Editorial

Introduction: The Charisma of Liturgy in the Middle Ages

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This collective volume is devoted to the various manifestations of liturgy in the Middle Ages, based on a great variety and wealth of primary sources. Coming from diverse historiographical and disciplinary traditions, the authors have focused on different aspects of liturgy, but all with the common denominator of seeking to trace the notion of liturgy and some of its ritual manifestations, as well as its spiritual, political and material ramifications.

The word "liturgy" was originally used in a Christian context to refer to "public work" or "service in the name/on behalf of the people". In Christian tradition, liturgy is synonymous with the participation of the People of God in divine action. In the New Testament, the word "liturgy" refers not only the celebration of divine worship, but also to the proclamation of the Gospel and active charity. Christian liturgy has been endowed with charisma since Antiquity. As articulated by St Paul in the twelfth chapter of his epistle to the Corinthians in the mid-first century, charisma refers to a supernatural gift given to a member of the Christian community, the benefits of which do not remain within the charismatic person, but always spread out to the service of other members of the community. Its broader synonym, charisma, has also been applied to other historical realities, such as the "the charisma of distant places", in Peter Brown's expression for late antique societies, or "the charisma of objects", in C. Stephen Jaeger phrase. Recent research promoted by Jaeger holds that charisma can be understood as an aesthetic phenomenon that can manifest itself through any artistic, literary, material or ritual expression. The terms "charisma", "aura" and "charm" can be usefully rehabilitated as critical concepts for analysing art, literature and film—their aesthetics, their impact on audiences and social psychology. The notion of charisma thus extends to religious ceremonies, with all their splendour and mystery, capable of inspiring the same kind of admiration and impulse to imitate as charismatic living figures.

Liturgy has always fascinated scholars, but acquired special prominence in the mid-twentieth century, when prestigious historians such as Ernst H. Kantorowicz began to approach the liturgical sources in a systematic manner, especially in his *Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Workship* (1946). Liturgy ceased to be a fringe interest, fit only for theologians specialising in Christian ceremonies, to also become the domain of historians, art historians and anthropologists interested in its ritual dimension.

The new liturgists broadened the scope of the liturgical sources, without which it is difficult to understand the social and political dynamics of the medieval world. These studies have shown not only that analysis of the liturgical sources illuminates some fascinating manifestations of medieval religiosity and spirituality, but also that they contribute decisively to forging the attendant political and social realities. The influence between liturgy and politics is reciprocal, so both benefit from this fruitful encounter while at the same time preserving a certain degree of autonomy from each other. Political theology, theorised by Carl Schmitt and practised by Ernst H. Kantorowicz as a means of analysing the transfers that take place between religion and politics, endures as an effective method for analysing the most varied manifestations of medieval liturgy, as the contributions to this volume demonstrate.

1. The Spirit of the Liturgy

Based on the documentary and symbolic richness of the liturgy, the contributions to this volume can be grouped into three areas: the first deals with the proper notion

of liturgy, together with the key concept of the sacramental *character*; the second focuses on the relationship between liturgy and power; and the third analyses the material and iconographic dimension of liturgy.

The first group of contributions focuses on the very notion and definition of liturgy in the Middle Ages, delving into some of its more strictly spiritual manifestations. The concept and practice of medieval liturgy becomes a tool capable of uniting core ritual manifestations with fringe ritual manifestations. Nils Holger Petersen explores the capacity of liturgy to embrace what was seemingly marginal in medieval society, as he handles three apparently diverse but interestingly linked concepts in the medieval religious setting: liturgy, ritual and theatre. This makes him question the excessively rigid, tradition-bound notion with which some simplify the concept and practice of liturgy, a simplification which reduces it to the mechanical repetition of long-established ceremonials. He focuses on two ceremonies devised for Easter time, developed in twelfth-century Europe. These liturgies did not initially present any classification problems for the participants, who clearly perceived their connection to tradition. However, analysis of their development over time reveals a clear tendency towards experimentation and renewal in terms of traditional liturgical procedures. This leads us to investigate the key concept of the "transformation of rituals", which must always maintain a delicate balance between a legitimising tradition and innovation that enabled them to adapt to the zeitgeist.

The examples examined by Peterson indicate that even on one of the most sacred feasts such as Easter day, the liturgy was innovative and flexible. However, at the same time, they confirm that this "ritual innovation" was generally restricted to liturgical manifestations that did not affect their most sacrosanct ceremonies, such as the Eucharist and the overall structure of the mass. These ceremonial transformations are all the more striking in an age when tradition had an enormous legitimising power. The justification for the changes was normally made by reference to that tradition, and the alterations in the rituals thus had to be legitimised theologically, for example, by a new explanation of the sacraments, which in turn implied transformations in liturgical practices. This all has implications for the modern researcher, too, who must be sensitive to all the forces at play in this equilibrium between tradition and innovation, permanence and change, and which, therefore, require interdisciplinary and intermedial approaches (i.e., *intermediality*).

