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LITURGY AND HEALING IN AN EARLY MEDIEVAL
SAINT'S CULT: THE MASS *IN HONORE SANCTI SIGISMUNDI*
FOR THE CURE OF FEVERS

BY FREDERICK S. PAXTON

In *The Glory of the Martyrs*, a collection of miracle stories completed by the early 590s, Bishop Gregory of Tours included a chapter on the Burgundian king Sigismund.¹ A Catholic convert from the Arian Christianity of his father, Sigismund had founded a monastery at Agaune, the present St.-Maurice, Switzerland (Wallis/Valais), in the year 515.² After he died in 523, at the hands of Chlodomer, one of the sons of Clovis, his body lay in a well at St.-Pérvay-la-Colombe near Orléans (where the Franks had thrown it) until the abbot Venerandus brought it back to St.-Maurice in 535/36 for burial.³ Over the next fifty years or so, Sigismund gained the reputation as a saint and as a source of healing power over fevers.⁴ About Sigismund's posthumous fame, Gregory recorded that "whenever people suffering from chills piously celebrate a mass in his honor and make an offering to God for the king's repose, immediately their tremors cease, their fevers disappear, and they are restored to their earlier health."⁵ Gregory's reference to a mass in honor of Sigismund is as unusual as is the very existence of such a celebration, for the *Missa sancti Sigismundi* is an early and peculiar example of a new development in the Latin liturgy in late antiquity,

¹ Gregory of Tours, *Liber in Gloria Martyrum*, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SSRM 1.2 (Hanover, 1885), chap. 74, p. 537; trans. Raymond Van Dam, *Glory of the Martyrs* (Liverpool, 1988), 96–97. On the dating of the text, see Krusch, 451–56, and Van Dam, 4–5. I would like to thank the American Council of Learned Societies for a Grant-in-Aid that supported initial research on this project in Paris in 1990, and the Fulbright Commission, for a research fellowship in Rome in 1993 that gave me the opportunity to bring it to completion.

² Jean-Marie Theurillat, *L'Abbaye de Saint-Maurice d'Agaune des origines à la réforme canoniale 515–830* (Sion, 1954).

³ *Ibid.*, 84 n. 1.

⁴ On Sigismund's cult, see Robert Folz, "Zur Frage der heiligen Könige: Heiligkeit und Nachleben in der Geschichte des burgundischen Königtums," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 14 (1958): 317–44; idem, *Les saints rois du moyen âge en occident (vie-xiiiè siècle)* (Brussels, 1984); Erich Zöllner, "König Sigismund, das Wallis und die historischen Voraussetzungen der Völsungensage," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 65 (1957): 1–14; Frantisek Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague, 1965), 396–98; and Frederick S. Paxton, "Power and the Power to Heal. The Cult of St Sigismund of Burgundy," *Early Medieval Europe* 2 (1993): 95–110.

⁵ "Nam, si qui nunc frigoritici in eius honore missas devote celebrant eiusque pro requie Deo offerunt oblationem, statim, compressis tremoribus, restinctis febribus, sanitati praestinae restaurantur." *Liber in Gloria Martyrum*, ed. Krusch, 537; trans. Van Dam, *Glory of the Martyrs*, 97.

the *missa votiva* or votive mass. Votive masses differed from traditional forms of eucharistic celebration because they could be offered for a particular purpose and at the special request of a member (or members) of a congregation.⁶ Unlike the *Missa sancti Sigismundi*, however, most other early votive masses had generalized titles such as *missa votiva* or *missa pro vivorum et mortuorum*. The mass in honor of St. Sigismund is, as far as I can tell, unique in its appeal to the intercession of a particular saint for a specific purpose—the cure of fevers.

Because the oldest version of Sigismund's mass appears in the so-called Bobbio Missal, scholars have often discussed it when confronting the problems of dating and establishing a provenance for that early medieval liturgical book.⁷ In a lengthy aside in the introduction to the fifth volume of the series *Paléographie musicale*, for example, Dom Paul Cagin concluded that behind the *Missa sancti Sigismundi regis* in the Bobbio Missal lay an older mass that was the creation of liturgists at Sigismund's own foundation, the monastery of St.-Maurice d'Agaune. The liturgists of St.-Maurice, he claimed, originally composed the mass in the style of the Gallican liturgy, but others quickly adapted it to Roman forms as it spread into areas that conformed to that rite. As he saw it, one such adaptation was present at the court at Monza of the Lombard king Agilulf (591–615/16), whose wife Theodilinda was a Catholic, and who was himself instrumental in the foundation of the monastery of Bobbio in 612. At Agilulf's court, the mass caught the attention of the Irish missionary, St. Columbanus, who added it along with some other Roman masses to the Irish core of the Bobbio Missal.⁸ Unfortunately, Cagin's conclusions, however plausible, were only conjectures, and there is still no general agreement on the dating and provenance of the Bobbio Missal. It may have originated in north Italy in the seventh century or in Francia in the eighth, and its direct and indirect sources remain obscure.⁹

⁶ Angelus Albert Häussling, *Mönchskonvent und Eucharistiefeier: Eine Studie über die Messe in der abendländischen Klosterliturgie der frühen Mittelalter und zur Geschichte der Messhäufigkeit*, Liturgiewissenschaftlichen Quellen und Forschungen 58 (Münster, 1973); Arnold Angenendt, "Missa specialis. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Entstehung der Privatmessen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 17 (1983): 153–221.

⁷ J. Mabillon and M. Germain, *Museum Italicum* 1.2 (Paris, 1687), 273–77; Paul Cagin, "Avant-propos," *Paléographie musicale*, vol. 5, *Antiphonarium Ambrosiarum de musée britannique (xiie siècle) codex additional 34209* (Solesmes, 1896–99) (hereafter cited as Cagin); André Wilmart, E. A. Lowe, and H. A. Wilson, *The Bobbio Missal: A Gallican Mass Book (Ms. Paris Lat. 13246): Notes and Studies*, HBS 61 (London, 1924). More rarely, scholars have investigated the mass in its own right: Adolph Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie und des religiösen Volkslebens* (Freiburg, 1902; rept. Darmstadt, 1963), 191–203; and Amédée Gastoué, "Un rituel noté de la province de Milan du Xe siècle," *Rassegna Gregoriana* 2 (1903): 245–54. The Bobbio mass is edited in E. A. Lowe, et al., *The Bobbio Missal: A Gallican Mass Book (Ms. Paris Lat. 13246)*, HBS 58 (London, 1920), 101–02.

⁸ Cagin, 134, 161–76, 197–98.

⁹ In the preface, written in 1924, to his contribution (originally written in 1907 as an article

Thus the mass of Sigismund as found therein may be either a Frankish or an Italian product.¹⁰ It is, in any case, a partially romanized version of a now lost original.

Elsewhere I have explored the origins and history of Sigismund's cult from the sixth through the ninth century.¹¹ The saint's reputation did not derive from the fact that he himself had been miraculously cured of fever, as the *Vita* of Bishop Apollinaris of Valence records, and as some scholars have believed.¹² It resulted rather from a complex of associations and circumstances including the treatment of his remains by the Franks, the topographical and spiritual ecology of Agaune, where they were finally laid to rest, and struggles for independence and authority among monks, bishops, and kings in sixth-century Burgundy—struggles visible to us in part through competing claims to healing power set forth in contemporary hagiographical texts. In this essay, I would like to focus on the mass of St. Sigismund, not for the light it sheds on the origins of the Bobbio Missal, but for what it reveals about early medieval attempts to come to terms with the ever-present reality of illness.

