scale. Britain does seem to have established a number of Christian-style "managed" cemeteries with graves in east-west alignment and with little display of wealth, but its churches were typically "unimpressive" and notably thin on the ground.[54] Even those areas of eastern Britain that have produced a number of Christian artifacts, including lead tanks that are thought to be related to baptism, are marked by "an almost complete lack of church structures," possibly because the late-fourth century economic decline evident in urban areas encouraged the elites who supported churches to invest in "portable indicators of wealth" such as plate and jewelry rather than in public buildings.[55] The few late fourth- and early fifth-century British buildings that are identifiably "Christian" are found in active *villae* like Lullingstone and Bradford-on-Avon, leading Bowes to identify British Christianity as primarily "a luxury import" nurtured by "a British aristocracy insistent in their physical proclamations of faith, declaring their Christianity alongside testaments of classical learning and *paideia*. Being Christian in Britain seems to have been very much also about being a contemporary Roman, and faith and *Romanitas* seem to have been announced with the same emphatic klaxon" in the elaborate mosaics that combine Christian and classical mythological elements.[56] The only other fourth-century British sites where Christian structures, including baptismal fonts, have been found are in Roman military forts, where those structures were typically located "either the main *principia* or headquarters area of the fort or the north-west corner," locations that suggest they "may

[54] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 163.

[55] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 164–165.

[56] Kimberly Diane Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 178.

be replacing earlier pagan regimental shrines."[57] It is easy to imagine both that such replacement would have been required at the latest by the reign of Theodosius (r. 379–392) and that its significance for the civilian populace may have been short-lived given the withdrawal of the Roman army from Britain in 407.

In all, while documentary evidence indicates that by the end of the fourth century Roman Britain had established the ecclesiastical structures found in the rest of the empire, with urban churches and upwards to twenty bishops whose dioceses "would have covered the towns or cities and immediately-dependent area,"[58] few fourth-century sites in Britain render remains that are unequivocally churches. This likely reflects both the period in which these structures were built and the interrupted development of church sites in Britain. Petts points out that "the elaborate baptisteries and large church complexes" that are usually associated with late antique Christianity in Gaul "are virtually all fifth-century of later," while early fourth-century churches there and throughout most of the Empire can be identified as Christian structures only because the continuity of worship at those sites preserved evidence for Christianity. According to him, "if only the fourth-century levels of these structures were discovered, the debate over their identification would be as intense as that over the possible Romano-British churches."[59] While from the fifth century on most important religious communities in Gaul had at least two churches with attendant buildings, these religious complexes grew up piecemeal at first by appropriating "whatever domestic, public or military buildings

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[57] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 166–167.

[58] Charles Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 198.

[59] Petts, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 84–85.

were available," and only in the sixth and seventh centuries were church complexes in northern Gaul built along or modified to align to a west-east axis.[60] The grouping of multiple churches and other religious structures and the alignment of these groups along the solar axis or to the surviving Roman architectural grid bring to mind the shifting alignment at Yeavering, where significant features were identified and cult buildings were raised in relationship with them. The association of churches with extramural graveyards and the tombs of saints is another reflection of this pattern.[61] Churches were significant within their sites, but in many cases those sites needed time to develop— time that churches in Roman Britain did not have.

The importance of examining churches within the context of their sites is shown in Ireland as well. Unlike in Gaul and Britain, Rome did not establish a military and political presence in Ireland, which during the peak of Roman power in the west was experiencing a centuries-long period of social and economic decline marked by a reduction in farming activity and the production of artifacts.[62] It was not until the fourth and fifth centuries that the Irish population began to increase once again and new settlements to be established, centuries that coincide with the increasing wealth of Britain, the foundation of Irish trading depots such as at Leinster where both Roman goods and evidence of British traders have been found, and, as Ammianus reported in

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[60] John Blair, "Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Topographical Review," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe, Studies in the Early History of Britain (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 244–249.

[61] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 8.

[62] Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 145.

360, the emergence of Irish sea power and piracy in the Irish Sea.[63] Ireland's orientation was eastward toward its nearest neighbor, and its lack of a Roman presence meant the lack of Roman political and social institutions as well. As a consequence, roads, urban centers, and administrative dioceses played no part in organizing Irish society.

Christianity was brought to Ireland in the late fourth or early fifth centuries, though exactly how remains uncertain. The British cleric Patrick has been given credit for Ireland's conversion since the seventh century, but Thomas Charles-Edwards points out that Prosper, Bede, and Columbanus all instead cited Pope Celestine (422–432) as having sent the deacon Palladius to minister to the Irish,[64] likely at their request and to ensure that they remained orthodox in the face of the Pelagian heresy then present in Britain.[65] By whatever means, and it should be remembered that they identity of those who brought Christianity to Roman Britain is equally unknown, Christianity was established in Ireland by the end of the sixth century and likely earlier. Churches there with *dominicum* (Old Irish *domnach*) names almost surely date from the period of the fourth through the sixth centuries because it was only during that period that *dominicum* denoted church buildings.[66] These churches were often the chief ones of the *tuath* or kingdom (a *tuath* being about the size of an Anglo-Saxon "hundred," or roughly ten to fifteen miles across), and by the eighth century, law codes indicated "a fairly dense distribution" of both large *domnach* churches and of smaller churches, shrines, and oratories throughout

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[63] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 155–158.

[64] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 182–183.

[65] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 204–205.

[66] Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe*, 87.

the island, many of which housed saints' relics and were closed to most lay people.[67] The *paruchiae* or area controlled by these churches was often marked with boundary crosses or cross-inscribed pillars as well.[68]

Irish churches were often central to both secular and religious communities. How this relates to popular ideas about "monastic" Christianity in Ireland will be examined shortly, but for now it is important to note that the early Irish laws make clear that a church was tied to particular kindred and that "an individual had a church which was his [and] to which he belonged."[69] Kinship and religion were closely linked in Ireland. Before Christianity was brought to the island, ancestral tombs were often placed near settlements and even could replace settlements, with the postholes of earlier dwellings found underneath tombs at some sites. These tombs, like the cemeteries we shall see later in Anglo-Saxon England, were located to invoke a bond among people, ancestors, and land, being both proximate to and visible from settlements. Lisa Bitel says this close and persistent connection among ideas of kinship, religious significance, and the dead in pagan Ireland is indicated by these ancestral highland tombs being recast as the *sidhe* or fairy mounds of Irish Iron Age legends after their neighboring kin-based settlements

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[67] Thomas Charles-Edwards, "The Pastoral Role of the Church in the Early Irish Laws," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 55–56; Lisa M. Bitel, *Isle of the Saints: Monastic Settlement and Christian Community in Early Ireland* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 71. Richard Sharpe notes that many early Irish churches were "too small to accommodate a congregation" and that some parts of the service (possibly after the Gospel reading according to Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* iii. 17) were performed by the clergy alone; Richard Sharpe, "Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland: Towards a Pastoral Model," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, 1992), 81.

[68] Tomás Ó Carragáin, "A Landscape Converted: Archaeology and Early Church Organisation on Iveragh and Dingle, Ireland," in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300-1300*, ed. M. O. H Carver (Woodbridge, UK: York Medieval Press, 2003), 142–143; Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 64–65.

[69] Charles-Edwards, "The Pastoral Role of the Church in the Early Irish Laws," 76.

moved away from them to the lowlands after the fourth century, so that the severing of the connection between settlements and tombs did not remove the power of the dead but instead turned the conception of them from that of beneficial ancestors to that of dangerous supernatural hill-dwellers.[70] Some ancestral tombs and pre-Christian sites were preserved as Christian ones by the Irish, whose establishment of churches on sites "where their ancestors had worshipped, died, and been buried" and continued use of the pagan monuments "to guard the sites of churches and saints' shrines" underscore the strength of those social and religious bonds.[71]

Kinship and religion also were linked in the otherwise different cultural setting of fifth- and sixth-century Gaul. The Germanic Visigoths and Burgundians who had been settled by the Empire in Gaul in what Herwig Wolfram calls an ultimately failed attempt to use these people's Romanized kings "to preserve the *res publica*" and prevent the dissolution of the Roman state[72] were Christians, but they were Arian and not Catholic Christians. Though Arianism had survived in Milan and in "a few isolated sees" in Illyria and Pannonia after the 381 Council of Constantinople declared the *homoousian* Christology of Nicaea to be the orthodox theology throughout the churches of the Empire, the Germanic *gentes* who had been converted by Arian missionaries prior to their theological defeat "reestablished Arianism on a far different basis in many regions of the

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[70] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 46–48.

[71] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 43.

[72] Herwig Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and its Germanic Peoples*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 103.

West."[73] In Gaul and Hispania throughout the fifth and sixth century, Arianism became a marker of Germanic identity and was used as such in the works of Sidonius Apollinaris, Victor Vitensis, John of Biclaro, and Gregory of Tours.[74] Arian bishops appear to have "lacked the social and political influence of their orthodox (Catholic) contemporaries,"[75] and certainly they lacked the influence of elite bishops like Sidonius who held office in an urban Roman "tradition of family and public service."[76] Ralph Mathisen says that, unlike Gallic Roman bishops who were appointed from within the ecclesiastical organization itself and whose jurisdiction was defined by the Roman urban diocese, the Arian bishops of the late fourth and early fifth centuries traveled with the Germanic *gens* and functioned in many ways like military chaplains. Germanic kings rarely appointed them to urban diocese; instead, these bishops likely served the king directly "as a sacerdotal college, perhaps still called a *presbyterion* as in the days of Ulfia."[77] Gallic cities in Arian areas seem not to have had Arian bishops, or at least not to have considered them necessary for pastoral efforts. In fact, when the Visigothic king Leovigild (572–586) attempted to establish Arian urban bishoprics, he did so at first by trying to "induce [Catholic] Nicene bishops to convert," apparently without success since

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[73] Manlio Simonetti, "Hilary of Poitiers and the Arian Crisis in the West: Polemicists and Heretics," in *Patrology*, ed. Angelo di Berardino, trans. Placid Solari, vol. 4 (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1992), 35–36.

[74] Barlow, "The Legitimisation of the Franks," 10.

[75] J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 160.

[76] Philip Rousseau, "In Search of Sidonius the Bishop," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 25, no. 3 (1976): 360–361.

[77] Ralph W. Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops and the Churches 'in Barbaricis Gentibus' During Late Antiquity," *Speculum* 72, no. 3 (July 1997): 692–693.

by 589 the Visigothic cities of Valencia, Viseo, Tuy, Lugo, Oporto, and Tortosa all had both Arian and Catholic bishops.[78]

Was only the Roman Church, then, with its bishops resident in defined locations that served as *loci* for ecclesiastical and administrative authority, truly "episcopal?" That does not appear to be the case, for in many ways the different methods of pastoral leadership among the Arian Christians of Gaul, the Irish Christians, and the "orthodox" Roman Christians primarily reflect social rather than theological differences. As Ralph Mathisen points out, Leovigild may well have wanted to appoint Arian bishops in cities in order gain influence over urban residents, most of whom were Roman Christians.[79] For the Irish, organization around kin-groups dominated; the *domnach* churches established before 600, which were most often "mother-churches" from which a bishop had regional oversight over subordinate foundations and which likely served as "the primary center of pastoral care within an area," had population group or territorial qualifiers attached to their names.[80] Mathisen again says that the "fundamentally different" ecclesiastical organizations of Arian and Roman churches "were the results of the special needs of the *gentes* involved, not of anything inherent to Arianism per se."[81] Again, social structure often shapes religious structure, and has done so since before the Anglo-Saxons entered Britain.

Mission and Monasticism

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[78] Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 683–685.

[79] Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 685–686.

[80] Sharpe, "Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland," 94.

[81] Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 692.

Another element that shaped Christianization in Ireland and subsequently in England was the establishment of monasteries and other places where Christian clergy lived in common. Though the monasticism that developed in the eastern Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries largely had done so independent of the institutional church, as C. H. Lawrence has pointed out the ascetic and communal practices of monasticism had to be "domesticated and brought under the roof" of that church if it was to survive.[82] By the time monastic houses were established in northern Gaul, Ireland, and the west of Britain, that domestication had been accomplished and monasticism had emerged as a method for creating Christian spaces in the secular, and typically the rural, world. Especially in regions where Roman urban life had declined or (like Ireland) had never been established, late antique and early medieval monasteries became demographic as well as spiritual foci for society. Monks developed networks of social relationships that created kinship-like bonds among the religious elite, that established patronage ties with the clients and tenants of monastic settlements, and that promoted alliances with secular leaders.[83] An additional benefit of cenobitic monasticism that frequently goes unrecognized is that of security; as Bitel points out, to live alone in medieval society represented a risky oddity at a time when living with others was both warmer and safer.[84] Even the "hermitage" cells found in southwestern Ireland that now appear to have been remote from other habitation and therefore are frequently cited as evidence for a peculiarly Irish "asceticism" in truth were part of a network of settlements along a

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[82] C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1994), 17.

[83] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 12–13.

[84] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 79.

coastline that was a prominent sea-borne trade and communication route. These sites seem isolated today "only because they were built on the seacliffs, and the wattled huts of their neighbors have now disappeared"[85]—an example once again of how the survival of evidence shapes subsequent archeological and historical interpretation.

Monastic establishments in the fifth through eighth centuries organized themselves in a number of different ways under a broadly communal rubric. They even went by many names; apart from bishops' households (which were consistently named *sedes episcopales* or *ecclesia*),[86] writers referred to these communities as *oratoria*, *coenobia*, *ecclesia*, and *monasteria*, from which came the Old English term *minster*.[87] Monasteries also frequently furnished priests and bishops to churches and dioceses in the fifth and sixth centuries,[88] with Augustine of Canterbury and Gregory, the pope who mandated his mission, only two of the most famous among them. Monastic foundations in Gaul, Ireland, and Britain demonstrate that monks established their communities in locations that had both natural and spiritual resources and that their founders and residents strove "to reorganize the settled landscape with themselves and their shrines at its center."[89] Because what distinguished "a *monasterium* from a secular household was that its

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[85] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 37.

[86] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 5.

[87] Tim Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c. 650-1200* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2004), 21–22.

[88] Thomas L. Amos, "Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages," in *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and John J. Contreni (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), 167.

[89] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 12–13.

inmates had determined to devote their collective lives to religion"[90] rather than being bound to the community by social ties such as kinship, patronage, or servitude, though, distinguishing secular from religious communities based on the archaeological record can be difficult. Unless material evidence for collective religious life, like a number of sculptured crosses or segregation by gender within cemeteries, is found, a monastery cannot be recognized by its remains alone.

Even though this and the other vagaries of archaeological interpretation can make it hard to identify any one site as a monastery or *minster*, there remains no doubt that monasticism influenced the conversion and Christianization of Ireland and England alike. The extent of their influence and their interaction with lay communities remains heavily contested, though. Foot says in her examination of early Anglo-Saxon monasticism that "all the sources show that communal living was the norm for religious of every grade and status in Anglo-Saxon England of this period,"[91] which would certainly imply that at least some of those who provided pastoral care also lived in religious communities. That cannot be taken as universal, however, for Richard Sharpe warns that in Ireland, "there is no evidence that pastoral care in local communities depended on monks, and the monastic model contains no provision for pastoral care [in] in the laws, in the *Riagail Phátraic* [the eighth-century monastic rule traditionally ascribed to St Patrick]" or elsewhere.[92] Clearly, no blanket statements about what those living in monasteries did or did not do to provide pastoral care will suffice. However, since those in a number of

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[90] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 5.

[91] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 290.

[92] Sharpe, "Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland," 99.

different regions of northwestern Europe saw Christian clerics living in communities near them, describing what those communities looked like and how they interacted with secular ones should illuminate how, where, and to what extent those clerics served a pastoral role.

Gaul likely had less influence on English monastic institutions than did Ireland, being in effect downstream of the foundational impetus of the Irish monk Columbanus (540–615) whose monastery at Iona would be critical to the conversion of the north of England.[93] Still, the monastery Columbanus founded at Luxeuil in Burgundy in the last decades of the sixth century was as much a center and source for monasticism in Frankish and Burgundian areas of Gaul as Iona was for institutions like Lindisfarne in England, and because both Benedict Biscop (*c.*628–690) and Wilfrid of York spent considerable time at Luxeuil (which was on the route to Rome), they very well could have acquired at that house familiarity with as well as copies of the Benedictine Rule that they brought back to England.[94] Moreover, while monasteries in Italy and Gaul before the seventh century seem to have had "very little direct influence on pastoral work," those like Luxeuil that were founded by this Irish missionary effort were much more active in providing pastoral care. In fact, Luxeuil and other Gallic monasteries continued to build and control churches and their monks continued to be ordained as priests even after official efforts began to remove monks from pastoral work during the reign of

[93] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 310.

[94] Patrick Wormald, "Bede and Benedict Biscop," in *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Gerald Bonner (London: S.P.C.K., 1976), 145.

Charlemagne (768–814).[95]

These Irish-created monasteries from which this pastoral and missionary approach sprang were shaped by their experience of their own land. There, monasteries were settlements, places of habitation separated by a wilderness in which tracks and paths led through unoccupied lands, "past tombs and assembly points, and to ritual and regnal sites."[96] Those who founded them also frequently acted as "colonizers of an already settled landscape" by occupying abandoned sites such as early Iron Age ring forts and by encouraging resettlement nearby.[97] Monasteries could build large religious complexes and attract people to live near them even in remote areas. Though the island of Inishmurray lies in Donegal Bay about 7 km from the nearest point of the mainland, the monastery founded there in the sixth century included three churches and numerous cells, three graveyards, and two or three holy wells along with over ninety carved stones, mostly cross-slabs and many with Latin or bilingual inscriptions,[98] within its approximate 40m in diameter enclosing wall.[99] So large a complex must have been supported by many agricultural and craft workers, who may have lived in the group of buildings that was located between the monastery's enclosure at the center of the island and coastline around 100 m to the south and that were still extant on early nineteenth century maps

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[95] Amos, "Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages," 167–168; 172–173.

[96] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 28–29.

[97] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 36–39.

[98] Tomás Ó Carragáin and Jerry O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray: Monks and Pilgrims in an Atlantic Landscape* (Cork: Collins, 2008), 34.

[99] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 8.

(though they have yet to be excavated).[100]

As were most other Irish settlements, Irish monasteries were usually surrounded by earth and stone enclosures, and the central enclosure was critical to a monastery's existence in both physical and symbolic terms. Founders marked the outer boundaries of the central enclosure with "spades, or words of blessing, or both" before laying out the walls of the church and dividing the interior space according to its use, and that boundary remained important to the monastery even when its area of control grew far beyond this sacred *locus*, so that even when monastic sites grew into large settlements monks still insisted that the burgeoning secular population stay out of the sacred central areas.[101]

Many monastic communities grew to be among the largest settlements of early medieval Ireland, with some having stone and earth enclosure walls ranging from 140m to over 400m in diameter,[102] but they were not the wealthiest ones. In fact, the wealthiest settlements in the seventh and eighth centuries were usually the smallest in size (29m and less in diameter), and nearly half of the early medieval Irish monastic settlements whose economic production Michelle Comber has analyzed fell within the lowest three ranks of economic activity even though those sites were mid-sized or larger.[103] Comber's assessment of economic activity, though, is almost entirely based on the examination of activities that support subsistence, such as cultivation, animal husbandry, and craft

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[100] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 347–348.

[101] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 80–81.

[102] Leo Swan, "Enclosed Ecclesiastical Sites and their Relevance to Settlement Patterns of the First Millennium A.D.," in *Landscape Archaeology in Ireland*, ed. Terence Reeves-Smyth and Fred Hamond, BAR British Series 116 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1983), 274.

[103] Michelle Comber, *The Economy of the Ringfort and Contemporary Settlement in Early Medieval Ireland*, BAR International Series 1773 (Oxford: John and Erica Hedges Ltd, 2008), 187–197 and tables 51–53.

production.[104] Subsistence was as necessary for a monastery as it was for any other type of settlement, but beyond this monasteries were ecclesiastical centers dedicated to activities such as prayer, the performance of ritual, the reproduction and preservation of texts, and pastoral care. It was primarily for these and not for economic reasons that they were granted land and given continued support by the landholding elites of Ireland and Britain. While Comber does say that too few of these monastic sites have been fully explored to make possible any "valid interpretations of size data," she allows that their being among the largest settlements in size while being middling in the production of wealth may reflect their participation in "an exclusively ecclesiastical economic 'order' not directly comparable to secular settlements" rather than just "the relative lack of excavated examples."[105] The material remains of this specialized "religious economy" help make it possible to identify a settlement as monastic.

These economic connections among monasteries underscore that even though early medieval Ireland was remote, it was not isolated. During the fifth and sixth centuries when both Christianity and monasteries were being established there, older tribal groups were being replaced by "new powerful dynastic families," and the expansion of these family's power together with increased traffic across the Irish Sea led to Irish settlement in western Britain and Wales.[106] These fifth- and sixth-century Irish settlements in the still-Romanized west of Britain and the increased trade in goods (and, as Patrick's *vita*

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[104] Comber, *The Economy of the Ringfort and Contemporary Settlement in Early Medieval Ireland*, 187.

[105] Comber, *The Economy of the Ringfort and Contemporary Settlement in Early Medieval Ireland*, 197–198, table 56; 223.

[106] Comber, *The Economy of the Ringfort and Contemporary Settlement in Early Medieval Ireland*, 9–10; Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 161.

suggests, in British slaves) from Britain to Ireland likely led to closer ties that encouraged the conversion of Ireland to Christianity as it increased agriculture, wealth, and competition among elites there.[107] Those ties led to cultural exchange between Irish and British polities that helped establish Romano-British influence in Ireland as it promoted Irish influence in Britain. Not only do the over thirty memorial inscriptions in southern Wales that were created from the fifth through the early seventh centuries present texts (many bilingual) in both Irish *ogam* and Roman characters,[108] but the act of inscribing names on stones to commemorate individuals, which was adopted in Ireland at this time as well, is "distinctively Roman."[109] It is important to recognize that neither Christianity nor overseas settlement were necessary for the transmission of cultural influence; after all, the *ogam* alphabet itself together with the practice of memorial inscriptions appear to have developed in Ireland in the fourth century, roughly the same time that the Roman practice of inhumation burial replaced cremation there as well, even though no Romans appear to settled in Ireland.[110] In these instances, changes in social structures are visible in the archaeological record, and while those changes may not indicate the importation of new (i.e., Christian) beliefs about death, they do demonstrate both the power of Roman models of social behavior in Insular societies and the freedom with which ideas and values could be shared and imitated among those societies.

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[107] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 161–162.

[108] James Campbell, "The Debt of the Early English Church to Ireland," in *Irland und die Christenheit: Bibelstudien und Mission (Ireland and Christendom: the Bible and the Missions)*, ed. Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Michael Richter (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987), 333.

[109] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 173.

[110] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 175–176.

