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The Cross and the Throne:
The Genesis of the Idea of Victimhood in the Context of Political Theology

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Abstract

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By Yevgen Galona

Despite the obvious negative connotations of weakness, misery, and pain associated with the status of the victim, the paradoxical trend is rapidly developing in which victimhood appears to be a desirable identity. In addressing this problem my dissertation presents an interdisciplinary inquiry into the genealogy of victimhood reconstructing the main turning points in the formation of the concept and its cognate sentiments. I argue that our contemporary understanding of victimhood where the victim gains a special social advantage because of society's ethical disposition to support those who have been unjustly hurt is primarily a remnant of the political theology of the High Medieval period. By analyzing iconography, the devotional tradition, and theological debates on the nature of the Atonement, I demonstrate how the idea of victimhood changed within Christian discourse. I further argue that these transformations cannot be understood outside of the confluence of private piety and the Church's quest to consolidate political power during the 11th-13th centuries. These transformations became crucial for the Church because the signifiers of victimhood were incorporated into a rethinking of the idea of authority by theologians of the Gregorian reform in their antagonism to the idea of power exercised by secular rulers, an idea that rested, in turn, on the signifiers of glory and triumph. As such, these transformations played a crucial role in the so-called "Papal Revolution" – an attempt by the Church to establish and expand its political influence over secular rulers during the High Medieval period.

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INTRODUCTION

"Trump's most powerful tool...is that he knows how to offer victimhood to people who have the least claim to it," said Trevor Noah during *The Daily Show* on the 5th of October, 2018. This phrase sums up his critique of Trump's stance on the Me Too Movement.[1] That day, the president answering questions from journalists, said that in the United States "women are doing great," while men are having a hard time because they can be accused of something they may not be guilty, and such allegations ruin their life. Trump made the comment in the context of the scandal over the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh (who was accused of sexual misconduct) to the Supreme Court, but his comment also implicitly refers to the cases of Harvey Weinstein and Kevin Spacey, who according to Trump's logic became the real victims of the Me Too Movement. Noah's argument is that Trump inverts the actual facts and presents perpetrators as victims, while denying the victimization of those who suffered from the harassment.

There are a few striking things in Noah's formulation that shed light on the contemporary perception of the very phenomenon of victimhood itself. First, this customary perception asserts that victimhood is not apparent – it is something to be "offered." This perspective immediately raises questions: who is this

[1] A movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault that spread virally in October 2017 as American actress Alyssa Milano popularized hashtag #metoo on social media in an attempt to demonstrate the widespread of these phenomena. It followed sexual-abuse allegations against Harvey Weinstein and later against Kevin Spacey.

person/institution that is responsible for proper labeling and why does this person/institution have the right and authority to do so? Second, a more important but less evident question is why such an offering is a powerful tool. According to this logic, victimhood can be used for one's own benefit. In the context that Noah mentions this – it is clear: offering victimhood to accused men automatically exempts them from allegations and presents them as innocent and unjustly persecuted.

But there is more. Noah's claim stresses the possibility in which claiming the status of victimhood grants certain privileges, which may be sought even by those who have not been victimized. Therefore, the real problem is not with victimization itself, but rather with the social constructions that surround it. These constructions prescribe certain attitude towards victims and in the attempt to utilize social benefits that are associated with that attitude some individuals even aspire to be labeled victims. An increasing body of scholarship indicates that despite the obvious negative connotations of the weakness, misery, and pain associated with victimhood, a paradoxical trend is rapidly developing in which victimhood appears to be a desired identity.[2]

> Paradoxically, our era, which proclaims happiness as a universal goal, not only preoccupies itself with – even invites despair over – certain forms of suffering, but also on an ever escalating scale it recognizes, ideologizes, and politicizes some form of suffering and victims, making them valid, fashionable, and even official.[3]

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[2] Alyson Cole, *The Cult of True Victimhood: From the War on Welfare to the War on Terror* (Stanford University Press, 2006); Greg Lukianoff, "The Coddling of the American Mind" The Atlantic, (Sept, 2015): 42-52.

[3] Joseph Amato, *Victims and Values: A History and a Theory of Suffering* (Greenwood Press, 1990), XVII.

Analyzing this situation, some scholars argue that Western humanism and liberal values created an opportunity for an "impure victim" or a "pseudo-victim" who is parasitic on the noble tradition of concern for victims.[4] Others get into the criticism of the phenomenon of victimhood itself perceiving it, after Nietzsche, as a psychological perversion[5] or criticizing the foundations of the concern for victim – namely, compassion.[6]

All these authors write in response to the fact that the figure of the victim has recently occupied an unprecedented position in contemporary culture. It is possible that no other historical period has been concerned with victims to the degree we do so today.[7] Aleida Assmann sees the rise of victimhood as a consequence of the catastrophic experience of recent centuries:

> After the Holocaust, slavery, and colonialism, further cases of collective powerlessness and suffering were brought to the fore, from older and more recent genocides both within and outside of Europe to the suffering of the civilian population during the world wars the figure of the passive victim has belatedly moved to the very center of media attention and cultural valuation, marking the present as a post-traumatic era.[8]

But Assmann does not stop with the general claim that the unprecedented position of the victim occurs because of the tragic events of recent history. She further

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[4] Charles Sykes, *A Nation of Victims: The Decay of the American Character* (St. Martin's Griffin, 1993).
[5] Brad Evans, Simona Forti, "Who Is 'Evil,' and Who Is the Victim?", *The New York Times* (16 Sept, 2016): 23-25.
[6] Thomas Szasz, *Cruel Compassion: Psychiatric Control of Society's Unwanted* (Syracuse University Press, 1998); Paul Bloom, *Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion* (Ecco, 2016).
[7] See Rene Girard Girard, "The Modern Concern for Victims" in *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (Orbis Books, 2001): 161-9.
[8] Aleida Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity* (Fordham University Press, 2015), 61.

inquires: "What is the basis of the new and overwhelming importance of this figure? What constitutes its value, indeed, its irresistible aura?"[9] In answering these questions she appeals to the Christian heritage of Western culture:

> The emphasis on suffering and scars appears as part of a post-Christian passion story that lends an absolute moral authority to the victim. Through its inversion of the heroic and the traumatic, the theme of suffering that was devalued and suppressed through heroic values and was only an object of religious attention in the symbolic form of Christ's suffering has become a positive cultural value and social status that individuals and groups are increasingly reclaiming for themselves.[10]

My dissertation can be seen an attempt to elaborate this brief comment and to explore the role of Christology in the formation of a pervasive contemporary attitude towards victims and the development of social constructions around the phenomenon of victimhood. I will show that the "absolute moral authority" of the victim and its "irresistible aura" appear because the very label of "victim" carries certain layers of meanings that are not reflected in current culture. These semantic layers convey the connotations of triumph, victory, overcoming, glory, and veneration that are connected both to the image of the Triumphant Christ that dominated Christian discourse and art during the Early Middle Ages and also to heroic martyrological narratives. In other words, in the history of the formation of the concept of victimhood there occurred a dialectical inversion of semantics: connotations of triumph and humiliation were not only mixed together, but also re-contextualized; thus, physical loss became a spiritual victory. These deep connotations are not immediate in the contemporary use of the concept but they

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[9] Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma*, 62.
[10] *Ibid*., 63.

are preserved as a background sense that victim-labeling brings only through the patterns of cultural memory.

To present such a genealogy of victimhood requires a complex interdisciplinary approach. In this dissertation I will study victimhood in the context of political theology. I argue that presenting this topic through the guidelines of political theology provides a fruitful perspective since the idea of victimhood in Western culture was shaped to a large extent within a discourse centered on the suffering Christ. Moreover, I will show that this discourse has itself emerged in the context of political struggle between the secular powers and the Reformed-minded ecclesiastic authorities in the High medieval period. In other words, the establishment of contemporary senses and sentiments associated with victimhood unexpectedly arises from medieval political theology.

Simon Critchley notes in his recent work that "the return to religion has become perhaps the dominant cliché of contemporary theory."[11] However, religion in such theorization is not understood as faith, dogma, or a certain form of theology, but rather as a metanarrative, or "fiction," that legitimizes the existing order. The beginning of such a methodological shift in contemporary theory is usually associated with Carl Schmitt. When in 1922 he wrote his famous thesis that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological

[11] Simon Critchley, *The Faith of the Faithless: Experiments In Political Theology* (NY: Verso, 2014), 8.

concepts," Schmitt hardly could have expected that his short work would launch a new field concerned with the influence of theology on political and legal theory.[12]

The approach suggested by Schmitt provided a new outlook on politics itself. Since Machiavelli, politics was considered merely as a technique of holding power through manipulation and domination of social and international power factors. Schmitt in one of his earliest essay revises this understanding: "No political system can survive even a generation with only naked techniques of holding power. To the political belongs the idea, because there is no politics without authority and no authority without ethos of belief."[13] Therefore, according to Schmitt, any serious examination of politics must study the theological background or what Critchley (following Edmund Morgan) calls "fiction." The "fictionality" of politics is not taken here in a negative sense – as something opposed to factuality and, therefore, untrue or possessing a manipulative character. In other words, it is not critique or an attempt to demythologize; such an approach does not set itself a task to reveal a "hidden truth" but to explore how politics works and to show its dependence on theological constructions.

Schmitt's work provoked a number of critical responses that either objected to his theory or attempted to "correct" its dictatorial tendencies (taking into account the scandalous collaboration of Schmitt with the Nazis).[14] For my dissertation the

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[12] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), 36.
[13] Carl Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* (Wesport: Praeger, 1996), 16-17.
[14] The German theologian, Eric Peterson gave one of the most elaborated responses to Schmitt's political theology in his work *Monotheism as Political Problem*. Peterson shows that political theology is not a Christian invention, but emerges in the circle of Hellenized Jews and has no significance in early Christianity before Constantine, whose court theologians found it useful in

most interesting critique of Schmittian political theology is presented by Ernst Kantorowicz.[15] While Schmitt emphasizes a *discrepancy* that is connected with the authoritative right of the sovereign to intervene in the normal political-legal order and? the state of exception, Kantotrowicz focuses on the *continuity* and *duration* of sovereignty that is embodied in the perpetuity of royal dignity. Kantorowicz traces how the *corpus mysticum* of the early church gradually becomes a mode of communal organization – or how in the High Middle Ages governmental bureaucracy developed out of a particular Christian theology. In contrast to his approach, my interest in medieval political theology is grounded in the study of the theological and artistic means through which the Church pursued its political propaganda against secular powers. I argue that in this propaganda the Church elaborated the image of the suffering Christ that significantly affected later conceptualizations of victimhood.

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the legitimation of imperial rulership. However, according to Peterson, Augustine's elaboration of the doctrine of the Trinity undermines the monarchic tendencies of monotheism that constitute the core of political theology and therefore challenges the very possibility of it. See Eric Peterson, "Monotheism as a Political Problem: A Contribution to the History of Political Theology" in *Theological Tractates* (Stanford University Press, 2011): 68-105. Another critical response to Schmitt was that of Hans Blumberg who challenges the way Schmitt views how politics and theology share their basic conceptualizations. See Hans Blumenberg "Political Theology I and II" in *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (MIT Press, 1985): 89-102. Also Graham Hammill, "Blumenberg and Schmitt on the Rhetoric of Political Theology" in Etien Balibar, Graham Hammill (eds.) *Political Theology and Early Modernity* (University of Chicago Press, 2012): 85-101. For other approaches to Schmittian political theology, see Georgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (University of Chicago Press, 2005); Georgio Agamben , *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Stanford University Press, 2011); William Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Willey-Blackwell, 1998); Simon Critchley, *The Faith of the Faithless: Experiments In Political Theology* (NY: Verso, 2014).

[15] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton University Press, 1997); Also Jeniffer Rust, "Political Theologies of *Corpus Mysticum*: Schmitt, Kantorowicz, and de Lubac", in Etien Balibar, Graham Hammill (eds.) *Political Theology and Early Modernity* (University of Chicago Press, 2012): 102-23.

This work also draws heavily on achievements in the studies of medieval spirituality. The works of Caroline Bynum and especially of Rachel Fulton and Sarah McNamer were instructive in the exploration of the medieval sensibility and mentality. But my dissertation is not a historical study *per se*; it rather presents an inquiry into cultural memory. Therefore, it not the research of events, but rather of their reception and the ways those events are remembered and reconstructed. The very notion of the victim is far from being straightforward and reveals a semantic shift that paved the way for an understanding of the complex development that the idea of victimhood underwent throughout history. The original meaning of victim was an object offered in the ritual of sacrifice; how then does this come to signify a person who has been harmed? Neither Roman Law, nor the codices of Old German Law, nor any other medieval legal codices refer to the harmed party as a victim. Using methodologies developed within the discipline of conceptual history, this dissertation aims at reconstructing the events that affected the semantics of the concept of victim.[16]

On a more general level, this dissertation is indebted to the inspiring ideas of the French thinker René Girard (1923-2015), who in his life-long research uncovered the foundational role of sacrifice in human society.[17] In his

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[16] Conceptual History is a branch of historical and cultural studies that deals with historical semantics. It examines the etymology and the transformations of meaning of concepts to trace social changes. See Hans Erich Bödecker (ed.), *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*, Göttingen (Wallstein-Verlag, 2002 Reinhart Koselleck, *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte*, (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979); Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Columbia University Press, 2005).

[17] According to Girard, sacrifice is a ritualized action that is used to solve the problem of mutual reciprocal violence in societies that have no developed legal system and where the state has not monopolized the right to use force. Girard does not see sacrifice as a particular religious ritual (the point that confuses many of his critics) – but as a repetitive schema or

groundbreaking study *Violence and the Sacred,* he demonstrated how the sacrificial mechanism works in ancient mythologies and Greek tragedies. After this book came out, the major criticism it encountered was the charge that in the light of Girard's theory any socio-cultural phenomenon can be interpreted either as sacrifice or its structural counterpart. Therefore, it was even more confusing for critics when Girard published his next monograph *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World,* where he presented Christianity as a narrative that has nothing to do with sacrifice and a narrative that, in fact, presents a deconstruction of the sacrificial mechanism. Christ, according to Girard's interpretation, debunks sacrifice in revealing how it works. This was ungraspable for critics since for them Girard sees sacrifice where it is absent, but refutes it at points where it is clearly present.

How then does Girard treat all the sacrificial references in the New Testament? According to him, the apostles did not have any other language familiar to them than a sacrificial one to describe what they had witnessed. Therefore, Girard opposes his non-sacrificial reading of the Gospels to the traditional sacrificial reading, which he criticizes as corrupted. The sacrificial reading is an attempt to inscribe the revelation into the familiar logic of the scapegoat mechanism that lies at the basis of Girard's understanding of sacrifice. Christ, on the contrary, shows that victims are innocent and arbitrary and their guilt is an "effect" of the texts of persecution that legitimize their exclusion from society (in the form of exile or collective killing). In contrast to the classical ancient texts of persecution, the

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mechanism where the reciprocal violence within society that threatens its survival is substituted with a random violence of the many against the one (victim). See Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Norton$ Company, 1997); Rene Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford University Press, 1987).

Gospels are narratives from the point of view of the victim and this particular perspective leads to the launching in Christian communities of a specific attitude – which Girard calls concern for victims (*le souci des victimes*) – that demand care and protection from society for its vulnerable members. Concern for victims, Girard argues, constitutes the most valuable social contribution of Christianity.

My work can be seen as an attempt to show a certain inconsistency in Girard's thinking – by arguing that the concern for victims is born precisely out of a sacrificial reading of the Gospels. Although Girard under the influence of Catholic thinkers (especially Raymund Schwager) softened his critique of the sacrificial interpretation acknowledging an important role that the figure of the victim plays in Christianity, he nevertheless never (to my knowledge) explicitly showed how that role functions. Therefore, in this dissertation I will demonstrate how perception of Christ as a victim brought about a major change in Western sensibility and its ethics.

In the first chapter, *The Modern Concern for Victims: Voltaire and the Enlightenment's Myth of Compassion*, I will show that the history of concern for victims in its contemporary form begins around the second half of the 18th century. It starts as the Enlightenment project of growing awareness about social inequality and the mobilization of public opinion regarding cases of unjust suffering of a particular human being. This discourse emerges also as a critique of religion – it treats religion as a repository of prejudice, intolerance, and barbarism. However, I will show, first, that the former Enlightenment's concern for victims would never have been possible without that ethical program that was set up by Christianity and,

second, that the history of the Church as an institution made a huge impact upon the idea of victimhood.

The second chapter, *The Origins of Concern for Victims and Its Marginalization within the Imperial Church*, deals with the roots of concern for victims in the early Christian tradition. In contrast to ancient Graeco-Roman sensibility, early Christianity introduced a new ethical attitude towards victims. This duty to care about the weak and the harmed that gives them a specific status in society first appears within the context of Ancient Judaism and forms a unique "theodicy of suffering" that later was imported into and developed by Christian theology. However, this particular pattern was soon downplayed with Christianity's transformation into the imperial religion of Rome. With Constantine the Great, from a religion of a persecuted minority Christianity was turned into the religion of a triumphal and powerful Empire. To fit this new designation it downplayed all associations with victimhood and introduced connotations of glory and might that found their fullest expression in the image of the *Pantocrator* – the all-mighty God.

In the third chapter, *The New Sensibility of the High Medieval Period and Christ's Victimhood*, I will analyze the sensibility that appeared during the High Middle Ages and its intrinsic connection to the phenomenon of victimhood. I will begin with a major change in Christian art – the emergence and spread of the image of the Suffering Christ and then explore how this image was used in devotional literature to elicit the emotion of compassion (with particular focus on the prayers and meditations of Anselm of Canterbury). After that I will demonstrate how the image of Christ as victim was appropriated outside Christology in the new

descriptions of martyrs. For that, I will do a close reading of one of Abelard's laments that presents a narrative example of an instance where the discourse of the triumphal martyr interferes with the discourse of the inglorious victim.

The fourth chapter, *Why did Crucifixion Became a Primary Symbol of Christianity in the High Middle Ages?* is aimed at explaining why the changes described in the previous chapter actually happened. I will argue that the image of the suffering Christ became the primary symbol of Christianity because the Church used it in its struggle with secular powers during the so-called Papal Revolution. In reinterpreting its authority, the Church used the image of the Suffering Christ as a propaganda symbol. I will do a case study of the mosaic of St. Clemente's Basilica in Rome where I argue there appears one of the earliest examples of the Crucifixion as propagandistic symbol.

In the Conclusion, I outline major findings from the research project and provide considerations for further interdisciplinary exploration into the genealogy of victimhood. I also present a visual appendix of select images to help the reader to find helpful orientation amidst the artistic data that I use in my work.

CHAPTER ONE

The Modern Concern for Victims:

Voltaire and the Enlightenment's Myth of Compassion

In this chapter I will analyze a legal affair that happened in 18th century France in order to show how the modern concern for victims emerges in the form of a new public attitude towards victims and social concern about unjust persecution. This affair became well-known because of the involvement of Voltaire who had stood up for the wheeled Huguenot and was able to persuade the authorities that the whole case had been based on religious prejudices. Throughout the affair Voltaire used the case to criticize Christianity presenting it as a repository of intolerance and barbarism and contrasting it to the Enlightenment's aim to restore the natural feeling of compassion inherent in humans. In this way, Voltaire constructs the Enlightenment myth of compassion and makes it the core of his concern for victims. However, I will show that the Enlightenment project of growing awareness about social inequality, the mobilization of public opinion regarding cases of unjust suffering that formed the 18th century "politicization of compassion," would never have been possible without the ethical program that had been set up by Christianity.

In 1894 a Jewish Capitan in the French army, Alfred Dreyfus, was convicted of espionage on behalf of the Germans.[18] He underwent a secret military trial and was sentenced to lifetime imprisonment in a penal colony. From the very beginning the affair was suspicious: claiming that the facts of the case were "a threat to state security," authorities concealed the evidence not only from the public, but even from the accused and his lawyer. Afterwards, this evidence appeared to be a forged letter and it was discovered that the person who betrayed military secrets was the French officer, Esterhazy. However, despite the growing number of proofs of Dreyfus' innocence and the misconduct of the trial, the army and the state refused to reverse their sentence. Moreover, the accusation of state treason against the Jewish officer provoked a wave of Anti-Semitism throughout the country. French society split about the affair. There were many who thought that Dreyfus was a traitor and who fervently defended the sentence, but there were also people who firmly believed in Dreyfus' innocence.

Everything changed when one of the most well-known French writers of the time, Émile Zola, together with a small group of supporters, started a campaign to rescue Dreyfus and clear his name. In 1898 Zola published a letter in the daily newspaper that was provocatively entitled "J'accuse…!" ("I accuse…!").[19] In this

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[18] For general information about the Dreyfus affair see: Jean-Denis Bredin, *The Affair: the Case of Alfred Dreyfus* (New York: George Braziller ,1986); Michael Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair: A Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford, 1998); Louis Begley, *Why the Dreyfus Affair Matters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); George Whyte, *The Dreyfus Affair, A Chronological History*, Springer, 2005). Also see, Shoshana Felman, *The Juridical Unconscious: Trials and Traumas in the Twentieth Century* (Harvard University Press, 2002), 116-120 and René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (Orbis Books, 2001), 145-6.

[19] Emile Zola, "Letter to M. Félix Faure, President of the Republic ('*J'accuse*'). *L'Aurore,* 13 January 1898" in Zola. E, *The Dreyfus Affair: J'accuse and Other Writings* (Alain Pages ed. Eleanor Levieux trans., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996): 35-42.

letter to the president, Zola accuses the army and the government of covering up the miscarriages of the trial and demands justice for Dreyfus. Zola's intention was not only to provoke additional attention to the case and openly state his position regarding it. Rather, because such an attack would itself be a matter for the trial, Zola intended to transfer the case to the public court. In this way, Zola forced the Dreyfus case to reopen. Although not everything went as smoothly as Zola planned and at one point he even had to flee to England, eventually after a long sequence of legal procedures Dreyfus was pardoned.

Shoshana Felman argues that Zola's act was "historically unprecedented": the well-known lawful citizen openly rises up against institutions of the state in order to protect someone, who has been scapegoated.[20] Zola's action sought to change public opinion, which according to him was based on superstition and prejudice. He called on supporters to group together in order to "enlighten the little people… who are being poisoned and forced into delirium."[21] The Frenchman Zola stood up for the Jewish officer; he was ready to risk his own reputation in order to protect someone who had been unjustly put into a penal colony. "For the first time, a literary writer understood his task as that of giving legal voice to those whom the law had deprived of voice."[22] For Zola it was not so much a personal quest for justice, but rather an attempt to protect the reputation of the whole nation. During his own trial, Zola proclaimed: "One day, France will thank me for having helped to save her honor."[23]

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[20] Felman, *Juridical unconscious*, 116.
[21] Zola, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 42.
[22] Felman, *ibid*.
[23] Emile Zola, "Déclaration au Jury", in *J'accuse...! La Vérité en marche*, supra note 35, at p. 127. cit. in Felman, *Juridical unconscious,* 118.

Admitting Zola's great role in changing public climate, Anatole France said: "For a brief moment, he was the conscience of humanity."[24]

The Dreyfus affair bears signs of the new ethical attitude towards victims that will fully manifest itself only after World War II. However, there was an analogous situation in France more than a century before the Dreyfus affair. In the 18th century, Voltaire raised his voice in order to clear the name of a certain Jean Calas.[25] Although there is no straightforward evidence that Zola was directly inspired by Voltaire, there is still a good possibility that Zola knew about that case. It is interesting to compare these affairs not only because of the striking similarities between the two. Rather, what is more important is to see how they are different and what this difference adds to the history of concern for victims.

In 1762, Jean Calas, a 64-year old Toulousean Calvinist, was convicted of his son's murder. The reason was ostensibly the presumed conversion of the latter to the Catholicism. On March 10, Calas died of torture on the wheel, while still very firmly claiming his innocence. Perhaps, we would not know anything about this story if the French writer and philosopher Voltaire had not heard of it and showed interest in the case. After his active intervention in the Calas affair, it became public and finally in 1765 was brought to the King's council where the charge against Jean Calas was overturned. Voltaire did excellent work in mobilizing public opinion in order to restore justice. For him, victory in this case meant a victory of the

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[24] Bredin, *The Affair*, 456.

[25] For general information on the Calas affair, see: David Bien, *The Calas Affair* (Princeton University Press, 1960); Edna Nixon, *Voltaire and the Calas Affair* (Vanguard Press, 1961); Gilbert Collard, *Voltaire, L'affaire Calas et Nous* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1994); See also Lisa Silverman, "Pain as Politics" in Silverman, Lisa *Tortured Subjects: Pain, Truth, and the Body in Early Modern France* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 153-178.

Enlightenment over religious fanaticism, prejudice, and intolerance. In one of his letters he goes even further and pathetically exclaims: "Ignoring such a thing is to abandon humanity."[26]

What immediately caught Voltaire's attention was the presence of religious fanaticism. Jean Calas and his wife were a part of the minority Protestant community (the Huguenots) in predominantly Catholic Toulouse. The living conditions of this religious group were constantly worsened by the Parliament of Toulouse (for example, the children of the Huguenots did not have the right to inherit their parent's possessions); in this way officials intended to turn them to Catholicism. After the Wars of Religion (1562-1598) where Catholics triumphed over the French Protestants, no legal recognition was granted to minority faiths. Even though the oppression of Protestantism initiated by King Louis XIV had mostly declined by the time of the affair, Protestants were, at best, tolerated in French communities. Therefore, many young Toulousean Huguenots Catholics became (at least formally), including Calas' eldest son, Louis. When the death of Jean Calas' second son, Marc-Antonine, occurred, on the night of October 13-14, 1761, the rumor that Calas had killed his son because Marc-Antonine intended to convert to Catholicism like his elder brother, quickly spread around Toulouse. It is this rumor that became a major line of the prosecution against the family and eventually led to the execution of Jean Calas.

During the interrogation, the family first claimed that Marc-Antonine had been killed by an unidentified murderer. But after realizing the threat that loomed

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[26] Voltaire, *Correspondence*, ed. Th. Besterman (Institut et musée Voltaire, 1960): 54, 43.

over them, they admitted that in truth they had found him hanged and decided to make his suicide look like murder, since they wanted to avoid the disrespect that suicides and their families had to endure at that time. In 18th century Toulouse, those who took their own lives "were stripped naked, placed face down on a hurdle and dragged through the streets for the crowd to desecrate with stones and mud. Finally, the body was suspended from a gibbet, and the property of the offender confiscated for the benefit of the Crown."[27] But the prosecution, prompted by the religious prejudice against the Huguenots, saw in this change of testimony proof of the initial rumor. Jean Calas was sentenced to death on the wheel. The prosecutors were sure that Calas would admit his gilt under torture, but the fact that he died firmly claiming his innocence, rose doubtless in some parliamentarians. Therefore, they first decided to free other members of the family, but after a member of Parliament explained that this would mean recognizing their fallacy, they sentenced the remaining family members to less severe punishments: the two daughters of Jean Calas were to be placed in a monastery, the son to be expelled from Toulouse, and the wife to pay a huge penalty.

In his letters, Voltaire, as in Zola's case, often appealed to the nation's honor. "What must other nations think of us? Do they not say that we know how to break a man on the wheel but do not know how to fight?"[28] Voltaire thought of the case not as a singular event, but rather as an exemplar case to show the need for re-thinking people's attitude towards justice, and for showing that all members of French society, including its minorities, deserved the equal right to a just trial as opposed to

[27] Nixon, *Voltaire and the Calas Affair*, 37.
[28] *Ibid.,* 153.

trials prompted by religious, national or other form of prejudice. The Calas affair was the first in a series of similar cases that followed: the Sirven case, and the de La Barre case. All of them helped Voltaire to voice his dissatisfaction with the current state of morality and to promote the Enlightenment ideal of a new society, where such injustice would have no place. Voltaire's target is not merely the transformation of institutions, but first of all the transformation of society and people's worldview. In his *Philosophical Dictionary*, he explains the ethical position of the Enlightened person: "He laughs at Lorette and at Mecca; but *he succors the needy and defends the oppressed*."[29] Note how the ethics of care is opposed here to the religious practice. This pattern will be important for us later.

There are many parallels between the Calas and Dreyfus cases: important writers intervene in ambiguous juridical trials; the mobilization of art to influence public opinion; the defense of oppressed minorities; and so forth. But it is more important to look at the ways in which they are different. The fundamental difference in these two cases is the approaches or strategies by which Voltaire and Zola attempted to affect public opinion. If in the 19th century Zola openly stated his position by publishing a letter in the daily newspaper that allowed him to reach thousands of people in one day, Voltaire had to be very cautious and work undercover. If Zola willingly signs his letter in order to undergo a trial, Voltaire prefers not to show up. Up until the very end, Voltaire lurks in the background and manages the whole procession from Ferney. He sends hundreds or even thousands of letters to different addressees to obtain their support. While Zola bets on public

[29] Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary* (Courier Corporation, 2012), 301.

support, Voltaire's aim is to enlist the support of the people in power. In other words, Zola appeals to the masses and Voltaire — to elites.

Edna Nixon in her book on the Calas affair shows that the success of the case was determined very early. A few weeks after Voltaire became familiar with the case, he wrote regarding Calas to the Marquise de Pompadour, a chief mistress of King Louis XV, with whom he had a good relations. Nixon cites the letter of Madame Pompadour that testifies to the King's reaction to the case:

> The kind heart of the King has much suffered on hearing about this strange adventure, and all France cries out for vengeance. The poor man will be revenged but cannot be brought back to life. These people of Toulouse are hot-headed and have more religion in their fashion than is necessary in order to be a good Christian. Please God, they may be converted and made more humane![30]

However, it took another three years and hundreds of other letters to pursue the case. Among the people who Voltaire addressed were the Marshal de Richelieu, the Comte d'Argental, the Chancellor of France Guilaume de Lamoignon, the French minister Duc de Choiseul, and of course the famous advocates of Paris and his fellow Philosophers. It should be noted that Voltaire's task was perhaps more difficult than that of Zola. Zola intervened in the Dreyfus affair because part of French society was convinced that Dreyfus was innocent, while in Calas' case nobody apart from the close circle of relatives and friends believed in the innocence of the Protestant father.

Voltaire was not a philosopher in a strict sense of this word, even in comparison to his 18th century fellows, namely "The Encyclopedians" Diderot and

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[30] Nixon, *Voltaire and the Calas Affair,* 220.

d'Alembert, or his eternal rival — Rousseau. His fame came not from the originality of his thinking, but was rather a tribute to his actions. He was an embodiment of *philosophy in action*. We now know Voltaire mostly as the author of *Candide*, but for his contemporaries Voltaire was a great figure because of his powerful speeches against religious superstitions and prejudice that introduced ideals of tolerance, and because of his tireless efforts in the popularization of the ideas of the Enlightenment. Moreover, his main instrument of action was a pen; as he himself once remarked: "Rousseau writes for writing's sake, I write to act."[31]

Voltaire was a "man of letters." Unlike Diderot, he was not interested in music; and, unlike Rousseau, he was indifferent to theater. His only passion was language. By the virtue of his literary talent, his "force of style", Voltaire was able to promote ideas, manipulate opinions, and promulgate views that no one before him ventured to voice. Therefore, his letters are no less important testimonies to his genius than his major works. Voltaire was perhaps the first to realize the force of public opinion (which at that time, of course, meant the opinion of the King's court). As he wrote, "It is only a voice of the public that can help us to obtain justice, the forms of which have been invented to ruin innocents… There are those who think it would be better not to resuscitate these stories [the Calas affair] and others of a like character which so disgrace our species. But I say that it is necessary to speak of them a thousand times, that they must be incessantly presented to the notice of men."[32] After intervening in the affair, Voltaire immediately began to form a

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[31] Voltaire, *Correspondence*: 54, 163.
[32] Nixon, *Voltaire and the Calas Affair,* 154.

network of allies: "All possible means should be combined, all voices joined in unison."[33]

As a result of Voltaire's engagement with the Calas affair, several documents appeared that are interesting for a genealogy of concern for victims. The main piece is the famous *Treatise on Tolerance*, which was published in April 1763 by the Cramer Brothers in Geneva.[34] A few anonymous copies of this leaked to Paris as gifts to selected recipients, including Madame de Pompadur, the King of Prussia, and some German princes. Later that year, it began to be officially distributed, but was quickly banned. As d'Alembert wittily teased regarding this censure: "Cette Tolérance nést point encore tolérée" (This 'Tolerance' is not tolerated").[35] But there are also a few other interesting documents that circulated together with the *Treatise* and that often appear placed next to the *Treatise* in old editions of the *Treatise*. They are so-called *Pièces originales* (*Original Pieces*) that consist of supposedly original letters of the family after the death of Jean Calas where they explain the case and show their feelings about it. However, many contemporary scholars are convinced that these *Pieces* were composed by Voltaire himself and, moreover, they were recognized by many of the recipients as Voltaire's works and read with that knowledge in mind. These *Original Pieces*, as well as the *Treatise* itself, were immediately translated into English, German, and Dutch and quickly became widespread across Europe. They were very popular reading, as the number of editions suggests.

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[33] *Ibid*.,163.
[34] Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, (Genève, s.n. (édition originale), 1763)
[35] Voltaire, *Correspondence*: 54, 241.

The success of Voltaire's campaign was built upon the new sensibility that the Enlightenment intended to foreground. This sensibility opposed the brutality of religious fanaticism to the compassion that according to the Enlightenment philosophers should be at the core of humanity. Such an opposition lays a foundation for Voltaire's *Treatise*; in one of the letters, written at the very early stage of the case, he writes: "It seems to me that it is in everybody's interest to look further into this affair which, however you look at it, is the height of fanaticism – "intolerance" is better. Ignoring such a thing *is to abandon humanity*."[36] And for this reason the Calas' case seems to Voltaire not only important for his own time, but also for posterity, as the opening sentence of the Treatise clearly states: "The murder of Calas, sanctioned by the sword of justice on 9 March, 1762, in the city of Toulouse, is one of the most extraordinary events to claim attention both of our age and of posterity."[37]

Voltaire's campaign, including the writing of *Treatise* and the *Original Pieces,* aimed to provoke pity for the family of Calas as one that had suffered injustice. In his letter to Elie de Beumont, Voltaire writes about the crucial role of compassion: "The cry of the general public which is moved to pity should obtain [protection of the Chancellor or King] for us."[38] In response to that request, de Beumont composed three *Memoires*, written "in style to touch all hearts."[39] To enforce the effect of his writings, Voltaire sends Calas' wife to Paris to read the *Original Pieces* and tell her story in person in the saloons and private clubs. At this stage of the case, d'Alembert

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[36] Voltaire, *Correspondence*: 54, 43.
[37] Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, ed. Harvey, S (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3.
[38] Nixon, *Voltaire and the Calas Affair,* 156.
[39] *Ibid*., 161.

notifies Voltaire: "The widow came to see me a few days ago, bringing me her *Memoires*. The sight of her filled me with pity. One must not complain of one's lot when one sees a family reduced to this point. I will speak and proclaim loudly in their favor."[40]

In his treatise, Voltaire proudly describes the result of his efforts to mobilize compassion for the defense of Jean Calas' innocence:

> *Not only Paris, but the whole Europe was moved to pity* by [Calas' wife] plight and joined her in demanding justice. This was public opinion notably in advance of the actual signature in Council which would restore common sense. *Compassion reached even to the seat of government* despite the perpetual press of business which often must exclude it, and despite also that familiarity with misfortune which can harden the heart still further.[41]

Few pages later, Voltaire again stresses his agenda: "We must hope that a brief and honest account of so many calamities might open the eyes of the ignorant, as it will touch the hearts of the good."[42] "To open the eyes of the ignorant" and "to touch the heart of the good" – these are the primary goals of the whole campaign and Voltaire used all possible means to reach them. The *Treatise on Tolerance* is only the tip of the iceberg; much more, in fact, was done by Voltaire through his personal correspondence (which often was written to be read in public) and through the forgeries of *The Original Pieces*.

Voltaire appears in the Calas case like a spider that weaves a net, hiding in the shadows until the moment of triumph. In this sense, Voltaire is very different from Zola: the former acts secretly, while the later states his position openly.

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[40] *Ibid*.
[41] Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, 10. Emphasis is mine.
[42] *Ibid*., 13.

Publicity was a part of Zola's plan, but Voltaire preferred to manage the case without showing his face; until the very end it was a cabinet intrigue. The difference between these two cases shows the development of concern for victims; for in fact, Voltaire sets up a new sensibility that opens up the conditions for Zola. To put this more sharply, the success of the Dreyfus affair would not have been possible without Voltaire's efforts in the case of Jean Calas.

What struck Voltaire in the Calas' case was the element of religious fanaticism that led to unjust persecution and ended up in the cruel slaying of an innocent man; therefore, he used this case to attack Christianity as a religion of bigotry. In his *Treatise,* Voltaire argues that nowhere in Ancient Judea, Greece or Rome could one encounter an intolerance similar to that of his own times. He grounds such a thesis on the conviction that tolerance stems from compassion, which in turn is a universal human feature "installed" in humans by nature. Although Voltaire does not say this explicitly, the course of his thought suggests that it is Christianity that changed the original sensibility of natural compassion and that led to intolerance. Voltaire undertakes this speculative and ideological reading of history in order to announce the return to compassion and tolerance as a goal of the Enlightenment. In this way, he contrasts the Enlightenment project with Christianity and claims concern for victims to be a natural and logical feature to which the Enlightenment tries to restore human nature.

It is revealing here to compare Voltaire's position with that of Nietzsche: both philosophers are critical of Christianity, but for antithetical reasons. While Voltaire accuses Christianity of intolerance that undermines the natural compassion of

humans for each other, Nietzsche criticizes Christianity *for introducing* this feeling into Western morality. Inquiring into the history of Christianity, Voltaire doubts stories about the persecution of early Christians and the great numbers of martyrs. In his view it is simply "unbelievable that Roman emperors ever subjected the Christians to an Inquisition, by which is meant that people were sent to interrogate them about matters of faith. They did not bother Jew, Syrian, Egyptian, Druid, poet or philosopher on this score."[43] This point is repeated several times throughout the *Treatise on Tolerance*, showing that it was an important statement for Voltaire: "We are told that as soon as the Christians appeared, they were persecuted by […] Romans who never persecuted anyone. It seems to me that this story is demonstrably untrue"[44]. He devoted an entire chapter 9, "On Martyrs" to show that most of the stories about the martyrs ether historically impossible and fake, or at least deceptive in regard to the reasons of the persecution. "It is extremely difficult to determine exactly why these martyrs were condemned to death. Nevertheless, I venture to suggest that under the first Caesars not one of them was executed on account of his religion, for all religions were allowed."[45]

Therefore, he concludes that those who were persecuted were persecuted not on account of their faith, but because they were considered as violators of the established political order by refusing to observe ritual practices mandatory for Roman citizens. This conclusion leads Voltaire to the statement that from such a

[43] Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, 38.
[44] *Ibid*., 33.
[45] *Ibid*., 36.

perspective it was the Christians who were intolerant and not the official authorities:

> The martyrs, therefore, were people who rose up in anger against false gods. No doubt they were correct in refusing to believe in these gods, and pious to a degree. But in the end one is bound to conclude that, if they were not content to worship God in spirit and in truth, but needed to make violent protest against the established religion, however absurd it might be, then it is they who were intolerant[46]

Voltaire appeals to logic when he asks how the Romans would have persecuted one group of Christians while letting others organize meetings, freely visiting imprisoned fellows, and accompanying martyrs to their death. In other words, Voltaire's argument is that the Romans persecuted not the Christians as people of a particular faith, but particular Christians who violated the laws of the Empire. Appealing to the authority of Tertullian, he states: "Tertullian, in his *Apology*, confirms that Christians were regarded as radicals. The term is doubtless unfair, but it does indicate that it was not by virtue of their religion that Christians provoked the attention of the magistrates."[47] Otherwise, he says that the Romans would have acted as the Catholics did against the heretics during the Inquisition, meaning that the Romans would have exterminated the early Christians indiscriminately:

> Surely they [Christians in the Roman Empire] would have been treated as we have treated the Vaudois, the Albigensians, the Hussites, the various sects of Protestants. We have slaughtered them and burnt them alive without distinction of age and sex. Among the well-attested cases of persecution in ancient times, is there one which, in character, comes anywhere near the terror of St. Bartholomew or the Irish massacres? Is there anything like that annual festival held in Toulouse, a truly wicked festival which ought to be abolished for all time, in which an entire population marches in procession to thank God and congratulate one another for having

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[46] *Ibid*., 38.
[47] *Ibid*.

> massacred, two hundreds years ago, four thousand of city's inhabits?[48]

After such historical reconstruction and comparison, Voltaire's argument concludes that it is not the Ancients who were intolerant, but "we, Christians." It is Christianity, according to the French philosopher, that brings a specific attitude of intolerance, a denial of the other's views, that led to the endless wars in Europe:

> I say it with repugnance, but with truth: it is we, we Christians, who have been the prosecutors, the executors, the assassins! And of whom? Of our own brothers. It is we who have laid waste a hundred cities, with the Bible or the crucifix in our hands, we who have spilt blood and ignited faggots with scarily a pause from the reign of Constantine…[49]

This powerful condemnation of Christianity for intolerance aligns with the apology and praise for the ancient traditions of toleration. Voltaire devotes individual chapters to show how the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews were more tolerant in comparison to his fellow Christians, on the ground that they were older civilizations that stood closer to the natural state of the human being. Tolerance, in other words, for Voltaire is connected with the capacity for compassion, and this capacity in turn is a virtue installed by the Nature. At the very end of the 1763 edition of the treatise, Voltaire gives Nature a voice to articulate the position for which the entire work was written:

> Nature tells us all, 'You have been born weak and ignorant and are doomed to live out a few fleeting moments on earth before fertilizing it with your corpses. Since you are weak, you must look after each other, and since you are ignorant you must educate each other […] I have placed in each of your hearts *a seed of compassion*; nor must you corrupt it; for it is divine[50]

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[48] *Ibid*., 46
[49] *Ibid*., 47
[50] *Ibid*., 100.

Nietzsche's take on Christianity is different. His anti-Christian attitude appears from the earliest works and develops throughout his life. Already in 1878, in *Human, all Too Human* (the work that he devotes to Voltaire), he states his complaints against Christianity that will latter receive significant development in works like *Genealogy of Morality* and *Anti-Christ*: "Christianity came into existence in order to lighten the heart; but now it has first to burden the heart so as afterwards to be able to lighten it."[51] Here we encounter what later will receive the name of *ressentiment*. According to Nietzsche, *ressentiment* is a sense of hostility towards the ideas or people to whom the subject ascribes the reason of his own failures; the feeling of weakness and inferiority leads the subject to the formation of the values that deny the value system of the "enemy." For Nietzsche, Christianity as an ethical teaching represents the pure example of *ressentiment* against the noble morality of the Ancients. He sees the Greeks and Romans as carriers of a particular exalted morality that is based on the will to power, whereas Christianity has a double intention: in order to gain power it devalues the moral system of the Ancients by prescribing a sinful nature to the ideals of the hostile moral system and produces instead a new one which values the opposite ideals.

On the first pages of *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche gives, perhaps, the best explanation of his view. He immediately acknowledges that his aim is to show that Christianity is responsible for the corruption of human values: "I lifted the curtain to reveal the *corruption* of humanity […] I understand corruption […] in the sense of

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[51] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, all too Human*, tr. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 119.

decadence: my claim is that all the values in which humanity has collected its highest desiderata are *values of decadence."*[52] Nietzsche goes on o claim that human beings are naturally governed by the "instinct for growth, for endurance, for the accumulation of force, for power," and that this was the basis for the morality of the Greeks and the Romans, but Christianity made people look at these instincts as defects.

> You should not beautify Christianity or try to dress it up: it has waged a *war to the death* against this *higher* type of person, it has banned all basic instincts of this type. It has distilled 'evil' and 'the Evil One' out of these instincts – the strong human being as reprehensible, as 'depraved.' Christianity has taken side of everything weak, base, failed, it has made an ideal out of whatever *contradicts* the preservation instincts of a strong life; it has corrupted the reason of even the most spiritual natures by teaching people to see the highest spiritual values as sinful, as deceptive, as temptations.[53]

Instead of those "highest spiritual values," according to Nietzsche, Christianity formed a new morality, the core of which became compassion. Precisely compassion allows Christianity to take "side of everything weak, base, failed, it has made an ideal out of whatever *contradicts* the preservation instincts of a strong life." The following quotation is crucial and therefore, worth citing in full:

> Christianity is called the religion of *pity* (*Mitleid*). – Pity is the opposite to the tonic affects that heighten the energy of vital feelings: pity has a depressive effect. You loose strength which in itself brings suffering (*Leiden*) to life. Pity makes suffering into something infectious; sometimes it can ever cause a total loss of life and vital energy wildly disproportionate to the magnitude of the cause (-the case of the death of the Nazarene). That is the first point to be made; but there is a more significant one. The moral dangers of pity will be much more apparent if you measure pity according to

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[52] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols: And Other Writings* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5-6.
[53] *Ibid*., 5.

> the value of the reactions it tends to produce. By and large, pity runs counter to the law of development, which is the law of *selection*. Pity preserves things that are ripe for decline, if defends things that have been disowned and condemned by life, and it gives a depressive and questionable character to life itself by keeping alive an abundance of failures of every type. People have dared to call pity a virtue (- in every *noble* morality it is considered a weakness -); people have gone even further, making it into *the* virtue, the foundational source of all virtues, - but of course you always have to keep in mind that this was the perspective of a nihilistic philosophy that inscribed the negation of life on its shield. Schopenhauer was right here: pity negates life, it makes life *worthy of negation*, - pity is the *practice* of nihilism.[54]

In this passage Nietzsche stresses how compassion (a better translation of Nietzsche's *Mitleid* since he is playing with the pair *Leiden* (suffering) and *Mitleid* that is analogous to the Latin *passio/compassio*) leads to the decline of the vitality and ultimately to the corruption of human values – not only by multiplying suffering, but also through indiscrimination, that is, supporting things that are condemned by the very force of life. Basically, Nietzsche states that the development of the human values went against the natural instincts based on selection and therefore immune to compassion. In Nietzsche's idealized view, the Ancient cultures were successful precisely because they followed the natural instincts and only with the spread of the virus of decadence – whether it was doubts imposed by Socrates or Christian ethics based on compassion – these cultures declined.

It was Petrarch who first called the Middle Ages "the Dark Ages," meaning that this period interrupted an idealized tradition of the Ancient cultures, and both Voltaire and Nietzsche continue this Renaissance tradition in their proclamation of the radical break from the preceding epoch and a presumable return to the ancient

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[54] *Ibid*., 6-7.

ideals.[55] Moreover, both Voltaire and Nietzsche agree that Christianity plays a crucial but negative role in this interruption. But the two greatly differ in understanding *the precise way* Christianity corrupted the noble ancient tradition. For Voltaire, Christianity introduced intolerance that led to violence, and therefore people need to return to the ancient ideals of compassion, whereas for Nietzsche, Christianity ruined ancient noble morality that was based on the instincts of growth, accumulation of force, and power by devaluing them and bringing to the forefront the virtues of compassion and humility.