After the ritual transformations analysed by Peterson, Juan Rego's contribution focuses on the more stable and permanent nature of medieval liturgy: the indelible character (*character indelebilis*) that some ritually transmitted sacraments provide. His sources are not strictly ritual–ceremonial, as most of the contributions to this volume are, but rather discursive–theological. Some scholastic theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth century reprised the concept of indelible character, which had first appeared in the late antique patristic sources to designate some permanent qualities transferred to the recipients of some particular sacraments. The new theologians used the restricted code of Aristotelian psychology to transfer the indelible character of baptism—to which those original late antique sources referred—to the priesthood. Rego examines the metaphorical nature of some of the new concepts developed, especially by Thomas Aquinas, and the iconic value they assign to the indelible mark left by some sacraments, which contributes to a better understanding of current theological debate.

This conceptual part of the volume is completed by John Joseph Gallagher's contribution, which draws on the rich source of *martyrologies* to connect liturgy with knowledge and learning. These documents often serve as paraliturgical resources outlining the contours of the liturgical year and the biographies of the saints commemorated over the annual liturgical cycle. *The Old English Martyrology*, Europe's first example of a prose martyrology in the vernacular, adapts the genre into a more scholarly and versatile manual which instructs and informs its users on a variety of topics: geography, language, hagiography, time calculations, information management, astronomy, cosmology, meteorology, science and doctrinal learning about the saints and the liturgical year. While the liturgical texts mainly constitute ritual formulas that worshippers should put into practice, the paralitur-

gical sources provide background information relevant to liturgy, the liturgical year and ecclesiastical life.

2. The Politics of Liturgy

The second group of contributions makes explicit reference to the links between liturgy and politics, from early medieval to early modern times. Eva-Maria Butz focuses on the political dimension of the liturgical prayers of remembrance. These books encompass the list of rulers during the Carolingian period, thus becoming key artefacts in the shaping of the collective memory of their time. The *Libri vitae,* also known as "confraternity books", are a compilation of the names of people deemed worthy of being explicitly remembered in liturgical prayers. Butz works with sources such as the *Salzburg Liber Vitae* (eight century) and the *Reichenau Confraternity Book* (ninth century). These two confraternity books firm up over time into a key source of legitimisation for Carolingian sovereignty, justifying it historically and confirming it liturgically. It is worth pointing out that these two confraternity books, typical of the eighth and ninth centuries, tie up with the genealogies, another means of historiographic legitimisation that would emerge in the twelfth century with the rise of lineages, in an already more secularised context. The genealogical logic that legitimised power underpins these liturgical annotations, arousing the piety and adherence of active attendees of liturgical ceremonies, as well as the unity of the kingdom around its rulers.

The political influence of Carolingian liturgy also made itself felt at the margins of the Empire, in the areas known as the *Marches*. The liturgy that developed in Catalonia is a paradigmatic case, deftly analysed by Cornel-Peter Rodenbusch, who focuses on the framing of trials in tenth- and eleventh-century Catalonia. It is a liminal liturgy, in that it represents a convergence of Carolingian and Visigothic influence. Visigothic law notably affected the form in which trials were organised, while also leaving enough latitude for liturgy and the divine to have a bearing on legal customs. The relationship between the liturgical and the legal, magnificently elaborated by Rodenbusch in his article, emerges as another key area where liturgy as spiritual ritual interacts with power as political action.

More specifically, the post-Carolingian expansion of Catalonia and Castile in Iberia, to the detriment of the Muslims, left a privileged space for new liturgical formulas, as diverse political and cultural structures were established. Marisa Bueno analyses the victory rituals, with clear Roman echoes, that arose from the Castilian expansion into Al-Andalus. The sacred Islamic spaces were transformed into places of Christian worship, with the very same locations being used. The conversion of mosques into churches is described in contemporary chronicles and books of liturgy, where liturgy is revealed as a privileged means of understanding both the appropriation and the sacralisation of the mosque. It was a means of taking these sacred places from Muslim control and restoring Christian faith with the new churches. These rituals are an obvious legacy of Roman law as modified in late antiquity. They are reconstituted, adapted and reused in the new consecration ceremonies to purify the Mohammedan contamination, rendering the space doubly sacred.

In this same historical and historiographical context, Francesc Granell analyses one of the defining liturgical manifestations of Christian expansion in the eastern half of the Iberian Peninsula, spearheaded by the Crown of Aragon: the festive commemorations of the conquests. Liturgy spreads beyond the sacred space of the churches as analysed by Marisa Bueno in the preceding contribution, expanding into the civil and public sphere. The day Valencia was conquered by King James I of Aragon, 9 October 1238, is seen retrospectively as a providential, divine intervention in history, worthy of being commemorated liturgically. A century after the event, the citizens of Valencia decided to hold a commemorative feast every year, a custom that continues to this day. Granell probes the aims and religious manifestations of a supposedly civil celebration, framing it in a broader Mediterranean context. The liturgy resulting from this Valencian feast has many parallels with two other medieval liturgies that likewise commemorated crusading victories against Islam: the "Feast of the Liberation of Jerusalem" and the "Feast of the Banner of Majorca".