Dramatic and sudden healing miracles at the shrines of the saints were characteristic of the religious culture of sixth-century Gaul. These miraculous cures, whereby the former sufferer often entered a state of dependence vis-a-vis the healing saint, staying on at the shrine as one of its servants, represent, in Peter Brown's words, a "model of healing" whose hierarchical aspects corresponded to the new social and power relations of life in the post-Roman West.¹³ Yet, thanks to the mass in Sigismund's name, sufferers from fever, who were ubiquitous in the Middle Ages and often too weak to travel, did not need to make a trip to the saint's gravesite on the Rhône River southeast of Lake Geneva, but could have access to his healing power wherever his mass was known and sung. Through the success of his mass, Sigismund became not only the first medieval

for the DACL) to *The Bobbio Missal: Notes and Studies*, Wilmart retracted his criticisms of Cagin and agreed that the Bobbio Missal was a north Italian creation. Lowe argued (*Bobbio Missal*, 94–105) for an eighth-century Frankish provenance on paleographical grounds, a judgment shared by Bernhard Bischoff. Cf. Klaus Gamber, *Codices liturgici latini antiquiores*, Spicilegii Friburgensis subsidia 1 (Fribourg, 1963; 2nd ed., 1968), no. 220, pp. 167–68, and Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources*, trans. and revised by William Storey and Neils Rasmussen (Washington, D.C., 1986), 323–24. Given the continuing disagreement about the origins of this text, it is surprising that there is no reference to Cagin's work in Gamber's guide to liturgical manuscripts.

¹⁰ Wilmart, *Bobbio: Notes and Studies*, 28, n. 3, expressed dissatisfaction (which I share) with Gastoué's attempt (n. 4 above) to reconstruct the primitive Gallican form of the mass.

¹¹ Paxton, "Power and the Power to Heal."

¹² Franz, *Messe*, 195–96; Folz, "Zur Frage," 325.

¹³ Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981), 114–20. Cf. Aline Rousselle, "Du sanctuaire au thaumaturge: la guérison en Gaule au IV^e siècle," *Annales* 31 (1976): 1085–1107; trans. Elborg Forster in *Ritual, Religion, and the Sacred*, ed. Robert Forster and Orest Ranum (Baltimore, 1982), 95–127.

saint to specialize in the cure of a particular medical condition but also the first whose healing power was regularly accessible outside the presence of his relics. In this respect, Sigismund's mass was an innovation in the way that saints cared for the sick. But it was also an innovation of another sort, for it created a place for priests within the healing process, as orchestrators of their congregations' entreaties and as petitioners themselves. The origins and spread of the mass of St. Sigismund thus cast a welcome beam of light on a little-known aspect of early medieval responses to sickness—ritual healing by priests within a liturgical setting.

* * * *

Although it does not appear in every early medieval missal or sacramentary, the mass of St. Sigismund was widely known and used.¹⁴ The version to which Gregory of Tours referred in the late sixth century, like that in the Bobbio Missal, must have derived from some form of the original,¹⁵ and the proliferation of versions between the eighth and the twelfth centuries (no two are exactly alike) attests to widespread interest in this novel form of heavenly intercession for the sick in the Latin church. After the mass in the Bobbio Missal, the oldest surviving examples appear in sacramentaries written around the turn of the ninth century in Aquitaine (Angoulême) and Burgundy (Autun).¹⁶ For the later ninth and early

¹⁴ Cagin (173, n. 2) was unaware of the eighth- and ninth-century Frankish examples, and Franz (*Messe*, 191–203) discussed only the Bobbio mass and the tenth-century St. Gall versions (n. 20 below). Using mostly late medieval liturgical texts, Folz (“Zur Frage,” 340–41) argued that there were two centers from which the cult radiated—the abbey of St.-Mesmin de Micy near Orléans, from which devotion spread into southern France; and St. Maurice d’Agaune, from which it spread to Italy and Switzerland. My findings support his (although the identification of St.-Mesmin is purely conjectural), and add St.-Martin of Tours and Lorsch as the sources of the diffusion of the mass in the low countries and Germany in the later ninth and tenth centuries.

¹⁵ Gregory memorialized his links to Agaune by rededicating the cathedral church at Tours to St. Maurice. See Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X* 10.31, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, MGH SSRM 1 (2nd. ed., Hannover, 1951), 534; and Sharon Farmer, *Communities of St. Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (Ithaca, 1991), 54–55, 232–35.

¹⁶ BN lat. 816, fol. 115v, “Missa sancti Sigismundi regis quae pre (sic) febribus cantare debet”; ed. Patrick Saint-Roch, *Liber sacramentorum Engolismensis*, CCL 159C (Turnhout, 1987), 251. This sacramentary, perhaps a product of the abbey of St.-Cybard, could have been written any time after the depredations of Pepin le Bref in Aquitaine in 760 and 768 and before 820; *ibid.*, xi; Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, MS Phillipps 1667, fol. 184r, (“Missa sancti Sigismundi”) (fragment); ed. Odilo Heiming, *Liber sacramentorum Augustodunensis*, CCL 159B (Turnhout, 1984), nos. 2022–25. Although Heiming noted (vi–vii) that a folio is missing between fols. 183 and 184 in the manuscript as it now stands, the truncated mass of St. Sigismund (last line of a collect, preface, and two postcommunion prayers) appears in his edition under the rubric “Super Agnum in Pascha” from fol. 183v, thus confusing its identification. I found it thanks to the apparatus in E. Moeller, *Corpus Praefationum*, 5 vols., CCL 161 (Turnhout, 1980–81), nos. 956, 997.

tenth centuries, I have located three north Italian versions;¹⁷ two from East Francia (Lorsch and Echternach);¹⁸ and at least two versions from Tours in West Francia.¹⁹ Tenth-century liturgists regularly incorporated the mass in new liturgical books, and examples exist from Winchcombe, Reims, Angers, Fulda, St. Albans (Mainz), and St. Gall.²⁰ They also added it in blank spaces of older books,

¹⁷ Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 377, fols. 91r-92r, "Missa sancti Sygismundi regis et martyris"; ed. Sieghild Rehle, *Sacramentarium Arnonis*, Textus patristici et liturgici 8 (Regensburg, 1970), 83-84 (A.D. 850-900). Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS A24bis inf., fols. 295r-297r, "Missa in honore sancti Sigismundi regis ac martiris pro infirmantibus" and ("alia missa sancti Sigismundi") (fragment); ed. Odilo Heiming, *Das ambrosianische Sakramentar von Biasca*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 51 (Münster, 1969), 191-93, nos. 1319-23 and 1324-26 (Biasca, N. Italy, 894-932).

¹⁸ Vatican, MS Pal. lat. 485, fol. 15r-v, "Missale in nat(ale) Sigismundi" (Lorsch, ca. 900); see Frederick S. Paxton, "Bonus liber: A Late Carolingian Clerical Manual from Lorsch (Bibliotheca Vaticana MS Pal. lat. 485)," in *The Two Laws: Studies in Medieval Legal History Dedicated to Stephan Kutner*, ed. Laurent Mayali and Stephanie A. J. Tibbetts, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Canon Law 1 (Washington, D.C., 1990), 11. BN lat. 9433, fol. 125, "Passio s. Sigismundi regis et mart(yris) Missa contra quartanum typum" (Echternach, 895-900); see Victor Leroquais, *Les sacramentaires et les missels manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France* 1 (Paris, 1924), 124, and Cagin, 170-71. The late ninth-century date for this manuscript was established by Carl Nordenfalk, "Ein karolingisches Sakramentar aus Echternach und seine Vorläufer," *Acta archaeologica* 2 (1931): 211-12.

¹⁹ There are four copies of the mass in three sacramentaries from Tours: BN nouv. acq. lat. 1589, fol. 102; Tours, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 184, fol. 184; and BN lat. 9430, fols. 33v and 262r ("Missa s. Sigismundi pro febribus"). Nouv. acq. 1589 (TU2) was written for the cathedral of St. Maurice in the last quarter of the ninth century. The other two manuscripts comprise a jumble of material from two sacramentaries, one written for the abbey of St. Martin between 875 and 900 (TU1), and an augmented copy of the same written for use at the cathedral in the early tenth century (TU3). Jean Deshusses, *Le sacramentaire grégorien: Ses principales formes d'après les plus anciens manuscrits*, 3 vols., Spicilegium Friburgense 16, 24, 28 (Fribourg, 1971, 1979, 1982) 2:196-97, edited the mass from the texts in TU1 and TU2, but although he distinguished between those two versions, he did not indicate if the version in TU1 is based on one or the other (or both) of its two appearances in that sacramentary (BN lat. 9430, fols. 33v and 262r). The mass in TU3 is probably the same as that in TU1 on fol. 33v (since they both appear after the common of the the saints and the mass for the dedication of a church), but I was not able to check the manuscripts directly; cf. Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 46, 50, 52; and Deshusses, *Sacramentaire grégorien*, 3:55-59.