In the next chapter I will show that despite his ideological predisposition in *Genealogy of Morals* and *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche's claim that Christianity introduced the idea of compassion to the moral discourse of the West is historically justified. Therefore, when Voltaire attributes compassion to natural human feelings and presents the Enlightenment as a project that re-invents it, he simply demonstrates wishful thinking despite his appeal to history. However, the politics of compassion that appeared during the 18th century in France as one of the driving powers of the Enlightenment brought concern for victims to an entirely new level. Compassion for the first time becomes a matter of politics and was soon used as an ideological background for the French Revolution.[56]

This development explains Girard's paradoxical statement that concern for victims is a uniquely modern phenomenon and yet "the true origin of [it]… is quite obviously Christian. Humanism and humanitarianism develop first on Christian

[55] Mommsen, "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages'," Speculum 17, no. 2 (1942): 226-242.
[56] In this regard Arendt writes "if Rousseau had introduced compassion into political theory, it was Robespierre who brought it onto the market-place with the vehemence of his great revolutionary oratory" (*On Revolution*, 76).

soil"[57]. Therefore, what is striking in the emergence of this new type of concern for victims in modernity is not that for the first time the victim became a determined political subject, nor that it turns compassion into the highest political virtue, but rather that such a concern presents itself as a radically new ethical framework. In other words, thinkers like Rousseau or Voltaire in their care for suffering individuals pretend that this care is a revelation of the Enlightenment, a product of progressive thinking that has nothing to do with the long-standing Christian tradition. As Halpern rightly observes: "The politics of pity borrows the moral indignation of the religious framework, without in fact being able to assure itself of analogous grounds or criteria of judgment."[58]

Why then did Christianity fail to make concern for victims the real practical agenda as the Enlightenment managed to do? Why is it that, despite the many centuries of preaching mercy as a moral standard of Western civilization, "compassion operated outside the political realm and frequently outside the established hierarchy of the Church"? [59] For Arendt, the answer lies in the politicizing of compassion. She argues that only Rousseau was able to elevate compassion from the individual and the private matter to the general realm of politics. This new sensibility was determined, according to Arendt, by the spectacle of people's suffering (Rousseau's "innate repugnance at seeing a fellow creature suffer"), which Enlightenment thinkers themselves did not share. Developing this idea, Halpern shows that such an outsider perspective contrasts with the inner

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[57] René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 163.
[58] Cynthia Halpern, *Suffering, Politics, Power: A Genealogy in Modern Political Theory* (SUNY Press, 2002), 17.
[59] Arendt, *On Revolution*, 65

perspective (that of a person who suffers) that is common to the Christian worldview because of the supreme value that suffering receives in Christianity. Suffering bridges the gap between the human and the divine. "Suffering was seen as a mark of significance of man's relation to God, a sign of his guilt, his sin before God, which justified God's wrath and his punishment." [60] But in contrast to the Christian view, the Enlightenment politics of compassion begins with the premise that human suffering is not justified and must be fought against. This radical intolerance to suffering is what, according to both Arendt and Halpern, helps the Enlightenment push concern for victims further than Christianity could possibly do. However, in the course of the next chapters I will show that such understanding is oversimplified and that within the history of the Church there was an attempt to politicize compassion that failed not because of the status of suffering within Christianity, but because of the internal contradictions that the project itself contained.

[60] Cynthia Halpern, *Suffering, Politics, Power,* 29.

CHAPTER TWO

The Origins of Concern for Victims and their Marginalization within the Imperial Church

2.1 Ancient Pity and Christian Compassion

Reasoning about the historical perception of human sensibility is always a risk. The historian only has bits of texts from which he tries to extract a complex understanding of an attitude towards a particular sense of terms. Moreover, not only do different cultures have different sensibilities (as anthropological researches attest), but also the sensibility within one culture can change drastically over time.[61] What concerns me in this chapter is how something as significant as *compassion* — a cornerstone of Western sensibility – came into being in its present form. It is repeatedly noted that there is still no major work that presents a genealogy of compassion in the Western world.[62] Inquiring into such a genealogy is not the

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[61] See Niko Besner "Language and Affect," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19 (1990): 419-451. Robert Levy, "Emotion, knowing, and culture," in *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion,* R. Shweder and R. LeVine (eds) (Cambridge University Press, 1984). Robert Levy, "Self and Emotions," *Ethos* 11, no. 3 (1983): 128-134; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 2017); Benedicte Grimma, *The Performance of Emotion among Paxtun Women* (Univercity of Texas Press, 1992); Catherine Lutz, "Antropology of Emotions," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 15 (1986): 405-436; Catherine Lutz, "Emotion, Thought, and Estrangement: Emotion as a Cultural Category" Cultural Anthropology 1, no. 3 (1986): 287-309.

[62] Karl Morrison*, I Am You: The Hermeneutics of Empathy in Western Literature, Theology and Art*, (Princeton University Press, 2016), xix. Morrison's book was first published in 1988 and since that time a few important monographs have appeared on the topic: the crucial work on compassion in the ancient period is David Konstan, *Pity Transformed* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), and on the emotion of compassion in the medieval period, Sara McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (University of Pennsylvania

primary interest of this dissertation; however, what I will show in this part of my work is how Christianity transformed the understanding of compassion that was common for the pre-Christian era and how that transformation led to the alteration of the status of victims.

René Girard in his life-long research of the foundational principles of the society's sacrificial mechanism observes that concern for victims is a modern phenomenon that has no precedent: "No historical period, no society we know, has ever spoken of victims [to the extent] as we do […] The China of the Mandarins, the Japan of samurai, the Hindus, the pre-Columbian societies, Athens, republican or imperial Rome – none of these were worried in the least little bit about victims."[63] According to Girard, Christianity played the crucial role in such a change; in fact, he calls this concern a "secular mask of Christian love."[64] Girard, according to my knowledge, never explicitly demonstrates the genesis of such a concern and does not explain why it became noticeable only within modernity. In the course of this next part I will show that concern for victims is tied to compassion and, therefore, to trace the history of this concern means to look into how Christianity transformed the concept of compassion itself.

Some contemporary scholars who deal with the history of compassion share Nietzschean view that the Ancients were impassionate and that they despised any expression of pity. Thomas Szasz in the introduction to his *Cruel Compassion* claims that "Greek and Roman philosophers distrusted (feeling) compassion. In their view,

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Press, 2011) and Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200* (Columbia University Press, 2003).

[63] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 161.

[64] *Ibid*., 165.

reason alone was the proper guide to conduct. They regarded compassion (a virtue) as an effect, neither admirable nor contemptible."[65] William Tarn notices that the mercy and pity shown by Alexander the Great were exceptional and would seem "strange" to his contemporaries as "no public man throughout Greek history is, I think, recorded to have shown pity."[66]

However, it seems that in the first centuries AD, Roman sensibility softened greatly and the classical Stoic sternness and rigor gave way to a more empathetic ethics that in turn granted reception to the spread of Christianity. The case of Seneca the Elder is revealing here. In his collection *Controversiae*, where Seneca presents imaginary legal cases, one can read a story about the famous Greek painter Parrhasius who tortured his slave in order to depict Prometheus nailed to the rock.[67] Although the story of Parrhasius is likely to be fictional (as it is not known before Seneca's account), it tells us more about Seneca's own time (beginning of the first century AD) rather than that of Athens of the 5th century BC (when Parrhasius lived). The plot of the story is quite simple: Parrhasius bought for his own use an old man, a captured Olynthian; then, torturing him in every way, he tried to reproduce Prometheus in painting - the suffering of "a man chased by Jupiter's anger." The onlookers cried out for Parrhasius's mercy, but he replied: "He is my slave, I possess

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[65] Thomas Szasz, *Cruel Compassion: Psychiatric Control of Society's Unwanted* (Syracuse University Press, 1998), 4.
[66] William Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), 65.
[67] Seneca *Contr*. 10.5.1-28. *The Elder Seneca Declamations: Controversiae, books 7-10,* tr. Michael Winterbottom (Harvard University Press, 1974), 449-75.

him by right of war." When the old man moaned suffering great agony and that he was dying, Parrhasius only said: "Stay like that!"[68]

At the first glance, the story narrates two different and contradictory ideas: in the behavior of Parrhasius there is the classical idea of Stoicism, a man who is dispassionate and who disregards the misery of others; but in the speeches of the witnesses there is a new ethics of compassion for the sufferer without regard for his ethnicity and social status. Pascal Quingard, analyzing this story, claims that a Roman of the 5th century BC would not perceive Parrhasius's torturing of the slave as a negative violence, but rather as a manifestation of ordinary dominance that should be performed by a noble Roman. [69] An important key here is the concept of virility (*virtus*), which for the Roman meant precisely dominance, the undivided dominion over the object of domination. This concept is reflected in Latin where *virtus* "power, force, masculinity," the root of the word *virtue* "energy, strength, honor, action," derives its meaning from the word *vir* "a man," as Cicero observes in *Tusculan Disputations*.[70] Furthermore, any acquiescence or sympathy would mean a lack of masculinity, implying impotence. Thus, when we read in Seneca that "the audience cried out for Parrhasius's mercy," we confront those changes in Roman morality that reflect the coming of a new sensibility that would soon take its shape in Christianity.

However, the reasoning of the witnesses rests not only on the pure idea of compassion. Although compassion for the tortured slave plays its role in the earlier

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[68] *Ibid*., 475.
[69] Pascal Quingard, "Parrhasios and Tiberius" in *Sex and Terror* (Seagull Books, 2012), 1-15.
[70] Marcus Tullius Cicero. *Tusculan Disputations: On the Nature of the Gods, and on the Commonwealth.* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2005), 81.

testimonies,[71] the strongest accusation comes from those who charge Parrhasius with the infliction of harm to the prestige of Athens: "[T]he prestige of Athens has been impaired. We have always been accounted merciful."[72] According to this charge, by torturing the citizen of Olynthus (a city with which Athens had good diplomatic ties), Parrhasius harmed the Athenian image of being the most merciful city-state in Greece. It is known that only in Athens Eleos, the personification of pity or mercy, had an altar in the agora. "The Athenians," says Pausanias (110-180AD), "are the only ones among the Hellenes that worship this divine being, and among all the gods this is the most useful to human life in all its vicissitudes."[73] And Isocrates calls the Athenians "most given to pity and most gentle."[74] This was somewhat unusual because as one of the modern commentators of Thucydides notices: "pity was not an outstanding Greek virtue."[75] Therefore, the issue is not only the suffering of the slave, but also the reputation of the whole city-state. Moreover, some of the onlookers claimed that suffering inflicted on the Olynthian affected not only the slave but them as well: "Was it only the Olynthian that Parrhasius tortured? Does he not torture our eyes too?"[76] In this way, Seneca attempts to show that the issue of violence is not a personal matter, but affects the whole of the republic, and

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[71] Everybody felt pity (*miserebantur omnes*). And maybe Philip [the seller of the slave to Parrhasius] himself would have ordered him to be taken out of sale if he hadn't seen the purchaser was an Athenian [So assuming that he had fallen into good hands.]… [Parrhasius] has shown lack of pity either in disgracing Jupiter or imitating him (Seneca, *Declamations,* 454-5)
[72] Seneca, *Declamations,* 461.
[73] Pausanius *Hell. Perg*. I.17.1. *Description of Greece* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918). Vol. I, 143.
[74] Cit. in Konstan, *Pity Transformed*, 81.
[75] *Ibid*.
[76] Seneca, *Declamations,* 452-3.

preforming pity can therefore be a matter of politics that increases the public prestige of the city.

In his outstanding book *Pity Transformed*, David Konstan makes an important methodological distinction between Greco-Roman pity and Christian compassion to show how the emotion of empathy became transformed into a notion of active care. A close reading of Aristotle, whose *Rhetoric* presents a most elaborate theory of pity in the ancient world, allows Konstan to claim that the Greek philosopher regards pity only as an emotion. "Let pity, then, be a kind of pain in the case of an apparent destructive or painful harm of one not deserving to encounter it, which one might expect oneself, or one of one's own, to suffer, and this when it seems near."[77] Konstant stresses that, for Aristotle, the pain has to be "apparent" while, for example, Gregory of Nyssa writes "people immersed in bodily pleasures are pitiable, even though they perceive no pain."[78] Another important moment is that pity in Aristotle's understanding is *not* something that the subject shares with the object of suffering. In other words, pity is not sharing suffering as the concept *compassion* suggests. It does not mean that the Greeks were incapable of it, but just that it had nothing to do with pity (Aristotle calls such suffering-together *sunakhthesthai* and seems uninterested in such a phenomenon). But the sharing of suffering becomes important in the Christian conception of compassion. The Latin substantive *compassio* is actually a late formation, occurring for the first time in the

[77] Aristotle *Rhet*. 1378 a30-b2; transl. David Konstan in *Pity Transformed*, 106.
[78] Konstan, *Pity Transformed,* 128.

Christian apologist Tertullian (*On Modesty* III.5, second century AD); the dependent verb *compati*, in turn, appears first in the Latin version of the New Testament.[79]

Aristotle's pity presupposes distance, while Christian compassion aims at unity. Aristotle writes: "people pity their acquaintances, provided that they are disposed as they are concerning themselves… For what is terrible is different from what is pitiable, and is expulsive to pity."[80] Aristotle cites the remark of certain Amasis, who did not weep when his son was led out to die, but did so in the case of a friend: "the latter was pitiable, the former terrible." Pity, then, Konstan concludes, is "excited only at a certain remove; when the connection with sufferer is too close, we experience the misfortune itself, not the anticipation of it."[81] Compassion universalizes pity for anyone who suffers. Cicero writes in the *Tusculan Disputations*: "pity is distress out of wretchedness of another who is suffering undeservedly; for no one is moved by pity at the punishment of a parricide or a traitor."[82] But the Christian idea of compassion presupposes that what matters is suffering without discriminating the reasons for that suffering; every suffering human being deserves compassion. God is merciful; so human beings have to be merciful too.

Reflecting on the idea of a merciful God, Konstan quotes Kenneth Dover, who observes that the Greeks in classical antiquity "did not expect gods to be merciful." "In Christianity, by contrast, no formula is more familiar than the invocation *kurie*, *eleison*, "Lord have pity," addressed to Jesus, which comes immediately after the

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[79] *Ibid*., 58.
[80] *Rhet*.1386a18-23.
[81] Konstan, *Pity Transformed,* 50-51.
[82] Cicero *Tusc. Disp.* 4.18, cit. in Konstan, *Pity Transformed,* 49.

introitus in the Catholic mass."[83] What is more important, compassion in Christianity gradually acquired the new meaning of being a virtue or duty rather than simply emotion. Lactantius was among the first who turned pity into compassion. Like the Stoics and pagan thinkers generally, Lactantius insists that the chief human virtue is justice; but pity, he argues is inseparable from justice.[84] The first duty of justice is to be united with God, the second to be united with man: Lactantius calls the one *religio* (perhaps alluding to the root idea of "binding" in *lig-* as in "ligation"), the other *misericordia* or *humanitas*, which he describes as the "highest bond" between human beings"[85] In this way *misericordia* acquired the sense of "charity" or "charitable works" in Christian writers and the new meaning began to displace the old sense of "pity."

The difference in the pre-Christian and the Christian understanding of pity is, perhaps, rooted in a more general difference in the perception of suffering, and consequently a different attitude towards victims. In the ancient word, violence and the suffering that it inflicts was considered as an inescapable, predetermined phenomenon — fate, or destiny. This domain of human life was in the hands of gods alone; therefore, suffering could not hold any value in itself. If you were an ancient Greek or Roman you can feel pity towards a person who suffers, but in no way would you prescribe any significance to that suffering. Those whom we today call victims existed in the ancient world (and quite frequently), but such a status was highly undesirable. It was a sign of bad luck, distress, or misfortune. Therefore,

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[83] *Ibid*., 105
[84] Lactantius *Inst*., 6.10.2.
[85] Konstan, *Pity Transformed*, 123.

when the death of Christ was represented as a self-sacrifice, such an interpretation predictably caused confusion among non-Christians. Paul in this respect testifies: "We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles (1 Cor 1:23)." Neither Romans nor Greeks for whom being a victim meant ignominious status were ready to accept the radical gesture of Christ as it was taught by Paul. As Cynthia Halpern notes, "the place of suffering in God's redemptive schema gave it supreme value"[86] in Christianity and such a perspective revolutionized the whole ethical model of the ancients.

The death of Christ understood as a necessary suffering that God undergoes for the sake of humanity and that in turn requires humans to suffer in the name of God was an unintelligible idea for the gentiles.[87] It was a widespread belief, even among learned pagans such as Celsus, that Christians venerate sufferers and value suffering on its own. In his treatise against Celsius, Origen writes: "Celsus behaves like the lowest class of enemies of the faith, who even think that it follows from the story about the crucifixion of Jesus that we worship anyone who has been crucified."[88] The same attitude can be found in the first known image of crucifixion – the Alexamenos graffito [Fig. 1]. This graffiti is an image scratched on the wall of a room near the Palatine Hill in Rome around the end of the second or beginning of the third century AD. It shows a man worshiping a crucified, donkey-headed figure with the Greek inscription that reads "Alexamenos worships his God." Most scholars

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[86] Halpern, *Suffering, Politics, Power*, 29.
[87] See Tertullian *Scorpiace;* "Antidote for the Scorpion's Sting" in Dunn, J. *Tertullian* (Routledge, 2004), 105-134.
[88] Origen *Cont Cel.* 2.47. *Origen: Contra Celsum* tr. Chadwick (Cambridge University Press, 1980), 102.

tend to believe that the image aims to mock a certain Alexamenos, a Roman soldier and Christian, therefore, this image is sometimes called *graffito blasfemo*, or "blasphemous graffito."[89] Christ is represented as a donkey-headed figure to emphasize that it would be silly to believe that a man who was crucified as a criminal could be god and that his suffering could redeem the humankind.

In one of the earliest surviving pagan depictions of Christianity, Lucian's *De Morte Peregrini* (The Passing of Peregrinus), one encounters the same incomprehension about the "scandal of the cross" – an idea according to which god voluntarily submitted himself to humiliation and infamous death that in some way prescribes the believers to inflict suffering on themselves in the attempt to imitate Christ.[90] In this writing, Lucian satirically portrays a certain Peregrinus Proteus – a Cynical philosopher who at some point connected his life with Christians and later burnt himself during the Olympic Games in 165 CE. Lucian gives the following depiction:

> The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account. … You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, *which explains their contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion* which are so common among them.[91]

Lucian mocks Peregrinus because of his suicide, emphasizing that Peregrinus' was simply seeking attention rather than achieving any spiritual goal. He contrasts

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[89] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 290-291. Viladesau, *Beauty of the Cross*, 19-20. Graydon F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (Mercer Univ. Press, 1985), 27-28. Gertruda Schiller, *Iconography of Christian* art Vol. 2. (New York Graphic Society, 1971), 89-90.
[90] Lucian, *The Passing of Pergriuns* (Harvard University Press, 1936).
[91] Lucian *De Mort. Pereg*., 11-12; *The Passing of Pergrinus*, 82.

Peregrinus' death with Brahmans who killed themselves in a more honorable way without turning it into a public spectacle. Although Peregrinus compares his self-immolation with the figures of Greek mythology, rather than with the Christian narrative (and by the time of his death he did not associated himself with the Christian community), Stephen Benko suggests that the manner of Peregrinus's death was carried out have been shaped in part by the public martyrdom of early Christians like that of Polycarp.[92] Tertullian remarks that while Peregrinus had died a pagan, his willingness to suffer was an example to Christians.[93]

The emergence of Christianity brought a new sensibility into the Greco-Roman world. Significant changes occurred in the way people reacted to the misfortunes of others – from the condescending feeling of pity that distanced the sympathizer from the sufferer and the sSoic view that violence is an integral part of being part of the world, am earlier pagan sensibility transformed into the active care for victims that called for the sharing of their suffering. David Konstan showed that if for Aristotle pity was an *emotion*, Augustine as a Christian author understood it foremost as a *virtue*. In his *Confessions*, Augustine writes: "What sort of pity can we really feel for an image or the stage? The audience is not *called upon to offer help*, but only to feel sorrow."[94] In this way, he stresses the priority of ethical duty. Compassion is understood in this theorization as a moral obligation that is not

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[92] Benko, Stephen. "Portrait of an Early Christian" in *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians* (Indiana University Press. Bloomington. 1986), 43.
[93] Tertullian *Ad Mart.* 4.5, *Address to Martyrs* in T. Herbert Bindley, *The Epistle of the Gallican Churches* (London: SPCK, 1900): 51-61, 58.
[94] Augustine *Conf*. 3.2, cit. in Konstan, *Pity Transformed*, 136.

satisfied anymore with empathetic feeling but requires the offering of active help to those in need.

2.2 Theodicy of Suffering

In the previous part, analyzing the ancient idea of compassion, I intentionally omitted the Hebrew heritage, focusing exclusively on the distinction between the Christian idea of compassion and the Greco-Roman idea of pity. As I have shown, early Christian authors intentionally contrasted their understanding of compassion with the one that was more or less common for Greaco-Roman world. In doing so, patristic authors rely on a long-standing Jewish tradition of compassion. The Hebrew influence on the Christian understanding of compassion becomes evident in the idea of a compassionate God. Konstan notes: "It is certain … that the translation of the Hebrew Bible to Greek, probably in the third century BC, associated God with the quality of pity – *eleos* and its derivatives."[95] The phrase "Lord, pity me," which became a distinctive Christian appeal to a merciful God in contrast to the pitiless gods of ancient Greece and Rome, appears for the first time in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, more specifically, of the Psalm 41:5: "I said, 'Have mercy on me, Lord; heal me, for I have sinned against you.'"

The tradition of compassion understood as a duty to help a person in need arises as a particular ethic in Ancient Judea that can be seen as a proto-concern for victims. Although Girard claims that concern for victims is a uniquely modern phenomenon that borrows its moral intentions from Christianity, at one point he

[95] Konstan, *Pity Transformed*, 118-9.

mentions that the Hebrew Bible is the first text where an author takes side of the victims and not of the persecutors. He credits Max Weber's *Ancient Judaism* for this finding:

> [Weber] takes the view that the propensity to favor the victim is characteristic of a particular cultural atmosphere peculiar to Judaism, and he looks for its explanation in innumerable catastrophes of Jewish history and the fact that the Jewish people had not experienced any great historical success comparable to the success of the empire-builders surrounding them: Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, etc.[96]

However, Weber's explanations for siding with victims in the Old Testament are, in fact, more complex than Girard presents in his reference above. He develops his argument in the course of the broader analysis of theodicy – a theological question of why a good god permits evil. Weber distinguishes two theodicies that were developed by ancient Judaism: the first "theodicy of calamity (or misfortune)" that is a simple and most common one in the Hebrew Bible and can be found in pre-exilic Prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah (Proto-Isaiah), and Jeremiah. The second "theodicy of suffering" is a unique and complex one; in fact, Weber calls it "the most radical and one may say the one truly serious theodicy of ancient Jewry."[97] Such theodicy appears in exilic prophecies and most explicitly in Deutero-Isaiah.

The "theodicy of calamity" emerges as a response to the question: how can a righteous God bring calamity after calamity upon the chosen people? In the difficult period of Hebrew history, when Jews suffered defeat after defeat, and inner conflicts penetrated the community, it was hard to believe in the dogma of a "chosen people."

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[96] Rene Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford University Press, 1987), 147.
[97] Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (Free Press, 1967), 369.

And the genius of the prophets was to exploit the current situation by transforming the cause for doubt and suspicion into an argument for strengthening of faith. The prophets immediately reject the idea that the misfortunes of Israel are caused not by God; Amos defiantly asks: "shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (3:6). Instead, the prophets claim that these misfortunes are a form of punishment that God inflicts on a people who have violated the covenant and committed sin. God's wrath and punishment are justified and the people are responsible themselves for such a fate. Erich Auerbach had observed that the framework of Judaism does not permit events that do not fit into it; thus, the histories of Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt became inscribed into the history of Judea through interpretation – they appear as an instrument of God's punishment.[98]

The "theodicy of calamity" is the dominant form of theodicy in Hebrew Bible. However, it is not a the only idea. In Deutero-Isaiah's Servant songs (especially the fourth song 52:13-53:12), Weber finds an absolutely different and much more complex theodicy, which he indicates as the "theodicy of suffering." According to this theodicy, the suffering that is inflicted on the Servant who represents the people

[98] "The Old Testament, on the other hand, presents universal history: it begins with the beginning of time, with the creation of the world, and will end with the Last Days, the fulfilling of the Covenant, with which the world will come to an end. Everything else that happens in the world can only be conceived as an element in this sequence; into it everything that is known about the world, or at least everything that touches upon the history of the Jews, must be fitted as an ingredient of the divine plan; and as this too became possible only by interpreting the new material as it poured in, the need for interpretation reaches out beyond the original Jewish-Israelitish realm of reality—for example to Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Roman history; interpretation in a determined direction becomes a general method of comprehending reality; the new and strange world which now comes into view and which, in the form in which it presents itself, proves to be wholly unutilizable within the Jewish religious frame, must be so interpreted that it can find a place there. But this process nearly always also reacts upon the frame, which requires enlarging and modifying" (Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton University Press, 2013), 16.)

of Israel is not the God's punishment for his sins, but on the contrary, the innocence of the Servant allows him to bear the sins of people and, therefore, he suffers for sins of others in order to save them. The Servant is described as most "despised and rejected of men", full of pain and suffering; he is viewed as "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted", but he gives his life for "bearing the sins of many"; he was "pierced and bruised for our iniquities" and God "laid on him the iniquity of us all"; his obedience is revealed in the fact that under torment "he opened not his mouth."

Such a perspective changes the role of suffering – if, in the "theodicy of calamity," suffering is a deserved punishment that signifies the sinful nature of a sufferer, than in the "theodicy of suffering" suffering signifies the piety of the sufferer and his innocence and, therefore, suffering itself receives value and becomes meaningful. "Blameless suffering is valued in the sharpest contrast to pre-exilic prophecy… [A] single eschatological figure seems to be thought as the vessel of significant suffering for salvation"[99]; in this way this theodicy becomes an "enthusiastic glorification of suffering" and represents "an apotheosis of sufferance, misery, poverty, humiliation, and ugliness which is not even second to New Testament prophecy."[100]

In the"theodicy of suffering," the poor, sick, and humble receive high esteem, since they are chosen to endure divine punishment for the sins of others. Poverty, sickness, and humbleness become signs of the pious man. There is no such positive esteem for these social groups in pre-exilic ethics. "The poor, sick, infirm, the waif, widow, metic, wage worker were objects of dutiful charity, but not themselves

[99] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 373.
[100] *Ibid*., 369.

representatives of superior morality of a specific religious dignity."[101] Moreover, the theodicy of calamity implies wealth and health as marks of the pious man, who stands in the full grace of God. Weber notices that the patriarchs, Boas, Job, and other pious men were wealthy people and the loss of wealth, sickness, and misery appears as a sign of God's punishment. But this idea is overturned in the theodicy of suffering where piety begins to be associated with poverty, sickness, and humiliation. For Trito-Isaiah as for other prophets of the time such as Malachi (3:18), the pious in contrast to the godless were champions of hopeful promises and God is a God of the humble (Trito-Isaiah 57:15) According to Deutero-Zechariah (9:9f), the future king rides upon an ass, because he is a prince of the humble and the poor.

However, the "theodicy of suffering" had not spread much in Judaic circles. It is apparent only in the story of Job (which is a later narrative): the friend of Job sees his misfortunes clearly in the framework of a "theodicy of calamity" as signs of his sinfulness. In general, Weber argues, the early rabbinical literature is foreign to the idea of the suffering redeemer. But Christianity picks up this theodicy and expands its ideas. It is a commonplace in Christian theology to present the Servant of God as a pre-figuration of Christ. Weber argues that Jesus' words "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that are borrowed from the twenty-second psalm, which "from beginning to the end elaborates Deutero-Isaiah's thesis of meekness and the prophecy of the Servant of God."[102]

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[101] *Ibid*., 370.
[102] *Ibid*., 376.

It is important to note that Weber's analysis of the theodicy of suffering was inspired by Nietzsche's understanding of *ressentiment*. In the course of explaining how Christianity transformed Western values into so-called "morality of slaves," Nietzsche writes:

> It was Jews, with awe-inspiring consistency, who dared to invert the aristocratic value-equation (good=noble=powerful=beautiful=beloved of God) and hang on to this inversion with their teeth, the teeth of the most abysmal hatred (the hatred of impotence), saying 'the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone – and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned!' One knows *who* inherited this Jewish revaluation.[103]

One can see Weber's analysis of the theodicy of suffering as an elaboration of Nietzsche's point, providing it with concrete historical and textual foundations. There is a long tradition of studying Nietzshe's influence on Weber, despite the critical statements of the latter regarding the former (Weber criticized Nietzsche's dismissal of Christianity as a narrow-minded and indiscriminate analysis). However, the impact of Nietzsche's analysis of *ressentiment* can be seen in a couple of Weber's late works, including *Ancient Judaism*.[104] In fact, what Weber finds in Deutero-Isaiah is a pure mechanism of *ressentiment*: the elevation of the sufferer, whose suffering receives the explanation of carrying the sins of others. Thus wickedness obtains holiness. In this way, the later Christian concern for victims, of which Girard speaks,

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[103] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Penguin Classics, 2014), 33-34.
[104] Bryan S. Turner, "Max Weber and the Spirit of Resentment: The Nietzsche legacy" *Journal of Classic Sociology*, Vol. 11, 1: 75-92.

has grown out of the elevated position of the sufferer that occurs in the Jewish theodicy of suffering.

2.3 The Triumphant Christ

The theodicy of suffering became a framework for the explanation of the death of Christ: it justified the suffering and humiliation of the Cross as the means of the salvation of humankind. On the other hand, suffering and humiliation, endured by Christ during the Passions, provided theologians with arguments for His humanity. These patterns were highly important for Christian doctrine from the very beginning as the first Councils show in respect, for example, to the condemnation of the Docetism (a doctrine that among other things denied the passibility of Christ).[105] However, the general emphasis of the early Councils was not specifically on suffering and humiliation, but rather on salvation and triumph over the sin and death.

Another curious motif in this respect is the immunity of the flesh of the martyrs – despite all the tortures inflicted on them, their bodies resist disfiguration. Depicting the burning of Polycarp alive, the narrator specifies: "And he appeared within [tongues of fire] not like flesh which is burnt, but as bread that is baked, or as gold and silver glowing in a furnace. Moreover, we perceived such a sweet odor [coming from the pile], as if frankincense or some such precious spices had been

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[105] Paul Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought* (oxford University Press, 2006), 64-90.

smoking there."[106] By the time Christianity became the official religion of Rome in the 4th century during the reign of Constantine the Great, the motives of suffering and humiliation that constituted the foundation for concern for victims were pushed into the background and foreshadowed by the patterns of glory and triumph that better served the new necessity for Christianity to fit the imperial imagery of the Roman Empire.

Starting from the period of Constantine, Christian theology becomes noticeably political, employing the trope of the Triumphant Christ in association with the Roman Emperor. The idea of Christ as a king or some kind of earthly ruler is foreign to the Gospels and the majority of the New Testament.[107] The only place (apart from the imputation of being a King of Jews) where it appears is the Book of Revelation that designates Christ as the "ruler [*princeps* (Greek: *Archon*)] of the kings of the earth [*regnum terrae*]" (Rev. 1:5). Giorgio Agamben notices that it is a mistake to read the Gospels and even the epistles of Paul as political texts. On the contrary, the language that is used to describe Jesus and his activities belongs fully to the domain of management (economy) that is opposed to politics. Both Paul and the evangelists call Jesus *kyros* – a "housemaster", and he is surrounded by *epískopoi* ("overseers", "guardians") and *diakonoi* ("servants", "waiting-men"): "the lexicon of Pauline ecclesia is "economic", not political, and Christians are, in this sense, the first

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[106] *Matr. Pol*, XV. See *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Volume I. Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts (Cosimo Classics, 2007), 37-44, 42.

[107] In the Gospels Christ is several times called the King of Jews, but it is a title that was ascribed to him by others in terms of accusation rather than affirmation. Outside of the Gospels, Paul once names Christ "king of kings and lord of lords" (Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων) in Timothy 6:14-15. But this is merely a quotation taken from the Old Testament name for God (Deut. 10:17).

fully "economic" men."[108] Agamben reminds us that the distinction between *politikos* (things that belong to polis) and *oikonomia* (administration of the house) was common to the Greek-speaking community and, therefore, the deliberate choice of the New Testament's authors not to describe Jesus in political terms must be taken seriously.[109]

However, despite the apolitical language of the New Testament and the univocal statement of Christ that His "kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36) there is a consistent tradition starting long before the Constantinian era of Christ's association with earthly rulers. Alongside titling him *rex*, early Christian literature designates Christ as *imperator*. Eric Peterson gives numerous examples from patristic authors (including Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine).[110] Sometimes these designations even go side by side as in the *Passio Sanctorum Scillitanorum* (*The Passions of the Sicilian Martyrs*): "I acknowledge my Lord, King of Kings and Emperor of all nations."[111] In other cases the connection between Christ and an earthly ruler is made not through titles, but rather by ascribing him honors that were typical for the Roman Emperors only; thus, Lactantius claims *proskynesis* (a specific type of kneeling) for Christ as a representative of God.

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[108] Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 24.

[109] In a pseudo-Aristotelian treatise on economym the author states that the difference between economy and politics is the same as that between house (*oikos*) and city (*polis*). Aristotle repeats this distinction in the *Politics* when he says that the politician or king belongs to the domain of politics, whereas*despotes* and *oikonomos* are attributed to the sphere of house and family. See Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory*, 17-24.

[110] Erik Peterson, "Christ as Imperator" in *Theological Tractates* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 143-150.

[111] Cit in Peterson. "Christ as Imperator", 144.

In the attempt to understand the political theology of early Christianity, Eric Peterson turns to the issue of monotheism: he reveals an ideological correlation between monarchy as a political structure and monotheism as a religious structure.[112] God as a heavenly supreme power corresponds to the emperor's earthly rulership and in this way legitimizes his monarchical government. The principal argument of Peterson is that such an ideological structure was not created by Christian theologians, but rather was a pagan invention; particularly, he names Philo of Alexandria (c. 25 BCE – c. 50 CE), a Hellenized Jewish political thinker, as the person who first fully elaborated this idea. Despite a few early patristic authors sharing a political theology of this type – with the notable exception of Eusebius, the court theologian of Constantine the Great, the ultimate triumph of the Trinitarian dogma that states the equality of the tree divine Person made impossible an ideological correlation of one God to one monarch.[113]

One of the early Christian theologians prone to political theology is Origen (184/185 – 253/254). In *Contra Celsum* (2.30), Origen reconciles the tension between the Empire and Christianity which his intellectual opponent, Celsus, denotes. Celsus accuses Christianity of revolt – *stasis*: Christians, as members of a social group that think of themselves as a closed community that exists apart from the rest of the Romans, lead to a dangerous division within the Empire. In answering this accusation, Origen provides an interpretation of Psalm 72:7 ("In his days justice and fullness of peace have arisen"). God prepared the nations for the teaching of

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[112] Peterson, "Monotheism as a Political Problem: A Contribution to the History of Political Theology" in *Theological Tractates* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 68-105.
[113] Therefore, Peterson, in response to Carl Schmitt, claims there is no possibility for Christian political theology.

Jesus in so far as the nations were united under the rule of the Roman Emperor: "Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus, who may be said to have brought the many nations of the earth into harmony through his sole rule."[114] Augustus removed the plurality that could be an obstacle for the spreading of Jesus' teaching.

According to Peterson, the "apolitical" Origen elaborated this political theology only because had been pressed to do so by Celsus. However, this idea was picked up and developed by Eusebius:

> Who would not be astonished, reflecting that it cannot be human doing that it was only from the time of Jesus and not before that most nations of the world came under the one rulership of the Romans, and that simultaneously with his unexpected appearance, Roman affairs began to flourish? Namely, when Augustus first became sole ruler over the majority of the nations.[115]

Peterson argues that, in this development, Eusebius shows that before Augustus polyarchy as well as polytheism led to endless wars. By contrast, the Roman Empire brings peace. Summing up the argument of Eusebius, whom he calls a "political propagandist," Peterson writes: "In principle, monotheism had begun with the monarchy of Augustus. Monotheism, is the metaphysical corollary of the Roman Empire which dissolves nations. But what began as a principle with Augustus has become reality in the present under Constantine."[116]

This emphasis on the connection between the Emperor and Christ was, perhaps, one of the main factors that led to the avoidance of images of suffering Christ in early Christian art. Apart from some very rare examples, Christian

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[114] Peterson, "Monotheism as a Political Problem", 90.
[115] Eusebius, *The Proof of the Gospel* 3.7.30-35 (cit. in Peterson, "Monotheism as a Political Problem", 92).
[116] Peterson, "Monotheism as a Political Problem", 94.

iconography deliberately avoided depiction of Christ's suffering and death, contrary to the later dominance of the Crucifix in both Byzantine and medieval iconography.[117] The rare Passion scenes depict Jesus' arrest and trial, but not the crucifixion itself. For the Romans, the cross was the sign of a shameful death; crucifixion was one of the most cruel and humiliating punishments, worse than hanging,[118] and reserved only for extreme crimes.[119] Crucifixion was primarily a punishment for political and military offenses, and even "civilized" Greeks used such a punishment for crimes of high treason. Already during the reign of Constantine the crucifixion was abandoned as a capital punishment and the Cross became a sign of imperial victory and had to be venerated. In the 4th century, Christian iconography shows a gradual shift – from narrative scenes where Jesus is portrayed as healer and wonder-maker towards dogmatic images representing Jesus' divinity, resurrection, and heavenly reign. In these representations the themes of suffering and humiliating death are absent. As Graydon Snyder puts it:

> There are no early Christian symbols that elevate paradigms of Christ's suffering (the *theologia crucis),* or even motifs of death and resurrection. In early Christian art, when Jesus does appear, he overcomes illness, political and social difficulties, and death .... In a social situation in which persecution, harassment, prejudice, class hatred, and illegal treatment were always possibilities, the early

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[117] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (Routledge, 2000), 130. See also E. Syndicus *Early Christian Art* (Hawthorne, 1962), 103-104; F. van der Meer, *Early Christian Art* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1967) 120-122; C. Pocknee*, Cross and Crucifix in Christian Worship and Devotion* (London: Mowbray, 1962), 38; A. Grabar, *Christian Iconography* (Princeton University Press, 1968) for a different explanation of this phenomenon.
[118] Isidore of Seville: "Hanging is a lesser penalty than cross. For the gallows kills the victim immediately, whereas the cross tortures for a long time those who are fixed to it" (*Etymoligia* 5.27.34).
[119] Rejali, "Why Social Sciences Care How Jesus Died?" in Jensen, *Histories of Victimhood* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 30.

> Christians stressed deliverance and victory rather than death and resurrection.[120]

Despite the emphasis on the glory and triumph of Christ and his being titled *rex* and *imperator* in theological treatises, there are no early images of Christ as king until the time of Constantine. After the 4th century one can see elements of the imperial entourage appearing in the images of Christ. He either wears imperial dress, or is enthroned, or shows other symbols of imperial power or poses that were common to imperial iconography. In the East, these developments quickly lead to the development of the rigid iconographic form of *Pantocrator*[121] [Fig. 2] – a bearded Christ, usually shown in half-body length, and having the gesture of one who has power to decree. This image by far dominates Christian art from Constantine up to the tenth or eleventh centuries.

Josef Deer argued that early Christian art that shows the emperor in front of the intersection of the arms of the cross promoted the idea that the emperor reigns under the protection of the cross; but the further development of this iconography was driven by the desire to stress the co-relativity between the emperor and Christ.[122] Therefore, in the later Middle Ages there is a common form of the crucifix that on the one side has images of a Roman Emperor (usually Augustus) and, on the other, the image of *Pantocrator*. [Fig. 3]

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[120] Graydon Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (Mercer University Press, 2003), 46.

[121] The Greek word *Pantocrator* ("all-mighty") is mentioned only once by Paul in 2 Cor 6:18, all other occurrences are from the Book of Revelation (although scholars claim that in this text the title *Pantocrator* is reserved for God alone).

[122] Josef Déer Das Kaiserbild im Kreuz. Ein Beitrag zur politischen Theologie des früheren Mittelalters," Vorträge und Forschungen 21 (1977): 125-77.

It is somewhat surprising that despite the long tradition of the Christ the King motif in Christian art and literature,[123] Christ does not appear wearing crown. It was Constantine who first adopted the crown as an imperial *insignium* suppressing the older tradition of the wreath, but, as Robert Deshman observes, in early Christian art Christ is never depicted wearing a wreath or a crown.[124] Images of the enthroned Christ crowned with a gold jeweled diadem upon his head only appear in the late 10th century.[125] Robert Deshman specifies that neither in Carolingian nor in Byzantine art can one find a crowned Christ and that such an iconography is found only during the Ottonian period (951-1024). He explains the lack of such iconography by arguing that after Constantine, medieval ideals of kingship had not always been so centered upon Christ. For example, during the Carolingian period the Constantinian tradition of the association of Emperor with Christ was displaced by the association of the Emperor with the Old Testament

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[123] Per Beskow, *Rex Gloriae: The Kingship of Christ in the Early Church* (Wipf and Stock, 2014); Johannes Kollwitz, "Das Bild von Christus dem König in Kunst und Liturgie der christlichen Frühzeit" *Theologie und Glaube* 37–38 (1947–48), 95-118; Klaus Wessel *Christus Rex: Kaiserkult und Christusbild* (1953), Andre Grabar *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1971).

[124] The first image of Christ wearing a wreath – "forerunner of the royal diadem and crown" is to be found in the Utrecht Psalter (which is from the Carolingian period), but Deshman claims that it has nothing to do with any imperial claim but rather signifies the victorious martyrdom of Christ. It refers to pre-imperial imagery when a wreath designated simply *vir triumphalis* and the wearing of it was not restricted to imperial family as a symbol of rulership (Deshman, "Christus Rex et Magi Reges", 155)

[125] Deshman, 143-4.

kings – David and Solomon.[126] However, by the time of Otto I (912-973) Western political thought renewed and elaborated the theory of Christ-centered kingship.[127]

The earliest certain images where Jesus is crucified occur in the early 5th century and are extremely rare up to the seventh century, but even within the Crucifixion images the pattern of impassibility will remain down to the 10th century and even later (contrary, as we will see, to theological elaborations). Moreover, in early Christian art, Christ and especially the Passions were usually depicted in a symbolic way: from this period we have lamb, fish, vine, pelican, or anchor as symbols that represent complex nature of Christ.[128] In this regard, Mitchell Merback writes: "Prior to the twelfth century, medieval ecclesiastical art tended to confine the representation of the crucified to […] symbolic conception. Rather than attempting to convey the historicity and actuality of the event, such images illuminated Eucharistic significance, or trumpeted its cosmogonic meaning with all the heavenly fanfare of a theophany."[129]

In early Crucifixions, Christ does not suffer: from the image in the Rabbula Gospel (6th century)[Fig. 4] to the Crucifix of Fernand and Sancha (c. 1063) [Fig.5]: Christ's eyes are open; the outstretched arms are firm and not dropped in weakness; the torso is physically robust, showing no sign of pain, but rather calmness and

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[126] See Schramm "Kronen des frühen Mittelaltes" in Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik. Hiersemann, 1955, pp. 377-417 and Deshmann "Christus Rex et Magi Reges" in *Eye and Mind: Collected Essays in Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval* Art (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Press, 2009), 145.
[127] See Ernst Kantorowitcz "Christ-Centered Kingship" in The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton University Press, 1997), 42-87.
[128] See Jensen*, Understanding Christian Art*, 32-93.
[129] Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 16.

dignity; and the body is covered by cloth. What immediately strikes an observer in these images is a deliberate departure from the earlier traditional pictures that visualized the historical narrative: there is a certain contradiction to the narrative about Christ's Passion. In these passionless crucifixions, Christ is wounded, but still alive, whereas the biblical narrative tells that He was pierced by the Roman soldier only after he was already dead. The reason for this seeming inconsistency is that this new type of image tries not to give the historical account of Christ's death, but to visualize theology according to which Christ "destroyed death." In other words, these crucifixions stress the abovementioned features of triumph and glory and not suffering and humiliation. Therefore, although these images aspire to realism in their visual form, they are still very symbolic.[130]

2.4 "Victim" in Pre-Christian and Early-Christian Latin Texts

Why in all European languages is a person who has suffered violence or injustice labeled by means of a word that originally designated a thing that is sacrificed?[131] Neither Roman Law nor the codices of Old German Law, nor, again, any other medieval legal codices refer to the harmed party as a *victim* – such a labeling is, in fact, a modern phenomenon. The relation between the two meanings

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[130] "Despite their incommensurability with the biblical text, the earliest historical Crucifixion images worked primarily to transform the viewer into a mystical witness and a participant who enters into the action depicted and, in doing so, activates their symbolic meaning" (Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel,* 54).

[131] The English Etymological Dictionary dates the appearance of *victim* to the late 15th century with the meaning "living creature killed and offered as a sacrifice to a deity or supernatural power," from the Latin *victima* "person or animal killed as a sacrifice." The sense of a "person who is hurt, tortured, or killed by another" is recorded from the 1650s.

of the concept *victim* – the ritualistic meaning of an object of sacrifice and a figural meaning of metaphorical label for a harmed party – has not been thoroughly examined. This linguistic puzzlement has attracted the attention only of scholars in the field of victimology. In a series of articles,[132] the Dutch victimologist Jan van Dijk attempted to show that the figural meaning derived from the original ritualistic one in the Reformation's imagery of Christ:

> The first use of the word victim for a human being emerged in theological texts around the time of the Reformation. According to my research, one of the oldest appearances of the word *victima* as a word for a human being can be found in the book *On the Institutes of the Christian Religion*, written in classical Latin by the lawyer and religious reformer Johannes Calvin and first published in 1536. Calvin used the word *victima* as a special name for Jesus Christ in an elaboration of the sacrificial nature of the Crucifixion.[133]

In his analysis, Van Dijk suggests a number of important directions that scholars of the semantic shift in the concept of victim might pursue. The Dutch victimologist stresses the necessity of a genealogical approach in order to clarify how the figural sense emerged out of the ritualistic one and he specifies Christ as the figure in whose imagery the semantic shift had actually occurred. Although I agree with the main line of Van Dijk's analysis in so far as Christological discourse played a major role in the spread of the figural sense of victim, in this chapter I will challenge two particular statements of his theory: his claim that the Reformation had a primary role in labeling Christ a victim and the claim that the emergence of the figural meaning of the concept occurred only within Christian discourse. Closer

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[132] Van Dijk J, "In the Shadow of Christ? On the use of the word 'victim' for those affected by crime". *Criminal Justice Ethics*, 2008, 27(1): 13-24; Jan Van Dijk, "Free the Victim: A Critique of the Western Conception of Victimhood." *International Review of Victimology* 16, no. 1 (2009): 1–33.

