RHETORICAL STRATEGIES IN OLD ENGLISH PROSE: A STUDY OF THREE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES

by

Dorothy Ina Haines

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Department of Medieval Studies, University of Toronto

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Title: Rhetorical Strategies in Old English Prose: A Study of Three Dramatic Monologues
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This thesis examines three dramatic monologues found in Old English homiletic literature in order to understand their cultural, religious and literary impact on a contemporary audience. In chapter 1, I survey early medieval attitudes towards preaching as well as various efforts to promote preaching as a vehicle for religious instruction. I discuss the production of homiletic compositions in late Anglo-Saxon England, particularly focusing on the interrelation of works by named authors, such as Ælfric and Wulfstan, and those by their anonymous contemporaries in terms of their differing rhetorical goals and approaches.

In each of the succeeding chapters I seek to discover how contemporaries viewed these dramatic monologues by closely examining their manuscript context, Latin sources, other related materials which constitute the literary environment, the structure and composition of each homily, and, most importantly, the rhetorical and dramatic strategies of the monologues themselves. An examination of Middle English analogues provides a valuable point of comparison for the Old English.

The first of these monologues, the Soul’s Address to the Body, though it has
often been seen as an expression of heterodox views concerning the body, is here seen to be a rhetorical device capitalizing on the relationship of intimacy between soul and body in order to portray, as dramatically as possible, moral choice. The second monologue, Christ’s Address to the Sinner, takes place at Doomsday and is no less effective in its ability to sway an audience. It employs the rhetoric of legal indictment in the form of a catalogue of Christ’s deeds on behalf of mankind, recalling other such lists used in liturgical and confessional contexts. The so-called “Sunday Letter,” purporting to be a missive sent by Christ and urging strict observance of Sunday regulations, is seen to be a document appreciated mainly for its forceful rhetoric rather than for the specific prohibitions it enjoins. The use of the first-person address and the pronouncement of curse and blessing, like the Judaic restrictions it seeks to enforce, clearly derive from the prophetic writings of the Old Testament.

These monologues are but three examples of a broader tradition of dramatic speeches used for the purpose of persuasion. I conclude by summarizing evidence that the Anglo-Saxons were especially attracted to this genre and used it effectively in their homilies to dramatize contemporary religious concerns.
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## Abbreviations

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASE</td>
<td><em>Anglo-Saxon England</em></td>
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<td>ASPR</td>
<td><em>The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records</em> (ed. G. Krapp and E.V.K. Dobbie*)</td>
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<td>Blick</td>
<td><em>The Blickling Homilies</em> (ed. R. Morris*)</td>
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<td>CCCC</td>
<td>Corpus Christi College Library, Cambridge</td>
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<td>CCSL</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum, series Latina</td>
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<td>CH I</td>
<td><em>Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies, First Series</em> (ed. P. Clemoes*)</td>
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<td>CH II</td>
<td><em>Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies, Second Series</em> (ed. M. Godden*)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td>Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum</td>
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<td>CUL</td>
<td>Cambridge University Library</td>
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<td>EETS</td>
<td>Early English Text Society</td>
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<td>HBS</td>
<td>Henry Bradshaw Society</td>
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<td>JEGP</td>
<td><em>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td><em>Lives of Saints</em> (ed. W. Skeat*)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MÆ</td>
<td><em>Medium Ævum</em></td>
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<td>NM</td>
<td><em>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</em></td>
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<td>OE</td>
<td>Old English</td>
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<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia Latina</td>
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<td>PMLA</td>
<td><em>Publications of the Modern Language Association</em></td>
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<td>SASLC</td>
<td><em>Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture</em> (ed. F. Biggs et al.*)</td>
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<td>Verc.</td>
<td><em>The Vercelli Homilies</em> (ed. D.G. Scragg*)</td>
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*See bibliography for full reference.*
Chapter 1

Introduction:

Homiletic Traditions in Late Anglo-Saxon England

This study will concern itself with Old English homiletic texts written during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. Although the surviving corpus of Old English literature includes an extensive body of homiletic works,¹ much remains to be discovered concerning the historical, cultural and literary contexts which spawned this activity. Understandably, scholarly attention has focused on the most prolific author of the period, Ælfric, a monk, mass-priest and abbot writing at the end of the first millennium. He and his contemporary Wulfstan, archbishop of York, were the first Anglo-Saxon homilists to be subject to detailed analysis, particularly in terms of

¹Hildegard Tristram notes that there are “some 1200 texts in 85 manuscripts, of which 32 are more or less complete homily collections”; “Early Insular Preaching: Verbal Artistry and Method of Composition,” Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse: Sitzungsberichte, vol. 623 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1995), 3.
canon, sources, and prose style.²

But there are many homiletic texts whose authors are not known by name and which might have been written anywhere from the time of Alfred to well after the Norman Conquest. In this chapter, I will be looking at ways in which the anonymous tradition of translating, adapting and compiling homilies may be defined in relation both to its broader historical antecedents and the traditions which shaped the writings of Ælfric and Wulfstan.³

Ælfric, Wulfstan and the Benedictine Reform

Ælfric and Wulfstan were products of the Benedictine Reform which, though


³A homily is considered to be an exposition based on a biblical text, and a sermon a moral, catechetical, or exhortatory piece; Mary Clayton, “Homiliaries and Preaching in Anglo-Saxon England,” Peritia 4 (1985): 208. However, this distinction may not have been observed in Anglo-Saxon homiliaries; Joyce Hill, “Reform and Resistance: Preaching Styles in Late Anglo-Saxon England,” in De l'homélie au sermon: Histoire de la prédication médiévale, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse and Xavier Hermand (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1993), 19, n. 13. In this study, I will be using the terms “homily” and “sermon” interchangeably, even though nearly all the texts I will examine technically fall into the latter category.

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primarily a monastic movement, also sought to spread its achievements to the secular church, notably by means of renewed preaching activity. The originators of the reform in England, Dunstan (d. 988) and Oswald (d. 992), had been trained on the continent in the monasteries at Ghent and Fleury and introduced not only reforming ideas but many new texts to England. For instance, one important document which provides clear evidence of continental influence is the *Regularis concordia*, composed in order to bring all monastic houses into conformity of observance. The *Regularis concordia* does not specifically mention current preaching practice, but in its instructions for Sundays and feast days it assumes that laity and monks celebrated mass together, a situation which must have been fairly common; one example is Ælfric's congregation at Cerne Abbas.

Ælfric's emphasis on preaching is well-known and needs no lengthy exposition here. He encouraged preaching in the letters he wrote on behalf of Wulfstan and Wulfisige and by his own example of labouring to compose suitable preaching material, products of his own experience in the preaching office while a mass-priest at Cerne. In his letters he urges both bishops and priests to preach and

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6Clayton, "Homiliaries and Preaching," 239.
compares unwilling priests to "mute dogs" when they ought to "bark and preach to lay people, lest they perish for lack of teaching."\(^7\)

The two collections which Ælfric called the *Sermones catholici* contain some forty homilies each, covering Sundays and feast days, and meant, in his words, "to suffice for a year, if they are recited to the faithful in their entirety by the ministers of God in church."\(^8\) Many of them are exegetical, that is, they mainly seek to explicate the gospel reading for the day, but because they were composed for the laity, Ælfric sought to use simple language, speaking not with "loquacious verbosity but with the pure and clear words of the language of this people."\(^9\)

It is perhaps irresistible to associate Ælfric and Wulfstan, since both composed homilies noted for their carefully crafted rhythmical prose, and both shared the

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\(^8\) "Quadraginta sententias in isto libro posuimus, credentes hoc sufficere posse per annum fidelibus, si integre eis a ministris Dei recitentur in ecclesia"; ‘Latin Preface to the First Series of Catholic Homilies,’ *Ælfric’s Prefaces*, ed. Jonathan Wilcox (Durham: Durham Medieval Texts, 1994), 107. Malcolm Godden has shown that whereas the first series was to be read to the congregation at Cerne, Ælfric’s second series offered preachers a more active role in selecting and arranging the materials; “The Development of Ælfric’s Second Series of Catholic Homilies,” *English Studies* 54 (1973): 209-215.

\(^9\) "Non garrula verbositate ... sed puris et apertis verbis lingüe huius gentis"; ‘Latin Preface to the Second Series of Catholic Homilies,’ Wilcox, 111.
conviction that preaching to the laity was an urgent necessity, but there are also important differences between the two homilists. Wulfstan (d. 1023), bishop of Worcester and archbishop of York, was a public figure, heavily involved in the secular church as well as at court. That he knew Ælfric’s work may be seen in his own adaptations of the latter’s homilies for his own sermons and by the pastoral letters he commissioned Ælfric to write for him. But in the type of homily Wulfstan wrote, he must be differentiated from Ælfric. He composed mostly occasional sermons not intended for particular events in the church year, he did not publish what he wrote as a collection, and, most importantly, his sermons are mainly catechetical or exhortatory in content. Wulfstan, in fact, should be seen as standing somewhere between Ælfric and the anonymous tradition in that he must have approved of the choice of authoritative materials made by Ælfric, but apparently did not feel that his own audience would appreciate the depth of exposition found in the Catholic Homilies. As Bethurum notes: “he was not interested in hermeneutics”; instead he


11Two possible exceptions are Homilies XIV and XV. Bethurum lists four categories for Wulfstan’s sermons: eschatological, Christian life, archiepiscopal functions, and evil days; Homilies of Wulfstan, 29ff.

12Tristram has stated that, even though he did not use vernacular sources, “Wulfstan elaborated on the verbal artistry of the affective style of some of the anonymous Anglo-Saxon
focused on catechetical, eschatological and moral themes.\textsuperscript{13} His choice of subject matter reveals Wulfstan as a bishop who felt that the gravity of immediate abuses took precedence over the finer points of biblical exegesis.

Milton Gatch, in discussing Wulfstan’s adaptation of Ælfrician material in Homily V, suggests a possible motivation for Wulfstan’s practice:

Lest the reader be misled by the fact that Wulfstan characteristically deletes the niceties of biblical explication from his sources, it may be well to stress the fact that he does not reject the exegetical tradition. It is, simply, irrelevant to his parenetic, or hortatory, purposes, and its reflections are omitted lest they get in the way.\textsuperscript{14}

In part, his habits may also have been due to a difference in audience since Wulfstan was responsible for the “wild and partly heathen province of York,”\textsuperscript{15} but we have no way of satisfactorily gauging lay congregations elsewhere in England in order to be certain that his audience differed significantly from that of other homilists.\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{13}Bethurum, \textit{Homilies of Wulfstan}, 96.
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\textsuperscript{14}Gatch, \textit{Preaching}, 21. About Wulfstan’s sermons in general, Gatch says: “Wulfstan made it a point to avoid theological subtlety, to drop exempla and most traces of allegorical interpretation and, usually, to delete specific historical allusions” (\textit{Preaching}, 20).
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\textsuperscript{16}Methods of adaptation similar to Wulfstan’s have been discerned in some of the anonymous compilations as well; Malcolm Godden notes a comparable avoidance of explanation, interpretation, and narrative in certain homilies compiled at Winchester; “Old English Composite Homilies from Winchester,” \textit{ASE} 4 (1975): 57-65. See also the study by
\end{flushright}
What is most conspicuous is that the homilies which have been attributed to Wulfstan are powerful oratorical pieces. It has been suggested that Wulfstan revised his source materials in order to produce an “oral style” well suited to his audience. Bethurum credits Wulfstan with “the most careful adjustment to his audience,” noting his attention to clarity and particularly the way a sermon would sound in oral delivery. This suggests a view of his audience which coincides with that of Ælfric in certain respects—for example, in the desire for lucidity and the use of rhythmical prose—but the two authors show less agreement in the subject matter deemed suitable for their audience.

The Anonymous Homilies

Ælfric and Wulfstan are the only vernacular homilists from the Anglo-Saxon period whom we know by name, and it has seemed convenient to most scholars to divide the homiletic literature along the lines of what is familiar as against that which is unknown, grouping the remaining texts into the category “anonymous.” And to a

Mary Swan listed in note 32.


18Bethurum, Homilies of Wulfstan, 89-92.
certain extent this kind of classification has proven to be appropriate; it is clear that Ælfric at least saw the process of composing preaching texts in a somewhat different light from his anonymous colleagues, especially in his selection of exegetical source material.

But this binary classification is not entirely equal to the task of defining the varied cultural and literary circumstances and diversity of ideologies which motivated Anglo-Saxon homily-making. Probably the earliest witnesses to this tradition are the well-known Vercelli and Blickling collections.¹⁹ These manuscripts dating from the end of the tenth century, though they are often grouped together, represent two different textual traditions and methods of compilation.²⁰ The Blickling Book contains eighteen homilies which are, for the most part, liturgically arranged. The Vercelli Book, on the other hand, does not follow the church year but seems to be a


kind of *florilegium* for private devotional reading; it contains twenty-three homilies and six poems. A comparison between the influence of the Vercelli Book and that of the Blickling Book, and a study of the two sermons which are common to both, has prompted Scragg to note that these two collections have very different textual traditions. Furthermore, Scragg’s study of the Vercelli pieces has allowed him to postulate the kinds of collections from which they must have been drawn, another reminder that the idea of a vernacular homiliary did not originate with Ælfric.

Although these two collections have been associated with a time period before the reform, there are difficulties with such a classification. It may be true that many of the individual texts are considered to be early compositions, some perhaps as early as the ninth century, but the manuscripts themselves are still late enough (Vercelli, s.

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23D.G. Scragg, “The Compilation of the Vercelli Book,” *ASE* 2 (1973): 189-207. Similarly, Scragg has noted that many of the anonymous saints’ lives must have been written before 1000, and that Ælfric “in no sense filled a vacuum. However he may be shown to have transmuted it, the genre was already well established in English”; “The Corpus of Anonymous Lives and Their Manuscript Context,” in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints’ Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. Paul Szarmach (Albany, N.Y.: Univ. of New York Press, 1996), 225.

x², Blickling, s. x/xi) to be considered, at least in their production, the first-fruits of the Benedictine Reform.²⁵

Even if these codices were not produced under the influence of the reform, the tradition which they represent by no means became obsolete after the publication of Ælfric’s collection. Almost immediately Ælfric’s homilies were placed side by side with texts which he had emphatically condemned.²⁶ Ælfric himself must have known how common this procedure was, since he specifically tries to forestall such a fate for his own homiletic texts.²⁷ Collectors often broke up his sets against his express wishes,²⁸ substituting non-exegetical and allegedly less “orthodox” homilies for his.²⁹

²⁵The dating of all Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in this study will follow that of N. R. Ker in Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

²⁶The surprising complacency with which this was done may be explicable if we remember that the main vehicles for expressing his wishes in the matter were prefaces and closing prayers, the most likely part of a collection to be lost or neglected in transmission; Hill, “Reform and Resistance,” 38-39.

²⁷Cf. Joyce Hill, “Ælfric, Authorial Identity and the Changing Text,” in The Editing of Old English, ed. D. G. Scragg and P. E. Szarmach (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1994), 177-189. Hill makes the point that “non-authorial re-use can be seen as degradation of the Ælfrician tradition,” but that “ecclesiastical and theological activity in the eleventh and early twelfth century cannot be understood if these adapted texts are not examined” (182).

²⁸‘Old English Prayer Appended to the Second Series of Catholic Homilies’: “Gif hwa ma awendan wille, ðonne bidde ic hine, for Godes lufon, þæt he gesette his boc onsundron fram ðam twam bocum ðe we awend habbað, we truwhað þurh Godes diht” (Wilcox, 114). ‘Old English Preface to Lives of Saints’: “Ic bidde nu on Godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wille, þæt he hi wel gerihte be þære bysne, and þær na mare betwux ne sette þonne
Malcolm Godden, while pointing out the extensive circulation of Ælfric’s homilies, also notes their free combination with anonymous works in many, if not most, collections and their use in new composite homilies. Elsewhere he calls the method of extraction a “striking but perverse talent for ferreting out from unlikely texts by Ælfric the exhortatory and eschatological material that is in general so uncharacteristic of that author.”

Joyce Hill also remarks that the material extracted for use in the anonymous tradition is unrepresentative of the Catholic Homilies as a whole. The compilers omit the validating references, side-step much of the systematic exegesis, avoid complex theology, and seize instead upon incidental narrative details and on those occasions when Ælfric deals with such basic practical topics as prayer, penance, fasting, tithing, pride, greed, love, or the need to prepare for Judgement.

We awendon” (Wilcox, 121). Ælfric is more measured in his Latin preface to the First Series, saying that if his book is not pleasing, the reader may make his own book containing deeper interpretations (condat sibi altiore interpretatione librum), but should not pervert his own [Ælfric’s] text (Wilcox, 107-8).


“Old English Composite Homilies from Winchester,” 65.

Hill, “Reform and Resistance,” 40-41. Hill is referring to a study by Mary Swan: “Ælfric as Source: The Exploitation of Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies from the Late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries” (Ph.D. diss., University of Leeds, 1993).
Though Ælfric’s homilies were certainly popular, they apparently never influenced the way homilies were composed by contemporaries or successors.

Ælfric knew that the anonymous tradition was vigorous and well-established, as he finds it necessary to state his disagreement with it on several occasions; Malcolm Godden has identified items in the Vercelli and Blickling collections which fit Ælfric’s descriptions.  

Modern scholars have tended to agree with Ælfric in their own assessments of the anonymous tradition. For example, Gatch, in his analysis of the eschatology in Vercelli and Blickling, finds their theology of the Last Times ambiguous and contradictory, and his verdict has been often cited as conclusive in subsequent scholarship.

It is crucial to notice that scholarly judgment concerning the anonymous homilies has simply followed the preferences of Ælfric himself. There are good reasons for this development. Hill rightly draws attention to our own modern

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33 Godden lists the *Visio Pauli*, the apocryphal Assumption of Mary, and the intercession for the damned on Judgment Day as three such texts to which Ælfric objected; “Ælfric and the Vernacular Prose Tradition,” 99-117. A frequently quoted statement by Ælfric concerning his predecessors may be found in his preface to his First Series: “Pa bearn me on mode, ic truwige þurh Godes gifæ, þæt ic ðas boe of Ledenum gereorde to Engliscre spræce awende, na þurh gebyle micelre lare, ac for ðan ðe ic geseah and gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum Engliscum bocum, ðe ungelaerede menn ðurh heora bilewitnysse to micclum wisdome tealdon; and me ofhreow þæt hi ne cuðon ne næfdon ða godspellican lare on heora gewritum” (Wilcox, 108).

34 Gatch, “Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies,” *Traditio* 21 (1965): 117-165. Gatch’s evaluation seems to me to be marred by a misdirected quest for “clear doctrinal statement” in the anonymous homilies, which, as he himself admits, are not concerned with speculative theologizing. Furthermore, his discussion does not sufficiently take into account the variety of sources represented in the anonymous texts.
To the modern scholar, Ælfric’s self-definition is seductive. There is a coherence in his work which we can feel confident about; there is a consistency in his use of sources which aids our analysis; and—most seductive of all—we have a partially autobiographical persona.... But there is a danger, nonetheless, for as Clare Lees has recently pointed out, our modern authorial conditioning creates “a binary division [of the homiletic corpus] into known writers (Ælfric and Wulfstan) and the unknown (anonymous) texts,” with a resulting bias in value judgements and a resulting imbalance in the scholarly effort expended.36

In aligning themselves with Ælfric, scholars of Old English homiletic literature have often failed to acknowledge the preoccupations of the anonymous tradition and to recognize it as meeting cultural and religious needs which are in a sense complementary to the predominately educational purposes of Ælfric. Although it is important to note the prejudices of Ælfric (as of modern scholarship), it is also essential to work toward a better understanding of that “other” tradition which forms the background to his efforts.

An important step in sharpening our sensitivity to the various traditions has been made in terms of Ælfric’s status as a representative of the Benedictine Reform. Joyce Hill has demonstrated that there are areas in which we can observe that Ælfric

35Bethurum has also observed the modern scholar’s preference for Ælfric over Wulfstan, the former evoking a “readier response from scholars than do Wulfstan’s passion for order and his stern kind of morality”; “Wulfstan,” 215.

went beyond the standards of his fellow reformers in his efforts to align the secular
church to his reformed monastic ideals. For instance, Hill has noted that his ideal of
exegetical preaching can hardly be seen as gaining universal acceptance, even among
other reformers.37 Similarly, she has pointed out that his attempt to enforce the
monastic practice of “silent days” (i.e. without preaching) on the three days before
Easter was rejected by compilers of later homiliaries.38 Mary Clayton, in her study of
the cult of the Virgin Mary, reaches a similar conclusion, noting that Ælfric’s attitude
to various apocryphal Marian texts is not so much based on their orthodoxy per se,
but on his knowledge of some authoritative condemnation of them. Clayton’s study
of the Marian homilies lead her to conclude that Ælfric’s attitude was an
“independent reaction not shared by fellow-reformers,” and she therefore cautions
against simple pre- and post-reform labels which are used to distinguish Ælfric and
the anonymous corpus.39 The picture which emerges is one of multiple traditions,
even within reformed circles, some of which are quite comfortable with the very texts
and practices which Ælfric deplored.

39The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ.
Press, 1990), 260-266. The traditional view is represented by Gatch (Preaching, 8 and
122ff).
Preaching in the Early Middle Ages

Another productive way of moving toward a clearer understanding of all OE homiletic literature is to examine the various Latin sources which were available to these writers. Both Ælfric and the anonymous homilists drew on Latin material, much of it written in the patristic era and adapted and preserved in collections compiled, for the most part, during the Carolingian renaissance. They also inherited the beliefs of their predecessors in regard to the purpose and scope of public preaching. So, to a certain extent, one can look to the surviving ecclesiastical documents and earlier homiliaries to answer questions concerning the Anglo-Saxon milieu. Our information on the textual and ideological ancestors of Ælfric and Wulfstan is quite full, but the anonymous homilies have not been studied as a tradition at all, due to their indeterminate chronology and diverse sources. But even at the present state of research in this area, it is possible to speak in general terms about their historical and textual contexts. As a comprehensive survey of the early medieval preaching tradition has been done elsewhere, I will only attempt to sketch

40Two inventories which have greatly facilitated investigation of the anonymous homilies are Donald Scragg’s “The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies and Prose Saint’s Lives before Ælfric,” *ASE* 8 (1979): 223-277; and Janet Bately’s *Old English Homilies: A Preliminary Bibliography of Source Studies Compiled for Fontes Anglo-Saxonicii and Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture* (Binghamton: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, SUNY, 1993).

here those points which seem to have some bearing on both the practice of preaching
and of compiling preaching material as it was carried out in late Anglo-Saxon
England.

The most important statements on the subject of preaching for the early
medieval church are undoubtedly those of Augustine (354-430) and Gregory the
Great (ca. 540-604). Augustine addresses the topic in the fourth book of his De
doctrina christiana, a treatise which essentially reevaluates the place of classical
rhetoric in the ecclesiastical setting of the sermon. Augustine appropriates the
Ciceronian concepts of the plain, middle and grand styles, used for the purposes of,
respectively, teaching, delighting and persuading (docere, delectare, flectere).

Using a culinary analogy, Augustine states that "there is a similarity between eaters
and learners in regard to the fastidiousness of many, for even the foods without which

Historical Society, 1977); and Thomas Amos, "The Origin and Nature of the Carolingian
Sermon" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State Univ., 1984), for the Carolingian period. Gatch,
Preaching; and Clayton, "Homiliaries and Preaching," discuss both the Carolingian and the
Anglo-Saxon traditions. The review in this chapter is very much indebted to these
fundamental studies.

James Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages. A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint
Augustine to the Renaissance (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), 57ff; and Tristram,
"Early Insular Preaching," 23-28. Augustine's justification for the use of rhetoric in
Christian preaching is reproduced in Hrabanus Maurus' De institutione clericorum XIX, PL
107.396-397; cf. Murphy, Rhetoric, 82ff.

43 A much abbreviated account of the three styles is also found in the Etymologiae
(XVII.1-3) by Isidore; Isidore of Seville: Etymologies. Book II. Rhetoric, ed. and trans. Peter
it is not possible to live need to be spiced up." Nevertheless, he is careful in *De doctrina* to subordinate the skills of oratory to the effective communication of divine truth. The ultimate welfare of the listening audience, particularly in the need for clear instruction and forceful persuasion to right behaviour, were paramount: the truths of the Christian message were, in a sense, all great matter (*omnia sunt magna*) requiring the grand style.

Similarly, Gregory the Great’s highly influential *Liber regulae pastoralis* presents an audience-centred approach to teaching, especially in Book 3 in which he differentiates various personality types and how the needs of each may be most effectively met through the preaching office:

> The discourse of teachers ought to be adapted to the nature of those listening, so that it corresponds to the concerns of the individual, and yet never departs from the art of common edification.

Gregory stresses the instruction of the laity by both example and word, a formula which was to become a very common description of clerical responsibilities.

"Inter se habent nonnullam similitudinem uescentes atque discentes, propter fastidia plurimorum, etiam ipsa, sine quibus uiui non potest, alimenta condienda sunt."


"Sit rector operatione praecipuus, ut uitae uiium subditis uiuendo denuntiet, et grex qui pastoris uocem moresque sequitur, per exempla
work was to be stipulated as required reading for every bishop in the Carolingian period and was quoted in its capitulares. Gregory himself composed one of the most popular and widely disseminated homily collections of the early Middle Ages, the *Homeliae XL in evangelia*. These homilies were most often transmitted as a set, but were also used in collections intended for popular preaching due to their “simple, straightforward expositions of the Gospel pericope.”

In the centuries following Gregory, the composition of original homilies became the exception; most homiliaries were compilations of the writings of the Fathers, as Briioth says: “preaching had become an art in the use of borrowed materials.” Perhaps the justification for this was provided by Augustine when he encourages those who cannot compose well simply to read the speeches of those who can. Nevertheless, as derivative as preaching might have been, the works just mentioned established the requirement for the use of public speaking in the process of teaching and motivating Christians. At no time could the Church afford to neglect

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melius quam per uerba gradianir.” Augustine had also insisted on the importance of the speaker’s life, and noted that a cleric’s conduct could be a kind of plenitude of speaking (*copia dicendi*), i.e. eloquence, in itself (*De doctrina* IV.27-29.59-61).

48McKitterick, 89.


50Briioth, 73.

51*De doctrina* IV.xxix.62.
this important task if it was to be successful in its confrontation of paganism and the
shaping of a Christian society. That it was a continuing struggle to achieve the ideal
of an adequately instructed populace can be seen in the constant need for correctives
which were promulgated by the ecclesiastical leadership.

One figure who had a tremendous impact on the office of preaching, both
during his life and thereafter, was Caesarius of Arles (ca. 470-542). In the early
Middle Ages, as in late antiquity, preaching seems to have been carried out primarily
by bishops. Caesarius launched an aggressive protest against this policy, urging that
all clergy—bishops, priests and even deacons—should be responsible for the
continual instruction of the people. In an admonitory letter he states that this was to
take place not only in church, but also at banquets and while traveling. Caesarius
endorses the use of the patristic authors in extreme cases of ineptitude, but he
contends that no special gifts of eloquence are needed to preach, which should be
done in the common speech so that the simple congregation could benefit. For

\[\text{52McKitterick, 87.}\]

\[\text{53} \textit{Praefatio libri sermonem}; \text{Cf. Sermo I.15; Morin, CCSL 103, 18-19.}\]

\[\text{54Sermo I.10, 17; Morin, CCSL 103, 7,13.}\]

\[\text{55Sermo I.15; Morin, CCSL 103, 11-12.}\]

\[\text{56Sermo I.12 (Morin, CCSL 103, 8): "Si sit in aliquo eloquentia saecularis, non
oporteat pontificali eloquio praedicare, quod vix ad paucorum potest intellectuam
pervenire"; A priest should speak in "simplici et pedestri sermone, quem totus populus capere
possit" (Sermo I.20; Morin, CCSL 103, 16); cf. Sermo I.13; Morin, CCSL 103, 10.}\]
those who do not know what to say he offers a lengthy list of evils which must be
denounced, fortified by the anticipation of the final Judgment.\textsuperscript{57} The official
statement at the Council of Vaison (529), at which Caesarius presided, reads as
follows:

\begin{quote}
Hoc etiam pro aedificatione omnium ecclesiarum et pro utelitate totius
populi nobis placuit, ut non solum in civitatibus, sed etiam in omnibus
parrociis verbum faciendi daremus presbyteris potestatem, ita ut, si
presbyter aliqua infirmitate prohibente per se ipsum non potuerit
praedicare, sanctorum patrum homiliae a diaconibus recitentur.\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

For the edification of all the churches and the benefit of all the people it
pleases us that not only in the cities, but in all the parishes we grant
priests the power to speak; if the priest is not able to preach because an
illness prevents him, the homilies of the sacred fathers are to be read by
deacons.

McKitterick sees this as marking, “juridically at least, the end of the bishop’s
monopoly over the right to preach in the Latin church,”\textsuperscript{59} and there is evidence that
Caesarius’ policy was remembered and perhaps enforced, at least at Arles, since
nearly three centuries later a council was to repeat this injunction in almost the same
words.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{57}Sermo I.12, 15; Morin, CCSL 103, 4-5, 8-10.

\textsuperscript{58}Canon 2, Concilia aevi Merovingici I, ed. F. Maassen, MGH, Leges 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1893), 56.

\textsuperscript{59}McKitterick, 88.

\textsuperscript{60}Council of Arles 813, canon 10; Concilia aevi Karolini I, ed. Albert Werminghoff, MGH, Leges 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1906), 251.
The contribution of Caesarius which was to influence Western Christendom most was not his policy but the more than 200 homilies he compiled and disseminated, eager to help those with little training and talent by providing a collection arranged according to the church year. These sermons, mainly based on Augustine, reveal his deep concern for his congregation which was still very much pagan in practice and lacked understanding of the fundamentals of Christian belief and behaviour, a situation which was to continue in parts of the Frankish kingdom well into the Carolingian period. The importance of these sermons, as will be seen below, lies in their great popularity with compilers of collections which were intended for public preaching, and, most significantly for Anglo-Saxonists, with many of the anonymous authors of Old English homilies.

There is little evidence to inform us as to how the office of preaching was carried out in the intervening period between Caesarius and the Carolingian renaissance. Sporadic hints in councils, synods, and chronicles suggest that it was encouraged in certain areas of Gaul and the Visigothic kingdom, and certainly the

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61 Clayton notes that “Caesarius’s collection was innovative in that it was intended for the use of secular clergy in preaching to the people”; “Homiliaries and Preaching,” 208. Gatch finds Caesarius “one of the most difficult figures in the history of medieval preaching,” presumably because of his “radical tactic” of enjoining priests to preach; Preaching, 32.

62 McKitterick, introd., xvii-xix and also 119-122.

missionary sermon played an important role in the conversion of German and Frisian areas.\textsuperscript{64} Homiliaries based on patristic texts continued to be compiled, including that compiled by Pope Leo I in the sixth century, the Homiliary of Toledo in the seventh century, and those by Peter Chrysologus, Alan of Farfa, Pseudo-Boniface, as well as the Homiliary of Würzburg in the eighth century.\textsuperscript{65} Some of these homiliaries were intended for public preaching, but, as Thomas Amos points out, without the backing of strong ecclesiastical and secular leadership, the practice of preaching was likely to decline.

Such a unified agenda was lacking until the Carolingian renaissance, but for that era several types of evidence point to a renewed interest in public preaching. Charlemagne and the officials of the Carolingian church saw the sermon as a primary means by which the ignorance of the Frankish people could be remedied, essential if the realm was to make progress towards a more unified Christian society. McKitterick maintains that the evidence of the church councils reveals a clergy responding with energy to the royal decrees concerning preaching.\textsuperscript{66} Clearly, widespread preaching had to go hand in hand with a drive to educate the clergy who needed to be properly prepared to instruct those in their care. The first official

\textsuperscript{64}Amos, "Origin and Nature," 51ff.

\textsuperscript{65}Amos, "Origin and Nature," 95-208. Amos provides a detailed analysis of these and many other sermon collections.

\textsuperscript{66}McKitterick, 12.
mention of these educational goals is found in the *Admonitio generalis*, issued in 789, in which Charlemagne urges both bishops and priest to read and preach the catholic faith to the people. The content of this preaching is also suggested, indicating a focus on the basics of the Christian faith: the elements of the creed, hell, eternal life, resurrection, vices to be avoided and virtues to be practiced. In two more capitularies, issued by Charlemagne in 802, public preaching is again encouraged. The *missi* were instructed to see to it that Charlemagne's decrees were everywhere carried out, making sure that the clergy preached regularly and were properly supplied with the appropriate books.

The five Reform Councils which took place in 813 sought to further this imperial program, each interpreting the decree in its own way. In three of the

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68Canon 82, Ibid., 61-2. Some anxiety concerning orthodoxy is expressed: "ut recte et honeste praedicent; et non sinatis nova vel non canonica aliquos ex suo sensu et non secundum scripturas sacras fingere et praedicare populo."

69Canon 4, *Capitula a sacerdotibus proposita*, ibid., 106; and canon 10, *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis*, ibid., 110.


71Arles, canon 10; Rheims, canons 14 and 15; Mainz, canon 25; Chalon, canon 37; Tours, canon 17; *Concilia aevi Karolini I*, ed. Albert Werminghoff, MGH, *Leges 3* (Hannover: Hahn, 1906), 251, 255, 268, 281, 288.
applicable canons the reference to preaching mentions bishops (Mainz, Rheims, Tours), but two mention priests as well (Arles, Chalon). In some canons the preferred subject matter of preaching is indicated (Tours, Chalon), and three interestingly mention that preaching should be in the language of the people or at least should be intelligible by them.

Nor was this a passing enthusiasm. Subsequent councils affirm and continue the legislative tradition concerning public preaching. For example, the 847 council of Mainz conflates material from two councils of 813, Chalon and Tours, in the following statement:

Cum igitur omnia concilia canonum, qui recipiuntur, sint a sacerdotibus legenda et intellegenda et per ea sit eis vivendum et predicandum, necessarium duximus, ut ea, quae ad fidem pertinente et ubi de extirpandis vitiiis et plantandis virtutibus scribitur, hoc ab eis crebro legatur et bene intellegatur et in populo praedicetur. Et quilibet

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72 Gatch attributes the mention of priests preaching in the Arles Council to “local traditions,” though he notes that, judging from the formulation in the Concordia episcoporum, it seems to have been in accord with the emperor’s objectives; Preaching, 35.

73 See the conflation of these two canons quoted below (Mainz 847).


75 Council of Attigny (822), canons 2 and 5; Concilium romanum (826), canon 3 (Concilia aevi Karolini I, ed. Albert Werminghoff, MGH, Leges 3 [Hannover: Hahn, 1908], 471-72, 568); Council of Meaux-Paris (845/846), canons 34 and 35; and the Council of Valence (855), canon 16 (Concilia aevi Karolini DCCCXLIII-DCCCCLIX, ed. Wilfried Hartmann, MGH, Leges 3 [Hannover: Hahn, 1984], 100-1, 361.
episcopus habeat omelias continentes necessarias admonitiones, quibus subiecti erudiantur, id est: de fide catholica, prout capere possint, de perpetua retributione bonorum et aeterna damnatione malorum, de resurrectione quoque futura et ultimo iudicio, et quibus operibus possit promereri beata vita quibusve excludi. Et ut easdem omelias quisque aperte transferrre studeat in rusticam Romanam linguam aut Teotiscam, quo facilius cuncti possint intelligere, quae dicuntur.\footnote{Canon 2, \textit{Concilia aevi Karolini III}. Hartmann, MGH, \textit{Leges} 4, 164.}

Therefore, since all the conciliar canons, which were received, are to be read and understood by the clergy, we, who must live and preach in accordance with them, hold it necessary that these things, which pertain to the faith and which are written to uproot vices and plant virtues, should be often read and well understood and preached to the people. Every bishop is to have homilies containing the necessary admonitions, by which those who are subject to him may be taught, that is, concerning the catholic faith, as they are able to grasp, concerning the perpetual reward of the good and the eternal damnation of the wicked, also concerning the future resurrection and final judgment, and by which works the blessed life may be merited and by which excluded. And that everyone take pains to translate these same homilies plainly into the simple Romance or German tongue, in which all should be able to understand easily what is said.


What these councils do not make entirely clear, and one would most like to know, is (1) the context in which preaching took place and (2) the kinds of homilies
and homiliaries used for that purpose. Although there is almost no evidence as to the place of the homily in the liturgy (assuming it took place during Mass), some suggestions have been made. Gatch proposes that "a vernacular office usually placed after the Gospel," called the prone, must have been the place for the sermon, but Amos has challenged this notion, noting the complete lack of evidence for a separable office.

The question most relevant to the study of OE homilies is that of the materials used for preaching. Here, the trend of recent scholarship has been towards identifying an increasing number of texts as being intended as preaching materials for the secular church. The basis for assessment of a homiletic collection usually is the nature of the contents, statements about its purpose made in a preface or prefatory letter and internal evidence in the homilies themselves. Clayton suggests that most of the surviving collections were intended for monastic use in the night office on

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78 A rare mention of the sermon in a liturgical text is found in the tenth-century *Ordo Romanus* which mentions that the bishop, if he wished, *sermonen facit ad populum* after the reading of the gospel; *Les ordines romani du haut moyen âge*, vol. 2., ed. Michel Andrieu (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovanieuse, 1960), 357. Preaching after the gospel reading also was a feature of the Gallican rite as indicated by Pseudo-Germanus: "Homeliae autem sanctorum quae leguntur, pro sola praedicatione ponuntur, ut quicquid propheta, apostolus vel evangelium mandavit, hoc doctor vel pastor ecclesiae apertiori sermone populo praedicet, ita arte temperans, ut nec rusticitas sapientes offendat nec honesta loquacitas obscura rusticis fiat"; *Expositio antiquae liturgiae Gallicanae Germano Parisiensi ascripta*, vol. 3, ed. Joannes Quasten, Opuscula et Textus: Series Liturgica (Münster: Aschendorff, 1934), 15-16.


80 Amos, "Preaching and the Sermon," 50.
Sundays and feast days, and some, such as Hrabanus Maurus' second homiliary compiled for Emperor Lothar, were primarily meant for private devotional use.\textsuperscript{81} These also include the homiliaries compiled by Paul the Deacon\textsuperscript{82} and those by Haymo, Heiric, and Remigius of Auxerre, and Smaragdus, which are all exegetical in nature.\textsuperscript{83}

As for those considered appropriate to be preached to the laity, Gatch in his pioneering survey of the Carolingian materials excludes all exegetical material from this group and maintains that only Hrabanus Maurus' first homiliary and that of Abbo of St. Germain-des-Prés were used to fulfill the official decrees.\textsuperscript{84} But the latest scholarship now suggests that Hrabanus' second homiliary (for archbishop Haistulf), the homiliary of St. Père de Chartres\textsuperscript{85} and that of Landpertus of Mondsee, all

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{81}Clayton, "Homiliaries and Preaching," 208-13.
  \item \textsuperscript{82}Paul the Deacon's collection was compiled at the request of Charlemagne and consists of 244 lections for the church year, divided into parts for summer and winter. It is a collection of patristic texts, 151 of which are labeled \textit{sermones}, reproduced without significant change; Cyril L. Smetana, "Paul the Deacon's Patristic Anthology," in \textit{The Old English Homily}, 76-97.
  \item \textsuperscript{84}Gatch, \textit{Preaching}, 35. Gatch does not work out a consistent classification for all the Carolingian homiliaries. To the two mentioned, he would presumably add those cited in a later footnote: St. Père de Chartres, Landpertus of Mondsee and possibly Gregory's homilies (189, n.28).
  \item \textsuperscript{85}Cf. Barré, (\textit{Les homéliaires Carolingiens}, 24), who notes of the St. Père homiliary: "Cet Homélieaire entend fournir au prêtres des modèles et des suggestions pour leurs
\end{itemize}
compiled in the first quarter of the ninth century, were intended for instruction of the laity. Thomas Amos in his comprehensive survey, has identified “over nine hundred sermons written or adapted by Carolingian authors as sources for popular preaching in the period 750-950.”

A few observations should be made about these homiliaries. It would be convenient if one could draw the dividing line between the two types of collections along the lines of exegetical vs. moral/catechetical as Gatch seeks to do. But analysis of the materials intended for non-monastic use would indicate that, while they have a “high sermon content,” they by no means avoid exegesis. For example, although the preface of Hrabanus’ first homiliary compiled for archbishop Haistulf of Mainz, states “sermonem confeci ad prædicandum populo, de omnibus quæ necessaria eis credidi” (‘I have written sermons to be preached to the people, concerning all that is necessary for them to believe’) the first forty pieces combine exposition of the pericope with an appropriate exhortation and are therefore exegetical, though

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allocations au peuple chrétien.”


87“Preaching and the Sermon,” 47.

88Praefatio, PL 110.9.

89McKitterick, 98.
perhaps in a simplified manner.\textsuperscript{90}

In part, the difference between monastic and secular preaching texts may be one of sources. Hrabanus' main source is, not surprisingly, Caesarius of Arles, an appropriate choice for what McKitterick calls a "large rural congregation, ignorant and credulous."\textsuperscript{91} Closely related to Hrabanus' collection is that of St. Père de Chartres which also includes a significant number of Caesarian sermons.\textsuperscript{92} Finally the homiliary of Landpertus of Mondsee forms another collection possibly intended for public preaching\textsuperscript{93} and contains exegetical homilies with "much moral teaching interspersed."\textsuperscript{94} What distinguishes the collections for the laity from those used in a monastic setting seems to be the quantity and level of exegesis contained in them and a healthy portion of moral directives and catechetical explanation which is in part a result of the sources from which the material was culled.

Some scholars have also suggested the possibility that Paul the Deacon may

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{90}Clayton, "Homiliaries and Preaching," 214.
\item \textsuperscript{91}McKitterick, 99.
\item \textsuperscript{92}Barré also lists Gregory, Fulgentius and Amalarius; \textit{Les homéliaires Carolingiens}, 24. This collection has been shown to have connections with Old English homilies by J.E. Cross who has examined and edited selections from Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25, an eleventh-century manuscript which is a version of the St. Père homiliary. Cross notes its relationship to eight different OE homilies; \textit{Cambridge Pembroke College MS 25: A Carolingian Sermonary used by Anglo-Saxon Preachers} (London: King's College, 1987).
\item \textsuperscript{93}Clayton, "Homiliaries and Preaching," 213.
\end{itemize}
have been a resource for public preaching.\textsuperscript{95} McKitterick offers the suggestion that it is...unlikely that the Frankish clergy failed to make full use of this collection made by Paul the Deacon for public preaching, even though the content of the sermons must have made paraphrase, summarization and simplification for the benefit of a lay audience necessary in many instances.\textsuperscript{96}

In support of this view, McKitterick points to the examples of Ælfric and Wulfstan in the late tenth century, but this proposal has not been accepted by other scholars.\textsuperscript{97}

All of these are, of course, Latin homiliaries, though delivery to the people must have taken place in the various vernacular languages. Little attempt was made to fix the vernacular translations in writing; preservation was almost always done in Latin so that little evidence of this activity survives.\textsuperscript{98} It seems safe to assume that such translation took place, however, as the councils cited above show an awareness of the language issues involved in public preaching.\textsuperscript{99}

In addition to the difficulties of matching surviving texts with various preaching contexts and of accounting for the language barriers, we still cannot be sure

\textsuperscript{95}Barré does not exclude the possibility that the so-called Carolingian homilies—those by Haymo, Heiric and Remigius—which do not at first glance seem suited for public preaching, were used for this purpose; \textit{Les homéliaires Carolingiens}, 5.

\textsuperscript{96}McKitterick, 102.

\textsuperscript{97}Amos, “Origin and Nature,” 196.


\textsuperscript{99}McKitterick, 189. Amos cites some of the surviving evidence for this process in “Preaching and the Sermon,” 51ff.
on what scale the decrees of the councils were carried out, though McKitterick generally expresses optimism as to the efficacy of the educational reforms. Certain misgivings are perhaps justifiable when we consider the ability of the secular clergy, particularly priests, either to understand or translate Latin homilies (especially ex tempore), but this scepticism may be partly answered with evidence that suggests that monastic priests, with their superior education, supplied the needs of the parish churches, particularly in the preaching office. Still, practice must have varied from region to region and may have been dependent on local episcopal encouragement.

This portrait of the Carolingian era, though sketchy, confirms a new agenda for preaching to the people and the use of the sermon as an instructional tool for catechetical and moral teaching and perhaps for some simplified exegesis. There was an attempt to deal with language difficulties and, in the educational reforms, with clerical incompetence. Some effort was made to compile preaching aids suitable for a lay audience, drawing on earlier collections made for the same purpose.

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100 McKitterick, 159, 209 and passim.

Preaching Materials and Styles in Late Anglo-Saxon England

Some interesting parallels can now be drawn to the situation in England. Certain early records provide an indication of ongoing efforts to promote teaching and preaching. Missionary preaching was clearly a part of the Augustinian mission in 597. Bede tells us that, following the conversion of King Æthelbert, "every day more and more began to flock to hear the Word."\textsuperscript{102} In the late seventh century, both Cuthbert and his teacher Boisil, though monks, reportedly ventured into the surrounding countryside to preach in the villages.\textsuperscript{103}

The Council of Clovesho (747) calls for bishops to instruct the people by preaching and to inveigh against pagan practices on their yearly episcopal visits. Priests also must know the essentials of the faith in order to preach (canon 6) and should do the latter on Sundays and feast days (canon 14):

\begin{quote}
Sed et hoc quoque decernitur quod eo die sive per alias festivitates maiorcs, populus per sacerdotes Dei ad Ecclesiam saepius invitatus, ad audiendum verbum Dei conveniat, Missarumque sacramentis, ac doctrinae sermonibus frequentius adsit.\textsuperscript{104}
\end{quote}


It is also decreed that on that day [Sunday] and on other major feast days, the people, often summoned to church by the priests of God, should meet to listen to the word of God and to be often present at the sacraments of the masses and the sermons of teaching.