²⁰ Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 127, fol. 329, "Missa in honore s. Sigismundi regis et mart. et pro febricitantibus"; Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 91 (taken from the abbey of Winchcombe in England to Fleury in the eleventh century). Reims, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 214, fols. 119v-120r, "Missa de (sic) s. Sigismundi regis contra febris"; Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 93, and Cagin, 171-72 (wrongly identified as ninth century). Angers, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 91(83), fol. 261, "Missa in honore s. Sigismundi regis et mart."; Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 73, and Cagin (n. 7 above), 170-71. Göttingen, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Theol. 231, fols. 183v-184r, "Missa pro illo qui febre continetur"; ed. Gregor Richter and Albert Schönfelder, *Sacramentarium Fuldense*, Quellen und Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Abtei und der Diözese Fulda 9 (Fulda, 1912), 278-79. Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, MS lat. 1888, fols. 67r-68v, "Missa sancti Sigismundi pro febribus"; ed. Franz, *Messe*, 202. The Vienna MS is a late tenth-century copy of a compilation assembled at St. Albans between 936-

as can be seen in sacramentaries from St.-Germain-des-Prés, Asti, Bergamo, and Padua.²¹ By the eleventh century, the mass had penetrated into Spain and southern Italy and examples abound from areas north of the Alps.²²

The long-term success of Sigismund's mass was not, however, guaranteed from the start. It could not have been easy for the monks of St.-Maurice to present Sigismund as a martyr and a saint. The cult of the saints was in its infancy in the early sixth century and there was little or no precedent for ascribing sanctity to a layman who had not died in the defense of his faith, especially one who, like Sigismund, had had one of his sons ruthlessly murdered. When Gregory of Tours first wrote of Sigismund in the third book of his *Histories* shortly before 576,²³ he introduced him as the founder of St.-Maurice d'Agaune, related the story of the murder of his son, and presented the king's death at the hands of the Franks as an example of God's just vengeance, which fell on the king even after he had performed penance at St.-Maurice for his crime.²⁴ If Gregory's portrayal reflects

62 as part of the preparation of the Roman-German Pontifical (Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy* [n. 9 above], 233). St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MSS 338–41; ed. Franz, *Messe*, 198–202. On the St. Gall manuscripts, see also Gustave Scherrer, *Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen* (Halle, 1875), 118–20.

²¹ BN lat. 2291, fol. 19r, "Missa s. Sigismundi regis pro febribus" (written at St.-Amand for St.-Germain ca. 875–76); see Deshusses, *Sacramentaire grégorien*, 3:41, and Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 56. The mass did not otherwise enter into the important stream of sacramentaries emanating from St.-Amand in the late ninth century. Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 525, fol. 98v, "Missa s. Sigismundi regis pro febricitantibus"; ed. Gastoué, "Un rituel" (n. 7 above), 252–54 (Asti). Bergamo, Biblioteca di San Alessandro in Colonna, MS 242, fols. 15v–16v, "Missa sci sigismundi (pro his) qui febricitantur"; ed. Angelo Paredi, *Sacramentarium Bergomense*, Monumenta Bergomensia 6 (Bergamo, 1962), 32–33. Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, D47, fol. 160r, "Missa in honore s. Sigismundi"; see Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, *Die älteste erreichbare Gestalt des Liber Sacramentorum anni circuli der römischen Kirche*, Liturgiegeschichtliche Quellen und Forschungen 11/12 (Münster, 1927), xxii, xxx. Cagin's (164–65) reference to a mass in this MS at fol. 297 is clearly wrong.

²² Vich, Museo Episcopale, MS 66, fols. 65r–66r, "Missa sancti Sigismundi regis"; ed. Alejandro Olivar, *El sacramentario de Vich*, Monumenta Hispaniae sacra, Serie litúrgica 4 (Madrid-Barcelona, 1953), 193–94. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Aedil. 123, fol. 80r, "Missa s. Sigismundi pro febricitantibus"; cf. Cagin, 164–65, and Adalbert Ebner, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kuntsgeschichte des Missale Romanum im Mittelalter: Iter Italicum* (Freiburg, 1896), 33–35 (Florence, Cathedral). BN lat. 820, fol. 12r–v, "Missa s. Sigismundi pro febribus"; Victor Leroquais, *Les pontificaux manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1937), 293 (Pontifical of Salzburg). Monte Cassino, Archivio della Badia, MS 426, pp. 57–58, "Missa sigismundi regis et martyris pre febre canenda"; Ebner, *Iter Italicum*, 102 (I would like to thank Virginia Brown for bringing this example to my attention). For other examples, see Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 101 (Figeac), 113 (St.-Méen), 116 (Reichenau), 119 (Metz), 144 (St.-Denis), 158 (abbey in the Limousin), 174 (Besançon), and Cagin, 164–73. I do not know of any examples of the mass from the British Isles.

²³ On the dating of books 1–4 of the *History*, see Gregory, *Libri historiarum* (n. 15 above), xxi; (1st ed., 1885), 16.

²⁴ *Libri historiarum* 3.5–6, ed. Krusch and Levison, 100–03.

general perceptions, then devotion to Sigismund and word of his healing power was probably confined to Agaune and Burgundy until that time. Even there his cult got off to a slow start. The monks of Agaune did not produce a *Vita* or *Passio* of the saint as a means of promoting it, but seem to have limited themselves to circulating the mass for the cure of fevers.²⁵ Indeed, the composition of the mass may have been an ingenious ad hoc solution to the problem of organized devotion to Sigismund in the face of active memory of his life and times.²⁶

The uncertain status of Sigismund's reputation for sanctity and healing power in the sixth century has left traces in the language of the prayers that have the best claim to derive from the mass that originated at Agaune. The prayers draw, in general, on ideas and expressions rooted in the liturgy of Roman Christian antiquity. They express faith in the ability of Sigismund to petition on behalf of fever victims at the court of the heavenly king and faith in the mercy and healing power of God. Yet they suggest that the monks of St.-Maurice did not want to push too readily their claims for Sigismund's power and intercession. This is hinted at in the one prayer common to every version of the mass that I have found from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. The prayer was no doubt originally a *Praefatio missae* (the prayer that began the mass of the faithful in the Gallican liturgy).²⁷ Written in the standard Gallican form of a bidding—that is, a dispositive prayer addressed to the congregation—it was eventually rewritten in the Roman vocative form, addressing God directly.²⁸ I present it here in its older dispositive form based on the Latin of the Bobbio Missal.

²⁵ A *Passio* did eventually appear, in the eighth or early ninth century, but not at Agaune (n. 57 below).

²⁶ For a recent discussion of the development of hagiographical traditions around none-too-saintly characters, see Paul Fouracre, "Merovingian History and Merovingian Hagiography," *Past and Present*, no. 127 (May 1990): 3–38.

²⁷ Cagin (n. 7 above), 168.

²⁸ On the bidding as a peculiarly Gallican prayer, see Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origin and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans. Francis A. Brunner, 2 vols. (New York, 1951–55) 1:366–67. From the tenth century on, the grammatical confusion evidently caused by the shift from the dispositive to the vocative disappears and only vocative versions appear. The earlier confusion is visible in the texts in Bobbio (n. 7 above), Angoulême (n. 16 above), and Vat. lat. 377 (n. 17 above). The scribe of Vat. lat. 377 tried to correct "famulo tuo" to "famulo suo," but someone else erased the "s"; the modern editor compounded the problem by seeing two erasures where there is only one. The MS reads further on, "famuli sui," not "famuli tui." The tenth-century masses from Fulda and St. Gall (n. 20 above) have prefaces derived from this prayer. It was also rewritten early on in the vocative to form another prayer, beginning "Inclina domine." In that form it is sometimes a Secret (e.g. Bobbio, Angoulême, Tours [cathedral; n. 19 above], and St. Albans [n. 20 above]) and sometimes a Collect (Tours [abbey; n. 19 above], Biasca [n. 17 above], Fulda, the St. Gall MSS, and the Salzburg Pontifical [n. 22 above]). The grammatical confusion over the first prayer probably arose by way of contamination from the second, but the shift from the Gallican dispositive to the Roman vocative form also signalled a change in the role of the priest from leader of the congregation's prayer to the one who prayed for the congregation.