[133] Jan Van Dijk, "Free the Victim", 4.

examination of theological texts reveals that numerous Christian authors used the concept *victima* in application to Christ long before the Reformation. Moreover, pre-Christian authors used *victima*, not only in its primary meaning of the object of sacrifice, but metaphorically in a sense that is close to the figural one.

Van Dijk, as well as George Fletcher – criminal law professor whose research inspired van Dijk's study – stressed a major role of Christ for the emergence of the figural meaning of *victim*, stressed the major role of Christ for the emergence of the figural meaning of *victim*.[134] For them Christ became a character who combined the two senses of *victim*: an offering for the salvation of humankind (*victim* in the ritualistic sense) and the harmed party of an unjust trial (*victim* in the figurative sense). Moreover, Dijk admits that such a fusion is a result of late theorizing, since nowhere in the Bible itself is the person who suffered from harm or a crime is called *victim.* From this late Christian theorization, according to the Dutch scholar, stems the modern shift in the meaning of *victim*. However, this hypothesis must be rejected since it can be shown that association of a persecuted person with the object of ritual sacrifice in the Latin-speaking world first appears not in the description of Christ. The 2nd century pagan Latin author Apuleius writes in his novel *The Metamorphoses* (or *The Golden Ass*) as follows:

> At an order from the magistrates two of their attendants immediately arrested me – naturally I didn't resist – and began to take me off […] At length, when we had passed through every street and I had been led in procession round every corner of the city, *like one of those victims that are paraded from place to place before being sacrificed* to

[134] Fletcher G.P, "Language" in *The Grammar of Criminal Law: American, Comparative, and International, vol. 1: Foundations.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 117-150.

> expiate some threatening portent, we came to the square, and I found myself at the bar of the court.[135]

The word for victim that Apuleius uses here is not *victima* but *hostia*, but Roman authors used these two words interchangeably.[136] This pattern finds support a few lines below in the same text: "The officers of the court led me like some sort of sacrificial victim (*victima*) out across the stage and placed me in the middle of the orchestra."[137] The whole scene that Apuleius is depicting is a kind of mockery, a fake trial that the main character undergoes. However, the novel itself is seen by some researches as full of anti-Christian elements and, thus, this scene may be interpreted as a critical allusion to the Passion. The chapter indicates that the punishment Apuleius is going to face is torture and crucifixion[138]. Therefore, it is still possible to argue that Christ still plays a foundational role in this passage.

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[135] *Met.* 3.2 (The emphasis is mine) Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (Penguin Classics, 1999), 31.

[136] In Ancient Rome, *victima* is a concept that designates the object of sacrifice and usually is compared to another word – *hostia* – which was used for a similar purpose. In his *Etymologies* around 600 AD, Isidore of Seville summarized existing conceptual differences of both words: "Among the ancients the sacrifice made before they proceeded against the enemy (*hostis*) was called a *hostia*. But after a victory (*victoria*), when the enemies were defeated, the sacrifices they would slaughter were 'victims' (*victima*). Victims are larger sacrifices than *hostiae*. Others think that a victim is so called because it would fall dead when struck by a blow (*ictus*), or because it would be brought to the altar bound (*vincio*, ppl. *vinctus*)"[VI, 19.33-34]. Isidore provides his readers with various approaches to the distinction between *victima* and *hostia* that are found in earlier Latin writers. Thus, for example, the 4th century commentator of Virgil, Servius presents the idea that *hostia* is a sacrifice before the battle and *victima* after, but also stresses that usually these concepts were used interchangebly. Another source where such a distinction can be found is Ovid. In the first book of *Fasti* (8 AD), where he describes the celebration of the *Agonalia*, Ovid presents a long discussion of the sacrificial practices of the Romans. Ovid's general attitude towards sacrifices is rather negative: he sees them as a sign of moral degradation from the innocent state of the Golden Age where there was no blood sacrifice, but only gifts that did not involve any kind of killing. Regarding *victima*, Ovid also follows a false etymology and connects *victima* with victory: "the victim is so called because it has been struck by the victorious right hand" and contrasts it with *hostia* which "takes its name from conquered enemies." ["Victima quae dextra cecidit victrice vocatur; hostibus a domis hostia a nomen habet"]. (Fasti, 1.335-6)

[137] *Met.* 3.2. Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, 31.

[138] Sed anus illa quae fletibus cuncta turbaverat: "Prius," inquit "optimi cives, quam latronem istum miserorum pignorum meorum peremptorem *cruci affigatis*, permittite

To reject the view that the association between the suffering person and the object of sacrifice only appears within Christianity, let us look at Cicero's court oration *Pro Flacco* (*In defense of Lucius Valerius Flaccus*) that was delivered in 59 BC. In this speech Cicero mastered a discourse overloaded with the metaphoric use of *victima* that is difficult to understand without knowing the historical context and ritual sacrificial practices of Rome. The speech culminates in a pathetic appeal to the judges:

> What victim can you offer more acceptable (*victimam gratiorem*) to the manes of Publius Lentulus, – who intended, after you had been all murdered amid the embraces of your children and your wives, to bury you beneath the burning ruins of your country, – than you will offer, if you satiate his impious hatred towards all of us in the blood of Lucius Flaccus? Let us then offer a sacrifice to Lentulus, let us make atonement to Cethegus, let us recall the exiles, let us in our turn, if you, O judges, think fit, suffer the punishment due to too great piety, and to the greatest possible affection towards our country.[139]

Cicero builds his defense of Flaccus by referencing the Catilinarian conspiracy that took place several years prior the trial and in the exposure of which Cicero and Flaccus played major roles. Publius Cornelius Lentulus was one of the leaders in the Catalinarian conspiracy and the rhetorical argument of Cicero consists in the claim that Flaccus' conviction might be seen as a sacrifice of the Roman hero to the enemies of the Republic. The argument mirrors Cicero's immediately preceding claim that the earlier conviction of Gaius Antonius (another companion of Cicero)

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corpora necatorum revelari, ut et formae simul et aetatis contemplatione magis magisque ad iustam indignationem arrecti pro modo facinoris saeviatis. "[B]ut the old crone who'd caused such turmoil with her tears, suddenly spoke: '*Before you tie that brigand to the cross*, the one who murdered my poor little darlings, let the victims' bodies be uncovered so that seeing their youth and beauty you may be roused to the highest pitch of righteous indignation and match your severity to the crime.' (Met. 3.8[9]) *Emphasis is mine*

[139] *Flac.* 95-6.;, Cicero, *In Catilinam 1-4. Pro Murena. Pro Sulla. Pro Flacco* (Harvard Unversity Press, 1977), 466.

made him [Gaius] an offering to Catiline himself. Cicero writes that after that trial, the friends of Catiline gathered on the tomb of their leader and celebrated the expulsion of Gaius: according to the orator, they decorated the tomb with flowers and had a feast. This description alludes to the *Parentalis* – the ritual of commemoration of the dead that used to happen in February, during which tombs were decorated with flowers and people had feasts at the cemeteries and made sacrifices to the dead. Therefore, in celebration of the friends of Catiline there is a missing point – namely the sacrifice, and Cicero claims that the expulsion of Gaius represents that very missing element. Similarly, Flaccus' condemnation will be a sacrifice to the tomb of Lentulus. Cicero's use of *victima* in this speech goes far beyond the common religious meaning and turns this word into a powerful metaphor that assists him in defending Flaccus.

The figural usage of *victima* that one can read in the works of Apuleius or Cicero is exceptional rather than common in classical Latin authors. Jean Dumesnil in the early 19th century dictionary *Latin Synonyms, with Their Different Signification*, concludes his entry on the *victima/hostia* account by stating that "*Victima*, in good authors, is never used figuratively."[140] It rather presents what Reinhardt Koselleck called *Erstbeleg* – a rare (or perhaps, even unique) usage of the concept with semantics that are considered deviant at that time. Nevertheless, these rare occasions show that the association of a person with an object of sacrifice does not emerge in Christianity. Moreover, already in the pre-Christian era, one can find the figural meaning of *victima* and even a meaning that transgresses the sacrificial

[140] Jean Dumesnil, *Latin Synonyms, with Their Different Significations: And Examples Taken from the Best Latin Authors*. (G.B. Whittaker [etc.] Payne, 1809), 338.

context of the concept. Ovid who, generally uses the sacrificial concept of the victim sometimes employ the figural concept as well: "By my punishment do I redeem her lying: shall I be victim, deceived by the deceiver?"[141] What does this "deceived victim" (*victima deceptus*) stand for? How can the abovementioned ritualistic meaning of *victima* be applied here? Clearly this line can be understood only if we employ our supposedly "modern" meaning of *victim* as 'a person who is hurt' and read this line as a question of the character who calls himself a victim of deception. If Ovid in his *Amores* was able to use this concept outside its normal strictly ritualistic usage, this would suggest that eight years before Christ was even born, the Latin *victima* already possessed the secondary figural meaning along with its primary meaning of the object of sacrifice. If this is true, then Van Dijk's theory is not tenable – the emergence of the figural meaning of victim has nothing to do with the imagery of Christ. However, there is certainly a great influence of the Christian heritage on the transformation of the semantics of *victima* (that was briefly mentioned above) that I am going to examine in the following sections.

The execution and death of Jesus quickly became a theological problem for those who believed He had been the Messiah: for how could God endure suffering, humiliation, and death? The radical response from the Christ's followers was that His death had been *voluntary* and *necessary* for the human salvation – a response that met a strong critical attitude amongst pagans, as apostle Paul admits himself: "we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block (*scandalon*) to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Cor 1:23). Thus, the crucifixion served as a point of departure for the

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[141] Ovid *Amores*, III, 3, 23. (Paul Hudson, 2013), 223.

original Christian theology; already in the earliest Christian documents – the epistles of Paul – the death of Christ is explained as a sacrifice that Jesus undergoes for the sake of humanity.[142] However, despite the obvious sacrificial framework throughout the New Testament, Christ is never labeled as *victim (victima)*. This will happen only in a later theological exegesis. In this section, I will try to explain why.

Since the rule of Constantine the Great (c. 272- 337), when Christianity became the official religion of Rome, it faced the need to fit the imperial imagery of the Empire. The Cross became a symbol of victory, the suffering of Christ was downplayed and, subsequently, theologians elaborated more on the elements of Christ's triumph over death and the powers of evil rather than on the Passion itself within the sacrificial framework of Christ's death. The first systematic theories explaining the death of Christ in terms of sacrifice that led to the human salvation by Byzantine theologians (such as Basil the Great (330-379) or Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335-395)) suggested the so-called Ransom theory of the Atonement. This theory presented the death of Christ as a ransom that was given by God to the Devil in order to redeem humanity from the state of sin and being bound to evil. Christ is portrayed as a Victor who triumphs over death and sin; the elements of suffering and passivity are left out.[143] Moreover, during this period the whole idea of sacrifice is downplayed. For Lactantius (c. 250-c. 325), who was invited by Constantine as a tutor for his son, the sacrificial framework presented in the Bible plays little (if any) role: he sees Christ not as a redeemer, but rather as a teacher. Lactantius refers to

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[142] Rom. 3:25-26; 5:7; Eph. 1:7; 5:2; Col. 1:20; Heb. 10:1-18.
[143] Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the* Atonement (New York: MacMillan, 1969); see esp. ch. 3: "The Fathers in East and West," 36-60.

Christ as to a "teacher of justice" or "teacher of virtue"; even speaking of the Crucifixion, he emphasizes "not the victory over Satan, death and sin; rather Passion was the last lesson taught by Christ, a heroic example of virtue whose performance by a divine human being was meant to provide an achievable example of humanity."[144]

These theorizations that softened (or even in some cases repressed) the elements of Christ's suffering present in Bible found their reflection in the language that theologians used in speaking about the Crucifixion. I will try to show that there is a certain peculiarity in the usage of sacrificial language in the patristic authors: namely, that they avoid applying *victima* to Christ and tend to replace it with more specific concepts such as *hostia*, *oblatio*, or *immolatio* when speaking of his victimhood.[145] The early theologians were well aware of the figural meaning of the concept *victima* and for this reason avoided its employment in describing the sacrificial role of Christ due to the contradiction between the connotations of suffering and misfortune that it carries and the new image of exalted Christ. Therefore, even in the rare cases when the Church fathers labeled Christ as *victima*, we must understand it in its ritualistic sense only, without attaching the connotations of the figural meaning.

Even though he rarely employed the non-sacrificial meaning, Tertullian (150-220), the first known Latin-speaking theologian, both labeled Christ as *victima* and showed familiarity with the figural meaning of this concept. In *Against Marcion*,

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[144] Elizabeth Digeser, *The Making of a Christian Empire: Lactantius and* Rome (Cornell University Press, 2012), 74-5.
[145] For example, "ipse offerens, ipse et oblatio" (Augustine), or "ipse et hostia, ei pontifiex" (Origen in Rufinus' translation).

Tertullian developing an analogy between the sacrifice of Isaac and Christ's Crucifixion at one point states that Christ "was destined by his father as a sacrifice" (*in victimam concessi a Patre*).[146] The English translation avoided rendering Terullian's *victima* as *victim* perhaps to emphasize the ritualistic usage of the concept within the given context. But strictly speaking, the context itself does not provide the reader with sufficient information to choose between the senses of *victima*: the possible psychological reading of Isaac's sacrifice scene (such as Kierkegaard gives in the beginning of *Fear and Trembling*) brings emotional complexity into the story and, therefore, Tertullian's statement can be read as if God destined Christ to endure pain and suffering; or at least as an attempt to preserve the ambiguity of the concept *victima*: signifying both an object of sacrifice in the ritualistic sense and stressing an emotional part in the figural sense. A passage from his other work where he calls harlots "victims of public lust," supposedly referring to their showing in the theatres, testifies that Tertullian knew the figural sense of *victima*.[147]

Against the reading that prefers figural meaning of *victima* or one that preserves semantic ambiguity of this concept when employed for labeling Christ in patristic literature, I would like to appeal to the authority of Jerome. He is a key author since it is his translation of Bible into Latin in the late 4th century that for many centuries became the official version of Bible. It seems that a certain idea stands behind his translation regarding the concept *victima:* it shows up almost

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[146] Tertullian *Ad Marc*. III,18. "The Five Books Against Marcion"*.* In*: The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A. D. 325.* Ed. Roberts A.. 3: 269-476, 336.
[147] Tertullian *De Spect.* XVII. "The Shows, or De Spectaculis". In: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A. D. 325.* 3: 79-92, 87.

exclusively in the Old Testament, where it appears more than hundred times, and only twice in the New Testament.[148] The standard Hebrew concept of the object that is sacrificed close to the Latin *victima* (or *hostia*) is *korban*; the Greek one is *prosphora*. But there is no consistency in *korban* – *prosphora* – *victima* rendering. *Victima*, *hostia*, *oblatio*, *immolatio* appear much more often then the original *korban* since Jerome often emphasizes that biblical author speaks specifically about the object of sacrifice rather than about practice itself. Therefore, his avoidance of *victima* in the New Testament should be taken as a conscious decision not to associate Christ with the concept that can be read figuratively: Christ is a victim in the ritualistic sense only. Such deliberate rendering shows that Jerome actively participated in the creating of the emerging triumphant image of Christ.[149]

The consistency with which Jerome and many other patristic authors avoid using *victima* in respect to Christ calls for explanation. In my view, this phenomenon can be understood only if we accept that the concept *victima* lost its strict ritualistic meaning at that time and was often used in its figural sense of a "harmed party." Such ambiguous usage evoked the connotations of suffering, misfortune, and passivity that were undesirable in the context of a new glorified image of Christ that the Church had been promoting. To support this hypothesis, let us look into two letters of Jerome that show his specific discrimination regarding the concept.

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[148] Mk 9.48(49) "Everyone will be salted with fire, every sacrifice (*victima*) shall be salted with salt"; Act 7.42 "as it is written in the book of the prophets: 'Did you bring me sacrifices (*victimas*) and offerings (*hostias*) for forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?"

[149] See R. Layton, "From 'Holly Passion' to Sinful Emotion: Jerome and the Doctrine of *Propassio*" in Blowers P, Christman A, eds. In: *In Dominico Eloquio-In Lordly Eloquence: Essays on Patristic Exegesis in Honor of Robert L. Wilken* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001): 280-293, where the author attempts to show that Jerome borrowed from Origen the Stoic idea of the impassibility of Christ. [He could easily have got it from Clement of Alexandria]

Writing about an unjust and brutal trial that he had witnessed, Jerome refers to a woman who was about to be executed as a *victima*: "The victim takes her place, protected only by the favor of Christ."[150] This particular sentence shows the figural usage of the concept – a woman whose suffering Jerome pities, is called *victima* – the same word he used to render the objects of sacrifice in the Old Testament. But when it comes to the sacrifice of Christ, Jerome never uses *victima.* In another place Jerome's deliberate word choice is even more obvious: in the letter to monk Heliodorus he writes: "Let him, but only him, deny that there is sacrilege in carnal lust, who has polluted the living offering of his body pleasing to God by shameful intercourse with the victims of public vice."[151] Here, in one sentence Jerome makes two citations: one from Paul's Epistle to Romans ("to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice") (Rom. 12:1) and another from Tertullian that I quoted above ("victim of public lust"). It is striking that for Tertulian's use of *hostia* ("*publicae voluptatis hostiae*"), Jerome substitutes with *victima* ("*publicarum libidinum victimis*"). Again, I argue he does this in order to avoid confusion of Christ as victim with the figural meaning of this concept.

The initial impulses of concern for victims initiated by the spread of Christianity were downplayed when after the 4th century Christianity became a part of imperial Roman politics. While Christianity was the faith of a persecuted minority, within its community a sensibility of compassion as an ethical duty to care for unjustly suffering ones had naturally developed. This sensibility stemmed from the Judaic theodicy of suffering where the connotations of misery and humiliation

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[150] Jerome *Ep.* I, 11. *Selected Letters* (Harvard University Press, 1933), 26.
[151] Jerome *Ep*. XIV; *Selected Letters*, 63.

signify God-chosen individuals. The story of Jesus read through the lenses of this theodicy became a foundation for concern for victims that revolutionized the ethics of antiquity. However, after Christianity became the official religion of imperial Rome, these initial impulses were restrained and the connotations of victory in Christ's resurrection were emphasized both in theology and art to support the triumphal image of the Empire. This change can be seen in the rise of the imagery of the *Pantocrator* and *Christ in Majesty* that present Christ as Almighty King of Kings, and with simultaneous absence of the images of Christ depicting his sufferings (even in the scenes of the Passions). Another piece of evidence of this turn is linguistic – patristic authors avoided calling Christ a *victima*, as such a label introduces a (marginal) figural meaning with the connotations of misfortune and harm; instead they used synonyms (*hostia*, *oblatio*) that have only the religious sacrificial meaning to emphasize that Christ's death is not about failure, but about the mystical drama of saving humanity. In both art and theology the Imperial Church was preoccupied with constructing the image of the Glorified Christ that corresponds to the grandeur of the Emperor and of Empire itself and that marginalized the impulses that shaped the original Christian sensibility where compassion is understood as a duty to help those in need.

CHAPTER THREE

The New Sensibility of the High Medieval Period and Christ's Victimhood

3.1 The Suffering Christ (*Christus Patiens*)

After the final and most vivid exposition of interchangeable features between the Emperor and Christ during the Ottonian period (951-1024), this trend fades away and gives way to the new type of iconography that explicitly depicts the suffering and humiliation of Christ. Eventually, this transformation leads to the disintegration of the correlation between imperial iconography and Christ imagery that was so important in the Triumphant Christ's trope: the new iconography no longer conveys ideas of glorification and power.[152] The rapid development and spread of the Suffering Christ also coincides with the growth of Papal claims to political power and in the fourth chapter I will discuss in details how these two phenomena are connected. For the present moment, I will trace some basic stages of how the trope of the Suffering Christ came into being since it does not suddenly appear out of nowhere in the 12th century Italy.

Although it is common to contrast the image of the Suffering Christ as a Western invention to the dispassionate Eastern image of the *Pantocrator*, the *Christus Patiens* is of Eastern origin as well. So far scholars trace this trope to developments in rituals and artistic techniques in the Holy Land of the 8th-9th

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[152] The iconography of Christ in Majesty preserves, but no longer alludes to, the imperial cult; rather it is transformed into the image of Christ in Judgment and is associated with the spiritual power of the Church rather than with the legitimization of imperial rulership.

centuries.[153] However, while it gets transferred to the West, it changes its function and acquires a different meaning. The image of the Suffering Christ did not appear as an *opposition* to the Triumphant Christ, but rather as a *development* and *complication* of it. Despite the fact that it is hard to understand the intrinsic connection between these two types of iconography if we look at later images of the Suffering Christ (as, for example, Matthias Grunewald's altarpieces [Fig. 6]), the linkage to the Triumphant Christ is apparent in the earlier works that I will discuss here.

I have already mentioned that there is a peculiar discontinuity between art and theology regarding the Passions and the death of Christ in early Christianity: namely, that the strong emphasis on Christ's passibility present from the very beginning in theology is intentionally avoided in art.[154] The early images of Christ portray him as healer and wonder-maker and later as King of Kings, while crucifixion images are lacking until the 7th century and even in those rare images Christ is alive and not suffering. However, in theology one can see the constant proclamation of Christ's passibility. E.J. Tinsley, explaining the turn to the iconography of Suffering Christ which he locates in the early 10th century, presents this as a result of the Christological controversies of the earlier periods.[155] In the

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[153] John Galey, *Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1980); Kurt Weizmann *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai; The Icons Volume I: From the Sixth to the Tenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1976); Hans Belting, "An image and its function in Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," Dumberton Oaks Papers 34/35 (1980): 1-16.

[154] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 136-137; in general about the problematic character of the relation between theology and art, see Alain Besançon *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[155] E. J. Tinsley "The coming of a Dead and Naked Christ," Religion 2 (1972): 24-36.

course of Christian theological development, the idea of the non-obligatory death of Christ gained some favor among a number of theologians throughout history[156] who argued that Jesus' death was without suffering and bodily disfiguration. But the idea of impassionate God caused some theoretical issues. As Gavrilyuk puts it: "The acceptance of the apathetic God into classical Christology led to insoluble theological difficulties. Qualities such as pity, compassion and love appear incompatible with absolute 'immutability.'"[157] Another issue with the impassibility of God was that it led easily to the accusation of patristic authors as those who "drank from poisoned wells of Hellinistic philosophy" – Aristotle's apathetic God.

After the Council of Nicea (325) proclaimed the Homoousian doctrine that asserted all three distinct and infinite "hypostases" or Persons, (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, possess the very same Divine Essence (*ousia*)), the question of passibility became one of the most debated: how could the impassible God the Father share the same essence as the passible Son?[158] During the Council of Rome

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[156] For the idea of the impassibility of God in Patristic literature see Hans Urs von Balthazar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*; Vol. V: *The Last Act* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), 216-223; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God* (Fortress Press, 1981), 21-25. Richard Creel, *Divine Impassibility* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005). Paul Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought* (oxford University Press, 2006); James Keating (ed) *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (Eerdmans, 2009).

[157] Lucien Richard, *A Kenotic Christology: In the Humanity of Jesus the Christ the Compassion of Our Lord* (University Press of America, 1982), 249-50.

[158] It is certainly was one of the major questions even before the Council of Nicea: the earliest strong pronunciation of the passibility of God can be found already in Melito of Sadis' (d. 180) *On Pascha.* P. Gavrilyuk argues that this text heavily influenced the later *Lentern Triodion* (Byzantine liturgical texts and hymnology). ("God's Impassible Suffering in the Flesh" in *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, 128-129). Another early text that deals with the issue of passibility is Gregory Thaumaturgus' (ca. 213 – ca. 270) *To Theopompus, On the Impassibility and Passibility of God.* See Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Ad Theopompum*, in *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus: Life and Works*, trans. M. Slusser (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998).

(382) held under Pope Damasius I, theologians distinguished two natures, and ascribed suffering to the human nature only and not to the divinity that was understood as impassible. Canon 166 reads: "If anyone says that in the passion of the cross it is God himself who felt the pain and not the flesh and the soul which is Christ, the Son of God, had taken to himself – the 'form of a servant' which he had accepted as Scripture says – he is mistaken."[159] This sharp division, with the attribution of a capacity to suffer to Christ and immutability to God the Father, gave birth to many heresies that continued to question Christ's passibility. Therefore, the Council of Ephesus (431) asserted radically: "If anyone does not confess that the Word of God suffered in the flesh, and was crucified in the flesh, and tasted death in the flesh, let that person be anathema." By that time, Augustine and Gregory Evagrius before him distinguished between *apatheia* and insensitivity - thus impassibility of God does not mean insensitivity or inability to suffer. [160] The following Council of Chalcedon (451) attempted to reconcile the two positions with the formulation that Jesus is "one person in two natures" and in this way to unite God's divine dignity and the passibility of Christ. Such a position first appears in Cyril of Alexandria's letters against Nestorians (who believed in impassibility of Christ); in the 3rd Letter he writes: "though being by his nature impassible, [Christ] suffered in the flesh for us, according to the Scriptures, and he was in the crucified

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[159] Cited in G. Emery, "The Immutability of the God of Love" in *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (ed. J.F. Keating and T.J. White), 29.
[160] *Civ*. 14. 8-9. Corrigan *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Routledge, 2009).

flesh impassibly making his own the suffering of his own flesh."[161] In this way, the Council of Chalcedon "corrected" the doctrine that was presented earlier during the Council of Rome. Leo the Great (at that time Pope) affirmed the paradoxical Christology of Chaledon: "The God who knows no suffering (*impassibilis Deus*) did not despise becoming a suffering man (*homo passibilis*)."[162] In this way, by the end of the 5th century the common understanding regarding the paradoxical passibility of Christ was set up both in Byzantine and Roman theological circles. But after the outburst of iconoclasm in Byzantium in the 8th century, the idea of the Incarnation and, thus, the humanity and passibility of Crist played a crucial role in the defense of icons. The dead, suffering and humiliated Christ became a representation of the doctrinal emphasis on Jesus' humanity.

Around the 11th-12th centuries there was an outburst of the new type of images that stress the suffering of Christ (*Christus patiens*).[163] In the 11th century Michael Psellos (1018-1070) a Byzantine monk in a sermon on crucifixion gives a valuable account describing this new iconography and the reaction to it. *Ekphrasis on the Crucifixion* is a traditional and ordinary sermon, except for the closing section that describes in details the pictorial representation of the dead Christ on the

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[161] Cyril of Alexandria *Ep. 3 Ad Nestorium* in E.R. Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954). See also M. Shepherd "Christology: A Central Problem of Early Christian Theology and Art" in Weitzman, *Age of Spirituality: A Symposium* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013).

[162] cit. in Emery, "The Immutability of the God of Love", 30.

[163] R. Hausherr, "Der Tote Christus am Kreuz. Zur Ikonographie des Gerokreuzes." Diss. Bonn 1963. Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian* Art (vol. 2*: The Passion of Jesus Christ* (New York Graphic Society, 1971); Richard Viladesau *The Beauty of the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Theology and the Arts from the Catacombs to the Eve of the Renaissance* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

cross.[164] Psellos describes the image as follows (par. 57-62): Christ is deadly pale, his eyes and mouth closed in death, his head is bent to the side, his arms unevenly extended, his belly sagging, his knees slackened towards the ground, his ribs visible beneath the skin, his hands and feet are bloody, his legs and torso disfigured by scourge marks and spittle, but his head is clean though wounded.[165] It is possible that Psellos refers to a crucifixion image similar to one found in the Hosios Loukas Monastery, which is considered the earliest known image of this new type [Fig. 7]. This early 11th century mosaic in Boetia depicts Christ as dead, with disfigured body that forms an innovative S-shape, clearly visible bleeding wounds, and surrounded by the grieving figures of Mary and John. Reading the *Ekphrasis* one gets a sense that the image is uncommon and rather scandalous for its viewers and, therefore, Psellos feels obliged to explain it. "I would not compare this image to any other," he writes and urges his audience not to stare at it for too long: "Lo, see the Lord himself crucified, but do not repeatedly desire to see him thus, nor in his tomb, but rather resurrected and taken up [into heaven]."[166]

Tracing the history of crucifixion images, Jensen suggests that the first images were a "by-product of the sensation caused by [the Empress] Helena's discovery of the True Cross and the subsequent pilgrimage traffic to the Holy Land."[167] During the reign of Helena's son – Constantine the Great, theology and liturgy placed a significant emphasis on the Passions. The cult of the veneration of

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[164] *Ekphrasis* from the Greek "description of a work of art, possibly imaginary, produced as a rhetorical exercise".
[165] Michael Psellos, "Ekphrasis" in Elizabeth Fisher, "Image and ekphrasis in Michael Psellos' sermon on the crucifixion," *Byzantinoslavica* 55, no. 1 (1994): 44-55.
[166] *Ibid*., 55.
[167] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 150.

the cross is attested in Constantinople, and in Jerusalem there were processions for commemorating Christ's suffering in liturgical celebrations at the historical sites of the Passion that attracted a lot of pilgrims[168]. However, as noted above, there are no images of crucifixion at this time: Christian art prefers to use symbolic images to talk about the Passions and the sacrificial death of Christ. But in 692 the Council in Trullo held under Justinian II in Constantinople asserted that these symbols must be replaced by images that show the humanity of Christ and "the full magnitude of God's humiliation in the Incarnation and Passion should be made visible."[169]

One can speculate that this new Church policy on images resulted in the proliferation of crucifixion images and soon led to the first Byzantine iconoclastic controversy (730-787). Even in the West there is evidence that proliferation of crucifixions caused some controversies even among Church officials. Thus, for example we have an outraged reaction to crucifixion images by Claudius of Turin (d.827), the bishop and a courtier of Louis the Pious, who, despite his attachment to Carolingian culture, supported the ideas of iconoclasm:[170]

> These practitioners of false religion and superstition [who defend the use of the cross] say: "It is for the sake of remembering our Savior that we accept and venerate and adore the cross painted and de-signed to honor him. But what pleases them about our Savior is nothing other than what pleased the nonbelievers [*impiis*]: that is, the disgrace of the passion and the degradation of death. They believe about Christ

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[168] Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel*, 50.
[169] Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages,* 102. The 82nd canon reads: "In order therefore that that which is perfect may be delineated to the eyes of all, at least in colored expression, we decree that the figure in human form of the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, Christ our God, be henceforth exhibited in images, instead of the ancient lamb, so that all may understand by means of it the depths of the humiliation of the Word of God, and that we may recall to our memory his conversation in the flesh, his passion and salutary death, and his redemption which was wrought for the whole world".
[170] The Second Byzantine iconoclasm occurred 814-842.

> the same as nonbelievers, whether Jews or pagans, who deny his resurrection, and cannot think of him except as suffering and dead; and they believe in him and hold him in their hearts permanently undergoing his passion, and they do not attend to or understand what the Apostle [Paul] says: "Even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know him this way."[171]

It is almost certain that the images that Claudius saw were crucifixions of an alive Christ whose eyes were open and body firm that were typical for Byzantine iconography after the first iconoclasm. As noted earlier, the alive Christ on the Cross was meant to demonstrate the triumph of Jesus over death, and simultaneously, to remind the viewer of the passibility and humanity of Christ. Celia Chazelle describing art in the ninth-century Carolingian Empire argues that this era "witnessed a surge in imagery of crucifixion, the first time in western Europe that this became a significant subject of artistic representation."[172] The most notable examples of Carolingian art's engagement with the Passion iconography are Hrabanus Maurus' (c. 780 – 856) collection of poems *De laudibus sanctae crucis* (a set of highly sophisticated poems that present the cross in word and image, and numbers) [Fig. 8] and the Utrecht Psalter (an illuminated psalter with a set of pen illustrations [Fig. 9]). Chazelle explains that the spread and variety of the artistic representations of the Passions during this period had been provoked by the diverse intellectual tradition that was established in the courts of Carolingian kings.[173]

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[171] Cited in Viladesau, The Beauty of the Cross, 63 [Claudius Taurinensis, *Apologeticum atque Rescriptum Claudii episcopi adversus Theutmirum Abbatem*, PL 105, 459-466, 461-462].

[172] Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 239.

[173] Thus, for example, in his correspondence, Alcuin claims that to attain heaven one needs to imitate Christ in pain, humility, love, and obedience. He urges his addressees to remember that Jesus' blood, that stands as a testimony to His sacrificial death, is a source of

However, despite all these developments, Claudius removed crosses and crucifixion images from churches subordinate to his episcopate causing concern both in the court of Louis the Pious and in Rome.[174] Several treatises were written against him to stress "the power present in the redeemer's humility, as revealed in the devil's defeat" and to remind everyone that "the crucifixion's glory is proven by Christ's command that the event be commemorated in mass and by the disciples' imitation of his suffering."[175]

In fact the later reaction of Psellos is only slightly different from that of Claudius. Psellos is also concerned that the new iconography showing the dead Christ could be misunderstood as an image of disgrace. Therefore, despite acknowledging that Christ shows the features of a dead human being, Psellos cannot resist tying the image back to the established tradition claiming that the observer needs to see Christ both dead and endowed with life: "gaze upon the dead as if endowed with life, for the clarity of the likeness takes the place of life for the body"[176]; "for [artistic] skill shrouds and what is disclosed is at once lacking of life and endowed with life"[177]; "the dead body in the picture, even that which in fact seems so lifeless, will appear endowed with life."[178] Although Psellos attempts to

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the vanishing of sin (Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era,* 26). The early Carolingian penitential literature also affirms the crucifixion's role "as an example of patience (in the sense both suffering and tolerance) and humility, which all the faithful (not only saints) should imitate" (*Ibid*., 25).

[174] Jean Wirth, L'image médiévale. Naissance et développements (VIe-XVe siècles) (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1989), 155-162.

[175] Chazelle, 120-128. This is particularly true for the treatises of Jonas of Orleans *De cultu imaginum*, Amalarius of Metz *Liber officialis* (chapter *Adoratio crucis*), and especially Dungal of Bobbio *Responsa contra perversas Claudii Tauronensis Episcopi sententias.*

[176] Michael Psellos, "Ekphrasis", 52.

[177] *Ibid*., 54.

[178] *Ibid*., 55.

interpret the new image through the old theological framework, it is apparent that he senses that such an image is dangerous and therefore urges the observers "not repeatedly desire to see him thus." Psellos' position is radically different from one that will soon flourish in the West in what is called the *devotional tradition*, where the observer will be invited to gaze at the image of the suffering Christ in order to stimulate a contemplative and compassionate state of mind.[179]

To understand this quick transformation in the reception of the new iconography that shows this Suffering Christ one needs to draw attention to the images of the Man of Sorrows (or *Imago Pietatis*) that flourished around the same time as the new type of crucifixion. The Man of Sorrows depicts the half-length figure of Christ with the visible wounds of the Passion, sorrowful, agonized and dead. It does not refer to any particular moment described in the New Testament. It is not a crucifixion; the Cross may even not be present; Christ is shown dead, but in an upright position. In earlier art-historical literature the spread of this *imago pietatis* was attributed to the image of the Man of Sorrows in the Santa Croce Church in Rome [Fig. 10]. The legend ascribed the cultic feature of this image to a vision of Gregory the Great during the Eucharist and argued that this icon had granted indulgences to those who venerated it. Ervin Panofsky, in his influential article on the *imago pietatis*, made a distinction between the image in the Santa Croce and images that stemmed from it: the former he attributed to the cultic image (*kultisches Repräsentationsbild*) and the later he identified as devotional images

[179] Thus, the outstretched arms of the dead Christ will be seen as open for embrace: Christ embraces the pious in Bernard's *Vita*; In Pseudo-Bonaventura such an embracet equals Christ's sacrifice: "O how intensely thou embrace me, good Jesus, when the blood went forth from thy heart…"

(*Andachtsbilder*).[180] If the cultic image was meant to be publicly venerated, then devotional images (that introduced secondary figures that were mourning the suffering and death of Christ) stimulated compassion and a specific state of mind.

However, this image has nothing to do with Gregory and was actually an icon produced in Byzantium around 1300. Hans Belting in *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages* shows that the icon of Santa Croce arrived in Italy no earlier than 1380 and by that time there were already examples of similar images. Developing (and "correcting") the ideas of Panofsky, Belting attempts to explain how the new image of the Man of Sorrow became a devotional private image in the West while being an icon (cultic image) in the East. Belting defines the devotional image as one that creates "the intersubjective relation between Jesus and the contemplating believer", "a religious dialogue that an individual or community conducts with a partner imagined in a particular way."[181] In a broader sense he sees devotion as a particular style of affective religiosity that "brought to existence an analogous style of contemplation of images. The images were expected to reciprocate the believer's mood, and, if possible, even to generate it."[182] Belting claims that these new type of affective reception of images can be seen already in the twelfth century, long before the icon of Santa Croce was installed in Rome. He cites Theodoricus, who around 1170 after conducting a pilgrimage to the Holy Land writes about an *imago Crucifixi*

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[180] Erwin Panofsky, "Imago Pietatis: Ein Beitrag zur Typengeshichten des 'Schmerzensmanns' und der 'Maria Mediatrix'" (Leipzig, 1927).
[181] Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, 3.
[182] *Ibid*., 58.

above the entrance to the Holy Sepulcher that was "painted in such a way that it imbued every beholder with deep remorse."[183]

In his major work, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages*, Belting does not go deeply into the genealogy of the *imago pietatis*, limiting himself to the statement that the Western devotional image of the Man of Sorrows resulted from the encounter with the Eastern cultural heritage whose relicts and images "opened new avenues of religious experience that contributed to the development of an affective religiosity."[184] But in one of his articles, he specifies that the new images appear in response to the initiation of the new rites and services for the Passion in the monasteries outside of Constantinople that varied their services from those of the Cathedral held in Hagia Sophia.[185] These innovative rites created new functions for icons since "the cross and the Crucifixion icon alone could no longer satisfy the requirements of the liturgy."[186]

Belting further argues that the transformation of the rites in Constantinople probably was a result of the Holy Land's piety that adopted new services for the Passion. This observation can be supported by the fact that the earliest known image of the Suffering Christ is to be found in the monastery of St. Catherine in

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[183] Cit. in Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, 6.
[184] *Ibid*., 7.
[185] Belting, "An image and its function in Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium" Dumbarton Oaks Papers 33/34 (1980): 1-16.
[186] Belting, *The Image and Its Public,* 103. To support his argument, Belting refers to Henry Maguire, who in his magisterial work *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* was able to show how particular theological texts influenced iconography in Byzantine monasteries and in particular how the poetic language of the ninth-century homily of George Nicomedia was transformed into affective images of the Lamentation, See Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

Mount Sinai [Fig. 11].[187] This icon that is now dated to the mid 8th century shows Christ crucified, his eyes closed and his head tilted slightly to one side. Merback notes that because of the first Crusades and pilgrimages, the Holy Land images were important inspirations for the incipient Western devotional art before the major impact of the Eastern tradition during the siege of Constantinople in 1204, when many relicts and icons were captured and exported to the West.

Explaining the specific form of the *imago pietatis*, Belting turns to the icon of King of Glory that became a prototype for the Western Man of Sorrows [Fig. 12]. The icon was not meant simply to display the suffering Christ, but aimed to convey a complex theological meaning to the observer. In this regard, Ridderbros writes: "The Man of Sorrows was the result of fusing into one image elements from the representation of the crucified Christ and the representation of the Pantocrator."[188] Therefore the King of Glory icon fuses features of the crucifixion (marks of the Passion) and the half-body form that refers to the typical image of Pantocrator. The metaphorical statement of *imago pietatis* thus must be read as following: "The image of crucified Christ is the image of the Pantocrator."[189] Bernhard Ridderbos notes that the usual inscription on the cross behind the Christ states: *Basileus tes doxes* (King of Glory), but traditional title for the icon was *Akra tapienosis* (Deepest Humiliation). When this icon was exported to the West it preserves its form, but acquired a new function of devotional image: "the icon, so to speak, transferred its

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[187] Kurt Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Moun Sinai: The Icons*, vol. 1: *From the Sixth to the Tenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1976).
[188] Bernhard Ridderbos, "Man of Sorrows: Pictorial Images and Metaphorical Statements," in A.A. MacDonald, *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture* (Groningen: John Benjamin Publishing, 1998): 143-182, 158.
[189] *Ibid*., 158

form to the devotional image, but that form lost the content that had been tied to it."[190]

In early Christian art, the Crown of Thorns – another important symbol of the Passion — is almost missing. It is possible that during this early period artists avoided depicting Christ crowned with the Crown of Thorns because it was initially meant to mock Him as a fake king. Scholars claim that the Crown of Thorns was not made of actual thorns (since it cannot be woven), but rather of some sort of plant that bears thorns on a stem or branch that are flexible for weaving, probably from the long thorns of the date-palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) or similar plant. The use of the thorns of this palm would allow the creation of a form with spines projecting upward from the headband that is intended as a caricature of the radiate crown worn by the Greek and Roman emperors as shown in coins.[191]

Surviving examples prior to the 13th century are extremely rare and usually uneven.[192] But in the High Medieval period and especially the Late Middle Ages, the Crown of Thorns became an important object: both as a relict and as a representation of Christ's suffering in the catalog of the instruments of the Passion (*Arma Chrisi*). It would seem *prima facie* that there must be a clear transition in the symbolism of the Crown of Thorns from mockery to suffering, but this idea is

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[190] Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, 42.
[191] J. Hart, "The Crown of Thorns in John 19:2-5" *JTS* 3, no.1 (1952): 66-75.
[192] The two often-mentioned early images where Christ wears the Crown of Thorns are: an image in ninth-century Utrecht Psaltar (MS 32, fol. 90; Uthrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit) and the above mentioned eighth-century icon from the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai where the head of Christ is crowned with a slender filet studded with three small stars, meant to depict the Crown of thorns (Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel*, 56).

misleading. Here we again face the discrepancy between literary sources and artistic media: both the Gospels and early Church fathers mention the Crown of Thorns and some of them clearly state that this object was not only an instrument of mockery but also of torture. Such an idea can be found already in Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – c. 215).[193] Commenting on the imposition of the Crown of Thorns as described in John 19:2, Augustine interprets it as following: "the kingdom which was not of this world overcame that proud world, not by the ferocity of fighting, but by the humility of suffering."[194]

Moreover, starting from the 5th century in literary sources there are references to a particular relic of the Crown of Thorns kept in Jerusalem and venerated by pilgrims.[195] Pauline of Nola in his letter to Macarius mentions "the thorns with which Our Savior was crowned" among other relics that are present in Jerusalem.[196] Cassiodorus at the end of the 6th century writes that in Jerusalem "we may behold the thorny crown, which was only set upon the head of Our Redeemer in order that all the thorns of the world might be gathered together and broken."[197] Similar testimonies can be found in the writing of pilgrims from the 5th to 9th century, but probably around 1063 the relict was transferred to Constantinople and was kept there until 1239 when Louis IX purchased it from Baldwin II, the monarch of the Latin Empire of Constantinople that was established after the siege of

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[193] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* II, 8.
[194] Augustine, "Tractate 116" in *Tractates on the Gospel of John* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 27-32.
[195] However, it is interesting thatat the end of the 4th century Jerome in his account of relics discovered by the Empress Helena in Jerusalem speaks only about the Cross, the Title, and the Nails, and is silent about either the Crown of Thorns or the Lance of Longinus.
[196] Pauline of Nola, PL, LXI, 407.
[197] Cassiodorus, PL, LXX, 621.

Constantinople by the Latins in 1204. Gauthier Cornut, Archbishop of Sens who was a participant in the ceremony, documented the translation of the relict to Paris. The whole process was solemn and festive and intended to emphasize the role of Louis as a devoted Christian King.

The pompous installation of the Crown of Thorns in San Marco[198] and later in Sainte-Chapelle (the Parisian chapel build by Louis IX to store Holy Land relics), explains the flourishing of images of Christ wearing the Crown of Thorns in the French and Italian regions in the middle of the 13th century. Another influential phenomenon that added to this new iconography that focuses on the suffering of Christ was the stigmata of Fransis of Assisi, his death in 1226, and canonization in 1228. Therefore, the region of Assisi – Umbria – gave rise to a new school that seems to be the first to adopt the Crown of Thorns on their painted crucifixes. The painted Crucifix (c. 1260) in San Francesco, Arezzo, by an unknown artist (possibly by the so-called Master of St Francis who worked in Umbria from 1260 to 1280) is one of the first explicit images of Christ wearing the Crown of Thorns [Fig. 13].[199] The Crucifix (one of the biggest known, almost 6 meters high) that shows the S-shaped dead Christ also features a smaller figure of Francis who is kissing the bleeding foot of Christ. The work of an Umbrian master of the second part of the 13th century, now in Cologne and similar to the Crucifix in San Francesco, shows Christ with the Crown of Thorns [Fig. 14].

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[198] However, because of complicated negotiations, the Crown of Thorns was first transported to Venice as security for a loan and was placed on display in the Church of San Marco; only after that did it arrive in Paris.

[199] Precisely because of this innovative feature (the Crown of Thorns) I doubt that the author of this Crucifix is the so-called Master of St Francis since not one of the painted crucifixes ascribed to him has such an element.

The Crucifix in San Francesco and works like it have been influenced by the Crucifixes of Giunta Pisano (c.1180 – c. 1258) who was one of the first innovative artist that made the images of *Christus patiens* popular in the West [Fig. 15]. Giunta was a painter from Pisa who worked for a long period in Umbria. Thus, his legacy is closely connected with the Franciscan order. In 1236 Elias, who succeeded Francis as head of the order, commissioned a panel cross for the new basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. "Significantly, Francis' followers did not choose to follow the model of the triumphant crucifix in Assisi's church of San Damiano [Fic. 16], whose smiling victorious Christ had spoken to Francis at the beginning of the mission. Instead, they erected an image in a new style, reminiscent of Byzantine icons: a portrayal of the dead Christ painted by Guinta Pisano."[200] The cross that Richard Viladesau is referring to was lost in the 17th century, but it is known that the cross depicted a dead S-shaped Christ and Elias praying at his feet. If we compare this cross to other preserved crucifixes made by Giunta (most famous of which is the Crucifix in San Domenico, Bologna [Fig. 15]), it is safe to assume that the image of the lost Crucifix shaded the same Byzantine-style iconography that shows the dead Christ, with a very distinct facial expression of pain and suffering, and usually with smaller images of the compassionate figures of Mary and John on the sides of the crucifix, that we already saw in Eastern images.