A legatine synod of 787 urged bishops to preach and not be silent, lest they be like false shepherds who flee when they see the wolf approaching.105

In the tenth and eleventh centuries some of the products of the Frankish preaching initiative already mentioned above were translated into Old English. The Capitula Theodulfi urge priests to be prepared for preaching (canon 28) and the people to gather for the mass and preaching (canon 45).106 One chapter of the Rule of Chrodegang entitled De cura quam in populo sibi comisso debent habere clerici ('Concerning the care which the clerics ought to have for those people entrusted to them') states that preaching should occur at least twice a month and preferably every Sunday and feast day.107

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107 Regula canoniconorum, XLIV, PL 89.1076: "Constituimus ut bis in mense per totum annum, de quinto decimo, in quinto decimo, verbum salutis ei [populo] prædicetur, qualiter ad vitam æternam, Deo auxiliante, perveniat. Et si omnibus festis et Dominici diebus assidua fuerit prædicatio, utilior est; et juxta quod intelligere vulgus possit, ita prædictandum est." There is also an Old English Rule of Chrodegang extant (in addition to several fragmentary survivals): Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 191; A.S. Napier, ed., The
There is no conclusive evidence that the ideals represented by these texts became a matter of common practice in England before the Benedictine Reform. However, the fact that, as mentioned above, both the Vercelli and Blickling collections presumably draw on exemplars which were compiled and/or translated perhaps even as early as the age of Alfred, should prevent us from taking too dim a view of the instructional efforts of the Church before the Reform. In any case, like their Frankish counterparts, the Anglo-Saxons were at least sporadically reminded of the need for public preaching.

In seeking to fulfill this mandate, Ælfric, Wulfstan and the anonymous writers turned to previous collections for material, and the discrepancies between the traditions may be partly explained in the sources they drew upon. Ælfric’s main sources were the collections of Paul the Deacon, Haymo, and Smaragdus, none of which seems to have been originally compiled for preaching to the laity but rather for monastic or private devotional use.\(^{108}\) Though Ælfric sought to adapt these sources to a lay audience, their more monastic, learned nature, naturally, resulted in a very different kind of end product than that of homilies based on materials originally intended for the laity.

The anonymous homilists, by contrast, used whatever sources seemed suitable, which often meant standard public preaching materials such as the sermons of Caesarius of Arles, transmitted in collections like the version of St. Père found in Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25,109 and, unlike Ælfric, they freely used already existing vernacular homilies. Clayton has noted the similarity between Blickling and Hrabanus Maurus' first homiliary and especially the St. Père collection in terms of arrangement, occasions covered and type of texts represented.110 It is likely, once the sources of the anonymous tradition have been comprehensively compiled, that an even clearer connection between similar Latin collections for public preaching will emerge.

To his contemporaries, the output of Ælfric must have seemed a novel approach to public preaching and, no doubt, a valuable and fresh influx of ready-to-hand sermons, but they were not prepared to give up the traditional sermon with its

109 This material is often referred to as the "Gallican-Celtic" tradition; cf. Gatch (Preaching, 122-23) and Stanley B. Greenfield and Daniel Calder, A New Critical History of Old English Literature (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1986), 72. However, the diverse sources used by the anonymous homilists and the collections from which their materials may have derived have not been thoroughly catalogued, so that it is impossible at this point to make accurate statements about the tradition as a whole. The SASLC project has discovered some Hiberno-Latin sources; Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version, ed. Frederick M. Biggs, Thomas D. Hill, and Paul E. Szarmach (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, SUNY, 1990), 87-123. See also Hildegard Tristram, "Early Insular Preaching," passim.

heightened rhetoric and strong moral admonition. Appreciation and composition of the anonymous homilies continued long after Ælfric’s works had been widely disseminated. I will suggest that, at least in part, these texts were chosen and continued in their popularity simply because they were inherently well-suited to their target-audience and to the purposes for which churchmen used them. They are, for the most part, “preaching” instead of “teaching”-texts, meant for oral delivery to an unlettered audience.

Though I am not suggesting that all the anonymous homilies were equally powerful when delivered, they do often employ such schemes as formula, repetition, enumeration, and direct speech (both monologue and dialogue), all of which have been associated with a target-audience which functions primarily on an oral level, and all of which enhance oral comprehension and retention.

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111 Cf. Erich Auerbach’s discussion of the patristic and later medieval sermo humilis, and his statement that “the common people were great lovers of rhetoric”; Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Routledge, 1965), 53.


113 Thomas Amos, discussing homilies used for instruction of the laity in the Carolingian era, lists the following features: timeless temporal references, formulas, externalization of doctrine, “homely” imagery, the use of mnemonic aids; “Early Medieval Sermons and their Audience,” in De l’homélie au sermon: Histoire de la prédication
So, while Ælfric (though not without occasional misgivings) believed that what his "mixed" lay and monastic congregation at Cerne needed most was strictly authoritative exposition of biblical passages as well as fundamental doctrines presented in a plain teaching style, many of his contemporaries and successors, though glad to make use of his writings, saw the need for another kind of homily and consequently often chose catechesis and exhortation over exegesis, paying less attention to the sources from which their material was derived, perhaps partly out of an awareness that their audience would have little appreciation for the finer points of scholarship.

Such a view may serve in some cases to remove the taint of "heterodoxy" and

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114 On several occasions Ælfric betrays an anxiety as to the intellectual capacities of his audience and their willingness to listen to lengthy exegesis, as, for example, in the Latin preface to his first series of Catholic Homilies: "seculares omnia nequeunt capere, quamvis ex ore doctorum audiant"; Wilcox, 107.

115 Exegesis is not wholly absent, however; Clayton lists Vercelli I, V, XV-XVIII and Blickling I-III, VI, XI, XII as exegetical or partly exegetical; "Homiliaries and Preaching," 229.

116 Swan notes that when anonymous homilists used Ælfric in their compilations "they rarely include Ælfric's references to his own sources and authorities" (192). And Clare Lees has made the important point that in oral delivery "all homilies are anonymous homilies and all are mediated through the trope of the voice of the speaker" ("Homiliaries and Preaching," 166). Even if an "auctor" was mentioned in the homily, it is not likely that the unlettered in the audience would have appreciated such references.
“bad taste” which has discredited the anonymous corpus. Nor need the discrepancy be seen as one of training and intellectual capabilities. The example of Wulfstan may serve as a reminder that a well-educated reformer who was zealous to ensure the “right belief,” could prefer the “preaching” rather than “teaching” style for much of his output. Similarly, we may suppose that other homilists were either monks like Ælfric or bishops (often from monastic houses), as these were the two groups most likely to have the training and authority to engage in this activity.

What hides behind the equivocal terms used to described the anonymous tradition—“dazzling display of rhetoric,” “effusive, piled-up clauses,” “more colorful, if less mainstream,” “mishmash of Christian ideas without a clear agenda”—is an expression of scholarly tastes, rather than an attempt to understand their effectiveness in terms of reception by the target audience. Broadly speaking, one may say that the three goals of such homilies, whether consciously articulated or

117Tristram in her survey of Anglo-Saxon homiletic materials distinguishes between an “orthodox” and a “heterodox” tradition, although she does not class all the anonymous homilies in the latter category; “Early Insular Preaching,” 5, n. 7.

118This was true at least from the second half of the tenth century on; P.A. Stafford, “Church and Society in the Age of Ælfric,” in The Old English Homily, 20.


120Godden, “Ælfric and the Vernacular Prose Tradition,” 110.

121Jonathan Wilcox, 19.

not, are audience appeal, retention of important directives, and motivation towards behavioural changes. The difficulty in appreciating how well these aims were achieved lies in the simple question, as asked by Amos: "How can we understand the effects that popular sermons, which we study as written documents, had on audiences which heard them orally?" 123

I will be exploring only one way of answering that question by focusing on the use of the rhetorical device of the dramatic monologue. Though the scope of the study of rhetoric in late Anglo-Saxon England has been questioned, in the rhythmical prose of both Ælfric and Wulfstan we can observe an effort to harness the possibilities of their native tongue to the service of public persuasion and instruction, and it has been claimed that they perhaps used their rhetorical training to accomplish this purpose. 124 One might also reasonably speculate that at least some of the

123 "Early Medieval Sermons," 1. Or, as John O'Malley says: "The greatest challenge of ... is to overcome the written and static nature of the evidence we possess in order to try to arrive at a better understanding of a reality that was oral and fleeting"; "Introduction: Medieval Preaching," in De Ore Domini: Preacher and Word in the Middle Ages, ed. Thomas Amos, Eugene A. Green and Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989), 2.

124 Luke Reinsma has cautioned against an overly enthusiastic identification of rhetorical figures in the later Anglo-Saxon period, noting that there is no evidence that Augustine's De doctrina was known, and that most of what was known on the subject would have been through the Etymologiae of Isidore, whose comments on the subject he dismisses as "dry, lifeless science." Reinsma concludes that "Ælfric and his countrymen exhibit an uncertainty, even a mistrust of the nature and goals of rhetoric itself"; "Rhetoric in England: The Age of Ælfric, 970-1020," Communication Monographs 44 (1977): 400-402. This position has been recently questioned by Knappe (29ff., 466).
anonymous homilists had basic training in rhetoric.\textsuperscript{125} A lengthy trope such as the dramatic monologue was probably present in the source,\textsuperscript{126} though it is not unknown to more freely composed texts.\textsuperscript{127} In this case, it is important to distinguish between the reader who selects the homily—i.e. the homilist who finds it in Latin or in an already translated OE version—and the target audience to whom he intends to preach the homily. The latter’s appreciation of rhetorical tropes must have varied greatly, while the former may very well have recognized a rhetorical feature such as\textit{ethopoeia}, a dramatic characterization in which the orator, according to Isidore, must ask himself “Who is speaking? And before what audience? And about what?”\textsuperscript{128}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{125}Jackson J. Campbell, dealing mostly with the eighth century, suggests that “the notions Old English preachers had of arrangement or structure of their material probably came as much from \textit{imitatio} as from study of rhetoric books, though of course both avenues of learning were open to them”; “Adaptation of Classical Rhetoric in Old English Literature,” in \textit{Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric}, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1978), 179. Knappe maintains that \textit{imitatio}, rather than application of the classical \textit{ars rhetorica}, was the primary methodology of Anglo-Saxon homilists (439, 459).

\textsuperscript{126}Surely it should not surprise us to find rhetorical figures in the sources used. Most of the patristic writers would have had some or even, as in the case of Augustine, considerable training in rhetoric; Brilioth, 22-63.

\textsuperscript{127}Bernard Huppé has observed that the prefaces of both Alfred and Ælfric employ the device of the dramatic monologue; “Alfred and Ælfric: a Study of Two Prefaces,” in \textit{The Old English Homily}, 119-137.


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The homilist may have also observed that these monologues are either laudatio (Greek: epenon) or vituperatio (Greek: psogon),\textsuperscript{129} classical genera which are exemplified in the style and tone of the homilies which I will survey. On the other hand, it is not likely that the homilist chose the text as a preaching text merely because its rhetorical structures commended themselves to him. It seems more plausible that he was also influenced by his perception of his audience, the illiterate laity with its cognitive conventions and spiritual needs.

As I will show in the following chapters, this does not mean that the selections always had to be as “simple” and straightforward as one might assume. After all, as will be seen, the speech of the soul to the body requires not only the conjuring up of a disembodied soul, but its setting in an indeterminable future place and time. Similarly, the idea of bringing the historical Christ into the present of the audience or the notion of Christ communicating by means of an ancient, non-canonical letter, demand a recreation of history and an imaginative application of that event to the present.

The vernacular verse often requires comparably sophisticated imaginative leaps in the acceptance of a cross that speaks and a bird that regenerates (Dream of the Rood, The Phoenix), the significance of which is quite beyond the literal

\textsuperscript{129}Cf. Isidore's Etymologiae II.29,13. Vituperatio was for the most part passed over in the early classical manuals of rhetoric, though it was certainly practiced and particularly useful in a judicial setting; Clemens Ottmers, Rhetorik (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996), 29. Ottmers cites Rhetorica ad Herennium I.5.8.
presentation.\textsuperscript{130} To these monologues one might add those in \textit{Christ and Satan}, the riddles, and the elegies—\textit{The Seafarer}, \textit{The Wanderer}, \textit{Deor}, \textit{The Wife's Lament}, \textit{The Husband's Message}, \textit{Resignation}—which feature the poet's dramatic representation of a persona.\textsuperscript{131} I therefore suggest that the habits of mind needed to appreciate a dramatic monologue were reinforced by the vernacular poetic tradition.\textsuperscript{132}

One might speculate that for both preacher and poet there were conventions of gesture and tone of voice which would have provided the necessary cues for the assumption of the dramatic persona. Here it is also worthwhile to note that the second half of the tenth century was the time period when we may look for the beginnings of liturgical drama. In the \textit{Regularis concordia} is found one of the first examples of the \textit{Quem quaeritis}, a reenactment of the discovery of Christ’s empty tomb in which monks were to impersonate the angel and the three women coming to

\textsuperscript{130}Margaret Schlauch has argued that the form of the \textit{Dream of the Rood} is that of \textit{prosopopoeia}, a speech delivered by an inanimate object; “The ‘Dream of the Rood’ as Prosopopoeia,” in \textit{Essays and Studies in Honor of Carleton Brown} (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1940), 23-34. See also Knappe, 41ff.


\textsuperscript{132}D.R. Letson has examined the relationship between poetry and homiletic literature from a similar point of view, stressing that the two shared features such as rhythm, alliteration, and, in general the “affection for delectable pedagogy”; “The Poetic Content of the Revival Homily,” in \textit{The Old English Homily}, 143.
the tomb on Easter morning.\footnote{Regularis concordia, canon 51, Symons, 49-50. One monk was to sit in the place of the sepulcher (sepulcri locum) and the other three were to pretend to be looking for something (ad similitudinem quaerentium); then a sung dialogue between the “women” and the “angel” occurs. Appropriate costume is also mentioned: “quattuor fratres induant se, quorum unus, alba indutus...residui tres...omnes quidem cappis induti, turibula cum incensu manibus gestantes” (‘four of the brethren shall vest, one of whom, wearing an alb....the other three brethren, vested in copes and holding thuribles in their hands’); translation by Symons. Cf. Timothy J. McGee, “The Liturgical Placements of the Quem quaeritis Dialogue,” Journal of the American Musicological Society 29 (1976): 1-29; and David A. Bjork, “On the Dissemination of Quem queritis and the Visitatio sepulchri and the Chronology of their Early Sources,” Comparative Drama 14 (1980): 46-69.}

It is important to keep in mind, however, that comparisons with classical rhetorical practice and with later drama will ultimately fall short when it comes to the overarching purpose of the monologue in a homily. Rhetorical form and dramatic presentation were subordinate to the goal of the spiritual instruction of the audience. This will become quite clear as I examine both the content and the context of each monologue in its function as a persuasive act. However, throughout this study it will also be seen that in these dramatic monologues the need of the clergy to instruct and motivate and the need of the audience to hear the message in an appealing and emotionally inspiring way intersected favorably, a success which is attested by the evident popularity of the homilies in which they are found.
Chapter 2

The Soul's Address to the Body

Huru, ðæs behoða hæleða æghwylc
þæt he his sawle sið sylfa geþence,
hu þæt bið deölic þonne se deða cymerð,
asynedreð þa sybbe þæ ær samod wæron,
lic ond sawle!

(Soul and Body I, ll. 1-5a)

The Soul's Address to the Body is known to students of Old English literature, if at all, mainly in its poetic adaptations known as Soul and Body I and II¹; the homiletic versions of this speech have received comparatively little attention. And yet, it is not difficult to see how this monologue has the potential to rouse scholarly interest in its origins and use. The Soul's Address takes place after death, of course, either at the separation of body and soul, during a periodic visit of the soul to the grave, or at the Last Judgment when the two are about to be reunited in preparation for their final destiny. Depending on whether the soul is good or evil, it either praises

or blames its body for the life they lived on earth. The tone is often personal, and the scene can be highly dramatic and emotionally charged as bitter accusation mixes with regret as well as terror of the punishment to come.

Since this remarkable feature occurs in nine OE sermons, representing four different versions, it was singled out early in the history of OE homiletic studies as meriting special attention. Its history has been traced, its sources discovered, and its literary influence on the later debate form discussed. These topics seem to have exhausted the interest in the homiletic version, and only sporadic attention has continued to be given to the OE poem, mainly in the form of controversy concerning its theology and the relationship of the two poetic versions found in the Exeter and

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Vercelli Books.6 This study hopes to reawaken the homiletic adaptations of the Soul’s Address from the slumber of neglect in an analysis which seeks to discover its historically and culturally determined uses. What was the Anglo-Saxon homilists’ perception of the speech and what can we know about its effect on its intended audience? I will be approaching these questions from two angles. I will first examine the manuscript context (the position of the homilies in the codex in relation to other texts) and the literary milieu (surviving analogous texts). Secondly, I will look at the homilies themselves, studying the theological implications of the speech, the nature of the material in which the Soul’s Address is embedded, and the rhetorical structures and use of drama found in the speech. Only then will it be possible to assess its purpose, use and possible effect on the intended audience. Finally, I will compare these discoveries with the later development of the Address during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The Latin Sources

According to Louise Dudley, the ultimate origin of the Soul’s Address is to be sought in Coptic Christianity which was influenced by the beliefs of ancient Egypt. Even though the exact nature of the transmission cannot be traced, Dudley shows that the Soul’s Address was among the several features of later Soul and Body material which seem to have their roots in Egyptian folklore.

By the time the Address is translated into OE, it is already found in four versions which differ enough from each other to presuppose a lengthy history of transmission. However, of the Latin sources which have been identified all but one post-date the earliest OE versions, which limits our knowledge of its prior textual history. What has obscured this lacuna is that source studies have been content to refer to the *Patrologia Latina*, which does not provide satisfactory references to the manuscripts from which the texts are drawn. For example, a reasonably close Latin source of the OE homilies HomSauer and HomNapier XXIX is printed as Homily

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8Ibid. Dudley mentions two speeches found in the *Necrosima* of Ephraem the Syrian and one in the Coptic *Histoire de Marc le salutaire* as parallels to those found in the “Macarius” version of the Soul’s Address. In this version the departure of a soul from its body and its reception by devils is witnessed by a monk who reports to St. Macarius what he saw. The OE homilies HomNapier XXIX and HomSauer (see following note) and the Latin homilies *Ad fratres* LXIX and Batiouchkof’s “Nonantola” homily (see following discussion) are all variants of the “Macarius” version.

LXIX of the pseudo-Augustinian collection *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, which the Maurists say is a compilation by a certain Jordanus de Saxonia of the fourteenth century, and Germain Morin has attributed to a Belgian forger of the twelfth century.\(^{10}\) However, LXIX was apparently not part of the original collection, but belongs to a group which was gathered by the editors from other, unfortunately unidentified manuscripts. So although, according to the editors, the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* appear to have enjoyed a wide circulation, there is no evidence that LXIX did as well.\(^{11}\)

To my knowledge, there are only two manuscripts which can be associated


with this version of the Soul's Address. One has been discovered by Batiouchkof in an eleventh-century manuscript from Nonantola, now in Rome.\textsuperscript{12} The contents of this volume are not otherwise homiletic in nature: Amalarius' \textit{Forma institutionis canonicorum}, the pseudo-Augustinian \textit{Regula monastica} and an \textit{Ordo Romanus}.\textsuperscript{13} Hauréau lists the \textit{incipit} of LXIX as the beginning of a homily on fol. 46 of Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS 5558, a fourteenth-century manuscript containing a \textit{Gospel of Nicodemus}, poems on the Virgin Mary, confessional formulas, and two sets of anonymous sermons.\textsuperscript{14}

The other OE version for which a Latin source has been found is that of HomMurfin. Here a pseudo-Isidore Sermon provides the basic text for part of the homily, though it must be at some remove from the exemplar used by the author of HomMurfin, as the Latin which is sometimes quoted in the OE text differs substantially from that printed by Migne.\textsuperscript{15} The sole witness to this text would

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12}The homily is printed as an appendix in Batiouchkof's study (576-78).
\item \textsuperscript{13}José Ruysschaert, \textit{Les Manuscrits de l'abbaye de Nonantola}, Studi et Testi 182 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1955), 55.
\item \textsuperscript{15}PL 83.1223-1225. Cf. Murfin, 2. A shorter version of this homily is another of the \textit{Sermones ad fratres in eremo} LXVIII, which however does not include the souls' speeches. Another version, in a fourteenth-century Spanish manuscript, Escorial T.I.12. (fol. 208\textsuperscript{r}), according to the \textit{explicit}, concludes right after the speech of the good soul; unless, of course, this homily reverses the order of the speeches. The manuscript contains homilies by Bede,
\end{itemize}
appear to be a ninth-century manuscript—Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 17059—which is a collection of mostly Augustinian sermons; the homily is there attributed to Isidore.¹⁶

The textual history of these anonymous homilies must remain at present impenetrable; we simply do not know where they came from or what purpose they may have served when they were originally authored. Since so much sermon material from the early medieval period remains uncatalogued, one can only state tentatively that as far as we know these two sermons did not enjoy a wide circulation before the tenth century. How and when they came into the hands of our Anglo-Saxon homilists remains a mystery for the time being.

A more general observation concerning the relation of the Latin and Old English sermons can be made, however. In the two related homilies Ad fratres LXIX and Batiouchkov’s “Nonantola” version, the treatment of the Macarius legend takes up almost the entire homily, with very little prefatory and concluding matter added. In the OE adaptations (HomNapier XXIX, HomSauer) the vision has become more of what one might call an exemplum: it has been greatly shortened and supplemented

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with extensive admonitory passages drawn from other sources, both Latin and vernacular, or possibly original.¹⁷

The case of pseudo-Isidore III, *Ad fratres* LXVIII and HomMurfin is in some ways similar. It seems probable that the Soul and Body material of pseudo-Isidore III was added at some point to a homily which was very much like *Ad fratres* LXVIII (see note 15). The source of HomMurfin was the longer version as represented by pseudo-Isidore III. In this case, the Latin homily provided the Anglo-Saxon homilist with both the prefatory material and Soul’s Address, but additional material was drawn from another pseudo-Augustinian sermon, *Ad fratres* LXVI, to form his conclusion.¹⁸

Therefore, in these two instances in which Latin sources, however imperfect, are known, it can be shown that the Anglo-Saxon homilists’ treatment of the Soul and Body material differs from that found in the Latin compositions. It has become a story used to exemplify and dramatize a point made in the other parts of the homily. This adaptation probably also took place in the OE sermons for which we have no Latin parallels. For example, despite the length of the Soul’s Address in HomScragg

¹⁷HomNapier XXIX, for example, includes a prose adaptation of the OE poem *Judgment Day* II immediately before the Macarius legend. HomSauer has translated a section of Ephraem the Syrian’s *De paenitentia* as its introduction; Charles D. Wright, “The Old English ‘Macarius’ Body and Soul Homily, Vercelli IV, and Ephraem the Syrian’s *De paenitentia*,” (paper presented at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Mich., May 1996).

¹⁸Murfin, 39.
IV, there is a long introduction and an awkward admonitory conclusion which someone found necessary to affix to the end.\(^{19}\)

**The Manucripts**

The absence of early Latin sources makes it all the more remarkable that so much, and such varied Soul and Body material may be found in OE. Including the poems, there are eleven occurrences of the Address found in manuscripts ranging from the late tenth to the late twelfth centuries. An examination of these manuscripts should yield valuable information as to how the homilies which contained the Soul’s Address were perceived by those who selected them, as well as their purpose and status in relation to other kinds of texts, whether Ælfrician, apocryphal, or poetic.

The manuscripts which contain the homilies I will be discussing are listed in the chart below. The sigla are those used by Scragg,\(^{20}\) with the Ælfrician sigla—used by Clemoes, Godden and Pope—provided in parentheses\(^{21}\); the dates are those

\(^{19}\)Scragg, *Verc.*, 88-89. Scragg notes that the ending, the motif of the devil as archer shooting arrows of sins, sits “uncomfortably with what goes before,” and that “the language is noticeably different.”


assigned by Ker.\textsuperscript{22} My designation for the individual homilies forms the third column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Siglum</th>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Homily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S(L)</td>
<td>Cambridge, University Library MS II.1.33 (s. xii\textsuperscript{2})</td>
<td>HomMurfin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K(O)</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 302 (s. xi/xii)</td>
<td>HomAssmann XIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J(N)</td>
<td>London, British Library, Cotton Faustina MS A.ix (s. xii\textsuperscript{1})</td>
<td>HomAssmann XIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(P)</td>
<td>Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius MS 85/86 (s. xi med.)</td>
<td>HomHealey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41 (s. xi\textsuperscript{1})</td>
<td>HomScragg IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f'(P)</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 367 pt. II (s. xii)</td>
<td>HomScragg IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare MS CXVII (s. x\textsuperscript{2})</td>
<td>HomScragg IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O(T)</td>
<td>Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton MS 113 (s. xi 3\textsuperscript{rd} quarter)</td>
<td>HomNapier XXIX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 201 (s. xi med.)</td>
<td>HomSauer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It should be clear, even from this simple list, that the homilies which contain the Soul’s Address to the Body are often found in the same manuscripts which contain \textit{Ælfric} homilies, even though he himself never used this material and rejected the \textit{Visio Pauli}, which has certain similarities to it.\textsuperscript{23} All of the manuscripts


\textsuperscript{23}\textit{CH II, XX.14-16}: “Humeta rædað sume men. ða leasan gesetmysse. ðe hi hatað paulus gesiðhe. nu he sylf sæde. þæt he ða digelan word hyrde. þe nan eorðlic mann sprecan ne mot” (‘How do some men read that false composition which they call the vision of Paul, when he himself said that he heard secret words which no earthly man can speak’). It should
postdate the Benedictine Reform.

There would seem to be a variety of uses represented in these manuscripts. Since all the pieces are non-exegetical, they are not in themselves tied to any particular event in the church year. However, manuscripts K(O) and J(N), two closely related manuscripts containing mostly Ælfrician items, designate the Address homily (HomAssmann XIV) for the fourth and sixth Sundays after Epiphany (or quando volueris) respectively, bearing the heading [Larespère] be urum drihtne.²⁴ Furthermore, even though J(N) has two additional Ælfrician homilies for this season than K(O) and thereby brings the total to seven homilies designated for the Sundays following Epiphany (a number which is never needed), yet the compiler of this collection did not choose to omit any of the anonymous pieces.²⁵

Here an example of modern bias against the anonymous homilies may be observed. In studies of the Ælfrician items it has been noted that K(O) and J(N) are so closely related that it is agreed that they must have a common ancestor. Another manuscript, Cambridge University Library MS ii.4.6 (Pope/Godden M), though not that ancestor, has been identified as also deriving from that line of descent. The

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²⁵There are three anonymous items in this section of J(N), Ker 153 arts. 4, 5, and 6.
question is whether the two Ælfrician items for the Sundays following Epiphany, present in J(N) but not in K(O), were present in their exemplar. If not, J(N) must have added them to the anonymous items; if so, then K(O) must have deliberately omitted them, preferring the anonymous compositions. Although the Ælfrician homilies precede the anonymous homilies in J(N), and the latter follow without a break and are numbered consecutively with the former, Pope believes that the Ælfrician items were an “afterthought,” added because the compiler was “not satisfied with the inherited set for Sundays after Epiphany”; this was done “not because a larger supply was urgently required, but simply on the score of their weight and merit.”\footnote{Pope, introd., 50.} However, even if their incorporation had occurred in a predecessor of J(N), one would still need to explain their independent inclusion in the closely related M; Pope calls this “mere coincidence.”\footnote{Ibid.} But Godden disagrees and believes that the Ælfrician items were part of the collection from the beginning.\footnote{Godden, CH II, introd., lxxxvi-lxxxvii. Godden cites Clemoes as being in agreement with him on this point.} This view turns the tables on the status of the anonymous items, since now it seems that they were added to the already present Ælfrician items in a predecessor in the J(N)/K(O) line. Furthermore, the absence of Ælfric’s two pieces from K(O) indicates that at some point the anonymous texts were actually preferred over these Ælfrician items.
According to Godden, the anonymous items common to both K(O) and J(N) were most likely added to their predecessor at Rochester or Canterbury; subsequently K(O) omitted eleven of J(N)’s homilies (including the Ælfrician items) but retained the anonymous pieces.²⁹ The homily containing the Soul’s Address is one of these favoured anonymous texts.

The homily which is the source of the Address in the two homilies just mentioned is found in an earlier manuscript, C(f⁹), from the mid-eleventh century. Although the collection as it now stands contains one Ælfrician homily, palaeographical evidence indicates that it was added at a later date.³⁰ The collection, now imperfect at the beginning, began with the Soul and Body homily (HomHealey), which interestingly was augmented with a version of the Visio Pauli. Both the scribe of the Visio and the scribe of the homily into which it was inserted made textual connections between the two texts once the Visio had been added.³¹ Furthermore, the collection contains not only these two related texts, but other similar material such as a homily containing the “Three Utterances of the Soul,” and a vita of St. Martin which, as Healey points out, features a death-bed scene in which there is a struggle

²⁹Godden, CH II, introd., 1-11.
for the saint’s soul. Healey notes the compiler’s predilection for “vigorous scenes which dramatize the fates of souls.” The manuscript has been associated with a south-eastern scriptorium, possibly that of St. Augustine’s, Canterbury, which coincides with the later appearance of a modified version of this Address in J(N)/K(O), whose predecessor, as noted above, was augmented with its anonymous items in that area.

The remaining manuscripts reveal a variety of attitudes towards these homilies. O(T), also known as “St. Wulfstan’s homiliary,” is a collection of homilies produced in Worcester in three parts: the first is an assortment of homilies, most by Wulfstan but some anonymous; part two is a liturgically arranged homiliary for fixed festivals other than Saint’s Days; and the third part covers the Saint’s Days. The Soul and Body homily (HomNapier XXIX) is one of only three anonymous items in the first section and bears some traces of a “Wulfstan-like” reworking (see discussion below). It seems at least possible that the compiler thought that the author of this homily was Wulfstan, since this portion of the codex contains nearly all of the authentic homilies of Wulfstan and several more composed partly of Wulfstan

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32Ibid., 15.

33Ibid.


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The placement of HomSauer in R is inexplicable. The homily is found, by itself, between the Latin and OE versions of the *Capitula Theodulfi*. Perhaps it was meant to be copied into another codex. Another explanation may be that the scribe was not compiling a homiliary at the time he ran across this homily and simply recorded it wherever he had some free space.  

The earliest manuscript, A, is the well-known Vercelli-Book which contains twenty-three homilies and six items of poetry, including the longer poetic version of the Soul's Address. The arrangement is not according to the church year, but rather the collection appears to have an ascetic and eschatological focus, presumably reflecting the compiler's tastes and private reading habits. The homily containing the Soul’s Address (HomScragg IV) occupies the fourth position in this collection, the penchant for eschatology and the dramatic in the rest of the book being enough to explain its presence. There is no rubric which might give us some clue as to its position in the exemplar from which it was copied, unless that fact itself is an indication that it was not designated for a specific Sunday.

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37Its companion volumes CCCC MSS 191 and 196 contain no homiletic material.

38Scragg believes that the compiler had “no overall design for his book”; *Verc.*, introd., xx.
Another copy of HomScragg IV is found in a very late manuscript, f² (s. xii), where it possibly had a place in a liturgically-arranged collection of which now only fragments survive. Only one folio of the Address is extant, and the beginning is missing. The other items in this homiliary were mainly by Ælfric.³⁹

S(L) is a *passionale* comprised of texts derived mostly from Ælfric’s two *Catholic Homilies* series and his *Lives of Saints*. But following these, the compiler added a few miscellaneous texts: the Soul and Body homily (HomMurfin), a translation of Alcuin’s *De virtutibus et vitiiis*, an anonymous homily compiled from the Canons of Edgar, Ælfric’s version of the vision of Drihthelm and the poem *Instructions for Christians*. The section has been called a “moralizing and admonitory appendix” by Pope, probably an apt description of the compiler’s purpose in selecting these texts.⁴⁰

An even more heterogeneous assortment of texts is found in D. Here, in the margins of a copy of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History*, are collected, apparently by one scribe, a varied selection of items including liturgical pieces, a section of a martyrology, charms (both Latin and OE), a fragment of the Solomon and Saturn dialogue, several homilies based on apocrypha, an exegetical homily, and a homily containing the Soul’s Address to the Body (HomScragg IV).

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⁴⁰Pope, introd., 38.
From these descriptions it can be seen that the manuscript contexts varied from placement in a liturgical sequence to an addition in seemingly idiosyncratic compilations. This observation suggests that these homilies were popular, since they were not copied mechanically as part of a set collection, and it may also indicate that they were often viewed as complementary texts outside of the regular preaching cycle.

An interesting pattern may be observed if the manuscript dates are examined. Those which assign the Address-homily a place in the church year are from the twelfth century (K[O], J[N], F), while the other collections are earlier in date.41 Manuscript O(T) from the third quarter of the eleventh century may already show the beginning of this process in its incorporation of the Soul and Body homily into a Wulfstan collection, which, though not liturgically arranged, seems not to be a supplementary part of the codex, either. Does this indicate an increasing acceptance and use of the homilies containing the Soul’s Address to the Body? Certainly, if Ælfric or his fellow-reformers found this material problematic, their attitude had little long-term effect on its distribution and integration with Ælfrician homilies.

Another variable of its status could be the nature of the individual versions. The J(N)/K(O) version, HomAssmann XIV, features a relatively short, less dramatic Address of the soul. It has been greatly reduced from its source, a version of

41An exception is S(L) from the second half of the twelfth century.
HomHealey which has a rather less canonical place in a collection containing the
Visio Pauli and various charms. However, the fully dramatized Address represented
by HomScragg IV, though placed with apocryphal works in D (Apocalypse of
Thomas, Gospel of Nicodemus, charms), has also by the twelfth century made its way
into the liturgically arranged collection f. The “Macarius” version in O(T) and R
seems to have gained approval by the end of the eleventh century as a homily
associated with Wulfstan’s circle, though some aspects may seem offensive to
modern sensibilities.42

Whatever was the deciding factor, it seems clear that the Soul’s Address
experienced not a decline but an increase in popularity. In collating the various
homilies one is struck by the fact that four completely independent versions—five if
we count the homiletic version which was undoubtedly the source of the poem—had
attracted the attention of the Anglo-Saxon homilists and were circulated
enthusiastically, three of them appearing in more than one manuscript copy. This not
only indicates that the material was acceptable, but that it was regarded as useful and
attractive in some way. Despite its anonymous status in the homiletic literature, it
continued to be preserved, adapted and preached whenever needed.

42This is the homily in which devils pierce the sinful person in eyes, mouth and heart,
then carry the soul off and shove it into a dragon’s mouth which then regurgitates it onto the
fires of hell.
Analogues

If a study of the Soul and Body homilies in their manuscript contexts reveals the Address’ continued popularity and usefulness, then an examination of some of its literary analogues may uncover how such strikingly dramatic and, by modern estimations, heterodox material could have gained acceptance, especially following the Benedictine Reform. Using the term “analogue” loosely to refer to texts or features which in some way bear a resemblance to the Soul’s Address, I will attempt to sketch a portrait of the metaphors and images which may have been familiar to the audience of these homilies.

The Soul’s Address, whether it is specifically introduced as such or not, belongs to the vision genre. In it the audience is called upon to witness extraordinary events which are not normally perceptible to human beings. When the setting is Judgment Day (HomScragg IV, HomAssmann XIV), it becomes prophetic, resembling the biblical Apocalypse. When it takes place at death (HomNapier XXIX, HomSauer) or during the interval between death and judgment (HomMurfin, HomHealey), it becomes a vision of the spiritual world, events believed to be taking place daily and yet imperceptible to ordinary people.

Several visions of the afterlife, though by no means on the scale of Dante’s Comedia, are known to have been current during the Anglo-Saxon period. In The

\begin{footnote} {Cf. Arnold Barel van Os, Religious Visions: The Development of the Eschatological Elements in Mediaeval English Religious Literature (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1932); and}

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Ecclesiastical History of the English People, Bede recounts the visions of two men, Fursey and Drihtelm, who had extraordinary experiences. Fursey was granted a vision of, among other things, a fire which burns away evil desire after death, atoning for past sins. Fursey would not tell the story to anyone but only to "those who questioned him...because they desired to repent." So also the nobleman Drihtelm, reportedly allowed to return from death, tells of four different otherworld places: one where spirits are cast from a blazing fire into the ice-cold of a snowstorm, a chasm of darkness and fire into which spirits are dragged by devils and tormented, a pleasant meadow, and finally a very bright light. The four scenes are explained by his angelic guide as being, respectively, a place of punishment for those who only confessed at death, hell, a place of waiting for the good-but-not-perfect, and heaven. Bede makes it clear that the information conveyed, rather than merely serving to satisfy curiosity, was intended "to arouse the living from spiritual death." We are assured that Drihtelm would not relate his experience to those "who were living a slothful or a careless life, but only to those who were terrified by fear of the torments or delighted


44Historia ecclesiastica III.19, V.12; Colgrave and Mynors, 268-277, 488-499.

45Historia ecclesiastica III.19; ibid., 273.

46Historia ecclesiastica III.19; ibid., 293.

47Historia ecclesiastica V.12; ibid., 489.
with the hope of eternal joys and were ready to make his words a means of spiritual advancement. Drihthelm himself reacts to his vision by distributing his possessions and entering a monastery, a worthy example to those who may hear about his experience.

Another vision reported by Bede, this time that of a wicked man, records that, shortly before his death, he is shown the tiny book of his good deeds by angels and the enormous book of his sins by devils. Based on this incontrovertible evidence the devils pronounce that the man’s soul belongs to them. The scenario is very similar in outline to the “Macarius” version of the Soul’s Address as well as a story found in the Vitae patrum known as “The Two Deaths” (see below), which also relate the departure of a wicked soul and the claim by the devils that it belongs to them.

Bede tells us why this vision was granted to the unrepentant man:

He saw this vision not for his own benefit, because it did not profit him, but for the sake of others; so that they, hearing of his fate, may fear to put off their time of repentance while they still have the opportunity, and not be cut off by sudden death and die impenitent.

Ælfric adds little comment of his own in his translation of the visions of Fursey and Drihthelm, which he offers as a replacement for the unacceptable Visio

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48 Historia ecclesiastica V.12; ibid., 497.
49 Historia ecclesiastica V.13; Ibid., 498-503.
50 Historia ecclesiastica V.13; ibid., 503.
51 CH II, XX and XXI.
Pauli. He is satisfied to end the second homily with a general statement on the efficacy of intercession for the dead. In fact, he seems more interested in this doctrine than in the amendment of life which Bede suggests is the purpose of these stories. In what would seem to be a catena of similar anecdotal material, Ælfric adds to the Drihthelm vision yet another brief vision from Gregory's Dialogues concerning a shoemaker from Rome whose place in heaven is seen, and, as a kind of appendix to the homily, another story by Bede about Imma, a captive whose fetters fell off whenever his brother, thinking he had died, said Mass for him.

Ælfric uses these texts by respected authorities to replace the Visio Pauli, which he rejects on the basis of scripture. But scripture itself offers a parable in which a scene from the afterlife is vividly dramatized: the story of Dives and Lazarus. This narrative contains several elements characteristic of death-bed scenes and afterlife visions: the beggar Lazarus is carried off by angels to the bosom of Abraham; the fates of a good and evil person after death are compared, and a connection between life on earth and the eternal recompense is made. Dives is told that the testimony of someone returned from the dead will be ineffectual, but in its

52Historia ecclesiastica IV.22; Colgrave and Mynors, 400-405.


54Luke 16:25: "Et dixit illi Abraham: fili recordare quia recepisti bona in vita tua et Lazarus similiter mala; nunc autem hic consolatur tu vero cruciaris."

very telling the story contradicts that statement. The Dives and Lazarus parable, in its theme of the reversal of fates after death, is a kind of canonical prototype for the comparison of good and evil souls at the time of death.

Even more than the afterlife, the death-event itself spawned a vast literature through which it was possible to address a variety of topics and concerns: the nature of death as the separation of soul and body, the events immediately following death such as the journey of the soul to its next destination and the guides who lead it there (angels or devils), the possibility of a struggle of demonic and angelic forces over possession of the soul, and, as seen in the Soul’s Address, the emotions of the soul itself during this event. All of these elements, though perhaps foreign to modern interests, were accepted unquestioningly as part of the literary death-bed scenario during the early Middle Ages. The precedent set in the fourth Book of Gregory’s Dialogues meant that the orthodoxy and value of such narratives need not be called into question. Thus Gregory relates the following: the soul of Germanus is carried by angels in a ball of fire to heaven; an abbot’s soul departs in the form of a dove;

56Cf. Philippe Ariès, The Hour of our Death, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Knopf, 1981), 108ff; and see also the curious statement in Jude 9 that the archangel Michael argued with the devil about the body of Moses.


58IV.11; Ibid., 48.
Stephen’s soul is taken by angels, and Chrysaorius sees hideous spirits ready to take him. Gregory often draws attention to the value of these narratives for instruction.

Since, in Christian belief, death and subsequent judgment are a time when all that is as yet unseen will become visible, its importance to Christian instruction was not underestimated.

A saint’s death is an indispensable part of all hagiographical writing, and the scenes often involve angels, apostles, sweet-smelling odours and heavenly music. Narratives of a damned person’s death are much less common, but there was no doubt that the wicked could expect to face the terrifying prospect of having to be transported to hell by black devils. Ælfric tells of a child carelessly brought up who curses God and suffers a terrible death:

Then at last came murderous devils, clearly seen, black in appearance, to that child and he immediately cried out, “My father, my father, these devils are taking me.” And he hid his head in his father’s bosom and

59 IV.20; Ibid., 76.

60 IV.40; Ibid., 142-44.

61 IV.32, 37, 40, 49.

62 The story is taken from Gregory’s Dialogues IV.19.

63 CH II, XIX.206-11.
cursed the Lord and so departed at once with the black devils, condemned to hell.

A similar exemplum which Ælfric uses to expand a homily furnishes a better outcome: a devil appears to a dying boy in the shape of terrible dragon, wanting to take his soul on account of his sins. Monks pray for the boy, put the devil to flight, and the boy recovers, does penance, and sees no dragon when he departs from this life again.\(^{64}\)

If the conservative Ælfric could use this kind of episode instructively, then we should feel less alarm at the scenes presented in the version of the Soul’s Address taking place at death. The presence of taunting devils or rescuing angels who receive the soul according to its merits can hardly have been considered as sensational as it may strike us today. Similarly, the reunification of body and soul at Judgment Day was both familiar and perfectly orthodox subject matter.\(^{65}\) The setting of the Address during an Easter or dominical respite from hell (or heaven), however, brought about under influence of the *Visio Pauli*,\(^{66}\) depicts a less common, apocryphal scene. It may be significant that only the OE poem and two of the homilies, HomMurfin and HomHealey, make use of this framework. A third (HomAssmann XIV), though

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\(^{64}\)ÆSupp. XI.168-76.

\(^{65}\)Cf. Ælfric’s sermon, *Sermo ad populum in octauis pentecosten dicendus* (ÆSupp. XI).

based on HomHealey, deliberately moves the setting to Judgment Day, and another, though mentioning the respite, relates a version which takes place at death (HomSauer), and we do not find this setting in the Soul and Body material of later centuries. From this evidence one senses a tendency to avoid this setting, perhaps based on its apocryphal associations.

This leaves us with the most peculiar aspect of the Soul’s Address, namely the notion that the soul can give expression to its thought when separated from the body. This is clearly an additional leap of the imagination, and it is precisely the fictional status of the Address which is at issue here. Did the homilist expect his audience to accept the speech as literally true, or not? The question, posed in this way, may not be answerable, but it is possible, again considering some related texts, to discover a pattern in the use of monologues in parenetic contexts.

One example of such a monologue is the warning uttered from the tomb by the dry bones of a departed person, a feature of three OE homilies: Vercelli XIII, Blickling X, and Belfour XII. As Cross has pointed out, two of the homilists take care to note that this monologue is indeed fictional. The Vercelli homilist introduces the speech with “ðær þæt, la, gewiordan meahte þæt ða drigan ban sprecan

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68 Cross, “Dry Bones,” 437.
meahton” (‘Ah, if it could come about that those dry bones could speak’) and ends it with “ðus cleopedon þa ban to us gif hie sprecan meahton of þære byrgenne” (‘thus those bones would have cried out to us if they had been able to speak from the grave’). Similarly, the author of Belfour XII warns that “þeah þe ða deade ban of þære burignes specon ne magon, þeah we magen us sylfæn bi þam læren” (‘though dead bones are not able to speak from the grave, nevertheless we can teach ourselves by them’). Cross considers these additions to be concessions to a “less sensitive” and “hardheaded” audience, but these statements could just as well be read as attempts to forestall incredulity or perhaps even ridicule of the preacher’s supposed inventiveness.