Ireland continued to influence the development of British ecclesiastical institutions. Neither the Irish nor the British churches were at any time isolated from Christianity in the west, and their "heterodox" practices so famously condemned by Wilfrid and Bede reflect not so much their ignorance or flouting of Roman orthodoxy as they do the variety of Christian practice in the early Middle Ages.[111] Even in the case of the variant British dating of Easter that is such a source of conflict in Book III of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, British clergy knew the Easter tables of Victorius of Aquitaine on which the "orthodox" Roman date was based but chose to adhere to the dating scheme that was older and traditional for them.[112] In addition, though British and Irish monastic foundations might differ in their specific forms, the same sorts of material influences and focus on settlement can be seen shaping both. Just as some Irish monasteries had been established in old ringforts and other abandoned settlements by grant or with the approval of Irish elites, many of those founded in southern Wales in the first half of the sixth century were on sites of Roman *villae* (a pattern also followed in Gaul).[113] Even those estates without *villae* in western Britain served as centers of population and ecclesiastical site; for example, the church at Lustleigh in South Devon where are found a graveyard and a memorial inscription dating from the later half of the sixth century was likely the center of an estate centered on a large British farm (the holders of which may well be the family of the men memorialized in that inscription) from which the boundaries of the

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[111] Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 664.

[112] Clare Stancliffe, "The British Church and the Mission of Augustine," in *St. Augustine and the Conversion of England*, ed. Richard Gameson (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 139.

[113] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 101–103.

thinly settled parish that church later served were taken.[114] In a similar manner, the monastic site at Portmahomack on the Tarbat Peninsula, which lies about forty miles northeast of Inverness in modern-day Scotland, began as a settlement with subsistence-level iron working before developing in the seventh and eight centuries into an active artisanal complex with specialized production areas for copper, silver, and gold metalwork, glass, and leather—likely vellum, given the presence of tanning tanks and of scraping and polishing stones as well as the pegs and weights used on parchment stretching frames.[115] Though the site is remote, the presence of a road adjacent to what was likely the vellum-making yard reinforces the interconnections monastic sites shared as well as suggesting the important part vellum production played in the "ecclesiastical economy" that Comber suggests monasteries shared.

To reiterate, monasteries in Ireland and Britain functioned as settlements whose supporting members included clerics, artisans, and agricultural laborers, and which often included women and children as well as men as the presence of a women's cemetery at Inishmurray[116] and the sex-segregated cemetery at Wearmouth[117] demonstrates. Textual sources further demonstrate that these monasteries were not simply settlements that

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[114] Susan M. Pearce and Michael Swanton, "Lustleigh, South Devon: Its Inscribed Stone, its Churchyard and its Parish," in *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland: Studies Presented to C.A. Ralegh Radford*, ed. Susan M. Pearce, BAR British Series 102 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1982), 142–143.

[115] Cecily A. Spall, "Reflections on the Monastic Arts: Recent Discoveries at Portmahomack, Tarbat, Easter Ross," in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches: Proceedings of a Conference on the Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches, September 2004*, ed. Nancy Edwards (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 322–329.

[116] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 35.

[117] Susan McNeil and Rosemary Cramp, "The Wearmouth Anglo-Saxon Cemetery," in Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 1:84.

incidentally supported ecclesiastical institutions, but also were places where clerics with pastoral responsibility lived and worked. Huw Pryce says that from Gildas and the sixth-century *Synod of North Britain*, to the *Historia ecclesiastica*, and even as late as Asser (who identified the bishopric of St. David's as a *monasterium* with a *paruchia* in the late ninth century), "the cumulative impression conveyed by the evidence … is that a key component of the ecclesiastical structure in Wales from the sixth century onwards were communities to which monastic vocabulary was applied, but which also contained ordained clergy who could have performed pastoral work."[118] Confusion about the terminology employed in the textual sources, particularly in Irish sources where Old Irish *manach* [< Lat. *monachus*] designates "a lay person economically tied to a particular church" or, more simply, a "monastic tenant,"[119] has led scholars from the nineteenth century to the present to overlook evidence for episcopal structure and pastoral care alike in the early medieval "Celtic" church. Not all Irish and British monks were clerics, so we should be cautious about assuming that all English ones were. As Sharpe has warned, to imagine that there existed a peculiarly "Irish" or "Celtic" monasticism that was almost wholly eremitic rather than cenobitic and that was aloof from the concerns of lay persons "does not accommodate a major part of the evidence we have."[120] That evidence not only points to an ecclesiastical structure based on mother churches with episcopal authority and smaller churches with priests providing pastoral care, but also to monasteries

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[118] Huw Pryce, "Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Wales," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, 1992), 51–54.

[119] Sharpe, "Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland," 102; Charles-Edwards, "The Pastoral Role of the Church in the Early Irish Laws," 67.

[120] Sharpe, "Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland," 98–99.

engaged in the economic and social life of their dependents and involved in a network of ecclesiastical and material relationships among themselves.

This is this ecclesiastical structure that was shaping Christianity in Britain at the time of the entry of the Anglo-Saxons. This structure also would have formed the image of Christianity held by the Anglo-Saxons, not only in the fifth and sixth centuries but also in the seventh, when the missionaries that brought Christianity to many of the English were not from Rome but from the Irish-influenced monastery founded by Columbanus at Iona.

The Anglo-Saxon Adventus

In his *Historia ecclesiastica*, Bede identified the English people to whom Christianity was brought by the Irish and Roman missions of the late sixth and seventh centuries as descendants of distinct Germanic continental peoples. In what has long been the traditional narrative of the *adventus* of the Anglo-Saxons, he wrote in the fifteenth chapter of the first book that a group or groups of warriors from the tribes of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, seeing the weakness of the British after the withdrawal of the Roman army, entered the island as mercenaries in the hire of British kings and then, after drawing a number of their fellows from their Continental homelands to join them, laid waste to Britain and killed or enslaved its inhabitants.[121]

Bede actually says both far more and far less than this, though. In the following five chapters, after sending the hostile Saxon army "back home,"[122] he recounts the activities

[121] *HE* i.15, 48–52.

[122] "hostilis exercitus …domum reversus est"; *HE* i.16, 52.

of St. Germanus of Auxerre in Britain. Then, after a brief chapter summarizing Gildas's jeremiad against British slackness and adding his own condemnation of the Britons for failing to preach Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons who lived in Britain with them, Bede introduces the Roman mission to Kent.[123] Because Germanus died before 450,[124] this account leaves a gap of nearly a century and a half in which it is unclear how these Germanic tribes came to people the portion of Britain that became England. For people it they did, substantially replacing the language spoken by the British with their own and, according to all evidence, ending the practice of Christianity in the south and east of Britain. We must consider how they accomplished these changes—by replacing the British or by changing Insular culture.

According to the work of archaeologist Irving Rouse, whose 1987 *Migrations in Prehistory* proposes systematic methods for determining population movements from archaeological, linguistic, and physical anthropological data, this movement of Anglo-Saxon peoples should be described as a migration rather than as immigration. Rouse says that when people of a particular culture move from one place to another, if they

> arrive in large enough numbers to dominate the entire area, if they bring along a different language, culture, morphology [physical traits, including genes], or some combination of the three, and if they are able to keep them intact, a population movement will have commenced. In effect, a foreign speech community, people, and/or race will have colonized the local area. The colonists will probably live alongside the native inhabitants, retaining their own language, culture, and/or morphology, as the case may be. They may eventually abort the movement by withdrawing to their former homeland, or they may complete it by absorbing or expelling the native

[123] *HE* i.22, 56–58.

[124] Either in 437 or 442 according to Ian Wood, "The End of Roman Britain: Continental Evidence and Parallels," in *Gildas: New Approaches*, ed. Michael Lapidge and David Dumville (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1984), 16.

> inhabitants of their new homeland. *A population movement, then, is more than the cumulative result of immigration. The migrants must take over an entire area and cause an overall change in its human conditions.*[125]

By this definition, there seems to be no question that what was accomplished in Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries was the migration of a pagan Germanic culture into areas that had been held by Christian British peoples. Exactly what numbers are "large enough" to accomplish this "change in human conditions" demands consideration, though, because there is no material evidence for large-scale destruction and population movement in sub-Roman Britain as a whole. C. J. Arnold is likely right that the two main historiographic positions adopted over the last century in response to this problem—one advocating "large-scale migration and population displacement" and the other proposing the dominance of the British population "by a small Germanic warrior elite"—represent extremes within the range of discrete military and political events occurring throughout the fifth and sixth centuries that gave rise to the Anglo-Saxon polities in England at the end of the sixth century.[126] Even the historical sources hint at the different ways these English may have appeared; Nicholas Higham points out that Bede implies the displacement rather than the extermination of peoples when he employs *exterminare*, "to drive out," to describe the actions of pagan or "ungodly" conquerors such as Æthelfrith, Penda, and Cædwalla,[127] while the Gallic Chronicle of 452 says that in 441 Britain was

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[125] Rouse, *Migrations in Prehistory*, 176–177, emphasis mine.

[126] Arnold, *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 20–21.

[127] Nicholas Higham, "Britons in Anglo-Saxon England: An Introduction," in *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Nicholas Higham (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2007), 3 and n. 13.

reduced to Saxon domination (*in ditionem Saxonum rediguntur*).[128]

Why is it important to know how the Anglo-Saxons established themselves in Britain? It is because the question of how the Christian message and Christian messengers changed pagan Anglo-Saxon English society rests on the assumption that something more than a change in religious affiliation occurred. If the "conversion" of England consisted merely of the baptism of a small Germanic elite and the resumption of Christian practice among a much greater British population, then the significance of that conversion and its cultural effect would be markedly different than if it involved the acceptance of pastoral authority and Christian norms derived from Irish and Roman models by a primary Germanic pagan population for whom that authority and those norms were likely foreign. We cannot turn to the written sources for Anglo-Saxons' entry into Britain to determine the origins of English society, for those are either incoherent or far too terse to be useful. Neither do we have contemporary descriptions of Anglo-Saxon society before the conversion with which we could compare its later development. We have no mythologies and a scant few genealogies that trace royal lineages back to legendary figures and deities. We do have what may be references to often-repeated tales, such as the connected fragments in *Beowulf* and in the stand-alone *Fight at Finnsburg* that describe a battle between the Danes (Scyldings) and the Frisians and may reflect significant events in important families' or kin groups' histories. Material data is therefore even more critical for understanding Anglo-Saxon England in this period than it is for understanding Ireland and the British areas of Britain, and that data—from genetic

[128] Richard Burgess, "The Gallic Chronicle of 452: A New Critical Edition with a Brief Introduction," in *Society and Culture in Late Antique Gaul: Revisiting the Sources*, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 79–80 s.v. 441.

studies, from burials, and from the contexts of sites—is surprisingly rich if not wholly conclusive.

One of the newest of these data sets directly addresses the question of how many Germanic peoples came to Britain and how they may have achieved dominance there. In 2006 and 2008, Mark G. Thomas, Michael P. H. Stumpf, and Heinrich Härke (joined by Gary German in 2008), representing the disciplines of biology, bioinformatics, and archaeology respectively, published work based on studies of Y-chromosome variation among populations in central England, northern Wales, southern Denmark, and northern Germany. These studies were prompted by initial work on English and British genetics published in 2002 by Michael Weale and his collaborators that found the genetic material from men from southern Danish and northern German populations and that from central English male populations to be so similar as to produce what the authors characterized as "a strong genetic barrier between central England and north Wales and the virtual absence of a barrier between central England and Friesland," results so dramatic that the authors suggested the large-scale early medieval migration of more than 500,000 Anglo-Saxon men into central England as the mechanism that best explained them.[129]

Thomas, who was the last author of the 2002 study, and his 2006 and 2008 collaborators re-examined the data using new computer models and taking into account such supplementary evidence as the seventh-century laws of Ine of Wessex and Härke's

[129] Michael E. Weale et al., "Y Chromosome Evidence for Anglo-Saxon Mass Migration," *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 19, no. 7 (July 1, 2002): 1018.

work on skeletal remains in weapons burials.[130] What they instead have proposed is that this high level of "immigrant" Y-chromosomes can now be observed among central English populations because the Anglo-Saxon men who entered Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries enforced "reproductive isolation and differential social status along ethnic lines" in ways that established an "apartheid-like" social system under which their "elevated social and economic status" granted them greater reproductive success.[131] According to their model, the Anglo-Saxon immigrants came to dominate the British because they were more successful at passing along both their genes and their cultural norms. Anglo-Saxon men, who were wealthier and of higher status, are assumed to have out-reproduced their British counterparts (a difference in reproductive success commonly observed in populations with disparities in status), in part because they would have had sex with and married British women and produced offspring much more frequently than British men would have produced offspring with Anglo-Saxon women. The children of Anglo-Saxon men would have been more likely to assume the favored ethnic identity of their fathers, which in turn would have led to the female children of Anglo-Saxon men marrying men who shared their identities and genotypes. This would have resulted in the assignment of Anglo-Saxon cultural identity to those more likely to be of a particular

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[130] Thomas, Stumpf, and Härke, "Evidence for an Apartheid-like Social Structure in Early Anglo-Saxon England," 2654. Their publications reinforcing their conclusions and, with Gary German, adding support based on the examination of related morphological changes in Brittonic and Old English, are Mark G Thomas, Michael P. H. Stumpf, and Heinrich Härke, "Integration versus Apartheid in post-Roman Britain: A Response to Pattison," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 275, no. 1650 (November 7, 2008): 2419–2421, and Mark G. Thomas et al., "Social Constraints on Interethnic Marriage/Unions, Differential Reproductive Success and the Spread of 'Continental' Y Chromosomes in Early Anglo-Saxon England," in *Simulations, Genetics and Human Prehistory*, ed. Peter Forster, Shuichi Matsumura, and Colin Renfrew (Cambridge, UK: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2008), 59–68 (at 64–65).

[131] Thomas, Stumpf, and Härke, "Evidence for an Apartheid-like Social Structure in Early Anglo-Saxon England," 2651.

genotype and controlled the amount of inbreeding between Anglo-Saxon and British populations. According to the computer modeling done by Thomas and his collaborators, this social structure limiting both identity and interbreeding would have led to an increase of the socially preferred "incoming" Anglo-Saxon Y-chromosomes from as little as five percent of the English population to fifty percent of the population within fifteen generations and from ten percent of the population to fifty percent in as little as five.[132]

Remembering that Rouse identified the preservation of a distinctive immigrant population's morphology as one of the elements of a population movement, Thomas *et al*'s study provides a convincing model for how Anglo-Saxon elites, acting to preserve their cultural identity within a much larger native British population, may have ensured the success of both their morphology and their identity as a result. If this model is correct, then taking the authors' estimate of two million inhabitants in Britain in the mid-fourth century[133] would mean that an immigration population that was five percent of the total population would number around 100,000 Anglo-Saxon men. Moreover, though the study's authors do not say so, the actual number of immigrants needed to effect this social change might have been even fewer. If the initial immigration and the accelerated growth of an Anglo-Saxon cultural and genetic population was concentrated in southern and central Britain (where Bede says they initially established themselves[134]), this concentration should have resulted in a burgeoning population of native-born English

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[132] Thomas, Stumpf, and Härke, "Evidence for an Apartheid-like Social Structure in Early Anglo-Saxon England," 2653–2656.

[133] Population estimates for sub-Roman Britain are little better than guesses. Nicholas Higham would set the number at three to four million; *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London: Seaby, 1992), 20.

[134] *HE* i.15, 51.

men and women who identified themselves as among the Anglo-Saxon peoples rather than one whose growth depended on continued immigration. The "traditional" Bede- and Gildas-derived narrative does not contradict such a proposal, for the Anglo-Saxons who were defeated at Mount Baden around 490–500 C.E.[135] may have been of the second or third generation to live in the south of Britain after their ancestors' initial entry. After that defeat (which of course is more likely to represent a remembered regional victory for the British than an island-wide defeat of the Anglo-Saxons), these Anglo-Saxons could have returned "home" as Bede said, with that home being the east and south where they dominated. Subsequent participation in socially controlled breeding that favored them and their male offspring may have been enough to secure English cultural as well as political dominance there by the middle of the sixth century, at which point they moved outward once again to gain control of the Midlands and north.

If, as these genetic studies suggest, pagan Anglo-Saxon control in many area of England was achieved by social and political means rather than by the replacement of the Christian British population, then we should next want to look for evidence of these two populations in the archaeological record. As Rouse warns, though, "social structures"—i.e., individual groupings within cultures based on ethnic, political and social identities—"leave fewer material traces on the ground than do [whole] cultures."[136] In the context of sub-Roman Britain, this means that it is difficult to distinguish Anglo-Saxon from British peoples despite what are assumed to be differences in their ethnic identities and religious practices.

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[135] *HE* i.16, 54.

[136] Rouse, *Migrations in Prehistory*, 4.

Burials in sub-Roman Britain provide an example of these difficulties of interpretation. Both Roman- and Irish-influenced areas of Britain practiced inhumation rather than cremation, and though inhumation likely predated Christianity, it was unquestionably a prerequisite for Christian identity.[137] The corollary is not true, though, and inhumation burial is not an unmistakable marker of British or of Christian identity. It was instead one of the wide variety of mortuary practices, which also included cremation, the construction of barrows and mounds, and burial with and without accompanying grave goods, that were found among peoples in the area around the North Sea in the fifth and sixth century, including among the incoming Anglo-Saxons.[138] Inhumation and cremation burials coexist in the same Anglo-Saxon archaeological sites; for example, though the six or seven cremation burials found among the 51 sixth- to early seventh-century inhumation burials in one of the Saltwood cemeteries cannot be conclusively dated, they appear to be contemporary with the inhumations.[139] The orientation of graves is not diagnostic of culture, either, for cemeteries in areas of the continent from which those peoples who immigrated to England are thought to have come contain burials oriented along a north-to-south as well as along the east-to-west axis that is often thought of as "Christian."[140]

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[137] Richard Hoggett, "Charting Conversion: Burial as a Barometer of Belief?," in *Early Medieval Mortuary Practices*, ed. Sarah Semple and Howard Williams (Oxford: University of Oxford School of Archaeology, 2007), 31–32.

[138] Carver, "Agency, Intellect and the Archaeological Agenda," 9.

[139] *North Of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 99 Southern Section, Detailed Archaeological Works, Interim Report* (Canterbury, UK: Canterbury Archaeological Trust and Union Railways (South) Ltd, 2000), 4, doi:10.5284/1000497.

[140] Sally Crawford, "Britons, Anglo-Saxons and the Germanic Burial Ritual," in *Migration and Invasions in Archaeological Explanation*, ed. John Chapman and Helena Hamerow, BAR International Series 664 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 1997), 63.

Nevertheless, two types of mortuary evidence do appear to be consistent markers of Anglo-Saxon identity in England. One of these is furnished burial. Sally Crawford says that most Anglo-Saxon burial sites have a higher percentage of graves furnished with weapons and other items and that, "given the family/household based structure indicated in continental cemeteries" (where graves and goods tend to cluster around notable high-status burials), "it seems probable that whole families were moving to Britain with their basic familial structure more or less intact."[141] The genetic models explored by Thomas and others subsequent to Crawford's analysis make her assumption that whole families migrated to England less probable; after all, if Anglo-Saxons were concerned enough about preserving their ethnic identity that they controlled intermarriage with the British natives, then they are unlikely to have needed to bring a family with them in order to remind themselves what Anglo-Saxon family and household relationships should look like, either in life or in death. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that the presence of grave-goods is a marker of Anglo-Saxon identity in England. This is especially clear in the Magonsætan and Hwicce in the West Midlands, where Anglo-Saxons likely entered in the sixth century into areas where Romanized British culture was still strong[142] and where seventh-century accompanied burials lie on new sites on the peripheries of cemeteries in which other contemporary burials lack goods. Patrick Sims-Williams says that the overall impression from the Magonsætan and Hwicce is that of a region in which the late-entering Anglo-Saxon population never overtook the British one, for "the practice of

[141] Crawford, "Germanic Burial Ritual," 68–69.

[142] Katharine Bridget Pretty, "Defining the Magonsæte," in *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Steven Bassett (London: Leicester University Press, 1989), 182–183.

accompanied burial never established itself in the seventh century outside the area of sixth-century [Anglo-Saxon] settlement" and "within this area [furnished burial] tended to disappear, except on the peripheries, much earlier than in the neighbouring Middle Anglian and Mercian regions."[143]

Not all Anglo-Saxon graves contain grave goods, but those that do frequently use them to mark the identity and status of the deceased and his or her kin. "Status" and its relationship to grave-goods can be understood in several ways, such as a demonstration of how much disposable wealth was available to the family or kin-group of the deceased or an indication of how much those performing the burial valued the deceased. Beowulf's burial, in which the grieving Geats hung his "splendid" pyre with armor "as he had commanded" reflects at several centuries' remove how grave goods could communicate both the status of and mourning for the deceased.[144] Weapons are often seen as the clearest such markers of status among men, but they were neither ubiquitous nor always an unequivocal sign that the individual buried with them was a warrior. Both chldren and men whose skeletal remains indicate they likely were unable to wield weapons have been found buried with them, while men whose remains show evidence of battle wounds were not. Härke says that, based on skeletal evidence, the weapons burial rite was a symbolic act that was determined or influenced by membership in a particular family or kin group and that was "independent of the ability to fight and of the actual experience of

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[143] Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600-800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 71–72.

[144] *Beowulf* l.3137–3140; Friedrich Klaeber, ed., *Beowulf and The Fight at Finnsburg*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Heath, 1950), 118.

fighting."[145] Many Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have their graves grouped together in ways that indicate kinship relationships among them, such as at Saltwood where a number were dug, some intercutting others, within the area bounded by a penannular ditch,[146] and the examination of which graves within these clusters contained weapons indicates that in most cases only certain families buried their members with them. Härke also notes that not only were most of those buried with weapons larger in stature and therefore probably of Germanic origin but also that "the social groups practicing weapon burial for adult men also buried some (but not all) of their children with arms."[147] Not only the presence but also the placement of grave-goods may have conveyed information about the deceased as well. Among the more than 580 items found among the sixth-three inhumation burials found in the initial 1999 excavations in the area north of Saltwood Tunnel, three Anglo-Saxon spearheads could be identified as pointing toward the feet of the corpse in what is considered to be a Frankish burial practice, underscoring Frankish influence in Kent as well as hinting at the presence of Franks themselves within these Kentish settlements.[148]

The second type of Anglo-Saxon mortuary evidence is drawn from examining how graves relate to other features within cemeteries and how cemeteries relate to the human landscape in which they are set. In her interpretation of pagan Anglo-Saxon religious sites as they compare to both Roman and later Christian mortuary and religious sites,

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[145] Härke, *Angelsächsische Waffengräber des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*, 226.

[146] Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, 38.

[147] Härke, *Angelsächsische Waffengräber des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*, 226–227.

[148] *North of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 98C*, 9.

Sarah Semple says that Anglo-Saxon sites employ a "full pre-Christian repertoire" of burial practices, including "votive deposits, furnished burial, monumental mounds, sacred natural phenomena and eventually constructed pillars, shrines, and temples" that signal "an appreciation of natural places and of previous prehistoric practice" by positioning burials in relationship to existing features, primarily pre-Roman barrows and mounds.[149] While a few Roman-era British burials appear to have been located in association with such monuments, reuse of Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows as the foci of burials was common in Northern Germany and southern Scandinavia during the Roman Iron Age.[150] This reuse became a regular practice in Britain from the late fifth through the seventh centuries, during which graves were often oriented radially in respect to or aligned on the same axis as barrows and earthworks, and graves also were increasingly placed close beside and even within Bronze Age barrows as the seventh century progressed.[151] Anglo-Saxon cemeteries like those at Saltwood, where single graves (including two of the richest) were surrounded with their own penannular ditches as if in imitation of the ring ditch surrounding the site's Bronze Age barrow into which many of the Anglo-Saxon graves were inserted, suggest a symbolic incorporation or even conquest of these prehistoric British sites, just as does the likely contemporary overshadowing of the original Bronze Age barrows by the much larger and more elaborate ship grave at Sutton Hoo. One of these later penannular ditches at Saltwood actually cuts the Bronze Age

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[149] Sarah Semple, "In the Open Air," in *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*, ed. Martin Carver, Alex Sanmark, and Sarah Semple (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), 42–43.