Let us entreat, dearest brethren, the omnipotent lord, who through his apostles and martyrs grants diverse gifts of health, that he might mercifully respond to the prayers of his servant Sigismund, so that while revealing to us his merits, he might grant a cure to this his servant N. who is harassed by the vexation of quartan fever.²⁹

The first half of this prayer establishes the role of the apostles and martyrs as channels of God's healing power. In keeping with the nature of the Gallican liturgy, the priest is not himself a link in the intercessory chain, but the director and coordinator of the congregation's entreaty. The second half of the prayer expresses the congregation's hope that God will cure the one for whom the mass is being said and, in so doing, reveal to them Sigismund's special place as an intercessor for fever sufferers, especially victims of malaria.³⁰ The hint of ambivalence over the precise nature of the king's status in heaven in this prayer recalls Gregory of Tours's statement that the mass he knew was said in Sigismund's honor *and* "for his repose."³¹ Thus, the original mass was sung as much for the king himself as for those who invoked his name in the hope of healing. As a cautious move in the emerging cult of Sigismund at Agaune, the mass served both to honor the king and as a means of establishing his claims to sanctity. Miracles wrought in his name on earth would attest to his presence in heaven and to his special status as intercessor for fever sufferers.

²⁹ *Bobbio Missal* (n. 7 above), 101: "Omnipotentem dominum qui per apostolus et martires suos, diuersa sanitatum, dona largiatur, fratres dilectissimi deprecimur, ut huic seruo suo *ill.* qui typum quartani uixacione fatigatur, fidelis, famoli sui sigismundi, precibus clementer, occurras, dum nobis illius facit, merita isti conferas medicinam." Translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own, although I would like to acknowledge the aid of three works that are indispensable to anyone reading medieval liturgical texts: Albert Blaise, *Le vocabulaire Latin des principaux thèmes liturgiques* (Turnhout, 1966), and *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des auteurs chrétiens* (Strasbourg, 1954); and Anthony Ward and Cuthbert Johnson, *The Prefaces of the Roman Missal* (Rome, 1989). In this instance, I have corrected the final two verbs to the third person on the model of the sacramentary of Biasca (n. 17 above) and read "patefacit" for "facit" on the basis of the text of this prayer in Bergamo (n. 21 above) and the Secret in Bobbio ("Inclina . . . nobis illius, patefacias, merita presenti egroto conferas medicinam"). Cf. Franz, *Messe* (n. 7 above), 196.

³⁰ The reference to quartan fever suggests malaria, but the subject is in need of a separate study. On the historical epidemiology of malaria, see Mirko Grmek, *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*, trans. Mireille Muellner and Leonard Muellner (Baltimore, 1989), 245–83 (and esp. the bibliographical references in nn. 123–45); and Leonard Wilson, "Fever," in W. F. Bynum and Roy Porter, eds., *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, 2 vols. (London, 1993) 1:382–94. Peregrine Horden, "Disease, Dragons and Saints: The Management of Epidemics in the Dark Ages," in Terence Ranger and Paul Slack, eds., *Epidemics and Ideas: Essays on the Historical Perception of Pestilence* (Cambridge, 1992), 45–76, has recently suggested that early medieval stories of dragon slayers can be read as stories of the successful control of diseases such as malaria. If he is right, then the intriguing possibility raised by Zöllner, "König Sigismund" (n. 4 above), 8–9, of a connection between Sigismund as healer of fevers and Germanic folk heroes like Beowulf and Sigurd as dragonslayers takes on new significance.

³¹ "eiusque pro requie" (n. 5 above).

I am certain that a mass “in commemoration of St. Sigismund the king for fever sufferers” in a tenth-century manuscript from St. Gall preserves another of the prayers that Gregory knew.³² It is one of two Secrets included among the prayers of the mass and is unique to this St. Gall manuscript. It is, moreover, written in the purest late-antique liturgical style.

Accept favorably, Lord, our supplications for the soul and spirit of your servant King Sigismund, for whom we offer to you this sacrifice of praise, so that you will deign to receive him into the company of your saints.³³

The intent of this prayer is perfectly clear. The liturgical offering was meant for the benefit not only of the sick but of the dead king as well, who had not yet entered the ranks of the elect around the throne of God. A mass containing the bidding looked at above and this Secret would have given precisely the dual message to which Gregory referred. Yet no other example of this prayer, or any other petition for the repose of the king’s soul, appears among the large number of extant versions of the mass. That no trace of this tradition survives outside this one example from St. Gall—not even in the Bobbio Missal—implies that by the eighth century at the latest the early ambivalence over Sigismund’s status as a martyr and his role as an intercessor had dissolved.³⁴ How did this come about?

There is already a hint of this change in the entry on the king’s death in the Chronicle of Marius of Avenches, which was based in part on Gregory’s *Histories* and finished in 581.³⁵ The mention by Marius of the fact that Sigismund was

³² St. Gall 399, p. 500, ed. Franz, *Messe*, 198–99, “Missa in commemoratione s. Sigismundi pro febricitante.”

³³ *Ibid.*, 199, “Propitiare Domine supplicationibus nostris pro anima et spiritu famuli tui Sigismundi regis, pro qua tibi offerimus sacrificium laudis, ut eam sanctorum tuorum consortio sociare digneris.” On the language of the prayer, see Blaise, *Vocabulaire Latin*, 181–82, 441–42. Cf. the Secrets in the mass for the dead in the sacramentary of Gellone, ed. Antoine Dumas, *Liber sacramentorum Gellonensis*, CCL 159 (Turnhout, 1981), 480; the mass on the anniversary of a death in the supplement to the Gregorian sacramentary of Benedict of Aniane, ed. Deshusses, *Sacramentaire gregorien* (n. 19 above), 1:467; and the parallel between Gregory’s language and the words of the prayer (noted below). The use of the expression “pro anima et spiritu” rather than simply “pro anima” (only Gellone agrees with the St. Gall Secret here) may also indicate the Gallican origin and antiquity of the prayer; see Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1990), 58–59.

³⁴ The fact that neither Franz nor Folz was familiar with the late eighth- and ninth-century versions of the mass led them to misread the presence of the Secret in the St. Gall mass as representative of a continuous tradition of ambivalence concerning the saint’s power rather than as an isolated vestige of the sixth-century beginnings of the cult. Cf. Franz, *Messe*, 199–200, and Folz, “Zur Frage” (n. 4 above), 331–32.

³⁵ Marius, *Chronica*, anno 523, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA 11.235: “Sigismundus rex Burgundionum a Burgundionibus Francis traditus est et in Francia in habitu monachale perductus ibique cum uxore et filiis in puteo est proiectus.” Marius recorded a number of incidents at Agaune known from no other source, such as the attack by the monks on the local bishop and his retinue in 565 (*ibid.*, 237): evidence of tensions that may have been involved in the promotion of Sigismund’s cult; see Paxton “Power and the Power to Heal” (n. 4 above).

“betrayed by the Burgundians” and taken to Francia “in the habit of a monk” suggests that his image was in the process of undergoing a transformation. As Frantisek Graus showed in his groundbreaking study of early medieval sanctity, the process of turning a dead king into a saint necessarily involved presenting him either as a monk or as a victim whose death comes not in battle but as the result of betrayal into the hands of his enemies or his own refusal to fight.³⁶ Both elements are present in Marius’s brief notice. Then, within a dozen years after the completion of Marius’s chronicle, Gregory subtly reworked his account of the king’s death in the *Histories* for inclusion in *The Glory of the Martyrs*. In the new text, Gregory presented God’s vengeance not as a punishment but as a sought-after expiation of the king’s sins.³⁷ The miracles wrought through the mass in honor of St. Sigismund thus were proof of God’s forgiveness and Sigismund’s reception “into the company of the saints.”³⁸ To Gregory’s mind, the original form of the mass had achieved its object. God had heard the prayers of his people and had received Sigismund as a saint in heaven.³⁹ The close connection between the change in Gregory’s presentation of the king and his experience of the mass in St. Sigismund’s honor is apparent in his use of the term *consortio sanctorum*, which appears both in *The Glory of the Martyrs* and in the final invocation of the Secret in the St. Gall mass.⁴⁰ The implication that there was no further need to retain the prayers in the mass for the repose of the king’s soul is clear. Securely placed at the heavenly court, Sigismund could concentrate on interceding for those who suffered from fever and sought his aid.