The Latin source for this motif is ultimately a sermon by Caesarius of Arles, and the contents of each homily as a whole, as well as the monologue by the dry bones shows that the speech, like the Soul’s Address, was intended to focus the audience on the transitoriness of this life and the vanity of its pleasures. In Vercelli XIII, a penitential homily for Rogation Wednesday, the bones reprimand the audience for thinking highly of earthly things: “To hwan, la, ðu earma man and þ[u]

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69 Verc., XIII.21-22, 33-34.
70 Belfour, XII, 124.16-18.
71 Cross, “Dry Bones,” 437.
72 Sermo XXXI.2; Morin, 134-38.
ungesæliga, gymest ðu þysse worulde swa swiðe?” (‘Why, oh you wretched and unfortunate man, did you regard this world so very much?’). They remind the audience that it will ultimately share their fate in the famous dictum: “þæt ðu eart nu, þæt ic wæs io; þæt ic eom nu, þæt ðu wiorðest eft” (‘What you are now, that I once was; what I am now, that you will later become’). And finally the bones express the hope that their message will be a catalyst for change: “Geseoh ðu me in dust formolsnodne, and þurh þæt forlæt ðu þinne þone yfelan lust” (‘Look at me, decayed to dust, and because of that leave your evil lust’). The monologue in Belfour XII is very similar, though it has been chosen, not as the closing thrust of the sermon as in Vercelli XIII, but as an introductory attention-getter to a sermon on Doomsday and the transitoriness of life. Curiously, both homilies are designated for Rogation Wednesday.

The Blickling version of the dry bones’ speech is the most elaborate, set in an extended narrative of a rich man who dies and is mourned by a kinsman who, in his grief, visits the dead man’s grave. Much more emphasis is placed on the change in

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75 Verc., XIII.31-32.

76 Rogationtide texts are especially attentive to Doomsday themes and the “care of the soul”; J. Bazire and J.E. Cross, eds., Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies, Toronto Old English Series 7 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto, 1982), introd., xxiv.
the body, once beautiful and rich, but now mere dust and the leavings of the worm (\textit{wyrmes lafe}). The visitor takes this lesson to heart; he turns to spiritual virtues and also achieves the salvation of his kinsman's soul from punishments.

Another peculiar homiletic monologue is spoken by the sins of a corrupt man.\textsuperscript{77} It is set in the context of a warning against taking on penance for others when one is not able to take care of one's own sins.\textsuperscript{78} The setting in this homily, edited by Napier as his XLVI, is Judgment Day, and the scene preceding this speech is the weighing of the soul of the person against his sins.\textsuperscript{79} If the sins weigh in heavier than the soul, then the person is damned, and we are told that the sins will run after the

\textsuperscript{77}See also a letter of Boniface (Wynfrith) to Eadburga recounting a vision by an unnamed man in which both his vices and virtues speak. The letter was translated into OE and is edited by Kenneth Sisam in "An Old English Translation of a Letter from Wynfrith to Eadburga," \textit{Studies in the History of Old English Literature} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 212-224. In another part of the vision the departed soul of one man accuses his brother for not fulfilling a request: "\textit{ða wæs his sawul on þære hextan sworetunge, <and wæ> s wregende hire þone ungetriowan broðer, and hio hefiglice hine <prea>de}" (ll. 191-93).

\textsuperscript{78}"Donne ne beo nan man oðres mannes ōlmesan to geornfull, butan he wite, þæt he mæge ægðer gebetan ge his agene synne ge eac oðres mannes, forþan þe ælc man hæfð on his agenre byrdene genoh" ('One should not be too eager for the alms of another man, unless one knows that one is able to do penance for both one's own and the other man's sins, since each man has enough in his own burden'); Napier, XLVI, 239.21-25.

\textsuperscript{79}Napier, XLVI, 239.25-240.6. The complete homily is found in two manuscripts, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 419 (s. xi\textsuperscript{1}) and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343 (s. xii\textsuperscript{2}); the former is composed of mainly anonymous homilies, though its companion volume (CCCC MS 421), contains Ælfrician pieces; the latter is a large collection which includes anonymous as well as Ælfrician and Wulfstan items. The portion of the homily under discussion also appears as an interpolation in the "Institutes of Polity" in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Junius 121(s. xi, 3\textsuperscript{rd} quarter), a manuscript compiled in Worcester, as companion volume to Hatton MS 113, which has a Soul and Body homily; cf. Jost, \textit{Institutes of Polity}, 14.
soul and accuse it in the following way:

Hwi noldest ðu, earme, betan ure synna, þæ þu hy onsfenge þurh ure ælmesan? Hwy noldest ðu, forwyrhte, biddan þe arfulte þingeras wið þone elmihtigan þrym þære halgan þynnesse and æt þære soðan annesse?\(^{80}\)

Why, wretch, would you not do penance for our sins, when you accepted them through our alms? Why, evil-doer, would you not ask for honorable intercessors with the almighty majesty of the holy Trinity and that true oneness?

Jost points out that ælmesse is here a euphemism for the payment given to another to do penance on one’s behalf.\(^{81}\) The sins accuse the soul of pocketing the money without performing the promised penance. The monologue is so clearly fictional that there is no need to clarify this point for the audience. The improbable situation which it presents is ignored, namely that the personified sins assume the moral high ground and state that the soul promised them prayers and fasting but betrayed them. It is clear that the speech was a useful rhetorical device for a direct attack on those who take money for penance which they either were not able or never intended to perform.

As in the Soul’s Address, the speakers take the part of the injured party, and the speech is very personal and specific in its accusations:

We wendon, þæt þu wære godfyrht and hæfdest gastlice gebæru beforan us, ac ðu hæfdest deofles geþanc æt þinne heortan, and þu wære

\(^{80}\)Napier, XLVI, 240.7-11.

\(^{81}\)Karl Jost, Wulfstanstudien, Schweizer anglistische Arbeiten 23 (Bern: A. Francke, 1950), 238.
an licetere, and þe þuhte æfre to lytel ure ælmesse.\textsuperscript{82}

We thought that you were God-fearing and you had a spiritual demeanor in our presence, but you had the devil's thought in your heart, and you were a hypocrite, and always thought our alms too little.

Despite its logical absurdity, the speech offers a vivid dramatization of the dangers of vicarious penance.

The author of this monologue may have been familiar with the Soul's Address. In addition to the similarity in tone and format, there is the comment "þonne farað hy butu forwyrd" ('then they both will undergo destruction') which seems odd applied to the soul and its sins, but is a common statement concerning the soul and body.\textsuperscript{83} For example, in HomHealey the soul exclaims that "wit ðonne butu sculon beon birnende in ðæm ecan fyre" ('we two must then burn in that eternal fire')\textsuperscript{84} and similarly in \textit{Soul and Body} I (ll. 101-2): "sculon wit þonne eft ætsomne siððan brucan / swylcra yrmða, swa ðu unc her ær scrife!" ('the two of us must then afterwards together partake of such miseries as you here ordained for the two of us before').\textsuperscript{85}

If an audience could be expected to exercise its imagination enough to accept speeches from dry bones and sins, then this must affect our evaluation of how the

\textsuperscript{82}Napier, XLVI, 240.26-241.3.

\textsuperscript{83}Napier, XLVI, 240.5-6.

\textsuperscript{84}Healey, "Junius 85," 324.

\textsuperscript{85}Cf. HomScragg IV: "Gang þu, sawl, in þæt forlorene hus. Ða gyþ ætsomne syngodon, gyþ eac ætsomne swelten"; \textit{Verc.}, IV.303-304.
Soul’s Address was perceived. Furthermore, there are two additional examples of a speaking soul which point to a wider tolerance for this rhetorical device. A similar monologue of the soul is central to Vercelli XXII which is an adaptation from Isidore’s *Synonyma*. The OE homily transforms part of a dialogue between man and reason in Isidore into a monologue by the soul. The soul bemoans its wickedness in life and its present torment and even resorts to an appeal to the devils which torture it, an element not found in the source. At one point, again an addition in the OE, the soul refers to its body and here, as in the Soul’s Address, it briefly accuses it:

Wa la þæt ic swa lange on minum lichaman eardigan sceolde, þa he me reste geearnigan ne wolde!\(^{87}\)

Woe, that I had to dwell so long in my body, when he did not want to earn rest for me!

Perhaps the author of this homily is supplementing his source from another speech of the soul, which he remembers due to its carefully balanced, rhyming clauses. The introduction of the taunting devils and accusation of the body may very well be due to the influence of Soul and Body homilies on this homilist, an understandable association since the decay of the body, the torment of the soul and the transitoriness of life are all common topics in these texts.

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\(^{86}\)Cf. PL 83.827ff.

The exemplum which comes closest to the “Macarius” version of the Soul’s Address is the so-called “The Three Utterances of the Soul,” although it is more properly termed a dialogue since angels or devils reply to the soul. This narrative is ultimately based on an account in the *Vita patrum*, which, however, does not itself contain the utterances of the soul. It consists of the appearance of two hosts, one angelic and the other demonic, who contend for the souls first of a wicked and then good man at the time of death. In the case of the former, the devils enumerate the man’s sins and bear his soul to hell. The good soul is led out by angels, and the archangel Michael leads it to the throne of God. The utterances which the souls make as they leave their bodies are the following:

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88 This homily was popular and the Latin version is extant in nearly thirty manuscripts; Mary F. Wack and Charles D. Wright, “A New Latin Source for the Old English ‘Three Utterances’ Exemplum,” *ASE* 20 (1991): 188. Cf. Rudolph Willard, *Two Apocrypha in Old English Homilies* (1935; reprint, New York: Johnson, 1967), 31-149; and “The Latin Texts of ‘The Three Utterances of the Soul,’” *Speculum* 12 (1937): 147-166. All OE homilies which have the “Three Utterances” are found, curiously, in manuscripts which also have a version of the Soul’s Address: MSS O(T), K(O), J(N) and C(P). In two collections it immediately precedes the Soul and Body homilies in the sequence for the Sundays following Epiphany. Willard does not mention Ælfric’s translation of the *Vita patrum* exemplum in Cotton Vitellius C.v., fols. 176v-7v.

89 PL 73.1011-1012. Ælfric’s treatment is a translation of this version and therefore contains no comments by the soul; *ÆSupp.*, XXVII.15-82. An Irish version which does incorporate the utterances has been printed by Carl Marstrander, “The Two Deaths,” *Ériu* 5 (1911): 120-125.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evil Soul</th>
<th>Good Soul</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís is mycel nearones!</td>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís is mycel leoht and ðís syndon fægere geferan!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís syndon mycel þeostru!</td>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís is mycel bliss!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís is grimlic siðfæt þe we on syndon!</td>
<td>Eala, hwæt! Þís is swete siðfæt on to farenne and swyðe wynsum!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, this is a great oppression!</td>
<td>Oh, this is a great light and these are fair companions!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, this is a great darkness!</td>
<td>Oh, this is great joy!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh! This is a terrible journey that we are on!</td>
<td>Oh, this is a pleasant and very delightful journey on which to travel!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are rather formulaic suggestions of the soul’s state of mind and do not compare in dramatic force to the Soul’s Address. The soul’s statements focus on terror or bliss and do not address the body⁹¹; therefore they are also in themselves unable to contain the element of exhortation found in the Address. The vision is, however, very much like the “Macarius” version of the Soul’s Address. In both (HomNapier XXIX, HomSauer), the setting is the time of the death and there are taunting devils present. The evil and good souls’ fates are carefully balanced against each other. There may even be an allusion to the “Three Utterances” in the Soul’s Address when the devils jeer that perhaps the wicked soul expects Michael to come to its aid.

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⁹⁰Bazire and Cross, IX.28, 32,35-36, 70-71, 74-75, 79.

⁹¹The Irish adaptation does state that the evil soul curses its body following its three laments; Marstrander, 123.
Although we cannot now know for certain how well Anglo-Saxon audiences understood the rhetorical devices which came from the pulpit, these analogous texts show that the Soul's Address was not alone in its use of a fictitious monologue and depictions of the moment of death. Most of its elements were familiar and orthodox.

**Body and Soul Theology**

Reading the Soul’s Address in the context of other, similar monologues provides the perspective needed to appreciate its place in the parenetic literature of its time. Employing fictional direct speech was clearly neither unusual, nor was it cause to label the work heterodox. We have heard dry bones address the living, sins address the soul, and the soul cry out to devils. Each of these speeches has, as I have tried to show, its purposes as a didactic tool, its dramatic potential exploited in the service of teaching and exhortation.

Scholars studying these monologues have shown almost no concern with the theological implications of the foregoing addresses primarily because they are so obviously fictional that it would be ludicrous to do so. Not so with the Soul’s Address to the Body; although the homilies have been, for the most part, spared this kind of scrutiny, the poem’s theological position has received quite a bit of attention. By implication, then, it becomes necessary to examine this aspect of the Soul’s Address in order to determine its canonicity during the Anglo-Saxon period and later.
Are we dealing with heterodox material whose doctrines are "out of line with the best opinions" and whose view of the body "trembles on the edge of heresy"? Does its popularity imply theological naiveté, unconcern, or worse, a subversive sectarianism during this period?

To the modern mind, a soul speaking to its body, berating it or praising it for how it lived its life on earth, immediately raises certain questions. What, for example, did the writer assume the precise relationship of soul and body during life to be? If the soul animates and supposedly controls the body, how can it accuse its body of acting against its own wishes? If the soul is not responsible, why is it, too, subject to eternal punishment? Is the soul wholly good and the body evil?

These questions have been variously answered in discussions concerning Soul and Body I and II. Benjamin Kurtz accused the poem of revealing a definite hatred for the body and would seem to see a dualism similar to that found in Catharism. Cyril Smetana sought to vindicate the poem from these accusations by pointing out that the famous Gifer passage which focuses with gruesome detail on the horrors of the grave is merely an "ill-advised and amateurish realism," a "lapse of taste."

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93Kurtz, 259-61.

Smetana draws attention to the orthodox teachings on the soul found in the poem.\textsuperscript{95} Allen Frantzen has furthered the discussion by noting that the evil and good souls' insistence that it was the body which earned them their respective states is fully in keeping with the notion in penitential practice that both the offense and the penance for that offence are done by means of the body.\textsuperscript{96} Associating these homilies and poems with penitential practice undoubtedly brings us closer to the religious context of this material, but it does not entirely resolve the question of whether it is the body or the soul that is responsible for evil deeds in the first place. In fact, the penitential scheme seems to assign all responsibility to the body, leaving the soul without a function, or at least, as Frantzen says, that function remains unexpressed.\textsuperscript{97}

In order to answer some of these questions it will be necessary to take a brief look at the early medieval conception of soul and body.\textsuperscript{98} Already in the New Testament we find statements which involve complex and potentially misleading

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{95}Ibid., 201.
\item \textsuperscript{96}Frantzen, 79ff.
\item \textsuperscript{97}Ibid., 81.
\end{itemize}
metaphors. For instance, in the book of Romans St. Paul says\textsuperscript{99}:

Scio enim quia non habitat in me hoc est in carne mea bonum. Nam velle adiacet mihi perficere autem bonum non invenio.... Condelector enim legi Dei secundum interiorem hominem; video autem aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae et captivantem me in lege peccati quae est in membris meis. Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius.\textsuperscript{100}

For I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is to say, in my flesh, that which is good. For to will, is present with me: but to accomplish that which is good, I find not.... For I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man: But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Paul is using the opposition of flesh and spirit metaphorically to depict the inner struggle between the good and evil impulses within the human being. However, saying that the law of sin dwells in one’s members and calling the body the “body of this death” was no doubt an invitation for later, more literal associations between the body and evil or sin.

A similar passage in Galatians 5:16-19 provides the much-repeated metaphor of warring factions:

Dico autem spiritu ambulate et desiderium carnis non perficietis. Caro


\textsuperscript{100}Romans 7:18, 22-24.
enim concupiscit adversus spiritum; spiritus autem adversus carmem;
haec enim invicem adversantur ut non quaecumque vultis illa faciatis.
Quod si spiritu ducimini non estis sub lege. Manifesta autem sunt opera
carnis quae sunt fornicatio, inmunditia...

I say then, walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the
flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and the spirit against the
flesh: for these are contrary one to another: so that you do not the things
that you would. But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the
law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication,
uncleanness...

The adversarial relationship of caro and spiritus is plainly delineated here in terms
which promote a kind of personification of the two entities as two enemies.

Furthermore, the body clearly takes the part of the corrupting principle. Whatever
Paul intended, it is easy to see how medieval theologians could exploit what was
originally only figurative to explain the literal relationship between body and soul.

Metaphorical uses of the soul and body dichotomy existed side by side with
statements which explicitly deny any dualist tendencies identifying the body with evil.

Augustine, for example, is quite clear when he states:

Nec caro corruptibilis animam peccatricem, sed anima peccatrix fecit
esse corruptibilem carmem.101

Nor did the corruptible flesh make the soul sinful, but the sinful soul
made the flesh corruptible.

And Ambrose also denies the culpability of the body:

Quid carnem quasi infirmam accusamus? Membra nostra arma sunt

101 *De civitate Dei*, XIV.3; B. Dombart and A. Kalb, eds., CCSL 48 (Turnhout:
Brepols, 1955), 417.
iniustitiae et arma iustitiae.\textsuperscript{102}

Why do we accuse the flesh as though it were weak? Our members are weapons of injustice and weapons of justice.

But it was all too easy to muddy the waters with statements such as this one by Augustine:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Tunc ergo coepit caro concupiscere aduersus spiritum, cum qua controversia nati sumus, trahentes originem mortis et in membris nostris uitiataque natura contentionem eius siue victoriam de prima praevacicatione gestantes.}\textsuperscript{103}
\end{quote}

Then, therefore, the flesh began to lust against the spirit; when we are born by this conflict, we take on the origin of death and, on account of the first sin, we bear in our members and in our corrupted nature its struggle or victory.

If there is a tension here between doctrinal statement and metaphorical expression, it was not perceived as a contradiction; rather it seems that both had their applications. Depicting soul and body as representing moral choice or conflicting desires was a dramatic and effective way of explaining an important aspect of human experience.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, soul and body are similarly represented. In the homiletic literature there is a broad agreement that the soul is a faculty which is

\textsuperscript{102}\textit{De Iacob et beata vita}, I.3,10; Karl Schenkl, ed., CSEL 32, pt. 2 (Wien: F. Tempsky, 1897), 10.

\textsuperscript{103}\textit{De civitate Dei}, XIII.13; Dombart and Kalb, CCSL 48, 395.
granted to every human being by God. Soul and body differ primarily in that the body is mortal and will return to dust, that is, decay, at the time of death and that the soul is immortal and lives on after death. There is also a notion of the resurrected body at Judgment Day; a body that will be immortal—whether it is destined for eternal punishment or bliss.

It is when we turn to the relationship of soul and body, however, that we find both the metaphorical and the literal senses employed even though they are sometimes contradictory. Generally, the soul is seen as the animation of the body, the entity that exercises volition. Ælfric says that the soul guides the body, and, following Augustine, calls the soul the mistress of the body, which is her servant. The soul governs the five senses and the limbs and is enclosed (befangen) by the body. But, the body is also said to war against the soul and, if the soul permits, it is 

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104CH I, I.174-76; CH I, XX.265-66; Verc. XXII.135-37; and homily I.85-86 of Ælfric’s Lives of Saints, EETS, o.s., 76, 82, 94, 114, ed. Walter Skeat (1881-1900; reprint, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966); hereafter abbreviate LS.

105CH I, I.115-16; CH I, XIX.101-103; Belfour, IX.16-20 (Ælfric); LS, XII.23-32; Blick V, 57-9; Blick., VIII.99.


107CH I, X.119-28; LS, I.141-46, 171-72; LS, IX.84-85; Verc., IX.64; Blick., II, 21.


able to pollute the soul. How may these two views be reconciled? One way of dealing with the discrepancy is to explain it in terms of a disrupted hierarchy, as in Ælfric’s homily “On Auguries”:

\[
\text{Pæt flæsc soðlice gewinð ongean ðone gast and se gast ongean þæt flæsc. Þæs ðincg soðlice þæt is se lichama and seo sawl winnað him betweonan. Ac seo sawl is þæs flæsces hlæfdige and hire gedafnað þæt heo simle gewylde ða wylne þæt is þæt flæsc to hyre hæsum. Þwyrllice færð at ðam huse þær seo wyln bið þære hlæfdian wissigend and seo hlæfdige bið þære wylne underðeodd, swa bið eac þæs mannæ lif on hinder gefadod gif þæt flæsc þe is brosnigendlic and deadlic sceal gewyldan þone gast ðe is ece and unateorigendlic to his fracob dum lustum ðe hi buta fordoð and to ecum tintregum gebringað.}
\]

The flesh truly strives against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Truly, these things, that is the body and the soul, fight between themselves. But the soul is the flesh’s mistress, and it is right for her that she should always govern the slave woman, that is the flesh, according to her commands. Things are out of order in the house where the slave woman is the governor of the mistress and the mistress is in subjection to the slave woman; so also will the life of a man be arranged backwards, if the flesh which is corruptible and mortal shall compel the spirit, which is eternal and lasting, to submit to its vile desires, which will ruin them both and bring them to eternal torments.

The same idea is also the subject of Riddle 43, whose solution is “soul and body”:

\[
\text{Ic wat indryhtne æbelum deorne}
\text{giest in geardum, þam se grimma ne mæg}
\text{hungor sceðdan ne se hata þurst,}
\text{yldo ne adle. Gif him arlice}
\text{esne þenað, se þe agan sceal}
\]

\[\text{id.}^{110}\ \text{CH I, XIX.209-10. LS, XVII.12-15. Verc., XXII.99-100, 147, 215-16.}\]

\[\text{id.}^{111}\ \text{On Auguries, LS, XVII.6-15. The first two sentences of this passage illustrate the synonymous nature of gast and sawol as well as of flæsc and lichama.}\]

85
on þam siðfate, hy gesunde æt ham
findað witode him wiste ond blisse,
cnosles unrim, care, gif se esne
his hlaforde hyreð yfle,
frean on fore.\textsuperscript{112}

I know a noble guest in the world, excellent in virtues, whom neither bitter hunger nor hot thirst, nor old age nor disease may injure. If his servant, which he must have on that journey, serves him honourably, they, safe at home, will find appointed for them abundance and joy, countless kin, sorrow, if the servant obeys his lord badly on the journey.

Whereas the soul ought to be master (or mistress) and in control of the body, when this hierarchy is inverted and the body is allowed to rule and follow its own desires, then the person sins and endangers his or her eternal destiny. Even so, it is obvious that this metaphor of inverted hierarchy tends to make the body appear to be the primary culprit whereas the soul seems to have no independent desire for evil. Similarly one finds the repeated assertion that the soul or person will be rewarded on the basis of what the body did.\textsuperscript{113} On the other hand, the same is sometimes said of the soul.\textsuperscript{114}

The most frequently used metaphor of the soul/body dichotomy in OE is not one of hierarchy, however. More often body and soul come to stand for two points of view or ways of life. In this scheme, the soul represents the eternal and spiritual. The

\textsuperscript{112}Krapp and Dobbie, \textit{The Exeter Book}, 204.


\textsuperscript{114}\textit{Verc.}, IX.63-65; \textit{Verc.} X.63-64.
Christian is encouraged to “take care of the soul’s need,” which itself can mean different things such as performing penance or “feeding” the soul with the spiritual food of the eucharist or, alternatively, with spiritual learning. Thus Blickling V says:

Swa se lichoma buton mete and drence leofian ne mæg, swa þonne seo saul, gif heo ne bið mid Godes worde feded gastlice hungre and þurste heo bið cwelmed. Forpon mycceb swiðor we sceolan þencan be þæm gastlicum þingum þonne be þæm lichomlicum. Se lichoma on þisse worlde þingum gewiteþ, swa þonne seo saul mid gastlicum þingum on ecnesse leofæ.  

As the body cannot live without food and drink, so then the soul if she is not spiritually fed with God’s word, will be killed with hunger and thirst. Therefore we should think much more about spiritual things than about physical things. The body will pass away with the things of this world, so then the soul will live with spiritual things in eternity.

Likewise Ælfric, in an exposition on the Lord’s Prayer, maintains:

Hraðe se lichama aswint. and forweornað, gif him bið oftogen his bigleofa; Swa eac seo sawul forwyrð, gif heo næfð ðone gastlican bigleofan þæt sind godes beboda. on þam heo sceal geþeon and beon gegodad. eac se gastlica hlaf is þæt halige husel mid þam we getrymmað urne geleafan.

The body quickly becomes weak and withers if its nourishment is withheld from it. So also the soul withers, if it does not have that spiritual nourishment, those are God’s commandments, on which it shall thrive and be enriched. Likewise the spiritual bread is that holy eucharist, with which we strengthen our faith.

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115 Blick, V, 57.
116 Ibid.
117 CH I, XIX.113-17.
It is assumed that human beings are naturally focused on the present, material aspects of life and do not need to be reminded to take care of their physical needs. However, since the spiritual life, and, of course, the future life, remain invisible until death, their reality and the need to tend to one’s spiritual standing is the subject of this homiletic theme.

Some additional examples of this motif will illustrate its broader uses. The homilist of Blickling VIII introduces his Judgment Day and *memento mori* sermon with the following exhortation:

> Ac hwaet is þæt þæm men sy mare þearf to þencenne þonne embe his sauwle þearfe, and hwonne se dæg cume þe he sceole wið þæm lichomon hine gedælon, and hwylce latteowas he hæbbe, and hwýder he gelæded sy, þe to wite, þe to wuldre. Sweotollice we magon ongeotan þæt þa syndon heowcuðe þe we geseon ne magon.\(^{118}\)

But what is more needful for man than to think about his soul’s need; and when that day may come that he must separate himself from the body, and what guides he may have, and where he may be led, whether to punishment or to glory. Clearly we may discover that those things are familiar which we are unable to see.

And the same homilist later cautions against squandering attention on what is mortal:

> Gêpenceah þæt ge gelomlice winnað, and a embe þæt sorgiað þæt we urne lichoman gefyllan and gefrætwiað; þonne gelimpeð þæt eft æfter feawum dagum oþþe feawum gearum, þæt se ilca lichoma byð on byrgenne from wyrnum freten and forglendred. Forþon us is mycclæ mare nedþearf þæt we winnon ymbe ure saule þearfe, seo biþ

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\(^{118}\) *Blick*, VIII, 97.
geondweard on heofnum beforan Gode and his englum.\textsuperscript{119}

Consider that you frequently labour; and we are always anxious to fill and adorn our body; but then it happens that, after a few days or a few years, that the same body will be eaten and devoured by worms in the grave. Therefore we have much more need to labour for the need of our soul, that will be present in the heavens before God and his angels.

In order to encourage the audience to favour the needs of the soul, the homilists had an incontrovertible argument on their side: the body is mortal and undergoes repugnant putrefaction at death\textsuperscript{120}; it is therefore a poor investment of one's energies. By contrast the soul lives on, and, what is more, will suffer either bliss or torment based on the kind of life lived. One can see how this construction lends itself to neat antithetical statements opposing the soul and body as representatives of the eternal and temporal. Moral choice is seen as the nurturing of a "personified" soul or body. Certainly there is tension with a literal application here, too, but it works to the advantage of the homilists. "Starving the body" can refer quite literally to fasting or more generally to any bodily self-denial. Likewise "feeding the soul" can refer to partaking of the Eucharist or any act which is of spiritual benefit. Whether literal or figurative, the opposition is between the mortal/temporal and the spiritual/eternal.

Returning to the homilies which contain the Soul's Address, it will be seen that the motifs which are found in the prefatory and concluding matter which envelop the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[119] \textit{Blick}., VIII, 99.
\item[120] Cf. \textit{Blick}., II, 21; \textit{Blick}., V, 59.
\end{footnotes}
speech are all part of what I will call this “temporal versus eternal” theme.\textsuperscript{121} We find, for instance, several types of antithetical lists which compare this life and the next. One type contrasts the brevity of the pleasures of this life with the eternal torments which may be expected in the next:

Her is seo lænlice winsumnes; ac þær is seo syngale nearones. Her synt þisse weorolde wynlustas; ac þær synt þa ecan tintregu. Her is hlehter; ac þær is se ungeendoda heaf.\textsuperscript{122}

Here is transient rejoicing, but there is constant distress; here are the sensual pleasures of this world, but there are eternal torments; here is laughter, but there is unending lamentation.

This homily (HomSauer) later makes the same point with a comparable list:

Wala, þæt for swa scortum life to swa langum deaðe hi synt læddæ; for swa medmicelre blisse to swa langre unrotnesse; for swa litlum leohfe to swa miclum þystrum; for swa medmiclum gestreone to swa heardum and swa hefigum tyntregum; for swa sceortum hleahter to swa langum and biterum tearum.\textsuperscript{123}

Alas, that for so short a life they are led to so long a death; for such slight joy to such long unhappiness; for so little light to such a great darkness; for such mean treasure to such severe and heavy torments; for such short laughter to such long and bitter tears.

HomMurfin also contains a catalogue very much like this one:

\textsuperscript{121}For a discussion and examples from other OE literature see Christine Fell, “Perceptions of Transience,” (172-189), and Milton McC. Gatch, “Perceptions of Eternity,” (190-205) in The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991).

\textsuperscript{122}Sauer, lines 8-11.

\textsuperscript{123}Sauer, lines 64-69.
...of swa sceortum life þyssere worulde to swa langum deaþe, of swa lyteere frofre to swa langere unrotnysse, of swa sceortum leohte to swa langum þystrum, of swa fægerum gestreone to swa micclum deaþe, of swa litelre hwilefæce to swa langum tintregum butan æclum ende, of swa medmycelre wynsumnesse to swa langum wite and to swa biterum tearum.¹²⁴

...from so short a life of this world to such a long death; from such little joy to such long unhappiness, from such a short light, to such long darkness, from such a little space of time to such long tortments without any end, from such slight pleasantness to so long a punishment and such bitter tears.

A variation of this kind of list in HomScragg IV takes an even more pessimistic view of earthly pleasures:

Her is lytelu unrotnes, ac þær is singalo nearones. Her syndon lytle wynlustas, ac þær syndon þa ecan tintrego þon förworhton. Her bǐð unglædlic hlealter, ac þær is se ungeendoda heaf þa[m] þe her mid unrihte gytsiap.¹²⁵

Here is little unhappiness, but there is constant distress. Here are small sensual pleasures, but there are those eternal tortments for the condemned. Her is cheerless laughter, but there is the unending lamentation for those who here covet unjustly.

In order to remind the audience of the shortness of life and the vanity of earthly possessions and power, the familiar ubi sunt motif is employed in three of the homilies.¹²⁶ The inevitability and unexpectedness of death are underscored in similar

¹²⁴Murfin, lines 59-65.

¹²⁵Verc., IV.24-27.

¹²⁶Two of these are based on Ad fratres in eremo LXVIII; J.E. Cross, “Ubi Sunt Passages in Old English—Sources and Relationships,” Vetenskaps-Societetens i Lund Årsbok (1956): 33.
We should continually long for that eternal life, because in that life there are good days, not many days but one which never ends. Though a person may wish to have good days here in life, he cannot find them here, even though he should be prosperous in the eyes of the world, because he is either sick or full of care, or his friends fall away from him, or his property is lost to him, or some other misfortune befalls him in this life, and in addition to that he constantly fears his death.

Also it is very much unknown to us all, young and old, when the time or that day is to come when the spirit will be led from the body.

Finally, there is a focus on Judgment Day and the dual destinies to be expected then, even in the homilies in which Doomsday is not the setting of the Address. The most extensive presentation is in HomNapier XXIX in which the OE poem Judgment Day II is transformed into prose, followed immediately by the Soul’s Address. HomSauer emphasizes the two different fates on Judgment Day by reminding its

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127 Napier, XXIX, 141.32-142.11.

audience of the two speeches which Christ will direct to blessed and damned souls.  

All of these elements—and many more could be listed—reinforce the basic theme of the “temporal versus eternal.” This is more than simply a call to remember to prepare for death. These elements are designed to convince the audience of the wisdom of this course of action. Earthly joys and pains are not to be compared with those of the afterlife. It would be foolish to choose the inferior pleasures of this life over those in heaven, and similarly unwise to avoid short-lived pain now only to endure unbelievable torment forever.

Given this environment, it should not surprise us to find that the soul’s speech itself is primarily a dramatic rendering of the same “temporal versus eternal” theme. In the form of a monologue the preacher has the opportunity to personalize the concern for the afterlife and to lay plainly before his audience the reasons and methods of focusing on the eternal things which will last.

Drawing upon the imagery mentioned above in which the soul stands for things spiritual and eternal, the Soul’s Address uses the personified souls as a metaphor for a spiritual way of life. Thus the soul of the damned person was not properly taken care of:

For hwan swenctest ðu me, and wlenctest þe in þ[ær]e sceortan tide and forgæte me, and þas langan woruld ne gemundest? ... Ne beþohtest þu no hu ic on ecnesse lifian sceolde. Ac æghwylce ðæge þu murcnodest,

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129Sauer, lines 43-54. Judgment Day is also mentioned in HomScragg IV (Verc., IV.96ff.), HomAssmann XIV (Assmann, XIV.53ff.) and HomMurfin (Murfin, lines 185ff.).
and ðæt wæron þine mæstan sorga, hu þu þine ceolan mid swetmettum afyllan meahetest. and me ðu symle forgete mid eallra godra worca gehwylcum.\textsuperscript{130}

Why did you oppress me and exalt yourself in that brief time, and forget me, and were not mindful of that lasting world? ... You did not consider at all how I had to live in eternity. But every day you complained, and those were your greatest cares-- how you might fill your throat with sweetmeats. And you always forgot me and all good works.

The soul complains that for every fulfillment of bodily pleasure, it suffered a corresponding deprivation, as in the following example.

Þonne ðu wære glæd and reod and godes hiwes, þone wæs ic blac and swýðe unrot; þone þu smercodest and hloge, þonne weop ic biterlice.\textsuperscript{131}

When you were happy and ruddy and of good appearance, then I was pale and very dejected; when you smiled and laughed, then I wept bitterly.

A corresponding affliction in the next life is presented in HomScragg IV, though here the soul is directing its complaints to Death:

Ða he fedde his lichoman orenlicost mid smeamettum, ða geearnode he me þæs ecan hungres. ða he swiðost his lichoman drencte unrihttidum, ða earnode he me þæs ecan þurstes. ða he his lichoman in idelnesse glengde mid hrægle, ða earnode he me þære ecan næcede.\textsuperscript{132}

When he fed his body most excessively with delicacies, then he earned for me that eternal hunger. When he made his body exceedingly drunk on improper occasions, then he earned for me eternal thirst. When he in vanity adorned his body with clothing, then he earned for me eternal

\textsuperscript{130} Verc., IV.205-13.

\textsuperscript{131} Napier, XXIX, 140.26-29.

\textsuperscript{132} Verc., IV.254-58.
nakedness.

Such antithetical lists parallel those already cited from the material which introduces the Soul’s Address. They contrast this life and the next by focusing on the attentions paid to either soul or body and their results. The message, because of its placement in a dramatic monologue, gains in emotional force and personal applicability for the accusations are pronounced in direct speech and oriented towards the listening audience. In a performance the Address would sound, not so much like a debate of relative responsibility, but like two kinds of persons presenting how a focus on either soul or body affected their eternal destiny.

Since the speech always takes place after death and in the presence of a decaying body, it does not hesitate to draw attention to this unsavory but inescapable object-lesson of human transience:

La, ðu eorðan lamb [sic] and dust and wyrma gifel, and þu wambscyldiga fætels and gælstor and fulnes and hraw, hwig forgeate ðu me and þa toweardan tide?\(^{133}\)

Lo, you clay of the earth and dust and food of worms and you gluttonous sack and pus and foulness and carrion, why did you forget me and the future time?

Like the speech of the dry bones, it is calculated to reset priorities by inducing, not a disgust for the body per se, but for its mortality and eventual state after death. The care lavished on such a perishable entity is so much effort wasted, whereas caring for

\(^{133}\)Verca., IV.207-209.
the needs of the soul results in eternal reward.

The way the antithetical statements are set up encourages the audience to make its own informed decision about the most worthwhile way to live one’s life. Soul and body are not meant to be read as the literal two parts of the human being, but as two choices, two points of view, two ways of living open to the individual. If the person caters to the body and pleases the body, he or she is short-sighted because the body is destined for the grave—its beauty is fleeting and ends in decay. Furthermore, caring for the body, since obviously not all sins have physical origins, must stand for a love of all that is earthly and transient.

By contrast, if the individual attends to the needs of the soul, he or she earns the lasting pleasures of heaven. A solicitous concern for the soul is really a concern for the spiritual, the eternal, for God. Soul and body are like two people competing for one’s attention, the one cared for, the other forgotten, the one fed, the other starved. Perhaps it was this fact that resulted in the tendency to drop the blessed soul’s speech entirely. The damned soul alone could present the desired contrast, and the comparison of the good and wicked souls became redundant.134

Because these two oppositions are personified so vividly in the Soul’s Address, some critics have been misled into thinking that we are examining the

134 In HomScragg IV, the damned Soul’s Address is almost exactly twice as long as that of the blessed soul, and in HomSauer and HomNapier XXIX the latter is omitted entirely. The speech of the blessed soul is generally considered to be a later addition in the poem Soul and Body I; it is lacking in Soul and Body II.
relative responsibility of the two entities. However, most of the homilists avoid dualist tendencies by stressing unambiguously that soul and body, even if temporarily separated, are inexorably tied together in a single individual and will suffer a common fate. Though at times the rhetorical stance of the evil soul which tries to distance itself from its body is quite convincing, it is not to be taken as the definitive last word. This is most clearly seen in HomScragg IV in which, after a lengthy attempt by the wicked soul to exonerate itself from the deeds of its body, Christ and the devil agree in blaming them both. The devil uses the plural when he says: “Fram hiora geogoðe oð hira yldo hie hyrdon me” (‘From their youth until their old age they obeyed me’).\(^{135}\) And Christ likewise uses the OE dual when he says: “Da gyt ætsomne syngodon, gyt eac ætsomne swelten” (‘Since you two sinned together, you two should also perish together’).\(^{136}\)

The Soul’s Address is not primarily about the relationship between the soul and the body and which of the two bears responsibility for doing good or evil as this view ignores the more important antithesis so carefully set up and reiterated by the homilists. The didactic purpose of the Address could not be achieved if, in the final analysis, responsibility for sin and motivation for amendment of life could not be located in the individual members of the congregation.

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\(^{135}\) Verc., IV.296.

\(^{136}\) Verc., IV.304
Drama and Rhetoric

If the object of the Soul’s Address was to turn its audience from a preoccupation with the temporal to a true concern for the eternal, then it was uniquely suited to render dramatically the difference between the two points of view as well as to picture the invisible afterlife in a comprehensible framework. In order to generate the desired emotional responses, the setting had to be vivid and the character and experiences of the speaker engagingly portrayed. The following will demonstrate how all of the versions of the Soul’s Address provide both speaker and audience with cues which stimulate the imaginative process. References to acts of seeing and hearing constantly help the listener to visualize the setting and to hear and listen to the voice of the persona now represented by the preacher.

Nowhere is the dramatic effect of the Address more successfully realized than in HomScragg IV. Here the Judgment Day setting is vividly portrayed: the judgment takes place before all mankind, the hosts of hell and the angels and archangels. The Lord addresses his angels and commends the good soul, and they in turn inform the soul that they have seen its “house” and will lead it to its body. Then, the soul sights its body:

*Cwið þonne si sawl to þam englum bliðheortre stefne: “Ic gesio hwær min lichama stent on midre þisse menigo.”*

Then the soul says to the angels in a joyful voice: “I see where my body

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137Verc., IV.124-25.
stands in the middle of this crowd!"

To introduce the Address to the body, the homilist leaves no doubt as to the soul’s emotions: “Besyhð þonne sio sawl swiðe bliðum eagum to hire lichoman” (‘Then the soul looks at its body with very joyous eyes’). Following the soul’s praise of the body, the homilist underlines the feelings of the soul by urging the audience to consider “hu glædlice and hu wynsumlice and hu fægre and hu mildlice” (‘how happily and how agreeably and how kindly and mildly’) the soul has spoken. The body reacts by bursting into a splendid display of colourful transformation. The Judge joins body and soul, who together sing a hymn of praise and are received into the eternal kingdom.

The pattern is repeated with the wicked soul. It is easy to visualize the souls which are about to be damned standing forhte and afaerede (‘timid and afraid’) and cwacigende (‘trembling’) and moaning and weeping. The Judge is reðe (‘fierce’) and on swiðe ongryslicum hiwe (‘exceedingly terrible in appearance’) and speaks with a swiðe egeslicre stefne (‘very dreadful voice’). When the accursed soul addresses its body it is with a swiðe unrotre stefne and unbealdre and heofendre

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138 Verc., IV.133.
139 Verc., IV.153-54.
140 Verc., IV.194, 197.
141 Verc., IV.197-200.
Further on, in a reminder of who is speaking, we are told that the voice is *swīðe geomor* ("very miserable").

The soul's transformation into foul blackness is detailed; the devil, speaking of both soul and body, claims them as his own on the basis of their obedience to him and the King pronounces the *Discedite*. The whole presentation in this homily reads almost like a play with one player, the damned soul, dominating the spoken parts. A skilled preacher, following the clues provided in the text might well have been able to take each part in turn and thereby create a mini-drama.

Similar possibilities perhaps ensured the appeal of the "Macarius" version of the Address. Here we are invited to enter with the visionary to witness an extraordinary scene:

Magon we nu gehyran secgan be suman halgan men, se wæs on gastlice gesyhðœ gelæded. He geseah....

We may now hear tell about a certain holy man, who was led into a spiritual vision. He saw....

Or more simply in HomNapier XXIX: "Sum halig man wæs gelæd on gesyhðœ; þa geseah he..." ('A certain holy man was led into a spiritual vision; then he saw...').

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142 *Verc.*, IV.203.

143 *Verc.*, IV.221.


145 Sauer, lines 76-77.

146 Napier, XXIX, 140.9-10
The wretched soul sees the devils and overhears their frightening conversation about his certain doom. The soul, in HomSauer, *ongan earmlice cleopian* (‘began to cry out piteously’) and it *locade to hyre lichoman* (‘looked at its body’).\(^{147}\) After its speech, the body, as in HomScragg IV, undergoes its horrible transformation and is graphically pierced in eyes, mouth and heart. The devils take the soul *mid micle sare and geomrunge* (‘with great sorrow and moaning’; on the part of the soul) onto their black wings, and on the way to hell, when it perceives its destination, it naturally *ongan mid micel[e] sare and wope heofian* (‘began to lament with great sorrow and weeping’).\(^{148}\) Finally, it is delivered *wepende and geomrigende* (‘weeping and wailing’) to a fiery dragon.\(^{149}\) This homily leaves no doubt, even apart from what the soul actually says in the Address, that this is an experience to be avoided at all costs, and it thereby provides its listeners with the appropriate emotion in its description of the panic of the damned soul.

The grave-side scenes have their own kind of drama in which the tomb and its foul inhabitant form the setting. Understandably, there is more background

\(^{147}\)Sauer, lines 87, 90-91.

\(^{148}\)Sauer, lines 119-20.

\(^{149}\)Sauer, line 122. HomNapier XXIX, the other OE homily based on the same Latin text, adds that the devil cries out with *hludre stefne*. Generally, however, HomNapier XXIX provides fewer “stage directions”; it omits *pa locade to hyre lichoman*, as perhaps superfluous with the following *eala pu earma lichama*; and it also omits the placement of the lamenting soul on the devils’ black wings and the participles *wepende and geomrigende* describing the soul on its way into the dragon’s mouth.
explanation required in order to clarify the nature of the respite granted to souls. The concept is attributed to Augustine and to godcundum gewritum (‘sacred writings’) in the two homilies which make use of it (HomMurfin, HomHealey):

On þam dæge þe dríhten of deáþe aras, þonne mot anra gehwylces mannes sawl, ge söðfæstes mannes ge synfulles, þa byrgenstowe gesecan þe ðe lichama on aled wæs. Úton nu þi gehyran hwæt ðe gode gast specð to þam lichaman þonne he him ærest to cymð. Þonne gret he hine þus þysum wordum...

On the day when the Lord arose from death, the soul of each man, both the faithful and the sinful man, visits the grave where its body was laid. Let us now hear what the good spirit says to its body when it first comes to it. Then it greets it thus in these words...

Men ða leofestan, we geleornodon on godcundum gewritum þæt æghwylces monnes sawul, æfter þisse weorulde, scyl gesecan eft ðane lichaman, and þissum wordum ærest þus sprecaþ and cweð þæs synfullan monnes sawle...

Dearest people, we learned in sacred writings that each man’s soul, after this world shall visit again the body, and with these words the soul of the sinful man thus speaks and says....

The sinful soul speaks with a hreowlicre stefne (‘a pitiful voice’) in HomMurfin, but in HomHealey tone of voice is not indicated, though we are reminded frequently that

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150 Murfin, lines 100-105.