[150] Howard Williams, "Monuments and the Past in Early Anglo-Saxon England," *World Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (June 1, 1998): 95.

[151] Williams, "Monuments and the Past in Early Anglo-Saxon England," 97–99.

ditch, indicating dominance over rather than respect for the original monument.[152]

When burying their dead, Anglo-Saxons not only honored them through the use of grave-goods and the association of graves with monuments of the distant past, but also by associating them with their recent ancestors. Three cemeteries in total were found at Saltwood, each initially oriented on a prehistoric monument. Over the course of the late sixth and early seventh centuries, though, four graves, two of which were furnished with Byzantine-style hanging bowls of a type that are frequently found in high-status graves,[153] were placed, likely two at a time, in a line in the northern part of the cemetery. These burials changed the cemetery's orientation as each of them was subsequently surrounded by satellite graves (see Figure 4.2 on the next page).[154]

Along with the relationship that the Anglo-Saxons established among their own graves and between previous burials and their own, the placement of the Saltwood burials in the context of the landscape of Anglo-Saxon settlement further underscores their significance. The three Anglo-Saxon cemeteries together contain burials from around 550 to after 650 C.E. and were found at Saltwood as the result of fieldwork done to determine the extent of the Iron Age and Roman settlement nearby that was unoccupied after the beginning of the fifth century. Each of these cemeteries was associated with early Bronze Age features and located alongside three prehistoric or Romano-British trackways that may have met at a point to the south of the excavated area. Two Anglo-Saxon sunken-

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[152] *North of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 98C*, 5–7.

[153] see Helen Geake, "When Were Hanging Bowls Deposited in Anglo-Saxon Graves?," *Medieval Archaeology* 43 (1999): 1–18.

[154] Graves C1048 and C1081 in the grave catalogue; Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, 65.

Figure 4.2. North of Saltwood Tunnel: Anglo-Saxon graves and grave-related features from the central cemetery.The four added high-status graves and their orientation are marked. Adapted from Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, figure 44, ADS Collection: 335, doi:10.5284/1000230. ©Archaeology Data Services.

featured buildings were found during these excavations, one about 70m northwest of the western cemetery and the other 30m east of the eastern one. Both of these were likely part of "an extensive settlement lying further to the north" that was not excavated.[155] In general, early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and settlements were proximate to but separate from each other as they are at Saltwood, with cemeteries often placed on higher ground or otherwise associated with natural or man-made features that ensured their

[155] Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, 25–28.

prominence.[156] All of this strongly suggests that a place in which to bury the dead was as important as a place to settle the living. The extensively excavated site at Spong Hill, North Elmham reveals that when Anglo-Saxon settlers took over the Roman farm site there, which had been abandoned for a century or more, they cleared it fully, removing "buildings, old huts, sheds, brambles and bushes, existing middens and other farmyard debris" so that they could use the approximately 4375m^2 area as a cemetery.[157] Cemeteries are also frequently associated with roads. On the former isle of Thanet in Kent, five cemeteries and likely two other burials line the Dunstrete road, though in those and other cases features such as ridges may have played a part in the selection of grave sites as well.[158]

A prominent location was important for other Anglo-Saxon temple or shrine sites as well, and that prominence appears to have been directly related to the history of those sites. Semple studied three English sites and their environs whose names contain the element *hearg*, the Old English word for a shrine or temple that was used from the ninth century on to gloss Latin words for all kinds of shrines,[159] such as for the Latin *fanum* in

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[156] Richard Hoggett, "The Early Christian Landscape of East Anglia," in *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham and Martin J. Ryan (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2010), 202.

[157] Jacqueline I. McKinley, "The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, Part VIII: The Cremations," *East Anglian Archaeology*, no. 69 (1994): 71.

[158] David Perkins, "The Location of Cemeteries on the Line of Dunstrete," in Paul Bennett et al., *At the Great Crossroads: Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval Discoveries on the Isle of Thanet, 1994-95* (Canterbury, UK: Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2008), 304–305.

[159] Sarah Semple, "Defining the OE *hearg*: A Preliminary Archaeological and Topographic Examination of *hearg* Place Names and their Hinterlands," *Early Medieval Europe* 15, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 370–371.

the Mercian translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica*.[160] Her analysis of these sites—Harrow Hill, Sussex; Harrow Fields near Heswall in Cheshire; and, Wood Eaton, Oxfordshire—found no evidence of any structures that could be identified as pagan Anglo-Saxon temples or shrines, and only at Harrow Hill were Anglo-Saxon mortuary remains found nearby.[161] However, at all three sites she identified particular archaeological "themes" or patterns, much like those Renfrew says are found at cult sites, that she says help identify what *hearg* meant to the Anglo-Saxons. These sites are all distinguished by their topography (being set on hilltops or in locations with springs), they all have evidence of long-term human activity that often begins in the Bronze Age if not earlier and continues through the seventh century C.E., and they all have material evidence for votive and other Romano-British religious activity that continued into the fifth and sixth centuries if often on a reduced scale. Semple says that the persistent application of *hearg* to these sites indicates that they held sacred association as late as the seventh century, either because monuments that were thought to signify those associations continued to be visible on the landscape (as the mound and ditch likely were at Saltwood) or because cultic practices continued there at some level.[162] In either case, Anglo-Saxon speakers, at least some of whom were Anglo-Saxons themselves, seem to have understood that *hearg* sites represented a link with the sacred and with the past that parallels their linkage of Anglo-Saxon burial sites with Bronze Age monuments and remains. The significance gained through those associations even seems to have survived

[160] Audrey L. Meaney, "Pagan English Sanctuaries, Place-Names and Hundred Meeting-Places," *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 8 (1995): 31.

[161] Semple, "Defining the OE *hearg*," 375.

[162] Semple, "Defining the OE *hearg*," 382–384.

conversion to Christianity as well. Audrey Meaney's study of the meeting places of Hundreds in the Cambridge region that were established not much earlier than the mid-tenth century found that though both locations containing fords, bridges, and other natural meeting places and locations containing groves and springs were among the most common sites for Hundreds to meet, the most popular *marker* of the specific meeting place was a mound.[163]

Though *hearg* sites and other locations appear to have held religious significance for the Anglo-Saxons, graves and cemeteries remain the primary places from which the patterns of material evidence for their religious beliefs may be drawn. In his seminal 1992 study of the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon pagan religion, David Wilson concluded that "nothing that has been excavated so far on a settlement site, either structure or artifact, has given any clue as to how the gods were worshipped away from the burial of the dead."[164] While this remains true, those recent studies that consider sites as a whole as well buildings and artifacts support Semple's conclusions that the Anglo-Saxon practices of creating furnished burials of significant kinsmen and kinswomen, associating those burials with prominent man-made and natural features, and displaying an awareness of sites with long-term religious significance suggests that these practices were undertaken within a "numinous landscape" in which religious significance was both found and made, often over generations and even centuries.[165] Moreover, this meaningful landscape was not removed from everyday life. The cemeteries at Saltwood were not only clearly visible

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[163] Meaney, "Pagan English Sanctuaries," 35–36.

[164] Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Paganism*, 176.

[165] Semple, "In the Open Air," 42–43.

from the settlements there, but also, given those cemeteries' position near the eastern edge of an elevated plateau and the trackways that passed through them, would have been visible to those approaching or passing by those settlements.[166] Just as was the case with the *sidhe* and their mounds in Ireland, the Anglo-Saxon dead must have been thought to have as secure a hold on the land as did the living given that their places in the landscape were as visible as any settlement.

Semple concludes that Anglo-Saxon mortuary and religious practices not only reflected those of others Northern European peoples, but also reflected that Anglo-Saxons' "communal identity, both in local and regional terms, may have been bound up with the ways in which they used and perceived the landscape," so that their forging of associations with the landscape constituted a statement about "legitimacy or authority and ownership."[167] If this is so, then when Christian pastors came to England, what they would have found was a people who had taken possession of the land not only by force of arms and control of resources but also by forging ideological and symbolic associations with the land they were claiming as their new home. When those pastors in turn created their own associations with that English landscape—a landscape that they also understood to be numinous, though one mediated through the activity of holy men and women[168]—they engaged in an activity whose meaning and significance was comprehensible to those already there.

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[166] *North of Saltwood Tunnel, Kent: ARC SLT 98C*, 12.

[167] Semple, "In the Open Air," 42.

[168] As is made clear through any number of hagiographic sources as explored in Peter Brown, *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Conversion and New Christian Places in England

When the Roman and Irish missions[169] to the Anglo-Saxons arrived in England, they found an unfamiliar human landscape. England had few of the urban centers those of the Roman mission would have considered proper sites for episcopal organization, while Irish missionaries would have found Anglo-Saxon settlements to be both more compact and less dispersed than their own, with both "palace-clusters" and groups of hamlets.[170] Though the new Roman mission established itself in the old Roman site at Canterbury where Æthelbehrt of Kent's Christian queen Bertha had her church,[171] that location had been abandoned some time in the fifth century and had no "significant resident population" when Augustine and his fellows arrived. When the mission set up its collective house and associated settlment there, it was, in effect, a "rural settlement superimposed upon an urban background."[172] By the end of the seventh century, though, Canterbury had been built up into an ecclesiastical complex like Tours, with the cathedral and the bishop's residence within the rebuilt Roman walls and extramural churches arranged in a row along the road to Richborough, which ran alongside a Roman

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[169] There is no perfect designation for these missionary efforts. "Roman" in this context designates not only the initial mission sent by Gregory and led by Augustine but also later missions whose mandate and organization came from Rome. To call these efforts "Roman" should not be understood to exclude the involvement of the Frankish church, which was certainly a part of the conversion (see *HE* iii.7 relating to the conversion of the West Saxons, the Irish-speaking Gallic bishop Agilbert, and Wine, the Gallic bishop who replaced him). "Irish" in this context designates clerics whose training originated from Irish-founded institutions such as Iona and Lindisfarne irrespective of their own place of origin. In the case of Agilbert, this means that he can be understood either as an "Irish" cleric by benefit of his training or as a "Roman" one because of his ancestry and his eventual adoption of a see in Frankish Gaul and that both identifications would be correct depending on the context. Such complexities are unavoidable, but following this Roman vs. Irish designation avoids many of them.

[170] Comber, *The Economy of the Ringfort and Contemporary Settlement in Early Medieval Ireland*, 206.

[171] *HE* i.26, 76–77.

[172] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 17–18.

cemetery.[173] The town itself revived as well, though mainly as rough *Grubenhäuser* and timber buildings erected among the Roman ruins inside the eastern wall.[174]

Comparing this description of Canterbury in the seventh century with those of the initial Anglo-Saxon settlement and religious sites in the centuries before reveals both similarities and differences. The Christian association of sacred sites with burials and roads mirrored the pre-Christian pattern of settlement, as did the association of those sites with the past. The past that was acknowledged at Canterbury, though, was a Roman past, so that the new buildings were linked with the surviving Roman cemeteries and city wall. At Canterbury, the sacred site was established first and the secular settlement followed, unlike at Saltwood where Anglo-Saxon settlements and cemeteries appear to have developed alongside each other at a remove from the abandoned Roman settlement. Other settlements near Canterbury appear to have followed that earlier pattern of development even after Canterbury's complex of churches were established. A royal manor was founded at least by the late seventh century several miles up the Stoor from the cathedral town, while documentary sources refer to a trading port across the river from it at Fordwich, and both of these settlements appear to have had their own community cemeteries.[175] By contrast, while Canterbury's cemeteries likely served the ecclesiastical foundations' community to some extent, their focus was on the holy dead, both through the martyr churches and particularly with the succession of archbishops who

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[173] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 18.

[174] Tim Tatton-Brown, "The Anglo-Saxon Towns of Kent," in *Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, ed. Della Hooke (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 214–215.

[175] Richard Helm, *Excavations at Market Way, St. Stephen's, Canterbury* (Canterbury: Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2010), 82.

were buried first extramurally and then, from Cuthbert (d.760) on, within the walls at Christ Church.[176]

This comparison reveals two potentially fruitful areas of investigation when considering the places in which pastors and their charges may have interacted. The first is related to Anglo-Saxon burial practices and how those changed in the seventh century. The second is related to the creation of places for Christianity in England—churches, monasteries, and minsters—and how those places related to the physical, demographic, and ideological landscape in which they were set. It is in the second of these areas that provides the most evidence of how clergy in England created settings for pastoral interaction, but both areas are ones in which religious and cultural ideas interact in ways that can be illuminated by the archaeological record.

Burial in the Century of Conversion

Richard Hoggett has said that, "though it is hard to say that this is the only time they change, burial rites do change at conversion."[177] Examining burial in England during the seventh century when Christianity was being adopted, though, prompts a reevaluation of his statement and of how the burial practices that Wilson and others have identified as intimately connected with pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon religion may have remained significant to Anglo-Saxons Christians. Cremation is one of the practices whose disappearance has been associated with conversion to Christianity, but as noted before, both cremation and inhumation had been practiced in England since the arrival of the

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[176] Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury: Christ Church from 597 to 1066* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984), 81–82.

[177] Hoggett, "Charting Conversion: Burial as a Barometer of Belief?" 29.

Anglo-Saxons. These practices were contemporaneous at Spong Hill, which has evidence for both fifty-five inhumation and more than 2500 cremation burials throughout its roughly century and a half of use.[178] Härke's assessment that cremation "dominated in the Anglian midlands and the east of England" while inhumation prevailed in the south and the north until the seventh century[179] appears to be borne out by the 50:1 ratio of cremations and inhumations at the Spong Hill cemetery in Norfolk as compared to the western cemetery at Saltwood, where a single sixth-century cremation grave appears among the inhumation burials.[180] While cremations did disappear over the seventh century, they did not immediately cease in England any more than they did in Frankish Gaul, where cremation and inhumation coexisted until the Carolingian period.[181] Even if the absence of cremation burials is not taken as "a necessary criterion" for burial sites to be assessed as Christian, Hoggett's warning that "the absence of cremation does not automatically equate to Christian burial" is well-justified.[182]

Furnished burial continued in many areas of England throughout the seventh century as well. Burial with grave-goods was practiced in kingdoms that had converted to Christianity as well as in those that had not; eight of the eighteen burials of the "Final

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[178] Kenneth Penn and Birte Brugmann, "Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Inhumation Burial: Morning Thorpe, Spong Hill, Bergh Apton and Westgarth Gardens," *East Anglian Archaeology*, no. 119 (2007): 8.

[179] Heinrich Härke, "'Warrior Graves'? The Background of the Anglo-Saxon Weapon Burial Rite," *Past & Present*, no. 126 (February 1, 1990): 25.

[180] Riddler and Trevarthen, *Funerary Landscape at Saltwood Tunnel*, 33. Howard Williams does say that examples of mixed cremation and inhumation cemeteries are found "in every region of early Anglo-Saxon England"; Williams, "Monuments and the Past in Early Anglo-Saxon England," 94.

[181] Bonnie Effros, "Beyond Cemetery Walls: Early Medieval Funerary Topography and Christian Salvation," *Early Medieval Europe* 6, no. 1 (1997): 20 n.93.

[182] Hoggett, "Charting Conversion: Burial as a Barometer of Belief?" 34.

Figure 4.3. Changes in the proportion of weapons combinations and weapons-burials over time. Adapted from Helen Geake, *The Use of Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England, c.600-c.850*, BAR British Series 261 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1997), 75.

Weapon combinations	Härke's burial date groups						"conversion period"
	early 5th–early 6th	mid 5th–mid 6th	late 5th–late 6th	mid 6th–early 7th	late 6th–late 7th	mid 7th–mid 8th	early 7th–late 8th
spear(s) only	31%	42%	46%	26%	51%	47%	49%
shield, shield and spear(s)	46%	47%	37%	62%	24%	18%	11%
seax, combinations of seax, shield and/or spear	-	-	2%	3%	12%	35%	25%
sword, combinations of sword, shield and/or seax and/or spear	16%	7%	11%	9%	13%	-	14%
Total sample of datable burials	55	113	158	105	92	17	150
% of all burials with weapons	15–20%				12%	3%	6%

Phase" (seventh-century) cemetery at Mount Pleasant on Thanet, including the earliest (grave 5) and the latest (grave 13), contained grave goods.[183] What was buried with the body (or placed on the pyre, since cremations often included grave goods as well) did change over the course of the seventh century, though. Weapon assemblages changed in both their frequency and their components, as Helen Geake has illustrated in her comparison of "Conversion-period" graves with Härke's analysis of graves with weapons throughout the Anglo-Saxon period (Figure 4.3 above). This change may reflect life as well as death; as Edward James points out, the increased deposition of the single-edged *seax* in later sixth-century graves both in England and on the Continent may indicate that

[183] Ian Riddler with Trevor Anderson, Jon Andrews and David Perkins, "The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery," in Bennett et al., *At the Great Crossroads*, 284–292.

the *seax* had replaced the double-edged sword in both the fighter's weapons set and in mortuary deposition.[184]

While the number of burials furnished with weapons declined in the late seventh century, the proportion of furnished graves overall containing jewelry and other female-associated objects increased sharply.[185] Geake argues that this material, like all of that deposited throughout the seventh century, reflects conscious choices by Anglo-Saxons concerning identity and meaning and how those changed during the period of conversion. According to her interpretation, those burying the dead appear to have selected, either at the behest of the deceased or on their own, elements from among those employed in sixth-century mortuary assemblages for continued use in seventh-century grave deposits. Frequently, the elements chosen, such as coin pendants, annular brooches, iron-bound buckets, and claw-beakers with in-line claws, were similar to objects found in the classical world, while "more emphatically Germanic items—long strings of amber beads, various sorts of brooches—were discarded" from the mortuary assemblage. At the same time, Roman items such as earrings and pierced gold work that were not found in Roman Britain are not part of these assemblages, while items of Frankish origin appear in Kent in the first part of the seventh century.[186] Most notably, grave-goods had varied by region throughout the fifth and sixth centuries in both their form and the forms of their assemblages. By *c.*580 in Kent and *c.*600 elsewhere, though, these distinctive groupings,

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[184] Edward James, "Burial and Status in the Early Medieval West," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 39, Fifth Series (January 1, 1989): 31.

[185] Helen Geake, *The Use of Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England, c.600-c.850*, BAR British Series 261 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1997), 75–76.

[186] Geake, *Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England*, 120.

especially those related to the *Tracht* or "deliberately constructed national [e.g. Anglian] costume" and particularly to female costume,[187] were "flattened" in favor of a standardized group of objects with a "Roman flavor" that became more Byzantine by mid-century before furnished burials virtually ceased in the first half of the eighth century.[188]

In summary, while furnished burial continued to be practiced after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons commenced, grave-goods increasingly were associated with the burial of women, and the material forms and assemblages that in the previous century had signified distinct cultural affiliations were increasingly homogenized as the seventh century progressed. Almost all of these burials were by inhumation, though cremation, while rare, continued to be practiced. Individual graves continued to be elaborated by earthworks and other structures, such as the canopies on wooden posts that covered two of the richest graves at the Mount Pleasant cemetery on Thanet.[189] The timing of these changes in mortuary practice makes them concurrent with Christian missionary activity among the Anglo-Saxons, and it also suggests that they were contingent upon that activity.

These changes in mortuary practice do not mean that seventh-century English clerics preached against burying the dead with weapons or other goods, or even that they tried to exert much control over burial at all unless it took place in the church or on its grounds. Their opportunities for exerting such control necessarily would have been

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[187] Geake, *Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England*, 107.

[188] Geake, *Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England*, 129–130.

[189] David Perkins, "Grave Dimensions and Structures," in Bennett et al., *At the Great Crossroads*, 293–294.

limited as churches were being built, but even once churches were established the supervision of the dead did not immediately move within the pastor's domain. For one thing, church burials remained rare, and new cemeteries continued to be located near settlements as well as near churches. At Caisor St Edmund in East Anglia, two Anglo-Saxon cemeteries that had been in use since the settlement was established in the fifth century were abandoned in the early seventh century when a church was founded within the Roman walls. Yet even though that church had (and still has today) its own burial ground, at the same time a new "final phase" cemetery was established outside the settlement's wall when the two earlier cemeteries were abandoned, and that cemetery was used until the eighth century.[190] This retention of a non-sectarian cemetery reinforces the likelihood that through much of the seventh century many burials in England remained directly under the control of families and kin rather than under the purview of the church. Burial by kin was the established Anglo-Saxon practice; as the excavations at Spong Hill have shown, the cremation of the dead was not done on the cemetery grounds but instead within the settlement and likely next to dwellings.[191] This is consistent with continental practices as well. Bonnie Effros asserts that it was not until the sixth and early seventh centuries that clerics on the continent began to use their position as those who performed the Christian funeral liturgy and had the authority to deny or allow the dead to be buried within the physical and (through excommunication) ideological domain of the church to

[190] Hoggett, "The Early Christian Landscape of East Anglia," 204–205.

[191] McKinley, "The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, Part VIII: The Cremations," 88.

wrest control over mortuary rites from families.[192] Such ecclesiastical control over burial would have come later to England, where church-sanctioned cemeteries were only just being created in the seventh century.

The survival of the practice of furnished burial over the seventh and early eighth centuries suggests that, in addition to the slow growth of cemeteries as Christian institutions, there was little pastoral opposition to the placing of items into the grave of those buried in community cemeteries. Two closely related reasons for this suggest themselves. First, as Patrick Wormald has pointed out, Anglo-Saxons elites depended on displaying their status and authority in culturally recognizable ways in order to maintain their and their families' place in society, and, while they were "willing to throw [their] traditions, customs, tastes and loyalties into the articulation of the new faith," in the case of burial they seem to have proceeded cautiously and waited until a suitable substitute for the deposition of grave-goods—possibly, something such as burial in a favored position in a churchyard or the use of grave markers—was available to them as part of the Christian care of the dead.[193] Second, the deposition of objects in the grave was a fundamental aspect of Anglo-Saxon mortuary practices, and those practices had religious as well as social significance. The prominent siting of cemeteries near settlements, the association of graves with features and forms (mounds, ring ditches) retained or copied from the past, the further association of those kinds of features with *hearg* naming elements that later came to mean "shrine," and, in some cases, the elaboration of graves

[192] Effros, "Beyond Cemetery Walls," 8–10.

[193] Patrick Wormald, "Bede, Beowulf and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy," in *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Robert T. Farrell, British Archaeological Reports 46 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1978), 57.

and inclusion of Christian burial goods in contexts that suggest the "privatization of the holy" by elite families that Peter Brown says lies at the origin of the cult of the saints[194] all argue for Anglo-Saxon burial marking something more that just the elevation of certain families' or kin groups' social status above that of others. Sally Crawford says that in the seventh century, burial may have even served to "convert" what had been pagan cemeteries to Christian, "reorienting" them just as high-status burials reoriented the cemetery at Saltwood. For example, the seventh-century burial of a woman with jewelry bearing Christian iconography in the Boss Hall cemetery in Ipswich, a cemetery that had fallen out of use before this burial revived it, may have represented the reclaiming of an ancestral burial ground "by Christians for whom the inclusion of jewelry and other artifacts in the grave was a natural [i.e., customary] way of expressing religious belief and devotion."[195]

Pastors in England did in time gain control of mortuary practice in a number of ways. Some seventh-century community cemeteries became the sites of churches, much as they had in British areas in the sixth century,[196] and the long use and rebuilding of English churches and development of their churchyards may in fact obscure these seventh-century origins.[197] In addition, both churchyard burial and the inscription of the names of the deceased in the *liber vitae* of monastic foundations served to bring

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[194] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 34.