Gregory’s attestation of Sigismund’s sanctity coincides with another piece of evidence for the maturation of the dead king’s cult in the late sixth century: the appearance of Sigismund’s name in the so-called *Martyrology of Jerome*. This guide to the liturgical celebration of saints’ feasts was first compiled in the fifth century on the basis of an old Roman church calendar. Starting with the twenty-fifth of December, it provided brief notices with the names, places of death or burial, and related information on the saints of the Church for each day of the

³⁶ Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger* (n. 4 above), 393, 427–33; see also Janet Nelson, “Royal Saints and Early Medieval Kingship,” in *Sanctity and Secularity: The Church and the World*, ed. Derek Baker, Studies in Church History 10 (Oxford, 1973), 39–44.

³⁷ Gregory, *In gloria martyrum* (n. 1 above), chap. 74, p. 537, “paenitentiam egit, deprecans, ut quaecumque deliquerat in hoc ei saeculo ultio divina retribueret, ut scilicet habeatur in iudicio absolutus, si ei mala quae gesserat, priusquam de mundo decedat, repensetur.”

³⁸ *Ibid.*, “quem in consortio sanctorum adscitum ipsa res quae geritur manifestat.”

³⁹ There was also a political motivation. At the time, Gregory was advancing claims for the sanctity of the reigning king of Burgundy, Guntram, which owed much to the precedent of Sigismund; see Folz, “Zur Frage,” 320, 326. The heightened interest in the cult of Sigismund around this time may also be linked to the rebuilding of the abbey of St.-Maurice by Guntram after its occupation by the Lombards in 574; see Marius of Avenches, *Chronica*, 239, and Theurillat, *Abbaye* (n. 2 above), 105.

⁴⁰ Cf. notes 33 and 38 above.

liturgical year. It reached its final form in Burgundy, probably at Auxerre, between 561 and 592.⁴¹ In that form, the martyrology commemorated King Sigismund on the first of May.⁴² Whatever the relationship between Gregory's own work and the inclusion of Sigismund's name in the *Martyrology of Jerome*, they must both have helped to advertise his fame as a healer and to promote the circulation of the mass in his name.

On the basis of this initial success, the mass of St. Sigismund spread out from Burgundy and the Orléanais in the following centuries. It is not surprising that the earliest extant examples after the version in the Bobbio Missal would come from Burgundy and from Francia south of the Loire, but the masses in the sacramentaries of Autun and Angoulême do not stand in the same tradition as the Bobbio mass. In his analysis, Dom Cagin grouped examples of the mass according to the relationships of their Prefaces to the Preface in the Bobbio Missal.⁴³ I would like to take a different approach. Most versions of the mass have Prefaces that share something with the Bobbio Preface, but the sacramentary of Angoulême and the late ninth-century sacramentary of the abbey church of St. Martin of Tours do not.⁴⁴ Moreover, there is an important group of witnesses whose Prefaces comprise the words of the Angoulême Preface together with the central portion of the Preface in the Bobbio Missal. I would like therefore to look first at the Angoulême Preface; then at the portions from Bobbio that are common to the largest number of witnesses, and at how they are elaborated in different versions; and finally at the Tours Preface. My interest lies less in the precise relationships between the various versions than in the process by which liturgists, between the seventh and the tenth centuries, variously developed the mass in honor of St. Sigismund as a source of healing power in a ritual setting.

The Preface in the sacramentary of Angoulême, unlike the other prayers in its *Mass of St. Sigismund the king which is to be sung for fevers*, does not mention Sigismund's name or the purpose of the mass, but thanks God for the gift of sickness.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord, you who assails your servants in the flesh

⁴¹ John M. McCulloh, "Martyrology," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1982-89) 8:161-62; Jacques Dubois, *Les martyrologes du moyen âge latin* (Typologie des sources médiévales 26; Turnhout, 1978), 29-34.

⁴² AS November 2.1, p. 53 and 2.2, p. 222; cf. Folz, "Zur Frage," 327-28; some manuscripts have "passio Sigismundi regis" and others, simply, "sancti Sigismundi regis."

⁴³ Cagin (n. 7 above), 168-73.

⁴⁴ I leave aside those versions that use a form of the Gallican bidding, "Qui per sanctos apostolos tuos et martyres," as a Preface: i.e. those in St. Gall 338 and the Fulda sacramentary (n. 20 above), and in the books from tenth-century Bobbio, Brixen, and the Tyrol discussed by Cagin (169, n. 1).

so that they might grow in spirit, revealing clearly the glorious cure of your love, when you arrange it so that sickness itself can work in us health.⁴⁵

This is in fact a very old Roman prayer first seen in the so-called Leonine or Verona Sacramentary as a prayer *post infirmitatem*.⁴⁶ It is characteristic of Roman prayers for the sick in its pragmatic acceptance of the reality of illness and its emphasis on life in this world.⁴⁷ But it also directs attention to the spiritual meaning of illness, especially in its use of the words *salus* and *saluatio*, terms that meant simply “health” and “cure” in classical Latin, but had taken on the added meaning of “salvation” in Christian contexts.⁴⁸ Whereas the mass as a whole unambiguously petitions God through Sigismund for a cure, the Preface reminds the sufferer and his or her relatives to see in illness a gift through which God makes possible both health and salvation.

It is possible that the mass of St. Sigismund arrived at Angoulême without a Preface and that this one was added there. It is equally possible that it circulated intact. One scholar has even cited the Angoulême mass as *the* Roman version.⁴⁹ Its other prayers occur regularly in other versions of the mass, so its history before and after its incorporation in the Angoulême sacramentary must have been complex.⁵⁰ The appearance of the “Roman” Preface in the Angoulême mass certainly represents a much wider diffusion, for when it does appear in other masses, it does so in combination with some of the specific references to Sigismund that appear also in the Preface of the Bobbio Missal. This is the case, for example, in the near contemporary sacramentary of Autun, a Burgundian book that represents eighth-century practice in the lands around Agaune more unambiguously

⁴⁵ *Liber sacramentorum Engolismensis* (n. 16 above), 251: “UD. Qui famulos tuos ideo corporaliter uerberas, ut mente proficiant, patenter ostendens quod sit pietatis tuae praeclara saluatio, dum praestas, ut operetur nobis etiam ipsa infirmitas salutem.” The translation of the standard beginning of a Preface (abbreviated as UD) is taken from Ward and Johnson, *Prefaces* (n. 29 above).

⁴⁶ *Sacramentarium Veronense*, ed. Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, *Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, series maior, fontes 1* (Rome, 1956), no. 1060. It reappears regularly in masses for the sick in later sacramentaries, and among prayers *de tribulatione*; see Moeller, *Corpus praefationum* (n. 16 above), no. 956.

⁴⁷ On attitudes toward sickness in Roman prayers and rituals for the sick, see Paxton, *Christianizing Death* (n. 33 above), 27–32, or “Anointing the Sick in Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval West,” in *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. Sheila Campbell, Bert Hall, and David Klausner (New York, 1992), 93–94.

⁴⁸ There are some trenchant remarks on this subject in an unpublished paper by Julia M. H. Smith, “Saints and Sickness in Carolingian Europe.”

⁴⁹ *Bobbio Missal: Notes and Studies* (n. 7 above), 28, n. 3.

⁵⁰ The Angoulême Secret is in the Bobbio Missal, the Tours and Biasca sacramentaries (nn. 19, 17 above), and the Vienna MS of the Roman-German Pontifical (n. 20 above); its Post Communion prayers appears as well in the Tours cathedral sacramentary, the St. Gall books (n. 20 above), and the Vienna MS.

than the Bobbio Missal. The Preface of the sacramentary of Autun begins with the text of the Angoulême prayer, but continues in the following manner.