There is little doubt that Giunta Pisano, who grew up as an artist in Pisa, was influenced by the so-called Byzantine Master of the Crucifix of Pisa, who worked there during the first part of the 13th century [Fig. 17]. The most popular hypothesis

[200] Viladesau, *The Beauty of the Cross*, 87.

of the origin of this anonymous painter proposes that he was a Byzantine iconographer who had fled from Constantinople during the siege of 1204.[201] The Byzantine Master of the Crucifix became the first artist to adapt the traditional Eastern iconography of *Christus patiens* on the new Western media – the painted crucifixes (*croce dipinta*) that appeared in Italy in the early 12th century. Pisa quickly became the place that produced a new school of art: apart from Giunta Pisano, it is also worth mentioning Ugolino di Tedice [Fig. 18], who worked in Pisa in the last quarter of the 13th century and whose painted crucifixes, in their expressive and vivid depiction of suffering, perhaps excel even those of Cimabue.[202] Cimabue (ca. 1240 – ca. 1302) [Fig. 19, 20], originally a Florentine artist, spent much time in both Pisa and Umbria,[203] and is known widely because he became a teacher of Giotto.[204] With Giotto [Fig. 21] Byzantine iconography was completely reworked and integrated into Western art. Giotto developed the revolutionary iconography of the Pisan school and the Umbrian masters: his Christ breaks with the schematism and primitivism of the Byzantine iconography, opening up a path to the realistic depiction of the *Christus patiens*. He deletes all the accompanying scenes that were

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[201] V. N. Lazarev. "New light on the problem of the Pisan School," *The Burlington Magazine* 68 (1936): 61-68; Ferdinando Bologna. Early Italian Painting: Romanesque and Early Medieval Art (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1962), 92-93.
[202] M. Burresi, A. Caleco, *La Pittura Pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Editore Pacini, 2005).
[203] Cooper, Donal. 2005. "Cimabue and Painting at Pisa. Pisa". *The Burlington Magazine* 147 (1228): 513–15. Alfred Nicholson, *Cimabue, a Critical Study* Kennikat Press, 1972).
[204] In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante laments Cimabue's quick loss of public interest in the face of Giotto's revolution in art: "O vanity of human powers, / how briefly lasts the crowning green of glory, /unless an age of darkness follows! / In painting Cimabue thought he held the field / but now it's Giotto has the cry, /so that the other's fame is dimmed." (Purg. XI, 91-95).

typical of the *croce dipinta* leaving the crucifix minimalistic and expressive, forcing the observer to focus on the main figures: Christ, Mary, and John.

During the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries the Man of Sorrows was appropriated in the West as an Italian invention due to the apocryphal story of the Mass of St. Gregory. Hans Belting was a pioneer in showing the development of this image in the West and its ties with the Byzantine image of the King of Glory that was an antecedent to it. Resent scholarship avoids using concepts of "precedence" or "influence" and instead refers to the process of sharing and exchange as "reception" in order to stress a cultural pluralism in the formation of the new iconography. Moreover, although rare but essential examples of the Suffering Christ can be found in the West prior to 1204, the *Christus Patiens* is known to Italy and Northern Europe at least from the 10th century.[205]

The transformation in piety that happened in the West during the late 11th – early 14th centuries was formed by the new devotional tradition that not only drastically changes iconography, but also introduced fresh theological interpretations that in turn changed people's sensibility. As Gertrud Schiller puts it: "A Christian of the Late Middle Ages sought union with Christ by following in his footsteps along the way of the Passions. To follow him thus […] meant at that time to 'imitate' (*imitatio*) or to share the suffering (*compassio*) of Christ."[206] If the earliest crucifixion images were meant to commemorate a pilgrim's journey to the place

[205] The Passion window in Chartres (ca. 1134-1150), the Crucifixion from the Gospels of Countess Judith (ca. 1050-60), and the Gero crucifix at Cologne (c. 970) are among the most well known examples.
[206] Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art,* II, 197.

where the Passion had occurred, with the spread of the new devotional tradition the pilgrimage became an interior journey; the contemplation of the crucifixion was no longer an appeal to memory, but an invitation to the viewer's current state. There is a clear transformation: from history to the present. Christ offers himself as recipient of a lament that "was no longer a part of a biblical situation, but instead took place in the present within a Byzantine church."[207]

3.2 Devotional Literature and the New Sensibility

In the descriptions of the Passions even in the late eleventh century it is still possible to read of Christ's "*candet nudatum pectus*" – ivory naked breast – a description that is typical for the older tradition that perceived the death of Christ rather as a metaphor than an actual brutal execution.[208] That earlier tradition attempted to downplay the aspects of suffering and focused on the triumph of the resurrection; it presented the death on the cross as a sleep from which Christ awakes into eternal glory.[209] But already in the same period another type of narrative that stresses the physicality of the torments endured by Christ is

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[207] Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages*, 105

[208] In John of Fecamp's (d. 1078) *Meditationes* that in the High and Later Middle Ages were ascribed to either Augustine or Dernard. See Dronke *The Medieval Lyric* (Boydell & Brewer, 1996), 65-67.

[209] Augustine develops this influential interpretation while commenting on the Psalm's line "for he grants sleep to those he loves." (Psalm 127:2) Augustine reads it as a prefiguration of Christ's crucifixion; he writes: "But where did He sleep? On the Cross. When He slept on the Cross, He bore a sign, yea, He fulfilled what had been signified in Adam: for when Adam was asleep, a rib was drawn from him and Eve was created; so also while the Lord slept on the Cross, His side was transfixed with a spear, and the Sacraments flowed forth, whence the Church was born. For the Church the Lord's Bride was created from His side, as Eve was created from the side of Adam." (*Enarr. in Ps.* CXXVII, 4) Augusine of Hippo, "The Expositions On the Psalms," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* 8:607.

beginning to emerge. This new turn is usually associated with the impact of Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109), but he had lesser known predecessors in the eleventh century in the Benedictine monasteries of northwestern Europe.

This new tradition – known as devotional literature – became the most popular literary genre of the High and Later Middle Ages. Thomas Bestul emphasized that devotional writings are "important element of western European culture" and as such they are still understudied in proportion to their great influence.[210] The core of this genre constitutes affective meditations on the Passions – "richly emotional, script-like texts that ask their reader to imagine themselves present at scenes of Christ's suffering and to perform compassion for the suffering victim in a private drama of the heart."[211] In these texts the narrator leads the reader through the events of the Passion, usually significantly modified compared to the canonical biblical accounts, by adding detailed and graphic description of Christ's sufferings. Through such modifications this devotional literature presents alternatives to the brief account of the Passions in the Bible and "challenge[s] the hegemony of the scholastic method and its official monopoly on biblical interpretation." [212]

The development of the devotional literature was accompanied by a change in sensibility – the long twelfth century as a period of rising individualism witnessed

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[210] Thomas Bestul, *Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 7.
[211] Sarah McNammer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval* Compassion (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 1.
[212] Thomas Bestul, *Texts of the Passion*, 18.

new forms of feelings.[213] In contrast to the stoic ideals of the late Roman Empire and early Middle Ages that cultivated *apátheia* - insensibility, freedom from emotion, the High Middle Ages appears as an outburst of feelings. The writers and artists of that period were busy searching for appropriate expressions of this new sensibility where tears and blood became one of the most common topics in letters and paintings.[214] Therefore, there is a disagreement between scholars whether the devotional literature initiated these changes or was simply a result of them.

Richard Southern argues that these affective texts were rather consequences of the changes in sensibility: "It is possible that the pioneers of medieval spirituality in the eleventh century did not so much initiate, as give way to a prevailing sentiment of pity and tenderness, which they interpreted and expressed in art and letter."[215] He asserts that uneducated people knew nothing about the complex theory of redemption, which is foundational for the affects of devotional literature, but expressed pity for a god who was disgraced and humiliated and, thus, the simple faith of the illiterate impacted the new genre, but did not create it.

Sarah McNamer, on the contrary, argues that the great popularity of these texts was not in their aesthetic value but rather in their specific function "to teach their readers, through iterative affective performance, how to feel."[216] Following Foucault, she states that feelings have a history and that emotions are products of

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[213] See McNamer, *Affective Meditation* and Rachel Fulton*, From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary* (Columbia University Press, 2003).
[214] See Susan Broomhall, *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder* (Routledge, 2016); Elina Gertsman, *Crying in the Middle Ages: Tears and History* (Routledge, 2011).
[215] Richard Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (Yale University Press, 1970), 256.
[216] McNammer, *Affective Meditation*, 2.

discourse. Opposing the idea that emotions cannot be taught (as asserted by the neuroscientists), McNamer claims that emotions can "be willed, faked, performed through the repetition of scripted words."[217] In this way, McNamer argues, affective meditations of the High and Late Middle Ages brought the emotions associated with compassion into being.

I do not see Southern's and McNamer's positions as mutually exclusive; I find persuasive the view of Thomas Bestul, who argues that the relation between the changing sentimentality and devotional literature is best described as mutual influence rather than a simple schema where one phenomenon triggers another. Adopting the ideas of Paul Zuthmor, Bestul argues that on the one hand, devotional texts as "active and powerful agents" are not determined by the cultural context, but rather actively shape it; but on the other hand, they also cannot be separated from that context as they do not stand outside history. "Texts are products of social processes, and at the same time have the capacity both to articulate and transform social attitudes and religious values."[218] From such a perspective, devotional literature contributed to the formation of values, emotions, and beliefs of medieval people while also they are also an integral part of current ideology.

These affective meditations produce emotional responses in readers through the contemplation of the scenes of the Passions – the text creates a narrative that aims at constructing the imaginary presence of a reader at the very scene of crucifixion. This construction relays a suggestive, emotional narrative that provides a detailed account of events. Where did these details come from? They are not

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[217] *Ibid*., 13.
[218] Bestul, *Text of Passions*, 20.

simply fantasies of the authors – most of the material is taken from older sources. Devotional literature draws its inspiration from non-canonical gospels, homilies and sermons, poems and liturgy. These creative borrowings show that affective meditation sees itself not as a radical innovative genre (as is perceived by contemporary scholars), but rather as a development of an already established tradition. Also references to the earlier texts aim at establishing the text's credibility – it is not just an author's fantasies, but an account assembled from time-proven sources. It is interesting that the early affective meditations of Anselm very soon became referential themselves – they were imitated and new works circulated under his name.

The important early source for the development of the passion narratives in the devotional literature is *The Gospel of Nicodemus* – an apocryphal gospel of the late 4th century that includes an elaborate description of events occurring from the moment of Christ's death to his burial.[219] The Church Fathers in their commentaries and exegeses also randomly elaborated on the scene of the passion. Especially important texts in this context are Augustine's *Tractatus in Iohannem*, Jerome's commentary on Matthew, and Gregory's *Homilia in Evangelia*.[220] In the High Middle Ages Peter Comestor' s (d. 1179) *Historia scholastica* greatly influenced the development of devotional literature. In his work Comestor pays attention to the imposition of the crown of thorns - he specifies that the crown was made up of sea-rushes ('*juncos marinos'*), comments upon how piercing were its thorns, and gives

[219] "The Gospel of Nicodemus" in Bart Ehrman, *The Apocryphal Gospels: Texts and Translations* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 419-464.
[220] Bestul, *Text of Passions*, 30.

the reader information that the column of the scourging still shows signs of Christ's gore. This accent on blood became very popular in the latter Middle Ages, but already in Comestor one can read that the thorns drew gore from Christ's head adding to the gore on his scourged back and the bloody sweat from the garden of Gethsemane. Comestor notes that because Christ's back, hands, feet, and also his clothing, were covered with blood, He resembled the man from Edom with red-dyed garments from Isaiah (63:1-2). This association became one of the most cited in the devotional literature.[221]

Although the *History* elaborates on the details of the Passions, it is not a devotional text *per se* – it was meant as a historical book for students. Comestor was one of the most learned intellectuals in France, a professor and a church official, and theobject of his work was not to stimulate a "drama of the heart" but to provide the fullest possible account of the events. To sense the difference that devotional literature brought into the narration of the Passion, it is revealing to compare Comestor's account with the text of his contemporary Aelred of Rivaux (1110 – 1167) – a monk and abbot. Describing Christ's crucifixion he not only dwells on details, but invites the reader to participate in the scene.

> Hasten, linger not, eat the honeycomb with your honey, drink your wine with your milk. The blood is changed into wine to gladden you, the water into ilk to nourish you. From the rock streams have flowed for you, wounds have been made in his limbs, holes in the wall of his body, in which, like a dove, you may hide while you kiss them one by one. Your lips, stained with his blood, will become like a scarlet ribbon and your word sweet.[222]

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[221] Bestul, *Text of Passions,* 31.

[222] *De Instit*. 31. *Opera omnia* 1:671 (cit. in Caroline Bynum *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Univrsity of California Press, 1984), 123.

In Aelred's fragment the language is ornamented with biblical imagery; he uses rich symbols and poetic metaphors from the Psalms and Song of Songs. In presenting Christ's suffering body, the author simultaneously calls for a tactile involvement with it. The Passions are presented not as a repulsive and cruel execution, but as an act in which the wounded body of Christ becomes a source of nourishment for the observer.

Despite the fact thatthere were earlier authors in whom it is possible to trace the rudiments of such affective meditation, the beginning of this genre is traditionally associated with the works of Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109). The major contribution on this perspective was made by an outstanding medievalist, Richard Southern, who describes the changes introduced by this author to the spiritualty of Middle Ages as an "Anselmian revolution."[223] Anselm's prayers and meditations enjoyed a great popularity in his time, but were also admired in later centuries; evidence for this can be found not only in the great number of preserved manuscripts all over Europe, but in the fact that they were imitated by other authors who ascribed their works to Anselm. A great number of non-anselmian texts circulated in the Later Middle ages under his name and only at the beginning of the 20th century was Andre Wilmart able to distinguish which among them are original writings of Anselm.[224] However, Southern argues that these imitations did not harm the original texts, but on the contrary "were largely responsible for their popularity,

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[223] Richard Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought 1059-c.1130* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 100.
[224] André Wilmar, *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen âge latin: études d'histoire littéraire* (Études Augustiniennes, 1971).

for they preserve Anselm's style of devotion in a form easier to digest than the genuine articles."[225]

The conventional history of affective meditations begins in 1081 when Adelaide, a daughter of William of Conqueror, asked Anselm to send her a selection of psalms for her private use. She practiced the emerging lay religiosity, living a secluded life without being a nun. By that time the Psalter was an established book for devotional reading. Already in the Carolingian period Alcuin instructed Charlemagne: "In the Psalms, if you look carefully, you will find an intimacy of prayer, such as you never have discovered without their help: you will find words for an intimate confession of you sins, and for a perfect supplication of the divine mercy. In the Psalms, too, you will find thanksgiving for all that befalls you. In the Psalms you confess your weakness and misery, and thereby call down God's mercy upon you"[226] Therefore, it was natural for Adelaide to ask Anselm whom she perceived as a spiritual guide to send her a collection that would best suit her purposes.

In response, Anselm not only sent her a selection of Psalms, but supplemented it with 6 prayers and one meditation. In the cover letter, he explains the purpose of these texts – they are called to provoke certain feelings and intend for introspection: "to stir up the mind of the reader to love or fear of God, or to self-examination." [227] To achieve this effect Anselm provides instructions for the way

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[225] Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer*, 91.
[226] *PL* 101, col 465-6. Cit in Richard Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer,* 39.
[227] (ad excitandam legentis mentem ad dei amorem vel timorem, seu ad suimet discussionem). They Anselm, *Orationes*, in *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, 5 vols. (Stuttgart: Friedrich Fromann Verlag, 1984, reprint, Edinburgh: Thomas

they should be read: "not in a turmoil, but quietly, not skimmed or hurried through, but taken a little at a time, with deep and thoughtful meditation."[228]Analyzing these introductory remarks, Fulton argues that such an approach already shows the novelty of Anselm's writings. Comparing these remarks with the instructions attached to the earlier meditations by John of Fecamp written at the request of Empress Agnes, the wife of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry III, Fulton writes: "Whereas John warned Agnes not to take up the prayers unless moved by celestial desire, "tears and exceedingly great devotion," Anselm recommended his works to the reader specifically in order to excite such devotion. They were intended, in other words, to be a starting point for compunction and fear, to which the reader might turn in moments of spiritual dryness rather than primarily as a solace for when such emotions arose."[229]

In the course of the next couple of decades, Anselm developed and edited his prayers and meditations until they got their final shape in 1104. That year Anselm sent his collection to Mathilda of Tuscany. By this time the prayers and meditations had become popular and various versions of these works circulated around Normandy and Germany on their own as separate works. Therefore, when Anselm sent his collection to Mathilda – it was not an addition to a selection of Psalms as it was for Adelaide, but an organized collection of authorized texts that formed a

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Nelson & Sons, 1940-1961), vol. III, 3. (Hereafter referred to as "*Ora.*, with the number of the prayer and the volume, page and line numbers in Schmidt's edition).

[228] Anselm, *Epistola*, appended as preface to the collection of prayers sent to Matilda (ed. F. S. Schmitt, S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia, 6 vols. [Edinburgh, 1946-61], 3:4; trans. Benedicta Ward, *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm, with the Proslogion* (Harmondswort., 1979), 90.

[229] Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, 173.

comprehensive work. As a collection, these text set a "new standard of intensity of expression" and became Anselm's most significant and widely read works. It should be noted that before the 12th century, meditations were predominately a monastic exercise, but the emerging lay religiosity sought for a new discourse that would comfort its spiritual needs and the successful response to these needs explains the popularity of Anselm's writings. His meditations were not full of quotations from the Bible or the Church Fathers (as were the meditations of his predecessors); they were written in a language understandable for everyone; his meditations were not liturgical prayers, as were earlier devotional texts, "but a personal prayer whichch has its roots in the liturgy."[230]

In on of the latest texts of the collection, the *Prayer to Christ*, Anselm produced a discourse that appeals to the emerging novel sensibility.[231] The prayer presents a passionate lament for the inability to see Christ in flesh. Anselm invites the reader to imagine the scene of the crucifixion and to dwell on the details of the Passion. He invokes *arma christi* the instruments of the Passion - nails and spear to focus the reader's attention on the wounds and sufferings of Christ, but also on the grief of Mary stressed through hyperbolic description of her tears. All these patterns will be taken up by later authors and become an integral part of the genre of affective meditations.

The Prayer to Christ begins with a statement of utmost need:

My Lord and my Creator,
You bear with me and nourish me –
Be my helper

[230] Anselm, *Prayers and Meditations*, 32.
[231] It is first found in the collection sent to Countess Mathilda in 1104.

I thirst for you, I hunger for you, I desire you,
I sigh for you, I covet you:
I am like an orphan deprived of the presence
Of a very kind father…[232]

The language that Anselm uses here is highly emotional – the need to see Christ is rendered through physical, bodily experience of hunger and thirst. The absence of Christ in the life of prayer is compared to an orphanage and the missing of "a very kind father." But immediately the memory of Christ invokes his Passions. The prayer regrets that he/she is not mindful of it as he/she should be:

So, as much as I can, though not as much as I ought,
I am mindful of your passion,
Your buffeting, your scourging, your cross, your wounds[233]

The need to see Christ, to enjoy his presence, thus, has nothing to do with any egoistic desire of comfort. The absence of Christ signifies his death for the sins of every human and, thus, the remembrance of his Passions is an acknowledgment of what had been achieved by them. The remembrance of the Passions is the only possible form of appreciation of Christ's act, but it is always an insufficient and inadequate satisfaction for that self-sacrifice. Therefore, the prayer regrets that he/she was not present at the scene of crucifixion as if in seeing how painful and humiliating was Christ's death this would made it impossible for the reader to forget it:

Why, O my soul, you were not there
To be pierced by a sword of bitter sorrow

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[232] Domine meus, creator meus, tolerator et nutritor meus, esto adiutor meus. Te sitio, te esurio, te desidero, ad te suspiro, te concupisco. Et sicut pupillus benignissimi patris orbatus praesentia… (*Ora.* II, 54-59; *Prayers and Meditations,* 94-5)

[233] sic et ego non quantum debeo, sed quantum queo, memor passionis tuae, memor alaparum tuarum, memor flagellorum, memor crucis, memor vulnerum tuorum, (*Ora.* II, 62-64; *Prayers and Meditations,* 95).

When you could not bear to see
The nails violate the hands and feet of your Creator?
Why did you not see with horror
The blood that poured out of the side of your Redeemer?[234]

Although Anselm uses a narrative technique that is called "composition of place" that emerged earlier and reached its climax in Franciscan accounts, he does not simply reconstruct scenes of the Passion, but does this in order to evoke certain emotional responses in the reader. Therefore, the desire to see the crucifixion is at the same time presented as a desire to share Christ's suffering. This suffering-together (com-passion) constitutes the core of the sensibility of these affective meditations. To assist him in stimulating the feeling of compassion, Anselm introduces the figure of Mary. "The chief purpose of the work is to move the reader to an emotional response to the human suffering of Christ, but perhaps more importantly to stimulate feeling of compassion for the predicament of Mary as a witness to the torture of her own son."[235] Later meditations increasingly emphasized Mary's participation in the Passion and portrayed her as a fellow-sufferer with Christ in order to present her as a compassionate mother. When the text turns to Mary it immediately focuses on the pitiful condition of the Virgin that is expressed through the hyperbolized description of her crying:

My most merciful Lady,
What can I say about the fountains
That flowed from your most pure eyes
When you saw your only Son before you,
Bound, beaten, and hurt?

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[234] Cur, o anima mea, te praesentem non transfixit gladius doloris acu- tissimi, cum ferre non posses vulnerari Iancea latus tui salvatoris ? Cum vi- dere nequires violari clavis manus et pedes tui plasmatoris ? Cum horreres effundi sanguinem tui redemptoris? Ora II, 79-86; ibid).
[235] Bestul, *Text of the Passion*, 53.

> What do I know of the flood
> That drenched your matchless face.
> When you behold your Son, our Lord, and your God,
> Stretched on the cross without gilt,
> When the flesh of your flesh
> Was cruelly butchered by wicked men?[236]

Reading this fragment, Fulton draws attention to the major change in the representation of Mary. Comparing Anselm's description of Mary's reactions during the Passion to the 4-th century account presented by Ambrose, Fulton demonstrates how Mary turns into a model of the compassionate motherwho undergoes the death of her son with deep emotions in contrast to earlier representation where she appears as a stoic and impassionate figure. Where Anselm writes of "fountain of tears," Ambrose wrote:

> The mother stood before the cross, and while the men were fleeing, she stood undaunted…. She looked with pious eyes on the wounds of the son, through whom she knew redemption was to be for all…. Holy Mary stood next to the cross of her Son, and the Virgin looked upon the passion of her only child – I read that she was standing, I do not read that she was weeping.[237]

The figure of Mary was often used in prayers before Anselm. However, in these earlier prayers she was rather an addressee of the penitent sinner; the prayer perceived her as a kind of advocate for the sinner who dared to appeal to the mighty and judging god. In Anselm's writing she is not only a figure who is compassionate to the appealing sinner, but she "herself became an object of compassion, her tears a stimulus for thinking on her own pain – much as the tears of those praying to her

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[236] Domina mea misericordissima, quos fontes dicam erupisse de pudicissimis oculis, cum attenderes unicum filium tuum innocentem coram te ligari, flagellari, mactari? Quos fluctus credam perfudisse piissimum vultum, cum suspiceres eundem filium et deum et dominum tuum in cruce sine culpa extendi et carnem de carne tua ab impiis crudeliter dissecari? (*Ora.* II, 92-101; *Prayers and Meditations*, 96).

[237] Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, 206.

had hither to been (and still were) intended as a stimulus for turning her attention to them and their pain."[238] Fulton notices that the changes in the imagery of Mary run parallel to the changes in the image of Christ. The translation of the almighty Judge into the suffering man in Anselm's writings is doubled by the transformation of the queenly Mary into the grieving Mother. The major social impact these transformations accomplished, then, is that praying to the Virgin and her crucified Son "forced medieval Christians to forge new tools with which to feel."[239]

The stress on the suffering Christ and his grieving mother in Anselm's writing calls for explanation. Where does it come from? Why did Anselm choose to alter traditional prayers and meditations in the way he did? The answer, perhaps, lies in the historical circumstances of Anselm's life. When he became a Benedictine monk at Bec, the abbot there happened to be Lanfranc – a famous theologian who made the abbey one of the intellectual centers of the Anglo-Norman world in the 11th century. Lanfranc was an important figure in one of the most influential debates of the High Middle Ages – the Berengar controversy over the Eucharist.[240] It was Lanfranc who confronted the views of Berengar and acquired the condemnation of his views by Church officials.[241]

Berengar advocated a spiritual view of the Eucharist in which the bread and wine are simply figurative representations of Christ's body and blood and serve only

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[238] *Ibid*., 204.
[239] *Ibid*.,197.
[240] See Charles Radding ,*Theology, Rhetoric, and Politics in the Eucharistic Controversy, 1078-1079: Alberic of Monte Cassino Against Berengar of Tours* (Columbia University Press, 2003); Miri Rubin *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), esp. capter "Designing and Eucharist: New Ideas and Procedures in the Mass Fromm c.1000," 12-82.
[241] Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk, Archbishop* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

as a remembrance of him. This view threatened the Church's doctrine of the real presence according to which the bread and wine of the Eucharist *are truly* Christ's body and blood. During the debate Lafranc for the first time attempted to provide a systematic view of how precisely Christ is present in Eucharist – and developed the idea of *transubstantition* (that was finalized later by Aquinas and became an official doctrine of the Catholic Church) according to which during the sacrament of the Eucharist there occurs a change of substance, and the bread and wine are actually transformed into the real body and blood of Christ.

The stress on the reality of Christ's blood and body in the Eucharist and the simultaneous rise of the importance of this sacrament for the Roman Church brought to the fore the image of the tortured and dying Christ. Prior to the 11th century, the main sacrament was baptism, but starting from the Berengar controversy the Eucharist became the primary one. Southern notes that Anselm had never written on the issue of the Eucharist perhaps because he considered the matter to be closed by his teacher – Lafranc. However, Lafranc's vision of the Eucharist had a great impact on Anselm and his stress on the suffering Christ stems from the new understanding of the Eucharist. Anselm's writings "whether or not consciously intended as such [were] in fact an explanation of the contemporaneous liturgical development: the exaltation of the sacrament of the Eucharist as the primary Christian sacrament and the interpretation of the Eucharist as an experience of the real presence of the crucified Christ."[242] That Christ had to die in

[242] Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Harvard University Press, 1983), 177.

the humiliating and degrading way He did in order to save mankind made a profound impression on Anselm.

Apart from these passionate meditations, Anselm wrote longer theological treatises that are strictly logical with no trace of the affectivity inherent to his prayers. In these works Anselm appears as a thoughtful thinker who "put[s] aside all authority of scripture, and by reason alone" attempts to solve theological issues. The most important of these works are *Proslogion* (Discourse) that present an ontological argument for the existence of God, and *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God became Man) that explains the incarnation of Christ through a new theory of atonement. This theory – usually referred to as the "satisfaction theory of atonement" argues that Adam's sin offended God's honor and dignity and could not be satisfied by humans; it therefore required the sacrifice of the God-man, Jesus Christ. The logic of Anselm's atonement is based on the believe that the satisfaction due to God was greater than humans are capable of giving, since they can only do what is already required of them. Therefore, paradoxically God, out of his love and mercy for humanity, had to make satisfaction for himself. However, this satisfaction still had to be on behalf of humans themselves. For this reason only a God-man could satisfy God and give him the honor that is due him. Despite the fact that *Cur Deus Homo* presents itself as an answer to the issue of Incarnation – the main argument is that of atonement and, thus, the question of the death of Christ.

In autumn 1092 Anselm spent a few months in Westminster where at the same time Gilbert Crespin was engaged in a new controversy about the Incarnation with some learned Jew who had arrived from Mainz. The Jew posed a pressing

question: "How can the Incarnation, with all its indignity of human misery, insult, and shameful death, be reconciled with God's supreme dignity and unchangeable stability?" Gilbert Crespin came to Anselm to help him to come up with an adequate answer. [243] Southern also notes that such an answer was required and urgent "at a time when Christian art and piety were beginning to emphasize and make explicit with unprecedented realism the indignities and sufferings of Christ."[244] Moreover, as these changes in spirituality at least partly were triggered by Anselm's writings, his engagement in writing an elaborate treatise that would rationally explain why Christ had to die on the cross seems consistent.

Gustaf Aulen, a Swedish theologian of the beginning of the 20th century, showed that Anselm's theory repressed an earlier idea of atonement which was very different: at the center of the earlier theory was a Divine conflict and victory; "Christ – Christus Victor – fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the "tyrants" under which mankind is in bondage, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself."[245] Aulen argues that such an idea can be found both in the New Testament and the Church Fathers, but ever since Anselm formulated the satisfaction theory, this earlier idea somehow lost its attractiveness: "The triumph-crucifix of an earlier period is now ousted by the crucifix which depicts the human sufferer."[246] For the Church Fathers and later for the Eastern Church the crucifixion had no significance apart from the resurrection. The Atonement was connected to the resurrection – Christ triumphs over sin and death in his resurrection and this is

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[243] Southern *Saint Anselm and his Biographer,* 198-9.
[244] *Ibid*., 200.
[245] Aulen, *Christus Victor*, 20.
[246] Ibid., 137.

what was celebrated in the early liturgy. But "in the Roman Catholic theology of St. Anselm, on the other hand, and in the Roman Catholic liturgy of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, *redemption was identified chiefly with the crucifixion*."[247]

The ideas that were fully developed in the *Cur Deus Homo* were also a integral part of Anselm's devotional writings; a meditation that perhaps was written at the same time – *Meditation on Human Redemption* attests to this.[248] This work is unique in combining both discourses – rational consideration of the theological issue and an affective, emotional response to it. In this meditation Anselm asserts that it is impossible to enjoy salvation if one knows its price – namely, the horrifying death of the beloved Christ. If one is mindful of the price of human salvation it makes it impossible to celebrate it; instead one is bound to side with Christ and share His suffering: "How can I rejoice in my salvation, which would not be without your sorrows? How can I enjoy life which meant your death? […] Thus, I must condemn their cruelty, imitate your death and suffering, and share them with you, giving thanks for the goodness of your love."[249] Later in the meditation Anselm stresses the paradox of the dying god: his death is not a sign of weakness, but of strength. Undergoing this humiliating and insulting death, Christ is saving humanity. Therefore, Anselm claims that the cross reveals the hidden strength of Christ:

> Where is the strength of Christ? 'Horns are in his hands, there is his strength hid.' Indeed horns are in his hands, because his hands were nailed to the arms of the cross. But what strength is there in such weakness, what height in such lowliness? What is there to be venerated in such abjection? Surely something is hidden by this

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[247] Bertman, *Law and Revolution*, 178.
[248] The Meditation was probably composed in 1098 at monastery in southern Italy where the Cur Deus Homo was completed.
[249] Anselm, *Ora* II 175-186; *Prayers and Meditations*, 235.

> weakness, something is concealed by this humility. There is something mysterious in this abjection. O hidden strength: a man hangs on a cross and lifts the load of eternal death from human race; a man nailed to wood looses the bonds of everlasting death that hold fast the world. O hidden power: a man condemned with thieves saves men condemned with devils, a man stretched out on the gibbet draws all men to himself. O mysterious strength: one soul coming forth from torment draws countless souls with him out of hell, a man submits to the death of body and destroys the death of soul.[250]

Anselm mourns the cruel crucifixion and invites the reader to imitate the suffering associated with it precisely because of the comprehension of what was accomplished by Christ through such a death. Therefore, the atonement that is tied to crucifixion is an implicit foundation for Anselm's affective meditations. This crucifixion-centered atonement, in turn, is rooted in the understanding of the Eucharist as a sacrament that invokes the real presence of the blood and body of Christ in the bread and wine.

Anselm's theory of atonement and his prayers and meditations, as well as other various forms of devotion to the Passion inspired by them, nourished a sacrificial reading of the death of Christ wherein Christ was no longer seen as *Victor,* but rather reimagined as *Victima.* There is an enormous difference in the language that Anselm and his imitators use in describing the Passions and the earlier

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[250] Ubi est haec virtus Christi? Utique "comua in manibus eius; ibi abscondita est fortitudo eius." Cornua quidem in manibus eius, quia brachiis crucis confixae sunt manus eius. Quae autem fortitudo in tanta infirmitate? Quae altitudo in tanta humilitate? Quid venerabile in tanto contemptu? Sed certe ideo absconditum, quia in infirmitate; ideo celatum, quia in humilitate; ideo occultum, quia in contemptu. O fortitudo abscondita: hominem in cruce pendentem suspendere mortem aeternam genus humanum prementem; hominem ligno confixum diffigere mundum perpetuae morti affixum! O celata potestas: hominem damnatum cum latronibus salvare homines damnatos cum daemonibus; hominem in patibulo extensum omnia trahere ad se ipsum! O virtus occulta: unam animam emissam in tormento innumerabiles extrahere de inferno; hominem mortem corporis suscipere et animarum mortem perimere! (*Meditatio Redemptionis Humanae* 19-33; *Prayers and Meditations*, 230-1)

accounts in the patristic literature. Compare Anselm's "explanation" of the death of Christ with that of the Greek Church Father Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335-c.395): according to Gregory, the Devil "chooses [Christ] as a ransom for those who were shut up in the prison of death."[251] Then Gregory explains that the Devil was deceived by the humanity of Christ: he depicts Devil as a hungry fish who is caught on the hook of Christ's deity when he attempted to bait Christ's flesh. By this trick, God was able to redeem humanity:

> [I]n order to secure that the ransom on our behalf might be easily accepted by him who required it, the Deity was hidden under the veil of our nature, that so, as with ravenous fish, the hook of the Deity might be gulped down along with the bait of flesh, and thus, life being introduced into the house of death, and light shining in darkness, that which is diametrically opposed to light and life might vanish; for it is not in the nature of darkness to remain when light is present, or of death to exist when life is active.[252]

Gregory's language is rigorous and precise – the form mirrors the content – the death of Christ is described in a purely technical manner that is compared to the process of fishing. The Crucifixion is presented not as suffering on the Cross, but as a cunning device to deceive the Devil. In fact, the death of Christ is not even mentioned. On the other hand, Anselm and his imitators focus attention on the moments where Christ is in pain. For them the whole sacrificial framework becomes only a platform out of which he can speak about suffering and emotions of grief, sorrow, and cowardliness. In other words, if early texts were interested in *why*

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[251] Gregory of Nyssa *Cat*. XXIII. *The Great Catechism*, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series, ed. Philip Shaff and Henry Wace (1893., repr, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 5:493.
[252] *Cat*. XXIV. *Ibid*., 494.

Christ endured Passion, then later texts were concerned more with the question *how*.[253]

In the context of a new piety that was formed by such devotional literature, texts that affectively described the death of Christ flourished. In particular, this feature became a popular motif in sermons, and especially in songs. The emerging Crusading culture employed the theme of the Passion in order to remind faithful Christians about their duty to defend the Holy Land:

> He who was put on the cross for us
> Did not love us with a simulated love.
> He loved us like the finest friend
> And loving for us
> Carried with so much anguish
> The holy cross very gently
> Between his arms, before his breast,
> Like a gentle lamb, simple and devout.
> Then he was nailed with three nails
> Painfully through his hands and through his feet

And to remind the faithful that God will bring peace only to those

> …who for love of him
> Take the cross and for their burden
> Suffer pain both night and day. [254]

All of these transformations in the imagery of Christ and the emphasis on the emotional and physical side of the suffering of the Cross eventually affected the

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[253] Of course, the comparison among these texts is artificial since they are written for different purposes and audience. The text of Gregory is a dogmatic text that aims at the articulation of the fundamental Christian beliefs that were a matter of dispute at his time, while Anselm's meditations are written for a contemplative reader, usually a lay person of high origin to "stir up" their mind "to love or fear of God" (as he writes in the preface to his *Prayers and Meditations* in the letter to Countess Mathilda). But as far as both texts are dealing with the Passion, I find it useful to contrast them and to show the change of emphasis and tone.

[254] Anonymous author, 1150-1200 cited in *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274,* J. Riley-Smith ed., (Edward Arnold, 1981).

language that described the sacrificial death of Christ: the late medieval authors began to employ *victima* much more often than earlier writers. Moreover, it seems that in doing so, they wanted to preserve the double meaning of the concept: Christ is labeled *victima* to stress his sacrificial role, but now also his role as a suffering person. In the middle of the 12th century a French priest, Petrus Pictor, wrote a song that shows the unity of both meanings:

> Completely ruined man, he was absolutely shaken,
> The Lord who appeared as a dying victim (*victima*),
> But holy victim (*victima*), but a living and immaculate one,
> Victim (*victima*) whose stains are cleaned, and who purified himself,
> No more worthy victim (*victima*) can be offered
> By any of us to pay a sufficient satisfaction for us.
> Because there is no one except Christ who is able
> To pay satisfaction for the sin of Adam;
> And although according to the double nature, Christ is immortal,
> Nevertheless, He voluntary died for us.[255]

The song narrates the old idea of the death of Christ as an offering for the human sins. But what is new is the highlighting of suffering and the explicit, deliberate choice of *victima* in reference to Christ.

3.3 Martyrs and Victims

[255] Totus corruerat homo, totus erat labefactus,
Occurrit Dominus pereunti uictima factus,
Victima sed sancta, sed uiua, sed immaculata,
Victima que maculas fugat, ex se sanctificata,
Victima qua maior offerri nulla ualebat,
Cuique satisfacere pro nobis sufficiebat.
Quod non alius preter Christum pro peccato Ade satisfacere poterat,
et cum secundum utramque naturam immortalis esset,
sponte tamen pro nobis mortuus est.
(Petrus Pictor, *Carmina de sacamentis*, 29-28 in L. Van Acker ed., *Petri Pictoris Carmina*, (Brepolis, 1972)).

The imagery of Christ played a major role in the transformation of the primary sense of the notion of a victim within religious discourse. If the earliest Christian texts where Jesus is labeled victim aimed to show Him as an agent of propiatory sacrifice, by the time of the Reformation the very same notion began to be used to describe his unjust suffering during the Passion. However, it is not clear from such an analysis how the figural sense of victim was appropriated outside Christological discourse. I want to show that narratives about martyrs played a mediating role connecting discourse about the Suffering Christ to human daily experiences. If the early accounts of martyrdom written during (or right after) the "Great persecution" of the 3rd-4th centuries stress the incorruptibility of the martyr's body and the triumphal death that imitates the sacrifice of Christ, then by the time of the Reformation the emphasis falls on unjust suffering and vulnerability. In other words, by the time of the Reformation a martyr became much closer to the figural sense of victim – a person who endured unjust suffering. These depictions elaborated the concept of victim by linking it with the human experiences of violence and injustice while also separating it from its ritualistic context. Therefore, what I want to show is that there is a mutual influence between these two concepts: while early narratives of martyrdom use sacrificial language to designate a new phenomenon of martyrdom, later martyrdom narratives aided in establishing the new meaning of victim.

During the clash between the Catholics and the Protestants in the 16th - 18th centuries both sides used the figure of martyr in their ideological constructs to claim the savagery and cruelty of the opposite party. The Calas affair (discussed in chapter

one) provides a good example of this tendency. In his description of the case, Voltaire remarks that immediately after the rumor spread across Toulouse that Marc-Antoine Calas was killed by his protestant family for his wish to become a Catholic, some monks "performed a solemn service for [him] as for a martyr." This service, writes Voltaire, was celebrated with great pomp and after it the son of Calas, who actually committed suicide, was seen as a saint by the people of Toulouse.[256] This performance accelerated the execution of Jean Calas, Marc-Antoine's father, who was killed in a particularly painful way – he was broken on the wheel in 1762. Therefore, the 1787 edition of the Fox's Book of Martyrs (*The New and Complete Book of Martyrs*) – one of the major sources that testify to the persecution of the Protestants - includes a detailed account of his death.

Given the ideological character of the representations of the Protestant martyrs' narratives it is not surprising that they are portrayed as victims, as those who suffered unjustly and who thus provoke compassion, rather than in terms of the descriptions of earlier accounts where the martyr is represented as a triumphal figure. This holds true for the two most well-known and widespread collections of the acts of the Protestant martyrs – the Dutch *Martyr's Mirror* composed by

[256] "On the present occasion the white penitents performed a solemn service for Marc-Antoine Calas as for a martyr; nor was the festival of a martyr ever celebrated with greater pomp by any church: but then this pomp was truly terrible. Beneath a magnificent canopy was placed a skeleton which was made to move and which represented Marc-Antoine Calas, holding in one hand a branch of palm, and, in the other, the pen with which he was to sign his adjuration of heresy, and which in fact wrote the death-warrant of his father. And now nothing more remained to be done for this wretch who had been his own murderer but the office of canonization; all the people looked on him as a saint; some invoked him, some went to pray at his tomb, some besought him to work miracles, while others gravely recounted those he had already performed: A monk pulled out one or two of his teeth, in order to have some lasting relics. An old woman, somewhat deaf, declared that she had heard the sound of bells; and a priest was cured of an apoplectic fit, after taking a stout emetic." (Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, 6).

Thieleman J. van Braght (1660) and the English *Book of Martyrs* by John Foxe (1563). Both these books were highly influential in Netherlands and England respectively and helped to shape popular views on Catholicism in these countries. Both *Martyr's Mirror* and *Foxe Book of Martyrs* were complex printing projects in producing a huge folio illustrated with distinctive woodcut impressions to assist reader's imagination in visualizing the sufferings of their fellow believers.

Narrating the story of the Canterbury martyrs – a group of English Protestants who were executed for heresy during the reign of Mary I from 1555 to 1558 – John Foxe in the second edition of his *Actes and Monuments* (1570) writes in details about the last days of Alice Benden, who was imprisoned and later burnt. The author narrates the miserable conditions of her stay in prison, carefully specifying the cell and the diet to emphasize the cruelty of the persecutors:

> Their lying in that prison was onely vpon a litle short straw, betwene a paire of stockes & a stone wall: being allowed three farthinges a day, that is, a halfe peny bread, and a farthing drinke: neither could she get any more for her money. Wherfore she desired to haue her whole alowance in bread, and vsed water for her drinke. Thus did she lye ix. weekes. During all which tyme she neuer changed her apparell: wherby she be came at the last a most pitious and lothsome creature to beholde.[257]

The narration continues with the description of Benden's emotions and her reaction to such an injustice:

> At her first comming into this place, she did greuously bewayle with great sorrow and lamentation, and reasoned with her selfe: why her Lord God did with his so heauy Iustice, suffer her to be sequestred from her louing fellows into so extreame misery. In these dolorous morninges did she continue till on a night as she was in her sorowfull suppications in rehearsing this verse of the psalme: why art thou so

[257] John Foxe, Ecclesiastical History Contaynyng the Actes and Monuments… (2nd edition, London: John Daye, 1570). 2: 2208.

> heauy O my soule? and agayne: The right hād of the most hiest can change all: receaued comfort in the midest of her miseries, and after that continued very ioyfull vntill her deliuery from the same.[258]

As one can see, the narrative is studded with rhetorical devices that call for the reader's compassion. The martyr is depicted as a pitiful figure with no trace of glory or triumph of the early accounts. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the 1830 edition of the *Book of Martyrs*, where the story of Alice Benden is significantly abbreviated, to achieve the same effect the editors simply employ the concept of victim: "Dreadful must have been the situation of this poor victim, lying on straw, between stone walls, without a change of apparel, or the meanest requiest of cleanliness, during a period of nine weeks!"[259]

Although the actual use of the concept victim in designating martyr appears only in the late editions of *Foxe Book of Martyrs* (the earliest I was able to find is 1807)[260], the imagery and characteristics of what we today call victim were present in the descriptions of Protestant martyrs from the very beginning and perhaps are rooted in the earlier narratives of the persecution of heretics by the Catholic Church.[261] It is worth recalling that the Foxe work began first as a book about the

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[258] *Ibid*.

[259] *Fox's Book of Martyrs; Or, The Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church* (ed. John Malham, T. Pratt; J.J. Woodward, 1830), 411.

[260] "This novel mode of tormenting [to strip the minister naked, and alternately to cover him with ice and burning coals] a fellow creature was immediately put into practice, and the unhappy victim expired beneath the torments, which seemed to delight his inhuman persecutors." (*The Book of Martyrs*, (J. Nuttal, 1803), 192)).

[261] In August 1209 t Albigensian crusaders seized the city of Carcassonne. The people were not killed, but were forced to leave the town — naked (according to a Cistercian monk, Peter of Vaux de Cernay, who wrote a detailed chronicle of the Crusade). After the end of the Crusade the victims wrote petitions to Louis X with a plea to restore their losses. The Carcassonne cases may be found in Léopold Delisle, ed., *Recueil des historiens de Gaules et de la France*, 24 vols (Paris, 1904), XXIV, 296–319 (*Querimoniae Carcassonensium*). See also William Chester Jordan. *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade: A Study in Rulership;* and

persecution of Lollards and was printed in Strasbourg in Latin in 1554. The reason for the late appearance of *victim* in the *Book of Martyrs* is two-fold. First, when Foxe composed his 4 lifetime editions this word simply did not exist in the English language.[262] And second, the posthumous editions followed the original (although sometimes allowing significant abbreviation) and added contemporary information without modifying the earlier accounts. Only by the end of the 18th century did the editors take the liberty to modify significantly the text in order to fit the changed literary taste of the readers.

Before getting to the transformations of the image of the martyr in the High Middle Ages, I need to clarify the difference between the phenomena of victim and martyr, as they are perceived today. What immediately catches the eye in such a distinction is an issue of voluntarism: a martyr is a person who usually can escape violence, but chooses not to, while a victim is one who is involuntary subjected to oppression or mistreatment. The martyr is an active figure who, in submitting him- or her-self to death and by the very means of death, makes a certain statement; the victim is a passive agent of violence and his or her death or suffering usually

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Megan Cassidy-Welch "Memories of Space in Thirteenth-Century France: Displaced People After the Albigensian Crusade".

[262] The first clear appearance of *victim* in English is attested in the Douay–Rheims Bible – a translation of the Vulgate Bible into English by members of the English College in Douai, France. The New Testament was published in 1582 and it followed Jerome who deliberately chose to have two instances of *victima* in the Vulgate translation. The fact that the Douay–Rheims translation had been produced in France explains the decision of the translators to create a new word instead of trying to find an equivalent: by the 16th century *victime* already circulated in middle French and in the 17th century this concept firmly entrenched in the vocabulary of French writers as attested by examples from Racine and Corneille: "Vois comme tout nu sur la croix, / *Victime* pure et volontaire, /Les deux bras étendus sur / cet infâme bois, / Jadis pour tes péchés je m'offris à mon Père." (Corneille, *l'Imitation de J.-C.,* IV, 961). "Je ne condamne plus un courroux légitime, / Et l'on vous va, Seigneur, / livrer votre *victime*." (Racine, *Andromaque*, II, 4).

remains at the level of personal calamity. Therefore, martyrdom is connected to a narrative of victory, while victimhood is associated with misfortune and inglorious experience, something to be pitied. If martyrdom is a resistance that has teleological purpose and often includes public speech, victimhood is in fact a compulsion to silence, a deprival of language. Shoshana Felman in this regard writes: "Victim is by definition not only one who is oppressed but also one who has no language of his own, one who, quite precisely, is *robbed of a language* with which to articulate his or her victimization."[263] Martyrdom, on the contrary, as we will see in one of the earliest definitions given by Clement, bishop of Alexandria and later himself a martyr, is first of all a statement, an apology, a confession of faith. His pupil and successor, Origen, explicitly stresses that the spectacle of the martyr's execution provides an opportunity to convey Christian values to the public.[264]

Elizabeth Castelli in her study of martyrdom notices that suffering and death are not enough for a person who has endured them to be called a martyr. Martyrdom functions as a complex system of significations and requires certain conditions. "Martyrdom is not simply an action. Martyrdom requires audience (whether real or fictive), retelling, interpretation, and world- and meaning- making activity. Suffering violence in and of itself is not enough. In order for martyrdom to emerge, both violence and its suffering must be infused with particular

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[263] Felman, *Juridical Unconscious*, 125.