[195] Sally Crawford, "Votive Deposition, Religion and the Anglo-Saxon Furnished Burial Ritual," *World Archaeology* 36, no. 1 (March 1, 2004): 95–98.

[196] Pearce and Swanton, "Lustleigh, South Devon," 140; Pryce, "Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Wales," 145–146.

[197] Hoggett, "The Early Christian Landscape of East Anglia," 204–205.

memorial within the purview of the church. One final hint of what burial meant to the Anglo-Saxons at the time of conversion also may be preserved in the eventual pastoral condemnation of the most visible elements of pre-Christian burial: the mounds and other earthworks with which those graves were associated. These places (and, notably, not the henges and other megalithic monuments that today are often thought of as pagan "temples" but which in fact were not commonly reused for Anglo-Saxon burials) that once served as foci for kin, status, and religious practice were damned by Ælfric and the compiler of the pseudo-Egbert penitential as sites where evil women and men went to speak with or raise the dead. After mounds ceased to be places for the burial for kin, they were used as places of execution.[198] It may be that, as Semple suggests, Anglo-Saxon clergy and laity both retained a belief that the dead continued to exist within the mounds in some manner, a belief analogous to the identification of upland Irish tomb sites as the hillforts of the *sidhe* after the settlements that once were once beside them moved into the lowlands, breaking their inhabitants' physical connection with the resting places of their ancestral kin.[199] Whether Christian pastors like Ælfric and the compilers of the penitentials thought that the dead lived on in the mounds within and around which they were buried, or whether they thought that demons took advantage of their English flock's traditions or memories, their pastoral warnings hint that some such Anglo-Saxon belief did persist.

Churches and Minsters

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[198] Sarah Semple, "A Fear of the Past: The Place of the Prehistoric Burial Mound in the Ideology of Middle and Later Anglo-Saxon England," *World Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (June 1, 1998): 115–118.

[199] Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, 46–48.

The persistence of an Anglo-Saxon belief that places could have connections to both the past and the numinous can be found in what Christian clergy in England built as well as what they preached. In the main, what pastors did in the first century of conversion was not to directly claim community cemeteries or ritual sites for Christianity but instead to create Christian places that overshadowed them and left their own significant associations with the English landscape. Semple says that the widespread pattern of reuse of sites that continued after the conversion, which included siting churches next to "hillforts, henges and stone circles" and building on Roman sites, indicates more than just that their builders took advantage of resources like cut stone from Roman ruins. In addition, this reuse represented a continuation of the Anglo-Saxon interest in and assignment of importance to places connected to ancestors, origins, and "long-term ritual and spiritual significance."[200] If "pagan" sites were put to Christian purposes, though, it was in a manner far more subtle and indirect than what might be imagined from Gregory's instructions to Mellitus to pull down the idols but preserve and consecrate the English "temples of idolatry" (*fana idolorum*) as places of Christian worship.[201] Richard Morris says that those medieval church sites whose names incorporate pagan sanctuary words (*hearg* and *wēoh*, *wīh*) or god names, which represent just over a quarter of all "pagan-named" English sites, have one of four additional characteristics. Some sites stood in prominent locations (which, as we have seen, themselves attracted *hearg* and *wēoh* naming elements); some were monastic settlements; some were associated with Roman remains; and a few have names associated with

[200] Semple, "In the Open Air," 33–35.

[201] *HE* i.30, 106.

specific tribal groups and may represent "the substitution of tribal minsters for tribal sanctuaries."[202] Only the second and last of these characteristics might indicate the reuse of an Anglo-Saxon pagan "temple" if such a thing existed, but nevertheless they all suggest ties to the kinds of associations that were important for establishing significant places in the Anglo-Saxon landscape. Being able to trace some kind of material temple-to-church continuity is not common, but neither is it necessary for understanding how Irish, Roman, and English clergy navigated the conceptual landscape of England as they decided where to build a church or monastery. Morris asserts that most ecclesiastical sites in England "represent decisions taken before the thirteenth century, sometimes long before, when churches were located in relation to other components of the pattern of settlement – roads, dwellings, cemeteries, fortifications, fields, earlier places of worship – some or all of which may since have been altered or disappeared."[203] All of those reasons for deciding where to put a church indicate the *place* of the church in the religious understanding of those involved.

This religious place continued to be a communal one, just as the pre-Christian cemeteries had been. Roughly over one hundred and fifty churches and one hundred monasteries or minsters are documented as having been founded in England before 800, though with some overlap as around forty of those separately named churches were likely associated with monasteries or minsters.[204] Most of the remaining churches may, as

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[202] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 65–69.

[203] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 3.

[204] Christopher Pickles, *Texts and Monuments: A Study of Ten Anglo-Saxon Churches of the pre-Viking Period*, BAR British Series 277 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 1999), 153–154; Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (per my count of listed foundations).

Morris suggests, represent those that were founded on royal or comital estates and were later identified as *ealdan mynstres*, "old minsters."[205] In the British areas of the island in the fifth and sixth centuries, churches and cemeteries alike had been established within the old *villae* estates, a practice that was "widespread in Gaul during the fifth and sixth centuries" and that may represent not only secular British landholders' "pragmatic reuse for monastic purposes of originally secular structures"[206] but also their provision of institutions from which pastoral services—in particular, of burial—could be provided to those who lived on or near these still-active agricultural settlements.[207] When the Anglo-Saxons took control in the third quarter of the sixth century of the areas that are now Dorset and Gloucestershire, they seem to have preserved links between churches and secular communities by preserving the boundaries of these British estates, which were contiguous with the parish boundaries of their churches as well, so that many minsters in the late seventh century had a *villa* in their parish.[208] Continuities exist as well at the site of the church of St. Mary Major in Exeter, which from end of the sixteenth century was assumed to be a Saxon minster. Its roots extended much deeper that that, though. Christopher Henderson and Paul Bidwell report that excavations at this site following the 1970 demolition of the church discovered "a long sequence of building activity [that] extended back to the early Roman period, when a large bath-house was erected within the

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[205] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 138–139.

[206] Blair, "Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Topographical Review," 240.

[207] Susan M. Pearce, "Estates and Church Sites in Dorset and Gloucestershire: The Emergence of a Christian Society," in *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland: Studies Presented to C. A. Ralegh Radford*, ed. Susan M. Pearce, BAR British Series 102 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1982), 117–118.

[208] Pearce, "Estates and Church Sites in Dorset and Gloucestershire," 133.

Neronian legionary fortress which preceded the Roman town of *Isca Dumnoniorum*." The area of the bathhouse later was covered by "the eastern corner of the basilica and forum complex of the town," while over the last of the Roman layers were found a sequences of burials, the three earliest of which were probably from the later fifth, the end of the seventh, and the middle of the eleventh centuries.[209] Again, conversion-era religious sites can reveal a long-established continuity encompassing both community and church.

Even without direct evidence of such continuity, though, we still find that those churches of the early period of conversion for which we have evidence either were associated with existing secular communities or themselves established settlements housing a lay population. Like the monastery at Portmahomack and the minsters that grew up in relation to *villa* sites in the southwestern Midlands, minsters throughout England appear most often to have been organized as independent settlements that had some significant number of non-clerical inhabitants. Even at the seventh- and eighth-century monastery at Wearmouth and Jarrow,[210] which may well have been less than typical in its austerity and its relative independence from royal or comital provisioning and influence, the first buildings at Wearmouth almost certainly were aligned with an already established settlement even though the monastery itself, as Cramp says, was designed "to invoke the [self-contained] plans of late-antique villas" rather than being

[209] Christopher G. Henderson and Paul T. Bidwell, "The Saxon Minster at Exeter," in *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland: Studies Presented to C. A. Ralegh Radford*, ed. Susan M. Pearce, BAR British Series 102 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1982), 148–150.

[210] Which, following Bede, is referred to here as a single entity when describing it as a monastic foundation and separately when describing the two physical locations of the monastery; Bede, *Vita sanctorum abbatum monasterii* [=*VA*], 7, in *Opera Historica*, 2:406.

oriented outward toward that settlement.[211] Despite that introspection, the religious community at Wearmouth did not shun its lay neighbors as the monastery's cemetery, which was established at the same time south of St Peter's Church, demonstrates. No sources even hint that Wearmouth and Jarrow was a double monastery housing both male and female clerics, but nevertheless around thirty-six percent of the graves in this cemetery for which the sex of those buried can be established were of females. Moreover, the cemetery was primarily segregated by sex, with most of the female burials located west of the "elaborately decorated covered walk or passage" that led south from and was contemporary with St Peter's Church.[212] In all, 107 adults and fifty-three sub-adults (numbering eleven adolescents, twenty-five children, and seventeen infants) were buried in the cemetery south of the church at Wearmouth during the monastery's existence.[213] Most of these female and infant graves are likely to represent the presence of a lay community nearby that was identified closely enough with the monastery for the grave yard associated with its church to serve as their place of burial.

Not everyone who was buried at a monastery lived there, of course. A row of graves close to the southwest corner of the church at Wearmouth contains the only female burials identified in the segregated male side of the cemetery, and "the only example of gold thread" found on the site "came from a disturbed burial in that area."[214] It is

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[211] Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 1:111.

[212] Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 1:98.

[213] Rosemary Cramp and Susan McNeil, "The Wearmouth Burial Ground," in Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 1:84.

[214] Rosemary Cramp and Susan McNeil, "The Wearmouth Burial Ground," in Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 1:88.

undisputed that, as the history and hagiography of the period describe, the wealthy and powerful among the Anglo-Saxon donated land and wealth to ecclesiastical foundations and were often buried in those foundations' cemeteries in return. In Wales, high-ranking individuals were buried in churchyards no later than the ninth or tenth century, while an eighth-century charter records "the gift of the donor's body to the recipient church for burial."[215] This is not too far removed in practice from the association of the graves of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon elites with earthworks and other significant places, but with one key conceptual difference: in most cases, the burials of these secular elites does not make the site of burial significant but instead draws on the significance and sacredness inherent in a Christian ecclesiastical location.[216] Even those churches, minsters and monasteries that were established with royal support were proximate to rather than contiguous with the centers of royal power,[217] and this was especially so in the first century of conversion when that power centered on the king, his followers, and his moveable wealth rather than on a particular place of residence. Yeavering is frequently interpreted as a "royal center" and associated with Edwin of Northumbria, but as we have seen that site had served as a center of power for centuries before Edwin made use of it. Though Bede depicts hero-bishops like Wilfrid and Paulinus on the move with the royal retinue and with their own, it is nonetheless clear that pastors in England established and associated themselves with settlements that were *places* of power.

The places where pastors founded churches and minsters drew their sacred

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[215] Pryce, "Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Wales," 43–45.

[216] Oswald of Northumbria's tomb at Bardney would seem to be an exception, but Bede clearly casts Oswald as a martyr rather than as a secular leader; *HE* iii.2, 214–218.

[217] *HE* iii.11, 246.

character from a number of sources. *Romanitas* was one, and the influence of Roman models is as clear in such things as the creation and decoration of manuscripts as it is in the adoption of Roman styles of jewelry. However, like those changes in grave-goods that Geake describes, this adoption of Roman styles seems to reflect participation in a broader sphere of cultural influence as much as it does any antiquarian impulse on the part of Roman or "Romanized" clergy in England.[218] Early Anglo-Saxon Christian foundations may overlay Roman Christian structures in part because of continuity of settlement rather than out of any conscious attempt to reestablish Roman sites. Ten of the eighteen episcopal sees in England established in the seventh and eighth centuries were in formerly Roman locations,[219] and most seventh- and eighth-century minsters lay within Roman enclosures.[220] While the Anglo-Saxon church at Wells lay above a Roman grave chamber that likely contained an elevated shrine of timber construction, that location also shows signs of Neolithic as well Roman settlement that spans the entire Roman period from 70 C.E. on.[221] This grave chamber beneath the eighth-century minster, like the one at Poundbury in Dorchester, was likely a Roman Christian family mausoleum whose origins was unknown by the Anglo-Saxon period but whose location appears to have retained enough of a "memory of Christian sanctity" that, when it was destroyed in the later Anglo-Saxon period, it was to permit the construction of a mortuary chapel. That

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[218] Warwick Rodwell, "From Mausoleum to Minster: The Early Development of Wells Cathedral," in *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland: Studies Presented to C. A. Ralegh Radford*, ed. Susan M. Pearce, BAR British Series 102 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1982), 50.

[219] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 8–9.

[220] John Blair, "Minster Churches in the Landscape," in *Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, ed. Della Hooke (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1988), 35–36.

[221] Rodwell, "From Mausoleum to Minster," 50–52.

chapel was in turn spared to become a Lady chapel when the rest of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral was torn down in 1196. Similar continuities of memory may underlie other among the oldest Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical foundations, including that of St Albans.[222]

Because English communal religious foundations were most often endowed and supported by kings and other Anglo-Saxon elites, it is tempting to focus on their places in economic and social networks. That place is evident; the textual sources give the impression of a steady proliferation of minsters from the mid-seventh century until the beginning of the ninth century, each initially endowed with land and wealth and subsequently enriched by further gifts from kings and other lay people. Sarah Foot reminds us that these minsters could be founded by the elite as a display of wealth or in order to gain status (in imitation of the kings that had made the initial endowments), and that the stone buildings of these monasteries, which represented a technology new to the Anglo-Saxons, lent monumentality and a sense of permanence to that display.[223] Though Bede's letter to Egbert condemned them, some monasteries were undoubtedly secular, founded by families whose members served as monastic leaders, while the estate churches that later became the "old minsters" were likely *Eigenkirchen* as well.[224] As seen at Portmahomack, monasteries served as centers of craft production, and as Bede's account of Benedict Biscop's provision of glass workers for the monastery at Jarrow indicates they were also places from which the technical knowledge of crafts was

[222] Rodwell, "From Mausoleum to Minster," 55–56.

[223] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 76–79.

[224] Wormald, "Bede, Beowulf and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy," 50–52.

promulgated.[225] Cramp asserts that excavation at both monastic and secular sites make it clear that monasteries must have had enough surplus to trade for imported goods, and there is some indication of specialized production and exchange among monasteries in such things as glass, metalwork, and textiles.[226] A religious economy like the one that Comber proposes as having existed among monastic sites in Ireland seems to have been active among English minsters and monasteries as well.

Monasteries may have provided Anglo-Saxon elites with discernable material and political advantages, both as producers of wealth and possibly as a means of safely claiming through religious settlement areas that might otherwise serve as power bases for rivals.[227] Nevertheless, whatever their material and political advantages, the religious communities that Christian pastors founded and occupied in England were not primarily craft centers or places for the display of wealth and power. Instead, much as cemeteries had done for pre-Christian Anglo-Saxons, they served as fixed sacred places that provided a location for favored burials, and in a new development they also housed living communities that were associated with the sacred. While certainly the importation of craftsmen from the continent to build and adorn monastic buildings displayed the wealth of an ecclesiastical foundation and its donor, the English were not blockheads who needed glass and metal and stone in order to ascribe significance to such a foundation. Before Christianity, the Anglo-Saxons had anchored their places with religious meaning in the landscape—primarily, the places where they buried their dead—by associating

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[225] *VA* V, 2:400–402.

[226] Cramp, "A Reconsideration of the Monastic Site of Whitby," 71.

[227] Blair, "Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Topographical Review," 240–241.

them with features of natural and man-made prominence and frequently by locating them near settlements. These new Christian religious foundations drew from a symbolic repertory as wide and as rooted in the past as that of the pagan ones they replaced. Part of that past was English, but part of it was surely Roman as well. Luisa Izzi has shown, the churches founded by Wilfrid at Ripon and Hexham included passage crypts that appear to have been designed for processions like those he may have seen practiced at Rome in the catacomb *basilicae* that reached the peak of their development in the early seventh century. Wilfrid's churches not only reuse Roman building material but also appear to have emphasized that material's epigraphy and decoration through the application of plaster, gesso, and paint.[228] Other influences shaped English Christian foundations as well; for example, the free-standing "plain" crosses (undecorated stone crosses with incised outlines) that are found at Whitby, Jarrow, Hexham, and Carlisle reflect not only earlier wooden prototypes but also Merovingian funerary monuments of the period.[229]

Sarah Foot has said that the most prevalent influence on the physical layout of monasteries and minsters built in England during the first centuries of conversion was topography, the buildings and structures already present on the selected sites, and proximity to the lay settlement and the agricultural terrain that sustained the community.[230] In this, they were little different from the cemeteries and other, less tangible sites to which the pagan Anglo-Saxons had ascribed religious significance.

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[228] Luisa Izzi, "Wilfrid of York as a Promoter of Ideas and Models of *Romanitas* to Anglo-Saxon England" (paper presented at the 46th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 14, 2011).

[229] Cramp, "A Reconsideration of the Monastic Site of Whitby," 68–70.

[230] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 47.

Unlike those sites, though, these Christian places in England housed the living as well as they dead and presented the English with something new: a pastor who lived and worked in these places of religious power and significance. As burial moved from the cemeteries of the secular community to the grave-yards that housed the holy dead and were associated with churches where the rites of their religion were practiced, religious practice and significance reoriented away from the living and ancestral communities and toward the significant secular (and religious) dead and the pastors who were the agents controlling and teaching that religion. In addition, as the evidence for the large-scale production of parchment at the monastic site at Portmahomack demonstrates, text and the production of manuscripts was part of this new Christian religious significance as well. The next chapter concludes this look at pastoral care and English society by considering what texts pastors may have created and employed in the first two and a half centuries of Anglo-Saxon Christianity.

CHAPTER 5: THE PASTOR IN THE FIELDS OF THE WORLD: PASTORAL TEXTS IN THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

Pastoral Care and Early English Community

Before considering what the texts and manuscripts produced and used in England from the end of the sixth century until the mid-ninth century reveal about the practice of pastoral care, let us take stock of what this study has shown so far about the nature of Christian pastoral authority and its interaction with society and see how those things apply in England during this period. First, while it may be possible to question how important long-term interaction between pastors and those they led was for effecting religious change on a cultural level, the fact remains that pastors and followers always had interacted within community settings. From the earliest communities revealed in New Testament writings, the letters of Clement and Ignatius, and the *Didache*, to the monastic settlements and minsters of Ireland, Britain, and England, and even to the modern mission to the Tobelo of Indonesia described in chapter two, clerics have lived proximate to and almost always as part of the societies they sought to convert and lead.

Second, the pastoral authority that developed in the Church's first five centuries and shaped the understanding English pastors had of themselves and their roles was one that adapted to secular needs while remaining based in and justified by Christian doctrine. Those doctrines of ecclesiastical structure and leadership had developed out of both post-Second Temple Jewish synagogue communities and Christianity's apostolic and evangelical impetus, so that in the *Didache* the bishops as representative community leaders were afforded the same level of respect given to the charismatic prophets and teachers of the church, while in Ignatius's letters the bishop combined the prophets'

status and authority with those of presbyterial leadership to create the basis for a pastoral role. The community remained central to this conception of pastoral leadership. While in later centuries the diocese was defined as a "catchment area" of religious institutions for which its bishop was responsible,[1] there remained at the same time the sense of the bishop or abbot as the *paterfamilias* of those with whom he had a direct familial connection.

Did that familial framework extend to providing pastoral care to all of those associated with English religious communities, including lay members and neighbors? It seems unlikely that the spiritual needs of members of the lay community at a foundation like Wearmouth and Jarrow were ignored, given that some of the laity were buried in proximity to the monastery's church (albeit for the most part in their own section of the cemetery). Moreover, Bede, whose work is so closely tied to this monastery and its scriptorium, in his festival sermons welcomed to the church visiting "brethren" who may have been of the monastery's associated laity.[2] Preaching extended outside of the monasteries and their Latin literacy as well; in his letter to Egbert, Bede tells the bishop to ordain priests and appoint teachers in order to provide pastoral care to the whole of his diocese through preaching in both Latin and English.[3] Gervase Rosser says that even a text as dedicated to monastic reform as the tenth-century *Regularis concordia* "assumes a

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[1] as affirmed by the Council of Chalcedon in 451; John Philip Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 24 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1987), 37.

[2] Alan Thacker, "Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe, Studies in the Early History of Britain (Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, 1992), 141.

[3] Bede, *Epistola ad Ecgberctum* cap. 5, in *Bede: Opera historica*, 2:252–254.

regular presence of lay parishioners at mass in the monastery" to such an extent as to strongly suggests regular lay participation in monastic liturgical celebrations before these reforms as well.[4] Though minsters and monasteries were clearly set apart as Christian places, that does not mean that they were closed to the laity (even though their most sacred areas may have been restricted as they were in Ireland). Not only bishops, but also priests and deacons associated with churches and minsters appear to have served active roles in bringing Christianity to those around them.

This "minster hypothesis," which asserts that English minsters and monasteries both provided pastoral care to lay populations and formed the basis for the tenth- and eleventh-century development of the parochial church system, is one that has sparked considerable debate.[5] In 1995, Eric Cambridge and David Rollason argued that the minsters founded in the first two and a half centuries of English Christianity did not become sites for later central parish churches; instead, they said that those later churches were associated with contemporary shrines of relic cults and with centers for secular administration rather than reflecting any pre- to post-Viking continuity between minster and parish.[6] While their caution is valuable, their argument that the scarcity of direct evidence for organized pastoral efforts based in minsters means that any pastoral care offered by those associated with minsters was both exceptional and of little consequence is less tenable. In its

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[4] Gervase Rosser, "The Cure of Souls in English Towns before 1000," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe, Studies in the Early History of Britain (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 270.

[5] Summarized succinctly by Sarah Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England, c.600–900* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 287–288.

[6] Eric Cambridge and David Rollason, "Debate: The Pastoral Organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church: A Review of the 'Minster Hypothesis'," *Early Medieval Europe* 4, no. 1 (1995): 102–103.

defense, they contend that if Bede had considered pastoral care to be the purview of monastic foundations, he would have recommend that Egbert reform the so-called false monasteries "so as to make them perform pastoral functions"—a strange claim given that Bede clearly thinks that these were in fact secular communities "founded under the pretense" of being monastic ones so as to provide their founders with land without the concomitant secular or religious responsibility.[7] Bede can hardly be expected to advocate that fraud be made over as truth. Furthermore, Cambridge and Rollason's citation of Catherine Cubitt's examination of early English pastoral care as expressed on the canons of the 747 Councils of *Clofesho* as significant in its failure to assign a pastoral role to *monasteria* appears to miss one of her main points, which is that these canons "are concerned not with institutions but with office. *Pastoral duties are not portrayed as devolving upon organizations and communities, but upon individuals by virtue of their ordination*" (emphasis mine).[8] Provision of the pastoral care that we have emphasized as important for social change—that is, evangelization, instruction, and correction leading to *conversio* both to Christianity and to Christian mores—might have been provided by those who held a range of clerical orders, many if not most of whom lived in ecclesiastical communities.

In the end, this debate about pastoral care and the earliest minsters centers on the meaning of minster or *monasterium* and on whether that term primarily denoted a community whose focus was inward toward liturgy and contemplation rather than one

[7] "sub praetextu monasteriorum construendorum"; Bede, *Epistola ad Ecgberctum* cap. 12, 2:470–471; Cambridge and Rollason, "A Review of the'Minster Hypothesis'," 94–95.