Truly you Lord our God granted the triumph of martyrdom to your chosen one King Sigismund, mercy following upon grace. We offer gifts to you lord omnipotent father so that through the communion of the body and blood of your son Jesus Christ our lord, in honor of your chosen one King Sigismund, you will drive out the storms of chills and repel the heat of fever and see fit to recall this your servant to his former health, just as you restored the mother-in-law of the apostle Peter to complete health through Jesus Christ the savior of the world for whom the angels give praise.⁵¹

Prefaces that combine the old Roman prayer *post infirmitatem* with these lines also appear in the late ninth-century sacramentary of Echternach, the contemporary north-Italian sacramentary in Vatican MS lat. 377, and the eleventh-century sacramentary of Vich from northern Spain.⁵² The Bobbio Missal itself, however, along with a large group of north Italian and Swiss manuscripts, shows no trace of the old Roman prayer. In its place is an introductory passage that presents Sigismund as a man of peace who committed no sins (quoting Psalm 36:37 and Isaiah 53:9).⁵³ Moreover, the passage translated above is expanded by the assertion that Sigismund's martyrdom came "not through the trial of a persecutor but among the tumult of wars"; by an appeal to God's goodness; and by a request that echoes the last line of the Gallican bidding: "reveal after death in power he whom before death you formed in faith."⁵⁴ This is clearly early material, going back to a period when it was necessary to argue Sigismund's claim to sanctity. Its preservation in masses from the lands to the east of Agaune is the result, no doubt, of an early expansion of the cult in that direction and then the relative isolation of those mountainous areas throughout the early Middle Ages.⁵⁵ That it

⁵¹ *Liber sacramentorum Augustodunensis* (n. 16 above), 269: "Tu uero domine deus noster qui electi tui Sigismundi regis triumphis martyre contulisti consecutus gratiam consecutus misericordiam. Tua enim dona sunt domine omnipotens pater ut per communionem corporis et sanguinem Iesu Christi filii tui domini nostri in honore electi tui Sigismundi regis. tempestates frigoris excutias febrium ardoris in (eo) repellas et sanitatem pristinam hunc famulum tuum reuocare digneris quo socru beati Petri apostoli febricitantem integram restituisti corporis sanitatem Christi Iesu saluator mundi, per quem laudent angeli."

⁵² Cf. the charts in Cagin, 170–72.

⁵³ Bobbio Missal (n. 7 above), 102: "UD . . . quis in hoc mundo ita poterit sequi ut nec dolus, in ore nec peccatum eius inueniatur, in opere; sed in paciencia que deus amat, maiestas divina commendat. Nunc ergo dono maiestatis tue agnoscimus; reliquiae esse homeni pacifico . . ." Cf. Cagin, 170.

⁵⁴ Bobbio, 102: ". . . inter bellorum, tumultos, non examinatione persecutoris . . . tu dispensando pauperibus pulsanti, aperire dignatus es . . . post mortem, ostendas, in uirtute quem ante mortem firmasti in fide . . ." Cf. Cagin, 170 and n. 29 above.

⁵⁵ Cf. Cagin, 173–74. The "Missa sancti Sigismundi" in a tenth-century missal from Bobbio (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Cod. D 84 inf., fols. 403–5), uses the Gallican bidding as a Preface (Cagin, 169), thus suggesting that at Bobbio the old mass was no longer in use at that time.

does not appear in the extant masses from Burgundy, Francia, or Germany, on the other hand, is a result of the expansion of the cult in those areas after the sixth century, when Sigismund's sanctity was no longer an issue.⁵⁶

The liturgical uniformity of the mass in the mountainous areas of northern Italy and the Swiss Alps between the eighth and the twelfth century stands, thus, in sharp contrast to the diversity that developed in the lands that came under Frankish dominion during the Carolingian period. In those areas, liturgists regularly and freely adapted the mass for fever victims, composing, deleting, rearranging, and adding prayers and sections of prayers, and, as we shall see, placing the mass in different ritual contexts. Such activity shows a good deal of interest in the mass of St. Sigismund as a means of gaining access to God's healing power and a recognition of the value of such a specialized votive mass in the liturgical life of various church communities, secular and monastic.

A more general interest in the cult of St. Sigismund is apparent in the composition, most probably in the early years of the ninth century, of the *Passio sancti Sigismundi regis*, the first separate hagiographical account dedicated to the dead king.⁵⁷ The *Passio*'s curious blend of details known from no other source (such as the names of Sigismund's sons who died with him), mistaken information, and thoroughly mythologized version of his life and death argue both for its late date and for an origin outside of Agaune itself.⁵⁸ Its composition marks as well the completion of the process by which the dead king's memory was subsumed into hagiographical tradition. The text makes no mention at all of the murder of Sigismund's son, Sigeric, and presents the king's betrayal by the Burgundians and death at the hands of the Franks as a *topos* of the arrest and execution of Jesus, in which the (Arian) Burgundians play the role of the Jews and the Franks the Romans.⁵⁹ Its final chapter concerns the miracles that announced Sigismund's sanctity after death. After describing the arrival of the relics of Sigismund and his family at Agaune and their burial in the church of St. John, the text says:

The mercy of the Lord deigned to display such great powers in that place that whoever, suffering from quartan fever or other sicknesses that customarily attack the

⁵⁶ The Prefaces in the mass added to the sacramentary of St.-Germain (n. 21 above) and in the eleventh-century sacramentary of Nevers (Cagin, 171–72) have only the final section, “Tua enim . . . digneris”; that is, they read the same as Angoulême, but without the old Roman prayer as a beginning.

⁵⁷ *Passio sancti Sigismundi regis*, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SSRM 2.329–40.

⁵⁸ Krusch argued for an early ninth-century date for the text in MGH SSRM 7.776, and Theurillat, *Abbaye* (n. 2 above), 83–84, posited an author who had visited Agaune but wrote the *Passio* for his own local church.

⁵⁹ *Passio*, 338, “Qui dum ad clausuras ipsius monasterii pervenissent, ibique agminibus Burgundionum una cum Francis, ad instar Iudae traditoris Christi Trapsta Burgundio in eum manus iniecit, et vinctum catenis Francis obtulerunt.”

human race, faithfully and continually makes supplication to the relics of the saints, is made whole, and having been immediately restored to complete health, regains his former health, through the mercy of the Lord, the intercession of the holy martyrs, and the aid of our lord Jesus Christ, to whom honor and glory, virtue and power for ever and ever. Amen.⁶⁰

There is no explicit mention of the mass of Sigismund here, but there may be a hint of ongoing transformations in his cult in the author's use of the plural in the phrase *sanctorum cineribus*. In the context of the *Passio* itself, the reference would seem to be to the relics of the king along with those of his wife and sons, but it could also be taken as a general reference to Sigismund's "companions," who, as we shall see, begin to appear in the prayers of the mass towards the end of the ninth century. There is, moreover, an implicit connection between this text and the liturgical contexts in which it might be read as a *lectio* or with which it resonated, in the way it passes from narrative to prayer in the final clauses. The echo is clearest in the words of the invocation *praestare dignatur, ut . . . ad pristinam redeunt sanitatem*, which recall the language of the oldest layer of the Bobbio Preface and the words of Gregory of Tours.⁶¹ Such language is common to other prayers in masses in honor of Sigismund and less specific prayers for the sick circulating in contemporary sacramentaries.⁶²

The *Passio sancti Sigismundi* had a long-lasting effect on the Carolingian writers of martyrologies. By the year 806, an anonymous author in Lyon had used it to expand the brief entry transmitted by the *Martyrology of Jerome*:

The kalends of May . . . the passion of St. Sigismund, son of Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, who when he saw that he could no longer resist the Franks, fleeing alone, after having cut his hair, received the habit of a monk, and giving himself over day and night to fasts, vigils and prayers, was captured by the Franks and drowned in a well along with his wife and sons. Afterwards his relics were revealed to a certain abbot and reverently buried; and they shone forth in miracles.⁶³

⁶⁰ *Passio*, 339–40, "In quo loco tantas virtutes Domini misericordia praestare dignatur, ut, quisquis quartanum typhum invasus, fideliter sanctorum cineribus fuerit advolutus, statim integra sanitate recepta, revertatur incolomes; seu etiam et reliquae infirmitates, quae genus hominum invadere solent, assidue per Domini misericordiam, intercedentibus sanctis martyribus, ad pristinam redeunt sanitatem, adiuvante domino nostro Iesu Christo, cui est honor et gloria, virtus et potestas per omnia secula seculorum. Amen."

⁶¹ Bobbio Missal, no. 338, p. 102, "ad sanitatem pristinam reuocare digneris."