151 Healey, “Junius 85,” 294. Soul and Body I & II also place the Address during a visit after death: “Sceal se gæst cuman gehþum hremig, / symle ymb seofon niht sawle findan / ðone lichoman þe heo ær longe wæg, / þreo hund wintra, / butan ær wyrc ece dryhten, / ælmihtig god, ende worlde” (Soul and Body II, ll. 9-14).
it is the soul who is speaking.\textsuperscript{152} In HomHealey both blessed and damned souls invite their bodies to see their future prospects in their own state, an echo of the analogous reminder in the speech of the dry bones\textsuperscript{153}:

\begin{quote}
Damned soul: “Sceawa on me to hwylcere susle ðu eart toweard” (‘See in me what torment you are approaching’).\textsuperscript{154}

Blessed soul: “Sceawa on me to hwilcum setle ðu eart toweard, and þin med is in me fægere gesionne” (‘See in me what a dwelling you are approaching, and your reward is in me well seen’).\textsuperscript{155}
\end{quote}

The poem is also generous in its description of the tenor of the damned soul’s voice:

\begin{quote}
Cleopað þonne swa cearful cealdan reorde,
spreçe Grimlice se gast to þam duste:... (\textit{Soul & Body I}, ll. 15-16)
\end{quote}

Then exceedingly full of care the soul cries out to the dust, speaking grimly and with cold speech.

By contrast the blessed soul is \textit{hyhtlicre, eadiglicre...on ferhōe} (‘pleasant, happy in mind’), seeks its body \textit{mid gefean} (‘with joy’), and greets it \textit{lustum} (‘with pleasure’ [\textit{Soul & Body I}, ll. 127-134]).

One suspects that even without these helps the astute preacher would have

\textsuperscript{152}Healey, “Junius 85,” 324 (2x), 326; the good soul: Healey, “Junius 85,” 328 (3x), 330.

\textsuperscript{153}See note 74 above. Cf. also HomAssmann XIV, which contains extracts from HomHealey; Assmann, 167. Interestingly, this homily, which normally shortens its sources, adds its own “preaching cue” in \textit{wependre stefne} when describing the damned soul’s speech.

\textsuperscript{154}Healey, “Junius 85,” 324.

\textsuperscript{155}Healey, “Junius 85,” 328.
found the right tone in the Address itself. The damned soul’s speech is punctuated with cries of *Eala, pu earma,*\(^{156}\) *Wa me/pu,*\(^{157}\) and *La me/pu.*\(^{158}\) The intensity is increased with the demanding *gehyrstu,* “do you hear?” or “are you listening?,” an apt question in the middle of a sermon!\(^{159}\)

All questions in the end turn out to be rhetorical, a necessity in view of the muteness of the body, but also effective in emphasizing the guilty silence of the body in certain versions\(^{160}:\)

For hwan swenctest ðu me, and wlenctest þe in þ[aer]e sceortan tide and forgeate me, and þas langan woruld ne gemunest?\(^{161}\)

Why did you oppress me and exalt yourself in that brief time, and forget me, and were not mindful of that lasting world?

For hwon, earma lichoma, lufodesðu þone ðeond, δæt wæs se diofol? Forhwon lyfdest ðu þæm ðe þe forlærde þurh synnelustas? And forhwon, earma lichoma, noldest þu gelyfan in þam alysende God ælmihtigum, se for ðinum ðíngum manigfeald wite þrowode?\(^{162}\)

\(^{156}\)Sauer, lines 88, 96; Napier, XXIX, 140.29.

\(^{157}\)Murfin, lines 140-41; Sauer, lines 91, 120; Napier, XXIX, 140.20, 141.21; *Verc.,* IV.204, 206; Healey, “Junius 85,” 326; Assmann, XIV.81.

\(^{158}\) *Verc.,* IV.207, 273.

\(^{159}\)Healey, “Junius 85,” 294, 324; Assmann, XIV.81.

\(^{160}\)These are not appropriate in the speech of the Blessed Soul, of course, which confines itself to statements of accomplished fact.

\(^{161}\) *Verc.,* IV.205-206.

Why, wretched body, did you love that fiend, that was the devil? Why did you believe him who led you through desires to sin? And why, wretched body, would you not believe in the redeeming God almighty, who for your cause suffered manifold torment?

Excerpting from HomHealey, the author of HomAssmann XIV finds the question format particularly suited to his purposes and supplements the list in order to include his own concern with confession: “Hwi noldest ðu gelyfan þinum scrifte?” (‘Why would you not trust your confessor?’). In the parallel construction for the good soul (wel pe...), this homilist is even more liberal in his additions, adding church attendance, alms-giving, prayer, and confession to the praiseworthy behaviours in his source (HomHealey).

These are clearly questions which the audience is to direct against itself in self-judgment, perhaps in preparation for confession. Psychologically, because the preacher is here at one more remove from the audience and uses the voice of the soul rather than his own, the accusing questions are not perceived as an attack from ecclesiastical authority but rather from within the listener.

Other versions simply advance the body’s past virtues or sins as statements of fact, recited in tones of either proud accomplishment or embittered outrage:

Sōlice þonne ic wolde þæt ðu fæstest oððe ælnessan sealdest for

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163 Assmann, XIV.90-91.

164 Assmann, XIV.94-96.
Godes lufan, oððe ænig god wære donde. Eall þu þæt dudest.¹⁶⁵

Truly when I wanted you to fast or give alms for the love of God, or to do any good, you did all that.

Þu noldest næfre beon gehyrsum Godes engla larum wið deofles costnungum. He þe lærde þæt þu manigfealde synne wære begangende and þu him þæs geþafæ wære, and æt ærestan he þe lærde mid his folum lotwrencum: oferætas and oferdrunceanysse, and morgenmettas, and synlice lустas, and stala,...¹⁶⁶

You never wanted to be obedient to the teaching of God’s angels against the devil’s temptations. He taught you to commit manifold sin and you were his helper in that, and first he taught you foul deceit, overeating and drunkenness, and morning meals, and sinful lusts, and theft,...

Such lists are rhetorically slightly less forceful than questions, but they, too, effectively enumerate specific behaviours while using direct speech.

The Soul’s Address is most effective when it capitalizes on the relationship of intimacy which the soul and body once shared. At times it is almost reminiscent of a lover’s quarrel, an appropriate metaphor since soul and body are also referred to as a wedded couple in OE poetry.¹⁶⁷ The grammatical gender of soul and body in OE seems to have contributed to an exploration of this metaphor.

Though all the versions adopt a tone of reproach reserved for intimate

¹⁶⁵Murfin, lines 115-17.

¹⁶⁶Murfin, lines 143-48.

¹⁶⁷Cf. the use of the word sinhiwan to describe body and soul in Guthlac, ll. 566-69, Juliana, ll. 695-699. Smetana first noticed this aspect of the Soul’s Address in the poem (“Second Thoughts,” 199).
associates, it is HomScragg IV which most brings out the soul’s sense of betrayal and disgust with their former union. The damned soul, at one point calling its body *trowleasan fleasc* (‘faithless flesh’), says: “Næs ic næfre in þe aret, ac a me þuhte þæt wyt wæron to lange ætgædere” (‘I was never gladdened in you, but always it seem to me that we two were together too long’).\(^{168}\) And it complains in an apostrophe to Death:

> Næs me næfre gyt in him ieðe to wunianne, nihtes fyrst ne dæges fyrst. Ne ieðlice næs ic ane nihtes fyrst ne dæges on him, þær ic wiste hu ic utfulge.\(^{169}\)

> It was never easy for me to dwell in him, neither daytime nor nighttime. I was not easily in him for a space of one day or one night, when I knew how I might get out.

One senses the damned soul’s desire to disassociate itself from its former mate. In the final analysis, they had never been compatible:

> Nærón wyt næfre ane tid on anum willan, for þan þu hyrwdest Godes beboda and his haligra lare.\(^{170}\)

> We were never once of one mind, because you despised God’s commands and the teaching of his holy ones.

This contrasts sharply with the blessed soul’s happiness at its reunion with its body. It asks that the body be spared the fate of becoming *wyrmə mete* (‘food of

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\(^{168}\) *Verc.*, IV.214-15, 249.

\(^{169}\) *Verc.*, IV.228-30.

\(^{170}\) *Verc.*, IV.286-87.
worms’) and wishes to never be separated from its body again: “Dryhten, ne todæl ðu me and minne lichoman” (‘Lord, do not separate my body and me’).\footnote{\textit{Verc.}, IV.136-37.}

It is also HomScragg IV which is most inventive in its abusive epithets. In one breath the damned soul calls its body “eorðan lamb and dust and wyrma gifel, and þu wambscyldiga fætels and gealstor and fulnes and hræw” (‘clay of the earth and dust and food of worms and you gluttonous sack and pus and foulness and carrion’) and in another “wyrma gecow and wulfes geslit and fugles geter” (‘food of worms and biting of the wolf and tearing of the bird’).\footnote{\textit{Verc.}, IV.208-209, 266.} By comparison, other homilies content themselves with milder insults, the favourite being 	extit{earma lichama} (‘wretched body’) or, to draw attention to the decay, 	extit{fulesta lichoma/hræw} (‘foul body/corpse’).

Here again, it must have been desirable to eliminate the blessed soul, since the two speeches are usually symmetrically arranged with each part finding a counterpart in the other speech. There is a difficulty in presenting the decay of the body because there is no suitable opposite for the decay of the body in the speech of the blessed soul, since it, too, must face the ravages of the grave.\footnote{Cf. Frantzen, 83-84. One should not forget, however, that saints were often reported to have escaped bodily corruption; cf. Bynum, \textit{The Resurrection of the Body}, 206ff.} The disgust which is fitting in the sinful soul’s speech is not appropriate in that of the blessed soul, so we can see that, with the exception of HomScragg IV and the poem, there either is no blessed

\textit{Verc.}, IV.136-37.

\textit{Verc.}, IV.208-209, 266.

Cf. Frantzen, 83-84. One should not forget, however, that saints were often reported to have escaped bodily corruption; cf. Bynum, \textit{The Resurrection of the Body}, 206ff.
soul, or the horrors of putrefaction are not mentioned. In HomScragg IV, the Judgment Day setting helps the homilist to circumvent the issue, and he does not describe the state of the good body before its magnificent transformation.

Although many of these dramatic and rhetorical features would have been present for the OE homilists in their Latin sources, we should bear in mind that it was probably these very attractions which caused the Soul’s Address to be selected for translation and transmission. Furthermore, in the case of one of the Soul and Body homilies there is some evidence that at least one redactor appreciated the nature of his material. This is the author of HomNapier XXIX, who can be shown to have rewritten an already existing vernacular homily, taking an especial interest in the Soul’s Address. Such an assessment is possible because both a reasonably close Latin source as well as another OE sermon, probably at one remove from this exemplar, survive.

Zupitza, who first compared this homily to the closely related HomSauer and their common Latin source, decided that they were independent translations of the same Latin text. Jost disagrees and states that the verbal correspondences between the two indicate that HomNapier XXIX is directly derived from HomSauer or a slightly better copy thereof. The latter qualification allows me to agree with Jost,

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175 Jost, Wulfstanstudien, 206-7.
since I have identified two points where HomNapier XXIX translates a phrase from
the Latin omitted in HomSauer, and another, intermediate homily would therefore
seem necessary.\textsuperscript{176}

The fact that HomNapier XXIX is often quite close to HomSauer, but just as
often goes its own way, allows us to have a certain amount of confidence in
appreciating the changes which this homilist made. He uses a method which
combines excision, amplification and rearrangement of sentence elements which
speaks to his thoughtful and skilled use of his materials.

From the beginning of the vision, the homilist shows his aptitude for focusing
on the essentials as I noted above in his straightforward introduction to the vision.
When the soul, seeing the devils, will not exit its body, HomSauer has the devils say:
“Hwæt is þis, þæt þu dest? To hwæt yldst þu, þæt þu ut ne gange?” (‘What is this,
that you do? Why do you hesitate, so that you do not go out?’).\textsuperscript{177} For this literal but
circuitous translation HomNapier XXIX substitutes two simple questions which
clearly portray the situation: “Hwæt is þin þriding? Hwi nelt ðu ut gan?” (‘What is

\textsuperscript{176}The two differences are HomNapier XXIX’s \textit{be pam wege} which translates \textit{in itinere} in the Latin Nonantola version and is lacking in HomSauer; and the phrase \textit{et dereliqui claritatem illam} which becomes \textit{þæt ic swa mycel beorhtnesse forlætan sceolde} in HomNapier XXIX, but in HomSauer \textit{þæt ic æfre swa earm middangeardes leohþ geseon sceolde.}

\textsuperscript{177}Sauer, lines 81-82.
your hesitation? Why won’t you go out?’). But not until the speech itself does the homilist of HomNapier XXIX make considerable changes. To make this apparent, I will provide the two OE versions along with the closest extant Latin source;

HomNapier XXIX’s additions are italicized:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonantola</th>
<th>HomSauer</th>
<th>HomNapier XXIX</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heu me, heu me, quare unquam in corpore illud tenebrosum et pessimum ingredi merui!</td>
<td>Wa me earmre! To hwon sceolde ic æfre gesceapan beon, oððe for hwon sceolde ic æfre in-gangan on þísne fulestan and wyrrestan lichoman?</td>
<td>Wa me earmre, þæt ic æfre geboren sceolde wurðan, oððe þæt ic æfre sceolde niman eardungstowe on þís fulestan and on þís wyrstan lichaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ve tibi, misera anima [for miserum corpus] quare pecunias et alienas facultates et substantias pauperum tulisti et congregasti in domo tua! Tunc bibebas vinum et nimis decorasti cernes tuas illustrissimis vestibus et pulcherrimis.</td>
<td>Heo þa locade to hyre lichoman and cwæð: Wa þæ, þu earma lichoma! Ðu þeære nimende fremdra manna speda, and þu þe æfre være ofer eordan welena strynende, and þu þe gefrætwodest þe mid deorwurðe hægel; and þu þeære reod, and ic me wæs blac; þu ware glæd, and ic me wæs unrot; þu hloge, and ic weop.</td>
<td>þe wæs a nymende earmra manna æhta on unriht. Eala þu earma lichama and wurma mete, a þu wunne æfter eorðlicum welum, and a ðu geglengdest þe mid eorðlicum hraeglum and forgeate me. Donne ðu ware glæd and reod and godes hiwes, þonne wæs ic blac and swyðe unrot; þonne þu smercodest and hloge, þonne weop ic biterlice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu eras fecunda, o caro, et ego maculenta; tu eras virens, et ego pallida; tu eras hillaris, et ego tristis; tu ridebas et ego semper plorabam.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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In the first section, HomNapier XXIX expresses the entrance of the soul into its body with the more concrete *niman eardungstowe*. In the second, this homilist adds a threefold *a* and several phrases for emphasis (*on unriht, wurma mete*), including a touching phrase at the end for effect (*and forgeate me*). He seems to have chosen *wurma, wunne* and *welum* as well as *earmra, æhta* and *unriht* for alliteration. In the next sentence he replaces the monotonous isocolon of HomSauer (which follows the Latin) with a new arrangement, thereby greatly improving the balance and sound, rounding out his phrases with additions (*godes hiwes, smercodest*) and repeating *bonne* four times to underscore the temporal aspect of the comparison which is also underlined by the repetition of *eordlic*. Although these are only minor enhancements, they were unnecessary unless this homilist had an oral presentation in mind when he composed his text. He rewrote the Soul’s Address to improve both the clarity of thought and narrative and the forcefulness of the speech itself.\(^{180}\)

We know that Ælfric and Wulfstan went to great pains to make their sermons

\(^{180}\)The addition of the emphatic *georne, a, swide*, an *un-* compound, and the regard for alliteration (also evidenced in the adaptation of the Judgment Day poem in this homily) are comparable to Wulfstan’s practices; cf. Orchard, “Crying Wolf,” 246-49. Although Jost discounts the possibility of even a “Wulfstan-imitator” having a hand in this adaptation (*Wulfstanstudien*, 208), it seems that this possibility should not be dismissed. In addition to the above considerations one might add that 1) it is found in a collection containing most of the authentic homilies of Wulfstan, therefore it is likely that the reviser was familiar with the archbishop’s style; and 2) parts of the homily use Wulfstan’s favourite form of address, *leofan men*. A similar process of revision has been observed for the homily which follows this one in the manuscript, Napier XXX; see D.G. Scragg, “Napier’s ‘Wulfstan’ Homily XXX: its Sources, its Relationship to the Vercelli Book and its Style,” *ASE 6* (1977): 207-211.
attractive to the ear, and this example of a rewriting of the Address provides evidence that they were not alone in caring about rhythmic balance and clarity of expression. Such evidence can serve also as a reminder of the actual delivery of the sermon. We have seen that the Soul’s Address is primarily a parenetic tool, an alternative framework for the presentation of the choice between a life lived for today’s pleasures or the rewards of eternity. In the preaching event, as the speaker delivers the Address of the Soul, he can challenge his congregation with a voice that bears more weight than his own. This voice is now full of knowledge of the unseen afterlife, but it is also the voice of each individual. The exemplum may be hypothetical and fictional, but more importantly it is prophetic in its applicability to the future of every human being. A good exemplum teaches a universal moral, and this one goes one step further by providing the listener with the words in which he or she is to reproach himself or herself: Why would you not provide for eternity? Why did you forget your soul? Because the Soul’s Address is a monologue, the responsibility of answering these questions falls ultimately on the audience, or rather, on the individual in the congregation. For this reason the Address was probably more effective as a teaching device than the later debates.
Developments in Middle English Literature

Although I will not be able here to examine in detail the many Middle English and Latin Soul and Body texts, a brief comparison to this later development will highlight the unique suitability of the Address form to the homiletic setting. In broader studies of this material, the Soul’s Address has often been viewed as a “primitive” prototype of the Soul and Body debates which were to follow in the later medieval period. Moffat protests against such anachronism:

It must be insisted that, like certain eighteenth-century English poets who did not write what they did because they somehow knew that Wordsworth was just over the horizon, the poet of Soul and Body did not write his poem because he foresaw that in the twelfth century body-and-soul debates would become immensely popular. He need never have had any intention of making the body respond, mutely or otherwise: he was not writing a debate manqué for a poetic tradition he did not know, but an address within his own tradition of OE versemaking. 181

In defense of the Address form it has been pointed out that it is logically more consistent because it acknowledges the corpse’s inability to speak without the animation of the soul. 182 In fact, this paradox does cause some disturbing oddities in

181 Douglas Moffat, The Old English Soul and Body, 38. A certain disorientation on this point may be observed in some modern scholars’ inadvertent inaccuracies, for example, Allen and Calder’s claim, misquoting Heningham, that “most of the debates ‘go back at least as far as the homilies ... of Ephraem Syrus who died shortly before 375 A.D.,’” a statement which she makes about memento mori themes in general; Michael J.B. Allen and Daniel G. Calder, Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry. The Major Latin Texts in Translation (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1976), 40.

182 Mary Ferguson notes concerning Soul and Body II that the debates involve a “sacrifice of logic” and that the “very muteness of the Body heightens the drama of the
certain body/soul debates which were to follow.  

But in addition to the issues of the development of the debate genre and the questions of logic which the new framework entails, there is a need to consider how a shift from address to debate changes both the tone and the purpose of the Body and Soul material.

There is, to my knowledge, only one late Old English/early Middle English homily which contains a Soul’s Address, or rather two speeches, one each by a good and evil soul.  

It is part of an exegetical homily, purportedly on St. Andrew, though only the first section mentions him and the remainder is more of a rambling series of loosely connected thoughts. Following statements on the fleeting nature of earthly life and the vanity of wealth, a mention of death abruptly ushers in the departure of the soul from the body. The speeches are short and much like those in HomScragg IV and HomMurfin. There are almost no visual or speaking cues, except that the evil body is said to change colour. Curiously, the man’s friends are criticized for mourning over the body and yet not doing anything for the benefit of the dead man’s soul: “bigemeð þe licame and forgemeð þe sowle” (“they attend the body, and neglect

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183 Michel-André Bossy has observed that the point in the Visio Philiberti when the body admits it could not speak without the soul “makes both postulates seem tenuous” and makes the debate take on “a contrived appearance”; “Medieval Debates of Body and Soul,” Comparative Literature 28 (1976): 149.

the soul’).185 There seems to be in this later homily no need for a dramatic setting, but the tone of the two speeches is the same as in the earlier homilies.

There are several Middle English poems which treat the Soul and Body material, mostly in the form of an Address. In fact, the above statement by Moffat must be qualified in that the twelfth century did not produce any English Soul and Body debates at all.186 Although it had been cast as a debate in Latin by the early twelfth century, we do not know of an English counterpart until the thirteenth, the Desputisoun bitwen þe Bodi and þe Soule (‘Als I lay in a winteris nyt’).187 With only one exception, which I will discuss below, all the vernacular Soul and Body material prior to this poem is either clearly an Address or too fragmentary to provide definitive evidence to the contrary.

What is striking is how much these twelfth and thirteenth century poetic adaptations of the Soul’s Address resemble the OE homilies both in content and at times even verbally. The earliest of this group of texts is a piece which survives only in fragments and is known as The Soul’s Address to the Body or, more commonly,

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185Morris, Old English Homilies, XXIX.183.

186This section is indebted to Francis Utley’s compilation of material on the Soul and Body theme in “Dialogue, Debates, and Catechisms,” in A Manual of Writings in Middle English: 1050-1500, gen. ed. Albert E. Hartung, vol. 3 (New Haven, Conn.: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1972), 691-695. John W. Conlee has printed and commented on several of the poems I will be discussing in Middle English Debate Poetry: A Critical Anthology (East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1991), 3-49.

The Worcester Fragments (late twelfth century). Eleanor Heningham examines it in relation to the OE homilies and poem and maintains that the poet knew homilies like these and probably others of the same nature and wove his poem together from such sources. This observation fits in well with the fact that, as was seen above, several of the OE homilies are found in twelfth-century manuscripts. Though Heningham's analysis has been qualified by Moffat, he allows her main point to stand and confirms that there was at the very least "some continuity in the development of the theme in England."  

Roughly contemporary with the Worcester Fragments is the short, possibly fragmentary poem called The Grave ("ðe wes bold þebyld er þu iboren were"). It is also presented in direct speech, but the speaker is not identified. Even so, there are some verbal correspondences with earlier forms of the Soul's Address which suggest that it may have originally been part of such a speech. Woolf comments on its

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188 The former title is the one provided by its most recent editor, Douglas Moffat, The Soul's Address to the Body: The Worcester Fragments. Medieval Texts and Studies 1 (East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1987).


190 Moffat, The Old English Soul and Body, 35.

191 Arnold Schröer, "The Grave," Anglia 5 (1882): 289-90. Since there is little consistency in how these poems are referred to in modern scholarship, I have provided the title (usually created by the editor) and the first line in parentheses.

192 Its most recent editor, Gail Ricciardi, believes that it is part of a Soul's Address; "The Grave-Bound Body and the Soul: A Collective Edition of Four Related Poems from the
"elaborate and grimly inventive ingenuity" in its description of the narrow "house" of the grave and the odd absenteeism of former friends:¹⁹³

Ne bið no þin hus healice itinbred.
hit bið unheh and lah þonne þu list þerinne.
ðe helwæsæs beoð læze sidwæsæs unheæææe,
Þe rof bið ibyld þire broste ful neh
...
Nefst ðu nenne freond þe þe wylle faren to.
Ðæt efre wule lokien hu þe þæt hus þe likie. (ll. 7-10, 18-19)

Your house is built by no means high; it is low and flat when you lie in it. The endwalls are low, the sidewalls are not high, the roof is built very near to your chest. You have no friend who will come to you, who would ever see how you like that house.

One can see that the focus is not, as in the homiletic addresses, on reproaching the body's behaviour in life, though that might have been a feature in other, now lost, parts of the poem.¹⁹⁴ Rather, the tone of the surviving twenty-five lines of the poem is both somber and yet also clever in its exploration of the grave as the final dwelling place.

More directly related to the Worcester Fragments is a poem called The Latemest day ("Þene latemeste dai, wenne we sulen farren"), an early thirteenth-

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¹⁹⁴This lack of direct reproach is one of the reasons Louise Dudley feels it was not part of a Soul and Body poem; "The Grave," Modern Philology 11 (1914): 429-42.
century work which is again cast as an address rather than as a dialogue. Both versions in Brown begin with the fact that we are born poor and at death must lose everything. The physical features of the grave are explored in similar fashion as in the previous poem with mention of the friends who never visit, but there is then the soul’s reproach of the body: “Nou þu hauest, wrecche, hileuid al to longe / To louien þe riste and hatien þe wronge” (‘Now you, wretch, have forsaken too long to love right and hate wrong’ [ll. 53-54]). Often the relationship to the homilies in tone, if not in content, is quite obvious:

Wi noldes þu wid criste maken us isaiste,
Messen lete singen of þat he þe bitaiste?
Euer þu were abuten to echen þin haiste;
For-þi we boet an hende boþe bipaiste. (ll. 65-68)

Why did you not want to reconcile us with Christ, have masses sung that he commanded you? You were always around to increase your possession. Therefore we both in the end will be led astray.

As in the homilies, the soul has no doubt concerning the body’s responsibility: “and i sal for þine sunnen habben fendes to were” (‘and I shall for your sins have fiends as companions’ [l. 11]) and “alle þes ilke pines þou us hauist woucht” (‘all these same torments you have made certain for us’ [l. 80]). The poem then indulges in an

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elaborate description of the devil and ends with admonitory stanzas which list
behaviours which can prevent such a fate. Exploration of the concrete facts of death
and hell functions to instill disgust and terror, but the metaphor of soul and body as
representations of eternal and temporal is not used to change the listener’s point of
view.

Two other short pieces which contain speeches by a soul should be mentioned:
*Shroud and Grave* (‘Nou is mon hol & soint’) and *Over the Bier of the Worldling*
(‘Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list’), both of the thirteenth century.\(^\text{196}\) The Soul’s
Address in the former is a terse assault which contains the same subjects we have
seen before in these later poems: a list of the body’s refusals to do good, a mention of
the horror of the grave and the abandonment by loved ones. The Address in *Over the
Bier of the Worldling*, if indeed it is spoken by the soul, is even more concise. A
short *ubi sunt*-like question points to the former vanity of the body: “Were bet þine
robin of fau and of gris? Suic day hauit i-comin þu changedest hem þris” (‘Where are
your robes of gray fur? Such a day there was you changed them thrice’ [ll. 2-3]).
Then there is mention of the confines of the grave, the neglect of the poor and the
simple conclusion, “Þu noldist not þe bi-þenchen forte ben wis / For-þi hauistu for-

\(^{196}\) Titles are taken from the edition by Carleton Brown, pages 31 and 64, respectively. Another longer thirteenth century poem called *Sinners Beware* (“þeos holy gostes myhte”) incorporates a very short speech of the soul after depicting the departure of wicked souls on Judgment Day: “þe saule seyþ to þe lychome. / Acursed wurþe þi nome. / Þin heaued and þin heorte. / Þu vs hauest iwoht þes schome. / And alle þene eche grome. / Vs schal euer smerte” (ll. 331-36); Morris, *An Old English Miscellany*, 72-83.
lorin be loye of parais” (‘You would not bethink yourself to be wise. Therefore you have lost the joy of paradise’ [ll. 8-9]). These poignant little poems encapsulate in very few lines the theme of the Soul and Body material: the vanity of earthly pleasures and the result of the person’s failure to prepare for the next life. However, the reduced scale also limits the parenetic value; they read more like witty aphorisms than austere admonition. The fact that it is the soul speaking is secondary and sometimes left out altogether as unnecessary, so the dramatic element is greatly lessened.

One poem seems to stand somewhere between the address and debate forms. “In a pestri stude y stod a lutel strif to here,” identified only by its first line, is found in manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteen centuries.197 Though it certainly is a dialogue between body and soul, it is not quite accurate to call it a debate: to the soul’s accusations and insults the body is not able to mount a single defense; essentially they agree with each other. Even more emphasis is placed on the amenities enjoyed in life in contrast to the lack thereof in the grave: “Wrecche gost, thou wend away, fare ther thou shalt fare! Me is nou wo y-noh, myn bones aren al bare.”198 There is an extended section on the signs of the end times and then a homiletic reiteration by the narrator of the themes of transitoriness and vanity of life.

197Wright, 346-49.

198Wright, 347.
While these English poems were being composed, perpetuating the native homiletic and poetic tradition, the debate of the Soul and Body was being developed in Latin. An intermediate version in that language seems to be, according to Heningham, the Royal Debate (‘Nuper huiuscemodi visionem somnii’) of the early twelfth century, in which there is only one speech each for body and soul. Heningham thinks that the poet, “steeped in the Body and Soul material as it appeared in contemporary sermons, decided that it would make a good basis for a moral poem and chose to follow the form of the legend in which the body, as well as the soul speaks.” Heningham does not tell us, however, where the poet might have found this form of the legend, since, as we have seen, there is no evidence that it existed before the Royal Debate.

This poem seems to have been the ancestor of most later Soul and Body debates, both in Latin and in various vernacular languages. It was the source for the

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199 An interesting point is made by Heningham who observes that the Address rather than the debate framework seem to have “appealed only to English poets”; “Precursors,” 296-7 n.19.

200 *Early Latin Debate*, 11.

201 One clue that the scribe of the Nonantola manuscript (eleventh/twelfth century) might have known of Soul and Body debates is that he makes an interesting alteration near the beginning of the Address substituting “*Ve tibi, misera animal!*” for “*Vae tibi corpus miserum!*” as in *Ad fratres* LXIX; the phrase does not make sense with what follows, however.
Old French *Un samedi par nuit*\(^{203}\) which itself was translated into Old Norwegian.\(^{203}\)

Its most famous progeny is the *Visio Philiberti* ('Noctis sub silentio'), which is the source of the only true Soul and Body debate in Middle English, the *Desputisoun bitwen be Bodi and be Soule* ('Als I lay in a winteris nyt') already mentioned above.\(^{204}\) The origin of the latter in the Latin rather than the vernacular tradition is immediately apparent in that the dispute between body and soul has become more of an intellectual game and less of a meditation on homiletic themes. However, this poet also drew upon English material which produced a difference from the Latin which Ackerman characterizes as follows:

> Whereas the two principals in the *Dialogus* are sometimes rather priggish and self-conscious about their learning and the scoring of debating points, both Body and Soul emerge in the English far more sharply as living, breathing individuals wracked by emotion on contemplating not only the endless torment to ensue on Doomsday but also the impending break in their lifelong intimacy.\(^{205}\)

Ackermann finds that the more “popular” tone of the *Desputisoun* is likely due to the


\(^{203}\)The various extant versions are printed and commented upon by Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen in “A Debate of the Body and Soul in Old Norse Literature,” *Mediaeval Studies* 21 (1959): 272-289. It is of interest to note that these, unlike the English versions, are in prose and set the debate into a homiletic context. The same is true of the Irish debate; cf. Robert Atkinson, ed., *The Passions and Homilies from Leabhar Breac: Text, Translation, and Glossary* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1887), 266-73, 507-514.

\(^{204}\)The closest English version is the fifteenth-century *The Fadyr of Pyttee and Most of Mysericorde*; Utley, 695.

\(^{205}\)Ackerman, 544-45.
influence of the religious tracts of the day and only secondarily to the sermon literature and poetic versions.

There is no doubt that the poet of the Desputisoun tapped into the two traditions to create a very lively and successful poem; Woolf calls it "by far the most brilliant of medieval Body and Soul poems in any language." However, it is clear that the didactic and parenetic purpose has now finally been subordinated to a preoccupation with philosophical paradox. Since the issue of responsibility is never resolved, there is no clear moral to be drawn, and the comparison of the temporal versus the eternal seems to be obscured in the playful banter. This is not merely the difference between poetry and homily, since we have seen that the Address could be used effectively by poets in verse that is essentially meditative. But it is rather due to the defense of the body, which should not be possible, and which disrupts and undermines the unrelieved reproach of the Address format. This change alone lightens the tone and also diffuses audience identification with the speaking voice; the voices of body and soul are no longer the voice of conscience but become externalized and of no more than intellectual interest.

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206 Woolf, 98.
Conclusion

In summary, one can say that the Soul’s Address to the Body as it is found in the homiletic literature of Anglo-Saxon England was both less sensational and more effective than it perhaps seems on a first reading. Although the history of its Latin sources remains obscure, it can be observed that authors writing in Latin considered it a narrative which could be told without further comment, whereas in OE it is turned into an exemplum to be utilized in a larger hortatory context.

In this format it was popular, circulated in its several versions in various types of homiliaries and at times adapted and improved. The images of the departing souls at death, the presence of angels and devils, and the Judgment Day scenario, are all found in orthodox texts, and the devices of fictitious monologue was not uncommon and frequently used to good effect in other OE homilies. Its theology probably caused little concern, and, on the contrary, was one more instance of the Anglo-Saxon penchant for material which dwells on the end times, the transience of life, and the need to prepare for eternity.

Most importantly, this study of the Soul’s Address shows that the writers of OE homilies chose source material not merely on the basis of its colourful drama, but also because of its potential to move an audience to respond. This concern becomes more obvious as one examines the later poetic adaptations of the Soul and Body theme. Here the fascination with the horrors of death and decay, and, later, with
intellectual argument, changes both tone and purpose. The Soul’s Address in the Old English homilies, however, remains focused on the need for amendment of life.
Chapter 3

Christ's Address to the Sinner

If the speaker in the Soul’s Address is often of dubious credibility, in the monologue now under consideration, his authority cannot be questioned. Christ’s Address to the sinner is a dramatic monologue found in five different OE homilies and one OE poem.¹ It is a speech of reproach which takes place on Judgment Day and in which Christ narrates his involvement with and care for mankind, beginning


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with the Creation and ending with his incarnation and Passion. As Rosemary Woolf
has noted, the early medieval view of the Passion was one of triumph over Satan;
only in the later Middle Ages did the literature and iconography come to focus on the
Devotion,” in \textit{Christian Spirituality II. High Middle Ages and Reformation}, Jill Raitt, ed. (N.Y.: Crossroad, 1988), 75-108. In his study of the hourly prayers for the laity which focus on Christ’s life and Passion, Josef Stadlhuber sets the beginning of this transition from the victorious Christ to the \textit{Jesus dulcis} in the tenth century (282); “Das Laiengebet vom Leiden Christi in seinem mittelalterlichen Fortleben,” \textit{Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie} 72 (1950): 282-325.} The OE versions of Christ’s Address seem to mark the
transition between these two points of view. The events of the gospel account are
laid out in such a way as to demand an emotional response of guilt and a desire to
cleanse oneself, but a comparison with Middle English treatments of the same
material will show that the OE remains by comparison emotionally restrained,
allowing the dramatic appeal of the speaking voice and the events narrated to produce
the desired effect rather than heightening their impact with excessive descriptive
elements.

Before I turn to the OE versions of the monologue by Christ, I will examine
certain relevant Latin analogues, which, although they are not all direct sources for
the OE homilies, are part of the literary history of Christ’s reproach; some of these
may also have been in circulation in the later Anglo-Saxon period. I will then discuss
the OE version, its status, use and rhetorical structures and again conclude with a
brief look at the Middle English developments.

**Latin Analogues**

For the purpose of comparison, it might be useful, before I begin an examination of the Latin analogues, to produce the speech as it is found in Caesarius of Arles’ *Sermo* LVII, the source of the OE speeches 3:


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3*Sermo* LVII.4: Morin, CCSL 103, 251-254. The source was first discovered by A.S. Cook, *The Christ of Cynwulf: A Poem in Three Parts: The Advent, the Ascension, and the Last Judgement* (Boston: Athenaeum Press, 1900), 210. Rudolph Willard subsequently noticed the similarities between the OE poem, Caesarius and Vercelli VIII (HomScragg VIII) and discusses their relationship in “Vercelli Homily VIII and the *Christ*,” *PMLA* 42 (1927): 314-30. Following the publication of Morin’s edition of Caesarius, Edward Irving observed that the latter’s text and variants provided some closer parallels to *Christ III*; “Latin Prose Sources for Old English Verse,” *JEGP* 56 (1957): 588-595.
quod mihi in te sacraveram, luxuriae sordibus_polluisti? Quur corpus iam meum inlecebrarum turpitudine.maculasti? Quur me graviore crinimum tuorum cruce, quam illa in qua quondam pependeram, adflixiisti? Gravior enim aput me peccatorum tuorum crux est, in qua invitus pendeo, quam illa in qua volens tui miserius mortem tuam occisurus ascendi. Cum essem incommutabilis, pro te homo factus sum; cum essem inpassibilis, pro te pati dignatus sum; sed tu despexit in homine deum, in infirmo salutem, in via reditum, in judice veniam, in cruce vitam, in supplicis medicinam. Et quia post omnia mala tua ad medicamenta paenitentiae confugere noluisti, ab auditu malo non mereberis liberari, sed auditurus es cum tuis similibus: Discedite a me, maledicti, in ignem aeternum, qui paratus est diabolo et angelis eius; et descendes cum illo in aeternum gehennae ignem, quem mihi vitae tuae captus dulcis laqueis et bonis fallacibus praetuliisti.

I made you man, with my hands, from clay. I poured spirit into the earthly limbs. I deigned to bestow on you my image and likeness. I placed you among the delights of paradise. But you, disregarding the life-giving mandates, preferred to follow the deceiver rather than your Lord. But I pass over those ancient things. Afterwards, moved by mercy, when you had been justly expelled from paradise for your sin and were held by the chains of death, in order to be born, I entered the virgin womb, without detriment to that virginity. Exposed in a manger, I lay wrapped in rags; I bore the insult of infancy and human pains, through which I was made like you, so that I might make you like me. I accepted the palms and spittle of ridiculers; I drank vinegar with gall. I was beaten with scourges, crowned with thorns, fastened to the cross, pierced with a wound, so that you might be rescued from death. I sent my soul among torments. Behold the traces of the nails by which I hung fixed! Behold my side pierced with wounds! I received your pains that I might give you my glory. I received your death, so that you might live eternally. I lay buried in a sepulcher, so that you might reign in heaven. Why did you squander what I endured for you? Why, ingrate, did you reject the gifts of your redemption? I do not complain to you concerning my death: Render unto me your life, for the sake of which I gave mine. Render unto me your life, which you slay incessantly with the wounds of your sins. Why did you pollute that dwelling that I consecrated for myself in you with the filth of your lechery? Why did you defile my body with the foulness of allurements? Why did you crush me with the cross of your crimes, heavier than that
on which I was once hanged? Heavier to me is the cross of your sins, on which I hang unwillingly, than that onto which I voluntarily ascended to die your death, having pitied you. Although I was unchangeable, for you I was made man; although I was impassible, for you I deigned to suffer. But you despised God in man, salvation in weakness, returning on the way, mercy in the judge, life in the cross, medicine in suffering. And since, after all your evil, you do not wish to resort to the medicines of penitence, you do not deserve to be freed from an evil hearing, but you will hear with those like you: Depart from me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; and you, caught by the sweet snares and deceiving goods of your life, will descend into the eternal fire of Gehenna with him, whom you preferred to me.

A monologue by Christ that places uncanonical words in the mouth of the Deity requires an explanation. It is unlikely, for instance, that Caesarius created the speech himself, although direct sources for his sermon have not been found. On the other hand, several Latin texts which predate Caesarius offer correspondences which prove that the material had some currency.

Source studies of the poem Christ III have observed that Christ’s speech bears a certain resemblance to the liturgical Improperia, an antiphon sung responsively during the Adoratio crucis, which takes place on Good Friday. The text of these run

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4One early candidate, in addition to the Ephraem text discussed below, may be a Gallican Holy Saturday prayer in the Bobbio Missal which begins Predictus ad prophetus natus sum... and in which Christ in a first-person address lists the Passion events interspersed with some reproach; E.A. Lowe, ed., The Bobbio Missal. A Gallican Mass-Book (MS Paris Lat. 13246). Text, HBS 53 (London: Harrison, 1920), 67. For a comparison of this prayer and the Improperia (see below), see G. Römer, “Die Liturgie des Karfreitags,” Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie 77 (1955): 82, n.12.

5Marguerite-Marie Dubois, Les éléments latins dans la poésie religieuse de Cynewulf (Paris: E. Droz, 1943), 58, 74-75. Frederick Biggs rightly rejects these as a source for Christ
as follows:

Popule meus, quid feci tibi, aut in quo contristauit te; responde michi.
Quia eduxi te de terra egipti parasti crucem saluatori tuo. (Agyos o theos. Sanctus deus).
Quia eduxi te per desertum quadraginta annis et manna cibauit te et introduxi te in terram satis optimam, [parasti crucem saluatori tuo].
Quid ultra debui facere tibi et non feci? Ego quidem plantaui te uineam meam speciosissimam, et tu facta es michi nimis amara aceto narnque sitim meam potasti et lancea perforasti latus saluatori tuo.
Ego propter te flagellauit egyptum cum primogenitis suis, et tu me flagellatum tradisti.
Ego eduxi te de egypto dem[e]rso pharaone in mare rubrum, et tu me tradisti principibus sacerdotum.
Ego ante te aperui mare, et tu aperuisti lancea latus meum.
Ego ante te preiui in columna nubis, et tu me duxisti ad pretorium pillati.
Ego te paui manna per desertum, et tu me cedisti alapis et flagellis.
Ego te potaui aqua salutis de petra, et tu me potasti felle et aceto.
Ego propter te cananeorum reges percussi, et tu percussisti arundine caput meum.
[Ego te pre ceteris gloriosum elegi, et tu me humillimum esse uoluisti].


6I have taken the text, with minor changes in punctuation, from the Missale Romanum Mediolani, 1474, ed. Robert Lippe, HBS 17 (London: Harrison, 1899), 170-71. I have not reproduced the performance instructions and repeated verses; the text was sung in various ways, most often with the Popule meus verses alternated with the Agyos o theos and Sanctus followed by the first verse of the Popule meus alternated with each of the Ego te me verses.

7The last clause has been supplied based on Hermann Schmidt, Hebdomada Sancta, vol. 2 (Rome: Herder, 1957), 794.

8This verse is not found in Lippe, nor in modern versions of the Improperia. In order to accurately present the earliest form of the Improperia, I have supplied it from MS Lucques Chapitre 606 (fol. 155v), edited in facsimile in Le codex 10673 de la bibliothèque vaticane,
Ego dedi tibi sceptrum regale, et tu dedisti capiti meo spineam coronam.

Ego te exaltaui magna uirtute, et tu me suspendisti in patibulo crucis.

My people, what have I done to you, or how have I hurt you? Answer me! Because I led you out of the land of Egypt; you prepared a cross for your Saviour. Because I led you through the desert for forty years and fed you with manna and introduced you into a most excellent land, you prepared a cross for your Saviour. What more ought I to have done and did not do? I planted you as my most beautiful vine, and you became to me exceedingly bitter, for you quenched my thirst with vinegar and with a spear pierced the side of your Saviour.

For your sake I scourged Egypt with its first-born, and you gave me over to be whipped. I led you out of Egypt when Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea, and you handed me over to the high priests. I opened the sea before you, and you opened my side with a spear. I went before you in a pillar of cloud and you led me to the mansion of Pilate. I fed you with manna in the desert, and you struck me with blows and scourges. I gave you water of salvation from the rock to drink, and you gave me gall and vinegar to drink. For your sake I struck down the kings of the Canaanites, and you struck my head with a reed. I chose you to be more glorious than others, and you wanted me to be the most lowly. I gave you a royal scepter, and you placed on my head a crown of thorns. I raised you up in great strength, and you suspended me on the gibbet of the cross.

The most obvious discrepancy between the Improperia and Christ's speech to the sinner is that it refers to different events of biblical history. Caesarius's speech begins with creation and the fall and omits the deliverance from Egypt and following events, instead including the incarnation. The Improperia, however, build on the Old Testament tradition of cataloguing the mighty deeds of God and juxtaposes such a list

with the events of the Passion in a very effective series of antithetical statements.

Sung by a solitary cantor during the adoration of the cross, it must have been a moving experience to hear them.

The sources of the Improperia and the date of their composition have not been determined with certainty. At the most fundamental level, scripture forms an obvious antecedent. The first three verses are related in varying degrees to Old Testament passages which are supplemented with references to the gospel accounts of the Passion. Similar lists of God's acts may be found in various Psalms, notably Psalms 78, 135, and 136. God's reproach of Israel for its ungratefulness and depravity is so pervasive a topic in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament as to require no further commentary.

Apart from the biblical sources, however, literary sources have been sought in various quarters, mostly Hebrew, Greek or Syrian. Anton Baumstark suggests Greek Good Friday poetry, attested in manuscripts from as early as the seventh century.

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10 Anton Baumstark, "Der Orient und die Gesänge der Adoratio crucis," Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft 2 (1922): 1-17. Though the resemblance is certainly striking, Baumstark acknowledges that the three Greek tropes which he cites are not the immediate source of the Improperia, but postulates an earlier, perhaps Syrian composition which underlies both Greek and Latin (14-16). The relevant texts are printed with a German translation by Adolf Rücker, "Die Adoratio Crucis am Karfreitag in den orientalischen Riten," in Miscellanea Liturgica in Honorem L. Cuniberti Mohlberg, vol. 1, Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae 22 (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1948), 384-87 (#3, #8 and #12).
Eric Werner claims that the Improperia were written as a kind of parody of the Hebrew Passover haggadah. He suggests that Melito of Sardes (second century) was the first to turn the Jewish praise litany into a pointedly anti-Semitic reproach of the Jews by Christ. Both of these scholars, however, ignore an important point: although the first three verses of the Popule meus are attested from the seventh century on, and are wide-spread by the eleventh century, evidence for the final Ego te me verses is not to be found in the manuscripts until the tenth century; earlier witnesses merely list the three initial Popule meus verses interspersed with the Agios


12Ibid., 282-86. Although the Improperia are similar in nature to Old Testament prophetic writings in tone and subject matter—i.e. the reproach of God’s wayward people—in the crucifixion setting they take on an undeniably anti-Semitic aspect since the accusations are to some extent aimed at the historical perpetrators of Christ’s death. However, that they were composed as a deliberate parody of the Hebrew haggadah seems doubtful as even Psalm 78 has more in common with the Improperia than these. That they owe their origin to Melito’s Easter-homily is even less convincing since, though the content may be similar, the rhetorical structure is not. See Stuart George Hall, ed., Melito of Sardis On Pascha and Fragments (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).


14Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, 2d ed., s.v. "Improperien."

15The eleventh century, according to Schmidt (794). The earliest evidence I have been able to discover is in liturgical manuscripts from Northern Italy dated s. x/xi to s. xi in volume fourteen of the Paléographie Musicale (see note 8, above): Bénévent VI. 39 (fols. 22r-23r); Bénévent VI. 40 (fol. 12r-12v); Lucques Chapitre 606 (fols. 155r-155v). All of these manuscripts include the tenth Ego te me verse.
Furthermore, the fact that the *Ego te me* verses repeat some events already present in the first three verses also indicates that the composition of the *Improperia* took place in two stages. Thus, a composition date which is closer to the earliest manuscript evidence is desirable. I have not been able to find the *Ego te me* verses in any of the edited Anglo-Saxon liturgical books, although the *Popule meus* section is mentioned in several, notably in the Leofric Missal and the *Regularis concordia*; it is also found in one of Ælfric’s pastoral letters.

Baumstark and Werner’s suggestion of eastern origins for the *Improperia* is probably correct, however, particularly if the source texts were translated into Latin at an early date. Another Syrian example of the reproaches of Christ is also quite early and exhibits points of resemblance to both the speech as it is found in Caesarius and

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16 Baumstark makes only a passing comment on this great discrepancy in date; his earliest examples of the *Improperia* seem to be two Roman manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, though these contain mere allusions and not the actual text (7; 13, n. 5). Cf. Römer’s perplexed comment: “Wie sie aber Jahrhundertelang in der Liturgie ein verstecktes Dasein führen konnten, um dann in neuerster Zeit plötzlich wieder aufzutauchen, bleibt vorerst in Dunkel gehüllt” (86).

17 The drinking of gall and vinegar, piercing of the side and whipping are repeated as are the exit from Egypt and manna in the desert from the Old Testament.


19 Ælfrics zweiter altenglischer Brief an Erzbischof Wulfstan (Chrismabrief’; Fehr, 63.
the *Improperia.* Ephraem the Syrian's homily, as translated into the Latin *De die iudicii,* treats the monologue in the following way:


He will ask for a reason for this negligence of ours and say to us: "For your sake I was made flesh. For your sake I lived openly on the earth. For your sake I was scourged. For your sake I was spat upon. For your sake I was struck in the face with hands. For your sake I was crucified. For your sake I was hanged on the tree. I was fed gall and given vinegar to drink so that I might make you holy and heavenly. My kingdom I gave to you. My paradise I opened to you. I called all of

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20Cook mentions this as a possible source for Caesarius' sermon, but the version he cites in his notes is not as close as that which I reproduce. Cf. Willard, "Vercelli Homily VIII and the Christ," 329-30.

21The text is transcribed from Salisbury, Cathedral Library MSS 9 and 13 (s. xiex and s. xi/xii, respectively) see Appendix A. This seems to be very close, though not identical, to the Ephraem text translated as a source in Allen and Calder, 86-93 (at 88). Salisbury 9 also contains a Latin source offering unique readings for two other OE homilies, Vercelli X and Ælfric's *CH II,* VII; Scragg, *Verc.,* 192, n.1. See J.E. Cross, "A Sermo de misericordia in Old English Prose," *Anglia* 108 (1990): 429-40.
you brothers. I presented you to my Father. I sent my Spirit to you. What more than all these things ought I to have done and did not do for you? I ask only your humble will so that you may be saved. I have not compelled you lest the cause of necessity be the occasion of your salvation. Tell me, sinners and mortals, possible according to nature, what have you suffered for me, your Lord, since I, impassible, suffered for you? Behold, therefore, the kingdom of life is prepared. Happiness rests in the everlasting light. Death is prepared, punishment of grief and darkness. Let each one choose as he wishes by his own will. May he walk in the right way.”

The propter vos formula is reminiscent of the repeated ego [propter] te of the liturgical version. However, this catalogue focuses exclusively on Christ's life and Passion rather than on the Old Testament. Although the accused are here addressed in the plural, and the content is somewhat different, the correspondences suggest that Caesarius may have based his speech on material similar to this text. Particularly striking in this regard is the reference to Christ's impassible nature, found only in Caesarius and Ephraem. Cook also observes that both set the speech at Judgment

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23 Caesarius: "Cum essem incommutabilis, pro te homo factus sum: cum essem inpassibilis, pro te pati dignatus sum"; Sermo LVII.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 253-54.
Day. For present purposes it is most significant to note the presence of an extra-
bishical monologue by Christ which originates in the East and has as its setting the
Judgment on Doomsday.

Another early analogue, again of Eastern origin and again forming a parallel
with the speech in the Caesarian sermon, is found in the Visio Pauli. In the version
edited by Silverstein from a ninth-century St. Gall manuscript, the speech follows the
intercession of St. Paul and Michael on behalf of those in hell; Christ's reply, before
he grants a periodic respite, runs as follows:

Exiuit uox filii dei per omnes poenas dicens posthaec, “Quid opus
fecistis ut postuletis refrigerium? Sanguis meus propter uos effusus est,
et nec penituistis. Propter uos coronam de spinis in capite portau
manusque meas confixerunt clausis, et nec condoluistis. Aquam petiui
pendens: dederunt mihi acetum cum felle mixtum. Lancea aperuerunt
latus meum dextrum propter nomen hominum. Servos meos, prophetas
et iustos occidistis. Propter uos de his omnibus dedi locum penitentiae,
et noluistis.25

The voice of the Son of God went forth in the midst of all the
punishments saying as follows: “What work did you do that you should
demand a respite? My blood was poured out for your sake, and you did
not repent. For your sake I bore the crown of thorns on my head and
they fixed my hands with nails, and you did not grieve. Hanging, I
asked for water; they gave me vinegar mixed with gall. They opened
my right side with a spear for the sake of the name of men. My
servants, prophets, and just men you killed. For your sake, I gave an
opportunity for penitence for all these things, and you were not
willing.”


25Theodore Silverstein, Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin
Another version offers the following variation:

Vox domini dixit, "Quare estis in pena? Cur poscitis a me requiem, cum nil boni feceratis? Quid passi estis pro me? Crucifixus sum pro uobis, lancea perforatus, clauiculis affixus. Insuper et mortuus sum pro uobis: uos non redemi argento uel auro, sed meo preciosissimo sangwine; dedi me morti, ut uos uiueretis. Vos fuistis fures, auari, superbi, infidi, mendaces, adulteri, homicidi, rapters, cupidi in terrenis actibus.\textsuperscript{26}

The voice of the Lord said: "Why are you in punishment? Why do you ask me for rest when you did nothing good? What did you suffer for me? I was crucified for you, pierced with a spear, fastened with nails, and, above all, I died for you. I did not redeem you with silver or gold but with my own precious blood. I gave myself to death, so that you might live. You were thieves, misers, proud, treacherous, liars, adulterers, murderers, rapists, ambitious in earthly accomplishments."

This is not part of a Judgment Day scene as it is in the OE homilies, but the setting is similar in that it takes place in the Otherworld. It resembles the previous speeches in the repetition of the propter vos (first example) and in the reproof that the sinners now in hell did not suffer for Christ while on earth. Like Ephraem, the author of the Visio Pauli has Christ ask quid passi estis pro me? The long version of the Visio Pauli was translated into OE, though it survives only partially in Oxford, Bodleian MS Junius 85/86.\textsuperscript{27}

These examples show that there were several monologues by Christ with a

\textsuperscript{26}"Redaction III" (b), ibid., 186.

well-established literary history prior to the late Anglo-Saxon period when the OE homilies were produced. The authors of the Improperia, Ephraem’s homily, and the Visio Pauli all strive to relate the Passion events from the point of view of the one who experienced them, and at the same time to make their significance clear to their present audience.

The Passion in Old English Homiletic Literature

One might assume that an event so central to the Christian faith as the suffering and death of its founder would be a frequently retold narrative, but this is not in fact true of the Anglo-Saxon period. Although the redemptive act is often alluded to in the surviving literature, its details are only occasionally recounted. Here I will examine the nature of the narration when it does occur in order to suggest how such accounts compare with Christ’s monologue.28

From the pen of the most prolific Anglo-Saxon homilist, Ælfric, there are astonishingly few references to the details of the Passion. In his Catholic Homilies, he provides two pieces for Palm Sunday which deal extensively with the events before the crucifixion.29 In homily XIV of the first series (Dominica palmarum) the

28There is an interesting OE confessional prayer which is clearly related to the texts about to be discussed. It juxtaposes the sufferings of Christ with the penitent’s failures; Lars-G. Hallander, “Two Old English Confessional Prayers,” Stockholm Studies in Medieval Philology, n.s. 3 (1968): 87-110.

29CH I, XIV and CH II, XIV.

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focus is naturally on the entry into Jerusalem and its typological interpretation, but,
even so, the Passion account is surprisingly brief:

Pa Iudei genamon hine on frige æfen. and heoldon hine þa niht. and þæs on merien hi hine gefæstnodon. on rode mid feower næglum. and mid spere gewundedon; and þa ymbe nontid þa ða he forðferde.30

The Jews took him on Friday evening and kept him that night. And in the morning they fastened him to the cross with four nails and wounded him with a spear. And then around the ninth hour he departed.

In CH II, XIV there is a much more detailed narrative of the sufferings of Christ. The account is interspersed with commentary and typological exposition; for example, Ælfric explains that the thorns in Christ’s crown signify mankind’s sins, the bitter drink is Christ’s death, the water and blood from his side are baptism and salvation. No attempt is made by Ælfric to move the audience with the significance of these events, except perhaps in the modifier welhreadwlice (‘cruelly’) when referring to how Christ was fastened to the cross and hanged.31 This sober account, though comprehensive, was certainly not designed to rouse an emotional response from its audience.

Other mentions of the Passion in Ælfric scarcely receive more commentary than these. In his Sermo de initio creaturae, a synopsis of biblical history, Christ’s death is introduced with the following:

30CH I, XIV.181-84.
31CH II, XIV.235.
Ne mihton hi ealle hine acwellan. gif he sylf nolde; for ðy he com to us ðæt he wolde for us deað þrowian. and swa eal mancyn þa ðe gelyfað mid his agenum deaðe. alysan fram hellewite; He nolde genyman us neadunge of deofles anwealde. buton he hit forwyrtle.\textsuperscript{32}

Nor might all of them have killed him if he had not himself wished it. He came to us because he desired to suffer death for us and so by his own death to redeem from the torments of hell all mankind who believe. He did not want to take us from the power of the devil by compulsion, unless he [the devil] had forfeited it.

The redemptive and voluntary nature of the sacrifice are emphasized, and the act itself is quickly passed over:

\textbf{Crist ða ðeðæfode ðæt ða wælhræwan hine genamon. and gebundon. and on rodehæncgene acwealdan.}\textsuperscript{33}

Christ then suffered that those bloodthirsty ones took and bound him and killed him by hanging him on the cross.

The homily then proceeds to the burial and Harrowing. In another Ælfrician homily, \textit{ÆSupp. XI}, the Passion is mentioned as part of a summary of the observance of feast days:

\textbf{Eft we weorðiað on ufeweardan Lengtene on halgum rædingum þæs Hælendes ðrowunge, hu he wæs gefæstnod for urum synnum on rode on Langgan Frigedæge mid feower næglum, and gewundod mid spere syððan he gewit[e]jn wæs, and hu he wæs bebyrged on þam ylcan dæge, and us swa alysde mid his agenum deaðe.} \textsuperscript{34}

Also we celebrate the beginning of Lent with the holy narratives of the

\textsuperscript{32}CH I, 1.269-73.

\textsuperscript{33}CH I, 1.275-76.

\textsuperscript{34}ÆSupp., XI.33-39.
Saviour's Passion: how he was fastened on the cross with four nails for our sins on Good Friday and was wounded with a spear after he had departed; and how he was buried on that same day, and thus redeemed us with his own death.

Again the focus here is on the redemptive nature of the crucifixion.

If Ælfric provides the sober facts, Wulfstan does not want his audience to be unaware of their duty in the face of these facts. For Wulfstan, Christ’s Passion immediately brought to mind the obligation of the believer to offer recompense. In three of his homilies Wulfstan provides details of the crucifixion in the form of lists. In Bethurum’s homily II, a piece on the end times and final judgment, Wulfstan concludes with Christ’s display of his wounds and his demand at the final tribunal: “and wile þonne anrædlice witan hu we him þæt geleanedan, and hu we urne cristendom gehealden habban” (‘and he will earnestly wish to know how we repaid him for that and how we kept our Christianity’).³⁵

Homily VI is a somewhat more extended treatment, noting the mercy and humility of God in the incarnation. As in Christ’s Address, Wulfstan refers to the crib and swaddling clothes of the Nativity, but expands the human sufferings to include hunger, thirst, heat and cold, and the details of Christ’s ministry. But Wulfstan is more explicit than Ælfric in drawing a close connection between the meaning of the Passion and his present audience: “Ac he alysde us þurh his deaf of ecan deafðe and geswutelode mid his æriste þæt he hæfð us gerymed rihtne weg to

³⁵Bethurum, II.67-69.
ecan life” (‘But he redeemed us through his death from eternal death and made clear by his resurrection that he has opened up the straight way to eternal life’). And the Christian response is quite clear:

Donne is us mycel þærf þæt we eac þæt understandan þæt hit to þæm dome nu georne nealæc̄ þe he sylf to cymð; forðam þonne he wile æt us witan hu we him geleanod habben eall þæt he for us þolode.37

Then there is great need for us also to understand that that doom now quickly approaches to which he himself will come; therefore, he will desire to know from us how we have repaid him for all that he suffered for us.

Wulfstan’s most detailed account is found in Homily VII:

Hine man þand, and hine man swang, and æt nyhstan on rode aheng, and him ægðer þurhdraf mid isenum næglm ge fet ge handa and swa ða ludeas þurh deofles lære þa menniscnesse to deade acoman.38

He was bound; he was whipped and at last hanged on the cross and both his feet and hands were driven through with iron nails. And so the Jews through the devil’s teaching brought that humanity to death.

Repayment is again called for: “Witodlice witan we moton hu we Criste geleanian eal þæt he for us and for ure lufan þafode and ðolode” (‘Truly we must understand how to repay Christ for all that he suffered and endured for us and for love of us’).39 A variation on this pattern is the statement in Homily XIII:

36Bethurum, VI.185-87.
37Bethurum, VI.193-96.
38Bethurum, VII.55-58.
39Bethurum, VII.76-78.
Let it never seem too much to us, but may it always seem too little that we give good thanks to God, since we will never be able to repay him for those things which he has done for us and daily does, and still will do, when we most have need, if we wish to earn that for ourselves.

Wulfstan’s activities as a statesman and writer of laws may have been responsible for his particular perception of Christ’s sufferings, but his forensic emphasis on compensation is integral to Christ’s monologue and is a common theme in the anonymous homilies as well. The anonymous accounts of the Passion differ in length, content and setting, but the almost unvarying lesson that they emphasize is that mankind owes Christ something in return for his suffering. Blickling VII, after a narration of Christ’s life, says:

Uton we forbon gebencean hwylc handlean we him forb to berenne habban, þonne he eal þis recþ and sægþ æt þisse ilcan tide, þonne he gesiteþ on his dom setle.

Let us therefore consider what compensation we have to bring before him, when he will recount and tell all this at this same time, when he sits on his judgment seat.

Similarly, following a Passion narrative, Blickling II asks: “Hwæt wille we on domes

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40Bethurum, XIII.48-52.

41Cf. Soul and Body II (ll. 86-88a): “ðonne wile dryhten sylf dæda gehyran, / æt ealra monna gehwam muþes reorde wunde wiþerlean.”

42Blick., VII, 91.
dæg forþberan þaes we for urum drihtne arefnedon, nu he swa mycel for ure lufan
geprowode?” (‘What will we bring forth on Domesday that we suffered for our Lord,
now that he suffered so much for love of us?’). And Vercelli XXI after reciting
select events of Christ’s life says: “Uton efstan nu þæt we magon him gewrixl
agyldan on swa myclum swa he us gefultumian wille ongean ealle þa god þe he us
forgifen hæfð” (‘Let us hasten, now that we may yield him requital, as much as he
desires to help us, in exchange for all those benefits which he has granted us’).

Finally, Napier XL describes the scene on Doomsday when Christ will display his
wounds and the cross and “wyle þonne æt us witan, hu we him þæt geleanedon” (‘he
will then want to know from us how we repaid him for that’).

From these examples one can see that the Anglo-Saxon homilists, with the exception of Ælfric,
seem to recite the Passion events, not only in order to present the gospel narrative, but
also to stress the human obligation of compensation. As will be shown below, this
provides a valuable insight into the purposes of Christ’s Address in OE homilies.

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43 Blick, II, 25.
44 Verc., XXI.96-98.
### Manuscripts

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There are nine OE homilies which feature Christ’s Address and are found in these eight manuscripts dating from the early tenth to the twelfth century. These homiliaries are, for the most part, liturgically arranged and consist primarily of Ælfrician items; in other words, the anonymous homilies were used to supplement Ælfric’s collections in areas where his two Catholic Homilies series were found to be insufficient in some way.

The two exceptions to this type of manuscript context are the early Vercelli Homily Book (A) and the miscellanea collected in the margins of a copy of Bede’s

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⁴⁶Refer to chapter 2, pages 52-53 for the sigla and dating schemes employed in this chart.
Ecclesiastical History (D). Neither of these exhibit familiarity with Ælfric's works and are, as noted in the previous chapter, collections which reflect the tastes of the compiler rather than the need to supply texts for the annual preaching cycle. Copies of the two OE homilies found in these manuscripts (HomHulme and HomScragg VIII) also appear in later homiliaries in which they are designated for a specific occasion in the church year: HomHulme in the early-twelfth century H(C), and we find HomScragg VIII recopied as part of an Ælfrician series in E(D) and F(E).

There are, in fact, several different seasons of the church year for which these homilies were designated. The earliest such occurrences assign this homily (HomScragg VIII) to the first Sunday after Epiphany; these are E(D) and F(E), two homiliaries copied from a common ancestor at the beginning of the eleventh century. These collections contain Ælfrician homilies of the first recension, according to Godden, and their exemplar was probably formed around 1000. Both supplement the Ælfrician series with anonymous items, particularly in the Christmas season (one additional homily), the Sundays after Epiphany (one or two

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47 Willard says of the homilies in D that "practically all of them abound in apocryphal material of an uncanonical nature, what indeed, might be called ecclesiastical fiction"; he suggests that they belong "to an earlier period, to what one might call the unreformed, or pre-Ælfric period" (Two Apocrypha, 2).

48 Kenneth Sisam, Studies in the History of Old English Literature, 156.

49 Godden, CH II, introdu., xxv.

50 Scragg, "Corpus of Vernacular Homilies," 240.
additional homilies) and Lent (eight additional homilies).

Two manuscripts, K(O) and J(N), have already been discussed in the previous chapter, since these feature a homily which has both the Soul’s Address to the Body and also a truncated version of Christ’s Address to the Sinner (HomAssmann XIV). As previously noted, this homily was part of a group of anonymous homilies for the Sundays after Epiphany which was preferred over Ælfrician material in K(O). The text under consideration here is designated for the fourth and sixth Sundays after Epiphany.

Another liturgical season to which homilies with Christ’s Address are assigned is Rogationtide. In O(T) we find two different homilies, HomBazireCross X and HomBazireCross XI, as the Rogation Tuesday and Wednesday sermons. This does not involve an exact repetition of material, however, since in the second of these the homilist reshapes the Address into narrative form and produces his own, brief monologue. The insertion of these two homilies takes place in the predominantly Ælfrician part of this homiliary in which, however, none of his Rogationtide homilies is used, anonymous works being preferred for this season.

There is a third period in the church year for which we find a homily incorporating Christ’s monologue. An early twelfth-century compiler copied it as a second homily for Easter (Sermo in resurrectione domini), again in a collection of mostly Ælfrician material, H(C); it supplements an Ælfrician homily for the same
event which briefly mentions the Harrowing of Hell. HomHulme may have been added because its first part is a summary of the Harrowing, or because an enumeration of the Passion events by the risen Christ is also suitable following Holy Week.

A study of the manuscripts, then, shows us that sermons containing Christ’s Address were placed side by side with Ælfric’s homilies almost as soon as the latter were published and that they continued to be viewed as suitable texts when supplementary material was needed. Their use for the Sundays after Epiphany, Rogationtide and Easter, suggests that, in some cases, the compilers of Anglo-Saxon homiliaries selected them for style rather than appropriate seasonal content. In the following I will examine the features which justify their choice.

**Use of the Latin Source in the Old English Homilies**

As noted above, the immediate Latin source for Christ’s Address in the OE homilies has been identified as sermon LVII by Caesarius of Arles. Morin edits this sermon from manuscripts dating from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries; like much of Caesarius’ output, this homily was often transmitted under Augustine’s name. The Anglo-Saxon homilists removed the speech from its context in Caesarius’ sermon. In the parts not used, the Gallican archbishop speaks of his own obligation of addressing

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51CH I, XV.166-70.
harsh words to his congregation in order that this treatment, like unpleasant but necessary medicinal remedies, may heal sinners. Caesarius makes the transition to Judgment Day by considering God’s benefits, listing briefly Christ’s deeds and urging his audience to repay these. After a short description of the Doomsday setting, the speech follows. The brief remarks following the Address urge repentance in order to avoid being the object of such a reproach. Nothing apart from the speech is taken from Caesarius’ sermon by the OE homilists; even the Judgment day scenario is replaced with alternative treatments by all the homilists.\textsuperscript{52} The most likely reason for this selection—assuming, of course, that the writers had the complete Latin sermon in front of them—is the rhetorical potential of the Address itself; however, it should also be noted that Anglo-Saxon homilists rarely speak of themselves in the self-referential way employed by Caesarius in the first part of this sermon and it was perhaps discarded for that reason.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{52}Christ III (ll. 1365-78), however, seems to draw primarily on the sentence preceding the Address in Caesarius for its description of the Doomsday setting; See Biggs, “The Sources of Christ III,” 30.

\textsuperscript{53}Scragg suggests that the Anglo-Saxon homilists were not working from the Caesarian homily as printed by Morin because there are certain links between them which suggest an intermediate source: (1) HomAssmann XIV and HomHulme follow the speech with Peter’s locking of Hell; (2) HomScragg VIII, HomHulme and Christ III all mention that the speech is given as to one man; (3) and, less convincingly, that the phrases “of neornavanoge ascopen and ic be wolde eft miltsian” occur in that order only in these three versions (Verc., VIII.51-52); cf. HomHulme: “awearp of ðan wuldræ to deaðe. ða ic me geeaðmedde” (Hulme, 612). In part, Scragg’s hypothesis may be confirmed by the observation that the first part of Morin’s text is never used in the OE. However, my comparison suggests that the sources of HomScragg VIII, HomHulme, and HomBazireCross X were quite close to Caesarius and that HomBazireCross XI and HomAssmann XIV were

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There are three OE versions which are very closely related to Caesarius’ homily: HomScragg VIII, HomBazireCross X and HomHulme. A comparison of these adaptations shows that they are independent translations since each translates phrases from the Latin not found in the others and uses distinct vocabulary. If one includes the poetic version in the analysis, most of the Caesarian text is reflected in OE adaptations. One exception is the passage immediately preceding the Discedite:

Sed tu despexisti in homine deum, in infirmo salutem, in via reditum, in iudice veniam, in cruce vitam, in suppliciis medicinam. Et quia post omnia mala tua ad medicamenta paenitentiae confugere noluisti, ab auditu malo non mereberis liberari, sed auditurus es cum tuis similibus."  

At this point Caesarius has returned to the medicinal metaphor employed in the earlier part of his sermon which was not used by the Anglo-Saxon homilists. The section is also rather allusive and difficult and probably seemed extraneous to the homilists’ purposes. Two more sentences are conflated in the OE homilies in a similar way:

**Latin:** Suscepi dolores tuos, tu tibi gloriari meam darem: suscepi mortem tuam, ut tu in aeternum viveres. Conditus iacui in sepulcro, ut tu regnares in caelo.

**HomBazireCross X:** Ic onfeng eall middaneardlicu sar to þan þæt ðu wære on heofonum wlitig.

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probably based on vernacular sources.

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54 *Sermo* LVII.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 254; translated above, page 131.

55 *Sermo* LVII.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 251.

56 Bazire and Cross, X.109-110.
This suggests that the Latin phrases between *dolores tuos* and *ut tu regnares in caelo* were possibly lacking in many of the versions current in England. The author of the poem, however, must have had the full version:

> Ic onfeng þin sar þæt þu moste gesælig mines ðapelrices eadig neotan, ond þe mine deaðe deore gebohte þæt longe lif þæt þu on leohete sīþan, wlitig, womma leas, wunian mostes. Læg min flæschoma in foldan bigrafen, nipre gehyded, se þe nængum scod, in byrgenne, þæt þu meahte beorhte uppe on roderum wesan, rice mid englum. (ll. 1460-68)

I accepted your pain so that you would be able to enjoy, blessed and happy, my native country, and with my death I dearly bought for you that long-lasting life, so that you afterwards might dwell in the light, radiant and without stains. My body, which injured no one, lay buried in the earth, hidden below in the sepulcher, so that you might be above in the heavens, mighty among the angels.

Apart from possible discrepancies in the sources, each of the versions is adapted from the Latin according to the homilists’ purposes and tastes. HomScragg

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57Hulme, 613.

58Verc., VIII.62-64.
VIII, for example, omits several phrases from the Passion sequence. Instead, the author is prompted by the mention of the gall and vinegar which Christ drank to include the following unique elaboration: "And ic dranc eced wiō eallan gemenged, for þan þe ic þe dyde m[i]nre swetnesse wyrōne" (‘And I drank vinegar mixed with gall in order to make you worthy of my sweetness’). Indeed, the homilist seems to depart from his source more often after this: to the Harrowing of Hell allusion he adds: “to þan þæt ic þa ðine sawle þanon generede” (‘so that I might save your soul from hell’). He adds more specific details to the nail-wounds (“on minum handum and on minum fotum”) and to the side wound (spere). Then, at the conclusion of the speech where Caesarius, HomHulme and HomBazireCross X compare the heaviness of the cross with that of mankind’s sins, the author of HomScragg VIII indicates his own interpretation of Christ’s demand in terms of inheritance and personal relationship:

For hwan forwyrmdest ðu me þæs mines agenan yrifes? Ìc wæs þin fæder and þin dryhten and emne eallinga þin freond geworden, and ðu hit þa sealdest þinum ehtere, þam awyrgedan and þam beswicendan diofle.

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59 HomScragg VIII does not translate *inridentium palmas et sputa suscepi, flagellis caesus* and *adfixus cruci.*

60 *Verc.*, VIII.55-56.

61 *Verc.*, VIII.59.

Why did you deny me my own property? I was your Father and your Lord and even became entirely your friend, and you gave it then to your persecutor, the accursed one, the deceiving devil.

Only the subsequent mention of Christ’s impassible nature and the following *Discedite* assures us that the author of HomScragg VIII probably still had a version of the Caesarian sermon in front of him.

HomBazireCross X, on the other hand, has skipped over the entire detailed section of the Passion to the point where Christ shows his wounds, a suitable choice for the homilist who prefaces the Address with the following 63:

Donne beforan him eall eorðe forbyrneð and eall heofona mægn stranglice beoð onstyred on þæm micclan domesdæge, and seo rod þe ure Drihten on þrowode, seo byð æteowed ofer Cristes gesyhœ, and se þyrmena helm on his heafde and þa wunda on his sidan ealle þa beoð opene.64

Then before him the entire earth will be burned up and all the might of the heavens will be greatly stirred up on that great Doomsday. And the cross of our Lord, on which he suffered, will be revealed above the sight of Christ, and the crown of thorns on his head and the wounds in his side will all be revealed.

HomBazireCross X also omits the *Discedite*, possibly because this is a homily focused on the mercy rather than the wrath of God; its finality might detract from the

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63Bazire and Cross comment on the fact that this homilist seems to be working from Latin rather than vernacular sources and that his “controlled use of the Latin passage is apparent” (126).

64Bazire and Cross, X.96-100,
possibility of repentance.\textsuperscript{65}

HomHulme is the most complete OE version apart from the poem. Only rarely does this version depart from the Latin, most often to omit or to simplify.\textsuperscript{66} The only substantial addition takes place at the end and is puzzling considering that this homily follows the speech with the successful intercession for the damned by Mary, St. Peter, and the archangel Michael:

And ic eow betyne todæg heofona rices duru togeanes, swa ge betyndon eowra dura togenes þearfum ð[e] an mine naman to eow cigdon. Nelle ic gehiran todæg eowre steþe þe ma ðe ge woldon gehiran þæs earman steþe.\textsuperscript{67}

And today I shut the door of the kingdom of the heavens against you, as you shut your doors against the needy who in my name cried out to you. Nor am I willing today to hear your voice any more than you would hear the voice of the wretched.

Although the allusion to the biblical speech by Christ in the gospel of Matthew is quite appropriate in the Judgment Day context, the finality of the locked doors is immediately contradicted by the homilist’s unfortunate addition of the intercessions.

The remaining two occurrences of Christ’s Address are greatly shortened and possibly even reproduced from memory. The speech in HomAssmann XIV moves

\textsuperscript{65}It is also possible that the Latin exemplar did not have it, as it is not found in the versions of Caesarius’ homily printed in PL 39.2206-2208 and CSEL 21, 262-66 (\textit{Fausti Retensis Opera}, ed. August Engelbrecht [Wien: F. Tempksy, 1891]).

\textsuperscript{66}HomHulme leaves out the phrases \textit{ego terrenis artubus infudi spiritum, adfixus cruci}, and \textit{animam meam inter tormenta dimisi}.

\textsuperscript{67}Hulme, 613.
quickly from creation ("ic þe geworhte") to details of the Passion, listed out of chronological order: "and ic for þe prowude and ic wæs a rode ahangen and mid swipum geswungen" (‘and I suffered for you, and I was hanged on the cross and was scourged with whips’). The homilist summarizes the main point of the speech, perhaps based on his vernacular exemplar’s translation of munera (gife in HomBazireCross X): “Eala man, hwar syndon þa lean, þe þu me dydest for minre þrowunge?” (‘Alas, man, where are those compensations which you made to me for my suffering?’). Then, supplying his own transition— “Ne gemundest ðu na, hwilc hit bið on helle?” (‘Did you not consider at all what it will be like in hell?’)—he moves on to a description of hell similar to that found in HomScragg VIII: “þar bið eagana wop and toða geheaw. Þar bið unadwæsced fyr. Þær beoð egesfulle wyrmas, þa þe wundiað and slitað þa synnfullan sawle” (‘There will be weeping of eyes and grinding of teeth. There will be the unquenchable fire. There will be terrible worms, those which wound and tear apart the sinful souls’). Like the author of HomHulme, he follows the Address with a portrayal of St. Peter locking hell. This procedure is

69 Assmann, XIV.126-27.
70 Assmann, XIV.127-28.
71 Assmann, XIV.128-30.
72 This agreement of HomAssmann XIV with HomHulme has prompted Scragg to postulate an intermediary Latin source which combined the two motifs (Verc., 141-2), but the two versions of Peter locking hell have almost nothing except the subject matter in common.
in keeping with his practice throughout of excerpting the salient parts from other, most likely vernacular, sources, otherwise one might rightly consider the connection to Caesarius too tenuous for proof.\textsuperscript{73}

HomBazireCross XI, in its introductory passage, includes an extended consideration of the Passion:

Utan gehencan hu ælmihtig God for us prowode and gehafode: ærest þa he wæs on heofona rices hyhôu upahafen and on his wuldre unowendedelic, þa geeadmette he hine to þæn þæt he syððan on þisne middaneard wæs acenned and to menn geworden; and he ða her on worulde wæs þrowigendlic monn, and gyt he hine sylfne geeadmette to þon þæt he wolde for mæncynnes þearfe gehrowian and hine sylfne lætan for ealles middaneardes are and alysnesse ahon and acwellan. Ærest he þæt gehafode his agenum willan, þæt hine mann for ure þearfe genam and geband, and he wæs mid swipum beswungen and hine man on þæt neb hrahte, and hine man mid bradum handum on þæt neb sloh and him þyrnene helm for oðerne cynehelm on þæt heafod sette; and eall he þæt eadmodlice for ure þearfe gehrowode and micle maran and mænigfealdre þing þonne ic nu on þisse hwile areccan mæge oððe asecgan, þa þe he for mæncynnes hælo and are on him sylfum æræfnode and forbær.\textsuperscript{74}

Let us consider how almighty God suffered and endured for us: first when he was raised up in the height of the kingdom of the heavens and unchangeable in his glory, then he humbled himself to the extent that he then was born into this world and became man; and then he was here in the world a suffering man, and yet he humbled himself to the extent that he wished to suffer for mankind's need, and he allowed himself to be hanged and killed for the benefit and redemption of all the world. First he voluntarily suffered that men took and bound him for our need, and he was whipped with scourges and men struck him in the face and with broad hands hit him in the face and set a helm of thorns for another

\textsuperscript{73}Scragg, "Vernacular Homilies," 245.

\textsuperscript{74}Bazire and Cross, X.4-17.
crown on that head; and all that he humbly suffered for our need and much more and more various things than I now in this time may relate or tell, things which he endured and suffered on himself for mankind's salvation and benefit.

Despite the repetitious nature of this account, the similarity to the monologue is not only striking, it in fact seems compelling enough to indicate that it is a rough version of the Address which this homilist had either heard or read and was reproducing from memory. 

Certain phrases in particular recall the Address. The reference to the impassible and unchanging nature of Christ is not found elsewhere in narratives of the Passion, but here Christ is said to have been *on his wuldre unonwendedlic* ('unchangeable in his glory') and that he *her on worulde wæs prowigendlic monn* ('here in the world was a suffering man') as is found in Christ's monologue in HomScragg VIII: "Ac hwæt druge ðu on þam, þa ic wæs unawendedlic in minre godcundnesse, and þa ic wæs [u]nþrowendlic, þæt ic wolde for þe þrowiende bion?" ('But what did you endure in that, when I was unchangeable in my divinity and when I was impassible, that I desired to suffer for you?').

Additional phrases, as suggested by Bazire and Cross, are equally close to the other OE monologues:

HomBazireCross XI has *mid swipum beswungen* as also in HomAssmann XIV we

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75 Bazire and Cross, comparing Caesarius and this section, merely note that the Latin sermon "has some part to play" (137). Scragg seems to suggest a closer relationship when he says that by adding the beginning section and the Judgment Day speech, the "influence of the speech becomes clearer" (*Verc.*, 141, n. 2).

76 *Verc.*, VIII.71-73. *Sermo* LVII.4: "Cum essem incommutabilis, pro te homo factus sum: cum essem inpassibilis, pro te pati dignatus sum" (Morin, CCSL 103, 253-54).
find *mid swipum geswungen*\textsuperscript{77} and its *mid bradum handum on þæt neb sloh* may be compared to HomHulme’s *mid bradum handum slogh on min nebb.*\textsuperscript{78} But there are also additions which this homilist has taken from other sources such as Christ giving up his spirit and a reference to the Harrowing of Hell.\textsuperscript{79} In any case, it seems clear that the homilist knew of some, probably vernacular, version of Christ’s Address.\textsuperscript{80}

This supposition is confirmed by the fact that the homilist later in the homily does return to the Judgment Day scene after an exhortation to penitence appropriate to Rogationtide. He provides, perhaps from some other source, a unique version of the Address, having already “used up” the contents of the usual speech. The author of HomBazireCross XI makes two comparisons which are similar to the type encountered in the Soul’s Address to the Body (why would you not do this, so that I might...?)�

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{77}HomHulme: “me man swang mid swipan” (Hulme, 612).

\textsuperscript{78}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{79}“And he þa his þæt halige heafod onhylde and his gast on his Fæder hand ageaf and on his geweald bebead. And eac to helwarum nyþer astah and ðone ealdan wiþerweardan feond þær geband and getigde; and mænige halige sawla þæra manna þe him ær her on worulde gehyrdon and gecwemdon he þonon up ateah to heofona rices hyhðo and to his wuldre geledde” (Bazire and Cross, XI.20-25). Cf. John 19:30: “et inclinato capite tradidit spiritum.”

\textsuperscript{80}Bazire and Cross comment that “the sermon appears to have been written freely and without reference to a book” and this his description of Judgment Day seems to have been “produced by an author who has heard other vernacular sermons using the same theme” (136). Cf. Scragg, *Verc.*, 141, n. 2.

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Eala, þu man, forhwan noldest þu þas wunda gelacnian þas ic for þe þafiende wæs, to þon þæt ic ealle þine wunda gelacnode? Oðde forhwan noldest þu ðysne þýrnenan helm me of þæm heafde alysan, to þan þæt ic ðe of hellehæfte nearwan alysan and of deofles anwealde?

Alas, you man, why would you not treat those wounds which I was enduring for you in order that I might cure all your wounds? Or why would you not loosen this thorny crown from my head, in order that I might free you from the oppressive imprisonment and the power of the devil?

However, the imagery of the sinner refusing to heal Christ’s wounds or to free Christ’s head from the crown of thorns is too obscure to be effective in the homiletic context. The Discedite in the conclusion of the speech matches the other versions, and again seems to echo the kind of antithetical list frequently encountered in vernacular homilies:

Gewitað ge, awyrgerdan gastas, fram me in þæt forwyrde lif and in þa nyoðemestan helle, of þissum godcundan gemanan on deofla gemanan, and of þissum heofonlican heape in þon hellican þreat.

Depart from me, you accursed souls, into that life of destruction and into the lowest hell, from this godly company into the company of devils and from this heavenly assembly into that hellish throng.

The question as to whether this Address belongs to the same tradition at all, must be

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81 Bazire and Cross, XI.75-78.

82 The medicinal imagery of his first sentence might imply that the author had read Caesarius’ entire sermon and had assimilated the latter’s prefatory imagery with the reproach of the Address, but it seems more likely that he was working from vernacular sources and these do not appear to have ever adapted this part of the Latin.

83 Bazire and Cross, XI.80-83.
answered both negatively and positively: the material of Christ’s monologue has been incorporated earlier into the homily and converted from direct speech into narrative. In its usual place stands a weaker substitute which summarizes, in a circuitous way, the reproach of Christ. The meandering nature of this homily supports the verdict that it was not well thought out, but was perhaps put together in a more or less ad hoc fashion.

It is, of course, impossible to determine with certainty the nature of the exemplar used by each of these homilists. One Latin homily, to be found in the homiliary known as Pembroke 25 (Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25), will illustrate the possibility of alternative adaptations of Caesarius’ sermon. In this homily entitled Omelia dominicus iii qudragesimus, the speech follows a generally admonitory introduction and the briefest mention of Judgment Day.84 Christ’s Address is greatly shortened, omitting the incarnation and most of the accusations in the conclusion. Furthermore, the homily takes a very different turn following the speech: the damned are allowed to respond claiming ignorance of God, prophets and law. Then the patriarchs and prophets step forward one by one to testify that they were indeed witnesses to God’s truth. Here we have Christ’s Address adapted for a similar purpose—the trial of the damned—but the formulaic dismissal of the accused

84 The homily has no extant OE parallels and therefore is not edited in the partial edition of Pembroke 25 by J.E. Cross. See Appendix B for my transcription of the monologue.
is replaced with an extended courtroom scene which expands the testimony on God's behalf to include witnesses from the whole of biblical and Church history.

The most important feature of this text, evidently known in late Anglo-Saxon England, is that it includes at least two variants of the Caesarian text which agree with two of the OE homilies. Pembroke 25 has *de limo terrae* for Caesarius *de limo* where HomScragg VIII and HomBazireCross X have *of eorpan lame*. And Pembroke 25 closes the speech with the question *et tu pro his quid fecisti?* where HomScragg VIII has the following: “And ic þis eal fremede for ðe. Hwæt gedydest ðu for me?” These points of agreement suggest that certain Latin versions used in England may have featured some modifications to the Caesarian text.

**Setting of the Monologue in Old English Homilies**

Christ's Address to the Damned has a particular effectiveness because of its monologue format, but much of its force is derived from the particular setting in which it is invariably used. The Judgment Day scene which is set in the future and the content of the speech which treats events of the historical past are juxtaposed in the audience's mind, so that the present moment, suspended as it is between these two

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85 Verc., VIII.47. Bazire and Cross, X.100.

86 Verc., VIII.59-60.

87 Pembroke 25 also has two further additions not found in the OE version *proprio sanguine te redemi* and *in cruci*. See Appendix B.

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time references, becomes the central event.

The homilists recognize Christ’s Address as a compelling preaching device, but each follows a different methodology for incorporating it into his homily. Though its length differs from homily to homily, it holds a place of prominence in each, whether comprising the bulk of the sermon, as in HomScragg VIII, or supplying its climax as in HomBazireCross XI or HomAssmann XIV.

In most of the homilies in which the speech occurs, we can observe that the homilists anticipated the Judgment Day scene in the choice of his prefatory material. HomScragg VIII is particularly well wrought in its early introduction of the Judgment and the interlacing of Christ’s Passion with Doomsday themes. The homilist begins by telling his audience that Christ suffered “þæt he wolde þæt we wæron gearwe þænne he þis lif endode” (‘because he wanted us to be ready when he ended this life’).88 He moves swiftly to his second reference point with the topos that it is better to confess now before one person, than on Doomsday before the angels and all the inhabitants of heaven when Christ comes in the clouds and nothing will be concealed.89 Instead of moving right into Christ’s address, however, this homilist for

88Verc., VIII.7-8.

89The relationship of this motif to other occurrences has been examined by Malcolm Godden in “An Old English Penitential Motif,” ASE 2 (1973): 231ff. Godden’s statement that the motif in Vercelli VIII (HomScragg VIII), because of its similarity to AESupp. XXVII must therefore be based on a source which contained all three hosts, rather than just the angels, should be modified in light of Traherm’s discovery of the relationship of this part of Vercelli VIII to Caesarius LVIII.2 which reads: “Quicumque se modo, dum licet, emendare
a moment inserts an appropriate preparatory remark which guides the audience in its consideration of the dramatic events to follow:

Uton we nu geðencan hwylce we nu syn and hu us þonne lysteð. Hwæt, we sidðan ne magon nane lade gedon, ac we sculon gehwyl[c]ra þinga Gode riht ongyldan on urum sylfra sawlum, ealles ðæs ðe we him on anegum þi[n]gum abulgon, butan we ær eaðmodlice beten.90

Let us now consider what we now are and what we will then desire. Alas, afterward we will not be able to make any defence, but we must for everything pay what is due to God with our own souls for all that in which we have in anything angered him, unless we should have humbly done penance beforehand.

Having added a Doomsday setting from the vernacular tradition (see below), the homilist proceeds with a full-length version of the speech which occupies most of the remainder of his text.

HomBazireCross X builds up to the speech with similar skill, beginning with a call to timely confession and penance, reminding the audience that one does not know when one will die. The homilist invites his audience to consider Doomsday, the division of the righteous and the sinful and the helplessness of all when they are left

neglexerit, ante illum caelestem populum primum excepturus erit de confusione subplicium.” To this one should add another, earlier sentence: “cogiternus quales erimus in die iudicii purissimis angelorum conspectibus offerendi, et aeterno iudici rationem de libris conscientiae reddituri” (Morin, CCSL 103, 255). Together these comments form a satisfactory basis for the OE “beforan Gode sylfum and beforan his englum and beforan eallum þam heofencundan weorode,” especially considering that the homilist seems to have used other parts of Caesarius LVIII. Trahern, “Caesarius of Arles,” 109.

90Verc., VIII.28-32. The section draws on ideas found in Caesarius LVIII; see Scragg, Verc., 140.
with nothing but body and soul (i.e. without earthly wealth and influence).\textsuperscript{91} Like HomScragg VIII, this homily does not proceed directly to Christ’s Address, but the homilist carefully prepares his audience by focusing on what God expects of us, cleanness of soul and body produced by penance and good deeds:

\begin{quote}
Menn \textit{þa leofestan, we sceolon mid monigfealdum godum ure sawla clænsian, mid fæstenum and mid ælmesdædum and mid clænum gebedum}.\textsuperscript{92}
\end{quote}

Dearest people, we must with manifold good deeds cleanse our souls: with fastings and almsdeeds and with pure prayer.

Only then does he return to a description of the hosts at Doomsday and the need to be watchful as one does not know the time of its occurrence. A portrayal of Christ follows: he appears as at the crucifixion with the crown of thorns and wounds in his side, a dramatically effective way of helping the audience to visualize the persona of the following speech.

Both HomScragg VIII and HomBazireCross X thus weave a pattern of penitential and Doomsday motifs, anticipating the full dramatic setting well before the actual Judgment Day trial scene and Christ’s Address. Source studies suggest that these homilists composed these preparatory sections originally, using commonplaces

\textsuperscript{91}Part of this introductory section is a reworking of the \textit{Liber exhortationis} of Paulinus of Aquileia (Bazire and Cross, 125).