[8] Catherine Cubitt, "Pastoral Care and Conciliar Canons: The Provisions of the 747 Council of *Clofesho*," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, 1992), 205.

that also focused outward toward pastoral intervention in the surrounding world. Given that the evidence discussed in the previous chapter points to the overlapping nature of minster/monastery and community, that the involvement of monks in pastoral care in Gaul (where it would seem that institutions of pastoral care would be for firmly established than in England) was common enough for Carolingian authorities to legislate against it, and that "minster" as a generic term denoted a broad and eclectic range of English community based ecclesiastical foundations created out of the same impetus that drove the seventh-century evangelization of England,[9] then some of English foundations' members surely provided pastoral care to their neighbors. In her 1992 look at monastic terminology in early Anglo-Saxon England, Foot says that this is likely in part because "writers from the early Anglo-Saxon period saw no apparent contradiction in the expression of religious devotion through the dual roles of action and contemplation," so that "if the *cura animarum* were solely the responsibility of those ordained to [episcopal and presbyterial] orders, this would surely have been stated explicitly.[10] She expands on this in her later book on English monasticism from the seventh through ninth centuries when she says that administration of pastoral care and the practice of monastic contemplation were not "mutually exclusive activities" in these early centuries of English Christianity because "Anglo-Saxon minster communities led mixed lives, encompassing a diverse range of religious ideals worked out through a variety of practices suited to their

[9] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 286.

[10] Sarah Foot, "Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Review of Terminology," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 224.

own circumstances."[11] Though the reach of these communities was likely limited at first, their engagement with the world around them was evident as well.

As noted, part of that engagement was through preaching, and to preach effectively meant to be versed in Christian doctrine. Bede said that those near Augustine's foundation at Canterbury were drawn by the monk's way of living, their liturgical practice, and their preaching.[12] Knowledge of Christian doctrine came from Christian texts, so it is not surprising that the procurement and provision of manuscripts was also part of many minsters' activities. Let us look at how those texts may have supported pastoral care.

English Manuscripts from the Seventh through the Mid-Ninth Centuries

While it is impossible to say for certain how many manuscripts were used and produced in England from the seventh through the mid-ninth centuries, attempts have been made to estimate the scope of medieval manuscript production and to determine how much of that production still survive. Working from the extensive sampling and statistical analysis of data sets drawn from surviving manuscripts from 500–1500, Eltjo Buringh has claimed an average loss rate for medieval manuscripts of twenty-five percent per century before the twelfth century, with higher losses during the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries because of factors including the intentional destruction of manuscripts as part of the print revolution.[13] Based on these data, Buringh has calculated

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[11] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, 291–292.

[12] *HE* i.26, 76.

[13] Eltjo Buringh, *Medieval Manuscript Production in the Latin West: Explorations with a Global Database* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 226 table 4.6.

that as many as 14,507 manuscripts were produced in Ireland and Britain in the sixth through the ninth century;[14] in contrast, the database used for this chapter, which is derived from Helmut Gneuss's handlist corrected and supplemented by later addenda and corrigenda,[15] shows that 253 of the manuscripts produced in those centuries survive, often in fragmentary form. Figure 5.1 on the next page shows a graphical representation of a group those surviving manuscripts that has been selected to highlight ones that might have provided material supporting pastoral care. It is sorted into the following six categories:[16]

1) Biblical manuscripts, including Gospel books, Old and New Testaments, and psalters.
2) Biblical commentaries and other theological works
3) "Cosmological" and encyclopedic works specifically addressing the "nature of the world" and ontological concerns, in particular the works of Isidore of Seville
4) Works closely related to pastoral concerns, primarily books of private prayer and Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis*
5) Hagiographic works
6) Works concerned with ecclesiastical issues, including *regulae* and collections of canons

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[14] Buringh, *Medieval Manuscript Production in the Latin West*, 250 and 262 table 5.6.

[15] Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001); "Addenda and Corrigenda to the Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts," *Anglo-Saxon England* 32 (2003): 293–305.

[16] These categories are based on categories drawn from earlier catechetical works, as shown in figure 5.2 on page 217.

Figure 5.1 Manuscripts related to pastoral care that were produced and used in England before the mid-ninth century.

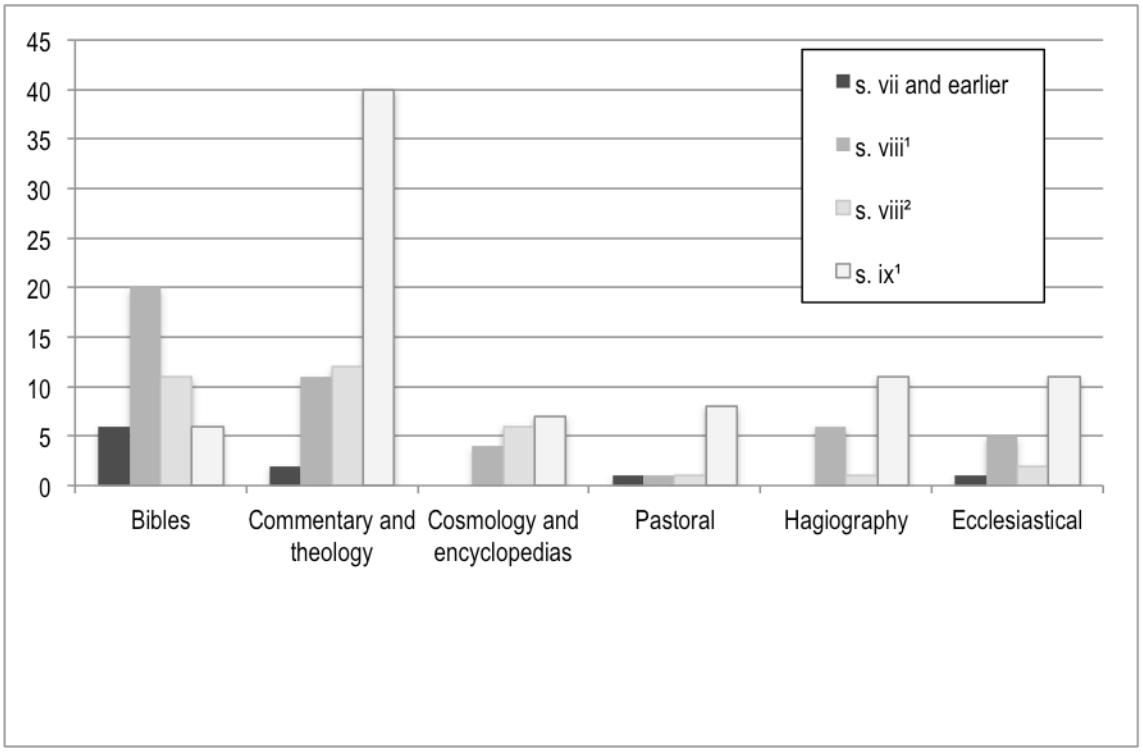

Figure 5.1 displays the count of items in each of these categories first for seventh-century and earlier document and then by half-century for the eighth and the first part of the ninth centuries—a schema that, while uneven in terms of chronological periods, does provide a more detailed look at production during these centuries. By way of comparison, Buringh calculates that 1107 manuscripts were produced in Ireland and England during the sixth and seventh centuries, of which ten survive and are represented in the database. He further calculates that 5474 manuscripts were produced during the eighth century versus seventy-six in this database (fourth-eight in the first half of the century and twenty-eight in the second), while 7926 were produced during the ninth century of which

101 are given in this database as being in England by the middle of that century.[17] Manuscripts were not simply lost or preserved at random, of course. Those that were the most valued and the most valuable, such as the great illuminated Anglo-Saxon Gospel books (many of which date from the seventh century), might be preserved far longer than something like a sacramentary that was used frequently and replaced when its condition or changes in liturgical practice warranted. By itself, a large number of Gospel books does not mean that more of those were produced over these centuries—only that more of them were preserved. Moreover, manuscript loss in England during the ninth century was almost certainly much larger than the average Buringh has calculated because of the destruction of minsters and churches and their libraries as the result of the Scandinavian attacks. Given these issues, any examination of the surviving English manuscripts from the seventh through the mid-ninth centuries must be a qualitative endeavor even if it is carried out within a broadly quantitative framework.

One way to examine this body of text is to compare categories and genres of works from the early English and other periods in order to determine what may have been available and useful to pastors in the early centuries of English Christianity. Such an exercise can highlighting those items that are noteworthy for their contents, their presentation, and in some cases even their absence from the early English corpus. The following example takes an examination of catechetical material from the fourth and early fifth centuries—that is, from the century following the Edict of Milan during which the church regularly received adult converts—as a starting point for understanding the part texts supporting pastoral care may have played during the seventh and eight

[17] Buringh, *Medieval Manuscript Production in the Latin West*, 262 table 5.6.

centuries when the Christianity in England faced much the same task.

Texts and Pastoral Care: Conversion and Catechesis

In earlier centuries, adults underwent a formal period of instruction before receiving baptism and entering fully into the church. This pre-baptismal catechesis was addressed in the church orders discussed in Chapter Three and in sermons that presented to candidates such topics as the meaning of the Nicene and other creeds, the refutation of heresies, and the demonstration of how the Old Testament prefigures the New. However, the practice of adult catechesis had been largely abandoned by the end of the fifth century as infant baptism became the norm, so preparing a number of adult English converts for baptism must have presented a challenge. How pastors prepared those converts is also a pressing question, for though catechetical sermons survive from the fourth and early fifth centuries, those sermons do not appear to have been brought to England in the seventh century (or even much later). Still, baptism did not become merely the ritual marking of the adoption of a new social and religious identity in the absence of these texts. Not only would such neglect have conflicted with the pastoral mandate under which these clergy operated, but also many of the topics explored in those earlier catechetical sermons also appeared in the Early English corpus.

Focusing on catechetical instruction in either the seventh and eighth centuries or the fourth and fifth implies that those accepted for baptism must to some extent have learned Christian doctrine before becoming Christian. Such instruction was not all that happened during the pre-baptismal period, though. In his study of baptismal kinship in the early Middle Ages, Joseph Lynch says that this period was not the time for "a short course in

theology" but instead one during which the candidate's commitment to Christian behavior was evaluated and his or her ritual purification was undertaken.[18] Third- and fourth-century church orders emphasize the exorcism and scrutiny of candidates as part of their preparation for baptism. Some, like the late-fourth century *Apostolic Constitutions*, also detail how those who present themselves to become candidates for baptism were to be examined first, so that those with demons might be purified before being received as candidates while those who employed in forbidden vocations, such as prostitutes and actors, might be told that they must leave those vocations.[19] Some commitment to what was identified as Christian behavior as well as to Christian learning was clearly necessary for these early candidates for baptism.

At the same time, church orders and other evidence shows that instruction in doctrine was explicitly a component of this period of preparation as well. The *Apostolic Constitutions* says that those who were to receive Christian initiation were to be taught about the triune nature of God, the order of creation, the spiritual economy of sin and salvation, and the moral precepts of the Church.[20] In addition, many of the most active and erudite pastors and scholars of the fourth century, including Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nyssa, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Augustine of Hippo, wrote sermons and treatises that engaged the question of what was necessary to teach adults approaching baptism. In his *De catechizandis rudibus* written to advise the Carthaginian deacon

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[18] Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 88.

[19] *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.32.6–9, in Marcel Metzger, ed., *Les Constitutions Apostoliques* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1985), III:237-239.

[20] *Apostolic Constitutions* VII.39.2, III:93.

Deogratias, Augustine recommended that the catechist consider his listeners and neither bore those already well-versed in liberal studies nor neglect "the rules of sound doctrine, whether concerning faith, or morals, or temptations."[21] Instruction, then, was undoubtedly part of the preparation for baptism.

When comparing texts supporting in catechesis in this earlier period with those used in England, though, we need to remember the different contexts for these conversions. Unlike the common experience of early candidates for baptism in England, the fourth- and fifth-century Romans who asked to enter the church were almost certain to have had considerable contact with its rites and beliefs already. Many of them became *catechumens*, or "hearers" who attended Christian rituals but were dismissed before the start of the Eucharistic rite, and remained so for years before choosing to become one of the *electus* or *competentes* who sought baptism. The *Apostolic Constitution* says that those who did choose to go forward dedicated three years to that preparation, though it qualifies that period as dependent upon the candidates' behavior rather than merely on their time spent preparing.[22] The seventh-century mission to England appears to have approached conversion with a greater sense of urgency than this; certainly, no Anglo-Saxon kings had to wait so long to be baptized. Even in the earlier period, though, the time spent in preparation and instruction clearly varied from place to place. The itinerate late fourth-century nun Egeria wrote to her sisters that at Jerusalem, *competentes* participated in purification rituals and instruction for three hours a day during the forty

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[21] Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* IX, in *Aurelii Augustini Opera pars XIII, 2*, ed. I. B. Bauer, vol. 46, *CCSL* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 136.

[22] *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.32.16, III:239–241.

days of Lent as they prepared for baptism at Easter.[23]

Egeria wrote that it was the bishop of Jerusalem whose chair was placed in the Great Church of Jerusalem each morning so that he could deliver to the *competentes* and whomever among the church's baptized members wished to attend catechetical sermons on God's law, the whole of the Bible, and the Creed.[24] As we have stressed, teaching was part of the clergy's pastoral mandate. Peter Brown has said that the holy men of Late Antiquity fulfilled two roles, as "Christ-carrier" and as a representative of the "central value system" of Roman Christianity,[25] and catechetical instruction can be seen as the fulfillment of both those roles. Christian pastors taught the components of a soteriological system that included understanding the nature of both sin and salvation, the specific behavioral precepts to which their followers should adhere, and, by word and example, the nature of ecclesiastical authority. Their catechetical teaching was designed to train those being baptized how to demonstrate both the internal understanding of and the external compliance to the Christian world-view that had developed in the Roman world.

Figure 5.2 on the next page shows some of the major catechetical works of the fourth century and the topics they taught. Beginning with the earliest, before he became that city's bishop Cyril of Jerusalem (c.313–c.387) delivered a series of twenty-three catechetical sermons that spanned the weeks before and the days immediately after the Easter celebration of baptism. These sermons begin by placing salvation within a universal context, not only talking about God and about Christ's salvation, but also

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[23] Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe*, 102.

[24] Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe*, 102.

[25] Peter Brown, "The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity," *Representations*, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 15–16, 18.

Figure 5.2 Major catechetical works for the fourth and early fifth centuries and the topics they cover.

	Cyril of Jerusalem (c.313–386) C=catechetical sermons (pre-baptism) M="mystagogic" sermons (post-baptism)	Gregory of Nyssa (c.335–395)	Theodore of Mopsuestia (*Liber ad Baptizandos* 1 on the Nicene Creed) (c.350–428)	Augustine of Hippo (354–430)
The nature of God and "cosmology"	C4, C6-18	*Catechetical Discourse* 1–8	I, II, III, IV, V (nature of the soul), VI, VIII, IX, X	*De catechezndis rudibus* 5, 6, 7, 24, 28–45, 46–47
Soteriology	*Protocatechesis* (introduction) C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C12-15, C18, M2	*Cat.Disc.* 9–40	I, II, V, VI, VII, VIII, X	*Cat.rud.* 7, 8, 10, 20–23, 26-28, **52**
Orthodoxy	C4, C6, C15, C18, M2–5	*Cat.Disc.* 38–39 (trinity)	I, III (strongly pro-Nicene), IV, V, IX, X	*Cat.rud.* 11, 12
Textual/ Scriptural	C4, C12–13, C15, C16, C18		I, IV,	*Cat.rud.* 5, 6, 10, 12* (recommending Scripture [*canonicis literaris*] to the educated), 13, 28-45, 53–54
Moral and ethical	*Protocat.*			*Cat.rud.* 9 (motive for conversion), 11, 13, 25, 48–49, 55
Orthopraxy	M2–5			*Cat.rud.* 11, 50
Ecclesiology	C18		III, IV (authority of church fathers), X (creed ["one catholic church'] and baptism)	*Cat.rud.* 12, 43–45
Creedal formation	C6-C18 (uses Jerusalem Creed)		Throughout	covered in *Sermone De Symbolo*

presenting man as a being of both body and soul for whom sin is "an evil springing up

from within."[26] After this introduction, Cyril conducts a clause-by-clause examination of the creed used in Jerusalem, explaining that this formula, which was to be memorized by the candidate and not written out, summed up in a few lines the faith of the newly baptized and was to be reserved for them alone.[27] Orthodoxy and orthopraxy are also important subjects for the catechist, and the sixth of his sermons details and condemns pagan faiths and Christian heresies alike, warning that "the polytheistic error of the Greeks" was based in their practice of idolatry while some heresies arose from the Manicean error of dividing God into "good and evil."[28] Finally, Cyril is straightforward about what constitutes the Christian behavior expected of those who undergo baptism; along with avoiding false doctrines, they are to dress plainly, to practice chastity and temperance, and to not use pagan amulets to treat illness.[29] It is easy to imagine, however, that lengthy discussions of proper dress and behavior were unnecessary in the fourth-century catechetical context. Not only would *competentes* already have been subject to a great deal of scrutiny about such matters, but also they likely would have heard preaching about and felt social pressure to conform to particular standards of behavior for some time before they chose to seek baptism. Thought the behavior of Christians was certainly important, it does not appear from these catechetical works that good Christian behavior (which was increasingly good Roman behavior, after all) was a major subject of

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[26] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 2.2, in *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, trans. Leo P McCauley and Anthony A Stephenson (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1969), 110.

[27] *Catechesis* 5.12, in *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, 146. It is ironic that we likely owe the survival of Cyril's sermons to some of his listeners' willingness to disregard the letter of the law and record his sermons in shorthand; Anthony A. Stephenson, "General Introduction," in *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, 1.

[28] *Catechesis* 6.10-12, in *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, 155.

[29] *Catechesis* 4.24–27, 29, 36, in *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, 131–137.

discussion for those preparing to be baptized.

In fact, these fourth-century catechists focused less on what candidates should do than on what they must understand. One area of focus for their teaching was the nature of God and especially the Nicene formulation under which Christ was conceived as being *homoousios* with the Father. The contentious theological landscape of the fourth century makes this emphasis on theological orthodoxy understandable, but its perhaps more surprising that catechists often took care to describe all of creation, the nature of the soul, and other cosmological matters in ways that supported that orthodoxy as well. Augustine's model catechetical sermon for the uneducated[30] details the world and its history in a way that not only establishes God as Creator but also underscores the soteriological interpretation of Old and New Testament scripture. This interpretation is also the focus of Gregory of Nyssa's *Catechetical Discourse*, a work designed to provide catechists themselves with orthodox arguments with which they could counter the religious ideas of Judaism, Greek polytheism, Gnosticism, and various Christian heresies,[31] while the first five chapters of Theodore of Mopsuestia's catechetical sermon based on the Nicene Creed. Cyril, Theodore, and Augustine also devoted considerable attention to establishing the divine nature and validity of the canonical scriptures, especially in contrast to other wisdom writings the catechist's hearers may have known. We should remember that the urban and educated fourth-century world in which these pastors worked was one of urban churches with established clergy and congregations.

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[30] Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* 24, in *The First Catechetical Instruction: De Catechizandis rudibus*, trans. Joseph Patrick Christopher (Westminster, MD: The Newman Bookshop, 1946), 52.

[31] *Catechetical Discourse*, "Prologue," in Gregory of Nyssa, *Discours Catéchétique*, ed. Ekkehard Mühlenberg, trans. Raymond Winling, Sources Chrétiennes 453 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2000), 137–139.

Church members, both baptized and unbaptized, lived in a social and political world that was increasingly identified as Christian but in which a plurality of active religious beliefs and practices still had influence. Concern about this is reflected in the catechetical material these pastors produced.

In contrast, the chronic scantiness of English sources has led some to conclude that kings and their followers learned little apart from "a vernacular version of the creed," the verbal assent to which they say would have satisfied the requirement for baptism.[32] The earliest extant creedal text in England (the *Quicunque vult* or Athanasian Creed) did not appear until the middle of the eighth century according to Helmut Gneuss's invaluable handlist, while the earliest Old English gloss on that creed does not appear until the mid-ninth century.[33] Moreover, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* indicates that more than the Creed was taught to candidates for baptism. Book I's account of the conversion Æthelberht of Kent says that it was only after Augustine and his party had established themselves in Canterbury and demonstrated their way of life to the English that the king agreed to be baptized and "learned from his teachers and guides in the way of salvation that the service of Christ was voluntary."[34] Likewise, Edwin of Northumbria, who Bede praises as a man of "great natural perception" (*vir natura sagacissimus*) was not "at once and indiscreetly willing to accept the mysteries of the Christian faith" (*non statim et inconsulte sacramenta fidei Christianae percipere voluit*) but instead made it his first

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[32] Nicholas Higham, *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 18.

[33] In British Library Cotton Vespasian A.1; Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, s.v. 381, 70.

[34] *HE* i.26, 78.

priority to learn diligently and at length (*uerum primo diligentius ex tempore … ediscere*) to learn the Christian faith from Bishop Paulinus before he agreed to be baptized.[35] Bede indicates in these passages that instruction preceded baptism as well a that such instruction likely was not limited to mere assent to the Creed given his praise for diligence and care in that learning.

As already noted, though, these English candidates for baptism likely did not hear the detailed and systematic fourth-century catechetical sermons written by Cyril of Jerusalem and others, for those works do not appear among the sources for England's early history. Theodore of Mopsuestia is represented in the corpus of English manuscripts before 1100 only by mid-eighth century fragment of his commentaries on the Pauline epistles, which likely did not reach England until around 800,[36] while nothing of Cyril's is found at all. Augustine, of course, was an important source for Bede, Aldhelm, and many other English scholars, but neither his sermon on the Creed nor his *Catechizandis rudibus* survive among those manuscripts made and used in Anglo-Saxon England.

However, even though they do not include these specifically catechetical works, the surviving English manuscripts do demonstrate that clergy performing evangelism and pastoral care could have drawn upon a number of sources to support their explication of many of the same subjects that were important to earlier catechists as well as some that had particular significance in the Insular context. One of these subjects is the nature of God and the cosmos, the importance of which is reflected in a number of grammatical

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[35] *HE* ii.9, 166–167.

[36] Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 17177 ff.5–12; Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, s.v 900.5, 138.

and encyclopedic works such as Isidore of Seville's *Synonyma*[37] and *Differentia* and works on the nature of the time and the world such as Bede's *De temporem ratione*. If the famous anecdote in "the swallow in the hall" from Bede's account of Edwin's of Northumbria's meeting with his *comitatus* in advance of accepting conversion is taken to reflect not only an Anglo-Saxon desire to know about the Christian conceptions of what comes "before" and "after" temporal life but also concern for the related conceptions of the nature of seen and unseen world, then such material may certainly have been valuable resources supporting pastors and catechesis.

Along with Isidore and Bede, another text that seems to evoke these sorts of concerns is the *De Ordine creaturarum* of "Pseudo-Isidore," an Irish text of the end of the sixth century whose two main recensions descend from manuscripts produced in Northumbria in the second quarter of the seventh.[38] *De Ordine creaturarum* begins with a explication of the Trinity and then presents a systematic description of creation from the outside in, from the heavens through the elements and the earth to the corporeal fires of Hell. This text, like the similarly cosmological *De Mirabilibus sacrae scripturae* of 664–665,[39] were both commissioned works that "allude to discussions on the subject" of the nature of the created world among their authors' fellows, and like the catechetical sermons they explored and explained the created world in a way that explained the nature

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[37] which survives in a copy that includes a scratched Old English gloss; Würzburg Universitätsbibltothek M.p.th.f.79, in Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, s.v. 946, 146.