[264] "A great multitude is assembled to watch you when you combat and are called to martyrdom. It is as if we said that thousands upon thousands gather to watch a contest in which contestants of outstanding reputation are engaged. When you will be engaged in the conflict you can say with Paul: We are made spectacle to the world and to angels and to men" (*Exhor*., 18) (Origen, *Prayer: Exhortation to Martyrdom* (Paulist Press, 1954), 158.

meanings."[265] Martyrdom, in other words, is a meaningful suffering, whereas victimhood is a meaningless one.

In his sophisticated analysis of torture, William Cavanagh gives an insightful distinction between martyrs and victims. He argues that modern torture (in particular, he studies the regime of Pinochet in Chile), unlike classic torture (as for example that of Damiens' after his attempt to assassinate Louis XV in 1757 that is famously discussed at the beginning of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*), works to create victims and not martyrs. If martyrdom makes the Church visible and establishes community around the figure of the martyr, then victimhood leads to the alienation, separation, and isolation of the victim. Martyrdom is a resistance that undermines a political order that initiates prosecution; victimhood remains a personal matter that de-socializes the victim.

According to Cavanaugh, the modern torture used by authoritarian regimes learned "the lesson of [the] Coliseum" very well in that the spectacle of martyrdom did not serve as a warning to those who did not obey Roman laws, but on the contrary, helped Christianity to spread within the Empire. Therefore, modern torture inverts the structure of martyrdom: instead of public execution, the regime tortures its victims in secret chambers; people are kidnapped at night; the officials do not affirm that the arrest had taken place; everything is made to seem as if the person has simply disappeared. The regime uses particular methods of torture that do not leave physical traces and, therefore, after a victim is released, it is impossible

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[265] Elizabeth Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (Columbia University Press, 2007), 34. The early martyrs were exposed to severe executions that included burning, death caused by wild beasts, and lynching.

for him or her to prove that they suffered violence. Moreover, the aim of the regime is not to kill a person, but to break his or her will and to threaten the community of the (supposedly) discordant. Cavanaugh writes that often a doctor was present during torture to ensure the victim could survive the suffering his or her persecutors intended to inflict.

In case a victim died during torture, the officials of the Pinochet regime made sure that the body was secretly destroyed. "The regime understood perfectly well that the body could become a focus of resistance to the state's power. For the early Christians, the bodies of the martyrs were loci of God's power on earth and had a central place in the memory and formation of the community."[266] Cavanaugh cites a fragment from the martyrdom of Polycarp where it is said that Roman authorities, "jealous of the crown that Polycarp had won," confiscated his body and had it burnt to keep it out of Christian hands. But Christians afterwards picked up his bones "as being more precious than the most exquisite jewels, and more purified than gold, and deposited them in a fitting place, whither, being gathered together, as opportunity is allowed us, with joy and rejoicing, the Lord shall grant us to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom."[267] Therefore, concludes Cavanaugh, the cult of martyrs threatened Rome's cult of power, not only because of the glorification of death but rather because of the veneration of persons who according to Roman law were criminals who refused to believe in the divinity of imperial authority.

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[266] William Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Willey-Blackwell, 2007), 66.
[267] *Mart.Pol*. 18.2. "Martyrdom of Polycarp" in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series, ed. Philip Shaff and Henry Wace (Hendrickson Pub, 1996): 1, 43.

Martyrdom is thus a resistance and triumph over persecutors; while victimhood is failure and misfortune in that a person loses his or her personality.

Another important aspect of martyrdom, in the context of this work, is the relation of this phenomenon to the issue of power. Martyrdom not only constitutes resistance to the dominant discourse of power as shown above, but, in fact, creates an alternative one. It is unexpected to view martyrdom that manifests itself in suffering and humiliation as a locus of power, but early *Martyrs' Acts* time and time again insist on such understanding. It is part of the creative re-thinking, or re-evaluation of values, that Christianity brought into the ancient worldview that suffering and humiliation could serve as a foundation to a new discourse of power. As Judith Perkins suggests, the fact that the *Acts* are usually written in the forms of letters needs to be considered not only as a way of reporting certain events, but rather as "key documents in early Christian self-fashioning". These narratives do not merely describe events, but "work to create and project a new "mental set towards the world," a new system of a new system for understanding human existence at the same time as they work to challenge the surrounding ideology of the early Roman Empire."[268]

In the second century when Christianity spread in the Roman Empire and the first incidents of persecution occurred, one already encounters the world of pain and suffering in the earliest Christian documents. They depict graphically the bodies scraped, pierced with knives, burnt, whipped, strangled, and torn into pieces by

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[268] Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (Routledge, 1995), 104.

beasts.[269] Traditionally this emphasis on the vivid depiction of suffering in early Christian texts is explained as a reflection and reaction of a community that exists under severe persecution. However, recent scholarship has shown that during the second century the persecutions were local and sporadic and did not have the state-sanctioned character as they did later.[270]

Why then do we encounter such a great emphasis on suffering in early Christian texts? Such a perspective appears even more puzzling if one places it in the context of contemporary narratives. Perkins notices that both Stoic philosophical works and romantic novellas – two most popular and widespread types of text during the early Empire, "for all their differences, essentially construct the same subject – a self that is exempt from the experience of pain and suffering."[271] But Christian texts of the same period (Irenaeus; Polycarp; Clement; Tertullian) on the contrary conveyed the message that to be a true Christian *was* to suffer and die. Perkins argues that Christian narratives "consistently offered a new literary happy ending for readers – death; in particular, the martyr's death."[272]

In martyrdom, the sufferings that Christians underwent are vindicated as worthy and triumphant. Early martyrs are usually portrayed as athletes, warriors, and victors. Saturnius, one of the companions of Perpetua – a famous early Christian

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[269] See accounts of Melito (Eusebius *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.26.2), Hermas (*Pastor* 3.2.1), and Justin (II *Apologia* 12).
[270] See Geoffrey de Ste Croix *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy* (Oxford University Press, 2006); Bowersock *Martyrdom and Rome* (Cambridge University Press, 1995) and T.D. Barnes "Legislation against the Christians" *The Journal of Roman Studies* 58 (1968): 32-50.
[271] Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* 77.
[272] *Ibid*., 24.

martyr – "insisted he want to be exposed to all the different beasts that his crown might be all the more glorious" (ACM, Perpetua and Felicitas 19.2). Polycarp, burnt and stabbed, was "crowned with the garland of immortality and the winner of the incontestable prize" (17.1). In her reading of the martyrdom of Perpetua, Perkins demonstrated how the *Acts of Martyrs* located new sources of power to subvert the hierarchical structures of the early Empire. She argues that Perpetua's representation fashions her as a "woman subverting and transcending her society's structures, buttressed by growing sense of her empowerment through suffering."[273] Perpetua rejects being a victim, as being nothing else than an object supplied to beasts. Her death is clearly represented as victory.

Injuring and harming other people is the most vivid sign of dominance, since, as Elaine Scarry argues, it provides an explicit demarcation between a winner and a loser.[274] However, despite "bruises, wounds, broken bodies, provided unassailable, palpable evidence of realized power… Christian discourse reverses this equation and thus redefines some of the most basic signifiers in any culture – the body, pain, and death."[275] The martyr narratives refuse to interpret the suffering body as defeat, but instead reads it as a symbol of victory that redefines the discourse of power. "By rejecting that they experienced pain or defeat, Christians rejected the power structures surrounding them, and rejected the social order these supported."[276]

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[273] *Ibid*., 104.
[274] Elaine Scarry, The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World (Oxford University Press, 1987), 137.
[275] Perkins, *The Suffering Self* ,115.
[276] *Ibid*., 117.

So far, I have distinguished martyrdom and victimhood to demonstrate that they are very different phenomena. However, there is a peculiar connection between the two that I have not yet touched upon: the early accounts of martyrdom drew heavily on sacrificial language. In other words, in early martyrological literature, martyrs are presented as victims in a ritualistic sense of this concept.[277] In the earliest narrative where the word martyrdom is used in the sense of a person who suffered public execution for his Christian belief – the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* – there is a clear representation of bishop Polycarp's death as a sacrifice:

> Then he, placing his hands behind him and being bound to the stake, like a noble ram out of a great flock for an offering, a burnt sacrifice made ready and acceptable to God, looking up to heaven said; 'O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ… May I be received among these in Thy presence this day, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as Thou didst prepare and reveal it beforehand, and hast accomplished it, Thou that art the faithful and true God… I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, through the eternal and heavenly High-priest, Jesus Christ[278]

In this depiction, Polycarp is shown to be a *figura Christi*. The text aims at making his death similar to Christ's Passions and in chapter 17 explicitly states: "we love the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord."[279]

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[277] See Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*; Frances M. Young, *The Use of Sacrificial Ideas in Greek Christian Writers from New Testament to John Chrysostom* (Wipf& Stock Pub, 2004); Theo Hermas, *Origene: Theoloogie sacrificielle du sacredoce des chretines* (Beauchesne Éditeur, 2012); Rober Daly, *Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice* (London: T&T Clark, 2009).

[278] Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory,* 53-54.

[279] The *Martyrdom* account portrays Polycarp as a model of Christ's life. For example, Polycarp waited to be passively betrayed (*Mart.Pol*. 1:2). The night before Polycarp's betrayal, he is praying with a few close companions (5:1). He prays "may your will be done" prior to his arrest (7:1; cf. Matt 26:42). Furthermore, Polycarp is betrayed on a Friday (7:1) and seated on a donkey to ride into town (8:1)—similar to the "triumphal entry" and garden of Gethsemane events. On the verge of death, Polycarp offers up a final call to the Father (14:3). While Polycarp is tied to the stake, an executioner is commanded to come stab Polycarp with a dagger (16:1). Even the execution offers a parallel to the confession of the

In another early account of martyrdom, Ignatius says that he is willing to be "poured out as an offering to God while an altar is still read" and "a sacrifice to God through these instruments [of torture and execution]". In other letters he wrote during the same journey, Ignatius characterizes his death as a ransom for others, paralleling the salvific function of Jesus' own sacrificial death.[280] Origen in *Exhortation to Martyrdom* articulates a theory of martyrdom in which, among other things, martyrdom functions as an expiatory, atoning sacrifice.[281] Observing these and other accounts, Castelli concludes: "The point is clear – martyrdom and sacrifice are integrally linked in the early Christian sources."[282]

In their imitation of Christ's sacrifice, martyrs (or the authors of these narratives) profoundly opposed themselves to another matrix of sacrifice – the Roman cult. The citizens of imperial Rome were obliged to perform a sacrifice (pour a libation) to the Emperor. Sacrifice was an important institution in Roman public life insofar it was "a force that kept power in circulation in Roman society, and it sustained in good working order complex networks of relationship and patronage. In the imperial period, sacrifice also served as a means of unifying a disparate and far-flung empire, linking the imperial center (Rome) and a colonized periphery (the

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centurion's statement "Certainly this man was innocent!" (16:2; Luke 23:47). The author(s) of the *Martyrdom* make[s] sure to slow the narrative so that the reader makes the necessary connection to the Gospel accounts by saying, "who just happened to have the same name—Herod, as he was called" (6:2). Moreover, those who betrayed Polycarp ought to "receive the same punishment as Judas" (6:2). There is an army to capture Polycarp, similar to the Gethsemane scene (7:1).

[280] Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 53.

[281] *Ibid*., 52-3.

[282] *Ibid*, 54.

provinces)."[283] Therefore, the refusal of Christians to perform sacrifice for the Emperor was regarded as a political action, as treason against *patria.* And in presenting martyrdom as a sacrifice there is an important undermining of the Roman sacrificial matrix:

> In refusing to perform sacrifice, Christians removed themselves from the position of agent (sacrificer) to the position of the victim (sacrificed). Yet at the same time, by aligning themselves with Jesus's own victimhood, they claimed as well the immediate divine vindication that Jesus himself, according to Christian teaching, enjoyed. They deprived the Roman gods of sacrifices and became, themselves, willing sacrifices to the one true God.[284]

The sacrificial framework is an essential constitutive element in the formation of the idea of martyrdom. Presenting themselves as victims in the true sacrifice that is opposed to the Roman sacrificial matrix, early martyrs generated particular meaningfulness in their violent deaths. This transformation of meaningless suffering into martyrdom by interpreting it as a sacrifice "generated a value-inverting understanding of victimhood as virtue."[285] Castelli argues that qualities such as passivity and submission that traditionally have been associated with femininity within theorization of martyrdom were elevated from their low status and gained certain social privilege.[286] Through such signification martyrs made their deaths a political gesture that in turn became a feature of a new cultural phenomenon in the Graeco-Roman milieu that transformed a "witness" into a martyr.

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[283] *Ibid*., 50.
[284] *Ibid*., 51-2.
[285] *Ibid*., 61.
[286] *Ibid*.

3.4 Peter Abelard's *Planctus*

In order to show how the conceptualization of martyrdom is involved in the transformation of the notion of victim, I will do a close-reading of Peter Abelard's (1079 – 1142) *Planctus virginum Israel super filia Iepte Galadite (Lament of the Maids of Israel over the Daughter of Jephthah Gileadite)*.[287] It is one of the six poetic texts (called *laments*) that were written by Abelard in the 1130s for Heloise, his wife and at the time a nun at Paraclete monastery. This lament retells the Old Testament story of a Jewish general Jephthah, who sacrificed his daughter for victory in the war against Ammon. The story narrated in the eleventh Book of Judges is the following: Jephthah, before the final battle with the Ammonites, rashly vowed to sacrifice the first person who would meet him after being victorious. ("Whatever comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering" (Jud. 11:31)). By misfortune, his only daughter happened to be that person and Jephthah, grieving and unwilling, had to fulfill his vow.

The author of the Old Testament story focuses the reader's attention on Jephthah, and early exegesis follows that pattern by emphasizing the moral lesson of the story: the Jewish general is punished by God for the rash vow.[288] Abelard instead reverses the story and makes Jephthah's daughter, who in the Bible narrative

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[287] The Latin text is from the late 12th century manuscript in Vatican Library (Vat. Reg. Lat., 288, fols 63va-64vb) reprinted in Juanita Ruys, *The Repentant Abelard: Family, Gender, and Ethics in Peter Abelard's Carmen ad Astralabium and Planctus* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 248-251.

[288] This tradition begins with John Chrysostom in the 4th century.

remains nameless, one of the main characters. He saturates the Biblical narrative with various details that are missing in the original story and turns it into a highly original exegesis. Abelard scholars unanimously agree that the *Lament* is an "inventive… unusual composition"[289], a "deep dramatic probing"[290] that shows the author's intimate feelings and that has deep psychological character. Drawing attention to the unusual emotional charge of the *Lament* and its private character, Peter Dronke and scholars after him have suggested that in interpreting the Old Testament story in profoundly humane terms, Abelard might have expressed some of his own complex sensibilities in relation to Heloise.[291] Commentators on the *Lament* noticed the parallels between Jephthah's daughter's sacrifice and the representation of Heloise's entry into the monastic life as a sacrifice on her behalf for Abelard.[292] Developing this idea, Juanita Ruys argues that the laments are

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[289] John L. Thompson, *Writing the Wrongs: Women of the Old Testament among Biblical Commentators* (Oxford University Press, 2001), 145.

[290] Alexiou, Margaret and Dronke, Peter. 1971. "Lament of Jephtha's Daughter: Themes, Traditions, Originality." *Studi Medievali* 12 (2): 819-63. Reprinted, with minor revisions, as Ch. 12 in Dronke, Peter. *Intellectuals and poets in Medieval Europe*. (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1992): 345-88.

[291] Old Testament figures were not usually characters of *planctus*, but Abelard composed his series of laments exclusively on figures from the Jewish Bible. Some scholars have argued that Abelard's choice of Old Testament figures was motivated by personal matters since Heloise was fluent in Hebrew and showed particular interest in the Old Testament.

[292] Abelard first speaks of this in his *Historia Calamitatum*, a letter he wrote to his friend to tell the story of his misfortunes, but that ended up in Heloise's possession and became the first letter in their correspondence. In that letter Abelard writes:
"Before I put myself in a cloister, I obliged her to take the habit, and retire into the nunnery of Argenteuil. I remember somebody would have opposed her making such a cruel sacrifice of herself, but she answered in the words of Cornelia, after the death of Pompey the Great:
O my lov'd lord! our fatal marriage draws
On thee this doom, and I the guilty cause!
Then whilst thou go'st th' extremes of Fate to prove,
I'll share that fate, and expiate thus my love."
Latter in the correspondence both Abelard and Heloise frequently return to this sacrificial logic. See Claire Nouvet, "The Discourse of the 'Whore': An Economy of Sacrifice". *MLN* 105 (Sep 1990): 750-73, for original interpretation.

written as an expression of Abelard's repentance in that he forced Heloise to become a nun and leave behind their only child.[293] The *Laments* were written for the private use of Heloise; they did not enjoy any great circulation, as, for example, did Anselm's private meditations.[294] However, these poems share the same devotional sensibility as Anselm's meditations: they are representations of a newborn affective piety that stresses emotions as a major concern of the period and are involved in what historians call the "twelfth century's production of self."[295]

Abelard presents his exegesis in the specific form of lament – *planctus* – a song or poem that expresses grief or mourning, usually for a famous person. It became a popular genre in the Middle Ages.[296] The justification that Abelard gives to this literary form can be found in one of his sermons: earthly stay, says Abelard, is an exile and therefore a time of weeping and lamenting, of *planctus* rather than joyful songs, *cantica*.[297] *Planctus virginum Israel super filia Iepte Galadite* is the longest lament of six composed by Abelard. It consists of 127 lines (the Bible fragment that it covers is only 10 lines (Judges 11.30-40)) that can be divided into

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[293] "There was… repentance later, in the mid-1130s, when Abelard came to realize, largely prompted by Heloise's allusive references to this in her writing to him, the losses he had sustained in distancing himself so effectively from his wife and son" (Juanita Ruys, *The Repentant Abelard*, 1).

[294] In fact, these compositions were published no earlier than 1839 (Thompson, *Writing the Wrongs*, 148).

[295] "To express a man's feelings in face of life's sorrows and joys was a major concern of the age" (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, 70).

[296] The earliest known example, the *Planctus de obitu Karoli*, was composed around 814, on the death of Charlemagne. Other plancti from the ninth century include vernacular laments in a woman's voice, Germanic songs of exile and journeying, and plancti on biblical or classical themes (like the Latin *Planctus cygni*, which is possibly derived from Germanic models). The earliest examples of music for plancti are found in tenth-century manuscripts associated with the Abbey of Saint Martial of Limoges. From the twelfth century Dronke identifies a growing number of laments of the Virgin Mary (called a *planctus Mariae*) and complaintes d'amour (complaints of love) in the courtly love tradition.

[297] "moeroris potius quam laetitiae tempus istud insinuant esse, et plancus" (Sermon VI)

five parts. The first part (lines 1-16) is a preamble where the author of the lament addresses Israel's maids to commemorate Jephthah's daughter. The second part (lines 17-27) tells the story of Jephthah's promise. The third part (which is central and the longest one: lines 28-79) begins as a dialogue between Jephthah and his daughter, but quickly turns into the daughter's monologue, a powerful speech on gender and sacrifice. The next part (lines 73-111) narrates the preparation of Jephthah's daughter for her death. The last part (lines 112-127) is the author's final appeal to maids to glorify Jephthah's daughter.

In what follows I will argue that in Abelard's *Planctus* one can see the emergence of the transformation of the notion of the martyr, where this notion acquires features that alter its meaning into a sense that is close to the figural meaning of victim. Jephthah's daughter is a victim in both senses – as a person who is sacrificed (and in this holds ties to traditional martyrological accounts) and as a pitiful human being who suffers unjust violence (a new perspective). It is through such descriptions that martyrdom was involved in changing the concept of victim – later martyrological accounts lose the sacrificial framework, but preserve the concept of the victim as a person suffering unjustly.

Abelard avoids calling Jephthah's daughter a martyr in his *Planctus*. Technically, she cannot be labeled a martyr since she did not suffer prosecution from officials and was not executed for confessing her religion. Moreover, the very notion of martyrdom appears much later than the events of the story,[298] so to call

[298] The first use of the word μάρτυς, which in the Greek meant 'a witness,' in the sense of martyr is attested in the second-century text – *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. While W.H.C Frend in his *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* maintains the view that the phenomenon

Jephthah's daughter a martyr would be an anachronism. However, in his 7th letter to Heloise, Abelard compares Jephthah's daughter to martyrs in an imaginative thought experiment: "What, I ask you, would she have done in the struggle of the martyrs, if by chance she had been forced by unbelievers to become an apostate by denying Christ? If she had been questioned concerning Christ, would she have said with Peter, who was already prince of the apostles (Luke 22:57): 'I do not know him?'"[299] In this fragment, Abelard stresses the courage of Jephthah's daughter in being loyal to God and her father even at the cost of her own life. In the following section, I will show that Abelard attributes to Jephthah's daughter features that unmistakably designate her as a martyr.

Martyrdom, as we noted above, emerges as a creative process of giving meaning to otherwise meaningless death and suffering. Martyrdom is, then, a triumphal death, or even triumph over death. Disdain for death is a prominent aspect of martyrological accounts: in showing that he or she does not fear death, a martyr demonstrates faith in the Heavenly kingdom and makes clear that his or her life is fully in the hands of God. Jephthah's daughter shows no sign of hesitation in the face of death and even rushes to it. In the introductory part of his *Planctus*, Abelard explicitly states that she "urges [Jephthah] against her throat" (20) and later in the narrative, when she finds it unbearable to wait for the ritual to start, Jephthah's daughter escapes the preparation and "at once she seizes the naked blade which she delivered to her father" (111). Abelard here draws a dramatic scene

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of martyrdom has its roots in the Jewish tradition, Bowersock argues that the Jewish tradition 'borrows' this phenomenon from early Christian martyrs and that only within the unique atmosphere of Christianity could such a phenomenon emerge.

[299] McLaughlin, *The Letters of Heloise and Abelard* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 119.

(totally missing in the biblical account) portraying the last moments of the life of Jephthah's daughter, where she acts in the stoic tradition of early martyrs. Juanita Ruys notices the parallels between Abelard's narrative and that of the martyrdom of Apollonia, an early Christian martyr (d. 249), who threw herself willingly upon the flames of a pyre.[300] But the death of Jephthah's daughter perhaps has an even more stark resemblance to the death of another famous female martyr – Perpetua (d. 202). As follows from the account of her martyrdom: "She took the trembling hand of the gladiator and guided it to her throat. Perhaps so great a woman could not have been killed… if she herself had not wanted it."[301]

This particular attitude of martyrs toward death sometimes approaches an extreme where it is difficult to distinguish it from a wicked desire to die in search of glory and fame. In his letters on the way to execution, Ignatius of Antioch (c. 35 – 108), one of the first martyrs, wrote that he is "lusting for death," that he does not fear the fate that awaits him, but rather he calls for it: "come fire and cross and encounters with beasts, incisions and dissections, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushing of the whole body."[302] When Perpetua is sentenced to the beasts, she and her fellow martyrs '[return] to prison laughing' (6.6). The Romans saw this phenomenon of voluntary martyrdom as a form of malaise, as a sick desire for suicide. Tertullian tells the story of the Proconsul Arrius Antonius, who faced a group of people who claimed that they were Christians without prior accusations. Such a claim meant that they were to be executed according to the current law. The

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[300] Ruys, *The Repentant Abelard*, n. 116., p. 282.
[301] *Mart. Perpet.* 21.9-10
[302] Ignat. *Ep ad Rom*. 7.2; 4.1-2; 5.2-3

Proconsul ordered the execution of a few of them and said to the others: "You wretches, if you want to die, you have cliffs to leap from and ropes to hang by."[303] The same attitude can found in the *De Morte Peregrini* (*The Death of Peregrinus*), Lucian's 2nd century satire where he shows acquaintance with Christian beliefs. Lucian tries to explain the Christian contempt for death as follows: "These misguided creatures have convinced themselves that they are going to be altogether immortal and live forever, which explains their contempt for death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them."[304] All early Roman accounts of Christianity (including Celsus, Pliny, and Marcus Aurelius) show that Christians were known predominantly for their attitude to suffering and disdain to death.[305]

It would be surprising, therefore, that the Church Fathers unconditionally condemned such behavior. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, Lactantius, and Jerome all wrote explicitly against voluntary martyrdom.[306] The only early Christian author who seems to embrace and defend the phenomenon of voluntary martyrdom is Tertullian. In his composition *On Flight in Persecution*, Tertullian (ascribing the speech to the Holy Spirit) pronounces: "Desire not to die in bed, in miscarriages, or soft fevers, but in martyrdoms, to glorify Him who suffered for you."[307] According to Glen Bowersock, Tertullian represents a marginal, but powerful and inspirational

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[303] Tertullian, *Ad Scap*., 5.
[304] Lucian, *De Mort. Pereg*. 11-13.
[305] See Judith Perkins, "Death as a Happy Ending" in *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (Routledge, 1995): 15-40.
[306] Cyprian admonished his followers: "Let no one among you stir up any trouble for brethren or offer himself up to the Gentiles of his own volition." (*Ep* 81.1.4). Jerome taught that martyrdom is worthless if it is undertaken for the sake of the honor and glory (*Comm. in Ep ad Galat.* 5.14, 26). Lactantius argued that Christ fleeing from persecution is a lesson to future Christians (*Div. Inst.* 4.18.1-2)
[307] Tertullian *De Fuga*, 9.

tradition in Christianity that sees martyrdom as a continuation of the tradition of Roman noble suicides.[308] Tertullian mentions Heraclitus, Empedocles, Lucretia, Mucius Scaevola, Dido, and Cleopatra as pagan proto-martyrs. The essence of martyrdom for him is resistance to an unacceptable way of life; it manifests itself in readiness (and even perhaps aspiration) to die for your own convictions: if noble pagans were ready to give up their lives for their convictions, how – asks Tertullian – can Christians fail to prove their faith by their own lives?[309]

In addressing the issue of martyrdom, Tertullian argues that a willingness to suffer is natural for a true Christian: "We want to suffer just as soldiers want to fight."[310] However, Tertullian is not a zealot who calls believers to death; rather he sees great potential in the phenomenon of martyrdom to eventually increase Christianity's recognition among the pagans. He writes to a Roman governor regarding the execution of Christians: "Your cruelty is our glory"[311] and in another place: 'The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed."[312] In other words, Tertullian conveys a typically Christian revaluation of values where defeat is interpreted as victory. Bowersock argues that it is through the spectacular executions of martyrs that many pagans learned about Christianity during the 2nd and 3rd centuries:

> Without glorification of suicide in the Roman tradition, the development of martyrdom in the second and third centuries would

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[308] Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome*, 63.
[309] However, scholars usually argue that at the time of writing this work Tertullian was under the heavy influence of the Montanist movement that stressed the necessity of dying for the faith and eventually was condemned as heresy by the bishop of Rome.
[310] Tertullian *Apol.* 50.
[311] Tertulian *ad Scap*, 5.
[312] Tertullian *Apol*, 50.

> have been unthinkable. The hordes of voluntary martyrs would never have existed. Both Greek and Jewish traditions stood against them. Without Rome, a *martos* would have remained what it had always been, a 'witness' and no more.[313]

Therefore, the tradition of noble suicides and Tertullian's rhetoric in support played a major role in the formation of the very phenomenon of martyrdom.

The very opposite of Tertullian's views on the phenomenon of voluntary martyrdom was Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – c. 215) who, according to Bowersock "clearly reject[ed] the Roman glorification of suicide that Tertullian represents."[314] Clement wants to establish that martyrdom in a true sense does not necessarily involve death at all. He returns to the original meaning of *martyr* –"witness" – to claim that every Christian who lives according to his faith is a martyr. "Martyrdom or 'bearing witness' is confession of faith in God, and every soul that is purely constituted in recognition of God, obeying His orders, is a martyr, both in deed and in word."[315] Martyrdom therefore is connected not with violent death itself, but rather with the confession or apology of Christian faith.

Clement is aware that such an argument might be understood as an apology for cowardice and wants to distinguish himself from such a position.[316] Nevertheless, he is clearly against voluntary martyrs and compares their execution

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[313] Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome*, 73.
[314] *Ibid*., 71
[315] Clement *Strom.* IV.4; 15.3.
[316] "Now some of the heretics who have misunderstood the Lord, have at once an impious and cowardly love of life; saying that the true martyrdom is the knowledge of the only true God (which we also admit), and that the man is a self-murderer and a suicide who makes confession by death; and adducing other similar sophisms of cowardice." Clement, *Strom.* IV.4, 16.3.

to the "vain death" of Brahmans, who according to him seek spectacular death to gain public attention[317]:

> Now we, too, say that those who have rushed on death (for there are some, not belonging to us, but sharing the name merely, who are in haste to give themselves up, the poor wretches dying through hatred to the Creator) – these, we say, banish themselves without being martyrs, even though they are punished publicly. For they do not preserve the characteristic mark of believing martyrdom, inasmuch as they have not known the only true God, but give themselves up to a vain death, as the Gymnosophists of the Indians to useless fire.[318]

In the same chapter, Clement also argues that those who voluntarily give themselves to death also inflict God's punishment on the persecutor and in this way collaborate in sin.[319]

At first glance, Jephthah's daughter seems to represent the tradition of voluntary martyrs defended by Tertullian. As we have seen, she rushes to her death and urges her father to cut her throat. Throughout the Planctus she is praised: "O maiden, more to be wondered at than lamented!/ O how rare the man her equal!"[320] and she speaks herself of the "glory" and "honor" in accepting such a fate. However, Abelard is careful to emphasize that Jephthah's daughter's sacrifice is not a suicide: "This is not cruelty, /but duty towards God,/ who had he not wished the sacrifice (*hostia*),/ would not have granted victory."[321] The word cruelty (*crudelitas*) that Abelard uses in these verses was a well-known euphemism for suicide during the

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[317]A Brahman from India who burned himself in Athens in the time of Augustus attracted considerable notice (Cass. Dio 54.9.10)
[318] Clement *Strom.* IV.4, 16.3.
[319] Clement *Strom.* IV. 10, 76-7
[320] Abelard *Planctus*, 15-16.
[321] Abelard *Planctus*, 53-56.

Middle Ages.[322] Jephthah's daughter accepts her fate, rather than aspires to it – as is clear from her request for a two-month delay of the execution during which she mourned herself. As Abelard explains in his letter to Heloise, Jephthah's daughter has to die in order to reconcile her two fathers: "She was determined, by her death, to free the [earthly father] from perjury and at the same time to preserve for the [heavenly father] what had been promised to him."[323] Jephthah, in Abelard's poem, claims that his daughter's sacrifice is not her aspiration for death, but a restitution to God: "you… pay the price for our joys" (31) and later in the text Jephthah's daughter speaks of the atoning role of her death: "an atonement should be the sacrifice (*hostia*) of my spotless flesh, which knows no defilement nor any stain" (71-72).

The central part of the lament occupies Jephthah's daughter's speech in which she justifies her decision to die and which becomes the testimony of her faith. As a true martyr, in Clement's definition, she uses her status as an opportunity to state the most important ideas. Here, Abelard explicitly contrasts the story from the Book of Judges with the story of the near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22, stressing gender as an important aspect of the interpretation he gives in the lament. In the story from Genesis Isaac does not know his fate, for he is a passive and almost mute participant of the drama that unfolds between his father and God. Jephthah's daughter, on the contrary, is an active character who enforces the whole event. After learning about her father's vow, she exclaims: "Would that he would fashion for

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[322] Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages* Vol. 2: The curse of self-murder (Oxford University Press), 108.
[323] McLaughlin, *The Letters of Heloise and Abelard*, 119.

himself/ my innocence /as the uncomplaining sacrifice (*victima*) in so great a matter!" and goes on directly to compare her fate to that of Isaac:

> Abraham wishing to sacrifice (*immolare*) his son
> did not receive this grace from the Lord
> that he would accept the boy from him as an offering (*hostia*)
> He who spurned a boy,
> If he accepts a girl –
> Think what an honor it will be to my sex! (36-41)

If in the story of Isaac's near-sacrifice Abraham is presented as a firm and obedient father who is ready to sacrifice his son if God wills it, then Jephthah is devastated by the need to sacrifice his only child. He is hesitant and uncertain and his daughter has to encourage him: "As in sex, so in spirit,/ be now a man, I pray" (44-45). In the story from Genesis, Abraham seizes the sword; in Abelard's lament it is Jephthah's daughter who "seizes the naked blade which she delivered to her father" (111).

Despite Abelard not explicitly calling Jephthah's daughter a martyr, her representation in the poem leads to an unavoidable association with this status. She is portrayed as a glorified victim of sacrifice, who is obedient and courageous in her disdain for death, firm in the faith that she publicly states, and her killing has a teleological purpose. However, alongside these traditional features of triumphal martyrdom, Abelard elaborates another narrative, where Jephthah's daughter appears as a pitiful figure who laments her destiny. And it is these supplementary features (that I will analyze in the following section) that complicate the poem's character and the image of the martyr that Abelard introduces.

Robert Daly in his study of sacrificial practices notices that, unlike modern perceptions of this phenomenon, the ancient rituals presupposed an atmosphere of

joy and festivity: "In contrast to the predominantly negative associations connected with sacrifice in the modern world, much more positive features usually characterize it in the ancient world. In the ancient Greco-Roman and Semitic-Hebrew civilizations… [a sacrifices] generally do not connote reluctance, sadness or deprivation, but rather, joy, festivity or thanksgiving."[324] The interpretation of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice during the early ages of Christianity also carried senses of triumph and joy rather than of sadness or grief. Such an attitude can be seen in the celebration of Mass (the Eucharist was theorized as sacrifice in *Didache* - The Teaching of the Apostles, one of the earliest Christian documents, dated to the first century), in early theories of atonement that emphasized the redemptive role of the Cross and triumph over death and sin, and in the iconography that until the 9th century avoided images of a Suffering Christ.

However, in the High Medieval period historians observe a dramatic change – the earlier marginal image of the Suffering Christ spreads throughout Europe. The new theory of atonement, established by Anselm, stressed the need for Christ to suffer death in a particularly violent form as a satisfaction for the people's sins; grief, sorrow, and the compassion of Mary became sentiments attached to the new image of Crucifixion that realistically depicted Christ as a dead body that endured severe torments. It is most plausible therefore to suppose that the roots of the modern understanding of sacrifice, which Daly describes as connoting sadness and deprivation, originate in the High Medieval period when the death of Christ had

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[324] Daly, Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice (London: Y&T Clark, 2009), 26.

been transformed from the festive sacrifice of the Triumphal Redeemer to the Man of Sorrows who in his sacrifice undergoes punishment for the sake of humanity.

What we see in Abelard's *Planctus* is a development of the imagery of the martyr that in its intrinsic connection with Christ imagery follows the shift from emphasizing the elements of glory and triumph to the exposition of the emotions that emerge out of a growing attention to the suffering body. It is in these developments of the imagery of Christ and the martyr's imitation of Him that senses of sorrow and grief came to be attached to the concept of the victim. Together with the decline of actual sacrificial rituals, the concept of the victim began to be associated predominately with unjust suffering and the emotions that arose in response to it. Although Abelard writes about a Biblical story where Jephthah's daughter is presented as an object of sacrifice (in the very specific Jewish ritual of the burnt-offering), for the medieval writer it serves only as an opportunity to develop the complex emotional character of Jephthah's daughter that resonates with his personal sensibilities.

In his letter, Abelard explains that Jephthah's daughter's conduct has been memorialized in a special yearly ceremony during which the maids of Israel gather in order to "commemorate her suffering with pious laments". The author in the preamble of the lament refers to this tradition addressing the maids: "According to custom let your songs be *tearful*/ and your laments as frequent as your songs./ Let your *sorrowing faces* be unadorned/ like those who *weep and wail*;/ let golden robes be far distant/ and rich adornment far removed" (3-8). Abelard skillfully uses language to portray people in lament and an atmosphere of grief and sorrow. Time

and time again he stresses that Jephthah's daughter is a pitiful figure and that pity is connected to the sacrifice: "The virgin daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, maid to be pitied (*miseranda*), made her father's sacrifice (*patris facta victima*)" (9-10).

Abelard presents the Biblical story of Jephthah as essentially tragic, not only in the sense of events that are sorrowful and worth lamenting, but also in the sense of the literary genre. He writes that upon the return from victorious battle (and realizing that it is the general's daughter to be sacrificed), "the people exchange triumph for grief" (27). In this formulation Abelard almost repeats the definition of tragedy that was common at the time. By the 1130s, when Abelard wrote *Planctus*, Aristotle's *Poetics* was not yet rediscovered and the main source for distinguishing literary genres was *De Tragoedia et comoedia,* written by the 4th century rhetorician Donatus. In this work tragedy is defined as a story that "begins in happiness and ends in sorrow" and this definition being popularized through various treatises became standard for the middle ages.

That Abelard explicitly frames his narrative as a tragedy complicates his representation of Jephthah's daughter as a martyr. For, as Tripp York in his study of the politics of martyrdom argues, the major distinction between martyrdom and victimhood lies in their relation to the notion of tragedy:

> A victim is the subject of domination or one who suffers injustice. This carries with it connotations of tragedy, a sense of something sorrowful that should not have occurred and thus hints at senselessness or want of teleological purpose. Martyrdom is anything but tragic (in either sense of the word)… Martyrdom participates in the ongoing creation of not an alternative world but an authentic world: a world inaugurated by the cross and the empty tomb is the

> world in which the martyr resides… It is predicated on hope, as strictly speaking, tragedy must deny.[325]

Abelard deepens the tragedy of Jephthah's daughter's calamitous circumstances by dramatizing the psychological depth of her reactions and the narrator's emotional response. And in doing this, he appears as an innovator in the Western dramatic tradition. Collin Morris observed that "Greek tragedy was a drama of circumstances, whereas the Western tragedy is essentially a drama of character."[326] By creating the complex figure of Jephthah's daughter who combines features of the triumphant martyr and pitiful sufferer, Abelard stands at the origins of a Western drama of character and constructs a new understanding of the victim as a tragic figure.

All the emotional tension of his poem Abelard draws out of the request of Jephthah's daughter to postpone her sacrifice in order that she might grieve her coming death. The passage in the Bible reads as following:

> "But grant me this one request," she said. "Give me two months to roam the hills and weep with my friends, because I will never marry." "You may go," he said. And he let her go for two months. She and her friends went into the hills and wept because she would never marry. After the two months, she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed. And she was a virgin. (Judges 11:37-39)

Abelard praises the fortitude of Jephthah's daughter in her acceptance of fate, but he is equally fascinated and moved by her personal reaction, by this very humane request to delay the death in which she gives herself over to lament. He expands the laconic and emotionally dry narrative of the Bible with detailed description of Jephthah's daughter's return to and preparation for the sacrifice (lines 76-111). After two months of mourning, Jephthah's daughter returns from the "valleys and

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[325] Tripp York, *The Purple Crown: The Politics of Martyrdom* (Herald Press, 2007), 147.
[326] Moriss, *The Discovery of the Individual*, 4.

hills" and "lays aside the garments of her mourning dress." Maids help her to take a bath and wash her body and hair with scented lotions. Finally, the reader realizes that this preparation is reminiscent of a bridal preparation. While Jephthah's daughter is taking her bath, maids send a message to her father "that he should raise up the altar, stoke up the fire,/ while she herself meanwhile prepare a sacrifice (*victim*)/ fitting for God, seemly for a prince" (91-93). And later the text states the bridal status even more explicitly by referring to Jephthah's daughter's putting on richly decorated garments: "prepare her for her death as though for her wedding" (90).

Despite her calm during the preparation procedure, at the very end composure escapes Jephthah's daughter and she "…springs from her bed and waves away all that remains, saying:/'What is sufficient for one about to wed is too much for one about to die'" and urges her father to accelerate the ritual. This is a peculiar moment that Abelard invents, once again to help him in accentuating the human side of his protagonist and stressing her personal tumult. History will remember her as a noble figure (and to this image Abelard himself will refer several times in his sermons, hymns, and letters), but in the *Planctus* he wants to preserve also an image of a human being in emotional tumult, grieving her early death. In other words, the *Planctus* shows Jephthah's daughter not only as a triumphal martyr, but also as an inglorious victim.

In complicating the image of Jephthah's daughter by uniting in her figure opposing intentions – a stoic disdain for death and a very human and vulnerable request to delay the sacrifice in order to grieve her own fate – Abelard transformed

the traditional image of the martyr and through this transformation contributed to a major semantic shift in the concept of the *victim*. Utilizing new sensibilities that the Passion devotion brought to the fore, Abelard portrays the martyr as a pitiful figure that alludes to the spreading image of the Suffering Christ. This description, overlaid with traditional sacrificial language, gradually influenced the very concept of victim attaching to its meaning a sense of pitiful tragedy. Thus, the martyr figure by the time of the Reformation loses its triumphal features and begins to be associated with the victim in a figural sense – as a person who suffers unjust violence. Within the Reformation's presentation of the martyr there is no real difference between martyr and victim, or rather one is a martyr insofar as he or she is a victim. Abelard's *Planctus* presents a unique occasion to see the beginning of this semantic shift in the concept of the victim, where it is not yet separated from its original sacrificial framework, but already begins to be associated with the sense of pitiful tragedy.

CHAPTER FOUR

Why did Crucifixion Became a Primary Symbol of Christianity?

Scholars of victimhood, despite many disagreements about particulars, acknowledge the strong relation of this concept to Christian theology and more specifically to the Christological tradition that represents Christ as the suffering god-man.[327] In previous chapters I have shown that the conventional reference to this tradition in relation to the general Christian pattern is in itself problematic since such an image appears quite late and, in fact, early Christianity seems to avoid it intentionally. Thus, understanding why the image of the Suffering Christ proliferated at the particular time it did might give us better insight into the very concept of victimhood itself. If we clarify how it was formed and shaped, what purposes it served, and which events preceded its emergence, we might have a better understanding of the initial sensibilities of victimhood that are mostly obscure to us today since we are no longer immersed in those foundational contexts. But even though these contexts are no longer relevant to us, the sensibilities that they have produced remain present in the very concept of victimhood and they still continue to affect us. Therefore, it is necessary to scrutinize them.

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[327] See Jan van Dijk, "In the shadow of Christ ? On the use of the word "victim" for those affected by crime," *Criminal Justice Ethics* 27 (2008) 1:13-24; Jan va Dijk, "Free the Victim: A Critique of the Western Conception of Victimhood," *International Review of Victimology* 16 (2009) 1:1-33. Aleida Assmann, Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity (Fordham University Press, 2015), 49-71.

In his pioneering study of medieval art Emile Male, in the very beginning of the 20th century, poses what he considers the "most interesting question" for medievalists, namely: "How did it happen that in the [High Middle Ages] Christians wished to see their God suffer and die?"[328] The situation to which this question appeals is truly striking, if one takes into account how the Church throughout its history tried zealously to preserve its foundational insights and to be as conservative as possible and hostile to radical innovations; and then at a single point the Church suddenly admits a major change in its sensibility and visual representation by accepting the image of the Suffering Christ which had almost no appearance in its early history – it then becomes apparent that we are dealing with a change that is so major and its impact so widespread that in overshadowing the whole preceding tradition it turn crucifixion the very symbol of Christianity itself.

However, since the times of Male this question has remained open as scholars prefer to speak about this change in vague and ambiguous terms and even its dating is indefinite and usually described as somewhere between the 11th and 12th century. Rachel Fulton associates this imprecision with methodological difficulties – she argues that the answer to such a question requires inquiry into motivation: the researcher has to reconstruct "the thoughts, ideas, anxieties, ambitions, and dreams that the men and women of the Middle Ages brought to the

[328] Emile Mâle, *Studies in Religious Iconography: Religious Art in France, Volume 1: The Twelfth Century: A Study of the Origins of Medieval Iconography* (Princeton University Press, 1978), 82-3.

construction of their culture" and for this reason such analysis is doomed to be a speculation that puts the scholar into a vulnerable position.[329]

Fulton herself reinforces Male's question: "why, after all, did the image of Christ change *at just this time* in the history of Christian devotion, and why did it change *in the way it did*?"[330] She argues that the change happened in the first half of the 11th century and this precise dating provides a key to the explanation of its nature: it was a time – the millennium of Christ's passion - of awaiting his Second Coming, in which he would appear as a Divine Judge. These apocalyptical moods, together with disappointment about Christ's failure to return, created a specific sentiment the dominant pattern of which constitutes the frustrating inability to repay the debt to Christ who died for the sins of every human. Apart from Fulton's original and creative theory not many other medieval historians have attempted to make a serious inquiry into the question. In fact (to my knowledge) there exist only two other developed theories – the most influential and most cited is a theory that links the transformation of Christ imagery to changes in the psychology of medieval men; this theory argues that the socio-cultural transformations of the long twelfth century produced more complex sensibilities that led to the emergence of individualism, and these new sensibilities did not correspond to the impassible unmovable God represented by the image of the triumphal Christ.[331] The other theory, articulated by Thomas Bestul, argues that this transformation in the visual

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[329] Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, 3
[330] *Ibid*., 64 (emphasis by Fulton).
[331] Colin Morris, The Discovery of the Individual, 1050-1200 (University of Toronto Press, 1987); Andé Wilmart *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen âge latin: études d'histoire littéraire* (Études Augustiniennes, 1971); Richard Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (Yale University Press, 1970).

representation of Christ results from new legal practices that made torture a legitimate and routine practice.[332]

In this chapter instead of adopting the traditional approach of historians of sensibility and examining how the image of the Suffering Christ emerged, I will change the focus to ask why it became so widespread. The first thing that attracted my attention is that this visual transformation coincided in time with the so-called Papal Revolution – a period in the history of the Roman Church when it struggled with kings and emperors for political power. To my knowledge, no historian (perhaps with the exception of Aers) views these phenomena as linked; on the contrary, some of them find it necessary to state explicitly that they are unrelated.[333] Indeed, this relation seems paradoxical, for it seems that by the time the Church had reached the climax of its political influence, instead of manifesting its success, it substituted the former image of a triumphal Christ with the new imagery of a Suffering Christ. It is hard to understand how the idea of powerfulness corresponds to connotations of suffering, vulnerability and humility. But I want to show that the signifiers of victimhood were incorporated into a rethinking of the idea of authority by the theologians of the Gregorian reform in their antagonism to the idea of power performed by secular rulers and that rested, in turn, on the signifiers of glory and triumph. Thus, my analysis presents this radical change in the visual representation of Christ as a politically determined process – it helped the Church to undermine the association of a triumphal Christ with the Emperor and to constitute its own image

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[332] Thomas Bestul, Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).
[333] David Aers, "The Powers of the Holy: Religion, Politics, and Gender in Late Medieval English Culture' (Pennsylvania University Press, 2004).

of authority that would be more comprehensible and appealing to faithful Christians.