\textsuperscript{92}Bazire and Cross, X.62-63.
popular in vernacular homilies, but selecting them with care and purpose. In order to ensure that the Address is as didactically effective as possible, these homilies in their specific calls to penance and cleansing offer an interpretative strategy to their audiences before the speech commences.

The placement of the monologue in HomHulme proceeds on somewhat different principles. This homily seems to have been compiled from at least three different sources. The first part is an unusual version of the Harrowing of Hell. With little transition, the homily moves on to the signs of Doomsday and Christ’s Address to the Sinner to which is appended the intercessions of Mary, Michael and

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93 Bazire and Cross, 125-29; Scragg, *Verc.*, 139-42.


95 The main connection is that the return of Christ, like the Harrowing was expected to occur at Easter-time: “Swiðe us is ēonne to gebencanne, cwæð se wittere, nu men ða leofestan, þæt ure Drihten hafa ðeft ēppingod heder on þisne middangeard on forman easterniht to þan þæt he eaire þisne worulde ende gesetteð” (Hulme, 611). Healey has commented on the near-canonical status of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* in OE literature and also notes that the pattern of linking the Harrowing of Hell episode with Doomsday material occurs also in Blickling VII and the poem *Christ and Satan*; Antonette diPaolo Healey, “Anglo-Saxon Use of the Apocryphal Gospel,” in *The Anglo-Saxons: Synthesis and Achievement*, ed. J. Douglas Woods and David A.E. Pelteret (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1985), 96-104. See also Marcia Daltby, “Patterns of Preaching in the Blickling Easter Homily,” *American Benedictine Review* 24 (1977): 478-92.
St. Peter\textsuperscript{96} and the scene of Peter locking the gates of hell. The various elements show little evidence of adaptation by the compiler. In the Harrowing of Hell section, the writer frequently refers to his source, whereas in the remaining sections he does not,\textsuperscript{97} and the transitions are at times awkward, most noticeably so when the intercession for the sinners takes place after the homily says they have already departed to hell.\textsuperscript{98} The homilist forgoes or is incapable of the kind of thematic preparation which is used in the previous two homilies, but simply strings together the various dramatic scenes in the hopes that they will speak for themselves.

In the remaining homilies, HomBazireCross XI and HomAssmann XIV, the monologue comprises just a few sentences. Though less successful in creating a thematically unified sermon than HomBazireCross X and HomScragg VIII, they are

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item This part is probably derived from the \textit{Apocalypse of the Virgin}; Mary Clayton, "Apocalypse of the Virgin," \textit{SASLC}, 65. See also Clayton's fuller treatment in her article "Delivering the Damned: A Motif in OE Homiletic Prose," \textit{MÆ} 55 (1986): 92-102. Here she notes that Ælfric was likely familiar with this text and objected to it in \textit{CH II}, XXXIX.184-198; the intercession is also found in Vercelli XV ("Delivering the Damned," 92-93).
\item He begins with \textit{her sagad an ðissum bocum} and repeats \textit{hit sagad} several times in the first section; the last such reference occurs in the transition between the Harrowing and the Doomsday setting: \textit{cwæd se writtere} (Hulme, 611). Cf. Healey, "Use of the Apocryphal Gospel," 99-100.
\item Clayton argues that the theological heterodoxy which results from the union of this intercession scene from the \textit{Apocalypse of the Virgin} with a Doomsday scene was most likely not deliberate, since the souls for which intercession is offered in the former are not destined for hell but are in purgatory; "Delivering the Damned," 98-99. The later version of this homily in CCCC 303 corrects the error by omitting the intercession; see Sarah Cutforth, "Delivering the Damned in Old English Homilies: an Additional Note," \textit{Notes and Queries} 238 (1993): 435-437.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
not without an inner logic. HomBazireCross XI’s meandering style has already been commented upon, although it follows the format of HomScragg VIII and HomBazireCross X: a general admonition and call to remember Christ’s Passion and Doomsday, the Judgment Day setting, Christ’s speech, and, finally, descriptions of heaven and hell. Following the use of the content of the Address in narrative form, it proceeds to an exhortation to love and purity, which will ensure that “we ne þurfon beon Gode on þa wynstran hand gesette ne þone cwyde gehyran þe he to þam cwyð” (‘we need not be placed on God’s left hand, nor hear the speech which he utters to them’). The Doomsday description is a lengthy one and it concludes with Christ’s display of the wounds in his hands and feet as he begins to speak. Despite its rambling passages it remains focused on themes of Judgment Day and Christ’s suffering which are central to the import of the speech.

The author of HomAssmann XIV combines an interesting array of motifs which he has excerpted from other vernacular sources, some of which are still extant and reveal his method. He perhaps knew that he would eventually end his homily

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99 Many conventional homiletic motifs are drawn upon throughout, for example, the topos of the 72 languages of the world in an unusual adaptation; Hans Sauer, “Die 72 Völker und Sprachen der Welt: Ein Mittelalterlicher Topos in der Englischen Literatur,” Anglia 101 (1983): 37.

100 Bazire and Cross, XI.52-53.

with Christ’s Address for he begins it with a call to remember Christ’s sufferings:

Ac us is mycel neodpearf, þæt we ēbpencan, hu drihten us mid his þrowunge alysde fram deofles anwealdes, þa he a rode ahangen wæs and his þæt deorweorðe blod for us ageat. Forðan we sculan weordian Cristes rode and biddan ure synna forgyfenessa ealle ætsumne. Swa he for us þrowude on þære rode and eal þa sar and edwit and þa heardan þrowunga, þe he adreah æt þam unlædan folce Iudea, eal he þrowude for us, þæt he wolde us generian fram helle wite and us gelædan in þa ecæn eadignesse.\(^{102}\)

But there is great need for us to consider how the Lord redeemed us from the power of the devil with his suffering, when he was hanged on the cross and poured out his precious blood for us. Therefore we must honour the cross of Christ and pray together for the forgiveness of our sins. So he suffered for us on that cross and all that sorrow and reproach and severe sufferings, which he endured from that wicked Jewish people, all that he suffered for us, because he wanted to save us from the torment of hell and lead us into that eternal blessedness.

Doomsday and the Passion continue to be a recurring theme throughout the homily as in this passage:

Ute gemunan þæne egesfullan domes dæg. Se cymð, þonne we læst wenað, and on þam dæge we sculan forðberan swa god, swa yfel, ælc sawl be hyre gewyrhtan. Men þa leofestan, geearne we, þæt ure se ytemesta dæg wurðe gode geccoren, and gecyræn we to drihtenes willan and ēbpencan, þæt he deað þrowude for us and he us of ðam nearwan þystrum alysde.\(^{103}\)

Let us remember that terrible Doomsday. It will come when we least expect it. And on that day we must bring forth both good and evil, each soul according to its works. Dearest people, let us earn that our last day may be acceptable to God, and let us turn to the Lord’s will and consider that he suffered death for us and redeemed us from the

\(^{102}\) Assmann, XIV.7-15.

\(^{103}\) Assmann, XIV.53-58.
oppressive darkness.

The homily is a veritable showcase of *memento mori* motifs, including a visit to the tomb (though the bones do not speak), an *ubi sunt* sequence, a Soul’s Address to the Body at Judgment Day, and a comparison between God and the devil and the ultimate destiny of their followers. In the final passage we return to the Passion of Christ in the greatly shortened monologue and the scene of St. Peter locking hell. It seems that this homilist was collecting material that would effectively associate the obligations of this life with the consequences of neglecting them in the next. Christ’s monologue, though not central, is a climactic element in his scheme.

There are many similarities in the Judgment Day settings of these homilies, most likely due to the use of commonplaces popularly employed in OE homilies. Bazire and Cross illustrate in detail how the homilist of HomBazireCross XI has combined, probably from memory, Doomsday descriptions from scripture, the *Apocalypse of Thomas* and a pseudo-Augustinian sermon, and how the author of HomBazireCross X has, in his portrayal, fused various scripture passages.

These descriptions are drawing upon the store of commonplaces associated with the Judgment Day scene and need not have a more specific source than

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104 PL 39.2210.

remembered inventories of the events. But, in connection with Christ’s monologue, it is worth noting that some of them are based on what might be seen as the inspiration for the Address: the gospel of Matthew (ch. 25) in which Christ describes the coming Judgment with himself on the throne, the separation of the sheep and goats (i.e. the saved and the damned), and the pronouncement of the final Discedite and Venite. Although the biblical portrayal includes an accusatory speech by Christ in which the focus is the individual’s treatment of those in need, it seems that the monologue in Caesarius’ sermon was a welcome substitute. In contrast to the biblical text, the latter makes a full case for the justice of Christ’s complaint against sinners, particularly in terms of the complete history of his relationship to mankind and his attendant claim for remuneration. The Judgment is clearly portrayed as a legal proceeding, and it seems quite natural that the divine Accuser should present his case forcefully, reminding the defendant of the deeds for which compensation was justly expected.

Apart from the Doomsday descriptions, a family likeness among the homilies containing Christ’s Address may also be found in their conclusions. Invariably these homilies end with a description of heaven or hell or both, depending on the homilist’s emphasis. Sometimes, as in HomScragg VIII and HomAssmann XIV, the description of hell forms part of the speech itself, incorporated into the Discedite. HomBazireCross XI finds this an occasion to bring in the “inexpressibility” topos
concerning the horrors of hell. In others a mere allusion to hell is made and a lengthy description of the alternative follows. HomHulme, as we have seen, is the only exception to this trait as it appends the apocryphal intercession for the sinful to the Address, though it, too, portrays the locking of hell by St. Peter and suggests the destiny of the blessed by recording the biblical speech to the blessed in its conclusion.

When the damned have been dismissed, the audience is, in a sense, left alone with the Judge and his narrative. Building on the awareness that there is still time to respond to the call of Christ's claims, the homilists draw attention to the present choice between the horrors of hell and joys of heaven. A good example of such a suitable conclusion may be found in HomBazireCross X whose author preferred to dwell on the latter possibility:

Ac uton we biddan urne Drihten, þone mildheortan Scyppend, þæt he ontyne þa earan ure heortan to his þære halgan lære to onfonne, and heo syðpan fæstlice on urum heortum wunige. And we oðre men georne monigen to pam godcundan gode, þæt we þonne ætgædere magon mid þæm godum to þæm heofonlican eþle.

But let us ask our Lord, that mild-hearted Creator, that he may open the ears of our heart to receive his holy teaching, and that it may thereafter

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107Matt. 25:34.

108Bazire and Cross, X.125-129.
dwell firmly in our hearts. And we should earnestly admonish other men to that divine good, so that we together with those goods may go to that heavenly homeland.

**Rhetoric**

I have suggested that Christ’s Address to the Sinner owes its popularity in part to its appropriateness to the trial that is to occur on Judgment Day. It provides the homilists with an effective way of recounting salvation history and at the same time firmly establishes Christ’s right to judge the sinful and the details of his case against rebellious mankind. The monologue, as I will show, follows a definite progression, not only chronologically, but also rhetorically, building to the final pronouncement of judgment upon the sinners. Although it is tempting to see in it a primarily emotional appeal, the rhetorical structure points to a reasoned forensic argument exhibiting the classical divisions of *exordium, narratio, argumentatio*, and *peroratio*.

Whether an audience listening to the speech would have been familiar with or capable of recognizing these rhetorical divisions is difficult to assess. Certainly in the

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109 In Micah 6:1-4, from which the *Improperia* of the Good Friday liturgy takes its opening words, the legal dimension is clearly stated: “Audite quae Dominus loquitur surge contende iudicio adversum montes et audiant colles vocem tuam audiant montes iudicium Domini et fortia fundamenta terrae quia iudicium Domini cum populo suo et cum Israel diiudicabitur: Populus meus...” (‘Hear ye what the Lord saith: Arise, contend thou in judgment against the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Let the mountains hear the judgment of the Lord, and the strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord will enter into judgment with his people, and he will plead against Israel: O my people...’).

110 The corresponding English terms are introduction, exposition or narrative, evidence, and close; Curtius, 70.
Anglo-Saxon period there were judicial proceedings in which the plaintiff opened the trial with a speech directed towards the defendant.\textsuperscript{111} There is also some evidence that careful attention was paid to the correct formulation of legal pronouncements and that delivery was aided by the use of alliteration and rhythm.\textsuperscript{112} And to some extent the division of such a speech into narrative followed by more direct argumentation and pointed accusation is a natural sequence which could be arrived at without any classical rhetorical training. So it is possible that anyone who had witnessed a trial would recognize the monologue by Christ as having a certain verisimilitude to courtroom procedure.

Two purposes of the \textit{exordium} in judicial oratory are to establish the speaker’s credibility as well as a link to the audience.\textsuperscript{113} The fundamental relationship between Christ and mankind is the subject of the first few phrases of the Address:

\begin{quote}
Eala, man, hwæt, ic þe geworhte of eorðan lame mid minum handum, and þinum ðam eorðlicum limum ic sealde mine sawle, and ic þe hiwode
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{112}Bigelow, 246; Liebermann (626): “Die Rede muss bestimmte Form haben. Sonst ist sie \textit{forspecen}, umsonst (vergeblich) gesprochen.”

\textsuperscript{113}Ottmers, 54-55. In the following section which deals with forensic rhetoric, I will be referring to the useful definitions and explanations in Clemens Ottmers’ \textit{Rhetorik}, Sammlung Metzler, vol. 283 (Stuttgart, Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 1996).
to mines sylfes anlicnesse, and þa þe gestaðelode on neorxna wonges gefean.\textsuperscript{114}

Alas, man, look, I made you from the clay of the earth with my hands, and into your earthly limbs I gave my soul, and I fashioned you in my own likeness, and then set you in the joy of Paradise.

The intimate relationship of Creator and creature is repeatedly underlined in the account of how mankind was shaped by Christ’s own hands, given God’s own spirit (with the possessive added in the OE\textsuperscript{115}), honored with the image of God and presented with the gift of Paradise. Mankind’s fall is therefore an outrage against the divine benefactor to whom it owes its origin and continued existence. It has preferred to follow, in HomScragg VIII to love, the devil: “Da ðu forhogodest mine bebodu and me sylfne, and þone awyr gedan dioful þu lufúdest” (‘Then you rejected my commands and myself and loved that accursed devil’).\textsuperscript{116}

If the straightforward and sparse narration of the facts is considered a desirable quality of the narratio in forensic rhetoric, Christ’s speech provides an admirable example.\textsuperscript{117} As we saw in the Improperia, there were many biblical events which might have been included at this point—the crossing of the Red Sea, giving of the

\textsuperscript{114}Verc., VIII.46-49.

\textsuperscript{115}HomScragg VIII: mine sawle (Verc., VIII.48), and HomBazireCross X minne gast (Bazire and Cross, X.101).

\textsuperscript{116}Verc., VIII.50-51.

\textsuperscript{117}Ottmers, 56-57.

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Law, the bestowal of the Promised Land—but the passing over of these events is more fitting in the homiletic setting since they are less directly applicable to the contemporary audience. Therefore the monologue moves almost seamlessly from the expulsion from Paradise to the mercy of the incarnation:

And þa ðu wære of neorxnawange ascofen and ic þe wolde eft miltsian, þa ic fæmnelicne innoð gesohte, and ic wæs mid cildclaðum bewunden, and ealle þa cildlican teonan ic aræfname, and þa menniscean sar ic wæs þrowiende for þe.¹¹⁸

And when you had been expelled from Paradise and I wanted to have mercy on you, then I sought a woman’s womb and I was wrapped in a child’s clothes and endured all that childish shame, and those human pains I suffered for you.

Here the lowliness and humility of Christ are emphasized in the ignominy (HomHulme, scama) of human infancy. The speaker also begins to introduce clauses which link the audience to the historical events in “to þan þæt ðu me gelice wære geworden” (‘so that you would become like me’).¹¹⁹ The OE adaptations begin earlier than the Latin to add the phrase for þe to suggest both Christ’s motives and human culpability. HomScragg VIII adds for þe in two places and the phrase “for þan þe ic þe dyde m[i]nre swetnesse wyrðne” (‘in order to make you worthy of my sweetness’) to the drinking of gall and vinegar and “to þan þæt ic þa þine sawle þanon generede” (‘in order that I might save your soul from there’) to the allusion to the Harrowing of

¹¹⁸Ver. VIII.51-54.

¹¹⁹Bazire and Cross, X.104-105; translating ut te mihi similem facerem (Sermo LVII.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 253).
Hell. 120 HomBazireCross X supplements the Latin with for ōinre hælo, for ḫe and the sentence “to þam þæt ic wolde ða synne þine forlornesse adwæscan; ic wolde þæt ic ðe fram ecum deaðe alysde” (‘because I wanted to blot out the sins of your perdition; I wished to save you from eternal death’). 121 HomHulme and HomAssmann XIV also add for ḫe where the Latin has no reference to mankind. It would seem that the Anglo-Saxon homilists were uniformly desirous to underscore that these deeds were more than historical facts; they were done on behalf of the present audience as much as for the fictional audience, i.e. the damned. Just as the addressee in the Soul’s Address is both the body and the listening congregation, so here the accused on the left hand of Christ becomes the audience in the preaching event.

Christ’s suffering during the Passion is perhaps the area where the OE homilists chose most often to omit elements found in the Latin. For some homilists it seems to have been a simple matter of avoiding repetition, but the subsequent displaying of wounds is also much more effective dramatically and covers the same ground, i.e. the crucifixion. All the full-length OE versions retain the latter section which begins the argumentatio with a presentation of the incontrovertible evidence

120 Verc., VIII.55-56, 59.

(probationes inartificiales). The visible signs of Christ’s sacrifice are produced in the imagination as indisputable witnesses to his sacrifice:

Geseoh nu minra nægla swæð þe ic on rode for ðe genæglað wæs. Her ðu miht geseon þa wunda þe ic gewundod wæs and ða rode on þære ic for ðe deadæ geþrowode.¹²³

Behold now the trace of my nails with which I was nailed on the cross for you. Here you may see those wounds with which I was wounded and that cross on which I suffered death for you.

The final section of the Address, once the evidence has been presented, is that in which the plaintiff now launches into the main argument of his case consisting of a series of accusations. It begins with a summation of the grounds for the complaint: “Èal þas sar ic geðrowode for ðe, þær ic tilode þæt þu an hefenum rixsode” (‘All these pains I suffered for you, because I strove that you should reign in heaven’).¹²⁴ Two rhetorical questions underline the foolishness and ungratefulness of the accused’s choices in life: “For hwan, la man, forlur ðu þis eal, þe ic for þe þrowode? For hwan wær ðu swa unþancul þinre onylsnesse?” (‘Why, oh man, did you abandon all this which I suffered for you? Why were you so ungrateful for your deliverance?’).¹²⁵ Christ, with insistent repetition, demands requital:

¹²² Ottmers, 58.
¹²⁴ Hulme, 613.
¹²⁵ Verc., VIII.64-65.
Ic nawuht ma to minum deaðe ne bidde. Agif me þine sawle swa clæne swa ic hy ðe sealde. Min feorh ic sealde for ðe. Agif me þæt þin lif ðe ðu acwealdes[t] mid sarlycum wundum þinra synna.\(^{126}\)

I ask nothing more for my death. Give me your soul as clean as I gave it to you. My life I gave for you; give me your life which you have killed with the grievous wounds of your sins.

This is the only part of the speech which is less appropriate to the fictional audience, the damned, since they were unable to do as asked, but it is clear that homiletic purpose overrides theological accuracy here. Furthermore, in terms of Anglo-Saxon legal procedure, the demand for compensation represented the most common purpose of a trial. Thus, the Caesarian request for mankind’s life is supplemented in two OE homilies (HomScragg VIII, HomBazireCross X) with the demand for the soul; for instance, HomScragg VIII reads “agif me þine sawle swa clæne swa ic hy ðe sealde” (‘give me your soul as clean as I gave it to you’).\(^{127}\) Although Scragg considers this point of similarity between the two homilies to be an indication of a common source, it perhaps should be viewed as a commonplace which was inserted independently.\(^{128}\)

The notion that Christ will require the soul (and sometimes the body) on Judgment Day, often with the stipulation that it be “clean,” or that man will be asked at that time

\(^{126}\) *Verc.*, VIII.65-68.

\(^{127}\) *Verc.*, VIII.66-67.

\(^{128}\) This point is strengthened by the observation that the insertion takes place at two different points in the two translations.
what he has to give to God seems to have been a current one.129 We have already seen that Wulfstan invariably associated the Passion of Christ with the idea of repayment.130 In the introductory section of HomAssmann XIV, the homilist notes: "And ne bit he us nan oðer edlean, butan þæt we ure sawle swa clæne agifan, swa he hi ær gesceop and us befæste" (‘And he asks us no other recompense than that we give our soul as clean as he before made it and entrusted it to us’).131 And in Blickling VII: “Uton we forþon geþencean hwylc handlean we him forþ to berenne habban...þonne sceolan we mid ure anre saule forgyldan” (‘Let us therefore consider what recompense we have to bring forth, ...when we must repay with our soul alone’).132 The clean soul/life/body which was the only compensation which this Judge demands or will accept is precisely what the damned are powerless to produce,

129 One of its variations, possibly Irish in origin, is discussed by Charles Wright in “The Pledge of the Soul: A Judgement Theme in Old English Homiletic Literature and Cynewulf’s Elene,” NM 91 (1990): 22-30. I agree with Wright (26) that the addition of the soul in two OE versions of the address was probably done independently.

130 Ælfric mentions a similar idea in ÆSupp. XVI.55-56: “and him nane æhta ne synd swa inmede swa him synd to agenne ure sawle clæne” (‘and no possessions are as dear to him as to give him our soul clean’). See also his translation of Basil’s Admonitio ad filium spiritualem: “Eall ðis he geðrowode for ure alysendyssæ ðæt he forgeafæ ðæt ece lif us mannun and he ne biddað us to edleane nanes ðories ðinges buton us sylfe him and ure sawle clæne” (‘All this he suffered for our redemption, so that he might grant eternal life to us men, and he asks from us no other thing as repayment except ourselves for him and our soul clean’); H.W. Norman, ed., The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil...and the Anglo-Saxon Remains of St. Basil’s Admonitio ad filium spiritualem, 2d edition (London: J.R. Smith, 1848), 42.

131 Assmann, XIV.63-65.

132 Blick., VII, 91.
but their silence and helplessness is contrasted with the audience’s responsibility to act according to the foreseen demand.

In the Latin, three more rhetorical questions begin the *peroratio* by forcefully reiterating the cause of complaint and aiming to establish the guilt of the sinner as well as draw an emotional response of both sympathy and guilt in the final sentence. Not all of these are reproduced in the OE, but the final question is translated by two:

Oððe forhwan ahenge þu me mid þære hefegan rode þinra hleahtra? Mìccle hefigre me is seo rod þinra synna þonne me si seo ðe ic lichamlice mid wyllan gestah and for ðe deað on geprowode!\(^{133}\)

Or why do you crucify me with that heavy cross of your sins? Much heavier to me is that cross of your sins than that one may be to me on which I bodily and of my own will climbed and on which I suffered death for you!

This analogy effectively moves the audience from the crucifixion to the present, daily pain inflicted on Christ by human disobedience.

Most of the OE homilies here proceed to the final crescendo of the *Discedite*, but HomScragg VIII, perhaps prefiguring the developments which would take place under the influence of the affective piety of the later Middle Ages, extends the personal pathos in the following:

For hwan forwyrndest ðu me þæs mines agenan yrfes? Ic wæs þin fæder and þin dryhten and emne eallinga þin freond geworden, and ðu hit þa sealdest þinum ehtere, þam awyrgedan and þam beswicendan diofol. Ac hwæt druge ðu on þam, þa ic wæs unawendedlic in minre godcundnesse, and þa ic wæs [u]nþrovendlic, þæt ic wolde for þe

\(^{133}\)Bazire and Cross, X.114-117.
Why did you deny me my own property? I was your Father and your Lord and even became entirely your friend, and you gave it then to your persecutor, the accursed one, the deceiving devil. But what did you endure in that, when I was unchangeable in my divinity and when I was impassible, that I desired to suffer for you? And you rejected me entirely. And I invited you to my eternal life and to that supernal kingdom which you neglected.

The relationship of father, lord, and friend and the images of a squandered inheritance and a rejected invitation all personalize the appeal in this surprisingly innovative addition.

The monologue by Christ is not just a list of events, but rather it prompts the audience to consider the Passion narrative in terms of legal procedure. Compensation for the wounds and sufferings of Christ is to be made by means of “giving back” a clean life to God. The speech appeals to the audience’s sense of justice concerning the rightness of God’s demands and concerning the obligation of the individual. The distant claims of God are brought near in the familiar setting of the trial, its procedures, personae, and rhetoric.

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134 *Verc.*, VIII.68-75.
Middle English Developments

There is an extensive literature on the Passion in Middle English which has been discussed in detail by several scholars.\textsuperscript{135} In what follows I will limit the analysis to first-person addresses by Christ narrating the events of his Passion in order to see how they continue the tradition of using Christ's own voice to elicit a response to his suffering.\textsuperscript{136}

Two of the Latin analogues examined above were translated into the vernacular during the Middle English period. The liturgical *Improperia* are the basis for two fourteenth century lyrics titled *Popule meus quid feci tibi?* in Carleton Brown's edition of religious lyrics.\textsuperscript{137} The first of these, a translation by the Franciscan William Herebert, even reproduces the structure of the Latin in repeating the first stanza as a refrain after every verse\textsuperscript{138}:


\textsuperscript{137}Nos. 15 and 72; Brown, *XIVth Century*, 17-18, 88-89.

My volk, what habbe y do þe
Ôber in what þyne toened þe?
Gyn nouþe and onswere þou me. (ll. 1-3)

It also attempts to emulate the anaphora of the Latin ego te verses. The second (no. 72) is a somewhat freer adaptation in four-line stanzas which require some additions by the poet. In the fifteenth century, elements from Improperia are also incorporated in a dialogue between Natura hominis and Bonitas Dei.139 Here the speech by Christ is interspersed with suitable responses by man asking for mercy.

Similarly, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we find translations of the Visio Pauli, including the speech by Christ which takes place before the granting of the Sunday respite:

A voyse fro heuen answerd aȝayn—
“What good dedes haue ȝe nov done,
ȝe did me to deb with passion and payn;
Hwy aske ȝe me now remyssioun?
I was crucifid on cros fore ȝou al-on,
With spere and nayles y sched my blood,
Of aysel and gal ȝeuen me drenkyn,
When I was on-perst hongyng on þe rode;
And I put my-self to þe deb fore ȝow,
þat ȝe schul euer haue leuyd with me;
Bot ȝe were proud, couetyse ful of enuy,
And wold do no good dede, bot cursid treuly,
And false lyers in ȝour lyue as wel ȝe now.” (ll. 274-286)140

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139 No. 107, “A Dialogue Between Natura Hominis and Bonitas Dei,” Brown, XVth Century, 164-68.

140 The XI Pains of Hell, edited by Richard Morris, An Old English Miscellany, 219. See also Pe visions of seynt poul wan he was rapt in-to paradys, 223-32 (ll. 297-314).
There are no such close translations of Christ’s monologue as it is found in Caesarius’ sermon and OE homilies. However, several Middle English lyrics suggest that some of the ideas have been taken into the general stock of motifs used in literature of the Passion, perhaps by way of vernacular sermons. All of these lyrics are from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, at a considerable remove from the OE, and therefore one should not expect a close correspondence but rather the kind of echo which is the result of many permutations in vernacular treatments. The complaint lyric which seems to reflect the OE Address more than any other is one that is not a monologue at all but a narrative recitation of Christ’s deeds. The following comparison of selected phrases should make the correspondence clear:

Lyke vnto þe trynity he deyd þe
dewyse (l. 2) ic þe hiwode to mines sylfes
anlicnesse
And set þe in þe plesant place
of paradyse (l. 4) and þa þe gestaðelode on
neorxnawonges gefean
Wyth these grete gyftis þu
cowdyst not be content, / Butt
by grete presumpsioun
Assentyst to þe serpent (ll. 9-10) ðu forhogodest mine bebodu and me
sylfne, and þone awyrgedan dioful
þu lufudest
Cryst þene, beholdynge þy
grete & grewous fall, /... Was
Anone meked with pyte
paternall (ll.13, 15) ic þe wolde eft miltsian
Off A vyrgyne was I-bore þe to
restore in-dede (l. 23) ic fæmnelicne innoð gesohte

\textsuperscript{141}No. 106, Brown, \textit{XVth Century}, 162-164; \textit{Verc.}, VIII.48-53.
The refrain, however, is from the *Improperia: Quid ultra debuit facere*? Another poem which has much in common with this lyric casts many of these elements as direct speech.\(^{142}\)

References to the creation, fall and incarnation in the complaint lyrics are thus possibly a distant reflection of the OE version of the Address, since these are not found in the *Improperia*. This may also be true of the analogy between the suffering of the crucifixion and the pain of bearing mankind's sin as, for example, in the speech as rendered in the *Cursor Mundi* and another fourteenth-century poem:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wid } & \text{bi sine } \text{bu pinis me,} \\
\text{Als } & \text{diu } \text{iuus apon } \text{he tre,} \\
\text{wid } & \text{athes grete } \text{and wick dede,} \\
\text{oft } & \text{bu } \text{geris mi wondis blede. (ll. 17157-60)}^{143}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Of al } \text{he payne } \text{bat I suffer sare,} \\
\text{with-in } \text{my hert } \text{it greues me mare} \\
\text{he } \text{vnkyndenes } \text{bat I fynd in } \text{he,} \\
\text{bat } & \text{for } \text{bi lufe } \text{hus hynged on tre. (ll. 11-14)}^{144}
\end{align*}
\]

The often repeated motif of asking for "nothing else" than mankind's love or heart seems also to be based on the Anglo-Saxon tradition of Christ's asking “no

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\(^{142}\)No. 105, Brown, *XVth Century*, 159-162.


\(^{144}\)No. 77, Brown, *XIVth Century*, 93. Cf. no. 104, Brown, *XVth Century*, 158 (ll. 11-14): "Ouer all theeis paines bat I suffer so sore, / With myne herte hit gruith me more, / bat I vnkindnes finde in the, / bat for thi loue hongid vpon a tree."
more” than life or soul in return for his suffering:

HomScragg VIII: “Ic nawuht ma to minum deape ne bidde. Agif me þine sawle swa clæne swa ic hy ðe sealde.”

Dere brother, non other thing I desire,
But geue me thi hert fre, to rewarde myne hire. (ll. 28-29)

On cros with payne / Scharp deth, agayne
ffor þi luf take.
ffor whilk I aske / None oþer taske,
Bot luf agayne. (ll. 7-10)

There are recastings in the Middle English period which treat the same
material in fresh ways. In addition to the dialogue between *Natura hominis* and
*Bonitas Dei* mentioned above, one poem juxtaposes Christ’s wounds with the seven
deadly sins. A very popular version was the *Testamentum Christi* which depicts
the Passion as a charter in which Christ’s own skin or body is the parchment, his
blood the ink, the witnesses the gospel-writers, and so on. The content of the
agreement is Christ’s promise of his kingdom in return for mankind’s payment of the
“rent” of penance and right-living. All of this is cast in the framework of

\[145Verc., VIII.65-67.\]

\[146\text{No. 103, Brown, *XVth Century*, 156-158. See also no. 102, Brown, *XVth Century*, 151-156 (l. 148): “Insteid of luf nocht ask I the”; no. 78, Brown, *XIVth Century*, 94 (ll. 11-12): “Dat I þi lufe sa dere haue boght, / And I aske þe noght elles.”}\]

\[147\text{No. 108, Brown, *XVth Century*, 168-169.}\]

\[148\text{No. 127, Brown, *XIVth Century*, 227-228.}\]

monologue by Christ detailing the crucifixion events. The most frequent setting is that of Christ speaking as from the cross to those who pass by based on Lamentations 1:12.  

All of these versifications share a new focus on the pathos of the crucifixion and identification with the human sufferings of Christ which is not found in the OE. The physical details of the pains of the crucifixion are heightened while mankind is said to be “unkind” and unmoved by the suffering Saviour. Sometimes the descriptions seem, to the modern reader at least, to degenerate into melodramatic hyperbole. Thus, we are invited to contemplate the bleeding Saviour:

Beholde, the bloode of my handis downe renneth,  
not for my gilte but for youre sinnes,  
fote and hande with nailes so ben foste,  
that sinoes & vaines alto-berste.  
The blood of myne hert rote,  
Loke, how hit stremyth downe by my fote. (ll. 5-10)  

In another example, his body is awash in blood: “fram side to side, fro hued to be

150"O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow: for he hath made a vintage of me, as the Lord spoke in the day of his fierce anger.”

One can perhaps discern a movement in this direction in the OE poems *The Dream of the Rood* (ll. 46-56) and *Christ III* (ll. 1081-1088, 1107-1127) in which the details of Christ's suffering are graphically described. For an examination of the passion-piety in these two poems with respect to earlier Christian literature and liturgy, see Christopher L. Chase, “‘Christ III,’ ‘The Dream of the Rood’ and Early Christian Passion Piety,” *Viator* 11 (1980): 11-33.

The number of wounds are multiplied: “ffyve hundreth woundsis, & fyve thousande, / And þairto sixty / And fyftene, / Was taulde & sene / On my body” (ll. 73-77).154 These emotional appeals as products of the new movement of “affective piety” belong to the larger context of similar literary developments such as the popular laments of the Virgin at the foot of the cross and the dialogues between Christ and his mother. This evolution was the result of a shift in the High Middle Ages away from a perception of Christ as Victor over Satan towards the image of the “Man of Sorrows.” Part of this move was an increasing focus on the natural feelings of pity and compassion which the sufferings of Christ evoke and which were encouraged as an initial step toward a more spiritual love of God in the writings of St. Bernard.155 The lyrics which employ Christ’s complaint illustrate well the difference between Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards the Passion in terms of the required response of remuneration and the later poetry in which it was a subject for meditation demanding an emotional response of grief, horror, remorse and penitence.


154 No. 102, Brown, XVth Century, 151-156.

It has already been noted that the context for these lyrics was often the homily. The most compelling evidence for the close connection between sermon and lyric during the Middle English period is John of Grimestone’s preaching book from the fourteenth century which collects, among other materials, vernacular lyrics for use in preaching. How this was accomplished may be seen in two examples of Christ’s Address which are found in both contexts. The first is a meditative lyric attributed to the inspiration of St. Bernard:

Man, folwe seintt Bernardes trace
And loke in ihesu cristes face,
How hee lut hys heued to pe
Swetlike for to kessen þe,
And sprat his armes on þe tre,
Senful man, to klippen þe.
In sygne of loue ys open his syde;
Hiis feet y-nayled wid þe tabyde.
Al his bodi is don on rode,
Senful man, for þyne goode.

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157 Brown nos. 62-76 (*XIVth Century*) were taken from this manuscript. Wenzel devotes two of his chapters to Grimestone’s book: “The Oeuvre of Friar John of Grimestone” (*Preachers, Poets* 101-134) and “Grimestone the Lyricist” (*Preachers, Poets*, 135-173); cf. Woolf, 20ff.

158 Wenzel also cites an example of a translation of the *Improperia* in a sermon (*Preachers, Poets*, 153).

159 No. 69, Brown, *XIIIth Century*, 128. This poem is ultimately based on *Sermo XXXII* in the pseudo-Augustinian collection *Ad fratres in eremo*: “Elevate capita vestra, et
This finds a close parallel in a later sermon:

Loo, myne armys ben sprede a brode for to clyppe the and to take the to grace, and myne hedde I bow doune for to gyfe the a kisse of luffe. And my syde is openyd for to schewe how kynde I have ben to the, and how lovyng, and myne hertt is clyfte a two for the love of the, my hondys and my feete bledythe for to schewe what I suffyrde for the.\(^ {160}\)

Though the poem was certainly based on the Latin verse which is next to it in the same manuscript, it may not have been changed into a first-person address until it was incorporated in the homilies, perhaps under the influence of other complaint lyrics.

Another unique version of Christ's Address which was adopted into the homilies was the lyric which Brown titles "Jesus Pleads with the Worldling" in which Christ juxtaposes his sufferings to the life of the well-to-do "worldling."\(^ {161}\) For a comparison I will quote the first stanza:

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corde aspice vulnra Salvatoris nostri in ligno pendentis, poenas morientis, pretium redimentis, cicatrices resurgentis. Quid aliud videre poterimus, nisi caput inclinatum ad vocandum et parcendum, cor apertum ad diligendum, brachia extensa ad amplexandum, totum corpus expositum ad redimendum?"; PL 40.1293.


Ihesus dop him bymene,  
and spekep to synful mon:  
Þi garland is of grene,  
of flores many on;  
Myn of sharpe þornes,  
myn hewe it makeþ won. (ll. 1-6)

In a homily by John Mirk this becomes: "Þou hast on þy hed a garland of flowres, and  
I for þe on my hed suffyr a wreþe of stynkyng þornes."162 It is, of course, possible  
that a particularly compelling homiletic text was likewise the inspiration for religious  
lyrics.

Finally, we are not surprised to find the Address by Christ in late medieval  
drama. The inherent dramatic possibilities of the complaint lyrics make it possible for  
them to be taken into various plays with only minimal adaptation, and the lyric in  
which Christ is portrayed as speaking from the cross is an obvious choice for the  
Crucifixion plays. In the York cycle this speech is still very much tied to the biblical  
passages of Lamentations 1:12 and to Christ's statement from the cross concerning  
the forgiveness of his enemies.163 But in the Towneley Crucifixion play the  
monologue goes well beyond the scriptural with features that are reminiscent of the

162Erbe, 113.

163Lucy T. Smith, ed., York Plays. The Plays Performed by the Crafts or Mysteries of  
York on the Day of Corpus Christi in the 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries (1885; reprint, N.Y.:  
Russell & Russell, 1963), 357 (ll. 253-264).
Improperia and the OE Address.¹⁶⁴

Dramatic settings also include those with which the Address was already associated in the Anglo-Saxon period: the Harrowing of Hell and Doomsday. Both the York and Towneley collections begin their Harrowing of Hell plays with speeches by Christ which are very similar. They are, however, merely statements of accomplished fact, rather than a complaint designed to elicit a response.¹⁶⁵ The Judgment Day play, however, features an Address in which Christ displays his wounds and is able to recite the main sufferings of his Passion.¹⁶⁶ Curiously, he ends this part of the monologue with the statement “All this suffred I for thi sake. / Say, man, what suffred thou for me?” (ll. 606-607), paralleled in OE HomScragg VIII—“And ic þis eal fremede for ðe. Hwæt gedydest ðu for me?”—and in HomAssmann XIV—“Eala man, hwæt syndon þa bylean, þe þu me dydest for minre

¹⁶⁴A.C. Cawley and Martin Stevens, eds., The Towneley Plays, EETS, s.s., 13 (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 294-295 (ll. 233-285). The influence of the Improperia is most obvious in the following lines:

My folk, what haue I done to the
That thou all thus shal tormente me?
Thy syn by I full sore.
What haue I greuyd the, anwere me,
That thou thus nalys me to a tre,
And all for thyn erreoure? (ll. 244-49)

Echoes of the OE Address may be seen in the creation of mankind in his image (l. 268), and perhaps in the lines “Vnkyndly thou me quytys; / Se thus thi wekydnes, / Loke how thou me dyspytys!” (ll. 273-75).

¹⁶⁵Smith, 373-373 (ll. 1-12).

¹⁶⁶Cawley and Stevens, 417-419 (ll. 560-631).
One perhaps should also compare it to a phrase in the Visio Pauli—Quid passi estis pro me?—or the Caesarius speech as it is found in Pembroke 25—et tu pro his quid fecisti?—but the OE still seems remarkably close to this version written several hundred years later.

The final dramatic setting in which a complaint monologue finds a place is in the Towneley Resurrection play. Here the tone is somewhere between the triumph of the Harrowing and the sorrow of the crucifixion. In fact, some lines seem rather inappropriate to the risen Christ and clearly were taken from a lyric which depicts him as speaking from the cross: “Thou synfull man that by me gase, / Tytt vnto me thou turne thi face” (ll. 248-49) or “Lo, how I hold myn armes on brade, / The to saue ay redy mayde!” (ll. 325-26).

During the Middle English period, the reproachful monologue by Christ was an established feature of homily, lyric and drama. It seems to have been mainly appreciated for its affective qualities; the wounds, suffering and humiliation of the Saviour are to provoke the emotions which will further penance and right-living.

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167 Scragg, Verc., 146. Assmann, 168.

168 Silverstein, 186.

169 Cawley and Stevens, 342-346 (ll. 230-350).

170 Cawley and Stevens (605) note that it combines lyric no. 102 in Brown (XVth Century) and another speech in the Chester Resurrection play. The latter begins with the creation (“Eirthlye man that I have wroughte”), but centers on a comparison between Christ’s body and blood and the Eucharist; Thomas Wright, ed., The Chester Plays: A Collection of Mysteries (London: Shakespeare Society, 1847), 89-90.
Conclusion

This study has shown that Christ’s Address to mankind most likely had its origins in early Eastern Christendom, as was shown by the examples of Ephraem the Syrian and the apocryphal *Visio Pauli*. In late Anglo-Saxon England it was known mainly in the version authored by Caesarius of Arles, and its frequent use in the homilies as well as its poetic adaptation are testimony that it spoke to current conceptions of the reciprocal relationship between God and man involved in redemption. It is always problematic to assert a belief as being essentially Anglo-Saxon given the derivative nature of the literature. Nevertheless, I suggest that Christ’s sacrifice in the Passion was fundamentally tied to the legal notion of compensation, and that the appreciation for this monologue shown by Anglo-Saxon homilists rests primarily on its concurrence with this conception. Dramatically, of course, the Address has much to recommend it as well. Its movement from simple narrative statements to forceful accusation and especially its ability to connect the distant events of Christ’s Passion to the world of its audience, no doubt played a large part in its survival through a thousand years of literary transformations.
Chapter 4

Christ’s Monologue in the Sunday Letter

Bone heahan dæg  healdað and freoðiaþ
ealle þæ de cunnan  cristene þeawas,
hálige heortlufan  and ðæs hehsten gebod;
on drihtnes namon  se dæg is gewurðod.
(The Gloria I, 27-30)

The document known as the Sunday Letter can boast a long history which begins in the sixth century and does not end until the present era and which includes versions in Greek, Latin and numerous vernacular languages. It consists of a


lengthy preamble which relates its composition by Christ himself, its fall onto an altar of Christendom, usually Jerusalem or Rome, and subsequent travels from prelate to prelate. Its main section is an exhortation to Sunday observance bolstered by a prospect of either curse or blessing depending on whether the warning is heeded. This is the letter proper, and it is spoken in the first person by Christ himself. Severe threats, ranging from natural disaster to foreign invasion, are made to those who will not honour the Lord's day properly. Within this framework, the various versions of the Sunday Letter employ a variety of authenticating devices to ensure that its alleged status as supplement to divine revelation be accepted.

Sunday observance is not just a religious matter; it has important social and economic implications which have made this issue a current one even to the present day.3 In fact, in the Middle Ages it may be said that theology at times appears to follow public belief and societal traditions. Legal codes, both secular and ecclesiastical, are enacted with only the scantest of doctrinal justifications, leading us to believe that the operative stimuli remain unstated. In this chapter it will be an essential part of my task to examine the historical and cultural contexts which governed the original composition of the Latin Sunday Letter in the sixth century as well as its appearance in Anglo-Saxon England.

3For example, Witold Rybczynski notes that in the United States of America “as late as 1985, thirty-nine states continued to restrict Sunday activities, either by a general ban on all commerce and labor (twenty-two states) or by restrictions on specific activities”; Waiting for the Weekend (New York: Viking, 1991), 74.
The OE versions of the Sunday Letter will be studied for their innovations to the Latin tradition and for the rhetorical devices which are used to validate this suspicious piece of writing. It will be shown that, despite its brief peak of popularity in the eleventh century, the Sunday Letter was never fully integrated into the homiletic corpus of the day, nor did it have a significant impact on the preaching of later centuries.

A History of Sunday Observance

The issue of Christian Sunday observance seems to have lacked clarity from the very beginning. The controversies concerning the Sabbath which are recorded in the gospels are well-known. Most of these have to do with Christ’s performance of miracles on the Sabbath, such as the healing of a blind man or a man with a withered hand.\(^4\) In one important incident, however, the Sabbath law is broken as a matter of necessity or even convenience. Christ’s disciples pick and eat some corn and, following the usual reproof by the Pharisees, Christ states that “the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,” and that “the Son of Man is Lord of the

Sabbath also." These two statements illustrate Christ’s disagreement with the extreme legalism of his contemporaries, but they do not necessarily imply that he advocated an abandonment of the third commandment of the decalogue. However, evidently the early Church was compelled to determine its own position on Sabbath observance without clear and unambiguous direction from its founder.

Nor do the writings of the apostle Paul resolve the difficulty as they do in the case of other Jewish practices such as circumcision and dietary restrictions. In the book of Romans, St. Paul merely makes the following statement:

Nam alius iudicat diem plus inter diem alius iudicat omnem diem unusquisque in suo sensu abundet. Qui sapit diem Domino sapit et qui manducat Domino manducat gratias enim agit Deo.

For one judgeth between day and day: and another judgeth every day: let every man abound in his own sense. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord. And he that eateth, eateth to the Lord: for he giveth thanks to God.