[38] Manuel C Diaz y Diaz, ed., *Liber De Ordine Creaturarum: Un Anónimo Irlandés del Siglo VII* (Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1972), 66–67.

[39] Marina Smyth, *Understanding the Universe in Seventh-century Ireland* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 1996), 12. It must be noted that this work does not appear to be part of the surviving corpus of pre-1100 English manuscripts per Gneuss.

of its Creator as well. In the case of both *De Mirabilibus* and *De Ordine creaturarum*, though, this exploration was both significantly extended and substantially divorced from Classical texts and models. Marina Smyth's study of these cosmological works says that while Isidore's explanations of the natural world sought to harmonize pagan and Christian sources and views by imposing a Christian supernatural order on nature, these Irish texts, one of which was clearly copied and promulgated in Northumbria, offered a systematic picture of the natural world that ignored Classical models of order except as those were mediated through Biblical, patristic, and grammatical sources.[40] Given their mid-seventh century origin and, at least in the case of *De Ordine creaturarum*, their presence in Northumbria at a time when Christianity was newly established there, it is worthwhile to consider that such a Christian-centered exploration of cosmology may have had particular significance in a place and time when people whose conception of the universe was different were being evangelized.

These and other manuscripts indicate that those English clergy who were based in centers that created and transmitted manuscripts had access to sophisticated theological sources that would have supported their attention to pastoral care, including to the instruction of candidates for baptism, and they suggest that sorting these manuscripts according to "pastoral" categories can aid in their interpretation. In addition, what is absent from the early English pastoral corpus highlights some of the differences between Syria and Africa in the fourth century and England in the seventh that English catechists needed to take into account. It is not surprising that English clergy do not appear to have valued fourth-century works arguing against fourth-century Christological and Trinitarian

[40] Smyth, *Understanding the Universe in Seventh-century Ireland*, 21–32.

heresies, but it is notable that very little *adversus paganos* appears in the English manuscript corpus before 800. Only fragments of Orosius and of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* would seem to qualify as such,[41] while such additional and seemingly appropriate sources as Gregory of Nyssa's *Catechetical Discourse* and it refutation of Greek polytheism are absent. This likely reflects a dearth of Greek texts in England during this period, but it certainly reflects as well that catechists of the fourth and early fifth centuries needed to employ different methods to refute philosophical and religious practices that, like Christianity, depended on sacred literature and its interpretation while English pastors of the seventh and likely later centuries who addressed Anglo-Saxon paganism and its practices did not. We should not assume that those English clergy either understood or characterized that paganism as an "indigenous polytheistic religion" even if we may think of it as such.

While it is likely that early English manuscripts do represent the collection and use of material to support conversion and initial instruction in Christian doctrines, there is no doubt that the early English church used and created other types of texts to support continued pastoral care. One type unique to England before the mid-ninth century is the book of private prayer, while another that was adopted in England from Irish models was the book of penance. Both of these now are taken in turn in order to explore their place in the pastor's collection.

Text and Pastoral Care: Books of Prayer

The exhortation to "earnestly pray for comfort and favor" stands at the head of the

[41] Düsseldorf, Nordrhein-Westffälisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Z 11/1 and Cambridge Corpus Christi College 173 respectively; *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, s.v. 52, 32 and s.v. 820, 124.

first remaining folio of Cambridge University Library Ms. Ll.1.10, known as the *Book of Cerne*. This manuscript is one of a group of devotional manuals for private use produced in the Mercian area of England in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Private prayer books as a genre appear to have originated in England during this period; similar collections of prayers are not found on the Continent until well into the ninth century and then initially only "in areas under English influence."[42] These collections of prayers, Gospel readings, and other material seem to address consistent themes like "healing" or "the communion of the saints." Moreover, some items in these books are glossed in Old English, and a few contain language that suggests they were meant for use by women. While an English gloss was employed in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in order to aid the learning of Latin, that does not consistently appear to be why it was used in these books of prayer. Neither does English always appear to be used in these manuscripts to explain difficult texts; after all, it is improbable that something like the *Pater noster*, which is glossed in the *Royal Prayer Book*, needed to be rendered in English to be understood. Instead, glossing is one of the related textural and codicological elements that together demonstrate that these books of prayer were created with the intention of providing pastoral care. The structure, the format, and the selection and glossing of material in the *Book of Cerne* and its fellows all reflect the pastoral concerns of those who created private devotional texts in eighth- and ninth-century England.

These private prayer books comprise a distinct and unusual genre. Only five of the 134 items in Helmut Gneuss's survey of Anglo-Saxon liturgical manuscripts are

[42] Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600-800* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 276.

identified specifically as prayer books, with only twenty additional manuscripts, almost all from the tenth and eleventh centuries, containing private prayers, but four of the twenty liturgical manuscripts produced in our period are private prayer books.[43] This greater percentage of prayer books among the earliest surviving Anglo-Saxon liturgical texts hints at their early popularity and likely at the care taken to preserve them as well, but it also shows that this genre was short-lived. The private devotional manuals that were developed on the Continent *after* these Anglo-Saxon examples were produced differed in their contents and emphasis, and in England after the ninth century private prayers were almost always copied into general liturgical collections rather than into specific books of prayer.[44] These Mercian books of private prayer, then, are both early and distinctive.

These four books, which are among the "Tiberius group" of eighth- and ninth-century Southumbrian manuscripts, are the *Book of Cerne* and its three fellows now in the British Library: Harley 2965, which is usually called the *Book of Nunnaminster*; Harley 7653, known as the *Harley Prayer Book*; and Royal 2.A.xx, called the *Royal Prayer Book*. Along with prayers adapted and created for private use, all of these manuscripts adapt material from the liturgy of the church and, in the case of the *Book of Cerne*, from the psalter as well. Though these books are derived in part from corporate liturgy, all four of them center on material specifically intended for use in private prayer. In this, they represent not only a manuscript genre but also a literary and devotional

[43] Helmut Gneuss, "Liturgical Books in Anglo-Saxon England and their Old English Terminology," in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 37–38 and passim.

[44] Gneuss, "Liturgical Books in Anglo-Saxon England," 137.

tradition specific to the early centuries of Irish and Anglo-Saxon Christianity. As Patrick Sims-Williams points out, though the early Church fathers had encouraged spontaneity and simplicity in private prayer, Christians in England and Ireland, whose native tongues were not Latin, might not easily pray with such freedom of language. If Insular Christians were going to follow the Pauline instruction to "pray without ceasing," as Patrick, Cassiodorus and Columbanus all urged, then some of them may have benefitted from the assistance provided by books of prayer.[45]

These books do much more than collect prayers for private use, though. The *Book of Cerne* begins with an English passage—the earliest surviving continuous English prose text, in fact—that tells how to pray. The first folio of this preface is lost, but the surviving portion instructs the reader to "earnestly pray ... for comfort and favor through all [the] saints' deeds and merits" while prostrating him or herself three times "for all God's church" and singing a verse adapted from the *Te Deum*.[46] These instructions are followed by a full-page miniature showing St Matthew in his "human" and "angelic" aspects that faces the opening of Matthew's account of the Passion.[47] The first part of the *Book of Cerne* presents all four Passion accounts in this way, marking each with a full-page miniature portrait of the evangelist together with his appropriate symbolic representation. After the Passion accounts are sixty-nine prayers, some in the form of litanies and some

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[45] Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England*, 277–278.

[46] Cambridge UL Ll.10.1 f. 2r; A. B. Kuypers, ed., *The Prayer Book of Aedeluald the Bishop, Commonly Called the Book of Cerne* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1902), 3 (translation mine).

[47] Plates II (a) and II (b) in Michelle Brown, *The Book of Cerne: Prayer, Patronage, and Power in Ninth-Century England* (London: British Library, 1996), 186–187.

fashioned in the manner of collects,[48] a breviate psalter with an *incipit* saying that "Bishop Œðelþald gathered this collection of verses,"[49] and an account of the "Harrowing of Hell" with rubricated performance directions that is "perhaps the earliest extant example of liturgical drama" according to David Dumville.[50] The other prayer books in this group are similar in their variety. Thought the surviving fragment of the *Harley Prayer Book* contains only prayers, those prayers echo the variety and the adaptation for personal use of the ones found in the *Book of Cerne*. When it was created, the *Harley Prayer Book* may well have opened, as both the *Book of Nunnaminster* and the *Royal Prayer Book* do, with Gospel excerpts like those found in the *Book of Cerne*.

Cerne does have some unique features, beginning with its English instructional preface. Though the single quire of the *Harley Prayer Book* provides no clue as to how the complete manuscript began, the *Royal Prayer Book* has no such preface. At first it seems that the *Book of Nunnaminster* likely had no preface either, but closer examination shows that one possibly could have been included, in part because the ten-leaf quire that now begins this book was once longer. Not only is there a stub between folios seven and eight of that quire, indicating that one of the preceding leaves is single, but one leaf has been lost at the end so that Luke's Passion account cuts off, improbably, *before* Christ's death. (Neither of these anomalies are noted in Birch's 1889 edition, by the way.) The *explicit* of Luke's account and the *incipit* of John's are missing as well, though the

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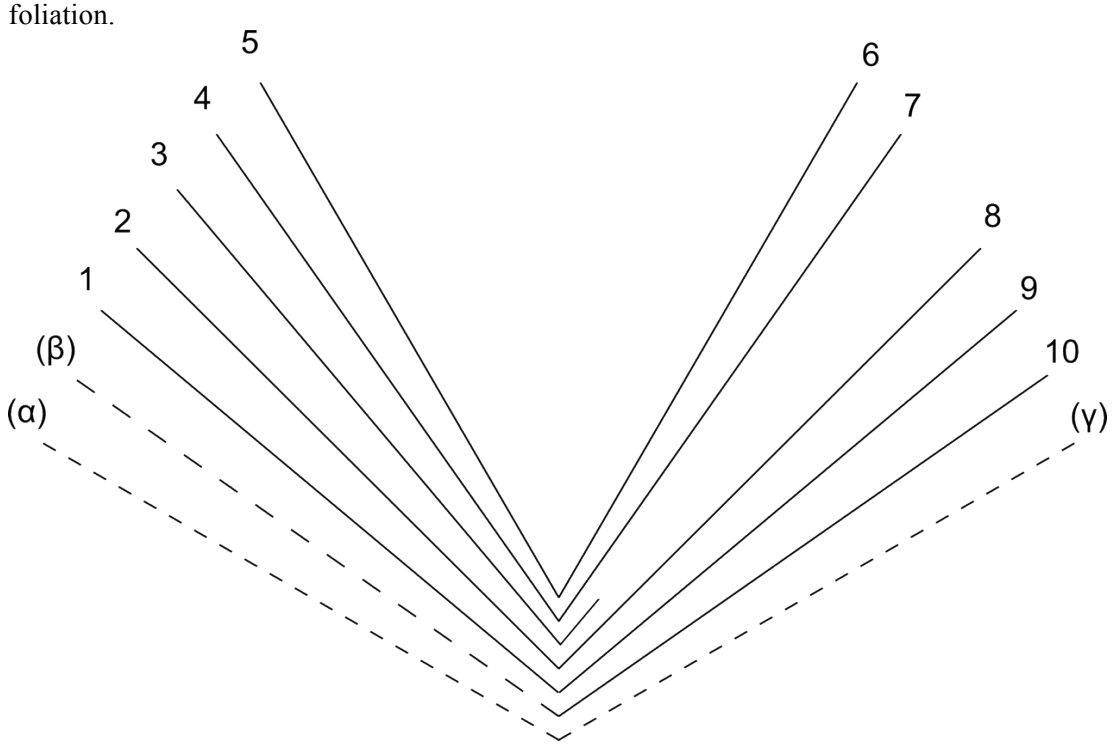
[48] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 136–137.

[49] f. 87v, line 15: *Hoc argumentum versorum æðelþald episcopus decerpsit*. Brown reads *versorum* for the manuscript's *forsorum* as opposed to *versarii* (from F. A. Paley, *Home and Foreign Review* (1882)) for *fersarii* in Kuypers' transcription; Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 143; Kuypers, *Book of Cerne*, 174.

[50] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 145.

Figure 5.3. British Library Ms. Harley 2965, first (originally second) quire, proposed original foliation.



opening of John's Passion on the first leaf of the third quire is headed with the same line of dots that is used to separate *explicits*, *incipits*, and Gospel extracts elsewhere in the manuscript. The second quire also lacks a number at the foot of its surviving first leaf. Since the quire numbers are placed well above the bottom of the leaf on the remaining quires and have not been lost to trimming, it is likely that the surviving leaf was not originally the first in the quire. Examining this manuscript unbound would likely clear up much of this puzzle, but as figure 5.3 shows, one possibility is that the second quire may have been in thirteen leaves rather than the surviving ten. Depending on the length of the missing first quire (and, as both the fourth and fifth quires were originally in twelve, it may have been *quite* long), it may have had considerable space for introductory matter as well for the now-missing Gospel material.

Whether or not any of these books other than the *Book of Cerne* had a preface, all contain prayers in the styles of litanies and collects. The *Book of Cerne* and the *Royal Prayer Book* both have glosses in English, while *Cerne* and the *Book of Nunnaminster* each contain a version of the *Lorica of Laidcenn*, a verse prayer of Irish origin that calls upon the Trinity and upon angels, prophets, and apostles to cover the one praying with a *lorica*, a defense or "breastplate" protecting all parts of the body from physical and spiritual harm.[51]

These prayer books not only collect similar items, but also each appears to have been written to a particular theme. Jennifer Morrish has suggested that the *Royal Prayer Book*, which adds to the Passion narratives a number of scriptural accounts of Christ as healer and regularly employs language equating salvation and health, seems to emphasize "the Trinity as the *medicus* or healer of mankind, with corporeal disease used as a metaphor for man's sinful nature."[52] Michelle Brown likewise suggests that the *Book of Cerne* may "be interpreted as a meditation upon the Communion of the Saints and as a tool for its implementation," with prayers designed to "invoke the intercession of all the faithful" for the individual and the church.[53] A focus on the Passion and the life of Christ and an emphasis on spiritual and physical health—*salvus* in all of its meanings—characterize the other two prayer books as well.[54] These books do more than give prayers to be said in private. They also appear to have been created to shape how their users understood the

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[51] Michael W. Herren, *The Hisperica Famina: II. Related Poems: A Critical Edition with English Translation and Philological Commentary* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1987), 24.

[52] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 151.

[53] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 148.

[54] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 152–153.

religious context in which prayer had power and meaning. This attention to understanding and praxis indicates that the Tiberius prayer books were designed to provide specific instruction and aid; in effect, to address the pastoral needs of their readers.

The prayer books of the Tiberius group, with their programs of personal devotional practice and understanding, can be seen as one way of fostering change through the written extension of pastoral care, and specific pastoral concerns may be indicated the codicological and social contexts of these books as well. Those who have studied the *Book of Cerne* since the 1902 publication of Dom Kuypers' edition have generally agreed that it was written in the first part of the ninth century, possibly between 818–830 during the tenure of Æþelwald bishop of Lichfield to whom both the acrostic poem on f. 21r and the breviate psalter that follows the collection of prayers are dedicated.[55] Though the manuscript was later associated with the abbey of Cerne in Dorset and bound with a fourteenth-century collection of that abbey's charters and a sixteenth-century list of its relics, it almost certainly was not written there since both its existence as a separate codex until as late as the sixteenth century and the high status demonstrated by its careful hand and elaborate program of decoration argue against this prayer book having been produced at a relatively minor ecclesiastical center like Cerne.[56] While its exact origin remains obscure, Brown's analysis of the manuscript's stylistic features, together with those of the other prayer books in the "Tiberius" group, has led her to conclude that, whether they were written in a *scriptorium* at Canterbury or at a Mercian foundation such as Worcester

[55] Kuypers, *Book of Cerne*, xiv.

[56] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 29, 32.

or Lichfield,[57] all four were produced during the late eighth and early ninth centuries within an area of Mercian cultural activity whose text productions are characterized by their shared "experimentation with minuscule scripts and iconographic and artistic features."[58] This puts these prayer books alongside such works as the Baberini Gospels (Vatican, Bibl. Apostl. Barb. lat. 570) and the lavish Bodleian Library Ms. Hatton 48, which is the oldest surviving copy of the Benedictine Rule in England,[59] as products of the age of Mercian hegemony south of the Humber.

To say that these Tiberius-group manuscripts were written in *scriptoria* without further explanation would be misleading, though. It is likely that most were produced in monasteries since, as we have seen, the production of parchment and texts is a marker of monastic identity. However, though most English monasteries may have had the *sedes scribentium* that Bernard Bischoff says were a necessary fixture of monastic life,[60] taking the seven-seat *scriptorium* shown on the idealized plan of St Gall as a model for how eighth- and ninth-century Insular manuscripts were produced would be a mistake. Jane Roberts has said instead that English ecclesiastical institutions before the end of the ninth century were much more likely to have had a *scribe* rather than a *scriptorium*. When these books of prayer were produced, even a foundation as famous for its rich library and elaborate manuscript production as Wearmouth and Jarrow would have possessed no

[57] Michelle Brown, "Mercian Manuscripts? The 'Tiberius' Group and Its Historical Context," in *Mercia, an Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle Brown and Carol Ann Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 283.

[58] Brown, "Mercian Manuscripts?," 287.

[59] Brown, "Mercian Manuscripts?," 282, 284; N. R. Ker, "The Provenance of the Oldest Manuscript of the Rule of St. Benedict," *The Bodleian Library Record* 2 (1941): 28–29.

[60] Bernhard Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography: Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín and David Ganz (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 207.

more than a few chests of books and had no more than two or three scribes working at any one time.[61]

In fact, these prayer books for individuals were in most cases themselves created by individuals. Both the text and the illustrations of the *Book of Cerne* are likely the work of a single scribe, as is shown by the tight integration of textual and decorative work and of initials and script.[62] Of the other Tiberius prayer books, Birch says that the main text of the *Book of Nunnaminster* is likely the work of a single scribe as well,[63] while the surviving leaves of the *Harley Prayer Book* are all in the same hand. The *Royal Prayer Book* alone among these books appears to be the work multiple scribes;[64] still, Brown emphasizes that the marginal rubrics and *litterae notabiliores* of its abecedarieal prayer sequence are likely the work of a single artist-scribe, just like the whole of the *Book of Cerne*.[65] Overall, the design and production of these prayer books by (in the main) individual scribes would seem to have provided a fruitful context in which both the innovation and experimentation with style and content they share and the clarity of theme and pastoral focus they demonstrate could flourish.

Even the size of these prayer books sets them apart. Famous early English codices are often grand in scale. The Lindisfarne Gospel book from the first quarter of the eighth

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[61] Jane Robert, "Anglo-Saxon Psalters," course lecture, London Palaeography Summer School, Institute of English Studies Centre for Manuscript and Print Studies, University of London, June 21, 2010.

[62] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 66–67.

[63] Walter de Gray Birch, ed., *An Ancient Manuscript of the Eighth or Ninth Century: Formerly Belonging to St. Mary's Abbey, or Nunnaminster, Winchester* (London: Simpkin, 1889), 17.

[64] Kuypers, *Book of Cerne*, 200.

[65] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 151–152..

century measures around thirteen and a quarter by ten inches,[66] while the *Codex Aureus* from the mid-eighth century is roughly fifteen and a half by twelve and a quarter inches.[67] By comparison, the *Book of Cerne* measures around nine by seven inches,[68] and the other Tiberius prayer books are even smaller: eight and a half by just over six and a quarter inches for the *Book of Nunnaminster*; nine by slightly less than six inches for the single quire of the *Harley Prayer Book*; and nine by six and three-quarters inches for the *Royal Prayer Book*. All four are comfortably hand-sized; even today the Harley manuscripts, which are written on thick and sturdy parchment that has retained ink remarkably well, invite much closer handling than would clearly be appropriate given their age (and the proximity of reading room staff). The intimate scale of these manuscripts adds to the impression that they were designed primarily for private devotion.

The *Book of Cerne* and the other Tiberius prayer books may be relatively small, but they are not plain. Even pages without miniatures or elaborate initial letters are not undecorated; both the *Book of Nunnaminster* and the *Royal Prayer Book* surround capital letters with an outline of carefully spaced dots, while the fragmentary *Harley Prayer Book* fills its initial letters with red, yellow, and green ink. Codices like these were not only vehicles for text but also crafted objects, and expensive ones. These prayer books were all high-quality manuscripts, the production of which was in keeping with the practices, and the pretentions, of the Mercian rulers of the eight and ninth centuries.

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[66] British Library Cotton Nero D.IV; *British Library Manuscript Catalogue*, accessed 3 April 2011, http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/manuscripts/HITS0001.ASP?VPath=html/65352.htm.

[67] Swedish Royal Library Ms. A.35; Jane Roberts, *Guide to Scripts Used in English Writings up to 1500* (London: British Library, 2005), 30.

[68] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 136.

Almost certainly the oldest of the Tiberius prayer books was created during the reign of Offa (757–796), during which "the influence of Mercia expanded from its origins in the Trent valley to encompass virtually all of the territory between the Thames and the Humber, as well as enjoying considerable influence in East Anglia and the South East" including at Canterbury.[69] It is likely as well that the most recent of these books was written not much later than the reign of Wiglaf (827–829 and 830–839) during which domination of the south of England passed from Mercia to Wessex. Just as Northumbria had in the century before, this area of eighth- and ninth-century Mercian domination saw concurrent growth of both secular power and ecclesiastical institutions. Perhaps responding to Carolingian models of imperial hegemony as well as the long-standing English tradition of royal support for and influence over ecclesiastical foundations, Offa and his queen Cynethryth established Mercia's *imperium* over the south in part by creating, acquiring, and endowing a series of monasteries that may have included ones at Bath, Westminster, Northampton, Peterborough and Bredon, while their daughter Æthelburh likely held the monastery at Fladbury and had joint claim with her sister on Glastonbury.[70] These monasteries remained closely tied to the royal house and frequently "owed extensive obligations to render *feorum* and entertain royal officials."[71] When Cynethryth was named her husband Offa's heir at the council of *Clofesho* in 798, her

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[69] Peter Featherstone, "The Tribal Hidage and the Ealdormen of Mercia," in *Mercia, an Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle Brown and Carol Ann Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 23.

[70] Pauline Stafford, "Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries," in *Mercia, an Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle Brown and Carol Ann Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 40–41.

[71] Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London: Continuum, 2003), 52.

inheritance included his monasteries.[72]

That Mercian ecclesiastical institutions would provide the context in which rich books would be produced for private use is not surprising given the evident wealth displayed within Mercia. Even if the Staffordshire Hoard was not a "Mercian royal treasury,"[73] the treasures found near Lichfield in 2009 demonstrates not only how rich the powerful of Mercia were but also, as Brown's assessment of the similarities between the decoration of the hoard's metalwork and the decorations found in manuscripts like the *Book of Cerne* shows, how much they valued the religious manuscripts created in the monasteries they controlled as physical objects as well. This is not to say that the contents of these books of prayer were incidental to their display of wealth. As noted before, eighth- and ninth-century English monasteries and minsters likely provided at least some pastoral care to their local areas, and in the ninth century especially "determined efforts by the episcopate to draw the monasteries of their dioceses firmly within their control" may have greatly increased those institutions' "provision and organization of pastoral care."[74] Whatever pastoral means may have been used to convey care and instruction to most of the laity, though, these high-quality prayer books appear to have addressed their thematic pastoral messages to individuals within a privileged social and ecclesiastical world.