The use of the image of Christ for political objectives might sound like an anachronistic conspiracy theory, but the events of the long twelfth century were not unique in this sense. In the beginning of her groundbreaking work *From Judgment to Passion*, Rachel Fulton describes how the need to reconcile the brutal baptism of Saxons by Franks led to what she calls the "'Germanization' of the Gospel" where the suffering of Christ was emphasized and made more vivid in order to create a narrative that would present the Saxon defeat through identification with Christ as a spiritual victory. Thus, the Church already by the 9th century was able locally to alter the image of Christ from the common representation of Glorified King to the Suffering god-man for particular political aims. And there is a little doubt that in the 12th century the Church in the struggle with the Emperor century who was considered the Vicar of Christ at time turned once again to this image as a political tool.

4.1 The Papal Revolution

In order to sense the tectonic change that happened to Rome (and consequently of importance for the whole Western world) in the longer twelfth century, one needs to imagine the city as it appeared on the eve of the coming changes. When the capital city of the Roman empire fell to the Barbarians at the end of the fifth century, its population is estimated to have been at least half a million people, but by the 11th century it had shrunk drastically. "Both in terms of its

population and physical size, Rome had been reduced from its former glory to effectively a provincial backwater, with a population probably of 25,000-30,000 inhabitants, down from a peak of nearly 500,000 in the fourth century."[334] Other centers of cultural and political life blossomed and especially in the Byzantine Empire – for example, the population of Thessaloniki at that time is estimated at 150,000 and Constantinople reached almost a million citizens. Rome turned into a very provincial city with almost no political influence apart from the small region of Italian territories. The rich and splendid Constantinople was at its acme and the rulers of Italian kingdoms saw the Byzantine emperor as a model to imitate.[335]

Despite the privileged position of the Roman episcopate as the "first among equals" based on the claim of apostolic foundation (since Peter and Paul were martyred and buried in Rome) and the controversial right to crown the Holy Roman empire, Rome was on the periphery of the vibrant political life of the surrounding kingdoms and empires. Although the "symbolic capital" of the apostolic foundation allowed Rome to withstand and survive the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the sparse attempts of a few ambitious Popes (especially those of Silvester and Pashal) to convert it into real political influence did not succeed. The city mostly survived due to "religious tourism" – it earned its living from providing services and accommodations to the pilgrims and penitents.[336] By the 10th century the Roman

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[334] Kathleen Cushing, *Reform and the papacy in the eleventh century: Spirituality and social change* (Manchester University Press, 2005), 18.
[335] See Ernst Kitzinger, "The Gregorian Reform and the Visual Arts: A Problem of Method," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (1972): 87-102, where he discusses the mosaic in the Cathedral of Palermo with Roger II receiving the crown from Christ and portrayed in Byzantine garments to resemble the Eastern emperor.
[336] Cushing, *Reform and the papacy in the eleventh century*, 18.

episcopate faced a major crisis and was in decay as it became concentrated in the hands of a local aristocracy who "often fulfilled the worst expectations of contemporary chroniclers by using the papacy as a means of obtaining and consolidating political power."[337]

The international reputation of the papacy was even worse. Widely circulated reports by Liudprand of Cremona and Flodard of Rheims in the mid-tenth century told scandalous stories of Roman corruption. They were written for northern Europeans who already held a low opinion of Rome as a religious center. The apex of this corruption became the rule of the notorious Pope John XII (955-964). Starting from his accession to the apostolic see, which happened in his predecessor's lifetime, and preceded by scandal and accusations of bribery, his reign was marked by political intrigues and revolts and ended up in an infamous deposition. Some chronicles went as far as to claim that John XII organized a brothel in the Lateran Palace.[338] The general tone of these descriptions of the affairs in Rome at the end of 10th – the beginning of the 11th centuries show the state of deep crisis and degeneration both in the social and moral spheres.

From that situation of stagnation, within less than a century Rome rose to the most influential institution managing the political life of all Western Christendom including its most remote regions to the point of approving the elected emperors and in some extreme cases deposing them. In 1080 it was appropriate to Pope Gregory VII to write an open letter concerning the most powerful ruler of the Western world – Henry IV: "In debarring him from the kingdom of the Germans and

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[337] *Ibid*., 22.
[338] *Ibid*., 18.

of Italy *I take away from him all royal power and dignity*. I forbid that any Christian should obey him as king, and I absolve from the promise of their oath all who have sworn to him, or shall swear, regarding his rulership of the kingdom."[339] How did a "provincial backwater" become so influential in such a short period of time? Historians view this spectacular transformation as no less than a revolution, the first European revolution, whose extraordinary feature became the fact that it happened not through revolutionary violence (although violence accompanied the events of the Papal Revolution) but first of all on paper and in the minds.[340]

If one wants to find a pure example of political theology – it is the Papal Revolution. Through theological arguments based on the interpretation of a couple of obscure citations from the Bible and the Church Fathers and a few controversial historical precedents (some of which were legends or events based on fabricated documents) a group of radically minded clerics managed to seize real political power. As Moore observers, the revolution consisted in the redefining of the position of aristocracy in the structure of medieval society that the reformed papacy succeeded to achieve.[341] In the heart of this transformation lays then a specific rhetoric that allowed clerics to subject the political power of aristocracy to the moral authority that they claimed to themselves. That authority was later

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[339] *Reg.* 7.14a, Ernest Henderson, Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages (London: George Bell and Sons, 1905), 390.
[340] Norman Cantor, *The Civilization of the Middle Ages: A Completely Revised and Expanded Edition of Medieval History* (Harper Perennial, 1994); Harold Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Harvard University Press, 1983); Eugene Rosenshtock-Hussey, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man* (Wipf& Stock Pub, 2013); Robert I. Moore, *The First European Revolution: c. 970-1215* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).
[341] Moore, *The First European Revolution*, 88-9

transformed into governmental principles and implemented through a network of bureaucratic institutions. As Berman notes, in this way the body politics created by the Catholic Church became the prototype of the modern state.[342]

During the period from 1924 to 1937 Augustin Fliche published the groundbreaking three-volume work *La Reforme gregorienne*, that for decades established Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) as initiator and leader of the Church reform movement.[343] The reform itself was intended to bring changes to the moral integrity of the clergy – the issue of simony (the act of selling church offices and roles) was of especial concern for the clerics. However, the implementation of the reform faced strong resistance from the local authorities who at that time had the right to appoint bishops and who often used this right for their own political purposes. Thus, the efforts of the reformers to enforce these changes led to a struggle for the independence of clergy from secular powers and, consequently, to the growing influence of Rome. Eventually the reform redefined the role of Rome in respect of other episcopacies and also secular powers and resulted in the major culture-political changes that are associated with the Papal revolution.

Today, despite acknowledging the great role Gregory played in that movement, most scholars date the beginning of the reform much earlier and relate it

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[342] "The Papal Revolution gave birth to the modern Western State – the first example of which, paradoxically, was the church itself […] Yet it is a paradox to call the church a modern state, since the principal feature by which the modern state is distinguished from the ancient state, as well as from the Germanic or Frankish state, is its secular character" (Harold Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Harvard University Press, 1983), 113-114).

[343] Augustin Fliche, *La réforme grégorienne*, 3 vols., Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniensis, (Louvain and Paris: H. Champion, 1924–37).

to monastic centers such as Cluny rather than Rome itself. Already in the first half of the 10th century, Odo, the abbot of Cluny, in his *Collationes* describes the decay of monasticism and the immorality and materialism of clergy, which he fiercely criticizes. However, there is more than just a description of the poor state of morality in the monasteries. Dawson notes that a striking feature of Odo's treatise is his criticism of social justice. Odo accuses the rich and powerful of abuse of power and oppression of the poor. "You have only to study the books of antiquity to see that the most powerful are always the worst. Worldly nobility is due not to nature but to pride and ambition. If we judged by realities we should give honor not to the rich for the fine clothes they wear but to poor who are the makers of such things – for the banquets of the powerful are cooked in the sweat of the poor."[344] Odo's view is that it is the Church that needs to take care of the poor and therefore it has to restore its moral authority since those who are in power discredited themselves and thus unable to perform that task.

In the next century the call for the renovation of the Church's moral authority was voiced in even sharper form by the "engine of the Reform" – Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida (d. 1061). His assault on the powerful and rich is no longer based on generalizations (as in Odo), but indicates a precise problem – the low morality of the clergy isthe result of lay investiture; in other words, while local authorities have the right to appoint ecclesiastical officials and use this right for their benefit by appointing suitable people or simply selling such appointments, there is no way for the Church to perform and live up to high moral standards. In his principal work

[344] *Coll*. III, 26-30. Cit in Christopher Dawson, *Religion and Culture* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 146.

Against Simonists (1057), the "earliest and ablest, and the most extreme statement of the program of the reformers", Humbert introduced simony not as a sin (which was common then), but a heresy in so far as it subordinates the spiritual to the material.[345] For him lay investiture is an "usurpation of sacramental function by unqualified rulers."[346] Therefore, Humbert calls for the radical revision of traditional division between *rex* and *sacredos*, that presupposes the subjugation of clerics to the layman and the concentration of actual power in the hands of unordain people.[347] But since spiritual powers are superior to the temporal, they should guide and rule. "Our Emperor is Christ," writes Humbert and sketches the main paths that the coming struggle for clerical independence would take in the next few centuries.[348]

Humbert came to Rome in 1048 only two years after the dramatic actions taken by the German King Henry III in the ecclesiastical affairs of Rome. At that time three rivaling Popes – Benedict IX, Sylvester III, and Gregory VI - claimed the Apostolic See to themselves with different groups supporting each candidate. Henry intervened and on 20th of December 1046 he held a court in Sutri where he deposed all three Popes while also promoting his own candidate to be Pope Clement II. One might think that such an appointment by Henry III (at the time he wasn't even crowned as Holy Roman Emperor) would be viewed by the Reformers as the

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[345] *Ibid*., 155.
[346] Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State: 1050-1300, with selected documents* (University of Toronto Press, 1988), 35.
[347] Est et laicalis potestas tamquam pectus et brachia ad obediendum et defendendum ecclesiam valida et exetra (*Adv. Sim*. III, 235) [The lay power executes commands of the priesthood. It is obedient to the latter. Western and Eastern Emperors are arms of the Corpus Christi. (Leo IX letter written by Humbert *Acta et Scripta*, 87; See also *Adv. Sum*. II, 29; Walter Ulmann *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages* (Routledge, 2009), 268, 3ff)
[348] *Adv. Sim*. III, 29.

negative intrusion of secular powers into the sphere of *sacerdotium* that reduced papacy to complete dependence; however, all major figures of the Reform (including Humbert, Gregory VII, and Desiderius) admired Henry and saw him as a model of Christian kingship.

The high reputation of Henry III was based on the fact that his intervention paradoxically benefited the Roman Church – it finally took the papacy out of the hands of the Italian aristocracy and tightened its connections to the Northern regions where the Reform movement had emerged. The introduction of a series of non-Italian Popes significantly improved the prestige of Rome and increased its international influence.[349] With Leo IX who invited many reform-minded clerics (such as Humbert) to Rome, the movement firmly settled in Rome and ceased to be just a monastic movement. "The introduction of this foreign element into the Curia had a revolutionary effect on the Papacy, which became the hierarchical center and organ of leadership for the reforming movement. The reform of the Church was no longer the aim of scattered groups of ascetics and idealists; it became the official policy of the Roman Church."[350] These changes soon reached a critical mass that resulted in an open struggle between the Church and secular powers.

The so-called conflict between the Church and the State (which is again misleading as there is no State in the proper sense of this notion at that time and therefore it is rather a conflict between the Holy Roman emperors and the reform minded papacy and clergy) began with the Investiture controversy between Pope

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[349] Clement II (1046-1047), Damasius II (1047) Leo IX (1049-1054), Victor II (1055-1057), and Stephan IX (1057-1059).
[350] Dawson, *Religion and Culture,* 154.

Gregory VII and King Henry IV in 1075. The controversy was resolved in 1122 by the Concordat of Worms, but the struggle over political power between Emperors and the Pope that it provoked continued up to the death of Pope Boniface VIII in 1303. The question is how the Roman Church was able to persuade the Western world that its exclusive position allowed it to manage the political life of surrounding kingdoms, collect taxes from them and request military intervention.

The role of the Roman Church in global affairs in the 12-13th centuries is striking. By the 13th century when it reached the climax of its political influence Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) was able to declare that the Apostle Peter had been given given "not only the universal church but the whole world to govern" and this right he passed onto subsequent Popes.[351] Around 1160 a canonist remarked that "the Pope is the true emperor, and the Emperor is his vicar."[352] Ullmann concludes that at this time any Christian royal power in the West could be exercised as long as it accepted the ultimate rule of the Pope.[353] "In order to enjoy St. Peter's protection, the King or Prince had to surrender his land to full papal ownership – 'jus et proprietatem beati Petri' – and receive it back as a fiefdom, so that he became legally an usufructuary."[354] Thus from the formal declaration of its supremacy, Rome was able to achieve during the Papal Revolution a formal acknowledgment of its position and in this way to transform abstract principles into governmental praxis.

4.2 The Early Sources

[351] Cit in Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State: 1050-1300*, 132.
[352] John H. Mundi, *Europe in the High Middle Ages 1150 – 1300* (Routledge, 2000), 222.
[353] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 283.
[354] *Ibid*., 333

The idea of the supremacy of Rome was not the invention of the reformed papacy in the 11th century; it appeared quite early – already Irenaeus in the second century wrote of its *principalitas* over the other churches.[355] When during the Synod of Constantinople in 381 the Byzantine empire attempted to claim its genealogical inheritance from Old Rome and therefore its primacy over all Christian churches, Rome answered that its church was founded by the commission given to St. Peter by Christ; and while Constantinople had no apostolic foundation, the Roman Church was founded by the two most important apostles.[356] Therefore, according to Roman clerics their primacy in ecclesiastical issues could not be contested either by Constantinople or by any other church.

The tension between the Roman church and that of Constantinople also had another important dimension. In the Byzantine Empire the church was highly integrated into the political sphere of the Empire; traditionally, beginning with Constantine the Great, theology was an imperial policy to the point that it wasthe Emperor who called and presided over synods. However, the slow disintegration of imperial authority in the West gave rise to the relative independence (both political and theological) of the Roman Church. Thus, the tension between Rome and Constantinople assumed the character of a conflict between the Church and the Emperor who personified the State or what would be designated later as "royal" or

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355 "For it is a matter of necessity that every church should agree with [Roman] Church, on account of its preeminent authority [potiorem principalitatem]." *Adv. Haer*. III. 3.2 (Irenaeus, "Against Heresies" in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Hendrickson Publishing, 1996): 309-567, 415).

356 Ulmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 5. See also Erich Caspar, *Geshishte des Papsttums* (J.C.B. Mohr, 1930).

"secular" powers.[357] Within this context the excommunication of the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius by the Milanese Bishop Ambrose in 390 and the following public penance accepted by the Emperor shows the strong position of the Roman church during the early Christian period. In contrast to the Ambrosian case, the controversy between the Archbishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, and the Byzantine court that happened not long after, resulted in the exile and death of the former. The case of Ambrose created a precedent that played a major role in the further theorizations of papal supremacy over secular powers.

In the following century two Popes – Leo I (440-461) and Gelasius I (492-496)-- advanced the claims of the Roman Church's supremacy. Leo was one of the first to stress the theme of apostolic succession as an argument for the superior position of Rome among the other churches. Walter Ulmann notes that in speaking of himself as functioning on behalf of St. Peter, Leo not only emphasizes the apostolic succession as an institution that is unique to the Roman episcopate, but also claims that asthe successor of Peter he alone is qualified to rule the universal Church.[358] Leo had advanced the claim that Christ in giving the power of keys (and thus power to bind and loose) to St. Peter alone had made a personal commission. Therefore, in the act of apostolic succession St. Peter handed this jurisdictional power onto the subsequent Bishops of Rome. Another important development

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[357] It should be immediately acknowledged that it is hardly proper to speak about conflict of the church and state in the Middle Ages since there is no state in its modern form (that is, the state understood as a 'sovereign power with developed system of legislation, taxation, and administration according to rational system of jurisprudence). "The only theoretical defense of political form (which in the Middle Ages was monarchy) was a theological - king is minister of God on earth" (Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 2).
[358] Ulmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 2.

effected by Leo in respect to the relation between the Church and the Emperor was an understanding of the Church as Corpus Christi – the Body of Christ - and the Ppapacy as its head; therefore, according to this doctrine, the Emperor was merely a member of Corpus Christi and his function was to be a protector of the Church, not the ruler.[359] This doctrine advanced the earlier ideas of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who during his disagreement with the Eastern Emperor Theodosius wrote that the Emperor was the son, internal to the Church, not the master of the universal Church: "Imperator enim intra ecclesiam, non supra ecclesiam est."[360]

In 494, Pope Gelasius I wrote the famous letter *Duo Sunt* to Emperor Anastasius I Dicorus, in which he attempted to clarify and assert his position in relation to the Emperor:

> There are two powers, august Emperor, by which this world is chiefly ruled, namely, the sacred authority of the priests [*auctoritas sacrata*] and the royal power [*regalis potestas*]. Of these that of the priests is the more weighty, since they have to render an account for even the kings of men in the divine judgment... In the reception and proper disposition of the heavenly mysteries you recognize that you should be subordinate rather than superior to the religious order, and that in these matters you depend on their judgment rather than wish to force them to follow your will. [361]

This letter became one of the most important documents for the subsequent struggle between these two parties. It occurs time and time again in the conceptualizations of both reformers and their opponents: for the Reformers it is valuable since it announces the superiority of sacred authority, and their opponents

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[359] Leo I *Ep* 156, 3-5.
[360] Leo I *Ep* 21, 36 (PL XVI, 1007).
[361] Gelasius I *Ep*. 12, 2 Gelaisus, "Letter to Anastasius Augustus" in Paul Allen, ed. *The Letters of Gelaisus I (492-496): Pastor and Micro-Manager of the Church of Rome* (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2014): 74-5, 74.

refer to it because of their claim to the autonomy of royal power over that of the sacred.

What did Gelasius have in mind when he contrasted *priestly authority* and *royal power*? The key distinction of Gelasius' conceptualization lies between *auctoritas* and *potestas*; a distinction that is somewhat obscure for a contemporary reader, because nowadays authority is associated with authoritarian regimes that are notable for limitations of freedoms, the abuse of power and tyranny. Hannah Arendt in her essay "What is Authority?" notices that "the very term [authority] has become clouded by controversy and confusion."[362] She argues that for the ear of contemporary man authority sounds suspicious; since it demands obedience authority is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence. However, she writes, authority is alien to both coercion and persuasion: "where force is used, authority itself has failed."[363]

Theodor Mommesen in his classical studies of Roman constitutional law describes *auctoritas* as "more than advice and less than command, an advice which one may not safely ignore."[364] Following Mommsen, Arendt considers *auctoritas* as a specifically Roman political concept that renders legitimation of power based on the past, on the "foundation of Rome and the greatness of ancestors." Explaining Cicero's formula *"Cum potestas in populo auctoritas in senatu sit."* ("While power resides in the people, authority rests with the Senate"[365]), Arendt explains that in

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[362] Arendt, "What is Authority" in Between *Past and Future* (Penguin Classics, 2006): 91-141, 91.
[363] *Ibid*, 93.
[364] Theodor Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, Vol. III. (Nabu Press, 2012(1887)), 1034.
[365] *De leg.* 3. 28 cit. in Arendt "What is Authority?", 122.

Rome the Senate is represented by the elders (*paters*) who had obtained it by descent and by transmission (tradition) from those who had laid the foundation for all things to come.

However, this division was abandoned with the transformation of Rome from Republic to Empire. As *Res Gestae* – the funerary inscription of the first Roman Emperor testifies – Augustus in assuming the title of Princeps willingly returns *potestas* (that was granted to him earlier as to a member of the Second Triumvirate) to the Senate and people. But in relinquishing the *potestas* of the Triumvirate, he does not give up *auctoritas*, which he claimed to possess in a higher degree than any other Roman.[366] Augustus claimed that he was equal to every Roman in *potestas* but surpassed everyone in *auctoritas.* And precisely this possession of authority allowed him to assume the unprecedented role of Princeps. In other words, Augustus was able to consolidate power not as a function of permanent offices or positions but rather because of the fact that he himself possessed such a great *auctoritas*.

Rossenstock-Hussey in describing Augustus' employment of the concept of *auctoritas* states that this usage aims to emphasize the moral leadership of the Princeps. Augustus holds the highest office in the Empire because of his dignity – he is the first in the hearts of his countrymen.[367] The very etymology of *auctoritas*. namely, in that is related to the verb to increase (*augere*), supports such a reading; a person was able to gain or lose *auctoritas* depending on his or her moral actions.[368] Therefore, Erich Caspar asserts that *potestas* in Gelasisus' letter meant a sovereign

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[366] *Res gestae*, 34.3 cit in Alice Chapman *Sacred Authority and Temporal Power in the Writings of Bernard of Clairvaux* (Brepolis Publishers), 20.
[367] Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution*, 102.
[368] Chapman, *Sacred Authority and Temporal Power*, 21.

power backed by real military and economic force, while *auctoritas* was merely moral and spiritual superiority.[369]

According to Caspar, Gelasius' division between *potestas* and *auctoritas* did not have any of the senses that later interpretations ascribed to them; in other words, Gelasius did not aim to challenge the sovereign power of the Byzantine emperor, but rather reminded him that in moral questions the Church had higher authority than the royal court. The extreme reading suggests that the division is merely a rhetorical device of no significance, used by Gelasius simply to avoid repetition of words that mean power.[370]

Walter Ullmann disagrees with Caspar's reading. He suggests that Gelasius in his distinction refers to the Roman law definitions with which he was certainly familiar . Thus, *auctoritas* is used in the sense of inherited right to rule, while *potestas* – iss a delegated executive power to carry out instructions: "*auctoritas* is the faculty of shaping things creatively and in a binding manner, whilst *potestas* is the power to execute what the *auctoritas* has laid down."[371] Understood in this sense the distinction constitutes one of the first proclamations of Papal supremacy. Therefore, it is not surprising that later Reformists rely heavily on the letter of Gelasius.

Regardless of which reading we prefer – Caspar's or Ullmann's – the letter perhaps testifies more about the growing discrepancy between Eastern and Western political theories and practices than of any struggle between *regnum* and

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[369] Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums*, II; p 65-71.
[370] A.K. Ziegler "Pope Gelasius I and His Teaching on the Relation of Church and State," *Catholic Historical Review*, XXVII (1943): 412-37.
[371] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 21.

sacerdotium. It might well be that the Emperor Anastasius (in concord with Caspar's interpretation) did not read the letter of the Pope as a threat to his sovereign power, even if Gelasius had the intention, in fact, of proclaiming Papal supremacy, simply because the reality of Constantinopolitan political culture was already very different from that of Rome, and the juridical nuances of the letter might well have been impenetrable to the Emperor. Both the word *auctoritas* and its conceptual reference belong uniquely to the Roman political realm. Arendt notices "neither the Greek language nor the varied political experience of Greek history shows any knowledge of authority and the kind of rule it implies."[372] Moreover, when the Greek Cassius Dio (155-235) in writing a history of Rome attempted to render this notion into Greek, he found no suitable notion.[373] Therefore, it is doubtful that the Greek-speaking Emperor Anastasius would really get the nuances of the Gelasian distinction.

The other problem in understanding Gelasius' views by the Constantinopolitan court is the fact that in the letter he reliess on a specific Roman tradition that was alien to Byzantium. He specifies that both powers originate in the figure of Christ, who was the last *Rex et Pontifex* (King and Priest) and who divided them by "marvelous dispensation." Therefore, asserts Gelasius after Christ "no emperor had arrogated to himself the title of pontiff and no pontiff had claimed the

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[372] Arendt, "What is Authority," 104. Citing Sophocles she claims that for Greeks "a polis belonging to one man is no polis" (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 737)

[373] "…[T]he senators would proceed with their deliberations and their decision would be recorded, though it would not go into effect as if regularly passed, but instead, their action was what was termed *auctoritas*, the purpose of which was to make known their will. For such is the general force of this word; to translate it into Greek by a term that will always be applicable is impossible." (*Roman History*, LI, 4-5).

height of royal power."[374] But the reality of the Byzantine Empire did not correspond to this conceptualization – the Emperor addressed Bishops as his "dearest brothers," presided over the Councils, was considered "divine" and most Emperors kept the title of *pontifex*. This tradition also goes back to Augustus who was the first to apply the title of *pontifex maximus* to himself as emperor. Chapman clarifies that in assuming this title Augustus fused sacred functions and political ones and such a fusion became a part of the imperial framework of the empire. Before this only members of the Roman priesthood, endowed with *auctoritas,* were to execute religious functions and actually had the right to use the title *pontifices*. After Augustus, all subsequent Emperors assumed the title and executed the sacred function of high priests until the Emperor of the Western Empire Gratian renounced this at the end of the 4th century.[375] However, in the East even the current to Gelasius emperor was addressed as *pontifex inclytus* (glorious priest).[376]

The only other document that was invoked in the debates about Papal supremacy more often than Gelasius' *Duo Sunt* was the *Donation of Constantine*. This decree was forged in the 8th century (supposedly in order to assist Pope Zachary in negotiations with the Franks in the attempt to escape dependency upon the Byzantine Empire) and it states that Emperor Constantine transferred authority over the Western Empire to Pope Sylvester. In this way, the Donation explains the emergence of the Eastern Empire and the decision of Constantine to build a new capital – it would be inappropriate for an Emperor to reside in the same place as the

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[374] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 24.
[375] Chapman, *Sacred Authority*, 17-18.
[376] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 24.

Head of the Christian world. The document endows the Apostolic See with "power, and dignity of glory, and vigor, and honor imperial" and assures its "supremacy over the four principal sees… as well as over all the churches of God in the whole earth".[377] The Donation of Constantine impressed the Franks and later the Germans who issued similar decrees to confirm papal possessions in Italy.

However, this document was rarely used up until the 13th century. In the initial stages of the Papal Revolution it makes almost no appearance. This fact can be explained by the internal weakness that is evident in the line of the document's argumentation– namely, that it makes the supreme position of the Pope Still dependent on f the will of the Emperor; without the Emperor's wish the transference of the Western empire to the Pope would not be possible. Thus, the power of the Emperor is greater. The Donation was thought to be an original document up until the 15th century (although the authenticity of the document was questioned earlier) when Italian scholar Lorenzo Valla convincingly showed that it was forged.

4.3 Gregory VII

Let us return to the events of the Papal Revolution and the figure of Gregory VII. The previous brief excursus into the history of Papal supremacy claims was intended to show that despite Gregory's reputation as an innovative reformer, he

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[377] "The Donation of Constantine as Given in Part One Division XCVI, Chapters 13 nd 14 of Gratian's *Decretum*" in Peter Elmer, Nick Webb, Roberta Wood eds. *The Renaissance in Europe: An Anthology* (Yale University Press, 2000), 21.

was not original in the question of the relation between *sacerdotium* and *regnum* but skillfully relied on an already existent tradition. Gregory's most important contribution was not the new understanding of the role of the Roman Church, but the implementation of hierocratic tenets, or as Ullmann puts it: "translation of abstract principles into concrete governmental actions."[378] But in the course of this implementation there was also a need for the Reformers to redefine what the "sacred authority" of Church might mean and to fill this with concrete and evident meaning.

By the 11th century the universal claims of Rome were well known both to its allies and opponents; however, none of them took these claims seriously. When Otto III in 1001 confirmed to the Papacy dominion over the lands that traditionally had been subject to it, he took the libertyof reminding Rome of its high mission and stressed that the reputation of its Bishops did not accordwith such high claims: "We hold Rome to be the head of the world, and acknowledge the Roman Church as the mother of all churches, *though by the carelessness and ignorance of its bishops that clarity of its claims has long been obscured*."[379] When in 1073 Hildebrandt was consecrated as Gregory VII, Papal power, despite a few decades of reinforcement of Roman influence under Reform-minded Popes, was still more symbolic than actual. Gregory had little to suggest over and above the great history and recent international consolidation of reformists in Rome. The Apostolic See itself did not represent any real political weight in international affairs.

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[378] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 262.
[379] *DO* III, 389 cit. in Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages* c. 800-1056 (Routledge, 2014), 280.

Therefore, a cautious attitude towards royal powers characterizes the beginning of Gregory's pontificate. The commitment and respect that Gregory had for the Salian royal family and especially for the Emperor Henry III, whom he had personally known and whom he considered as an exemplar of the Christian king, gave him hope that his son, Henry IV, would be able to continue the "state of concord" between the powers. In a letter to Rudolf of Swabia, he asserts that "the priestly and imperial powers should be bound together in a unity based upon concord" and he compares the two powers to the two eyes of a man that govern his body.[380] Moreover, when Gregory was planning the Crusade in 1074, he thought that Henry IV as a protector of the Church would occupy his own place while he himself would leave with the expedition to the East.

But very soon Gregory's rhetoric changed. Already in 1076 in a letter to Hermann of Metz there is a new turn - no concord anymore; instead we have the pronunciation of the hierocratic doctrine where royal power is subjugated to ecclesiastical authority. The most concise and powerful version of this doctrine appears later in a letter to clerical and lay magnates of Flanders:

> Although we are a sinner and unequal to bearing so great a burden, the charge and care of all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28) have nevertheless been entrusted by God to our mean self. For the Lord Jesus Christ appointed St. Peter to be the prince of the apostles, giving him the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the power of binding and loosing in heaven and upon earth. Upon him he also build his church and committed his sheep to him to be fed (Matt 16:18-19, John 21:17). From this time [i.e. when Christ commissioned Peter], this participation and authority have passed through St. Peter to all who have succeeded to his throne, or who will succeed to it until the end of the world, by divine privilege and by hereditary right. By reason of our own succession to his chair, it is incumbent upon us by

[380] Gregory VII *Reg*. 1.19.

> inescapable necessity to help all who are oppressed and to fight, even to death if it should be necessary, against the enemies of God in defense of righteousness until they are converted with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17).[381]

Here Gregory repeats the basic arguments for the supremacy of the Roman Church – the apostolic foundation and succession that provide a heredity right for ruling "all churches" and he considers it a "great burden" entrusted directly by God. Moreover, he sets an agenda of his rule – to help all who are oppressed and to fight against the enemies of God. The last claim is very important as now it is the Pope who decides who is an enemy of God and what actions must be taken against him and not only by Rome itself, but by all of Christendom as he (the Pope) is the head of "all churches" and the Church is in charge of the state. Gregory often reminded various kings of his right over their dominions and their responsibility to be protectors of the Church: he wrote to Philip I of France that his kingdom as well as his soul were in the power of St. Peter and St. Peter's functions are assumed by the Pope.[382] To the King of Ireland - that Christ established St. Peter over all kingdoms of the world 'super omnia mundi regna constituit.'[383]

The enemy of God could become Emperor, King, or Bishop – anyone who does not agree with the claims of the universal supremacy of Rome and its right to intervene in the political domain of local authorities. The most dramatic struggle occurred between Gregory VII and the German King Henry IV. Henry and his supporters were outraged by the attempt of the Reformers to take away the King's right to invest bishops and in their rejection of papal claims they went to the point

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[381] Gregory VII *Reg*. 9.35
[382] Gregory VII *Reg.* 8. 20
[383] See Ulmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 279-280, 1ff.

of pronouncing Gregory an usurper of the Apostolic See, illegitimately elected and a false monk. The pro-imperial synod under Henry IV ended up proclaiming Gregory's deposition. On the other side, Gregory excommunicated Henry's supporters and the King himself and went so far as to depose him. These events began the long history of struggle between the Roman Emperors and Popes. German troops invaded Italy and for almost four years laid siege to Rome. Eventually Henry was able to capture most of Rome and Gregory had to flee to Castello di Angelo across the Tiber. Later with help from the Normans Gregory was able to regain control over Rome, but soon the supporters of the Emperor and local aristocracy that was hostile to the Normans forced Gregory to leave the city and the last year of his life he spent in Montecassino and Salerno where he died in 1085. But the struggle between Emperor and Papacy did not end with the death of Gregory or Henry, but continued with various degrees of intensity for another two centuries.

Gregory formulated the framework of the "hierocratic tenets" in a famous short document – *Dictatus Papae* only a few years after he became Pope. This document presents a set of 27 concise claims that declare Papal supremacy and concentration of power in the hands of Pope. Among other things, *Dictatus Papae* states that: only the Pope can with right be called 'Universal'" (2); he alone may use the Imperial Insignia (8); all princes shall kiss the feet of the Pope alone (9); it may be permitted to him to depose emperors (12); no chapter and no book shall be considered canonical without his authority (17); he himself may be judged by no one (19). This document was never published. Some scholars believe it was a kind of note (or a table of contents) for a longer treatise. In any case, *Dictatus Papae*

provides an important insight into Gregory's thinking and shows that his ideas were audacious and "exploratory and developing," rather than rigid and stable.

The idea of having a small manual that states the authority of the Apostolic See with support from the Church Fathers writings and decrees of the early Popes came to Gregory even before he became Pope. In 1059 while he was archdeacon, he asked Peter Damiani to compose such a manual.[384] This request was perhaps triggered by the events of the same year in Milan, where local clergy were strongly resistant to the reform initiated by Rome that threatened its relative independence from the Pope. Damiani and Anselm I of Lucca were sent as legates to Milan by the Pope to enforce the Papal policy. After that mission Damiani came up with a small treatise *De privelegio Romanae ecclesiae* ("On the privilege of the Roman Church") that provided arguments Roman supremacy based on early Church documents.

Gregory was concerned not only with the legitimation of the hierocratic doctrine through authoritative texts; very soon he realized also the power of symbols. Note that in his aspiration to be the monarch of the whole world he acknowledges the role of insignia (as Dictatus Papae states, the "[Pope] alone may use the imperial insignia"). From the second half of the 11th century Popes began to wear crowns as a part of their attire despite their having no liturgical significance. It is interesting to contrast this developmentwith the moment in the Donation of Constantine when the Emperor wished to put the crown on Sylvester's head, but the Pope refused to wear it. In the promulgation of Papal court etiquette – mandatory kissing of the feet (similar to the Proskynesis to the Eastern Emperor) and wearing

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[384] *Ep*. 65; 10-15.

insignia – the Pope declared and visualised his universal power. The tradition of using imperial symbolism blossomed in the reformed-minded Popes in the 12th century – especially with Innocent II whose public appearances were remarkably pompous and spectacular.[385]

The more the Papacy obtained political influence the harder it was for common people (and perhaps for clerics as well) to distinguish between *sacerdotium* and *regnum*. After Bernard of Clairvaux promoted the idea that the Pope holds both secular and spiritual swords, the traditional division of two powers was broken. It was no longer possible to talk about the moral superiority or the "sacred authority of priest" over "royal power" because by the middle of the 12th century the Pope became almost indistinguishable from the Emperor. By the 13th century it was normal for the Pope to be titled the Vicar of Christ despite the long tradition of reserving this title for Emperors alone.[386] Therefore, the struggle between the papacy and royal powers was so dramatic - it was a struggle for identity. The core of this identity was the figure of Christ since the only possible legitimation of power was theological. It was not enough for the Pope to appropriate the tile of Vicar of Christ – the image of Christ had to be altered in order to dissociate it from the sphere of the Emperor. The Reformed Church required a new image of Christ - an image that would unite people and one that would accommodate the current needs of believers who in the midst of current vicissitudes did not feel connected to the imperial image of the Triumphant Christ.

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[385] See Mary Stroll, "Innocent II: Imperial Pope" in Symbols As Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest (Brill, 1991): 180-192.

[386] Even at the early stages of the Reform movement Popes were addressed as the Vicars of Peter.

Janet Nelson in a slightly different context calls this phenomenon a "crisis of theodicy."[387] She argues that the suffering and alienation that the violent events of Middle Ages had brought into the lives of common people raised a frustration that the current system of beliefs could not accommodate. In the 11th century changes that ruined the stable political and economic structures of the Carolingian era, the general disintegration of the authority of state, produced a great number of marginal individuals who could not find their place within the old institutions.[388] This dissatisfaction with the response of religious institutions to these challenges resulted in the emergence of new monastic orders and various religious lay movements.

Therefore, in adopting the image of the Suffering Christ of private meditations (that had already become popular among progressive religious groups) as its new symbol, the Roman Church succeeded in producing an appealing and inclusive image of Christ that was not connected to imperial rhetoric and, in fact, undermined it. The major impact of the political theology of the High Medieval Period is perhaps rendering public the image of Christ that had been private and intimate and, in this sense, politicized it. The appropriation of the image of the Suffering Christ by the Roman Church assisted in strengthening of its universal claim. Tired of conflict, wars, and uncertainties people felt attracted and connected to the image of a vulnerable and suffering God – it was a symbol that united people in rivaling kingdoms by presenting them as part of a larger Christian society. The

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[387] Janet Nelson, "Society, Theodicy and the Origins of Heresy" Studies in Church History 8 (1972): 65-77.
[388] See report of prelates of Rheims at Trosle (Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, 143-144).

identification of the whole organized society with the Church through the image of the Suffering Christ according to Southern, became "the fundamental feature which distinguishes the Middle Ages from earlier and later periods of history."[389]

4.5 Politics of the Image

But how can an image achieve such a major impact? Political theology in the sense of critical theory is primarily grounded in textual analysis – almost all major works in this field from Schmitt and Peterson to Kantorovicz and Agamben are preoccupied with the interpretation of theological texts and concerned with how the ideas expressed in them have affected our political thinking. Undoubtedly, the treatises and letters of the most creative minds of the Middle Ages that inspired debates on the Eucharist, the relationship between *Regnum* and *Sacerdotium*, and the nature of Christ played a major role in bringing Western intellectual history toa new level. However, the impact of these works itself should not be overstated: very often they had limited (if any) circulation and the general public was mostly unaware of the ongoing intellectual discussions. Very few people of that epoch could read and therefore art, despite the problematic relations between image and text, was a major tool of dissemination of ideas. The famous formula attributed to Gregory the Great - "pictures are books of the illiterate"[390] - well describes the

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[389] Richard Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Penguin Books, 1990), 16.

[390] Letter of Pope Greory I (590-604) – to Serenus, bishop of Marseilles "it is one thing to adore a picture, and another to learn from the story of a picture what should be adored. For

attitude of the Church to the issue. Therefore, the Long Twelfth Century was the age of the rise of visual culture – the proliferation of old media such as mosaics, frescoes, and statues was supplemented with the growth of relatively new media– such as illustrated manuscripts and painted crosses. The challenge is to decode the political theology that stands behind them for if the ideas had emerged in books, they were brought to the public, in actual fact, in the form of art.

It should be immediately acknowledged that the issue of images in Christianity has a long and complicated history. Given the non-representable nature of the faith in the Judaism, it is remarkable how Christianity (especially in the East), being its inheritor, developed a complex visual theory of sacred images, known as icons. This became possible because the coming of Christ was understood as the materialization of the un-representable God: in this way, the Incarnation served as a legitimation of sacred images. Defending the veneration of icons John Damascus in the 8th century wrote: "In other ages God had not been represented in images, being incorporate and faceless. But since God has now been seen in the flesh, and lived among men, I represent that part of God which is visible."[391]

The Roman Church never fully accepted the Byzantine theory of sacred images, which were supposed to be venerated, and instead developed its own. In doing so, as Hans Belting argues, it ceased to see images as icons of power, and instead thought of them as merely representations.[392] However, images in the

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what scripture is to those who can read, a picture makes present to the illiterate who look at it…For common people painting is the equivalent of reading."

[391] Damascus *Contra imaginum calumniatores*, I, 16.

[392] Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (University of Chicago Press, 1997).

Roman Church functioned not only as pedagogical visualizations, but also as a political agenda.[393] Moreover, the very appearance of the Roman Church on the political stage started withits policy regarding images. The historical circumstances that created the controversy between the Carolingians and the Byzantines on the nature of sacred images in the 8th century allowed Rome to distinguish itself from both sides and in doing so to impose its role as arbiter between two rivaling kingdoms. In other words, Rome established itself as a political unit through the politics of art.

When in 727 the decrees of the Byzantine Emperor Leo III launched the first iconoclasm, Pope Gregory II refused to accept them. This added to the growing tension between Rome and Constantinople. In seeking to free itself from the Eastern Empire that was losing its ability to maintain lands in the West (but also aiming to free itself from taxes to Byzantium), Rome attempted to secure support from the

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[393] This issue raised a debate at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in 1987 between medievalists Daly Kinney and Mary Stroll. Despite the fact that Kinney had written a dissertation discussing (among other things) the political connotations of the imagery of the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere rebuilt by Innocent II, during the conference she questioned the possibility of a historian reconstructing propaganda from the image, claiming that "there is no plausible path from patronage to propaganda." (Stroll, *Symbols as Power*, 170 ff 29) In contrast to Kinney, Mary Stroll strongly argued in favor of such reading. In her major work *Symbols as Power*, she explores mosaics, frescoes, and thrones as media of papal propaganda, showing their straight-forward political agenda. In particular, a few chapters are devoted to Innocent II, who "in an effort to demonstrate that he was the true Pope… metamorphosed from a modest legate into a regal monarch" (*Symbols as Power*, 180) Innocent II utilized pageantry and ceremony to impress spectators with the majesty of his office: "He never missed an occasion to celebrate the *dies coronae*, and each major event became an opportunity to stage a colorful pageant" (*ibid*). Stroll notes that Innocent's enthusiasmfor royal decorations and ceremonies stood in sharp contrast to "the ideas of austerity and simplicity cherished by Bernard and other Northern Reformers" on whose support Innocent's papacy depended (*Ibid.,* 169). In Innocent's actions Stroll sees the launching of "a program of propagandistic art designed to promote his view of papal superiority both in *regnum* and *sacerdotium*" (*Ibid.*, 163).

Franks. When in 751 the Lombards seized Ravenna cutting Rome from the Byzantine Empire, Pope Zachary crowned Pepin, and the Franks invaded Italy. After defeating the Lombards, Pepin granted the lands previously belonging to the Duchy of Rome to the Pope. In 781, Pepin's son – Charlemagne - codified the regions over which the Pope would be temporal sovereign: these included the Duchy of Rome, Ravenna, Pentapolis, Benevento, Tuscany, Corsica, Lombardy and a number of Italian cities. The Papal States became an independent political unity connected with the Carolingians, but Rome also managed to keep good relations with Byzantium.

In 787 the Second Council of Nicea put an end to the first Byzantine iconoclastic controversy. Sacred images were reinstalled in churches and the veneration of icons became yet again ordinary religious practice in the Eastern Christendom. The papal legates, who represented the Roman Church, signed decrees formally accepting their regulations. However, when the decrees reached the Carolingian court, they provoked a negative reaction that was expressed in the so-called *Opus Caroli regis* – a treatise written primarily by Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans (c. 750/60–821). Nowadays, scholars agree that the Carolingian response to the Nicean Council was caused predominantly because of misunderstanding prompted by the poor translation from the Greek. Theodulf as well as the whole of Charlemagne's court mistakenly believed that Nicea II proclaimed worship (reserved only to God Himself)of the images of Christ and saints. Nevertheless, Theodulf was also cautious not to accept the iconoclast position. He suggested that images in churches could be used as "ornamentation" and as a "memory of past

deeds"; therefore, writes Teodulf, "neither do we destroy with [the iconoclasts] nor do we adore with [the iconodules]."[394]

However, Celia Chazell, after careful examination of the *Opus,* asserts that it not only misunderstanding that caused Theodulf's reaction, but also the original theory of religious images that he adhered to: "Theodulf's assault on the eastern council depends on an entire structure of thought considerably distanced from Byzantine and indeed facets of Rome's intellectual tradition"[395] Therefore, Chazelle concludes, there could be no true dialogue between the Carolingians and their opponents (including Pope Hadrian) and the *Opus Caroli regis* should be read not as a response to them, but rather as an isolated proclamation of theology. The *Opus* put Adrian in a precarious situation – on the one hand, he formally supported Nicea II; on the other,he would have not wanted to spoil friendly relations with the court of Charlemagne. Hadrian decided to shelve the manuscript and thus it did not receive any circulation. In a situation of theological tension between Carolingians and Byzantines, the Pope became the arbiter between two rivaling Empires that further helped the Roman Church to claim universal supremacy.

The emergence of Rome on the political scene was marked not only by its policy regarding images but also through the images themselves. Art historians have pointed out that from the 8th century, the Roman Church developed visual representations that would be associated with the Papacy and that distinguished it from Eastern imagery where the image of Christ was tied to the Emperor. The Papacy, in contrast to Byzantium, chose the image of Mary as its symbolic

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[394] *Opus Caroli regis*, 102, 14-17. Cit in Chazelle*, The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era*, 42.
[395] *Ibid*., 40.

representation. This image became known as Maria Regina – it features the Virgin as a celestial Queen.[396]

Maria Regina is of Byzantine origin. Images similar to the Eastern analogues showing Maria in royal byzantine garments first appear in Rome in Santa Maria Antiqua - a basilica that was attached to the palace where Byzantine officials held court until the seventh century. During the 6-7th centuries the cult of Mary was slowly integrated into Roman services and calendar thanks to the efforts of Popes with Greek backgrounds (Sergius and John VII). At the beginning of the 8th century another Greek Pope, John VII (705-7), added a further impetus to the veneration of Maria as Regina. The mosaic in the oratory in St Peter's featuring Maria Regina was created under his commission. At the feet of the crowned Virgin, there is portrayed a kneeling Pope John VII himself. In the inscription the Pope declares himself to be her savant. Stroll argues that through such a declaration John "subtly asserted that the imperial figure to whom he owed obedience was not the Byzantine emperor, but the heavenly queen."[397] From that period the Roman Church elaborated on the image of Mary as a symbol of Ecclesia identified with the institution of the Papacy. This pattern was preserved and used by the reformed Papacy.[398]

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[396] Nilgen "Maria Regina - Ein politischer Kultbildtypus?" *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 19 (1980): 1-33.; Piotr Skubiszewski "Ecclesia, Christianitas, Regnum et Sacerdotium dans l'art des X-XIs: Idées et structures des images" Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale 28, no 110 (1985): 133-180; Mary Stroll, "Maria Regina: Papal Symbol." In A. J. Duggan, ed., *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe* (London, 1997): 173–203.

[397] Mary Stroll, *Symbols As Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest* (Brill, 1991), 26.

[398] The inscription in Santa Maria Trasterere suggests that Innocent II used the image of Maria Regina as a symbol of Ecclesia that had already a well-established identification with the figure of the Pope (Stroll, *Symbols As Power,* 168-170).