This comment, though it does not specifically name either Sabbath or Sunday, may be seen as emblematic of the struggle in the early Church between Christian freedom and

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6Exod. 20:8-11: “Memento ut diem sabbati sanctifices. Sex diebus operaberis et facies omnia opera tua. Septimo autem die sabbati Domini Dei tui non facies omne opus tu et filius tuus et filia tua servus tuus et ancilla tua iumentum tuum et advena qui est intra portas tuas. Sex enim diebus fecit Dominus caelum et terram et mare et omnia quae in eis sunt et requievit in die septimo idcirco benedixit Dominus diei sabbati et sanctificavit eum.”

7Rom. 14:5-6.
Jewish practices. What was pious observance to one was reprehensible "judaizing" to another, a situation which continued throughout the Middle Ages.

The earliest, pre-Constantinian Church observed the Lord’s Day primarily as a day of worship rather than rest, based on the belief that it was the day when Christ had risen from the dead, hence the designation "Lord’s day" (dies dominica). On this day of joyful celebration it was forbidden to kneel and fast, the very first Sunday prohibitions. While Christians were in the minority and in danger of persecution, it would have been unthinkable for them to draw attention to themselves by refusing to work on Sundays, particularly as many of them were of the lower classes or slaves.

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10Rordorf, 154-56. In this view, early mentions of cessation from work in Eusebius and Tertullian are interpreted as a reservation of a space of time for the purposes of worship, presumably in the early morning or late evening, rather than a setting aside of the entire day for rest; Rordorf, 158-162. Also, Bauckham, "Post-Apostolic," 274.
Meanwhile, in Syria and Palestine, the Jewish Sabbath also continued to be kept to a certain extent among Jewish Christians.\textsuperscript{11} It has been suggested that in the third and fourth centuries this ongoing syncretism was a result of popular tendencies to absorb the practices of Jewish neighbours, a situation which the authorities sought to oppose.\textsuperscript{12}

The first official legislation concerning regulation of Sunday was promulgated by the Emperor Constantine in 321. In it the “day of the sun” was to be set aside for rest; the only exception was field-work. Constantine’s intent in the formation of this edict has been disputed. There is some indication that it was more an appeasement of members of the cult of Mithras, who were sun-worshipers, than of the Christians in the empire. It may also have been an attempt to accommodate both groups, though there is little evidence that Sunday rest was a requirement of the Church at this time.\textsuperscript{13}

Indeed, some documents indicate that Sunday rest had undesirable associations with the perceived “idleness” of the Jewish Sabbath and that there were those who feared that secular amusements would become the means of filling the empty hours.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11}Bauckham, “Post-Apostolic,” 257-59. Bauckham also mentions various gentile groups who may have had strict Sabbath regulations (259ff.).

\textsuperscript{12}Examples of such disapproval may be found in canon 29 of the Council of Laodicea (380), the writings of “Pseudo-Barnabas,” Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Irenaeus and Valentinian Ptolemaeus; Bauckham, “Post-Apostolic,” 261-269. Cf. Rordorf, 167-68.

\textsuperscript{13}Rordorf, 164.

\textsuperscript{14}Rordorf, 167-70; Dumaine, cols. 919-20.
Once an official day of rest, Sunday becomes associated with the Old Testament Sabbath, and the notion of the former being a replacement for the latter begins to appear.\textsuperscript{15} In part, this must have been due to the very practical consideration that the Church had every reason to encourage a work-free Sunday in conjunction with the obligation to attend church services, the main avenue of Christian instruction. But this motivating factor alone cannot explain the sudden increase in prohibitions which seems to have taken place in the late fifth and especially the sixth century. Here there must have been an additional influence, whether Jewish, Germanic or Celtic, which encouraged these particular taboos. Wilhelm Thomas, in his comprehensive study of Sunday observance in the early Middle Ages, explains this influx not as an association with the Jewish Sabbath, but rather the transference of pagan Germanic practices in connection with their “taboo-days” to the Christian Sunday.\textsuperscript{16} As evidence, Thomas cites Caesarius of Arles’ sermon XIX which speaks out against the pagan practice of honouring Thursday or Jove’s day by not working.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{16}Wilhelm Thomas, \textit{Der Sonntag im frühen Mittelalter. Mit Berücksichtigung der Entstehungsgeschichte des christlichen Dekalogs dargestellt} (Göttingen: Bardenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1929), 17ff.

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Sermo} XIX.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 90. See also \textit{Sermo} XIII.5; ibid., 68. The Synod of Narbonne in 589 also condemned Thursday observance; Carl Joseph von Hefele, \textit{Conciliengeschichte}, 2d ed., vol. 3 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1877), 55. Various forms of Thursday rest have been observed among Germanic peoples into this century; cf. Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer and Hanns Bächold-Stäubli, eds., “Donnerstag,” \textit{Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens}, vol. 2 (1927-42; reprint, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987), cols. 331-345.
In another instance, Caesarius mentions women who will not spin or weave on that day.\textsuperscript{18} But as Thomas points out, Caesarius’ statement that such people are “transferring to Thursday what ought to be done on Sunday,” actually opens the door to syncretism.\textsuperscript{19} At the same time, when Caesarius tries to goad his parishioners with the example of the devotion of the Jews in not working on their Sabbath, he seems to be inviting Sabbatarianism,\textsuperscript{20} but at least in this instance he makes it clear that proper observance of Sunday for the Christian involves church attendance, reading and prayer.\textsuperscript{21}

One particular instance of Sunday regulation found in Caesarius which is of some importance is the prohibition of sexual contact on Sunday.\textsuperscript{22} This rule arose in honour of partaking of the Eucharist, but Caesarius declares that children conceived on Sundays or feast days will be born either “leprosi aut epileptici aut forte etiam

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}Sermo LII.2; Morin, CCSL 103, 230-31. Sermo XIII.5; ibid., 68. The prohibition against spinning was perhaps for Thursday evening in honor of the following day, Freyja’s day; Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens, col. 333.
\item \textsuperscript{19}Sermo XIX.4; Morin, CCSL 103, 90.
\item \textsuperscript{20}I will use the term “Sabbatarianism” not merely to refer to the influence of Jewish Sabbath customs, but to any tendency toward strict Sunday observance. Cf. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “Sabbatarian”(sense B.2): “one whose opinion and practice with regard to Sunday observance are unusually strict.”
\item \textsuperscript{21}Sermo XIII.3; ibid., 66. Sermo LXXIII.4; ibid., 308-309.
\item \textsuperscript{22}See William E. Klingshirn, Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 155-56.
\end{itemize}
daemoniosi” (‘lepers, or epileptics or perhaps demoniacs’),
23 a suggestion which is strongly reminiscent of the fate of children conceived on Sunday in the Sunday
Letter.24

Although Caesarius spoke out against Thursday observance, his sermons do not provide evidence that “taboo-day” restrictions had in fact been transferred to Sunday. Furthermore, his own notions of reverencing the Lord’s day seem to have more to do with attendance at Church and spending time in prayer, rather than abstaining from work.25 But there is other evidence to add some credence to Thomas’ thesis of pagan taboo-day influence. The Council of Orleans in 538 castigates those who will not deal with their farm animals, ride in a cart, prepare food or clean house

23 Sermo XLIV.7; Morin, CCSL 103, 199. Cf. Sermo XVI.2; ibid., 78. Thomas believes this section may be a later interpolation (33).


25 Sermo XIII.3; Morin, CCSL 103, 66; Sermo LXXIII.4; ibid., 308-309.
on Sunday. At the same time it forbids rural labour, presumably making a
distinction between populist taboos and a Christian obligation to refrain from servile
work. Martin of Braga (ca. 515-579), in his *De correctione rusticorum*, also
condemns the observance of Thursday, but urges the honoring of the Lord’s day with
the cessation of servile work (*opus servile*), in which he includes the undertaking of
long journeys. Various individuals may have had differing definitions of the notion
of work, and some, though we are never told exactly who, clearly went beyond what
was officially required.

The sixth century produced another type of endorsement of the new attitudes
towards Sunday in the literary sphere. The *Strafwunder* (miracles of punishment)
recounted by Gregory of Tours are additional evidence that popular stories were
beginning to spring up to support the increasing restrictions. Gregory recounts tales
of farmers and craftsmen whose limbs are immobilized as they try to work on
Sunday. One example points to the influence of taboo-like restrictions which take
the idea of Sunday rest to its extreme:

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26 Thomas, 25.

27 "Opus servile, id est agrum, pratum, vineam, vel si qua gravia sunt, non faciatis in
die dominico, praeter tantum quod ad necessitatem reficiendi corpusculi pro exquoquendo
pertinet cibo et necessitate longinqui itinерis"; *Martini Episcopi Bracarensis Opera Omnia*,

28 *Libri miraculorum. II. De miraculis S. Juliana*, PL 71:808; *De miraculis Sancti
Puella quædam, die Dominico cum suum caput componeret, pectine apprehenso, credo ob injuriam diei sancti, in manibus ejus adhæsit, ita ut affix [sic] dentes tam in digitis quam in palmis magnum ei dolorem inferrent.  

A certain girl was fixing her hair on a Sunday. I believe because of the injury done to the holy day that when she took hold of the comb it stuck to her hand so that the teeth pressed as much into her fingers as into her palm and caused great pain.

The girl is delivered from her agony when she prays at the tomb of St. Gregory, but the idea that even the combing of hair was forbidden goes well beyond the official prohibitions against Sunday labour.

The legislation in Gaul at this time and, indeed throughout the entire Carolingian period usually goes no further than to forbid work, and sometimes markets, in the most general terms, though as early as the end of the sixth century fines are to be exacted for Sunday work.  

The expressions used, corporalia opera or opera servilia, are not usually given further definition, although one eighth-century Bavarian law code specifies that this means the use of farm animals and field work.  

Another important exception is the Admonitio generalis issued by Charlemagne in 789 which specifies that work in field and vineyard—ploughing, harvesting, mowing, 

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Vitae patrum, PL 71:1040.}

\footnote{The Council of Narbonne (589); Thomas, 36-37.}

\footnote{L.L. McReavy, “The Sunday Repose from Labour,” Ephemeres Theologicae Lovanienses 12 (1935): 316-21. Thomas provides a useful table of all councils and synods which contain Sunday legislation from this time period as an appendix on pages 100-106.}

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erecting of fences, felling of trees—as well as building of houses and garden work are all prohibited. Travel is allowed only in pressing circumstances. Women’s work—such as sewing, weaving and the washing of clothes—is also forbidden. Here we can see that specific restrictions have found acceptance in official circles, though it is difficult to assess how successfully they were enforced. It should also be noted that these regulations still stop short of the more private spheres of personal hygiene and food preparation which are encroached upon in the Sunday Letter.

However, there were some important figures who tried to exert an influence against the increasing trend towards Sabbatarianism by spiritualizing the commandment of the Sabbath rest and resisting its association with the Christian Sunday. Most importantly perhaps, Augustine saw the Sabbath rest of the decalogue as a prefiguration of the spiritual rest under the New Law. Gregory the Great, in a letter to the citizens of Rome, protests against the Sabbatarianism of those who urge a cessation from work on the Sabbath. Gregory identifies those who espouse such views as “preachers of the Anti-Christ” (praedicatorum Antichristi) and reminds the citizens that the Sabbath is to be observed spiritually, not literally. More remarkable,

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however, is Gregory’s mention of the practice of not washing oneself on Sunday.\textsuperscript{34} In response to this deviation, he clarifies what may be seen as orthodox Sunday observance: the practice of prayer and the cessation of worldly work, in which, however, the term \textit{labor terrenus} need not imply labour, but rather sin, as in the term “the works of the world.”\textsuperscript{35} It would seem, however, that not even the influential voices of Augustine and Gregory could stem the tide of an increasing Sabbatarianism.

It is in the climate of this growing Sabbatarian movement of the sixth century that we first hear of the Sunday Letter.\textsuperscript{36} We would have no knowledge of its early appearance were it not for certain authoritative condemnations which are still extant, and it is particularly instructive to observe what arguments are used in the course of these denunciations. The first of these dates from the end of the sixth century, when

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{34}\textit{Epistola} XIII.3: “Aliud quoque ad me perlatum est, vobis a perversis hominibus esse praedicatum, ut dominicorum die nullus debeat lavare”; \textit{Gregorii I Papaepi\textit{registerm epistolae}}, vol. 2, MGH, \textit{epistolae}, ed. Paul Ewald and Ludwig M. Hartmann (Berlin: Weidmann, 1891), 367-68.
\item \textsuperscript{35}“Dominicorum vero die a labore terreno cessandum est atque omni modo orationibus insistendum”; Ibid., 368. See McReavy, 317.
\item \textsuperscript{36}A text which has been seen by some as a predecessor to the letter is a curious fragment (s. x-xi), probably authored sometime in the sixth century, which at one time was attributed to Peter of Alexandria. It commands Sunday rest and peace and anathematizes those who refuse to abide by this and other laws. Although it in some ways resembles the Sunday Letter, its doubtful dating and limited scope lessen its value to a study of the letter’s sources. It should, however, be noted that this text also introduces an Old Testament style curse to the exhortation of resting on the Lord’s day. Carl Schmidt, “Fragment einer Schrift des Märtyrer-Bischofs Petrus von Alexandrien,” \textit{Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur}, 20.4b (1901): 5-7. For the authenticity and dating of this text, see the note on Schmidt’s edition by Hippolyte Delehaye (\textit{Analecta Bollandiana} 20 [1901]: 101-103), and Renoir, col. 1536.
\end{itemize}
Licinianus, bishop of Carthagena, writes to Vincentius, bishop of Ibiza, concerning his use of the Sunday letter. Licinianus is clearly offended by the letter's claim to be Christ's words and condemns its inferior style and unsound doctrine (nec sermo elegans, nec doctrina sana). He believes that the letter goes well beyond honouring the day for the sake of Christ's resurrection and accuses the writer of trying to "judaize" by forbidding the preparation of food and travel. Licinianus notes that he would prefer that a man garden and travel on Sunday, than that he engage in dancing and other frivolous secular amusements. In addition to this, he cannot believe that Christ would add to scripture (the prophets and the apostles), which, with the exception of Moses' stone tablets, did not drop from heaven but were given by the Holy Spirit. Licinianus' theology of Sunday clearly is based on the earlier notion that abstaining from work is only a temptation to engage in unlawful amusements.

The next time that we hear of the Sunday Letter is in connection with a certain Aldebert who was condemned for his possession of the letter at the Council of Soissons in 744 and who also was the reason for a synod at the Lateran in the following year. On the latter occasion, Archbishop Boniface sends Pope Zacharias all the evidence he has accumulated against the heretic Aldebert. The man is unanimously denounced, but the letter is left to speak for itself in this context, only

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eliciting the following remark from the Pope:

Pro certo, karissimi fratres, et predictus in insaniam conversus
Aldebertus et omnis, qui hanc utitur scelere commentatam epistolam,
parvulorum more absque memoria mentium esse possunt et quibusdam
mulieris insaniunt sensibus. Sed ut ne leviores adhuc amplius decipiant,
indiscussam et absque sententia causam hanc in eum reliquere minime
possumus.39

Certainly, beloved brothers, this aforementioned Aldebert is insane, and
all who make use of this wickedly fabricated letter are able to lose their
senses altogether in the manner of children and they rave with certain
womanish notions. But in order that he may no longer deceive the
simple, we certainly cannot leave the case without discussion and a
judgment against him.

There is no question that Pope Zacharias considers the contents of the letter to be
beyond the need for further probings, and the entire assembly agrees with this verdict.

It is interesting to note that the letter is identified as “fabricated” (commentatam) and
that the Pope says it was used (utitur), in other words, that he perceives some
manipulative intention behind the letter’s tone or subject matter. No doubt in this his
imagination was aided by the other stratagems of Aldebert.40

The assembly of 745 decides, perhaps unwisely, not to burn the heretical
writings used by Aldebert, but rather to preserve them as evidence.41 Efforts to

39Michael Tangl, ed., Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus, vol. 1, MGH,

40Among other things, Aldebert was supposed to have distributed his own fingernails
and hair as relics and to have granted absolution without hearing confession (Ibid., 112).

41Ibid., 117-18.
suppress the Sunday Letter were doomed to failure, however, since it would seem that it was already being widely disseminated. Some fifty years later it reappears in Charlemagne’s *Admonitio generalis* (789) as part of a list of heterodox writings and is denounced as *epistola pessima et falsissima* (‘a most wicked and false letter’) which should not be believed nor read but burnt.\(^4\)

Shortly thereafter, the Sunday Letter reached Ireland and England as we hear yet another condemnation in a letter by Ecgred, bishop of Lindisfarne to Wulfsige, archbishop of York, written in the 830s.\(^4\) This letter mentions a certain Pehtred, who has collected heterodox writings, among them the Sunday Letter. Ecgred, like Licinianus, sees in the letter a tendency towards dangerous Judaizing: “honoremque Dominici diei ob gloriam resurrectionis. Eujusdem Filii Dei, non sabbatum cum Judæis, omnimodis servare justum credimus et vere scimus” (‘And we believe it to be right and know it to be true, to observe in every way the honour of the Lord’s day on account of the glory of the resurrection of the same Son of God, and not the Sabbath of the Jews’).\(^4\) He doubts the story of Niall, an Irish hermit who was said to have died and come back to life in order to testify to the authenticity of the letter. Ecgred has researched the names mentioned in the letter, because he says that he cannot find

\(^4\)Canon 78; *Capitularia regum Francorum I*, ed. Alfredus Boretius, MGH, *Leges 2* (Hannover: Hahn, 1883), 60.


\(^4\)Haddan and Stubbs, 615.
a Pope Florentius mentioned in his list of popes. Furthermore, he reasons that such
an important event as a divine letter arriving on St. Peter’s tomb would surely have
occasioned a general announcement from Rome. Ecgred advises that Pehtred, the
owner of the offending book containing the letter, be severely admonished, and
should he persist in error, be anathematized.

Thus far the trail of scandal that follows the Sunday Letter. We should note
that those who disapprove of the letter associate it with Jewish rather than pagan
practices, although this does not necessarily invalidate Thomas’ hypothesis of a pagan
origin for the practices prohibited in the Sunday Letter. It is likely that both the
pagan taboo-day and the Jewish Sabbath had a part to play in early medieval
Sabbatarianism; the extent of the influence in each case is no longer recoverable.

**Sunday Observance in Anglo-Saxon England**

Our earliest records show that Sunday was to be observed in England, as on
the continent, by resting from work. The laws of Ine and Wihtred from the late
seventh century record various punishments for those who either break the law
themselves or force others to do so:

[3] Gif ðeowmon wyrce on Sunnandæg be his hlafordes hæse, sie he
frioh, and se hlaford geselle XXX scill. to wite. [3.1] Gif þonne se
ðeowa butan his gewitnesse wyrce, þolie his hyde. [3.2] Gif ðonne se
frigea ðy dæge wyrc butan his hlafordes hæse, ðolie his freotes.45

[3] If a slave should work on Sunday by his lord’s command, he should be set free, and let the lord give thirty shillings in payment. [3.1] If the slave should work without [the lord’s] knowledge, let him suffer his hide. [3.2] If a free man should work on that day without his lord’s command, let him lose his freedom.

Alfred adds no new provisions except to decree that a theft occurring on a Sunday or other holy day must be repaid two-fold.46 During the time of Æthelstan, Sunday observance must have been the subject of some controversy; a law forbidding trade (II Æthelstan 24.1) was subsequently repealed (IV Æthelstan 2).47 Even so, from the late tenth century on, trade and court assemblies were commonly prohibited, and some law codes added hunting and worldly work, such as this one issued by Cnut48:

[15] And Sunnandaga cyepingce we forbeodað eac eornostlice and ælc folcgemot, butan hit for micelre neodþearfe sig. [15.1] And huntæðfara and eætra woruldlicra weorca on þam halgan dæge geswicæ man


47Ibid., 52 and n.1.

48Canons of Edgar 19; ibid., 321. VIII Æthelred 17; ibid., 393-94. “The So-Called ‘Laws of Edward and Guthrum’” 7-8; ibid., 310. VI Æthelred 22.1; ibid., 352. An interesting narrative which illustrates the conflict between Church and private amusement may be found in the life of St. Dunstan written by Eadmer. This records a vision granted to Dunstan while he was waiting for King Edgar to return from hunting so that mass could begin, which results in the king being urged not to hunt on Sundays; William Stubbs, ed., The Memorials of St. Dunstan, Rolls Series 63 (London: Longman, 1874), 207.
georne.

[15] And also we earnestly forbid trading on Sundays and every public meeting, unless it be for great necessity. [15.1] And one is to abstain from hunting expeditions and all secular work on that holy day.49

The first code to define the duration of Sunday as the period from Saturday at
three in the afternoon to Monday at dawn is II Edgar 5:

And healde man ælaces Sunnandæges freols fram nontide þæs
Sæternesdæges oð ðæs Monandæges lihtinge, be þam wite þe seo
domboc tæcð, and ælcne oðerne mæssedæg, swa he beboden beo.

And every Sunday shall be observed as a festival from Saturday noon
until dawn on Monday, under pain of the punishment which the
lawbook prescribes, and every other festival as it is enjoined.50

This is the time span mentioned in all texts thereafter.51

In addition to the general regulations against Sunday work there were
proscriptions of ordeals, oathmaking and strife on all feast days.52 Executions were


50Ibid., 101. Although Whitelock and Brooke here translate nontide as noon rather
than three o’clock in the afternoon, this seems to have been a later development possibly
due to the desire to move the meal-hour to earlier in the day; cf. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.
“noon”. See also Joseph A. Jungmann, “Die Heiligung des Sonntags im Frühchristentum und
im Mittelalter,” in Der Tag des Herrn. Die Heiligung des Sonntags im Wandel der Zeit,
edited by Hermann Peichl (Wien: Herder, 1958), 68.

51Cf. ‘Ælfrics Brief an Bischof Wulfsige’; Fehr, 32; ‘Letter from Cnut to the People of
England’18; Whitelock and Brooke, Councils and Synods, 440-41. I Cnut 14.2; ibid., 478.

‘Laws of Edward and Guthrum’” 9; ibid., 311.

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also prohibited on Sundays.\textsuperscript{53} An unusual amount of detail is provided in the Northumbrian Priest’s Law:

\begin{verbatim}[55] Sunnandæges cypingc we forbeodað æghwar and ælc folgemot and ælc weorc and ælce lade ægðer ge on wæne ge on horse ge on byrdene. [56] Se þe ænig þissa do, gilde wite: friman XII or, ðeowman ða hyde; buton wegferende, þa moton for neode mete ferian; and for unfriðe man mot freolsæfenan nide fulfaran betweonan Eferwic and six mila gemete. [57] Se þa freols oððe rihtfæsten brece, gilde wite XII or.
\end{verbatim}

[55] Sunday market we forbid everywhere, and every public assembly and all work and all carrying (of goods), whether by wagon or by horse or on one’s back. [56] He who does any of these things is to pay the penalty: a freeman twelve ores, a slave with a flogging; except for travellers, who are permitted to carry sustenance for their needs; and in case of hostility one may travel because of necessity between York and a distance of six miles on the eve of festivals. [57] He who then violates a festival or a legal fast is to pay twelve ores’ fine.\textsuperscript{54}

The addition of the prohibition against carrying goods as well as the exceptions to the travel rules are unique to this law code.

The penitentials mention additional restrictions which might have been observed. The penitential associated with archbishop Theodore (d. 690) records that the Greeks and Romans permit rowing and riding on Sunday, but that baking of bread, riding in a cart to go anywhere other than church, bathing, and writing in

\textsuperscript{53}“The So-Called ‘Laws of Edward and Guthrum’” 9.1; ibid., 311. II Cnut 45; ibid. 494.

\textsuperscript{54}Whitelock and Brooke, 463-464.
public are forbidden.\textsuperscript{55} Washing of head and feet was, however, permitted, a concession which has been interpreted as a challenge to Irish Sabbatarianism.\textsuperscript{56} Discipline for Sunday work was first a reprimand, then confiscation of part of the goods produced and finally a whipping or penance of fasting.\textsuperscript{57} Because of their formulation, it is not at all clear whether these rules were also to be applied in England; the references to Greek and Roman practice suggest that they were arbitrary and variable. The only other Sunday observance mentioned in this text, the penance for sexual relations on Sunday, is stated in a more straightforward manner and, by comparison, is relatively mild: one to three days of fasting.\textsuperscript{58}

Reservations about the relationship of these texts to actual practice should also apply to the OE translations. Three vernacular manuscripts excerpt these passages:


\textsuperscript{57}Book 1, XI.1: “Qui operantur die Dominico, eos Greci prima vice arguunt, secunda tollunt aliquid ab eis, tertia vice partem tertiam de rebus eorum, aut vapulent, vel VII. diebus peniteant”; Haddan and Stubbs, 186.

\textsuperscript{58}Book 1, XIV.20: “Qui nubit die Dominico, petat a Deo indulgentiam, et I. vel IIbus vel IIIbus. diebus peniteat”; Haddan and Stubbs, 189. Cf. Book 2, XII.1; Haddan and Stubbs, 199.
Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale 8558-63 (s. x'); Bodleian, Laud Misc. 482 (s. xi med); and Junius 121 (s. xi, 3rd qtr.). All of these include the references to Greek and Roman practice, though they omit the permission of head and foot washing. The latest manuscript, Junius 121, omits entirely the section on riding, rowing, baking and bathing, perhaps because, unlike the proscription against practicing one's trade, these regulations were not supported by the laws. This section would also have been in conflict with an important text of the Benedictine Reform, the Capitula Theodulfi. In its twenty-fourth capitulum, it forbids worldly work (weoruldweorc), but significantly permits riding, rowing and food preparation. Here the focus of concern does not seem to be a tendency to work on Sunday as much as the people's habit of spending the day in debauchery rather than prayer and the performance of good deeds.

The mention of the obligation to honour Sunday is conspicuously absent in the

59 For the Brussels and Laud manuscripts see F.J. Mone, “Zur Geschichte und Kritik der angelsächsischen Gesetze,” Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der teutschen Literatur und Sprache, vol. 1 (Aachen, 1830); 482-548 (sections 90-91, 108). Mone edits the collection from the Brussels manuscript. The relevant section of the Junius manuscript has been edited by Robert Spindler, Das altenglische Bussbuch. Ein Beitrag zu den kirchlichen Gesetzen der Angelsachsen (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1934), sections 19p, 21g. See Frantzen, Literature of Penance, 132-133.


61 C. 45 (MS A): “Forþon hit is se wyresta gewuna þæt monige men ægðer ge Sunnandagum ge eac oðrum mæssedagum begað, þæt is þætte hig sona on ærmergen willað mæssan gehyran, ond sona æfter þære mæssan, from ærmergenne ofer ealne dæg, on druncennyssse ond on wiste hiora wombe þeowiað, nas God”; Ibid., 401.
homiletic literature before Ælfric, i.e. in the Blickling and Vercelli collections. The anonymous homilies which do contain such admonitions are, it would seem, associated with the circle which published the works of Wulfstan, though he himself only mentions the honouring of Sunday briefly. The observance of Sunday as a day of rest seems to be taken for granted. In a homily preserved in three manuscripts closely associated with Wulfstan, the first Sabbath is called se æresta restedæg (‘the first restday’) and is then equated with se halga drihtenlica dæg þe we nu Sunnandæg nemniað (‘that holy Lord’s day which we now call Sunday’). The homilist explains that in the New Law we are commanded to rest on this day because of Christ’s resurrection, but then goes on to bolster his argument with a reference to its being the first day of creation and the day on which all the most holy spiritual events (ba gastlican gewyrde) took place. A statement that those who do not observe Sunday with honour, rest and worship are breaking God’s law closes this very brief explanation of Sunday observance.

62Bethurum Xc.107: “Sunnandæges weordunge næning man forgyme” (‘No one should neglect the honoring of Sunday’).


64Schaefer III.122-24.

65Schaefer III.127.
When the anonymous homilists treat the subject of Sunday, the discussion is generally confined to church attendance and cessation from work, usually referred to as “worldly work.” So a homily preserved in two manuscripts written around the turn of the millennium simply exhorts the congregation “forlæten we ælc ðær wurc, and ælce woruldlice bysga, and cumen we to godes ciercean” (‘let us forsake all other work and every worldly business and come to the church of God’). Several homilies repeat the legal codes in mentioning the restriction of trade and assemblies. The early prohibition against fasting on Sunday is everywhere repeated, usually as a reminder when certain fasts are mentioned that they are to be observed butan sunnandagum (‘except Sundays’).

The time span of Sunday following the Benedictine Reform is consistently from sæternesdæges nones ðód monnandæges lihtinge (‘three in the afternoon Saturday to dawn Monday’), whereas it had been from Saturday evening to Sunday evening in the time of King Wihtred, Archbishop Theodore and Bede. This is an exceptionally long period of time for which there seem to be only non-canonical

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66 Rudolf Brotanek, ed., Texte und Untersuchungen zur altenglischen Literatur und Kirchengeschichte (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1913), 23.
68 For example, Assmann XI.52.
precedents. Willard has suggested that the Sunday Letter may have even influenced the *Visio Pauli* in this respect. Whether or not there was a direct influence of one text on the other, it is still a curious fact that specifically this period becomes the time span in mid-tenth-century English legal codes and thereafter.

Characteristically, Ælfric hopes to justify theologically the reasons for Sunday observance. Ælfric's view is the following: the Jews honoured the Sabbath as a day of rest (*restendœg*) which typologically prefigured Christ's body resting in the tomb after the crucifixion, but for Christians the prohibition against servile work (*beowetlicum weorce*) on the Sabbath is spiritualized as being the cessation from sin during life, since the one who sins is the servant of sin. Sunday is to be held in

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70. Ælfrics Brief an Bischof Wulf siguе; Fehr, 32; Napier XXIII, 117; Napier L, 272. Sunday is defined in continental sources as lasting “*a vespera usque ad vesperam*” from at least the seventh century on (Council of Rouen [c. 650]); Bauckham, “Sabbath and Sunday in the Medieval Church in the West,” in *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation*, ed. D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1982), 308 n. 29.


73. Ælfrics zweiter altenglischer Brief an Erzbischof Wulfstan (Christmabrief’); Fehr, 194-96. This portion of Ælfric’s letter is based on pseudo-Ecbert’s *Excerptiones*, c. 36; Fehr, 196-97. Cf. *CH II*, XII.300-11. Belfour VII, 70.12-19.
honour instead because it is the day on which Christ rose from the dead.Ælfric may have known of the “Sunday List” tradition (see below); he lists the resurrection and the first day of creation as reasons for the dignity of Sunday, and in his homily for the tenth Sunday after Pentecost he adds that “he manega wundra geworhte on ðam dæge” (“he performed many miracles on that day [Sunday]”). The nature of Sunday observance is simply stated: church attendance is enjoined, and worldly labour (woroldlicum weorcum), fasting or kneeling, excessive feasting and drunkenness are all forbidden. One interesting hint that Ælfric supported the Sunday legislation of his time may be found in his Colloquy in which the hunter is asked whether he hunted that day and he answers: “Non fui, quia dominicus dies est, sed heri fui in uenatione” (“I did not, because it is the Lord’s day, but yesterday I hunted”). In his homily De falsis diis, Ælfric shows that he knows of a Danish habit of celebrating Thursday in


ÆSupp., XVI.81. Cf. HomNapierCCCC162: “and þæt ge gehealdan sunnandæg fram eallum woruldlicum weorcum, forðanðe God geworhte manega wundra on ðam sunnandæge” (NapierCCCC162, 357); also, Napier LVII, 293.5-7. Both of these homilies follow this statement with a Sunday List. Cf. CH I, VI.169: “Se sunnandæg is fyrnest on gesceapenysse and on endebyrdnyssse, and on wurþmynte.”

76ÆSupp., XVI.83.

ÆSupp., XVIII.341.

LS, XII.7-9.

honor of Jove: “þone fístn dæg hi freolsodan mærlice, Ioue to wyrðmynte, þam mærestan gode” (‘the fifth day [of the week] they celebrate greatly, in honour of Jove, the most famous god’). However, there is no other mention of this pagan custom to provide more information on its exact nature, so we cannot be sure that it involved the kinds of restrictions mentioned by Caesarius centuries earlier.

It is remarkable that, apart from the Sunday Letter itself, Anglo-Saxon homilists show so little interest in the proper observance of Sunday. One might suppose that the clergy were content to allow the secular arm to regulate the various Sunday restrictions regarding work and legal proceedings whereas only church attendance seems to be of significant importance to the Church authorities. Nor does the evidence of the penitentials provide us with certainty as to the enforcement of a more extensive list of restrictions. One can only conclude that the Anglo-Saxons were not inclined, on the whole, to multiply Sunday regulations, and it is against this evidence that the Sunday Letter must be read. In contrast to the very public acts forbidden in the laws, it contains a catalogue of taboos which include such private activities as bathing and shaving. The absence of the Sunday Letter from early homiletic collections and the scarcity and nature of the references to Sunday which do appear make one cautious when it comes to determining the actual scope of the letter’s influence or of the movement towards Sabbatarianism in general.

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ÆSupp., XXI.174-75.
**Old English Manuscript Contexts**

Whatever the Sunday Letter's early circulation in Latin might have been, it is possible to place the apex of its popularity in England in the first three quarters of the eleventh century. The following table contains all the manuscript occurrences of the Sunday Letter in Old English.\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sigla</th>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Homily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G(F)</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 162 (s. xi in.)</td>
<td>HomNapierCCCC162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M(X)</td>
<td>London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius MS A.iii (s. xi med.)</td>
<td>HomNapier XLIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N(V)</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 419 (s. xi(^1))</td>
<td>HomNapier XLIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(J)</td>
<td>London, Lambeth Palace MS 489 (s. xi 3(^{rd}) qtr.)</td>
<td>HomNapier LVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 140 (s. xi(^2))</td>
<td>HomPriebsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>London, British Library, Cotton Otho MS B.x (s. xi med.)</td>
<td>(HomWanley)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The OE Sunday Letter was copied in England for a relatively short time; all the extant manuscripts are from the eleventh century, most falling within the first fifty years. Unlike the two previous monologues examined, the Sunday Letter never appears as a homily designated for a specific season of the church year. It has various, not always appropriate titles: *Sunnandæges spell* and *Sermonem angelorum*

\(^1\)Refer to chapter 2, pages 52-53 for the sigla and dating schemes employed in this chart.

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nomina in (N[V]), Sermo ad populum dominicis diebus (P[J]), Be pam drihtenlican
sunnandæg folces lar (G[F]). Twice, therefore, it is specifically designated for the
general populace.

The most purposeful inclusion in a sermon collection occurs in G(F), where it
is one of the group of Ælfrician homilies copied before the compiler began a series
for the liturgical year. The section seems to be catechetical in nature, including
Ælfric’s De initio creaturae, De dominica oratione and De catholica fide. The
Sunday Letter homily follows these and seems to have set the tone for an Old
Testament focus as two homilies on Moses and Joshua come next. Its inclusion here
suggests that the compiler saw no incongruity between this piece and those by Ælfric,
but also that he recognized the Old Testament rhetoric which I will discuss below.

The remaining Sunday Letter homilies are scattered in miscellaneous
collections. Two versions of it are copied into N(V), a “general purpose collection,”
according to Godden.\footnote{Godden, introd., lxxi.} Scragg notes that the compiler seems to have drawn upon a
broad selection of works by Wulfstan and Ælfric and has put together his collection
“with care and authority.”\footnote{Scragg, “Corpus of Vernacular Homilies,” 252-53; Scragg cites Pope, 799-803.}
As in G(F), the letters occur in the beginning of the
manuscript, second only to a homily on the Anti-Christ. One might speculate as to
whether the placement of the Sunday Letter in the earlier part of two collections
suggests that it was seen as particularly supportive and fundamental to the preaching activity in general since its main objective is to ensure Sunday church attendance.

The manuscript M(Xe) is remarkable in that the collection seems to be one which would be useful to a bishop. It contains a wide variety of materials: the Rule of St. Benedict, the Regularis concordia, confessional and devotional prayers, Ælfric’s Colloquy, instructions for the ordination of a bishop, prayers to be used in confession and Ælfric’s letter to Wulfstan, among other items.84 The Sunday Letter is part of a series of anonymous texts: a life of St. Margaret, a greatly altered homily of Ælfric’s—the only one despite the manuscript’s late date (s. xi med.)—the Devil and Anchorite legend and twelve short homiletic pieces which are divided into to eallan folke and to mæserepreostum.

P(J), which was produced at Exeter, is a small collection of mostly reworked Ælfrician material, but it seems significant that it contains three homilies on the dedication of a church, suggesting that it, too, was intended for use by a bishop.

Christmas, Easter, and All Saints’ Day are the other Church occasions covered in this book; the Sunday Letter seems a curious companion to these items.

The remaining two occurrences of the Sunday Letter also date from roughly

84 In two cases the compiler knew the homilies of Wulfstan. N(V), according to Bethurum, contains six complete Wulfstan homilies (VI, VII, VIIIc, Xc, XIII, XX) and part of another (IX), while M(Xe) has two (VIIIa, XIII); both of these collections also contain material extracted from Wulfstan’s output and used in anonymous works. The fragmentary Æ also has part of a Wulfstan homily (VIIc); Bethurum, Homilies of Wulfstan, 1, 7.
the mid-eleventh century. In V the letter is added in the blank spaces of an OE translation of the gospels. It seems to have been one of the first items added and is the only homiletic text in the volume. One might wonder that this selection in particular would seem important enough to a scribe to justify marring a gospel-book, and one may even hazard a guess that the person who added it thought its claim to be another message from Christ credible enough to set it side by side with the canonical texts, or perhaps that he hoped to increase its authoritatively with such a placement.

Two inferences concerning the OE Sunday Letter can be made based on the manuscript evidence alone. Because it is never designated for a specific occasion and is only once specifically called a *sermo* (in P[J]), we might suspect that it was considered a kind of supplementary text and in some ways not a proper homily at all, although I will continue to designate it as such. Secondly, those selecting the letter for their compilations seem to have seen it, in some cases, as a basic and catechetical text and perhaps intended it to encourage church attendance more than anything else.

*The Latin Manuscripts*

Most of the extant Latin manuscripts containing the Sunday Letter are dated much later than the Anglo-Saxon period. Here I will examine only those surviving Latin manuscripts which predate or are contemporary with the OE homilies. The manuscript containing the earliest known full version (s. viii?) has unfortunately
been lost, but survives in a transcription. Although it is a valuable witness for the study of the letter's sources and transmission, nothing can be said about the manuscript context in this case.

Apart from this occurrence, there are three manuscripts which, like the OE translations, were all written in the eleventh century: Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm, 9550; London, British Library Add. 19725; and London, British Library Add. 30853. The placement of the Sunday Letter in these confirms what was observed above concerning the OE manuscripts. Only one of these is a homiliary (BL Add. 30853), but the letter is added as one of two ancient letters. BL 19725 includes a martyrology, penitential texts, canons, the Sunday Letter, and saints’ lives. Munich Clm. 9550 has only the *Vitae patrum* and the letter. If these manuscripts are any indication of the kinds of contexts from which the OE translators took the Sunday Letter, it is no wonder that it was never regarded as a traditional homily.

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85 Tarragona, Cathedral Library; printed in Priebsch (*Letter from Heaven*, 35-37). Lists of manuscripts containing the Sunday Letter are provided by Lees ("The 'Sunday Letter,'" 131-36), Renoir (cols. 1535-46) and Delehaye ( "Note," 171-213).

Before I examine treatment of the Latin letter in England, it will be useful to consider the Irish Sunday Letter and its particular relationship to the OE homilies. Two of the OE homilies reveal an important connection with Ireland. HomNapier XLIII and XLIV feature the story of the Irishman Niall, apparently the very visionary mentioned in Ecgred’s letter, who, as already mentioned above, allegedly died, came back to life, and thereafter testified to the authenticity of the Sunday Letter. These homilies have been linked, thanks to the clue provided by Pehtred’s infamous book, to the Irish Cāin Domnaig or “Law of Sunday” which contains a Sunday Letter (Epistle of Jesus), accounts of three Strafwunder relating to Sunday observance, and a set of law codes pertaining to Sunday. The Epistle of Jesus, as Whitelock has shown, is based on the same Latin source as the OE homilies although there are significant differences in their treatment of the material. HomNapier XLIII and

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87 The relationship of Ecgred’s letter, the deacon Niall and the Irish and OE homilies is thoroughly examined by Dorothy Whitelock in “Bishop Ecgred, Pehtred and Niall” (see note 2).


89a “Bishop Ecgred,” 59-60. Whitelock has also shown that another Latin text, Vat. reg. lat. 49, provides a better source for the dignatio diei dominici list in both the OE and Irish (see discussion below). Cf. Robert E. McNally, “‘Dies Dominica’: Two Hiberno-Latin Texts,” Mediaeval Studies 22 (1960): 355-56.
XLIV alone tell the story of Niall, but the Irish translation offers a similar validation in the tale of Conall Mac Coelmaine who, so the Epistle of Jesus claims, copied the Sunday Letter while on pilgrimage in Rome, and then many years after his death informed a cleric in a vision that the writ was to be found in his shrine.90

The Epistle of Jesus augments the Latin freely, both throughout the homily with elaborations,91 but also with additional prohibitions.92 In several manuscripts Strafwunder and law codes are appended to form a mutually supportive trilogy consisting of pseudo-scriptural authentication, narrative exempla and the legal sanctions underpinning Sunday observance.93

The remarkably detailed list of Sunday taboos found in the Cáin Domnaig is usually associated with the appearance in the late eighth century of the culdees (céli

90O’Keefe, “Cáin Domnaig,” 204-205.

91One colourful example is the elaborate description of the activities of one of the pestilences threatened, the bruchae: “Their hairs are pins of iron, and they have fiery eyes. They go into the vineyards and cut the branches of the vine so that they fall to the ground; thereupon they roll about in the fruit, so that the grapes of the vine stick in these pins, and they bear them away to their abode”; O’Keefe, “Cáin Domnaig,” 193.

92The Sunday prohibitions in the Cáin Domnaig are: horseriding, working oxen and slaves, servile labour, disputes, lawsuits, assemblies, bargains, horsedriving, sweeping the floor of one’s house, shaving, washing, bathing, washing clothes, grinding a mill or quern, cooking, churning, yarnweaving, adultery, journeying, racing, shooting spears and arrows, splitting firewood, putting a boat on water.

dé) in Ireland, an ascetic group known for its strict Sabbatarianism. The evidence of the *Cáin Domnaig* seems to indicate that these Sunday restrictions must have been quite wide-spread, as the law codes are very specific about the fines owed for every breach of observance and the circumstances which may be considered exceptions. There is also mention of "Sunday guarantors and bailiffs" who were responsible for enforcing the code. The support of these prohibitions by an influential religious group as well as the secular legal code no doubt facilitated the quiet acceptance and dissemination of the Sunday Letter in Ireland. As seen in the letter of Bishop Ecgred of Lindisfarne, such backing was not available at about the same time in England and would not be until early in the eleventh century.

Based on the evidence of the *Cáin Domnaig*, it seems likely that the framework of the Niall narrative in HomNapier XLIII and XLIV was the work of an Irishman. Priesch suggests that Pehtred or another Northumbrian homilist must have had the information concerning Niall from some travelling Irishman, but Whitelock has convincingly discounted his main evidence and believes that the Latin

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95 "Five seds [is the fine] for assaulting the Sunday guarantors or bailiffs, as they are claiming the Law of Sunday"; O'Keefe, *Cáin Domnaig*, 209.

source of these two homilies came from Ireland. It certainly does seem less likely that an Anglo-Saxon would trouble to insert a validating story about a little-known Irishman.

The two OE homilies which include the Niall story, HomNapier XLIII and XLIV, introduce it near the beginning where the narrative of the letter travelling from priest to priest is usually found. The more remote train of events is replaced in favour of an authority perceived to be more accessible. The author of this homily repeatedly returns to the Irish deacon to provide a kind of contemporary reference point for the Old Testament examples listed. So the narratives of Noah and Dathan and Abiron, standard elements in the Sunday Letter, are interpreted in the light of Niall’s predictions. Like Noah, Niall was not believed:

Swa þonne wenað nu manige men, þæt þæs diacon leoge be þam fyre, þe drihten seycgan het manna beamum. Ac men him nellað gerefan þe ma, þe heo Noe dydon, ær þæt fyr heom on sitt, swa þonne iu men ne woldon gerefan Noes worde, ær ealle wolcnu and ealle heofones þeoton wæron mid wætere gefylde, and ealle eorðan æddre onsprungon ongean þam heofonlican flode.

So then many men think that that deacon is lying about that fire which the Lord himself commanded him to relate to the children of men. But

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98The Dathan and Abiron episode is taken from Numbers 16:1-36, in which there is no mention of Sabbath-breaking, however.

men will not believe him any more than they did Noah before that fire comes upon them, just as once men did not wish to believe the words of Noah, before all the clouds and all the fountains of heaven were filled with water, and all the springs of the earth rose to meet the heavenly flood.

Niall is the special messenger sent by God because the heavenly letter was not at first believed:

And nu doð men þam gelicost syððan, swylce hit wære idel spell and unsoð. Nu he þonne gyt hine to ðam geadmedde, þæt he Nial þone diacon of deade awehte, to ðam þæt he mihte cyðan godes folce þæt towearde yrre. 100

And now men do just as they did before, as though it were a worthless and untrue story. Now he yet condescends to awake the deacon Niall from the dead, so that he might make known to the people of God that coming wrath.

The entire Sunday Letter has been reworked to include Niall and therefore the deacon could not easily be removed or replaced with a local visionary when this version of the Sunday Letter arrived in England.