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[72] Stafford, "Political Women in Mercia," 41.

[73] As Brown characterized it in her inaugural address, "Manuscripts from Anglo-Saxon Mercia: the Staffordshire Hoard, other Recent Finds and the 'New Materiality' in Book History," London Palaeography Summer School, Institute of English Studies Centre for Manuscript and Print Studies, University of London, June 22, 2010.

[74] Catherine Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils C. 650-C. 850* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995), 117–118.

The language of these prayer books also indicates that some of those individual were women. Birch based his claim that the *Book of Nunnaminster* was originally compiled "for the use of an abbess or head of a nunnery" on the manuscript's occasional use of feminine forms such as *peccatrix*, and he also suggested that the book may have been written by a female scribe who, as she copied from her exemplar, "unconsciously" wrote the feminine forms that she would have naturally employed when praying aloud.[75] This is an interesting suggestion, and there is evidence that a scribe might inadvertently substitute familiar oral forms of texts for less familiar written ones. In the late-ninth-century parallel Gallicanum–Hebraicum psalter now at Salisbury Cathedral,[76] the scribe copying the Hebraicum version of Psalm 54 into its location on the page alongside the Gallicanum version of that psalm incorrectly started the first verse with the word *Exaudi*, which is how the Gallicanum version used in the Divine Office begins. The scribe then erased that prefix in order to produce the correct Hebraicum form *Audi*. This substitution of oral for written forms may be one reason that feminine forms were used in these books of prayer.

Three of the Tiberius prayer books use the feminine in at least one of their prayers. Even the remaining fragment of the *Harley Prayer Book* contains a penitential prayer adapted for female use from one attributed to the fourth-century Ephrem the Syrian.[77] Those adaptations are not consistent throughout these books; a prayer appearing in the

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[75] Birch, *Book of Nunnaminster*, 15–17.

[76] Salisbury Cathedral Ms. 180, s. ix/x, f. 116v.

[77] Patrick Sims-Williams, "Thoughts on Ephrem the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 224–225.

Book of Cerne with the feminine forms *purificata* and *sanctificata* uses masculine forms in the *Book of Nunnaminster*.[78] Kuypers suggested that these differences are simply the result of *Cerne*'s scribe copying this prayer from an exemplar used by nuns while *Nunnaminster*'s copied from one used by monks.[79] This seems less likely, though, because these manuscripts, as we have seen, represent the conscious collection and adaptation of their source materials in response to pastoral concerns rather than the mere reproduction of exemplars. Instead, whether consciously or not, these scribes may have had a woman or women in mind when creating these books of prayer. Given the prominence of women in ecclesiastical foundations in Mercia during this period, it makes sense that the appearance of feminine forms in the Tiberius prayer books may represent "a personal tailoring" to meet the pastoral needs of female owners or users,[80] and maybe even the activity of female scribes as well.

As we have said, those who provided pastoral care sought to change not only the behavior but also the understanding of their charges. But even though Latin, as the language of scripture and doctrine alike, would seem to be the primary vehicle for that understanding, the *Book of Cerne* begins not with Latin, but with a thematic preface in English prose. Moreover, its fourth prayer, the *Lorica of Laidcenn*, has an English interlinear gloss that gives a word-for-word lexical translation of most of the Latin text. English is less prominent in the other Tiberius prayer books. The *Book of Nunnaminster*

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[78] Michelle P. Brown, "Female Book-Ownership and Production in Anglo-Saxon England: the Evidence of the Ninth-Century Prayerbooks," in *Lexis and Texts in Early English: Studies Presented to Jane Roberts*, ed. Christian Kay and Louise Sylvester (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 56.

[79] Kuypers, *Book of Cerne*, xviii.

[80] Brown, "Female Book-Ownership," 58.

does not gloss its copy of the *Lorica*, and the *Harley Prayer Book* has a single glossed word. The *Royal Prayer Book* has scattered English glosses throughout, but those are later than the main text and are often applied to substantially ordinary liturgical material (such as the *Pater noster*). In fact, these major English elements—freestanding prose compositions, contemporary glosses, and later glosses—represent more than two centuries of the use of the vernacular to support pastoral concerns. The *Book of Cerne*'s "exhortation to prayer" reflects what Brown has called the "pragmatic literacy" promoted during the period of Mercia's expansion by using English to ensure that its readers understood its devotional intention and use, just as English was used to ensure that readers understood law codes and charters.[81] English serves just that purpose at the end of the *Book of Nunnaminster*, to which was added in the ninth century an English description of the boundaries of land held in Winchester by Ealhswið, the wife of King Alfred. *Cerne*'s English instructions may have been composed by its scribe, but in the case of the *Lorica* all that scribe had to do was copy a pre-existing English translation. Michael Herren has established that this version of the *Lorica*, which was written in Hiberno-Latin before 661, not only was glossed in both English and Old Irish in the last quarter of the seventh century, but also was originally provided with an explanatory Latin gloss, possibly by its author.[82] In this case, the vernacular gloss helped explain a text whose language even its learned contemporaries found obscure. Since both the *Book of Cerne* and the *Book of Nunnaminster* took their version of the *Lorica* from the same (now

[81] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 129.

[82] Herren, *Hisperica Famina: II*, 11–13.

lost) exemplar[83] but only the former preserves that exemplar's English gloss, the artist-scribe of the *Book of Cerne* may well have thought that those for whom this prayer book was intended would benefit from help with difficult Latin as well as from devotional instructions in the vernacular.

Similar concerns shaped the *Royal Prayer Book* nearly a century and a half later, when it appears to have been recycled as a "work book" into which a single scribe added English glosses and copied a number of Latin prayers.[84] Interlinear vernacular glossing had been used in England to support learning Latin at least since the seventh century, but Joseph Crowley says that this tenth-century scribe's inexpert hand and imperfect grasp of both English and Latin grammar make it unlikely that he or she was in a position to teach Latin to anyone. Crowley instead proposes that the *Royal* glosses represent the scribe's attempt "to help himself or others" learn parts of the liturgy by rendering them in the vernacular.[85] In this case, the *Royal Prayer Book*, a hand-sized codex designed to serve as a guide for personal devotion, served in a new way to support pastoral needs.

Michelle Brown's study of the *Book of Cerne* concludes that it and the other Mercian prayer books of the late eighth and early ninth centuries "mark a new development in the devotional tradition."[86] More than that, though, these texts indicate that the adaptive pastoral impetus that drove the seventh century conversion of England lived on in the

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[83] Herren, *Hisperica Famina: II*, 8.

[84] Joseph P. Crowley, "Latin Prayers Added into the Margins of the Prayerbook British Library, Royal 2.A.XX at the Beginnings of the Monastic Reform in Worcester," *Sacris Erudiri* 45 (2006): 225.

[85] Joseph P. Crowley, "Anglicized Word Order in Old English Continuous Interlinear Glosses in British Library, Royal 2.A.XX," *Anglo-Saxon England* (2000): 151.

[86] Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, 157.

eighth century and found expression through the creation of a devotional and literary genre. In these books, pastors adapted and personalized prayers and other liturgical material for private use, possibly by and for women, in order to teach and inculcate particular ideas about health, healing and Christian community. Moreover, these books show that the English language was never wholly barred from the context of devotion or of pastoral care; it was important late in the seventh century and late in the tenth, and in the *Book of Cerne* English was the first choice for explaining difficult ideas about when, how, and why to pray.

Text and Correction: "Pagan Survivals" in England and Insular Books of Penance

The early English manuscript corpus suggests ongoing support for pastorals' evangelical efforts, and the books of prayer of the late eighth and early ninth century demonstrate how text could serve as a vehicle for pastoral instruction. Finally, the Insular *libri paenitentiales*, the "books of penance" that combined detailed lists of sins with the penances that are to be performed for each and that were in part created in and disseminated through England, demonstrate that correcting the behavior of others, the third of the elements of pastoral care that this study examines, was one of the early English pastors' tasks as well. Penitentials have long been recognized as valuable sources for the ecclesiastical, legal, and social history of the Middle Ages. Cyrille Vogel says that these documents not only reveal how the early church dealt with sin and reconciliation "but also illuminate in brief the history of ethics and morals, of civilization, and of human behavior in society and in its most intimate relations … at a given time and place with

rare accuracy and unvarnished language."[87] Because these texts appear to have developed in direct association with the practice of private penance and pastoral care,[88] it is easy to credit them with the authority to speak about how medieval men and women of many different stations truly behaved. It is even possible to anticipate that, if penitentials accurately record behavior, then they may provide evidence for behavior that was drawn from or influenced by pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon religious practices.

Penitentials deserve this credit, though, only if they in fact were tools honed by experience and regular use to address sins that those confessing actually committed. If these texts were instead just stereotypical or "schematic inventor[ies] compiled by clerics eager to ferret out every possible abuse,"[89] or if Christian priests rarely heard the confessions and administered the penance these penitentials claimed to aid, then penitentials may reveal little more than a priest's or compiler's interpretation of the behavior of those around them rather than revealing what people actually did. Some doubt that penitentials either reflect the actual practice of confession and penance or describe the sins that those confessing were likely to have committed; for example, Alexander Murray cites the discussion at the Council of *Clofesho* in 747 of a man who would have to fast for three hundred years to fulfill the penance he had been assigned[90] as

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[87] Cyrille Vogel, *Les "libri paenitentiales"*, vol. 27, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978), 13.

[88] Ludger Körntgen, *Studien zu den Quellen der frühmittelalterlichen Bußbücher* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1993), 2.

[89] As Allen Frantzen characterizes some of the objections to using penitentials as historical sources; Allen J. Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 13–14.

[90] "Council of Clovesho" canon 27, in Arthur West Haddan and William Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871), 3: 373.

compelling evidence against a realistic and "general observance of confession" in the early Middle Ages.[91] Likewise, Dieter Harmening say that because penitential texts are literary constructions that reflect their own sources much better than they reflect the time and place in which they were written, their "persistence and widespread dissemination is not due to the universality of their facts, but to the fact that they claim universality" and reveal something about medieval ideas but nothing about medieval behavior.[92]

At the same time, the popularity of these "plain" collections at a time when the production of manuscripts represented considerable time, effort, and expense suggests that they should at least be considered to have functioned in the way they are presented: as handbooks for the use of pastors charged with correcting the behavior of their flock. It seems unlikely that anyone would have written a penitential unless he or she expected it to be used within an extant system for hearing confession of and assigning penance for sin. Furthermore, if penitentials were functional documents, then their formulae should have reflected reality in a way that was understandable to the priest and the one confessing alike. That their descriptions of that behavior are stereotypical and at times derivative likely is incidental to the application of those descriptions. For example, in

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[91] Alexander Murray, "Confession before 1215," *Transaction of the Royal Historical Society* Sixth Series, Vol. III (1993): 60–61.

[92] "leur diffusion très large et durable ne tient pas à une universalité des faits, mais au fait que ces textes prétendaient `a l'universalité;" Dieter Harmening, "Anthropologie historique ou herméneutique littéraire? Une critique ethnographique des sources médiévales," trans. Lucile Depoorter, *Ethnologie française* XXVVII, no. 4 (1997): 453.

Bernadette Filotas's study in which she proposes that pagan survivals and superstitions[93] are recorded in penitentials and other texts supporting pastoral care, she points to Pope Leo IV's (847–855) application of a formulaic description of text-based divination (*sortes*) that was adopted at the fourth-century Council of Ancyra to the similar methods of divination being practiced in Brittany in the ninth century as a demonstration of how "a stereotyped description or text was in fact relevant to the actual situation."[94] In like manner, when the eighth-century *Paenitentiale Burgundense* prescribed three years' penance for all varieties of *sortes*, including the use of Christian scripture for divination,[95] it likely represented and was applied to actual behavior on the part of those confessing.

While penitentials can be understood as addressing "superstitions and the survival of pagan practices" as well as many other sins, it is important to acknowledge that they were written after the conversion to Christianity and that, though missionaries like Columbanus (540–615) did introduce penitential texts to other parts of Europe, those were places that were already Christian. Also, though it is true that penitential texts acted

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[93] In this section, "pagan survivals" and "superstition" both indicate behavior related to the religious practices and belief systems that prevailed before a people's conversion to Christianity, with "pagan survivals" most often designating more overtly "religious" practices such as the worship of idols and the celebration of holy days and "superstition" used for more "world-view"-based divinatory or magical practices. I agree with Bernadette Filotas that these terms most accurately reflect the concerns of the authors of the penitentials, who regularly connect behaviors like idolatry and divination "to pagan customs and beliefs" that they see as both "obsolete" and "superfluous" (both meanings of *superstitio*) and as having (non-Christian) theological content. Bernadette Filotas, *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005), 12–13.

[94] Filotas, *Pagan Suvivals*, 47.

[95] John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 229 n. 66.

as "a blueprint for the sinner's conversion"[96] if that conversion is understood to be their "turning toward" a particular Christian understanding or behavior, their immediate purpose was to correct the sins of believers. The unconverted and unbaptized did not do penance; as Aron Gurevich reminds us, "only Christians came to confession."[97] Finally, these penitentials do not describe the survival of an organized pagan religion. Though people sought out soothsayers or employed love philters, they did so, according to these texts, because of their sinful natures and under the influence of demons, not (in most cases) out of loyalty to some coherent system of pagan religious belief. This is a critical distinction: pagan religions lost their place in the world, but pagan religious *practices* (that is to say, the use of supernatural methods based on something other that Christian prayer and liturgy to affect the visible world) survived and were identified by medieval clergymen as pagan. Some that this survival has little meaning and that the practices and superstitions condemned in canons, sermons, and penitentials were merely, as Murray characterizes them, "debris, a bric-à-brac of words, names and language" diminished in station just as Jupiter was diminished from "God the Father" to just "one demon among others."[98]

While Murray makes the important point that that conversion to Christianity was possible because "some pagan thought-forms approached those of Christianity," his conclusion that with conversion "the religious core of paganism … was simply

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[96] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 3–4.

[97] Aron Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, translated by János M. Bak and Paul A. Hollingsworth (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 80.

[98] Alexander Murray, "Missionaries and Magic in Dark-Ages Europe (review of Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*)," *Past and Present* 136 (August 1992): 200.

swallowed up"[99] is incidental to the fact that, to all appearances, early medieval clerics thought that paganism still existed could identify both the doer and the thing done as *pagani* without distinction. R. A. Markus points out that Gregory the Great (540–604) used *pagani* to mean both unbaptized persons like the English slaves whose purchase he had arranged and Gallic Christians who persisted in "sacrificing to idols or worshipping such things as trees and animal heads."[100] Even though Harmening argues that penitential texts represent a literary tradition rather than a record of actual practices, he still recognizes that, while early medieval writers frequently used terms like *rusticus* and *paganus* to indicate the fallen state of man according to a "theological anthropology related to the theology of original sin,"[101] they nonetheless correctly identified the pagan origin of the practices they observed as well.

While it is rarely possible to relate those beliefs and practices that the writers of penitentials called "pagan" to any specific non-Christian religion, it is hard to see from what other soil some of the practices described in the penitentials may have grown. Gurevich says that attempts to trace "pagan survivals" back to Germanic or classical Greco-Roman religion almost always fail because those survivals "do not fit either of these categories, but reflect rather a deeper, 'primary' layer of popular consciousness" in which superstition and magical practices "were much less vestiges or 'survivals' of pre-Christian practices than integral elements of daily life in agrarian society."[102] It was not

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[99] Murray, "Missionaries and Magic," 199.

[100] R. A. Markus, "Gregory the Great's Pagans," in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 127.

[101] Harmening, "Anthropologie historique," 450–452.

[102] Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture*, 80–81.

only the *rustica* who held on to a core of traditional practices, though. In 743, the Anglo-Saxon missionary Boniface (672–754) complained to Pope Zacharias (741–752) about the pagan celebration of the Kalends of January in Rome, and the pope in response condemned this "pagan habit" in the synod of the same year.[103] As Filotas rightly points out, what most clearly defines these practices as "pagan" is that churchmen throughout the Middle Ages condemned them in their letters, synods, and penitentials as "being left over from paganism or coming from pagan customs."[104] When we consider England as an are newly and likely "thinly" converted, with Christianity quite possibly less well established throughout much of the land than it was at royal centers and minster communities, this is something that those churchmen may have been in a position to know.

The pagan behaviors condemned in the penitentials are of several types. Valerie Flint has shown that Imperial Roman ideas about religion and the supernatural influenced the Church's ideas about superstition and the survival of pagan practices. Among those ideas was a belief that magic expressed itself an "atmosphere of manipulation, isolation, mystery and fear"[105] and that it involved interaction with demons that were "spirits of evil" according to both Christianity and other religious found in the Empire.[106] Alongside those negative beliefs, however, Flint sees a positive "trust in oracles and in some of the

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[103] Hermann Joseph Schmitz, *Die Bussbücher und die Bussdisciplin der Kirche* (Mainz: Franz Kirchheim, 1883), 311–312.

[104] Filotas, *Pagan Suvivals*, 20.

[105] Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 15.

[106] Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, 20.

forms of divinatory prediction" as well as the idea that magic could beneficially address immediate needs for luck, health and harvest.[107] Harmening says that the resulting Christian interpretation of "superstition" or pagan practices groups them into three categories: *superstitio observationis*, or the belief that certain omens were favorable or unfavorable; the various *superstitio divinationum* or mechanical practices, such as the casting of lots, performed to determine those favorable or unfavorable influences; and the practice of "magical arts" through the creation of knots or amulets in order to defend against unfavorable or attract favorable influences.[108] The "pagan" and "superstitious" practices condemned in the penitentials, then, often persisted because they addressed everyday material concerns.

While the early English pastoral corpus does not include examples of penitential texts before the end of the ninth century, the genre itself was, as we shall see, already well established by that point and associated with some of England's most prominent pastors, including Bede (though the penitential named for him is not his[109]) and Theodore archbishop of Canterbury (whose eponymous penitential likely does reflect at least some of his pastoral rulings[110]). Did pastors in the early centuries of English Christianity, though, actually hear confession and assign penance? Murray contends that both penitentials and Carolingian decrees requiring regular penance and confession are

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[107] Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, 27.

[108] Dieter Harmening, *Superstitio: Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliterature des Mittelalters* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1979), 47.

[109] Vogel, *Les "libri paenitentiales,"* 70.

[110] Thomas Charles-Edwards, "The Penitential of Theodore and the Iudicia Theodori," in *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies on his Life and Influence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 149–150.

prescriptive documents. He says that confession was the domain of bishops rather than priests and that the penitentials' schedules of severe punishments served primarily to aid the development of monetary commutation by means of donations to monasteries and, "in due course, indulgences."[111] Just as public confession was not a regular rite but one performed when entering a monastery or when approaching death, Murray argues, the performance of private confession by lay persons appears only in close proximity to locations associated with monastic practice and learning[112] – factors found, in fact, in the origin of tariffed, private penance in Irish monasteries as Allen Frantzen acknowledges.[113]

Furthermore, while Sarah Hamilton does accept (*contra* Murray) that penitentials were used in pastoral care by priests until the ninth century, she says that the expansion of penitentials as part of the Carolingian reforms that predate the first century of the English conversion, and she suggests that the inclusion of penitential material in tenth-century canon law collections demonstrates that "such penitential texts were now seen as reference works for use in a juridical" or episcopal context rather than in a pastoral one.[114] Such a change in the use of penitentials would make it less likely that later ones, such as Burchard of Worms' *Corrector sive medicus* with its detailed list of superstitious practices,[115] contained material reflecting behavior that a medieval confessor actually

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[111] Murray, "Confession before 1215," 58–61.

[112] Murray, "Confession before 1215," 74–75.

[113] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 34–35.

[114] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 45–46.

[115] Summarized in Filotas, *Pagan Suvivals*, 378.

observed. Even Frantzen says that the repetition of material from penitential to penitential indicates that some sins, including "the same cultic acts and magic" that are "described in penitential after penitential" in substantially the same ways,[116] "may have been included in a given penitential only because they were automatically copied from the complier's source, without regard for their relevance"[117] to the practice of pastoral care.

Against these objections, though, there are still reasons to look at penitentials for evidence both of pastoral care and of the behavior of Christians. One is the crude spelling, awkward grammar, and general lack of "linguistic normalization" in penitentials, which Ludwig Bieler cites as evidence that they must have been the practical texts they claim to be since "nobody would bother to touch them up."[118] The second is that, even though these texts may be the work of theologians as Harmening says, they are practical rather than analytical works. Their theology is pastoral, and they guide and correct rather than explain. Frantzen, who contends that penitentials were from the first written to address the needs of laypersons connected with Irish monasteries as well as the needs of monastic clergy, characterizes them as "didactic or catechetical as well as disciplinary" texts[119] that represent "an original solution to a problem confronting all missionary churches—the problem of extending Christian ideals to lay society."[120]

The third reason to accept penitentials as likely reflecting both religious and lay

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[116] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 55.

[117] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, xi–xii.

[118] Ludwig Bieler and D. A. Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae V (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1963), 27.

[119] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 3–4.

[120] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 25.

practices is the evidence for the rise of private rather than public confession in Ireland and England and on the continent during the seventh and eighth centuries.[121] Dooley suggests that Irish churchmen may have developed tariffed, private penance by taking civil laws that prescribed "fixed retribution for particular transgressions" as its model and that penitentials may therefore be best understood as a pastoral response to the difficulty of imposing the older, established practice of public penance and excommunication on the newly converted.[122] It is easy to understand how a system of confession and penance that could be performed in private and that could be repeated would help make those ideas more palatable than would the public penitential practice that preceded it. In that practice, the Roman Church subjected penitents to what was almost a "civil death" by excluding them from the community of the faithful. Cyrille Vogel says that, as a consequence, men and women would therefore not confess until the moment of death so that they could receive *in extremis* "the Eucharist that would have been denied if they had resorted to the institution of [public] penance" as was permitted by the Council of Nicea (325).[123] In addition, there is strong evidence that private penance was practiced among the military in Carolingian France. The 742 *Concilium germanicum* issued a canon requiring the commander of every unit of the army to "have on his staff a priest capable of hearing confession and assigning penances to the soldiers under his care," a

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[121] Allen J. Frantzen, *Mise à jour du fascicule no. 27: C. Vogel, Les "libri paenitentiales,"* Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 35–36.

[122] Kate Dooley, "From Penance to Confession: The Celtic Contribution," *Bijdragen tifdschrift voor filosofie en theologie* 43 (1982): 396.

[123] Cyrille Vogel, "Pénitence et excommunication dans l'eglise ancienne et durant le Haut Moyen Âge," in *En rémission des péchés: Recherches sur les systèmes pénitentiels dans l'Église latine* (Aldershot, Hampshire, UK: Variorum, 1994), IV 13–14.

requirement that presupposes both private rather than public confession (in which no individual penance was imposed) and, most likely, a tariffed penitential.[124]

One last objection to considering penitential texts as part of an examination of early English pastoral material is that no discrete examples of these texts survive. However, while almost all penitential texts now appear only in large collections that include unrelated canonical and liturgical material, their original form may well have been as hand-sized books without covers, as the loss of material from what would have been the first and last folios of *The Old-Irish Penitential* suggests.[125] It is easy to imagine these manuscripts may have been produced in a form much like that of the *Harley Prayer Book* or the *Book of Nunnaminster* and to imagine that well that, unlike those books for private use, the strictly utilitarian nature of the original books of penance rendered them not worth preserving once their contents were incorporated into the penitential collections of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Here are some of the earliest penitentials that would have reflected and influenced correction as pastoral care in the early years of English Christianity, beginning with the sixth and seventh-century Irish tarrifed penitentials and followed by the late seventh-early eighth-century English *Poenitentiale Theodori*.