⁶² Cf. the opening prayer in the north Italian version of the mass in Vat. lat. 377, fol. 91r, ed. Rehle (n. 17 above), 83; the words of Gregory of Tours cited in n. 1 above; and the prayer for the sick in the Supplement of Benedict of Aniane to the Gregorian sacramentary, ed. Deshusses, *Sacramentaire grégorien*, 1:454–55, which is common to the Bobbio Missal and the Gelasian sacramentaries of the eighth century.

⁶³ Jacques Dubois and Geneviève Renaud, *Edition pratique des martyrologes de Bede, de l'anonyme lyonnais et de Florus*, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes: bibliographies, colloques, travaux préparatoires (Paris, 1976), 78, "Kalendas Maii . . . Passio sancti Sigismundi, filii Gundebaldi regis Burgundionum; qui cum se cerneret non posse Francis resistere,

Around the year 837, Florus of Lyons chose to include in his martyrology only the short notice from the *Martyrology of Jerome*: “In the city of Sion, at Agaune, the passion of King Sigismund.”⁶⁴ The longer version shows up again, however, in the martyrology of Ado of Vienne (850–60).⁶⁵ Hrabanus Maurus (840–54) and Usuard of St.-Germain-des-Prés (ca. 875) contented themselves with brief notices,⁶⁶ but Notker the Stammerer, who wrote a martyrology before his death in 912, not only returned to the text of Ado and the anonymous of Lyon, but extended the final line about the miracles wrought through Sigismund in the following manner: “and they shone forth in miracles so much so that sufferers from fever became accustomed to demanding from him as it were a special medicine.”⁶⁷ This is a remarkable recognition of Sigismund’s special role as a healer, especially from a monk at St. Gall, whose founder and patron also had a reputation for fever cures in the Middle Ages.⁶⁸

In the late ninth century, two different versions of the “mass of St. Sigismund for fevers” circulated among the clergy of Tours.⁶⁹ In the mass sung at the abbey church of St. Martin, the priests recited the following Preface found nowhere else.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord, you who are creator and protector of all, who made the universe from nothingness, ordained the ways things are, and now conserves that which has been ordained, to whose power and mercy it was not enough to have given us the beginning of this life and light, without also granting gifts to

solus fugiens, coma deposita habitum religionis suscepit et jejuniis, vigiliis atque orationibus die noctuque vacans, captus a Francis, cum uxore ac filiis in puteum demersus occubuit; post vero cuidam abbati revelatus, et ab eo reverenter sepultus, etiam miraculis claruit.” On the author and the text, see Henri Quentin, *Les martyrologes historiques du moyen âge* (Paris, 1908), 131–221, and Dubois, *Martyrologes* (n. 41 above), 39–40.

⁶⁴ “Civitate Sedunensi, loco Acauna, passio Sigismundi regis”; Dubois and Renaud, *Edition pratique*, 78, and Quentin, *Martyrologes*, 331.

⁶⁵ Ado, *Martyrologium*, PL 123:255.

⁶⁶ *Rabani Mauri Martyrologium*, ed. John McCulloh, CCM 44 (Turnhout, 1979), 41, “in Acauno passio sancti Sigismundi regis”; Jacques Dubois, *Le martyrologe d’Usuard, texte et commentaire*, Subsidia hagiographica (Brussels, 1965), 222, “Civitate Sedunensi, natalis Sigismundi regis.” Dubois asks if there might have been a political motive for refusing the title of martyr to Sigismund (*ibid.*, 109), and there might be something to that, but the term *natalis* preserves some sense of his sanctity, since it refers, in the style of the early Church, to his birth into life everlasting.

⁶⁷ Notker, *Martyrologium*, PL 131:107, “etiam miraculis claruit adeo ut frigoretici ab eo quasi specialem expetere soliti sint medicinam, et fideliter expetentes nequaquam priventur eadem.”

⁶⁸ Adolph Franz, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter*, 2 vols. (Freiburg im Bressgau, 1909) 2:473–74. This might also be a function or a cause of the multiplication of prayers in tenth-century masses in honor of Sigismund at St. Gall, and of the preservation of the otherwise unattested Secret said for the repose of the king’s soul in St. Gall, MS 338.

⁶⁹ See n. 19 above.

us of a mortal nature. Look favorably Lord on this offering of your servant N. who is vexed with tertian or quartan fever, and through the intercession of your faithful servant, Saint Sigismund, together with his associates, pour forth your spiritual gift to him; through the invocation of our Lord Jesus Christ your son.⁷⁰

This prayer reflects the expansion of the priestly role in making Sigismund's healing power available within a liturgical setting that resulted from the (however limited) success of Carolingian efforts to romanize the liturgical practices of the Frankish realm. At the request of a member of the congregation suffering from fever (or of his or her kin, physical or spiritual), and upon receipt of an offering, the priest would use his sacramental power to offer a mass. Sigismund, the advocate of fever sufferers, would then present the mass offering at the heavenly court as a petition through Jesus to his father, the all-powerful God, the source of both sickness and health. The elaboration of the image of the heavenly court is also characteristic of the Carolingian period, when power and authority were increasingly conceived in terms of chains of command. It is so well developed here that Sigismund is even given aides to help him press his case—providing the earliest mention of the “associates” of St. Sigismund, whose identity has never been determined, but who appear in many later texts.⁷¹ They are first named in the mass added to a Lorsch manuscript that was compiled as a manual for the training of priests in the late ninth century.⁷² In my judgment the names are most likely those of martyrs whose relics were distributed from St.-Maurice d'Agaune along with relics of St. Sigismund, probably to Tours and/or St. Gall. Of the seven (or eight) names that appear in those masses that have them, four appear among the eighth-century parchment relic authentications still extant at St. Maurice: Peter, Basilius and Basilinus, and Desiderius.⁷³ There were relics of Sigismund at Sens in the early ninth century and the authentications themselves attest to the connections between St.-Maurice and other cult centers in Italy and Gaul.⁷⁴ If, as is more than likely, relics of Sigismund travelled with others from St.-Maurice, then it is easy to see how they might come to be seen as those of his

⁷⁰ Deshusses, *Sacramentaire grégorien*, 2:197, “UD ae. d. Qui omnium creator et custos es, quique ex nihilo uniuersa fecisti, facta ordinasti, ordinata conseruas, cuius uirtuti et misericordiae parum fuit dedisse nobis uitae huius ac lucis exordium, nisi etiam mortalitatis nobis dona confirmes, respice domine ad hanc oblationem famuli tui ill., qui terciaris uel quartanis uexatur incommodis, et per intercessionem fidelis famuli tui sancti sigismundi cum sociis suis, spiritale ei munus effunde, per inuocationem domini nostri iesu christi filii tui.”

⁷¹ Cf. Cagin, 169 n. 1; Franz, *Messe*, 198–99; and Folz, “Zur Frage,” 341 n. 103.

⁷² Vatican, Pal. lat. 485, fol. 15r–v, “domnino, basilino, petro, pyrro, pirrino, restituto, basilio, desiderio.” Cf. Paxton, “*Bonus liber*” (n. 18 above); Cagin, 169 n. 1; and Franz, *Messe*, 198–99.

⁷³ Theurillat, *Abbaye*, 87, assuming that no. 4, “Sancti Basilidii marteres,” refers to two relatives, Basilius and Basilinus. I would identify Desiderius as Bishop Desiderius of Vienne, martyred by Queen Brunhilda in 610; the others are unknown.

⁷⁴ Folz, “Zur Frage,” 337; Theurillat, *Abbaye*, 86.