One of the episodes of the long-lasting struggle between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* is known as the Besançon incident. It occurred as a short outbreak in the clash between Pope Hadrian IV and Frederick Barbarossa. The conflict arose because of the particular wording in a papal letter translated by the Emperor's counselor, but further examination revealed that the roots of the disagreement lay in the picture in the Lateran Palace that captured the moment of Lothair II's coronation. The Besançon incident provides a great example of how a picture can work as a political means and convey a particular ideology. It reveals that for the Reformed church, politics is also (and perhaps more so) a politics of image.

In 1152 Frederick Barbarossa was elected as German king. This was a time when the Papacy suffered turmoil with the Roman nobility supported by King Roger II of Sicily to the point when the current Pope Eugene III had to flee Rome and ask aid from the German king. Frederick promised to defend the Papacy and regain control over Rome in return for his coronation as Holy Roman Emperor. The first Italian campaign of Frederick in 1154-5 was successful – he conquered the northern part of Italy, besieged Rome, and hanged Arnold of Brescia, the leader of the rebels against the Pope. On the 18 June 1155 Frederick was crowned as Holy Roman Emperor in St. Peter's Basilica by Hadrian IV, who superceded the deceased Eugene III.

After his coronation, Frederick had to return to Germany to cope with the uproar in Bavaria. The retreat of Frederick put Hadrian IV in a vulnerable position and the Pope had to come to terms with his former enemies and grant them land that Frederick considered as his dominion. Such actions spoiled relations between

the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor. In order to explain his political choices and to remind Frederick of his mission to be a protector of the Church, Hadrian IV sent a letter with legates to the Emperor. The meeting took place at Besançon in 1157. In the letter Hadrian referring to his coronation of Frederick alluded to it as *beneficia* "benefits" conferred upon the Emperor. The German chancellor translated this *beneficia* in the feudal sense of the presentation of property from a lord to a vassal (fief). Frederick and his entourage were infuriated by the idea that the authority of the King should derive from the Pope. If the crowning is a *beneficium*, it is not inheritance, but a favor. And the main problem of a favor is that it can be withdrawn.

A witness of the incident – Otto of Freising – writes that the situation was compounded by the Pope's legate Rolando Bandinelli (the future Pope Alexander III) who in the midst of the conflict responded defiantly "For whom then does [the Emperor] have the empire if not from our lord the Pope?"[399] This statement nearly cost the legate his life and only the intervention of Frederick Barbarossa calmed the situation down. The disagreement, as another chronicler explained it, occurred because "some Romans" had previously asserted that "our King had possessed the imperial power over the City [Rome], and the kingdom of Italy, by gift of the Popes."[400]

It is curious that the chronicler specifies that declarations of Papal supremacy were made by the Pope's supporters "not only orally, but also in writing

[399] Ottonis, *Gesta Friderici I imperatoris,* 3. X. *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa* (Columbia University Press, 2004), 184.
[400] Ibid, 183.

and *in pictures*."[401] The author refers here to the picture of Emperor Lothar in the Lateran Palace. The image (now lost, but preserved in handwritings in the manuscripts of 16th century), according to chronicles, depicted the historical episode of the coronation of Lothair II [Fig. 22]. Under the picture there was an inscription that said: "Coming before our gates, the King vows to safeguard the City. Then, liegeman to the Pope, by him he is granted the crown". The picture is considered to have been commissioned by Innocent II but the inscription may be a later addition. It is the inscription that turns the usual coronation procedure into an act of granting power. According to the chronicler, the picture and inscription were reported to the Emperor by his supporters and while he was in Rome and a year before the diet the Pope promised to destroy both the picture and the inscription.

After the diet of Rainald, the Archibishop of Cologne and imperial Chancellor, drafted a letter to the German bishops on behalf of Frederick. In this letter he returns to the image in the Lateran Palace and asserts that it is the picture that caused the conflict:

> The conflict began with the picture, the picture became an inscription, the inscription seeks to become an affirmative utterance. We shall not endure it, we shall not submit to it; we shall lay down the crown before we consent to have the imperial crown and ourself thus degraded. Let the pictures be destroyed, let the inscriptions be withdrawn, that they may not remain as internal memories of enmity between the empire and the papacy.[402]

The inscription was removed and Hadrian wrote a letter explaining that he did not mean *beneficia* to be understand as "fief," but rather in the general sense of "benefit." But in the current political situation it was obvious that the Pope had

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[401] Ibid *184.*
[402] Ottonis, *Gest*. 2.9 , *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, 187.

deliberately chosen this ambiguous word, and the reaction of Bandinelli confirms the hierocratic reading. Despite the incident being quickly resolved, this shows how important artistic media actually were in conveying political ideas during the High Middle Ages.

4.5 The Basilica of St. Clemente in Rome

In this section I will demonstrate the politico-theological nature (of the establishment and proliferation) of the Suffering Christ trope using as a case study the apse mosaics of St. Clemente Basilica in Rome. Made around 1130 this magnificent mosaic feature the Crucifixion with the distinctive features of the *Christus Patiens* [Fig. 23]. In the following section I will analyze the ideological program established within this work and suggest an interpretation that can plausibly explain such an uncommon image of the Suffering Christ (to that date) at such an important place. Before we proceed to the mosaic itself there is a need for some prior explanation: namely, to clarify who Clement was, to describe the history of the building of the church, and to place this within its historical context. This information will be important for our later analysis.

For the medieval Church, Clement was an exceptionally valuable figure since he is not only considered the first Church Father, but he also represents the launching of apostolic succession and in this way served as a strong argument for Papal primacy. The early-Christian sources vary concerning his actual place in the

apostolic succession listing him as second, third, or fourth Pope (or rather Bishop of Rome since the title "Pope" is much later) after the Apostle Peter to whom Christ, according to the scriptures, appointed as the original foundation of the Church (Mat. 16:13-19).[403] However, as the 11th century fresco in St. Clemente attests [Fig. 24], the common perception of Clement's episcopacy at that time followed the reputable *Liber Pontificalis* version that stated Peter had ordained two bishops, Linus and Cletus (who are now considered the 2nd and the 3rd Popes respectively) for the priestly service of the community, but it was to Clement that he entrusted the Church as a whole, appointing him as his immediate successor.[404]

Little is known about Clement's life. Most of our information comes from apocryphal writings, which tell the legend of Clement's life and martyrdom. The legend consists of three parts that in scholarly literature are commonly referred to as *Recognitiones* (Recognitions), *Passio* (Passion), and *Translatio corporis* (Translation of the body). These texts were composed in different time and places

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[403] Jerome listed Clement as "the fourth bishop of Rome after Peter", and added that "most of the Latins think that Clement was second after the apostle".(*De viris illustribus*, XV**)** According to Tertullian, the Roman Church claimed that Clement was ordained by St. Peter (*De Praescript*., xxxii).

[404] Another important source is the pseudo-Clementine *Epistle to James* (ca. 2-4 century) that devotes a chapter to state Peter's succession and presents Clement as one who receives pontifical power directly from the apostle. The chapter gives an account of Peter's speech: "Since, as I have been taught by the Lord and Teacher Jesus Christ, whose apostle I am, the day of my death is approaching, I lay hands upon this Clement as your bishop; and to *him I entrust my chair of discourse.*" The Apostle continues with justification of his choice: "to him who has journeyed with me from the beginning to the end, and thus has heard all my homilies-who, in a word, having had a share in all my trials, has been found steadfast in the faith; whom I have found, above all others, pious, philanthropic, pure, learned, chaste, good, upright, large-hearted, and striving generously to bear the ingratitude of some of the catechumens." And further Peter's speech resumes in proclamation of the transmission of sacred power: "*Wherefore I communicate to him the power of binding and loosing, so that with respect to everything which he shall ordain in the earth, it shall be decreed in the heavens*." ("Epistle to James*"* in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 218).

by various authors, and for specific ideological purposes, but by the end of the 9th century they seem to have acquired a more or less complete form. The first part tells the life story of Clement – his mother, Mathidia, became an object of lust by her husband's brother. In order to prevent family conflict she sailed to Athens with Clement's two older brothers leaving Clement with his father, Faustinianus. During their voyage there was a shipwreck that parted mother and her children. After not receiving news from his wife, Faustinianus went in search for them but went missing too. Meanwhile, Clement got a good education and sided with Christians. He later went to Judea where he met St. Peter. While he was traveling with Peter, Clement progressively found his brothers, his mother and then his father. At every stage because so many years had passed it took time for them to recognize each other; therefore, this part is commonly referred to as *Recognitions*.

The second part narrates Clement's exile and his martyrdom in Crimea. According to the *Passio*, Clement was exiled from Rome for his teachings and set to work in a marble quarry near the Chersonese. There he performed miracles and converted many pagans to Christianity. As his popularity grew , Roman officials ordered him drowned with an anchor fastened to his neck. After his death the place of his death became a cult site and once a year the sea receded so that the people could come a pray at the temple build by the angels under the water.

The third part, which is a much later addition, describes how relics of Clement were translated from Crimea to Rome by St. Cyril in the 9th century and buried with honor in St. Clemente. Although scholars point to the fictional character of Clement's legend (finding parallels with another *Vita* that probably had been its

source), the excavation of the relics and their translation to Rome by St. Cyril seems to be a real historical event. By this time Clement's legend became well known and widespread both in the East and West (this is attested by the number of manuscripts that retell the story of Clement from the 6th century onwards) and when Cyril discovered the relics (supposedly of a local saint confused with Clement) he sincerely believed that had found the second Pope.

The current basilica was built in the early 12th century upon the older church (now referred to as the "lower basilica" or "Old Clemente"). Already Jerome at the end of the 4th century mentions that a certain church was built in Rome to commemorate St. Clement.[405] Beneath the lower Church there was still another building that supposedly belonged to Titus Flavius Clemens – a Roman consul who, according to the legend, later became Christian and was martyred. During the early Christian era the figures of Roman consul and the first Roman bishop were merged into one.[406] There is a strong possibility that the Church of St. Clemente was build on the very spot that the constructors believed to be the house of Clement the Bishop. Thus, St. Clemente consists of 3 levels – an ancient Roman house, the early-Christian Church, that later became the foundation for the 12th century building.

For our purposes, the most interesting and intriguing period is the rebuilding of the basilica at the beginning of the 12th century. Not long after 1099 when Paschal II became Pope, the lower St. Clemente was demolished and filled with debris. Upon

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[405] *De Viris Illustribus,* XV.

[406] Perhaps this association was a source for Clement's martyrdom as sources before the 4th century do not mention it.

the remnants of the ancient basilica the new church was built.[407] Early scholars of St. Clemente suggested that the renovation had been caused by the damage inflicted by the Norman sack of Rome in 1084. However, later research showed the inconsistency of this theory.[408] Most scholars today believe that the main cause for the renovation was the gradual rising of the ground level around the church.

However, a few scholars have attempted to question the consensus about the cause of the church's renovation and explain it by the historical context – claiming that the destruction of the lower church was an act of "*damnatio memoriae*" of Pashal II's archenemy anti-Pope Clement III.[409] In 1080 when the clash between Pope Gregory VII and German King Henry IV reached its apex in the excommunication of Henry, in response the pro-imperial Synod of Brixen deposed Gregory and replaced him with Guilbert of Ravenna who became Pope Clement III. After Henry IV seized Rome in 1084, Clement was consecrated as Pope and a few days later he crowned Henry Holy Roman Emperor. In the consecration of Guilbert of Ravenna as Clement III there was the obvious intention from the pro-imperial party of imitating the events of 1046, when Henry III – father of Henry IV – intervened inecclesiastical affairs by deposing all three rival Popes and installing his

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[407] John B. Lloyd, *Medieval Church and Canonry of S. Clemente In Rome* (San Clemente, 1989); John B. Lloyd "The Building History of the Medieval Church of S. Clemente in Rome," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45, no. 3 (1986):197-223.
[408] Joseph Mullooly, *Saint Clement, Pope And Martyr, And His Basilica In Rome* (B. Guerra, 1873), 333-40.
[409] V. Pace, "La Riforma e i suoi programmi figurativi: il caso romano, fra realtà storica e mito storiografico", in *Roma e la riforma gregoriana*, ed. S. Romano and J. Enckell (Roma, 2007): 56-57. A few scholars have also discussed the possibility of an *Art Gilbertiniana*, raising a hypothesis that the frescoes in St. Clemente were sponsored or commissioned by the supporters of Giuilbert. See Christina Filippini, *The Eleventh-century Frescoes of Clement and Other Saints in the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome* (John Hopkins University, 1999), 281-4; Serena Romano, *Riforma e tradizione*, 26-27).

own candidate – Clement II - from whom he received the crown of Holy Roman Emperor.

However, in contrast to Clement II, Clement III was not able to secure his position in the "official" history of the Church – Paschal II annulled all his acts, ordered his remnants to be excavated and thrown into the Tiber and his memory to be excluded from official documents. The damnation of memory of anti-Pope Clement III was already completed when in 1187 another Pope was consecrated under this name. Despite these later events, the (anti)papacy of Clement III was quite remarkable for his time. He was a Pope in opposition to the four "official" Popes (Gregory VII, Victor III, Urban II, and Pashal II) until his death in 1100 – which constitutes a span of 20 years, which is very rare among medieval Popes. Most of his papacy from 1084 and well into the 1090s he resided in Rome enjoying considerable support from the citizens before the crusaders of Urban II took Rome and forced him to flee.

Out of the theories that deal with the hypothesis of the "*damnatio memoriae*" Lila Yawn presents, in my view, the most interesting one. The question at stake is a fresco cycle in the lower St. Clemente that was made at the end of the 11th century, a few decades (or perhaps even less) prior to the destruction of the basilica. It narrates scenes from the life of Clement and the translation of his relics to Rome. Most scholars associate them with the pro-Gregorian party not only because of their content, but also because the donors are known as supporters of Gregory VII.[410] However, given the fact that the frescoes were made during the time Clement III

[410] Filippini, *The Eleventh-century Frescoes of Clement,* 125-146, Romano, *Riforma e tradizione*, 129-130.

enjoyed his presence in Rome, one can doubt their strict pro-Gregorian character and to assume that the destruction of the lower church might be connected to the unwanted associations these frescoes prompted in people. But as Yawn points out, there is a strong objection to such an hypothesis: why would it require the destruction of the whole church if a more practical way would be simply to wipe them out? Moreover, the sheer fact that the consecration of Paschal II as Pope took place within the walls of St. Clemente would deny the unwanted character of the frescoes.

Nevertheless, Yawn demonstrates the ambivalent character of the frescoes themselves insisting that they also can be seen as favoring the pro-imperial Clement III (once again we face the theme of indistinguishability between papal and imperial representations during the early stage of the Investiture Conflict mentioned earlier by Ullmann). The same can be applied to the donors. Given the unstable situation in Rome during the end of the 11th century, it is difficult to be sure of anyone's firm support of any candidate. The story of Gregory's closest associates who betrayed him, had secret negotiations with Henry, and later invited him to enter the city at the time when Henry was ready to retreat is telling here.[411] Another example is the figure of Hugh Candidus, who was appointed to be cardinal priest of St. Clemente by Pope Leo IX in 1049 and played a major role in the election of Gregory VII. But during the Synod of Brixen, he not only signed Gregory's deposition, but claimed this

[411] Henry IV told bishop Thierry that he changed his mind only when an embassy of Romans invited him to enter the city, promising him their total obedience. 12 or 13 cardinals (including Gregory's chancellor) and many of the Roman aristocracy defected to Henry. The city was divided and the struggle continued even after Henry's coronation.

subscription "on behalf of all the Roman cardinals."[412] In the light of these stories, Yawn's argument about the possible temporal deflection of the donor family that was a known supporter of Gregory to the reigning Clement III does not look implausible.

Let us return to the question why should Paschal II destroy the church in which he was consecrated as Pope. Yawn attributes this to the rise of Clement III's cult that threatened to undermine the legitimacy of the current Pope. The scant information remaining about Clement III's posthumous destiny reveals that rumors of the anti-Pope's sanctity had been spread among his supporters. According to the Disibodenberg annalist, these rumors were the primary cause of Paschal II's order to excavate Clement's III' remnants and throw them into the river.[413] In the same manner, the Bishop of Padua writes to Henry IV describing the set of miracles that had taken place near the tomb of Clement III. Thus, Yawn asks: "What if Paschal had been too late and the veneration of St. Clement III had already begun to spread outside of Tuscia, and especially southward toward Rome?"[414]

Yawn suggests that the basilica of St. Clemente after the actions of Paschal's supporters might have become a site of veneration, a special place of remembrance associated with Clement III. Paschal in his "burning zeal" perhaps only added to the cult – by throwing the remnants of Clement III into the Tiber he unintentionally

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[412] Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 201.
[413] "Some of the supporters [of Clement III] spread amongst the populace the rumor that prodigious signs [i.e. lights] were glistening near his sepulcher. For that reason the apostolic Lord Paschal, burning with the zeal of God, commanded that he [Clement] be disinterred and thrown into the Tiber, and it was done. (*Annales sancti Disibodi,* 17, cit. in Yawn, "Clement's New Clothes," 202).
[414] Yawn, "Clement's New Clothes," 200.

repeated the actions of Trajan who had cast Clement I into the Black Sea so that his companions could not have the saint's body. However, the frescoes on the wall of Old St. Clemente attested the failure of such actions – the body of Clement I preserved in the angel-built sepulture had been gloriously returned to Rome. Therefore, argues Yawn, Paschal probably had an urgent need to re-brand the church (of which he was the long-time cardinal priest) in such a way as to preserve Clement I as a figure of the Reformed church but also to disassociate it from the imperial Pope.

The major argument for this interpretation Yawn sees in the particular pictorial solutions chosen for the upper church. She points out the changes in the way Clement was represented in the mosaic: in contrast to the images from the lower church that follow classical representations of St. Clement as an elderly man with white hair wearing papal attire, the Clement of the upper church is a youthful dark-haired man clothed in an apostolic tunic and sandals. Such an image, Yawn argues, is unique for medieval iconography. In her view, these changes were made in order that the saint should not resemble the anti-Pope who by the time of his death was a man over seventy and whose grey hair perhaps made him look very similar to the image on the frescoes of the lower church.

In the rebuilding of St. Clemente, Paschal established a precedent. A few decades later in the same manner Innocent II would re-build Santa Maria Trastevere justifying this by the poor preservation of the church. However, as Mary Stroll shows, this justification is likely to be artificial; the real reason was that Innocent wanted to cleanse the Church of "contamination" by his enemy – the anti-Pope

Anaclet II (who like Clement III resided in Rome during the papacy of Innocent II) and to perpetuate his victory over anti-papal forces and the triumph of the reformed church.[415] As Riccioni argues, while "St Clemente was composed under the direct influence of the initial ideals that gave impetus to the ecclesiastical reform, […] S. Maria in Trastevere constitutes the apex of Gregorian art, showing the triumph of the reformed Church"[416] Thus, the mosaic of St. Clemente which became the first mosaic in roughly two hundred years in Rome, in the given context represents a place highly loaded with political meaning, designed to guide its observer through the complex ideological program set by the Reformed Church.

Early-Christian symbols, true relics, medieval allegories, figures of the Church Fathers and Biblical characters are employed in a "kaleidoscope" of ideas at the junction of politics, theology, and aesthetics on the apsidal mosaic of St. Clemente, making it "one of the most complex works of art surviving from the Middle Ages early twelfth century."[417] The historical context in which this mosaic was created clearly shows its political agenda, something that was immediately acknowledged by early scholars. Helen Toubert in her pioneering study of the St. Clemente's iconography called it "*un art dirigé*" – the art that aims not only to

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[415] Mary Stroll, "Innocent II: Santa Maria in Trastevere" in Symbols As Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest (Brill, 1991): 162-,179.
[416] Stefano Riccioni , "The Word in the Image: an Epiconographic Analysis of Mosaics of the Reform in Rome," *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 24 (2011): 85-137, 88.
[417] Dale Kinney, "Riccioni, Stefano, Il mosaico absidale di S. Clemente a Roma: "Exemplum" della chiesa riformata", *Speculum* 85 (2010): 189-192, 189.

illustrate, but rather to induce its audience to certain senses and meanings.[418] Images, inscriptions, citations work together within this artistic frame in order to visualize and promote a complex program of Gregorian reform.[419]

Despite the fact that the rich imagery of St. Clemente is well studied, several features of this imagery still puzzles scholars. For the purpose of this chapter, the important issue is the "anomalous" Crucifixion at the center of the mosaic. It neither follows traditional imagery of the time, nor does it fit the general program of the St. Clemente mosaic (that according to the inscription aims at Christ's glorification). Why did the artists who made this mosaic place the Suffering Christ, which at the time was a marginal iconographic detail, right at the center of their work? I will show that their choice was deliberate; seen within the context of the mosaic, the crucifixion represents a new understanding of the sacred authority of the Church that is opposed to the conceptualizations of power used by secular rulers during the early stages of the Investiture Conflict. Moreover, introducing this iconography within this highly significant space for the Roman church (as a space of the ideological victory over the idea of Caesaropapism personified in the figure of the anti-Pope Clement III) perhaps influenced heavily the dissemination of the *Christus Patiens* image throughout Europe in the subsequent period.

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[418] Hélèn Toubert, Le Renouveau paléochrétien à Rome au début du XIIe siècle (Paris: Klincksieck, 1970), 122-52.

[419] In his recent study on the mosaic, Riccioni analyzes the inscriptions and ornamental structure of St. Clemente and shows that the 'visual composition [of the church] follows the rules of medieval rhetoric in order to emphasize an ecclesiastic message' and traces it back to the works of Reform theologians, such as Peter Damian and Bruno of Segni . "In the temple nothing is idle; whatever is written or carved is written for our instruction. The walls themselves teach us and in a certain way speak to us" (Bruno of Segni, PL 165 col 886))

The date the mosaic was created is uncertain as well as the identity/identities of the artist- or artists who made it. It is known that the basilica was consecrated in 1118, but most scholars date the mosaic to the later period of 1120-1130s. There is an obvious Byzantine trace in the style, techniques, and motifs of this artistic work. Kitzinger associates the possible author(s) of the mosaics with the workshop organized by the Abbot of Monte Cassino, Disiderius.[420] Disideris (who later became Pope Victor III) shortly after 1066 invited Byzantine mosaicists to decorate the rebuilt church at his abbey. According to the chronicle, Disideris had to call artists from Constantinople because "magistra latinitas had neglected the art of mosaics for more than five hundreds years;" therefore, he "decided that the great number of young monks in the monastery should be thoroughly initiated in these arts."[421] Thus, Kitzinger, comparing remnants of the mosaics created by Byzantine artists in Salerno cathedral (since the mosaics of Monte Cassino were not preserved) and those of St. Clemente, argues that the Roman mosaic was made not by the Byzantines themselves, but rather by the locals who participated in Disideris' workshop.

The mosaic features vine scrolls that arise from the crucifixion and occupy almost the entire space. Numerous figures of people of different social status and profession and various animals are placed in between the scrolls. Across the bottom of the mosaic runs the inscription: "*Ecclesiam Cristi viti similabimus isti quam lex arentem, set crus facit esse virentem"* ("We shall liken the Church of Christ to this

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[420] Ernsr Kitzinger, "The Gregorian Reform and the Visual Arts: A Problem of Method: The Prothero Lecture," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 22 (1972): 87-102.
[421] *Chronicon Casinense*, III, 27, cit in Kitzinger, "The Gregorian Reform and the Visual Arts," 92.

vine; the Law made it wither but the Cross made it bloom"). Scholars are divided as to what "law" the mosaic refers: some suggest that it means the Old Testament, others believe that it speaks of the revival of Roman law.[422] Roman law represented the Emperor as guarantor of peace and order in the Empire and, therefore, it was a threat to the Reformer's vision of the hierarchy of powers in which royal power was subject to the sacred authority of the Church.

There is a scholarly consensus that the mosaic of New St. Clemente is somehow a repetition or partly transferred material of the Old Clemente, the lower church of the 4th century. Many early-Christian symbols that would be ungraspable to the audience of the High Middle Ages are evidence for this (as for example, a small deer whose nose grazes a kind of red ribbon in the shape of a snake). However, it is also obvious that the mosaic is definitely not an exact replica; for it also incorporated a new symbolism into its older version. This can best be seen in the central theme of the mosaic – the acanthus-vine bush that takes up nearly the whole space of the mosaic. It seems that the lower church featured an acanthus

[422] Scaccia-Scarafoni associates the 'law' of inscription with Canon Law and dates the mosaics to the 13th century when a confrontation between ecclesiasts and canonists took place (but such dating is currently considered wrong) (Scaccia Scarafoni, 'Il mosaico absidale di San Clemente in Roma', *Bollettino d'Arte* 29, no. 3 (1935), 49–68). Stroll strongly supports the version of the Old Testament. "Lex was not a common symbol of imperial authority" (*Symbols as Power*, 120) This idea is supported by Toubert – living vine/dessicanting????? law theme is a metaphor for the church in opposition to the synagogue. She finds support in 11th and 12th century anti-Jewish tracts that proliferated at that time and also in iconography. Corrado Leonardi argues that the Church Fathers often presented Jews as bad farmers in contrast to the Christians who are seen as a new famers. The same can be found in Gerhoh of Reichersberg (supporter of Innocent II) in *Liber de laude fidei*. From this anti-Jewish sentiment Stroll dates the mosaic to the schism between Anaclet II and Innocent II and claims that the mosaic presents an implicit critique of Anaclet's presumed Jewish roots. Bernard in his letter on the death of Anaclet wrote to Innocent: "the fruitless growth, the rotten branch had been lopped off" (*Ep*. 147).

plant as a major "theme" of the mosaic that was re-styled into a vine (according to the inscription) in the upper church.

The acanthus was an important symbol for early Christians; precisely this plant is indicated in the gospels as the material for Christ's crown of thorns (Jn 19:2). Thus, the thorns of the acanthus symbolized death and its sweet aroma and evergreen nature – the resurrection (slightly altering traditional Greek symbolism that presented the acanthus as a symbol of victory). Despite the turning of the acanthus into a vine, medieval artists preserved visible acanthus elements (leaves at the base of the Cross recall those of the acanthus and the vine scrolls have acanthus flowers on them) in the new mosaic. Perhaps, in this way the old symbol had been preserved but also supplemented with new meanings.

The vine is a rich symbol in Christianity; it is immediately connected to the imagery of Christ – as according to the Gospel of John the vine is His self-designation "I am the vine; you are the branches" (Jn 15:5). But also the mosaic explicitly refers it to *ecclesia* (as the inscription explains); the branches of the vine that stream from the cross put the world into order. The world is depicted as "nests" on the branches where men of every condition and social range – from peasant to scholar – occupy their own proper places. Thus, the Church is shown as a corporate body, a *corpus mysticum*, which structures and organizes the social life of the world.[423]

Out of the four deliberately chosen Church Fathers (Gregory, Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose) each of whom is a key figure for the Reformists, Ambrose

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[423] Scholars have also noticed that no other metaphor is invoked so frequently as the grapevine to represent Judaic theocracy in the Old Testament (Stroll, *Symbols as Power*, 121).

stands out with his red halo. The red color of his halo is the same as the highlighted inscription that marks the direct speech of St Peter: "Behold, Clement, Christ as he was promised to you by me" and has a similar function - to indicate its particular importance.[424] Ambrose represents the idea of a strong bishop whose authority and influence go beyond ecclesiastical affairs – he was the first to excommunicate a Roman emperor.[425]In his letters Ambrose also considered the Emperor as a son and not the master of the universal Church – an idea shared and developed at the time of the creation of the mosaic.[426] The influence of Ambrose's exegesis on the *arbor vitae* (tree of life) as *ecclesia* is apparent also in the very visual scheme of the mosaic where the acanthus-vine alludes to its symbolism. In general, the framework that had been set by Ambrose was crucial and relevant for the Reformers in the light of the recent (at that time) historical events including the excommunication of Henry IV by Pope Gregory VII.

However, it seems that one thing is out of place in the visual scheme of St. Clemente. As David Foote has noticed: "Beneath the triumphal arch, traditionally a symbol of imperial power, there is *the sign of contradiction*: Christ crucified."[Fig. 25][427] Most scholars of the mosaic are silent about the Crucifixion or at least they restrict themselves to brief remarks that it is "uncommon" or "strange." As shown

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[424] Riccioni, "The Word in the Image," 88.
[425] Theodosius, who was the last Emperor of both Western and Eastern halves of Roman Empire was excommunicated by Ambrose in 390 for the massacre of 7000 people in Thessalonica after the local rioters murdered the Roman governor there. After several month of penance.
[426] "Imperator enim intra ecclesiam, non supra ecclesiam est" (Ep 21, 36 (PL XVI, 1007)
[427] David Foote "A Sign of Contradiction: The Apse Mosaic of San Clemente" Nov. 22, 2012, *Crisis Magazine* (https://www.crisismagazine.com/2012/a-sign-of-contradiction-the-apse-mosaic-of-san-clemente).

above, the cult of the Suffering Christ in the West is a later tradition, usually dated to the 13th or even 14th centuries. St. Clemente's Crucifixion is an outstanding example of this trope created almost a century before it became widespread.

Despite the Crucifixion featuring a dead Christ with his eyes closed and head bent to his shoulder, that resembles Byzantine analogues (see for example Hosios Loukas' mosaics [Fig. 7]), Christ's body does not have the traditional Byzantine S or Z curve.[428] Theremarkably thin arms of Jesus are not outstretched, but rather flaccid, emphasizing his fragility and vulnerability. The cross' dark-blue (almost black) color stands in stark contract to the golden background. Placed at the center of the mosaic, it appears like a wound or crack in the totality of surrounding gold that traditionally symbolizes the eternity of God and the light of Revelation.

Indeed, at first glance the cross falls out of the whole visual schema of mosaics that involve the glorification of Christ as most of its elements attest. In the left part of the triumphal arch one can see Isaiah holding a scroll that says: "*vidi dominum sedentem sup(er) solium*" (I saw the Lord seated on a throne). On the right another prophet – Jeremaiah – holds a scroll that states: "hic est d(eu)s n(oste)r et n(on) estimabit(ur) alius absq(ue) illo" (This is our God, there is none to compare with him). Along the edge of the arch is yet another inscription saying: gloria in excelsis deo sedenti sup(er) thronum et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis, (Glory to God in the highest, seated on the throne, and on earth peace to men of

[428] Also Byzantine analogues never place crucifixion to the centerpiece of apse mosaics. In byzantine churches the image of crucifixion functions as a narrative, while in St. Clemente it is a symbol.

good will). The apex of the arch is decorated with a medallion of the Pantocrator – the Almighty god.

Scholars have attempted to compare St. Clemente's Crucifixion with the 6th century cross in the Basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Ravena [Fig. 26] assuming that perhaps the Old Clemente either did not have at all such an element or it was in the form of the Cross close to that in Ravenna. However, there is a dramatic difference between the Crucifixion in St. Clemente and the cross at St. Apollinare. While St. Clemente features the body of the dead Christ, the Ravennian cross is an image of the traditional *crux gemmata* – a typical early- and medieval- Christian cross that is decorated with jewels. It has no crucifixion on it, but instead the medallion of the Pantocrator is often present. The *crux gemmata* symbolizes the triumph of the cross – emphasizes the resurrection and victory over sin and death, with no connotations of suffering or vulnerability. The association of triumph and victory made the cross the important imperial symbol within the court of Constantine.

During the early stage of the Investiture Conflict, the Papacy faced the identity challenge that had not been immediately recognized as a problem, namely, the aspiration of the Reformers to present the Pope as a monarch of the world superior to temporal rulers made him indistinguishable from them. The contemporaries of Gregory saw him as a successor of the ancient Roman Emperors and with admiration wrote that there was no difference in appearance between him and contemporary Emperor.[429] Archibishop Alphanus, who was a close associate of Gregory, in the poem "Quicquid et Marius prius" presents Gregory as the new

[429] Bruno Segni (PL, clxv, 1108).

Marius, the new Caesar, who without bloodshed and by the mere power of his words accomplished what earlier leaders achieved at the cost of slaughtering countless people.[430]

The opponents of the Reform immediately criticized such a conceptualization; in the view of Henry's supporters it was clearly a preoccupation with material and earthly things and an assault to secular power (*regnum*), which was a domain of the Emperor. Also this conceptualization threatened the established link between Christ and the Emperor. Since the Constantinian incorporation of the trope of the Glorified Crist into imperial imagery, it was re-enforced by the recent Ottonians. As some examples of surviving Ottonian art (for example, the Sacramentary of Henry II showing his crowning by Christ [Fig. 27]) or the earlier image of Otto III occupying the place of Jesus in the Aachen Gospels [Fig. 28]) attest, the Ottonian kingship had a straight-forward Christ-centered character.[431] Also it is important to remember that it was the Emperor who was designated the Vicar of Christ. Up until Innocent III made it the official designation of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome was "only" the Vicar of Peter.

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[430] Cit. in Kitzinger, "The Gregorian Reform and the Visual Arts", 97.

[431] See Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, 42-86. That this tradition was alive around the time of the creation of St. Clemente's mosaic attests the mosaic of Roger II coronation by Christ [Fig 29]. "A prime feature of Ottonian and early Salian rulership was its sacral character. It was eloquently set forth in the sermons of the churchmen and in the liturgical texts that they compiled" (Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 76). According to *Life of Conrad II*, written by Henry III's chaplain Wipo, Archbishop Aribo of Mainz on the coronation of Conrad: "You have come to the highest office; you are the vicar of Christ. Only one who imitates Christ is a true ruler" (Wipo, *Gesta Chuonradi imperatoris*, III, 22-3; Cowdrey, *Gregory VII,* 76).

The most elaborate conceptualization of Christ-centered kingship appears in the *Norman Anonymous*.[432] This name received the author of a collection of treatises, the *Tractatus Eboracenses*, written around 1100 that were never published. In these treatises the author develops the idea that the power of a king is the same as that of Christ and that the king is the perfect impersonation of Christ on earth: "The power of the King is the power of God… and whatsoever he does, he does not simply as a man, but as one who has become God and Christ by grace."[433] The *Anonymous* pays special attention to the issue of the division of powers to demonstrate the superiority of royal office over priestly authority. The author begins with the classical argument that kingship and priesthood emerge in Christ himself but then were divided into two independent institutions: "Both [King and Priest] are in spirit *Christus et Deus*; and in their offices they act as antitypes of Christ and God: the priest of the Priest, the king of the King."[434] However, the king's office is superior because it corresponds to Christ's divinity while the priest's office corresponds to His humanity.[435]

The *Anonymous*' arguments for the superiority of royal office presents a creative interpretation of a famous biblical line "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Mk 12:17). The author of the *Tractatus Eboracenses* notices that in his answer Christ did not refer to the current Roman emperors Tiberius, but to Caesar and thus to the institution: "He said 'Render unto Caesar the things that are

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[432] Kantorowicz; Williams, *The Norman Anonymous of 1100 AD: Towards the Identification and Evaluation of the socalled Anonymous of York*, Harvard Theological Studies, xvii (1951).
[433] LdL, III, 671. 35ff
[434] Ldl, III, 667, 8ff
[435] ibid

Caesar's", and did not say 'unto Tiberius the things that are Tiberius'. Render to the power (*potestas*), not to the person… Christ, according to his humanity, was then weak; but divine was Caesar's *potestas.*"[436] Christ in human form acknowledges the superiority of the royal office as it represents divine power on Earth. Therefore, the king represents this divine power, while the priest represents the human side of Christ and has to submit himself to the higher power of royal office. The *Anonymous*' theory of "sacral kingship" was already somewhat archaic in its own days since the new theories of kingship lean on more legalistic arguments.[437] The theological grounds were lost for them and the sacred nature of kingship was perhaps its last bastion.

If the Reformers could not easily break the traditional link between the Emperor and the image Christ, at least it was possible for them to alter that image in the attempt to disassociate one from the other. The other Christ, not that of majesty, glory, or victory – for several centuries had been a very marginal image within monastic circles. With the development of liturgical rites (especially those of Holy Week) the trope of the Suffering Christ began to enter medieval theological discourse and continued to do so with the rise of devotional literature. The Gregorian Reform was not only about seizing political power, but also (and perhaps more so) about the need for reform in morality and spirituality. Theological exposition in the Middle Ages show Christ not only as an almighty ruler (that had been so important in the first centuries of Christianity) but more as a figure of contemplation, meditation, and compassion. For ordinary people tired of conflicts

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[436] LdL, III, 671. 35ff
[437] Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State: 1050-1300*, 74.

and wars, it was difficult to associate themselves with the imperial image of Christ; they were in search of another more humane figure that would be relevant to their spiritual needs.

Almost at the same time as the New Clemente began to be rebuilt, Anselm of Canterbury finished his best-known work *Cur Deus Homo* (*Why God became Human*) where there appeared a rationally argued theory of atonement on the necessity of the suffering and death of Christ. But how did this image of the Suffering Christ become incorporated in the struggle over the issue of power if it represents something which is the very antithesis of power – namely, vulnerability and suffering? First, as we noted above, this image undermined the classical association of the Glorified Christ with imperial rhetoric. Second, it presented the Church as an entity that is "rooted" in the Christ of ordinary people (rather than the Christ of rulers); an entity who takes care of all who suffer and are humiliated. Whoever worked on the conceptualizing of the mosaic played on the idea of the Church as a corporate body that unites the whole *societas christiana*. This, in fact, was a foundational idea of Gregorian hierocratic doctrine according to which the Church was an "organic unit and, as such, embraced the whole of Latin Christendom of which the individual kingdoms and the empire itself formed constituent parts. This unit transcends all biological, linguistic or racial frontiers, and for this reason it is stronger and more resilient than the incidental bonds of birth, language, race or geography."[438] The church is superior to any Empire or Kingdom because it is universal, and its universality is based on the fundamental humanity of Christ.

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[438] Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 310.

In the mosaic of St. Clementethe crucifixion is "invested" with power. One of its anomalies is that it is not simply an image or a representation – it is also a container of the artifacts that are "loaded" with divine grace. The inscription that tells the viewer about the ecclesia-vine is interrupted in the middle by the statement: "De Ligno Crucis Jacobi Dens, Ignatiiq[Ue] Insupra Scripti Requiescunt Corpore Christi Quam Lex Arentem, Sed Crux Facit Esse Virentem" (In the body of Christ above this inscription rest [some] wood from the Cross, a tooth of James, and of Ignatius. In the very body of the cross the mosaicists put the sacred relics of the Cross and of the two early martyrs, transforming the image of crucifixion into a reliquary, a *locus* of divine power. In this way the crucifixion is still involved in the struggle over power – for it legitimizes power as divine presence and as the continuity defended by the Church.

In the 12th century the Roman Church appropriated the image of the Suffering Christ that had emerged earlier in monastic circles and then spread among religious lay groups as an image of private devotion. By making this image public, the Church politicized *Christus Patiens* in the attempt to disassociate the image of Christ from imperial cult and to find a visual representation for the concept of sacred authority that is not bound to the connotations common to secular kingship. However, in emphasizing the humanity of Christ and in focusing on the connotations of vulnerability and suffering the new imagery was not able (and did not aim to do so) to eliminate the traditional connotations of triumph and glory. Therefore, the main symbol of Christianity – the Crucifixion – that so heavily influenced the Western concept of victimhood is, in fact, an ambiguous symbol that through the

patterns of cultural memory has transferred this ambiguity into the very concept of victimhood itself. The crucifixion that appeared as a result of political struggle in the High Middle Ages presents a complex mixture of connotations that are essentially contradictory to each other, uniting glory and triumph with humility and pain.

CONCLUSION

In answering the question how did the figure of the victim come to play such a powerful and distinctive role in today's culture, I have analyzed the most decisive moments in the development of the idea of victimhood. This study demonstrates that our contemporary understanding of victimhood where the victim gains a special social advantage because of society's ethical disposition to support those who have been unjustly hurt is not so much the result of a revolution in a morality established by the Enlightenment, but rather a remnant of the political theology of the High Medieval period. During this period the figural meaning of the notion of victim (the harmed person) gradually outweighed the original meaning of the object of sacrifice in the theological exposition of the idea of the Suffering Christ.

I examine iconography, the devotional literature, and theological debates on the nature of the Atonement to show how the idea of victimhood changed within Christian discourse during the High Medieval period. I further argue that these transformations cannot be understood outside of the confluence of private piety and the Church's quest to consolidate political power during the 11th-13th centuries. These transformations became crucial for the Church because the signifiers of victimhood were incorporated into a rethinking of the idea of authority by theologians of the Gregorian reform in their antagonism to the idea of power performed by secular rulers, an idea that rested, in turn, on the signifiers of glory and triumph. As such, these transformations played a crucial role in the so-called "Papal Revolution" – an attempt by the Church to establish and expand its political

influence over secular rulers during the High Medieval period.

This dissertation does not provide a coherent continuous history of the development of the senses and sentiments associated with the concept of victimhood itself. Rather, it uncovers crucial moments in history that brought significant changes in the conceptualization of victimhood. I have examined four turning points in particular. The first turning point revolves around the emergence of concern for victims out of the ancient-Judaic "theodicy of suffering." In this radically new theory, the poor, sick, and humble receive special esteem, since they are chosen to endure divine punishment for the sins of others, and this specific role gives them an exalted status in society. Poverty, sickness, and humility become signs of the pious man. This conceptualization had a major influence upon early Christianity that, in contrast to the ancient Greco-Roman sensibility, introduced a new ethical attitude towards victims in the form of a duty to care for the weak and the injured.

The second historical turning point is the transformation of the Christian church from a society of the persecuted into an Imperial Church in the first half of the 4th century. In becoming a part of the imperial politics of Rome, Christianity changed its basic representations by downplaying earlier connotations of weakness and humiliation that were important for the early Church and focusing instead upon the triumphal connotations of the story of Jesus. Christ was no longer the Suffering Servant, but the King of Kings, who had overcome the devil, death, and sin. This transformation can also be seen on the level of language – the Church Fathers

almost never used the concept of victim to designate Christ, preferring more technical concepts to describe his sacrificial nature. I show that the Fathers avoided labeling Christ a victim because of the existence of the figural meaning of the concept of victim as "harmed party" that was associated with misery and loss and that this figural meaning did not accord with the image of a victorious Christ the Church Fathers attempted to construct.

The third turning point in the development of the idea of victimhood is connected to the rise of the image of the Suffering Christ and the new sensibilities triggered by this during the High Middle Ages. I find this moment to be the most important and most complicated because of its counterintuitive nature: by the time the Church reaches the peak of its political influence and the splendid public representations of the Popes reached the highest imperial level, the Church mitigated earlier connotations of glory and triumph and chose, instead, the image of the Suffering Christ as its main representation. I show that in doing so, the Church broke the linkage between the figure of the Emperor and that of Christ established from the time of Constantine. This was crucial for the Church in its struggle with secular powers that emerged at the turn of the 11-12th centuries.

It would be an overstatement to say that the Church *invented* the image of the Suffering Christ to fight secular powers; it rather *politicized* this image, partly by representing the ancient Roman notion of *auctoritas* as trumping secular *potestas*; and, most significantly, the Church contributed to the dissemination of an image that was becoming popular at the time. The disintegration of the Carolingian empire and other challenges that confronted the High Middle Ages complicated the

psychological life of medieval men and women who could no longer relate to the image of a dispassionate *Pantocrator* and sought instead for a new consolidating symbol. This thirst for a new and more humane image of Christ is visible in the emerging devotional literature of the time as well as in the new theory of Atonement presented by Anselm of Canterbury in which the humanity of Christ is unfolded through the lens of his ability to suffer. I demonstrate that it is in and because of this discourse that the major semantic change in the concept of victimhood happened. Christ's victimhood began to be conceptualized not so much according to the sacrificial connotations of the concept of the victim (as it had been for the Church Fathers), but rather according to figural connotations – presenting Christ as an unjustly suffering and pitiful figure.

This new conceptualization played a crucial role not only in the formation of the idea of victimhood, but also in the development of the new sensibility – compassion, as we know it today, was shaped by this discourse and our modern concern for victims would not be possible without it. However, the discourse of the Suffering Christ brought about a precarious fusion of opposing signifiers of triumph and misery. This fusion can be seen in the new descriptions of martyrs as these appear in the 12th century. I show that this occurs already in Abelard's writings, in which he mixes characteristics of the triumphal martyr and the inglorious victim in one character in the complex interpretation of an Old Testament story.

Thus, the fourth turning point in the development of the idea of victimhood is the appropriation of the abovementioned transformations outside Christological discourse and the complete separation of the concept of the victim from its

sacrificial context that took place later in subsequent Protestant martyrology. This study shows that by the time of the Reformation the martyr became aligned much more closely to the figural sense of victim by contrast to the original early-Christian accounts where the martyr is portrayed as a figure of triumph and glory.

In the very structure of victimhood as it was formed within Christian discourse – from the "theodicy of suffering" to the image of the Suffering Christ and its appropriation in Protestant martyrology – there is a dialectical inversion of victimhood where "disgrace [is] transformed into heroic grandeur, and shameful humiliation and powerlessness [became a] manifestation of strength and determination."[439] After the Protestant martyrological accounts and the Enlightenment mythologization of the natural character of human compassion it is difficult to see the connection between the modern concept of victimhood and the discourse of the Suffering Christ with all its ambiguous connotations. Murphy-O'Connor rightly points out that we simply got used to the crucifixion and do not notice its "scandal" anymore:

> The cross is such a common Christian symbol that it has become decorative rather than meaningful. We notice it but do not attend to it. It nudges the periphery of our consciousness, but it does not demand our attention. It has become a generalized idea rather than a specific thing.[440]

Murphy-O'Connor suggests a thought experiment to rediscover the particularity of the crucifixion as a religious symbol - we have to translate it into a picture of violent

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[439] Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma*, 49.
[440] Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Even death on a cross": Crucifixion in the Pauline Letters in Elizabeth Dreyer (ed), *The Cross in Christian Tradition: From Paul to Bonaventure* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001): 21-50, 21.

death that revolt us – the hanged man or a person dying on the electric chair. "What would be our reaction if such pictures decorated children's classrooms?"[441] The "scandal" of the Cross is that the most exalted being was exposed to the most humiliating and degrading death. The unity of opposing signifiers that occurs in the discourse of the Suffering Christ significantly affected and continues to affect our sensibilities and this dissertation is an attempt to see in what way this has actually happened. The problem is not with the dialectical inversion itself – such a strategy (presenting an utterly negative experience as an ultimate triumph of survival) is perhaps the only way for victims to overcome their trauma. The problem is rather that, in a world of ambiguity and forgetfulness of the development and manipulation of images and concepts, it gives room for abuse and political exploitation by those who do not belong to the category of victims themselves.

My project intervenes in the discussion by providing a solid historical background to the contemporary understanding of the phenomenon of victimhood and the sensibilities that surround it. This historical analysis of the idea of victimhood will intersect with and revise some of the central theoretical concerns in Medieval Studies, Political Theology, and Art History. First, the dissertation seeks to explain why the Church at the acme of its political power gradually shifted from the image of the Triumphant Christ to the image of the Suffering Redeemer. While current medieval scholarship views the rise of Church power and the emergence of affective piety that stresses the sufferings of Christ as separate and parallel

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[441] *Ibid*.

developments, my work suggests that there is an intrinsic linkage between these phenomena; namely, that the signifiers of victimhood developed within affective piety helped to shape the new idea of authority promoted by the Church during the 11th-13th centuries. Such an analysis contributes to our understanding of the Gregorian reform and the conflict between the Church and the State.