The world of the Carolingian Catalan Marches, and the Iberian expansion of Castile and the Crown of Aragon, eventually led to the union of the two kingdoms in the joint figure of the Catholic Monarchs at the dawn of the modern era. Álvaro Fernández de Córdova analyses the political significance of Isabella the Catholic's funeral in 1505. Queen Isabella is that figure who best symbolises the total victory of the Christian kingdoms in Iberia, so the study of the liturgical dimensions of her funeral represent a fitting way of rounding off the preceding contributions. The new political and religious context, at the start of the sixteenth century, associate to the formation of the early modern Estate, was favourable to a new concept associated with liturgy: political propaganda. The sources become more universal and plural, as the author of this contribution draws on papal diaries, diplomatic documents and the *sermo funebris* of Ludovico Bruno. This plurality of sources allows for the reconstruction of the liturgical, scenographic and rhetorical display of a ceremony that seduced with its solemnity and elegance, the fruit of a hybridism that combined Castilian and Italian funerary traditions in the Rome of Julius II.

This contribution shows that the new liturgical forms spread from the specifically political into the sphere of international relations, as some ceremonies—such as royal entrances and funerals—became established as a favoured means of expressing power. In the case of the Isabelline funeral, they gave concrete expression to Spanish–French competition, as well as to the incipient tensions between the Habsburg and Aragonese courts for the Castilian succession. The sober late medieval liturgies became modern scenographies, where theatricality prevailed over ceremonial decorum and the rites became more formalised, with a tendency to combine spiritual and secular meanings to a greater extent. Fernández de Córdova's contribution offers an exceptional platform from which to observe the progressive convergence between a politicising liturgy and formalising rituals— an evolution analogous to that experienced by the royal self-coronations, as suggested by Jaume Aurell in his monograph on the subject (*Medieval Self-Coronations: The History and Symbolism of a Ritual* (2020).

3. The Representations of the Liturgy

Finally, a third group of contributions focuses on the material aspects of liturgical practice, such as ceremonial vestments and iconographies. Abel Lorenzo-Rodríguez analyses the miracle of the chasuble of St. Ildefonso of Toledo (seventh century) from the angle of punishment miracles. The author draws an interesting comparison with other contemporary accounts such as that of Saint Bonitus of Claremont (also seventh century) and later accounts such as the miracle of Bishop Adaulfus II of Compostela (ninth century), pointing to the possible late antique inspiration for both in the *Libellus Precum* and hagiographies of Gregory of Tours. The accounts involving Ildefonsus and Adaulfus present remarkable similarities in the development of their respective sainthoods and the importance given to liturgical vestments. Both are sanctified as prelates owing to their miraculous possession of external attributes and their worthiness in the face of unjust trials.

Incorporating art history into the already rich disciplinary convergence of this collective volume, Ana-Maria Moubayed contributes on liturgy's ever-decisive iconographic influence, exploring the sculptural programme of the west portal of Saint-Martin-de-Besse (France), which puts the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist at the centre of its polysemic narratives, forming chiastic sequences. Focusing on the eschatological events relating to the fall of humanity and the history of redemption, the Besse portal presents a series of enigmatic figures from the Old and New Testaments, together with an early Christian figure, Saint Eustace. The series of sculpted narrative vignettes that form the west façade of Besse have multiple meanings. Centred on salvation through (re)conversion, where the liturgical sacraments of Penitence and the Eucharist are fundamental, these polysemic narratives form and enact four different chiastic exchanges that suggest the Garden of Eden, where time and space are in constant dialogue.

Altogether, the ten contributions to this volume are set within the common concept of liturgy, examining its different aspects in space, spiritual, politics and the material world.

The rich diversity of all these approaches makes clear the need for a multidisciplinary analysis in order to properly understand liturgy. Belonging at first glance to the field of spiritual ceremonies, it is also necessary to link liturgy to ritual studies, given that liturgical ceremonies are something more than pure scenography to be admired. Rather, they represent spiritual rites, the comprehension of which demands an attentive evaluation of both their content and their forms. Those who attend these liturgical events do not behave as mere passive spectators of a theatrical performance, but as active participants in a rite that involves a transformation of reality in one way or another. The political dimension does not emerge as something artificially juxtaposed, but as a clear manifestation of the medieval attachment to rituals and symbols. At the same time, they are enriched by—and enrich—everything that surrounds them, from their material environment to clothing and iconographies. Each one of the articles in this volume focuses on one of these manifestations of liturgy, but they can be read as a unified whole, by emphasising the interaction between all the elements at play in the proper development of the theory and practice of the rich medieval ceremonial.

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