“associates.”⁷⁵ What is surprising is that they were assimilated to his cult and not vice-versa. But then the period between the late eighth and early tenth centuries was the high water mark in early medieval interest in Sigismund as a saint and healer.⁷⁶

There is one final topic that I would like to cover before summing up—the routes of transmission of the mass for the cure of fevers within sacramentaries, missals, and other liturgical books. The most common and earliest appearances of Sigismund’s mass are among groups of votive masses. This is the case, as we have seen, with the oldest witness to the mass in the Bobbio Missal. It is also true of the sacramentaries of Angoulême, Autun, and Tours. Although there is usually nothing to distinguish the mass of St. Sigismund from the miscellaneous votive masses among which it appears, other than its own distinctive features and purpose, by the late ninth century some scribes and liturgists began to present it in new contexts that highlighted the special nature of the saint’s intercession. The fragment of a north Italian sacramentary now in Vatican MS lat. 377, for example, places the mass of St. Sigismund between a general mass for the sick and rituals for anointing the sick and the laying on of hands.⁷⁷ In a roughly contemporary manuscript from Lorsch, the mass was added to a collection of materials to be used in the training of priests for pastoral duties, especially confession and the care of the sick and dying.⁷⁸ In the tenth-century sacramentary of Fulda, Sigismund’s mass appears grouped with other votive masses and prayers for the sick.⁷⁹ It was also in the later ninth century when a mass in Sigismund’s honor began to appear as a festive mass among those for the first day of May—a result of the regular commemoration of St. Sigismund on that date in all the Carolingian martyrologies. This is where the mass appears in the sacramentary of Echternach, for example.⁸⁰ While the mass in the Echternach manuscript is still directed specifically at the cure of fevers, by the eleventh century the masses sung on 1 May in Sigismund’s honor had lost their specificity and taken on the more general celebratory form of most masses for feast days. In an elev-

⁷⁵ As Folz noted, “Zur Frage,” 341, n. 103, late medieval sources identify the associates with the king’s wife and sons. This probably was the result of the disappearance of the names from the mass traditions and the implication in the *Passio* that the miracles at the king’s grave involved the sanctity of the whole family.

⁷⁶ A second surge in interest began in the late Middle Ages when Emperor Charles IV, who named his second son after the saint, spread the cult to Bohemia; see Folz, “Zur Frage,” 338–43.

⁷⁷ Ed. Rehle (n. 17 above), 83–86. The laying on of hands is characteristic of the liturgical treatment of the sick in the Ambrosian liturgy.

⁷⁸ Paxton, “*Bonus liber*,” 10–12.

⁷⁹ *Sacramentarium Fuldense* (n. 20 above), nos. 431–34.

⁸⁰ Leroquais, *Sacramentaires* (n. 18 above), 124. The mass in Vatican Pal. lat. 485 (nn. 18 and 78 above) is associated by title with the feast of Sigismund on 1 May, but by context (it is followed by instructions for letting blood) with healing as a form of pastoral care.

enth-century sacramentary from Arezzo, for example, there is no mention of fever, but only “desired benefits” and the general intercession of the saint.⁸¹

The development of a general mass in honor of St. Sigismund and its inclusion in certain arrangements of the sanctorale (the sequence of masses in honor of the saints according to the liturgical year) did not, however, lead to the disappearance of the mass for the cure of fevers in other contexts. It continued to circulate among and to be added to collections of votive masses and, in its newer position in association with rituals for the sick and the dying, it continued to make an impact on organized clerical responses to the presence of fever in their congregations. It shows up as a votive mass in tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts from Biasca, St. Gall, and Vich.⁸² In the tenth-century sacramentary of Winchcombe, it appears after the ritual of anointing and the mass for someone close to death and before the reconciliation that precedes the last rites.⁸³ In the eleventh century, at the abbey of St.-Méen in Brittany, the mass could be found between the ritual for visiting the sick and the rites for the dying. At St.-Denis, it appeared just before the *ordo in agenda mortuorum*.⁸⁴

Indeed, by the eleventh century, as one source reveals, Sigismund’s fame as a healer of fevers had earned him a place even in extra- or quasi-liturgical healing contexts. An eleventh-century manuscript from the abbey of St.-Benigne-de-Dijon includes, among various astronomical, computational, and medical treatises, a *Carmen ad febres*, which is to be said thrice daily for three days as a cure for fevers.⁸⁵ After invoking (with the aid of mysterious syllables) the Trinity, the “cross of the triune God” and Christ’s cure of Peter’s mother-in-law, who was sick with fever, the *Carmen* introduces a litany of conjurations with the following words:

In memory of the holy King Sigismund, Lord God, free this your servant N. In the name of the Father I say to you fevers; in the name of the Son I contradict you; in the name of the Holy Spirit I conjure you.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 4772, fol. 74r (Ebner, *Iter Italicum* [n. 22 above], 225; Gamber, *Codices* [n. 9 above], no. 790), “Tuam nobis indulgentiam domine deus sanctus sigismundus martyr implorat (e written over a) et beneficia desiderata concedat. . . . Ad compendium. . . deprecamur ut indulgentiam tuam nobis intercessio beati sigismundi martyris tui et imploret semper et impetret.” See also, Folz, “Zur Frage,” 336.

⁸² Biasca (n. 17 above), St. Gall (n. 20 above) and Vich (n. 22 above).

⁸³ Leroquais, *Sacramentaires*, 91.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 113, 144.

⁸⁵ Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 448, fol. 181r; *Catalogue général des bibliothèques publiques de France: Départements 5* (Paris, 1889), 106–109; Ernest Wickersheimer, *Les manuscrits latins de médecine du haut moyen âge dans les bibliothèques de France*, Documents, Études et Répertoires publiés par l’Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes 11 (Paris, 1966), 32–33.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, “Tribus diebus cotidie ter lege super febricitantem et sanabitur. Ad febres carmen. In nomine Patris et . . . Amen. Ecce crucem Domini triunius. Christus natus est, on. bon. jon.

* * * *

The mass in honor of St. Sigismund for the cure of fevers originated at St.-Maurice d' Agaune as a unique means of testing the sanctity of a dead king and establishing his position as a heavenly intercessor. By the end of the sixth century, the cult was well enough established that it was no longer necessary to sing the mass for Sigismund himself as well as for those who sought health through his intercession. Purged of its original ambiguity, Sigismund's mass found a ready reception among liturgists who passed it from church to church over the next five centuries, and who regularly altered it to express their own sense of its place in church ritual and of their own role in the invocation of God's healing power as mediated by the saint. When they associated it with other masses in honor of martyrs on their feast days, it tended to lose its specialized character. When it was grouped with other votive masses for the sick or for the dying, however, it held a special place as the only mass directed at the cure of a specific medical condition. Therein, I think, lay its appeal.

Competition for healing power was rife in early medieval Europe and there was a greater range of therapeutic offerings to the sick than has usually been realized. Valerie Flint has shown how early medieval physicians and saints could make common cause against practitioners of medical magic.⁸⁷ Monastic involvement both in medical learning and in the organization and control of healing shrines is a well-known phenomenon of the period. The sick could and did seek help from magicians and "hippocratic" physicians, Jews and Christians, and holy men and women, living and dead.⁸⁸ The history of the mass for the cure of fevers points to still another therapeutic option in the early medieval west—liturgical celebration and ritual—and to another group of practitioners: secular or regular priests who performed votive masses at the requests of individuals or families. Since its beginnings the Church had seen to and organized the care of the sick. Between the sixth and the ninth centuries, clerics and liturgists developed organized rituals for sacramental anointing of the sick in churches, homes, and monastic infirmaries, seeking to translate the New Testament injunction of James (5:14–15) into a regular feature of pastoral care.⁸⁹ The mass of St. Sigismund for

Christus passus, don. ron. con. Christe resurrexit, ton. son. yon. Cum introisset Dominus Jhesu in domum Symonis Petri, vidit socrum ejus jacentem et febricitantem. . . . Syon. Syon. Syon. Pro commemoratione sancti Sigismundi regis libera famulum vel famulam N. Domine Deus, in nomine Patris dico vobis febres. In nomine Filii contradico vos. In nomine Spiritus sancti conjuro vos febres."

⁸⁷ Valerie I. J. Flint, "The Early Medieval 'Medicus', the Saint—and the Enchanter," *Social History of Medicine* 2 (1989):127–45.

⁸⁸ Katherine Park, "Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe, 500–1500," in *Medicine and Society: Historical Essays*, ed. Andrew Wear (Cambridge, 1992), 59–90, esp. 64–70.

⁸⁹ Paxton, "Anointing the Sick" (n. 47 above), 93–94.

fever sufferers extended the range of such forms of pastoral care in another, more specialized direction. As a particular type of votive mass, it gave priests a special role in mediating the healing power of God made available through his saints. The evidence of the origins and transformation of the mass in the sixth and seventh centuries and the varied manner in which it appears in surviving ritual books between 700 and 1100 suggest that for a long time, and in many different places, priests and their congregations found it a meaningful response to sickness and a useful alternative, or addition, to other forms of care.

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