By analyzing what role the idea of victimhood played in theoretical constructions of power in the Medieval period, this research also contributes to the field of Political Theology. It suggests, in fact, an alternative model for understanding political theology, one that is based not on the idea of interruption that brings a state of exception imposed by a sovereign and which is analogous to a miracle of the omnipotent God (Schmitt), and not on the idea of the continuity established by the body politic as a secularization of the theological concept of *Corpus Christi* (Kantorowicz), but rather based upon a new understanding of authority that utilizes the idea of victimhood to downplay the traditional idea of power associated with the trope of glory and triumph.

Drawing on the groundbreaking research of various forms of iconography of the Suffering Christ, this work also examines the ways in which artistic media represented and informed the development of the idea of victimhood. My study contributes to the field of Art history by examining the transformations of the image of Christ and clarifies the complex reception of Byzantine art in the West.

There are multiple ways this research can be improved and developed. I have purposely omitted some themes that are crucial to this study due to lack of space and time for the thorough research they deserve and to preserve the structural

unity of the dissertation. I have not touched on debates about the Eucharist, Crusade lyrics, and changes in the perception of the Virgin Mary, that also played a significant role in the formation of the image of a Suffering Christ and consequently in the development of the idea of victimhood. I consider these subjects, and others, as promising paths for future interdisciplinary research into the genealogy of victimhood.

FIGURES

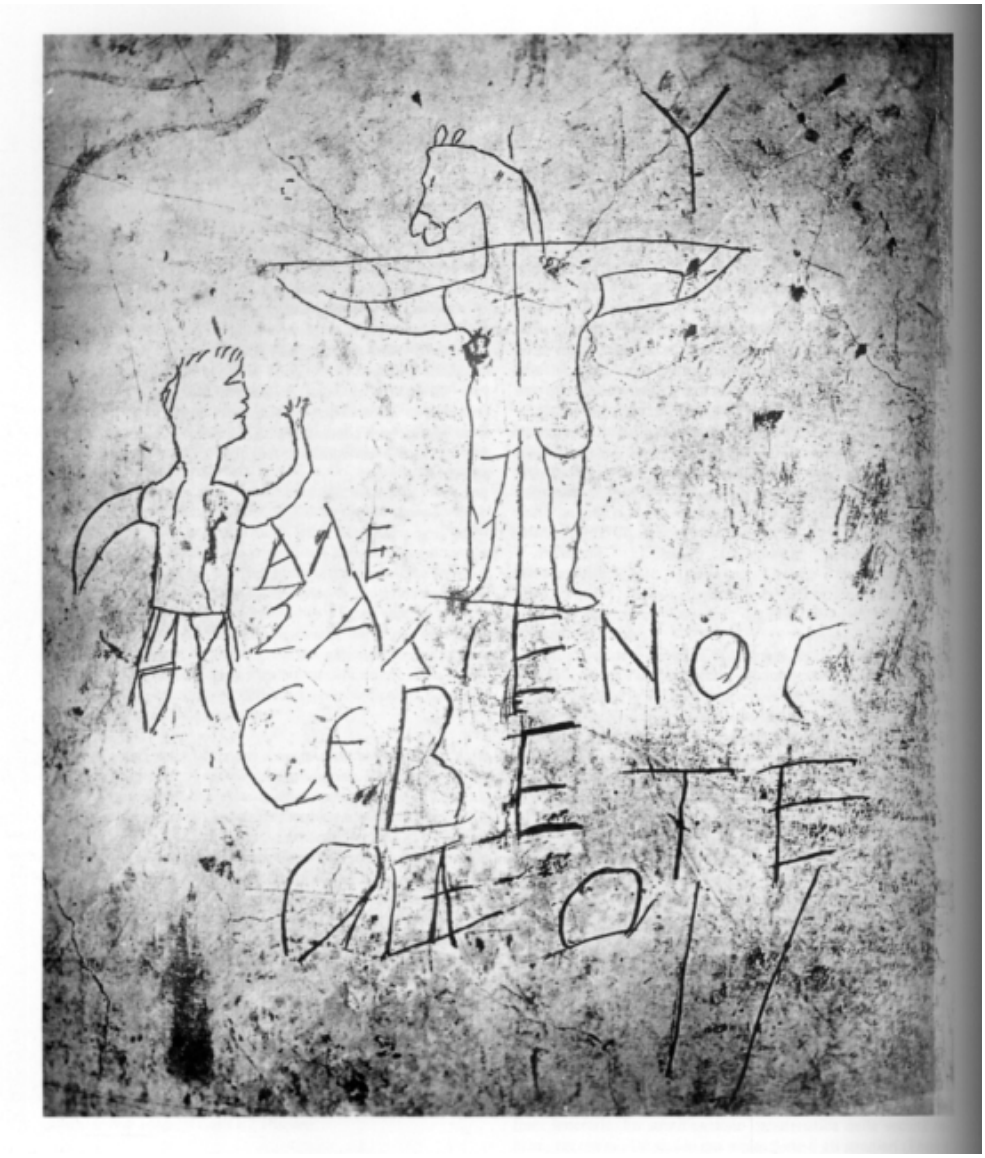

Fig. 1. Alexamenos Graffito, Palatine Hill Museum, Rome, Italy (ca. 200).

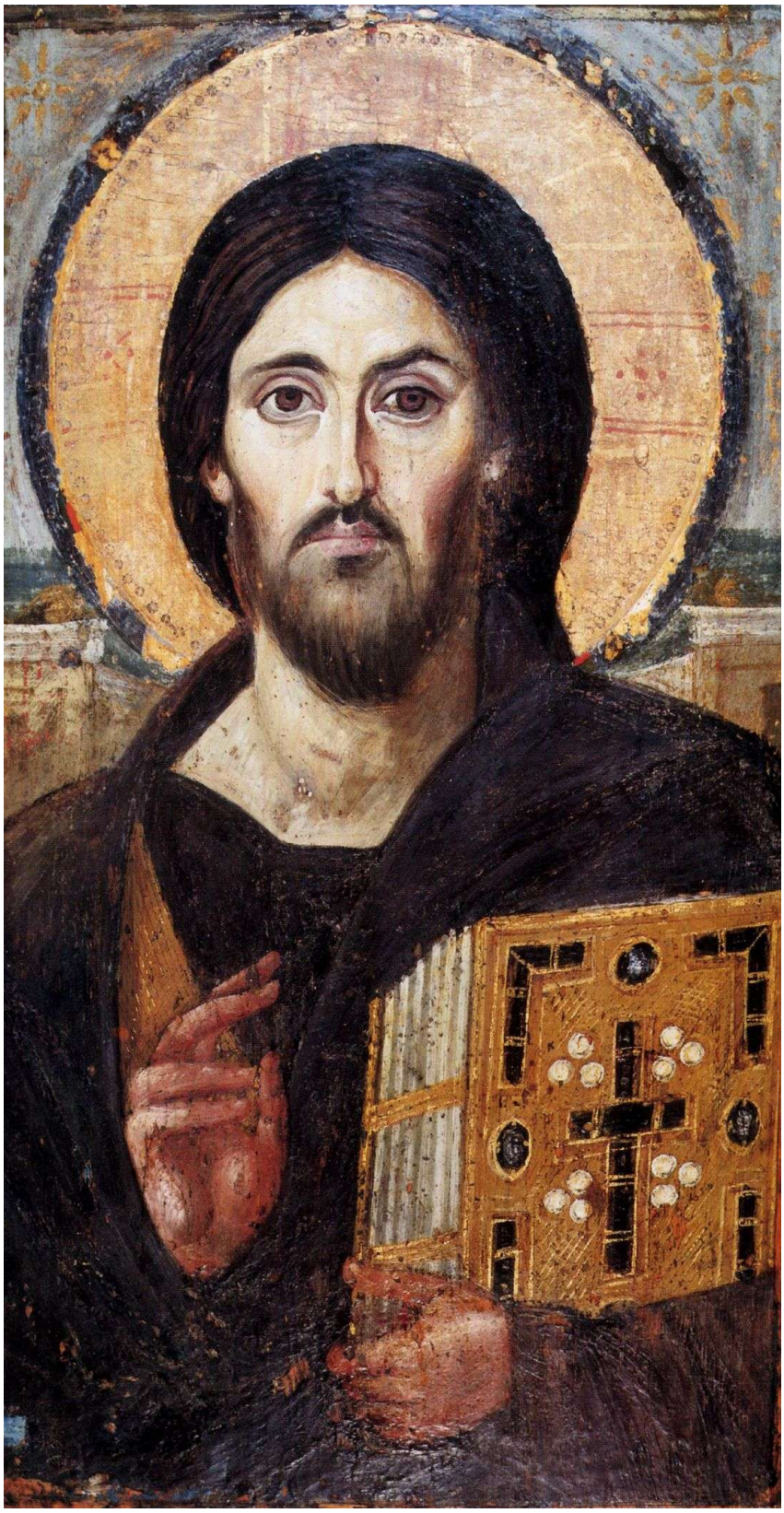

Fig. 2. The oldest known icon of Christ Pantocrator, encaustic on panel, Saint Catherine's Monastery, (ca. 6th century).

Fig. 3. The Cross of Lothair.
Imperial side (left); Back of the cross, with engraved crucifixion (right).
Cathedral's treasury, Aachen, Germany (ca. 1000).

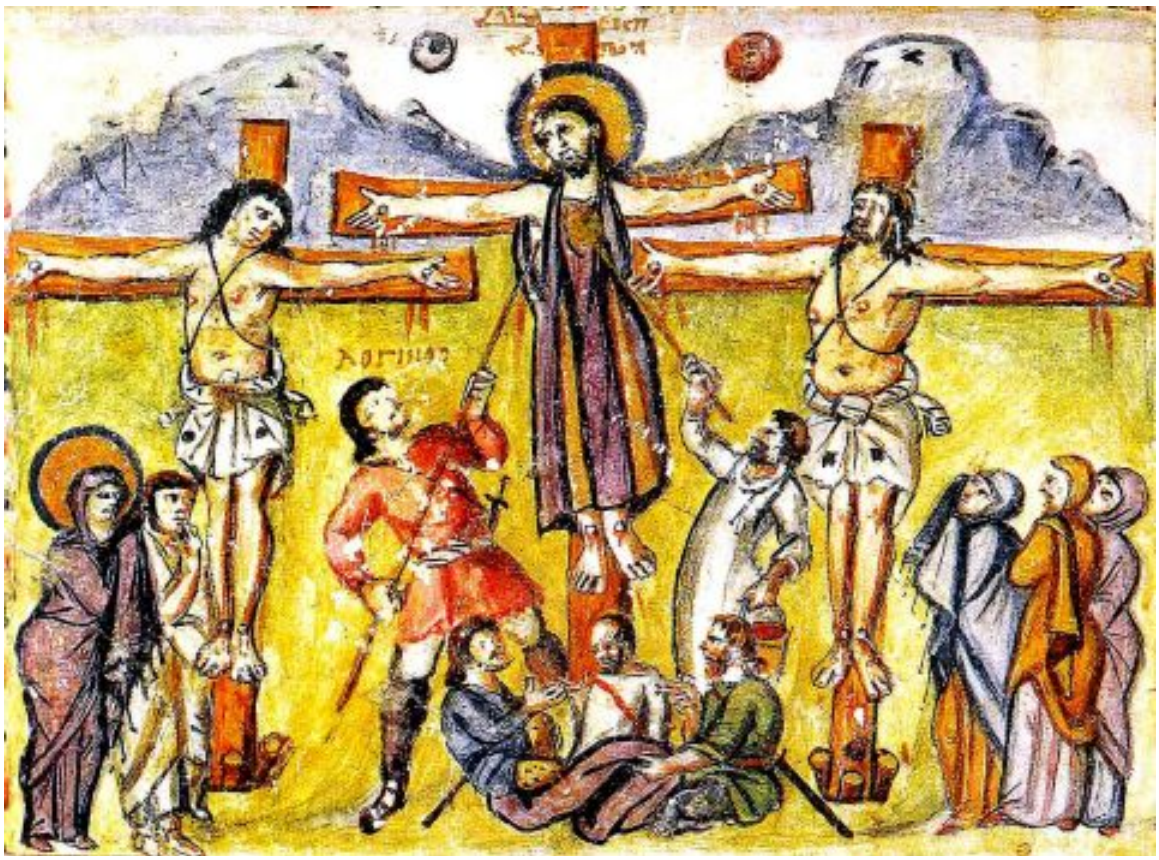

Fig. 4. Rabbula Gospels, Syriac illuminated manuscript (ca. 6th century).

Fig. 5. The Crucifix of Fernand and Sancha, ivory curving (ca. 1063).

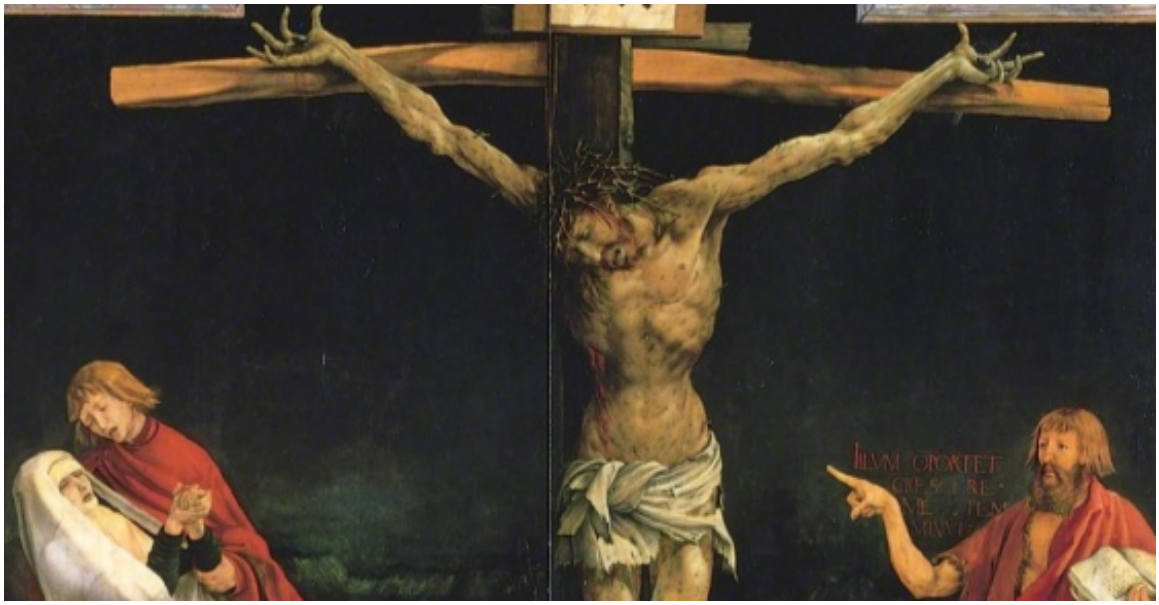

Fig. 6. Matthias Grünewald, The *Isenheim Altarpiece* (detail) (1512–1516).

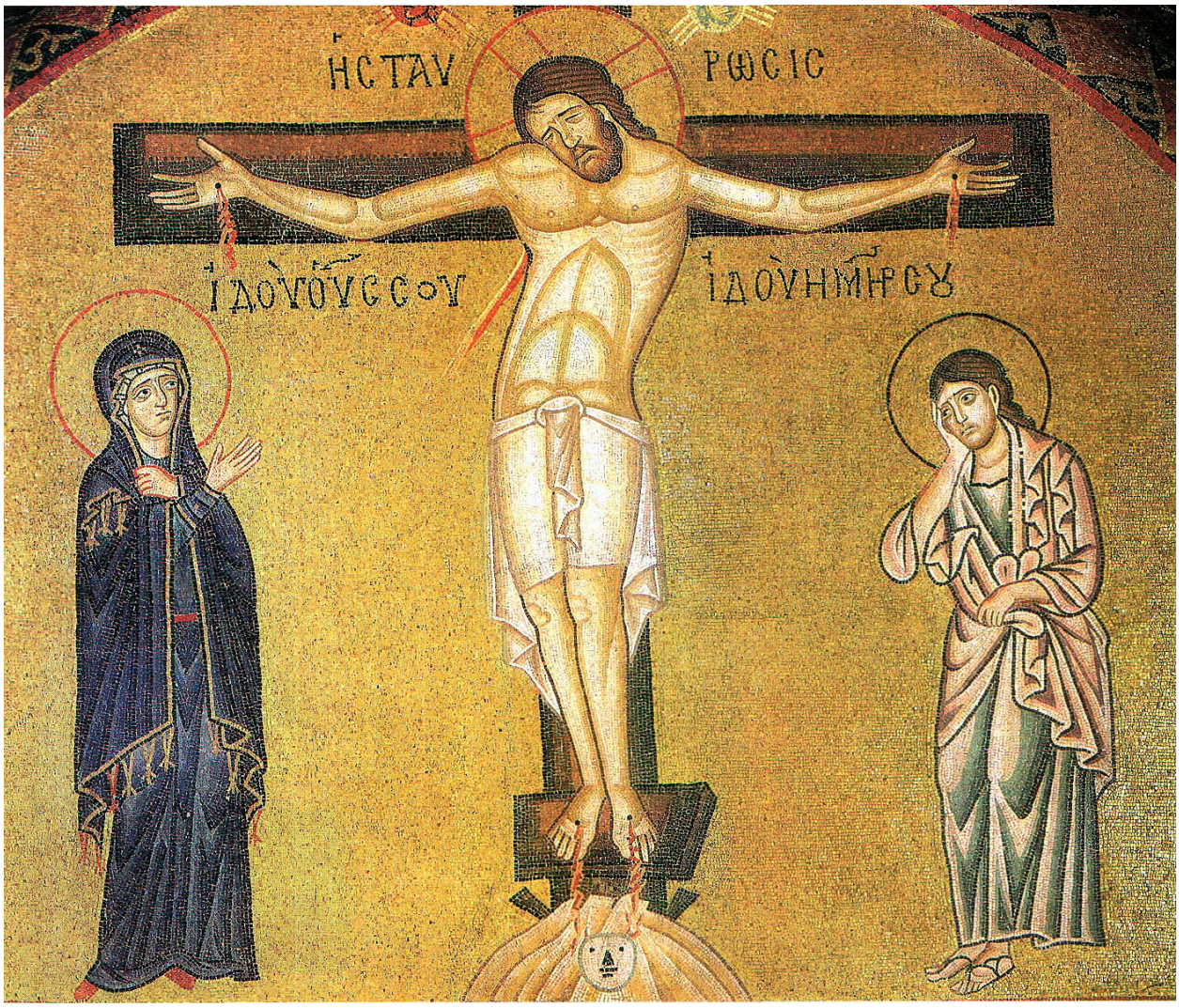

Fig. 7. Mosaic in Hosios Loukas Monastery, Distomo, Boeotia, Greece (early 11th century).

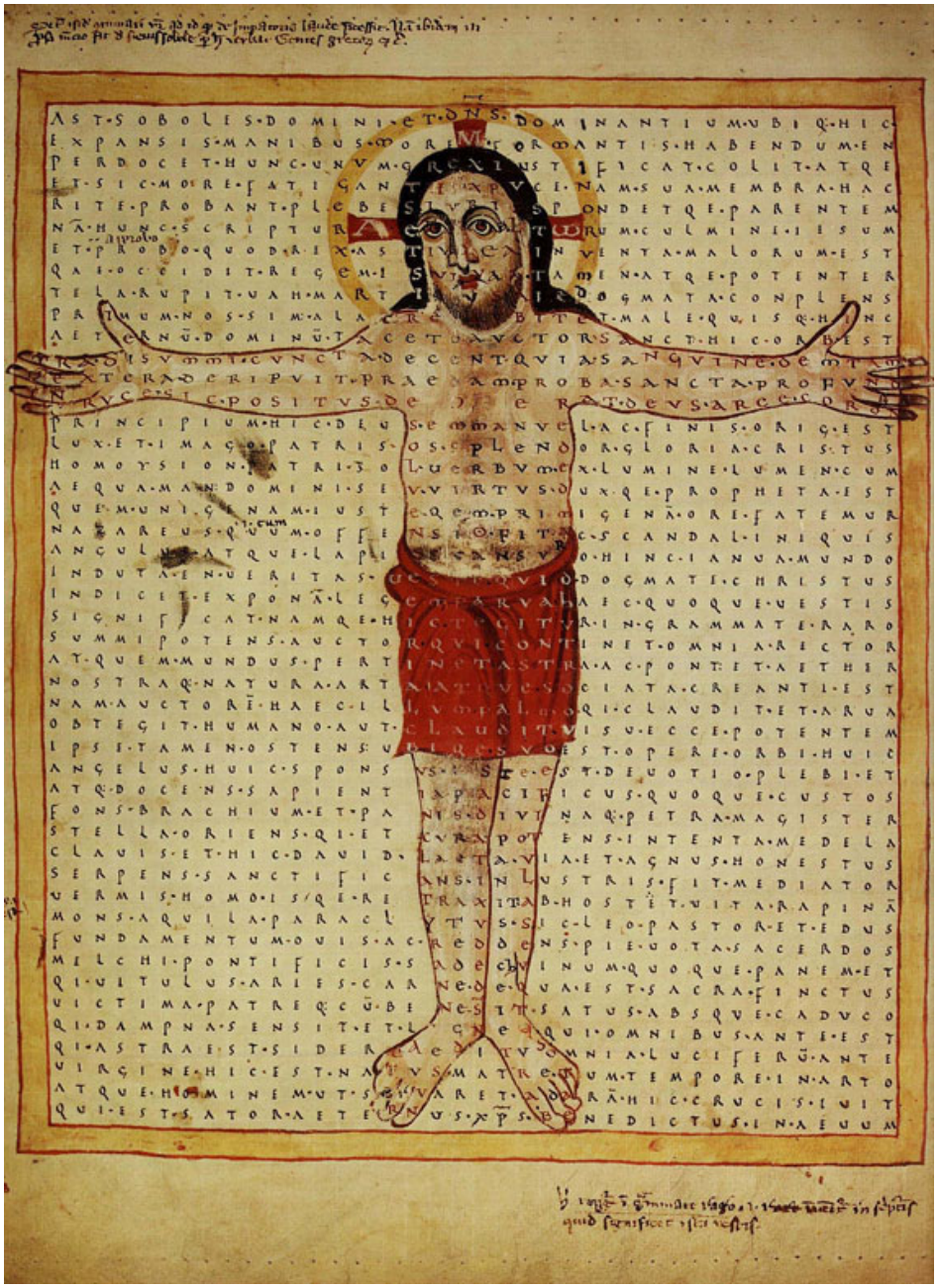

Fig. 8. Hrabanus Maurus. *De laudibus sanctae crucis* (The Praise of the Holy Cross), ca. 810.

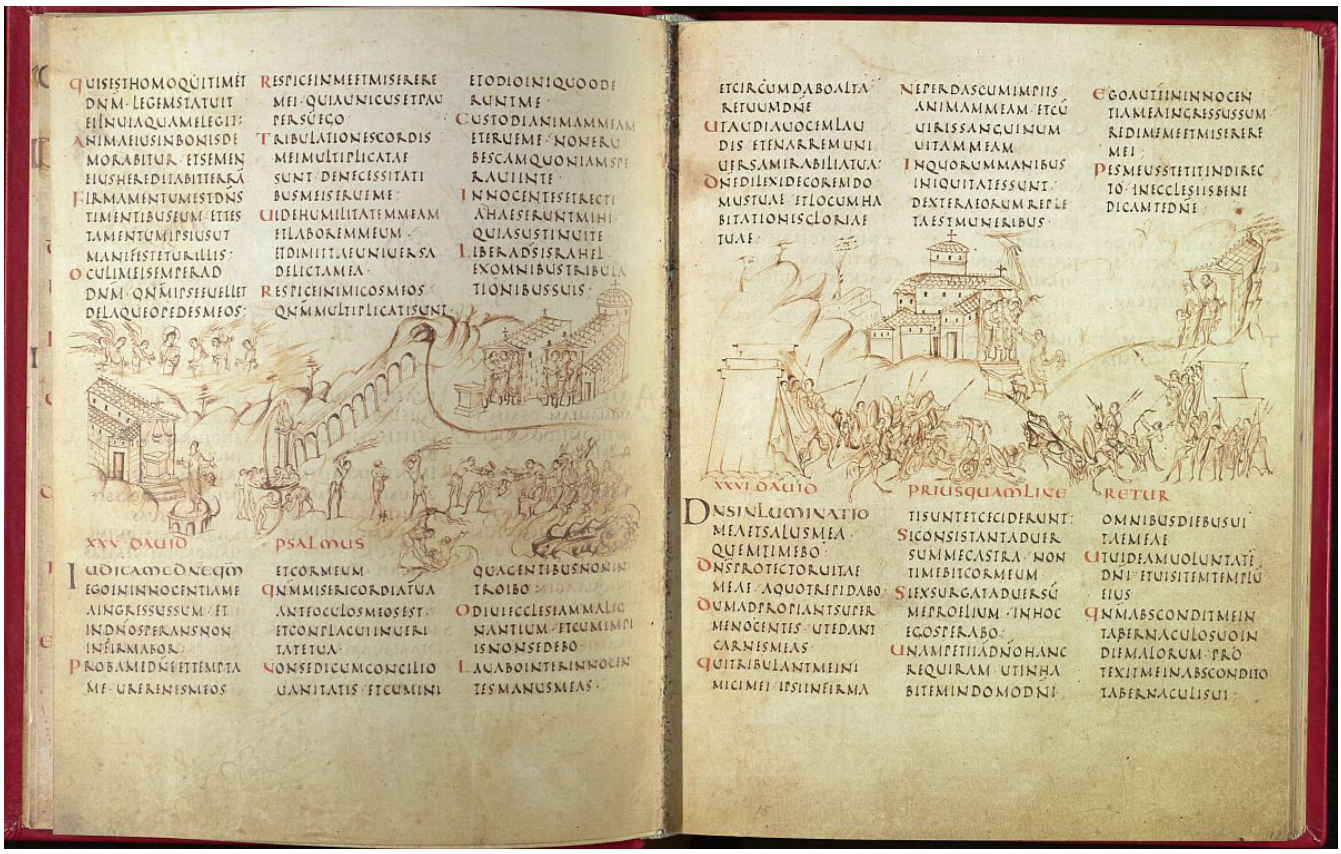

Fig. 9. The Utrecht Psalter (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek,
MS Bibl. Rhenotraiectinae I Nr 32), 9th century.

Fig. 10. *Imago Pietas* (Man of Sorrows),
Santa Croce Basilica in Gerusalemme, Rome
(13th or 14th century).

Fig. 11. Crucifixion icon, St. Catherine in Mount Sinai, ca. 8th century.

Fig. 12. Greek Icon, Man of Sorrows,
Kastoria Cathedral, Greece (12th century).

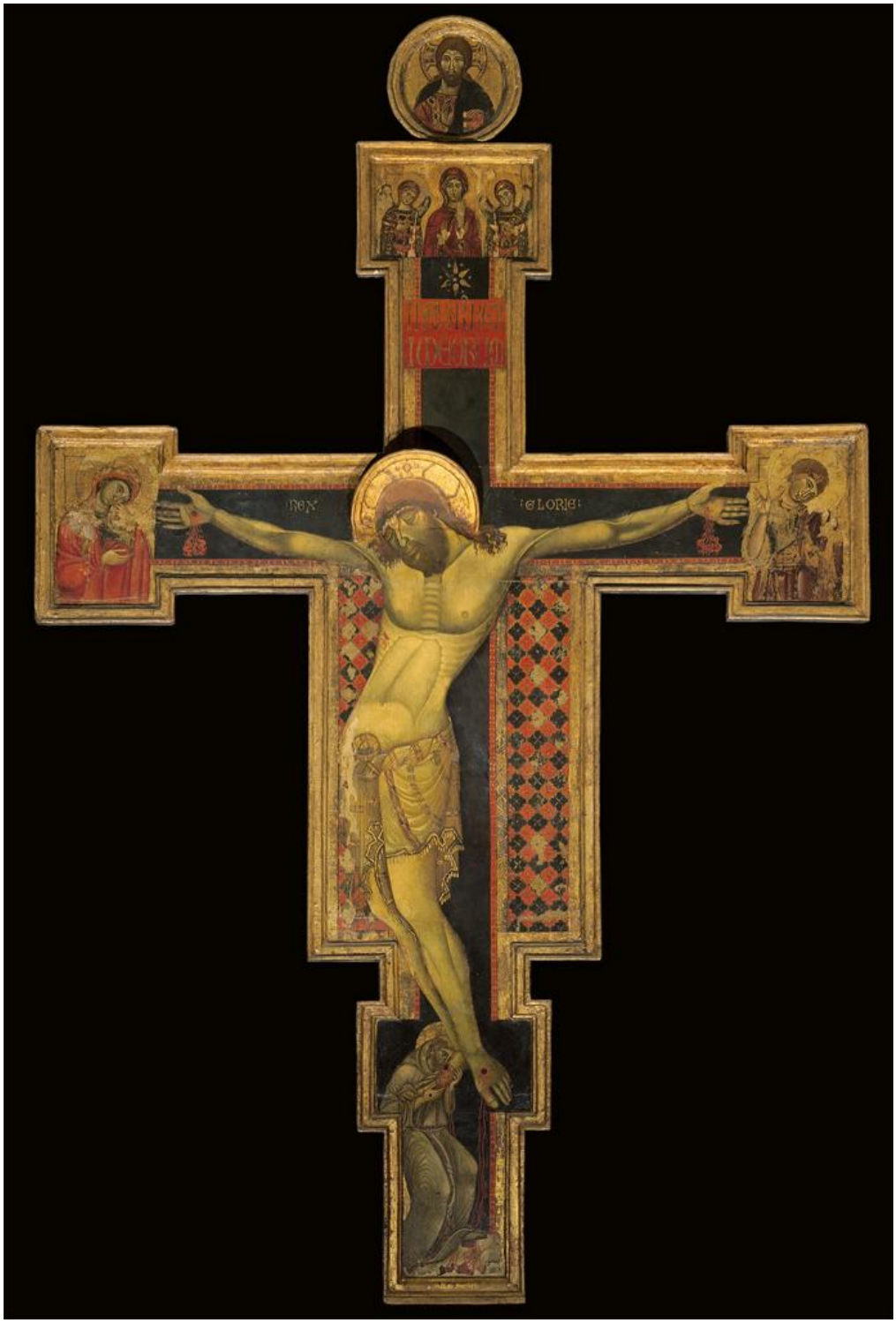

Fig. 13. The painted crucifix, by unknown Umbrian artist
Basilica of San Francesco, Arezzo (ca. 1260).

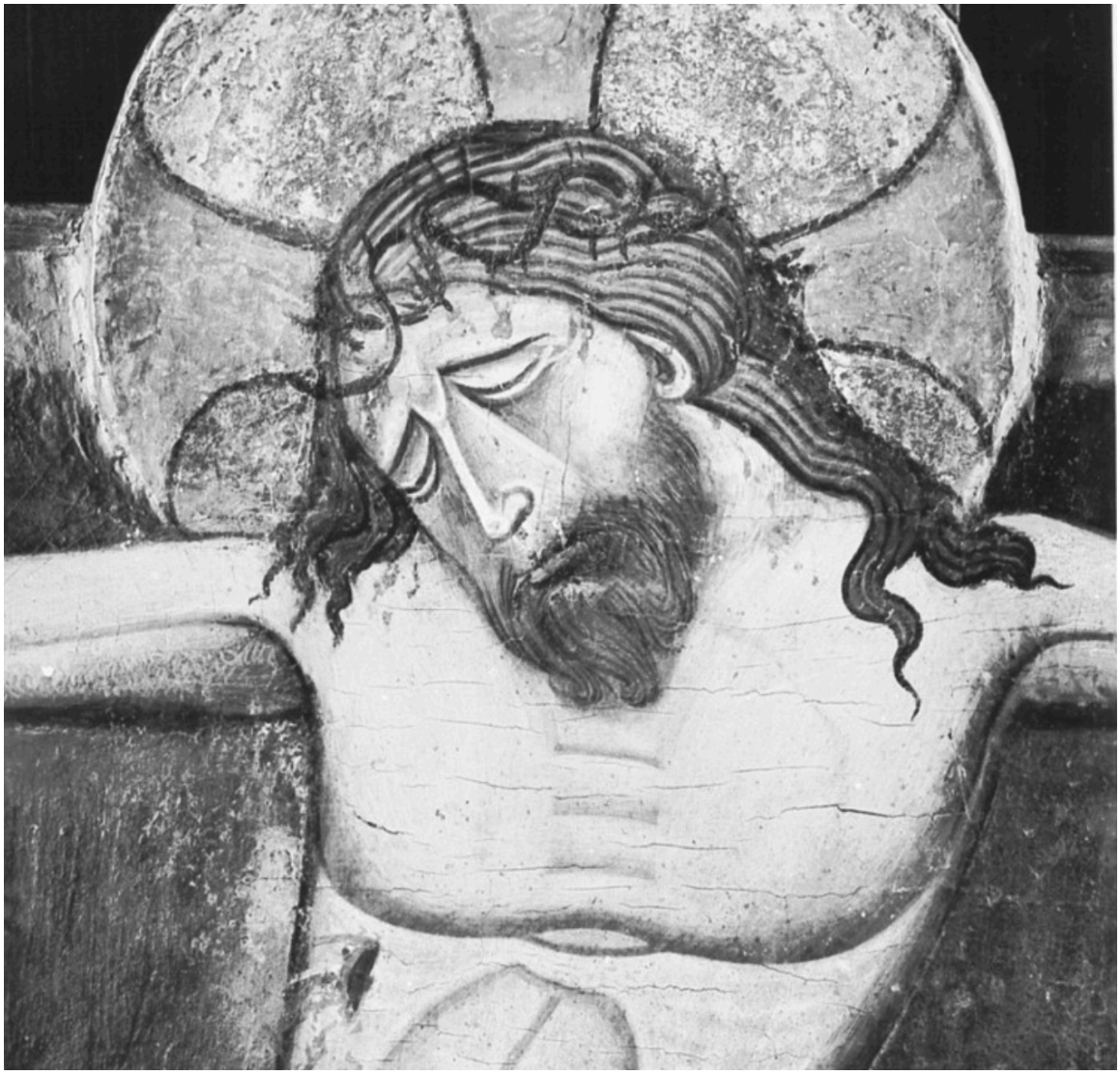

Fig. 14. The painted crucifix (detail) by unknown Umbrian artist,
Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Germany (ca. 1280).

Fig. 15. Giunta Pisano – The painted crucifix (detail),
Basilica of San Domenico, Bologna, Italy (1250-4).

Fig. 16. Francis' crucifix in San Damiano, Assisi, Italy (ca.1100).

Fig. 17. Pic. 15. Byzantine Master of Crucifix of Pisa,
National Museum of San Mateo, Pisa, Italy (ca.1200).

Fig. 18. Ugolino di Tedice – The painted crucifix,
Hermitage Museum, Saint-Petersburg, Russia (ca. 1270).

Fig. 19. Cimabue – The painted crucifix,
Basilica of Santa Croce, Florence, Italy (1287-8).

Fig. 20. Cimabue – The painted crucifix,
Basilica of San Domenico, Arezzo (ca. 1268–1271).

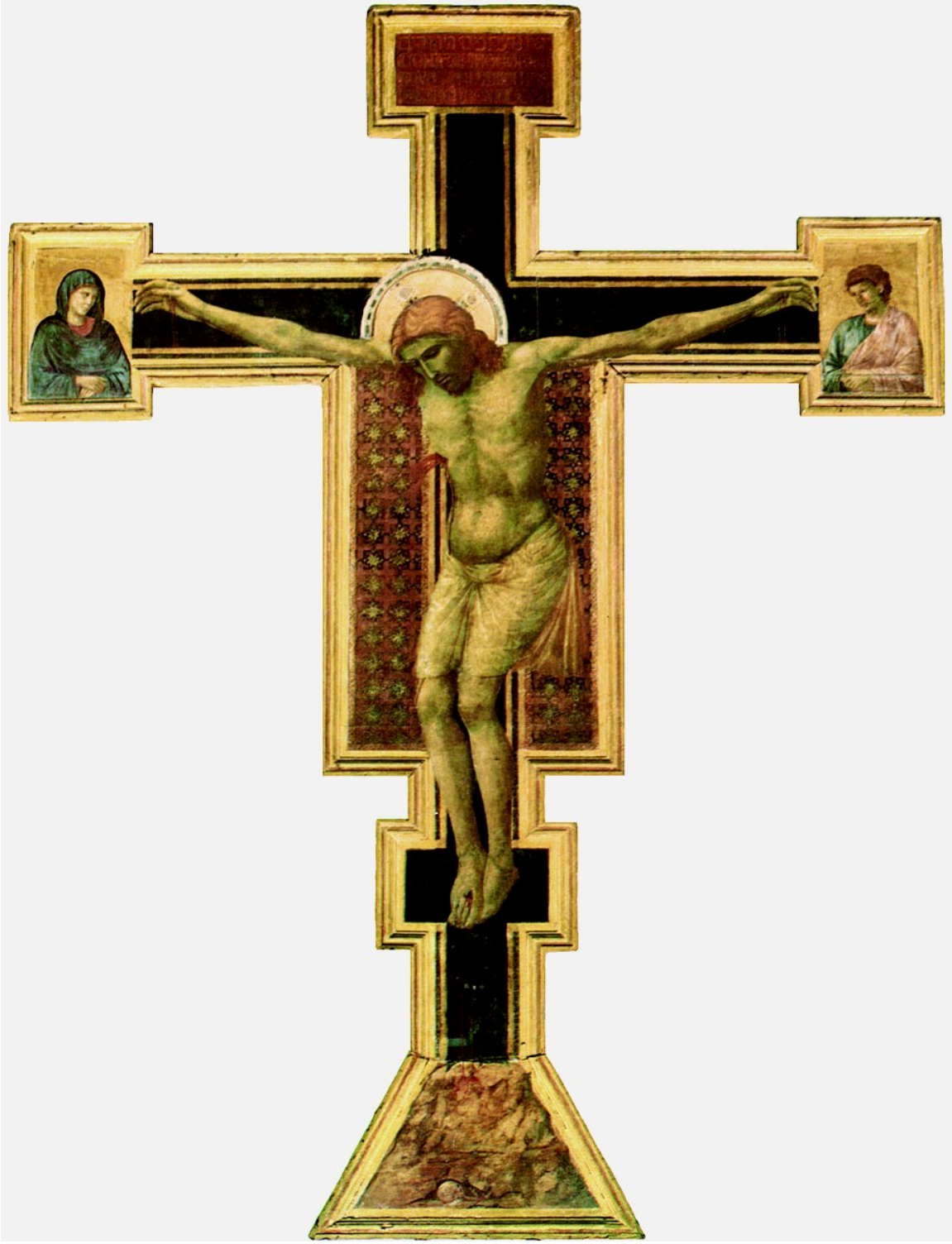

Fig. 21. Giotto – The painted crucifix,
Santa Maria Novella, Florence (ca. 1290-1300).

Fig. 22. Coronation of Lothair II
(17th century sketch in D. Rasponi, *De Basilica et patriarchio lateranensi libri quattuor* (Rome, 1656)) reprinted in Stroll, *Symbols as Power*, fig. 43).

Fig. 23. The apse mosaic, Basilica of San Clemente,
Rome, Italy (ca. 1130).

Fig. 24. Ordination of Clement I, fresco in the Lower Church of Basilica of San Clemente, Rome, Italy (11th century).

Fig. 25. The Crucifixion, the apse mosaic (detail),
Basilica of San Clemente, Rome, Italy (ca. 1130).

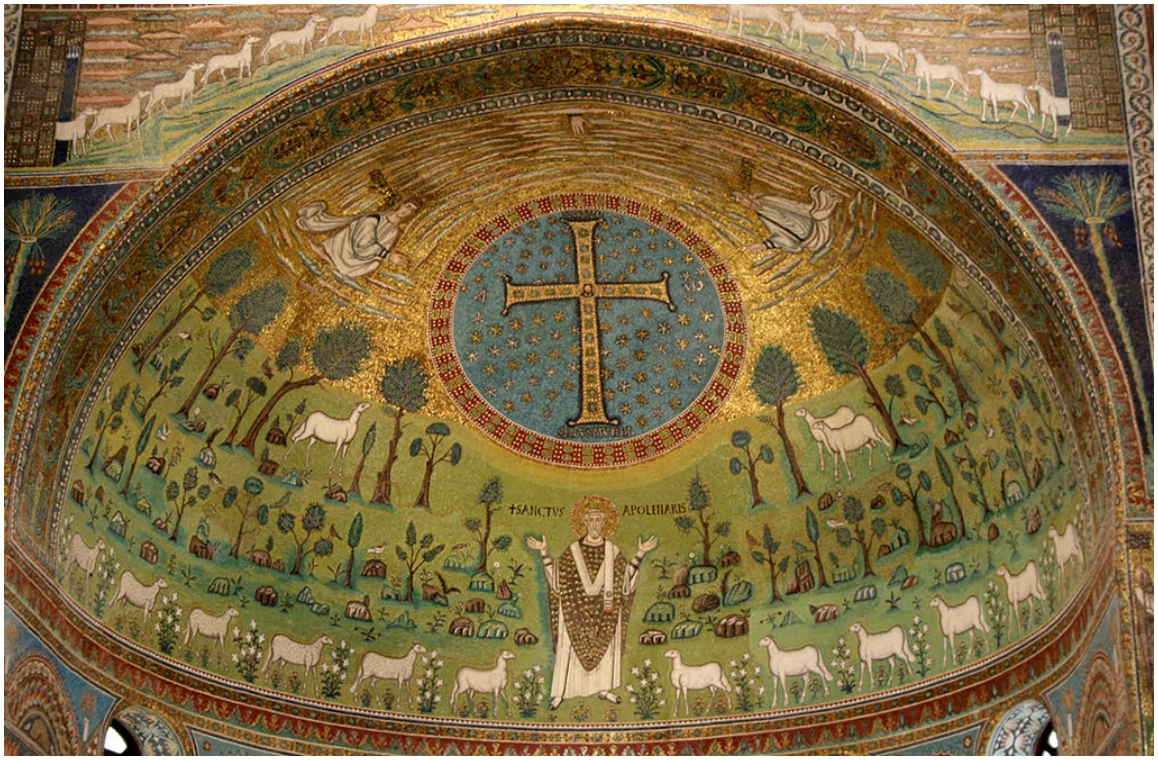

Fig. 26. Ravena Cross,
Basilica of Saint Apollinare, Classe, Italy (6th century)

Fig. 27. Coronation (fol. 11r),
The Sacramentary of Henry II (early 11th century manuscript)

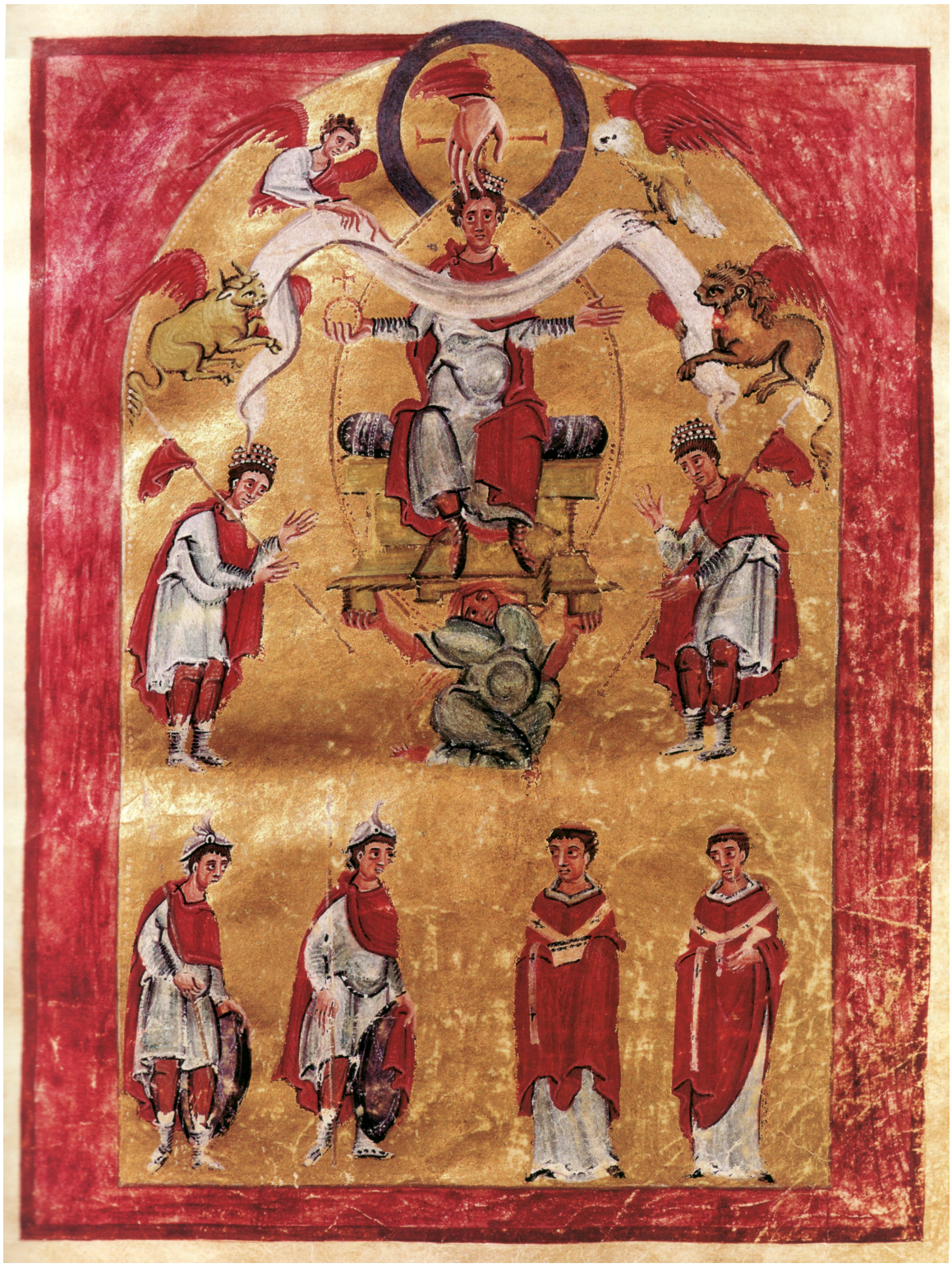

Fig. 28. Enthronement of Otto III (fol. 16r),
The Liuthar Gospels. Aachen Cathedral Treasury (ca. 1000).

Fig. 29. Coronation of Roger II (detail)
Martorana, Palermo (ca. 1130).

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