***Penitentialis Vinniani* (*Penitential of Finnian* – Ireland, 550x591)**[126]

Frantzen gives the *terminus ad quem* for this text as 550x579,[127] but Ludwig Bieler

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[124] David Bachrach, "Confession in the Regnum Francorum (742-900): The Sources Revisited," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54, no. 1 (2003): 12–13.

[125] Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 58. D. A. Binchy confirms in the introduction to his translation of the work that its first and last folios must have been lost before it was copied into the fifteenth-century codex in which it survives; Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 258.

[126] In *The Irish Penitentials*, 74–95.

says that it may be as late as 591 since Columbanus used it by that date as an unacknowledged source for his own penitential (q.v.) . The penitential itself says that it was compiled by the abbot of a monastery "for the benefit of his own monks," though it does describe penance for both clerics and laypersons. Bieler says that most regard the text as "the work of either St. Finnian of Clonard (d. 549) or St. Finnian of Mag-Bile (Moville), d. 579" but adds that making "a decision between the two alleged authors seems impossible."[128]

This earliest of the Irish penitentials contains little that addresses superstition or magical practices. It does condemn both nuns and clerics who (in Bieler's translation) "practice magic" to lead others astray (*Si quis clericus vel si qua mulier malefica vel malificus si aliquem maleficio suo deciperat*), however, and especially condemns such practices as the giving of a potion "for the sake of wanton love" (*pro inlecebroso amore*) [129] and the production of an abortion *maleficio*.[130] That the *mulier* is a nun is understood in context, for it says in the following canon that if she bears the child and does penance for six years, "in the seventh year she shall be joined to the altar, and then we say her crown can be restored and she may don a white robe and be pronounced a virgin."[131] These canons seem most clearly intended to address the use of aphrodisiacs and abortifacients, and that use is not associated with any supernatural agency. None of the

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[127] Frantzen, *Mise à jour du Les "libri paenitentiales,"* 22.

[128] Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 4.

[129] *Penitentialis Vinniani* cap.18, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 78–79.

[130] *Penitentialis Vinniani* cap.19–20, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 78–81.

[131] *Penitentialis Vinniani* cap.21, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 80–81.

canons that specify penance for laypersons address the use of potions.

***Paenitentiale S. Columbani* (*Penitential of Saint Columbanus* – Ireland/Francia, late sixth century)**[132]

Frantzen says that the attribution of this penitential to Columbanus is substantially correct,[133] and Bieler says that it was expanded from a core of material that dates from the beginning of the saint's mission to the continent in the late sixth century. The *Paenitentiale S. Columbani* was influenced by *Penitentialis Vinniani*, with canon B:6[134] in the former derived from the canons on potions discussed above.[135] Columbanus's penitential is more elaborate and even more openly pastoral. Notably, it assigns specific penances to monks, to different classes of clerics, and to lay persons throughout so that, for example, the one administering a love potion receives a whole year of penance on bread and water if a cleric but only half a year if a layman.[136] Significant as well is the addition of material related to specific superstitious practices, including that of feasting at pagan temples. The penitential says that "if any layman has eaten or drunk beside temples" out of ignorance, he is to do forty days of penance. If he "communicated at the table of demons" after "the priest had declared to him that this was sacrilege" out of greed, though, the penance was extended to three forty-day periods, and if he did so "in

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[132] *The Irish Penitentials*, 96–107.

[133] Frantzen, *Mise à jour du Les "libri paenitentiales,"* 23.

[134] The penitential exists in two sections, with the second ("B") addressing the sins of laymen as well as monks; McNeill and Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 249.

[135] *Paenitentiale S. Columbani* chap. 6, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 100.

[136] *Paenitentiale S. Columbani* chap. 6, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 100–101.

worship of the demons or in honour of the idols" he was to do penance for three years.[137] Bieler says that this canon and the one following it, which condemns communion with the followers of Bonosus, "were probably added in Burgundy early in the seventh century, when the heresy of Bonosus was at its zenith."[138] Though Christian heretics and what were presumably the ruins of Roman pagan temples would at first appear to have little in common, but what connects these actions is the communal meal during which the sinner *mensae daemoniorum communicauerit* on the one hand and *ceteris haereticis communicauerit* on the other. Filotas says that this is an example of the penitentials' condemning the sharing of meals in places associated with pagan practices or with others who ascribed to those meals a non-Christian ritual significance.[139]

What is condemned here, then, may not be the survival of a specifically "pagan" ritual but instead the persistence of a community one. At the least, this penitential's saying that it was possible for some to commune with demons "out of ignorance" while others did so intentionally indicates that there was little overt religious or superstitious connotation to these meals other than the place they were held. This admonition, like those made against celebrating the Kalends or, at the 747 Council of *Clofesho*, against marking Rogation days with "games, horse races and exceptionally lavish banquets,"[140] may be directed at community practices and rituals that, while carrying some pagan

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[137] *Paenitentiale S. Columbani* chap. 24, Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 104–105.

[138] Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 5. Bonosus was a fourth-century bishop condemned at the Synod of Capua (391/392) for asserting that Mary and other children by Joseph following the birth of Christ; Samuel MacAuley Jackson, *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Thought: Basilica-Chambers* (Kessinger Publishing, 2006), s.v. "Bonosus and the Bonosians," 2: 231.

[139] Filotas, *Pagan Suvivals*, 114–115.

[140] Filotas, *Pagan Suvivals*, 184.

associations, more critically were opportunities for drunkenness, the expression of "greed" and lust, and other condemned behaviors. Gurevich points out that though the priests who administered the sacraments of the Church were agents of ideological and moral control, "collective social control in the community" where members had their "social and human ties" was equally powerful.[141] Unacceptably pagan, superstitious, or heretical behaviors that were bound to a community's accepted social behaviors must have been critical targets for condemnation at the community level, and both the priest's personal declaration that such meals are "sacrilege" and his imposition of penance according to the intention of the sinner[142] would have been important tools for changing that community's mores.

***Paenitentiale Cummeani* (*Penitential of Cummean* – Ireland, seventh century)**[143]

While the *pereginatio* of Columbanus appears to have introduced more pastoral elements and an awareness of questionable community practices to his penitential, the *Paenitentiale Cummeani* underscores the monastic context of the most early Irish penitentials and, within that context, their general lack of concern with pagan practices or superstitions outside of the (questionable) case of the use of potions. This likely seventh-century penitential, which was widely circulated on the continent in the eighth and ninth centuries, contains elements drawn from Welsh canon collections of the early sixth century, from the *Penitentialis Vinniani*, and from monastic rules, all (according to

[141] Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture*, 78.

[142] *Paenitentiale S. Columbani* chap. 24, Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 104–105.

[143] *The Irish Penitentials*, 108–135.

Frantzen) from insular sources.[144] Bieler says that this "most comprehensive" of the Irish penitentials was likely written by Cummaine Fota (d. 662), who "may be further identified with … Cumineus Longus, bishop of Clonfert" (located in modern-day County Galway).[145]

This penitential displays extensive concern for food contaminated by animals and for the proper disposal of the host if it is dropped or expelled, and it categorizes as sins of pride the heretic "who allows himself any novelty outside the Scriptures" and the blasphemer, both of whom may be healed by public repentance and penance.[146] It does not, however, provide penances for any superstitious or magical acts, and is, in fact, concerned almost entirely with monastic discipline. Of the 190 penitential judgments given, only ten are explicitly or in context[147] addressed to laypersons.

***Poenitentiale Theodori* (England, 690x740)**

The preface to this work says that the compiler organized the "varied and muddled account" (*diversa confusaque digestio*) of Theodore archbishop of Canterbury's (668–690) penitential rulings into the present work.[148] Thomas Charles-Edwards says that the *Paenitentiale Cummeani* served as this work's model and describes it as having first been assembled from the archbishop's rulings and then divided into two books during his lifetime, with the *Paenitentiale Cummeani* serving as the organizational model of the first

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[144] Frantzen, *Mise à jour du Les "libri paenitentiales,"* 24.

[145] Bieler and Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials*, 5–7.

[146] *Paenitentiale Cummeani* VIII.1, in *The Irish Penitentials*, 122–123.

[147] i.e., by addressing sin within marriage.

[148] Charles-Edwards, "Penitential of Theodore," 149–150; Frantzen, *Mise à jour du Les "libri paenitentiales,"* 127.

"penitential" one. Chapter headings derived from *Cummeani* subsequently were added and material was moved between the two books after Theodore's death by the compiler, who names himself the "Northumbria Disciple" and who had access both to those who had known Theodore and to multiple versions of prior texts, to produce the completed work.[149]

Though it takes the Irish penitentials and especially the *Paenitentiale Cummeani* as its model, the English *Poenitentiale Theodori* differs from them in important ways, though. First, it addresses the actions of the laity much more than do those works. Among the 154 tariffed penances listed in the first book, only fourth-four are explicitly or implicitly addressed to members of the clergy. Second, it includes in that book a chapter that directly addresses superstition and pagan practices (*De cultoribus idolorum*, "On the worship of idols"). Of the five sins listed there, the first and fifth directly address worship or sacrifice to demons and, like the *Paenitentiale S. Columbani*, assign penance according to the pastor's determination of the intention of the sinner. The first canon assigns one year of penance to those "who sacrifice to demons in trivial things" (*qui immolant demonibus in minimis*) and ten years to those doing so "in serious things" (*in magnis*) while the fifth, which forbids eating food that has been sacrificed, instructs the priest to "consider the person, of what age he was and in what way he had been brought up" (*considerare debet personam in qua aetate vel quomodo edoctus aut qualiter contigerit*) when determining the appropriate penance for that behavior.[150] The fourth

[149] Charles-Edwards, "Penitential of Theodore," 157–158.

[150] *Poenitentiale Theodori* ("U") I.xv.1 and I.xv.5; Paul Willem Finsterwalder, *Die Canones Theodori Cantuariensis und ihre Überlieferungsformen* (Weimar: Hermann Bölaus Nachfolger, 1929), 310–311.

canon condemns the practice of incantations and divination by women and the performance of "auguries, omens from birds, or dreams, or any divinations according to the custom of the heathen" (*auguria, auspicia sive somnia vel divinationes quaslibet secundum more gentilium*) in language borrowed from canon 23 of the Council of Ancyra (314).[151]

Without precedent, though, are the second and third canon, which prescribe penance for a woman who puts her daughter "upon a roof or into an oven" to "cure a fever" (*pro sanitate febris*) and a man who burns grain where someone has died "for the health of the living and of the house" (*pro sanitate viventium et domus*).[152] Unlike the first, fourth, and fifth penitential canons of this chapter, the second and third do not appear in Finsterwalder's "D" text, the *Iudicia Theodori* that Charles-Edwards says originated in Ireland and attest to "the rapid reception of Theodore's teaching" there.[153] In fact, I have yet to find any other source mentioning these practices that does not derive them from this penitential. Additionally, the first and fifth canons are only superficially similar to those in the *Paenitentiale Columbani* in that the sin described by the *Poenitentiale Theodori* is to sacrifice or to eat of what is sacrificed, not to "commune" or participate in a community meal. Frantzen's assertion that penitentials served in part to teach Christian mores is born out not only in these penitential canons but also in the tenth chapter of second book, where the fifth canon says that Theodore ruled that those "bearing [attacks from] a devil" (*demonium sustinenti*) could make use of stones (*petras*)

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[151] *Poenitentiale Theodori* I.vx.4, *Die Canones Theodori*, 311 and note at 4, 13.

[152] *Poenitentiale Theodori* I.xv.2; *Die Canones Theodori*, 310.

[153] Charles-Edwards, "Penitential of Theodore," 147.

or plants (*holera*) that were presumably elements of "folk medicine" like the treatment of fever described earlier, but only with prayers and without the *incantatione* condemned in I.xv.4.[154]

As a whole, this penitential appears to record specific judgments made by Theodore (or attributed to him) in response to specific "pagan" behavior observed among English men and women in the later part of the seventh century, nearly one hundred years after the conversion of the kingdoms there to Christianity began. It and the other penitential texts cannot attest to the frequency of these behaviors, of course. However, if these texts are considered to be based at least partly in observation as well as in interpretation—something for which the unexplained, "undigested," and unique canons of *Poenitentiale Theodori* I.xv.1 and 2 certainly argue—then the only possible answer to "How many times did a pastor need to see this behavior in order to classify it as being related to paganism and idolatry?" is "Once." In at least some cases, its response to these behaviors is a pastoral one like that recommended in the *Paenitentiale Columbani*: to consider the sinner's awareness of his guilt and the reasons for his behavior when assigning penance for his sin.

Conclusions and Directions for Further Study

These three examples of genres and specific works demonstrate different ways in which the conversion and Christianization of England depended on texts and their production. The manuscripts examined both served as sources supporting the provision of pastoral care, in the case of penitentials and texts related to catechetical instruction, and

[154] *Poentitentiale Theodori* II.x.5: *Die Canones Theodori*, 324.

as a medium for that care in the case of books of prayer. Books of prayer and penitentials also show that this early English manuscript tradition was flexible and innovative, able to incorporate works and genres from Irish and Roman sources and to develop its own distinctive works. This overview has shown that, even in a world where few were literate and manuscripts were precious, texts both functioned in and were responsive to the world outside the ecclesiastical foundations where they were created and kept. As we have seen, those foundations were connected to each other and to the communities around them; it is only reasonable to conclude that texts that conveyed specific pastoral mandates and concerns would share that connection as well.

There is much more to be done and to be gained from these and similar approaches to early English manuscript study. An immediate task is to complete the detailed annotation of the database drawn from Gneuss's *Handlist* so that all items within each manuscript are listed and that the latest information on dating and provenance are included. The next obvious task would be to compare those manuscripts produced in France with those produced in England for the same period, but unfortunately the attempt to do that as part of this study was quickly abandoned because no equivalent to Gneuss's *Handlist* exists for French manuscripts of this period. The seven volume of medieval manuscripts in France that comprise the *Comité international de paléographie Latine*'s *Catalogue des manuscrits en écriture Latine*[155] focuses almost solely on manuscript codices, ignoring most single leaves and fragments, and consciously includes only those manuscripts that can be explicitly dated through their colophon or through other

[155] Charles Samaran and Robert Marichal, eds., *Catalogue des manuscrits en écriture latine portant des indications de date, de lieu ou de copiste*, VII vols. (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1959–1985).

contents.[156] By contrast, most of the English manuscripts in Gneuss's *Handlist* are dated on paleographic grounds, and eighty-four of the 188 mid-ninth century and earlier English manuscripts used in this study are fragments. Comparisons between England and France, then, either will have to focus on discrete works or will require the assembly of an equivalent of Gneuss's list for French sources. Fortunately, the increasing prevalence of manuscript catalogues in electronic form may make the later task possible if a specific genre or thematic category of manuscript is selected for comparison. In such an endeavor, the corpus of early English manuscripts undoubtedly will lead the way.

[156] Albert Derolez's essay on the *Comité international de paleographie Latine* Web site says that from its inception in 1959 the *Catalogue des manuscrits* was intended to be "a catalogue of manuscript books" from which "archival documents would in principle be excluded, in spite of the immense number of dated documents in comparison with the relatively rare occurrence of dated codices"; Albert Derolez, "Réalisations: Achievements," *Comité international de paléographie latine*, September 2003, http://www.palaeographia.org/cipl/derolez.htm#cmd.

CONCLUSION: PASTORAL CARE, ADAPTATION, AND INCULTURATION

Max Weber said that the triumph of religions like Christianity that infuse their followers with an ethical consciousness that shapes understanding and behavior alike was made possible by those religions' development of systematic pastoral care.[1] As this study has shown, the earliest Christian groups developed ecclesiastical structures that enabled the pastors' role to encompass community leadership, religious instruction, and divinely ordained power and authority. Education, family, political connections, and social prestige may have enhanced and even in some cases served as models for the application of pastoral authority. Still, at least through the early fifth century that authority remained rooted in the structures of the church as well as in the idea of the pastor as one who modeled his leadership after that of Christ the Good Shepherd, who told those chosen to carry his message that "truly you are not of the world but I have chosen you from the world" (John 15:19). To convert, to instruct, and to correct were primary among the pastor's mandates, and those activities were central to the establishment of Christianity both in the Roman Empire and in Anglo-Saxon England.

Christian leaders practiced pastoral care within their communities: within the house churches of the first and second centuries, within their churches and dioceses in Roman cities, within minsters and *monasteria* in England and Ireland, and even to some extent within their family *villae* and rural estates. Those last, though, frequently aroused suspicions that underscore the caution with which many within the church approached the interaction of pastoral and secular authority, so that urban bishops in time banned baptism

[1] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff, 4th ed. (London: Methuen, 1965), 76.

at estate churches that they claimed were hotbeds of heresy while Bede encouraged Egbert to censure lay persons who bought or received land under the pretext of setting up monasteries and then ignored the obligation to be "of service to God and man from then forward."[2] Pastors adapted to and acted within the domains of these communities out of their religious authority, an authority that was accepted by those who were and who would become their followers. Bede says that the king and people of Kent accepted Christian doctrine and were baptized because the establishment by Augustine and his fellow missionaries of their community at Canterbury enabled them to demonstrate their commitment to liturgical practice, to apostolic poverty, and to preaching and teaching.[3]

In all, Christian pastors in England asserted themselves *as pastors* and presented their message according to the understanding of that role that had developed in the centuries before. They were willing to live as their flock lived, but they centered their settlements on the church and controlled access to that central location. Though they evidently condemned cremation and may have discouraged the use of weapons in burials, pastors were willing otherwise to allow the dead to be buried in the secular community's cemeteries much as they had before so long as they retained control over burial practices within their own ecclesiastical domain. Augustine's mission held to its Roman models, and some idea of the Rome that sent this mission may have shaped a king like Edwin's response to the Christian message as witnessed by his own adoption of "Roman" styles

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[2] "liberi exinde a divino simul et humano servitio"; Bede, *Epistola ad Ecgberctum antistitem* 13, in *Opera historica*, ed. J. E. King (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930), 2:472.

[3] *HE* i.26, in *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors and Bertram Colgrave, trans. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 76.

for his own processions and coinage.[4] Still, the authority of pastors in England, while based in Latin texts and expressed in "Roman" ecclesiastical structures, was only incidentally Roman and was explicitly Christian.

These pastors did adapt to working in the fields of early Christian England, as witnessed by their willingness to establish themselves within English communities, to use English in ways that aided understanding, and to create new types of texts to support pastoral care. Such adaptations are taken as markers of "inculturation" by some scholars of Christianity, and considering how pastors expressed Christianity within different cultures remains a fruitful exercise. As this study has shown, though, this conception of how Christian mission succeeds among different peoples and societies, as it is expressed by the present-day Catholic Church in reference both to missionary theology and to the Church's interaction with indigenous beliefs and practices throughout in world, is of limited aid to interpretation of the historical evidence for the progress of Christianity in the places and during the period studied. Inculturation may seem to present such an attractive and broad-reaching theory for understanding conversion and Christianization in part because its assertion that the Christian message can profoundly change cultures and individuals alike supports the central place of individual human experience in human culture. If conversion did result from inculturation, then in a way the personal religious experience becomes of the collective experience of culture. As Durkheim characterized it, for "principal aspects of collective life to have begun as nothing other than various aspects of religious life, it is evident that religious life must be the eminent form and like

[4] Margaret Deanesly, "Roman Traditionalist Influence Among the Anglo-Saxons," *The English Historical Review* 58, no. 230 (April 1943): 137.

a summary of collective life in its entirety."[5] Durkheim's explanation of the relationship between religion and society speaks most clearly to the origins of religion, though, and not to changes such as those that occurred in England. As this study has shown, Christian doctrines and practices had always been shaped by the society in which Christians lived, but there is little evidence that those changes reflected a conscious effort on the part of pastors to find parallels to Christian doctrines within secular society.

In fact, when it came to dealing with mores and beliefs, pastors not only explained and corrected but also used their authority to try to "convert" their followers and turn them away from the secular world, rather than to find within that world the reflection of Christian belief. A recent proponent of inculturation as a way of understanding the conversion of England is Darius Makuja, who has explored the flexibility Pope Gregory the Great displayed in his responses to questions about how pastors should treat different cultural practices. In his instructions, Gregory addressed pastoral care not only in regard to pagans in England but also heretics in Spain, where he encouraged pastors to use single-immersion baptism rather than the three immersions that were done in Roman liturgy if doing so helped them avoid comparison with Arian baptismal doctrines and practices. However, while Makuja's claim that Gregory's instructions in this situation demonstrated his respect for Iberian cultural diversity is reasonable as a pastoral response,[6] it is also necessary to take into account a more prosaic explanation—that Gregory wanted bishops to avoid fueling the arguments of Arian controversialist in what

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[5] Émile Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: le système totémique en Australie* (Paris: Librairie Générale française, 1991), 697.

[6] Darius Oliha Makuja, "Eschatology and Inculturation: The Missionary Strategy of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604)," Ph.D. diss., St. Louis University, 2006, 55.

was likely a highly charged and politicized situation. Likewise, Gregory's instructing Bishop Milletus to destroy the idols of English pagans while preserving their temples and to recast their pagan festivals as Christian feast days likely does not demonstrate his desire to foster "continuity between paganism and Christianity,"[7] as much as it represents his desire to have Mellitus and other missionaries gain enough control over the English community that they could block and redirect further pagan practice. While the growth of Christian understanding was one goal of pastoral care, compliance with the mandates of acceptable Christian behavior was certainly another.

Moreover, to say that Gregory's "inculturation" of pagan English temples shaped the reception of Christianity in England is to overlook the fact that there is almost no evidence for Anglo-Saxon temple structures, much less for their reuse as Christian ones. Gregory's response instead appears to reflect his awareness of what Peter Brown has identified as "the issue of how to reconcile a universal Christianity with the conditions of a highly regionalized world," a reconciliation Brown says was expressed in the development of sixth- and seventh-century "micro-Chistendoms" in which Christians and the pastors who converted, instructed, and corrected them remained loyal to the universal Church while adapting in trivial matters to local conditions and social customs.[8] While early medieval England's burial practices, its cultural productions, and likely its settlement geography and social organization as well changed under the influence of Christianity, that change did not happen because pastors sought to modify the cultural

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[7] Makuja, "Eschatology and Inculturation," 88–90.

[8] Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200 - 1000*, 2nd ed. (Malden MA: Blackwell, 2003), 15.

systems established by the pagan Anglo-Saxons in order to "embody authoritative elements of Christian faith" within those structures (even if such embodiment may have been the theological result of their actions).[9] Instead, they simply fulfilled their roles and engaged in the pastoral care that was their heritage, just as the pastors who came before them did in Ireland, Gaul, Rome, and Jerusalem.

[9] Carl F. Starkloff, "Inculturation and cultural systems (Part I)," *Theological Studies* 55, no. 1 (March 1994): 77.

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VITA

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