Adaptation of Latin Sources

Given the myriad Latin versions of the Sunday Letter which are still extant, it becomes apparent that caution is advised when claiming too much innovation on the part of a translator. 101 Nevertheless, several adaptations may be credited to the

100 HomNapier XLIII, 213.14-18.

101 Priebusch's experience in having to revise his statements concerning HomPriebsch when he became aware of another Latin version is especially edifying in the matter; Letter
Anglo-Saxon homilists and are instructive in determining the role that the letter played in eleventh-century England.

The addition which has received the most thorough attention is that of the so-called Sunday list. This feature is a catalogue of events of Christian history which are said to have happened on a Sunday, thereby adding to the dignity of the day. Sunday lists are known from as early as the fifth century and appear to have evolved from a short list based on scriptural events alone, such as the resurrection and Pentecost, to a very lengthy list which features extra-biblical events and incidents not otherwise known to have happened on Sunday.¹⁰²

Five of the six OE Sunday letters contain a Sunday list; only HomPriebsch does not. As we have seen, two of these are closely related to the Irish Sunday Letter which also contains a list resembling the OE lists.¹⁰³ Clare Lees' study has led her to conclude that the insertion of a Sunday list in the letter is a distinctly insular

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¹⁰³ Whitelock has compared the Sunday lists in the Irish Epistle of Jesus and the HomNapier XLIII and XLIV; “Bishop Ecgred,” 58-60. Lees provides a table comparing the elements of all the lists in the OE Sunday Letters, two additional OE homilies containing lists, and three Hiberno-Latin lists (Table no. 4; “Sunday Letter,” 144).
phenomenon since "none of the earlier Latin texts of the 'Sunday Letter' has a 'Sunday List' comparable to those found in vernacular texts."\textsuperscript{104} The lists were perhaps added in an effort to collate material on Sunday observance but probably also to add to an impression of its canonicity by supplying more scriptural support for its claims.

One significant alteration is an added emphasis on the time period which defines Sunday in two of the OE homilies.\textsuperscript{105} Although all of the homilies agree that Sunday is to be honored from nones on Saturday to dawn Monday, it is clear that these two homilists are particularly concerned that their audiences commit to memory the designated time span; HomNapier XLIII mentions it ten times, and HomNapier XLIV twelve times. Indeed, these homilists seek to multiply opportunities for mentioning this phrase, sometimes to the point of almost inane repetition. The period is added to elements in the Sunday list,\textsuperscript{106} to the authenticating narratives,\textsuperscript{107} or simply

\textsuperscript{104}\textsuperscript{Lees, "Sunday Letter," 136. Although Lees (141, n. 51) takes note of the Sunday list in canon 24 of the OE Capitula Theodulfi, she does not specifically state that it is an addition; the Latin has no such list.}

\textsuperscript{105}\textsuperscript{Thomas N. Hall, "The Reversal of the Jordan in Vercelli Homily 16 and in Old English Literature," \textit{Traditio} 45 (1989): 73.}

\textsuperscript{106}\textsuperscript{HomNapier XLIII, 210.8-10 (Doomsday): "And drihten cymðon þam dæge to us, and he us þonne myngad þæs sunnandæges weorc and þæs sætënesdæges ofer non and þære monannihte."}

\textsuperscript{107}\textsuperscript{For example, in the list of countries which will be burned by the consuming fire (HomNapier XLIII, 205.6-9): "And hit gesæald ærest on Sceotta land, and hit þær forðærmð ealle ðæ fyrenfullan, þa ðe nu god gremlæð mid sunnandæges weorc and sætënesdæges ofer non."}
whenever Sunday observance is mentioned.  

The subjects of tithing and Sunday restrictions taken directly from the laws also receive additional emphasis. The homilist of HomNapier XLIII draws on material from a collection of legal codes composed by Wulfstan and states that the Old Testament figures Dathan and Abiron were punished for keeping back the tithe. A description of the terrors of hell excerpted from a Wulfstan homily is appended for added emphasis. HomNapier XLIV seems also to be adding to its source in a sentence mentioning almsdeeds and tithing, and HomNapier CCC162 likewise inserts a line about the prohibition of trade. These departures from the Latin sources point to a reception of the Sunday Letter which was not satisfied with the catalogue of restrictions conventionally presented there. The homilists, when they do feel free to expand the material, chose native legislation rather than excessively.

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108HomNapier XLIV, 219.9-12: “Swa bonne nu gegangeb manna beamum, þæt heora sawle biob ascyrede in helle diopnesse, gef hio nellab healdan þane halgan sunnandeg and þæs sæternesdæg ofer non.”


110HomNapier XLIII, 211.2-4.

111HomNapier XLIII, 209.9-25 is taken from Bethurum XIII.79-92; Jost, Wulfstanstudien, 231. Curiously, I Cnut 18a and 18b also contain the first part of this Wulfstan excerpt; Whitelock and Brooke, 480-81. The excerpted Wulfstan texts also occur later in the same manuscript and there are readings unique to these versions and the passages in HomNapier XLIII; Scragg, “Corpus of Vernacular Homilies,” 250 n. 3.

112HomNapier XLIV, 216.14-20.

113HomNapier CCC162, 358.
Sabbatarian prohibitions.

The common source of homilies HomNapier XLIII and XLIV appears to have incorporated several passages from a version of Vercelli IX.\textsuperscript{114} The two homilists subsequently cut different segments of these additions so that only one phrase from Vercelli IX remains which is found in both Sunday Letters.\textsuperscript{115} The conclusion of HomNapier XLIV which is taken from the beginning of Vercelli IX is particularly instructive for its adaptation of the material to its new environment. Though originally a simple admonition to remember the account to be given at Judgment Day and the terrors of hell, HomNapier XLIV adds phrases to focus on the reckoning to be given for the observance of Sunday and places those who disregard the Sunday Letter among hell's inhabitants.\textsuperscript{116}

HomNapier XLIII has retained an adaptation of the devil and the anchorite legend found in Vercelli IX\textsuperscript{117}:

\textsuperscript{114}Scragg ("Corpus of Vernacular Homilies," 250, nn. 2, 5) lists the following correspondences to Vercelli IX: HomNapier XLIII, 214.12-3; 214.21-215.3; 215.9-12 and HomNapier XLIV, 225.13-226.8.

\textsuperscript{115}This observation is made by Charles D. Wright, \textit{The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature} (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 221-224. \textit{Verc.} IX.117-118: "Se nama is to gēpenceanæ ælcum men butan hwæs heorte sie mid diofles stræle þurhwrecen" (italics mine); cf. HomNapier XLIII, 214.12-15 and HomNapier XLIV, 225.2-6.

\textsuperscript{116}The additions are readily observable in Scragg's edition which provides this section of HomNapier XLIV as a parallel to Vercelli IX and usefully italicizes the changes.

\textsuperscript{117}\textit{Verc.} IX.144.205. Other OE occurrences of this legend are listed by Fred Robinson, "The Devil's Account of the Next World: An Anecdote from Old English Homiletic Literature," \textit{Neuphilologische Mitteilungen} 73 (1972): 362. See also Donald
And gif ge nellað gelefan, men þa leofestan, þæs ærendgewrites, þonne ne gepæncæ ða na, hu þæt deofol þam ancre sæde, hwylc hit in helle wære to wunianne. Þæt gelamp iu, þæt an halig ancer genam ænne deofol and began hine dreatigan, þæt he him sæde, hwylc hit on helle wære. And þa cwæð se deofol to ðam ancre: ne mæg næg man wordum asecgan fram þam susle, þe in þære helle is.\textsuperscript{118}

And if you will not believe this message, dearest people, then you are by no means considering how that devil told the anchorite what it was like to live in hell. It happened once that a holy anchorite took a certain devil and began to harry him to tell him what it was like in hell. And then the devil said to the anchorite: “No man can describe in words the torment which is in hell.”

The devil then retells the popular tale of the seventy-two men with seven heads, each with seven tongues who are not able to tell of the torments of hell. It is not clear how this narrative adds to the themes of the Sunday Letter, but perhaps it can be explained by a phrase in the parallel HomNapier XLIV which states at the same point in the homily: “And gefeorþlice men nu agemeleiasiaþ þisæs gewrites bebodes, þonne ne gepæncæ hio na, hu strang hit bip an helle to bionne” (‘And if earthly men now neglect the command of this writing, then they by no means consider how grievous it will be to be in hell’)\textsuperscript{119}; to the extraordinary threats found in the Sunday Letter, the more common one of hell is appended.

The author of HomNapier XLIV also borrows another text represented in the

\textsuperscript{118}HomNapier XLIII, 214.19-27.

\textsuperscript{119}HomNapier XLIV, 225.11-13.
Vercelli Book, the beginning of Homily X, which is a call to the reading and hearing of the gospel:

Hiom weorp swa, swa swa þare bocere sawle biþ, þe nellþ godspel sæcgan godes folce for hiora gemeleaste and for weoruldgalnesse: forþon þe Crist selfa cwæþ: “þeah mann anum men godspyl sege, þonne bio ic an hiora midle; and þæm biþ þe þæt godspel sagþ, forgefen .c. synny, and þam fiftig, þe hit for godes naman lustlice gehereþ; and þam biþ wa æfre geborenum, þe hit sæcgan can and ne wile; forþan men sculan þurh þa godspellican lare becuman to liues wige.”

To them it will happen just as it will to the souls of those teachers, who do not want to relate the gospel to the people of God for their carelessness and lust of pleasure; therefore Christ himself said: “Though one may relate the gospel to a single man, then I am in their midst; and to those who relate that gospel one hundred sins will be forgiven, and to those who hear it willingly in God’s name, fifty. And woe to those ever born who are able to relate it and do not wish to, because men must come to the way of life through that gospel teaching.”

It is probable that the homilist intended that these statements about the gospel be applied to the Sunday Letter, since he elsewhere refers to it, too, as a “gospel.”

Both HomNapier XLIII and XLIV produce the kind of ending which is frequently found in OE sermons: a description of heaven or hell, or often both. So

120HomNapier XLIV, 219.12-21.

121HomNapier XLIV, 224.12, 16. Some other expansions in HomNapier XLIV are 217.31-218.16, which elaborates on the command of Moses; 219.25-28, an expansion of the Sunday List; 220.1-6, a mention of the Sunday respite for those not in hell; 220.9-20, the story of a Sabbath-breaker from Numbers 15:32-35; and additional sentences throughout 222.7-223.16. Particularly in the last two cases, it is difficult to say how much has been added to the source, but it is clear that the Sunday Letter material has been treated loosely in this version.
the homilist of HomNapier XLIII ends with a general reminder that if his audience will keep Sunday and confess their offenses, they will surely reign in heaven. In HomNapier XLIV, the equally popular subject of Doomsday is brought up when the homilist explains that on that day no sin will seem worse than Sunday work except for murder, sacrilege and betrayal of one’s lord.\textsuperscript{122}

These two homilies are the only ones to make significant, traceable departures from the Latin source, and, in fact, they were probably both derived from the same vernacular source.\textsuperscript{123} This attitude of preserving the text as it is, making only minor changes, is uncharacteristic of the Anglo-Saxons’ treatment of homiletic material in general and points towards a perception of the Sunday Letter which differed from that of other homilies. The internal testimony supports the evidence of the manuscripts noted above, that the Sunday Letter seems to have been \textit{sui generis} in OE prose.

\textit{Old and New Testament Rhetoric}

Although the Sunday Letter has been generally deplored on account of its inferior style, its author was certainly neither unimaginative nor even ignorant.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122}HomNapier XLIV, 225.25-28.

\textsuperscript{123}Jost, \textit{Wulfstanstudien}, 231.

\textsuperscript{124}See the comments by Delehaye (“le style est d’une barbarie rebutante”), and by Jost (“in stilistischer mangelhafter Form abgefasst”), and the letter of Licinianus above; Delehaye, “Note,” 177; and Jost, \textit{Wulfstanstudien}, 222.
The extent of his learning is most conspicuous in his use of the rhetoric of the Old Testament in his attempt to infuse his fictional missive with an aura of authenticity. Many of the blessings and curses as well as oaths and narratives concerning Sabbath observance are either appropriated from or made to resemble passages from scripture. Furthermore, the use of monologue is a direct imitation of a favourite mode of communication in the prophetic writings.

The primary place to look for scriptural parallels are books of the Old Testament which focus on the ancient Jewish laws concerning the Sabbath. As noted above, there was clearly an impetus in certain circles toward the identification of Sunday and Sabbath by the time the Sunday Letter was written. Thus the appropriation of Old Testament Sabbath laws and narratives was merely a step, though a large one, in the same direction. The twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus provides both tone and content for much of the Sunday Letter rhetoric. It begins by condemning idol worship and urging reverence for the Sabbath. Although the blessing and cursings which follow seem to apply to all the commandments, they yet form the basis for the letter. The blessings are agricultural in nature—abundant rain and plentiful harvests—and promise an existence characterized by peace with neighbours and with God.\(^{125}\) The Sunday Letter offers several examples of similar promises, the most ubiquitous being that if Sunday is held in reverence God will

\(^{125}\)Leviticus 26:1-13.
"open the gates of heaven":

Gif ge healdāð þone sunnandæg mid rihte, þonne ontyne ic eow heofona rices duru, and ic eow sylle manigfealde wæstmas minra bletsunga on eowrum husum to nytte oð ende eowres lifes.126

If you keep Sunday rightly, then I will open the doors of the kingdom of heaven and grant you the manifold fruits of my blessing in your houses as a benefit until the end of your life.

Abundance and a long life are promised:

Ic geopenige eow heofena renscuras and ic sylle eowre eorðan wæstmbæñnesse and genihtsumnesse and ic gelenge eower lif and ge beoð liibende on ealra worulda world.127

I will open to you the rainshowers of the heavens and I will give to your earth abundance and plenty, and I will lengthen your life and you will live forever.

The focus of the Sunday Letter is, however, not on the expectation of great reward, but on that of terrible punishment. Here the scriptural model, though clearly recognizable, has been freely supplemented, probably gaining considerably in the transmission of several centuries.

A number of these apocalyptic occurrences were clearly drawn from scriptural passages such as this one:

Ignis succensus est in furore meo et ardebit usque ad inferni novissima devorabitque terram cum germine suo et montium fundamenta

126HomNapier XLIII, 212.10-14; Also HomNapier XLIV, 223.13-19; HomNapier XLV, 228.13-14: "þonne beoð eow opene heofena geatu, and ic sylle eow hwæte and win and ele and in eowrum bernum blæde and gemanigfeald god in eowrum husum."

conburset. Congregabo super eos mala et sagittas meas conplebo in eis. Consumentur fame et devorabunt eos aves morsu amarissimo. Dentes bestiarum inmittam in eos cum furore trahentium super terram atque serpentium.\textsuperscript{128}

A fire is kindled in my wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell: and shall devour the earth with her increase, and shall burn the foundations of the mountains. I will heap evils upon them, and will spend my arrows among them. They shall be consumed with famine, and birds shall devour them with a most bitter bite: I will send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the fury of creatures that trail upon the ground, and of serpents.

Famine and war are frequently mentioned in the Sunday Letter:

\textit{Ic sende ofer eow min yrre on feower wisan, þæt is, hunger and sweordes ecge, cwyld and hæftnunge.}\textsuperscript{129}

I will send my wrath over you in four ways, that is hunger, the edge of the sword, pestilence and captivity.

One of the more memorable horrors is not, to my knowledge, based on scripture:

\textit{Soðlice eower wif þe ne wurðiað þone halgan sunnandæg and þa freolsgagas on geare, ic asende næddran to slittenne heora flæsc and hangiende to heora breostan and sucende hi ealswa heora bearn, hi to witniende eal for þære unclænnesse þe ge ne heoldon þone halgan sunnandæg.}\textsuperscript{130}

Truly your wives who do not honour Sunday and the feast days in the year, [to them] I will send serpents who will slit their flesh and will hang on their breasts sucking just like their children, to punish them for

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\textsuperscript{128} Deut. 32:22-24.

\textsuperscript{129} HomNapier LVII, 295.12-14.

\textsuperscript{130} HomPriebisch, lines 85-89.
that impurity and that you did not keep Sunday.

Many punishments are apparently inspired by the plagues which befell the Egyptians, as this comparison with some excerpts from the OE homilies shows:\textsuperscript{131}:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insects (Exodus 8:16-32)</th>
<th>And ic asende on eowrum muðum and on eowrum nosum and on eowrum eagum and on earan þæge wyrrestan gnættas and þa geættrode eow to amyrrenne. (HomPriebsch, lines 56-58)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death of Cattle (Exodus 9:1-7)</td>
<td>Þæt god wolde sendan ærest hungor and adla on manna ceap. (HomNapier XLIII, 209.28-29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boils (Exodus 9:8-17)</td>
<td>And gif ge neðað healdan min bebod, ic sende ofer eow geswinc and mettrumnesse on andwlitan and on eagum and on earum and on eallum limum, þa eow habbað oð deaðes tocyme swīðe hearde. (HomNapier XLV, 230.5-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hail (Exodus 9:18-35)</td>
<td>Þæt is, Þæt ic asende ofer eower land ælcne untiman, Þæt bið egeslice great hagol, se fordeð eowre wæstmas. (HomNapier LVII, 297.6-8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ic asendæ ceaferas on eowre wudas and gærshoppán on eowerne hwæte þæt fornimað eowerne bileofan. (HomPriebsch, lines 49-51)

The most frequent terror is a consuming fire or “burning rain”:

\textsuperscript{131}See also the list in Deuteronomy 28:15-68.
And if you will not believe, I will send on you a burning rain and sulphurous flame, and you and your children will be destroyed without end.

The frequent mention of the heathen people who will come from the north also has its origin in scripture and not, as one may be tempted to think, in the Viking raids:

Behold I will bring upon you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: a strong nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou shalt not know, nor understand what they say.... And they shall eat up thy corn and thy bread: they shall devour thy sons, and thy daughters: they shall eat up thy flocks, and thy herds: they shall eat thy vineyards and thy figs.

This is paralleled in the OE:

And ic sende ofer eow þa þeode eow to hergianne and eower land to awestenne, þe ge heora spræca ne cunnan, forþan þe ge ne healdæð sunnandæges freols, and forþan þe ge me forseð and mine beboda noldon healdan.

And I will send over you people to ravage you and lay waste your land, whose language you will not know, because you do not keep the feast of Sunday, and because you have rejected me and not kept my commandments.

It is clear that the author of the Sunday Letter went to great lengths to draw both material and rhetoric from scripture, and one can see how the less discerning clergy

\[12\text{HomNapier LV, 231.34-232.2. Cf. Apoc. 18:8.}\]

\[13\text{Jeremiah 5:15, 17 and also Deut. 28:49-50; cf. the references to the North in Jer. 1:14, 6:1& 22, 10:22.}\]

\[14\text{HomNapier LVII, 295.31-296.3.}\]
might be deceived by this procedure.

Both the writers of the Latin version and their insular adaptors, were eager to produce a sense of history. The most common such device in the Sunday Letter is the narrative of its arrival on an important altar in Christendom, although only two of the OE homilies retain this section:

Men þa leofestan, her onginð þæt halie gewrit þe com fram heofenan into Hierusalem. Soðlice hit gefeol beforan þam gaton effrem and þær hit wæs funden þurh anes preostes handa, þæs nama wæs achor. And he hit sende to anre ðære byrig to ðærum preoste, þe genemned is Joram, þe hit asende fram Bethania byrig to ðærum preoste, þe genemned is Machabeus. And he hit asende to monte Gorganum þær sancte Michaelis circe is þæs heahengles. Soðlice þæt ylice gewrit þurh Cristes willa ure hlaforde com to Rome to sancte Petres byrgene and eall þa men þe waren on þam burgum þær þæt gewrit to com, dydon þreora daga ðæsten and halie gebedu and ælmessan, þæt ure milda hlaford heom fultum sealde and geopenode gewitt on manna heortan to oncnawenne ure drihtnes hælendes Cristes mildheortnesse.\textsuperscript{135}

Dearest people, here begins that holy writing which came from the heavens to Jerusalem. Truly, it fell before the gate of Effrem and there it was found by the hands of a priest whose name was Achor. And he sent it to another city to another priest, who is called Joram and he sent it from the city of Bethany to another priest called Machabeus. And he sent it to Mount Gorganum where St. Michael the archangel’s church is. Truly that same writing through the will of our Lord Christ came to Rome to Saint Peter’s tomb and all the men who were in those cities into which the writing had come, fasted for three days, and said holy prayers and did almsdeeds, in order that our merciful Lord would grant them aid and open the understanding of men’s hearts to know the mercy of our Lord and Saviour Christ.

\textsuperscript{135}HomPriechsch, lines 1-13.
This list of names functions much like the genealogies which preface the gospels of Mark and Luke. They give the impression of a historical event of great significance which needs to be taken seriously. As mentioned above, the Niall legend serves to some extent as a substitute for this part of the Sunday Letter's authentication in HomNapier XLIII and XLIV, but there is also a similar sequence in relating the projected route of the punishing fire in these homilies:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Her } & \text{sægð on } \text{þisum } \text{drihtnes } \text{ærendgewrite, } \text{þæt } \text{fyr } \text{cymð } \text{sume } \text{þissa } \\
& \text{hærfesta } \text{offor } \text{manna } \text{bearn. } \text{And } \text{hit } \text{gefeald } \text{ær } \text{on } \text{Sceotta } \text{land, } \text{and } \\
& \text{hit } \text{þær } \text{forbærnð } \text{ealle } \text{ða } \text{fyrenfullan, } \text{þa } \text{ðe } \text{nu } \text{god } \text{gremiað } \text{mid } \\
& \text{sunnandæges } \text{weorcum } \text{and } \text{sæternesdaeges } \text{ofer } \text{non. } \text{And } \text{þonne } \\
& \text{færð on } \text{Brytwealas } \text{and } \text{gedeð } \text{þær } \text{þæt } \text{ilce. } \text{And } \text{þonne } \text{hit } \text{færð on } \\
& \text{Angelcyn } \text{and } \text{gedeð } \text{þær } \text{þæt } \text{ilce, } \text{þe } \text{hit } \text{dyde } \text{þam } \text{oðrum } \text{þeodum } \text{twam. } \text{ Dönne } \text{hit } \text{færð } \text{suð } \text{ofer } \text{sæ } \text{geond } \text{þæt } \text{þeodland, } \text{and } \text{hit } \text{þær } \\
& \text{forbærnð } \text{þæt } \text{mancyn, } \text{swa } \text{hit } \text{her } \text{ær } \text{dyde.}^{136}
\end{align*}
\]

Here it says in this letter from the Lord, that a fire will come in the autumn over the children of men. And it will fall first on Ireland; and it will burn up all those sinful who provoke God with work on Sunday and Saturday after nones. And it will then come on the Welsh and do the same there. And then it will come on the English and do the same there that it did to the other two peoples. Then it will go south over the sea around the continent, and it will burn up those people as it already will have done here.

The remaining two OE homilies belong to another recension which states that the letter was written by an angel who delivered it to a certain Peter, bishop of Antioch. The angel at the same time brings a message:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Þillic is } \text{þonne } \text{se } \text{fruma } \text{þæs } \text{ærendgewrites, } \text{ic, } \text{ærendraca } \text{and } \text{boda } \\
\text{Drihtnes } \text{Hælendes } \text{Cristes, } \text{betæce } \text{and } \text{bebeode } \text{þam } \text{bisceopum } \text{and}
\end{align*}
\]

\[^{136}\text{HomNapier XLIII, 205.1-14; cf. HomNapier XLIV, 215.1-20.}\]
barn cynegum and eallum geþungenum mannum þæt hi luftian rihtwisnysse on eallum þingum and þeowien drihtne on eallum ege, and þæt ge gehealdan sunnandæg fram eallum woruldlicum weorcum, forðanðe God geworhte manega wundra on ðam sunnandæge.\textsuperscript{137}

Such is then the origin of that letter. I, messenger and ambassador of the Lord Saviour Christ, give order and command bishops and kings and all noble men that they love righteousness in everything and serve the Lord in all fear, and that you keep Sunday from all worldly works, because God performed many miracles on Sunday.

This scenario clearly serves to improve upon the implausible story of the letter falling directly from heaven onto an important altar, yet it retains the full force of a message sent directly from God. This homily returns to the narrative about bishop Peter with an elaborate oath in the conclusion of the letter:

\textit{And he hit swutele mid aðsware geæðe and geswor, þus cwæðende, ic Petrus and biscoep on þære Antiochiscan cyrician geæðe and swerige þurh þone lifigendan Godes sunu, þæs ðe gesceop heofonas and eorðan and ealle gesceafra, and þurh þa halgan þrynnysse and annysse, and þurh þa eadigan fæmnan sancta Marian and þurh ealra engla endebyrdnysse and þurh ealra haligra lichoman, þæt þas word þe on þis ærendgeawite awritene syndon on fruman næron of nanes mannes handa gehiwode, ac hi wurdon onsende of Godes þrymsetle and mid engles fingrum awritene.}\textsuperscript{138}

And he openly swore an oath, speaking thus: "I, Peter, bishop in the church at Antioch make an oath and swear by the Son of the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and all creation, and by the Holy Trinity, and Unity and by the blessed Virgin Mary and by all the orders of angels and by all bodies of the Saints, that these words which are written in this letter were not first fashioned by hands of any man, but

\textsuperscript{137}HomNapierCCCC162, 357.

\textsuperscript{138}HomNapierCCCC162, 361-62.
were sent from God’s throne and were written by the fingers of an angel.”

Similar oaths are found in other versions. In HomNapier XLIII and XLIV, both Pope Florentius and Bishop Peter produce a supportive oath “wit sweriað þurh ðone micclan anweald mihtiges drietnes and þurh þa halgan rode, þe Crist for manna hælo on þrowade” (‘we two swear by the great power of the mighty Lord and by the Holy Cross, on which Christ suffered for man’s salvation’).139

These homilies do not shrink from having even Christ himself make an oath to validate the letter. In HomNapier XLIII he swears by the Holy Trinity and true Oneness, promising to send Sunday law-breakers into neðemestan hellewitu (‘the deepest torments of hell’).140 In HomPriebsch he also swears by mine halgan englas Cherubin and Seraphin (‘my holy angels, the Cherubim and Seraphim’).141

Finally, the rhetorical device which is most prominent and perhaps most successful in recreating the sound of scripture is the use of the first person. It is employed to sustain the high rhetoric of divine injunction and ominous threat that is the driving force of the letter. Verisimilitude is achieved with well-known phrases from the gospels such as sop is, sop is, þæt ic iow sæcge (‘truly, truly I say to you’;

139HomNapier XLIII, 214.7-9; HomNapier XLIV, 224.29-225.3.
140HomNapier XLIII, 207.15.
141HomPriebsch, lines 59-60.
Latin: *amen dico vobis*. Possessive pronouns when referring to the commandments, the Church or learned men (*mine boceras*) help to remind the audience that the preacher is not speaking in his own voice. The OE Sunday Letters sustain the monologue format well, and one can imagine that some preachers would warm to the prophetic voice as they recited this homily.

If one now turns to a consideration of what specific prohibitions were to be supported by all these rhetorical devices, one is strangely disappointed. To the general prohibition against worldly or servile work is added a list of restrictions which seems to have been almost always mechanically reproduced, as the following table will show:

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142 HomNapier XLIV, 221.10-11.


144 The lists are taken from HomNapier XLIII, 208.20-24, 212.25-30; HomNapier XLIV, 223.33-224.8; HomNapier LVII, 296.5-11; HomNapier CCCC162, 358-359; HomPriebsch, lines 18-23, 94-97; and HomNapier XLV, 227.7-13, 231.18.
What can be seen from this table is that, on the whole, there seems to be little attempt by the Anglo-Saxon homilists to revise the received lists of prohibitions; they are not correlated with each other, nor modified on the basis of some generally accepted standard. We know that HomNapier XLIII and XLIV used the same vernacular source, and, except for the above-mentioned passages taken from the laws forbidding
trade, assembly, ordeals and oaths, the same items are found in both.  

Similarly, HomNapier LVII and HomNapier CCCC162, independently translating the same source, reproduce identical lists. The catalogue of restrictions in these homilies is provided only once in each homily and never explained more fully.

Since we have reasonably close Latin parallels for HomPriebsch and HomNapier XLV, we know that in HomPriebsch only bathing, washing of the head, cutting of hair and shaving are not found in the closest source, though most of these are easily found in other Latin and OE Sunday Letters and were very likely also in the source. This leaves the additions in HomNapier XLV of obtaining fire and a unique qualification for milking for which I can find no Latin or OE parallel: “butan heo ða meolc for godes lufan sylle.” HomNapier XLV also repeats the proscription against gathering produce in the garden later in the homily. Here it is

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145 As noted, the regulation forbidding weddings is a marginal addition in another hand.

146 HomPriebsch, lines 94-97: “Ic eow bidde þæt ge healdon þone reste dæg fæstlice and ic eow beode þurh þis gewrit þæt ge ne wahson on þam sunnan dæge ne on þam freolsdagum eower heafod, ne ne sceran ne efsian eower fex”; See also HomNapier XLIII, 212.27-28 and HomNapier XLIV, 224.3-4. Cf. the Latin Sunday Letter printed by Priebsch (“Chief Sources,” 130-34), lines 76-78: “Et rogo vos, ut in sancto die dominico caput non lavetis neque comas tondatis.”

147 HomNapier XLV, 227.8-10: “and þeh hwam gebyrige, þæt his fyr ut gewite, nis þæt alyfed to begetenne.”

148 HomNapier XLV, 227.10-11.

149 HomNapier XLV, 231.18.
of interest to note that this homily follows HomNapier XLIII in the same manuscript, the OE version of the Sunday Letter which, as noted above, exhibits significant intervention in the form of additions from the laws and other homilies. It would appear that this compiler not only collected two Sunday Letter homilies, but was interested enough in their contents to make two minor modifications the list of prohibitions. However, it would be precarious to postulate widespread support of the regulations in the Sunday Letter based on this scant testimony.

In the light of this evidence, it does not seem entirely unwarranted to say that the taboo-like restrictions listed in the table, particularly those which deal with the private sphere of life, were not officially promoted in Anglo-Saxon England. At the same time, these catalogues are never eliminated, so that they must not have seemed entirely unreasonable to the homilists. However, apart from those items specifically forbidden by law, we do not find mention of these prohibitions in any of the more freely composed material. Furthermore, the efforts to supplement the Sunday Letter with current concerns, such as the period which defines Sunday and tithing regulations, indicates that English churchmen in the eleventh century directed their reform efforts, at least as they related to Sunday observance, along the lines of what was already supported by the laws.150

150Here I disagree with Levy’s view that the dissemination of the Sunday Letter in England was motivated by a desire to produce a “tabuistische Bewegung” (65).
Middle English Sunday Letters

A consideration of the fate of the Sunday Letter in the period which follows its brief popularity in the eleventh century confirms the above conclusions. There are only two Sunday Letters extant in Middle English, both found in the same manuscript of the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{151} A poem by John Audelay based on the same material, dates from about the same time period.\textsuperscript{152} The fact that there are no vernacular survivals in the intervening period suggests that the Sunday Letter simply did not correspond to the views concerning Sunday observance which were current at this time, and perhaps also that its content and tone did not lend itself to lyric, debate poem, or drama as was the case for the previous monologues examined in this study.

This is not to say that there was no longer any concern regarding Sunday observance in England after the Anglo-Saxon period. There was, no doubt, a continuance of the enforcement of a work-free Sunday, but the data that survives is quite thin for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{153} At the close of the twelfth

\textsuperscript{151} These have been edited recently by V.M. O’Mara in \textit{A Study and Edition of Selected Middle English Sermons}, Leeds Texts and Monographs, n.s., 13 (Leeds: Univ. of Leeds, 1994), 113-36, 137-40; I will refer to these as O’Mara I and II in the following discussion. See Robert R. Raymo, “Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction,” in \textit{A Manual of Writings in Middle English: 1050-1500}, vol. 7, ed. Albert E. Hartung (New Haven, Conn.: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1986), 2276, 2289, B2517.

\textsuperscript{152} Edited by Robert Priebsch, “John Audelay’s Poem on the Observance of Sunday,” in \textit{An English Miscellany Presented to Dr. Furnivall in Honour of his Seventy-fifth Birthday} (1901; reprint, New York: Blom, 1969), 397-407.

\textsuperscript{153} But see, for instance, Herbert Thurston, who cites a 1260 guild ordinance of the Loriner’s Company stating that “no one of the trade shall work upon Saturday after noon.
century, a French abbot, Eustace of Flay, was sent to England by Pope Innocent III, on a mission to preach the next crusade. A significant part of his campaign, which is recorded by the thirteenth-century chronicler Roger of Hoveden, was exhortation to revere Sunday and to abolish Sunday markets in particular. Eustace made two visits to England, the first meeting with a good deal of opposition from the authorities and little success. On his second he was clever enough to bring an effective weapon, the Sunday Letter, of which several Latin copies survive. Presumably Eustace delivered his message to the people in the vernacular, but we have no copies of any translations made at this time. The French abbot is reputed to have caused a sensation with his letter and Sunday-related miracles, but there is no evidence that his success had any lasting effect.

sounded and rung out at his parish church”; “The Mediæval Sunday,” The Nineteenth Century 46 (1899): 40. On the other hand, Cate (see next note) indicates that Sunday markets continued to be held in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries (78-89).


156Cate, 73; Jones, 168.

157Cate, 74; Jones, 168.

158Cate, 76. Levy, 83. Thurston attributes the later definition of Sunday as lasting from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning to the influence of Eustace, but, as was seen above, that specification was current long before the Frenchman’s mission (39-41).
There is more evidence that Sunday was a concern to civil as well as ecclesiastical authorities in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Max Levy compiles examples of statutes which prohibit activities such as the sale of wool, certain kinds of entertainment, fairs and markets. The Church, meanwhile, seems to have been troubled mostly by the kinds of activities which were promoted by a day of leisure. Owst has collected numerous examples of diatribes by late medieval preachers against those who would make Sunday a day of debauchery spent in trading, attending entertainments of doubtful moral value and gathering at the local tavern. But even though the clergy spoke out against these activities in sermon and even in canons, the economic benefits of working and holding market on Sunday were simply too great to ensure complete success in this struggle.

Nevertheless, there is little evidence that the Sunday Letter was widely used in these endeavors. As already mentioned, the two vernacular occurrences are found in the same fifteenth-century manuscript, Durham University Library MS Cosin X.IV.2. Most remarkably, O'Mara has identified the closest analogue, perhaps even source, of

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159 Levy, 71-77.


161 Levy, 78-82; Parker, 13-14.
one of these homilies as being the OE homily HomNapierCCCC162.\textsuperscript{162}

The homily is indeed very much like its OE predecessor. It has been supplied with a new introduction consisting of a general call to keep God’s commandments, especially the third ordinance of the decalogue. As it then recounts how the letter was sent to Saint Peter, bishop of Antioch, we notice that it is not the angel’s fingers as in the OE, but “be holy hand of allmyghty God” which produced the letter.\textsuperscript{163} It is more significant, however, that the homilist has apparently recognized the origin of the Sunday Letter’s rhetoric and quotes Deuteronomy 28.\textsuperscript{164} It is clear from the outset that where the Latin and OE Sunday Letters suppressed any direct references to the decalogue and Old Testament curses, by the fifteenth century, the identification of Sabbath and Sunday had progressed so far that this was no longer necessary. So the homilist does not even notice the difficulty when he says that Sunday is the day “on þe wylke he [God] rystyt fro all þe warkys þat he wroghtt at þe begynnynge of þis warld.”\textsuperscript{165}

The homilist has made only minor changes following this, though he assiduously marks the speech boundaries of the monologue with “says God

\textsuperscript{162}O’Mara, 107. She also examines its relationship to HomNapier LVII, which is based on a similar Latin source, but finds it to be less closely related.

\textsuperscript{163}O’Mara I.15.

\textsuperscript{164}Ibid., I.28.

\textsuperscript{165}Ibid., I.40-41.
The same list of restrictions is reproduced, and there seems to have been an effort to devise a mnemonic aid in forming alliterative pairs for rhythmical effect: "wesschyng or wryngyng, schapyng or sewyng, bakyng or brewyng, schauyng or collyng." 

The conclusion also returns to the ten commandments, written on stone tablets so that "bai sulde be lastyn withoutyn end," and the homilist claims that these laws continued to be observed by both by patriarchs and prophets and were also taught in the New Law by Christ. This makes more explicit the identification of the command in the Sunday Letter with the decalogue than does the OE, which only states:

Donne is eow micel neadþearf þæt ge gebeton þa þing þe eow fram Gode forbodene wæron and on ðære ealdan cyðnyss þurh heahfæderas and witegan and on ðære niwan þurh Godes sunu ænne and þurh þa apostolas and þa wítigan and þurh þa wundru þe God dæghwamlice on middaneard ætyweð.

Then there is great need that you do penance for those things which were forbidden by God, in the old ordinance through the patriarchs and prophets and in the new through God’s only Son and through the apostles and the prophets and the miracles which God daily shows on

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166Ibid., I.65-66, 89.
167Ibid., I.81-82. Cf. HomNapierCCCC162, 359: "swa hwa swa ænig woruldlic weorc on sunnandæg wyrcð, oððe hrægel wæsced oððe ænigne craf þyrcð, oððe he his fex efsige oððe hlafas bace oððe ænig unalyfed þing þurhtihþ."
168O’Mara I.131-35.
169HomNapierCCCC162, 360.
earth.

The other Middle English homily which contains a Sunday Letter is not related so closely to an OE homily. It is a variant of the letter as sent onto the tomb of St. Peter in Rome with the modification that an angel has to interpret the letter to a certain Octavian.\textsuperscript{170} But this version would appear to be either a very free adaptation of a Sunday Letter or a production from memory. It begins with Sunday proscriptions, loosely reproduced:

\begin{quote}
All manere of men that incressys wod for to grewe or doys ony othre labour opon þe holy Sunday ere cursyd. Also I command 3ow þat 3e go nott to gedir herbes ne none othre grene thynges on the Sunday, ne go to no vncowth waies apon þe Sunday, ne to no mylne ne to no sych werkes bott pure men that hafe nott of þare awn, and as þat day wesh nott 3owr hede nor shafe 3our berde ne do erthy werkes.\textsuperscript{171}
\end{quote}

The homily goes on to urge the keeping of “Seyntt Sunday” and reproduces a few of the threats such as the “blak bestes, fers and fell” which will destroy offenders, but the message thereafter diffuses into a more general parenetic sermon which piles exhortation upon exhortation without much thematic development. The device of a monologue, however, is retained throughout, and eventually the homilist returns to his source:

\begin{quote}
I say 3ow, if 3e will nott kepe my commandmentes as I hafe thaght you, ye shall be lost and I shall vndo 3ow so all the erthe shall opyn and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{170}O'Mara II.6.

\textsuperscript{171}Ibid., II.8-13.
swalowe 3ow into hell fro me and all myne.172

This would appear to be a reference to the Dathan and Abiron episode referred to in other Sunday Letters. The speaker is reaffirmed with the assertion that "this was wryttyn with no mans hand bott of me, Ihesu Criste," and there follows the familiar admonition to spread, under threat of damnation, the contents of the letter as much as possible.173

A curious development occurs in the conclusion of this homily. Here the audience is informed that the devil has no power wherever the Sunday Letter is read. Furthermore,

And what man or woman þat translate þis or berys þis copy apon thame for þe lowe of me shall neuere dye ewyll deth bott þai shall hafe my grace and ioy withowtyn end.174

Here we have the first signs of the Sunday Letter as a talisman or Schutzbrief, which function, according to Levy, it retained until the early part of this century, being carried by soldiers in the first World War as a protection against enemy fire.175

A final occurrence of the Sunday Letter should be mentioned for the sake of completeness, though even its editor admits that this is a case of "bad poetry."176

172Ibid., II.41-44.
173Ibid., II.45-46.
174Ibid., II.73-75.
175Levy, 66.

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Priebsch prints the poem by John Audelay along with its ostensible Latin source, the Latin Sunday Letter in British Library, Royal MS 8 F.vi, a manuscript also written in the fifteenth century. Audelay follows the Latin as closely as the adaptation into poetry will permit, as the following stanza (5) containing the specific prohibitions will illustrate:

He þat on any erand will ryd or goo
in þe fest of þat holeday
Fore one cause he hab to do,
or schaue heerus of heed or berde away,
bot got to þe cherche 3if þat 3e may,
and hold him þer in his prayere:
Al euylis y wil send him sop to say
and chortyn his days he schuld haue here.
Beware, Sierys, I 3ou pray,
or he þat waschis cloðis or hed,
on sunday breuys or bakus bred,
y schal him blynd with carful red
Noþer haue my blessyng nyʒt ne day.

The only section of the poem that may be said to contain any significant amount of new material are the last three stanzas which simply speak of the need to repent and the mercy of God. In the end Audelay assures us that "I me excuse hit is not I, / Fore þis of godis oun wrytyng / þat he send doun fro heuen on hye" (16.2-4). He asks prayer for himself after noting his own fulfillment of the command to pass the letter on. One has the impression that the poem was, as he says, made "with good entent" (16.10), but it is difficult to conceive of an enthusiastic audience.

These few examples of the Sunday Letter from the later medieval period seem
to point to a general rejection of its style and content for purposes of supporting the Sunday observance regulations. Other homiletic material suggests that excessive merriment was the main concern of the clergy which is a problem that the Sunday Letter does not address. The first Middle English homily considered, in its overt connection to the appropriate Old Testament models, would seem to show that Jewish Sabbath and Christian Sunday were now completely identified with each other in the minds of some clerics, but perhaps that also reduced the need for a special message written by Christ. The second Middle English homily, therefore, foreshadows the Sunday Letter’s destiny as a talisman against evil, presumably because of its imprecatory rhetoric.

Conclusion

The OE Sunday Letter tradition illustrates how an unorthodox text can be appropriated in order to undergird orthodox points of view. Anglo-Saxon Sunday observance, apart from the unusual length of time designated, probably differed very little from that on the continent, yet, on the basis of the frequency with which the Sunday Letter was translated, one might suppose that there was a movement towards an even stricter Sabbatarianism. I have shown that the letter was most likely appreciated and employed for its rhetoric rather than to promote the specific regulations it mentions. Its Anglo-Saxon translators appear to have seized upon this
text in the hopes of encouraging a general reverence for Sunday as well as compliance with the laws. That there was probably no excessive Sabbatarian movement in this period is supported by the disappearance of the letter from the vernacular homiletic literature until the fifteenth century. Nor does the sparse Middle English evidence support enthusiastic reception for the kinds of taboos mentioned in the Sunday Letter. Rather, it points to a progression of the letter towards its ultimate use as a kind of talisman.
Conclusion

Throughout this study it has been my aim to arrive at an understanding of the fundamental purpose of those OE homilies which contain dramatic monologues. I have used various types of evidence, from an analysis of manuscript contents to an examination of the rhetorical structure of the monologues themselves, in the belief that all this data can contribute to our perception of the role of these texts in the lives of tenth- and eleventh-century Anglo-Saxons.

Although it is well-known that the anonymous homilies were used contemporaneously with those of Ælfric in the eleventh century, it is still striking to observe the deliberate efforts of compilers to include homilies such as those I have studied. Evidently they sought out material which they believed would appeal to their congregations and simultaneously motivate them to live in a Christian manner. They clearly had an ear for dramatic, first-person speech, excerpting it from their Latin sources and adapting it to their own purposes.

At no time do the surviving texts suggest that these homilists are insensitive to the dramatic persona they create. I have shown that efforts were made to increase the rhetorical effectiveness of the speaking voice and to make it as appropriate and plausible as possible. A preacher furnished with these materials could use them to
accuse and exhort his congregation with an assumed authority which exceeded his own. Psychologically the effect would have been to focus the audience's attention on its own responsibility, rather than on the legitimacy of the speaker.

I have also sought to recognize the didactic function of each monologue. The Soul's Address to the Body was seen to fit into the larger context of the human struggle between temporal and spiritual values; whereas Christ's Address to the Sinner exemplifies a view of the Passion which requires remuneration. The Sunday Letter was most likely used to urge the observance of Sunday as a day of worship and rest without an excessive preoccupation on specific prohibitions.

The purposes of these monologues are underscored when compared to the same, or similar, material as adapted in the later Middle Ages. Although there seems to be a certain continuity, there are also significant differences which are the result of new trends in the expression of spirituality and, in the case of the Sunday Letter, social changes which necessitated a different kind of rhetoric. By contrast, the Anglo-Saxons appear to be sober and restrained in their use of rhetoric. Restraint is a quality not often attributed to the anonymous homilies, but it becomes more apparent when one reflects on the temptation to excess offered by sources with so much dramatic potential.

Finally, these three monologues, as well as the many other examples I have discussed, show that in the Anglo-Saxon period the first-person speech of an assumed
persona was a favoured means of communicating the essential doctrines of the day. Of the three monologues discussed, Christ’s Address to the Sinner is perhaps the most eagerly embraced by the homilists, as illustrated by its manuscript distribution. The Soul’s Address to the Body also enjoyed a surprising popularity, despite its challenge to the imagination of the listener. The Sunday Letter was only briefly fashionable and perhaps met a temporary need. Time, care and valuable material resources were poured into each of these literary productions as they were copied, translated, revised and adapted. It has been my pleasurable task to study their creation, use and effectiveness.
Appendix A

incipit liber vi. de die iudicii

Salisbury, Salisbury Cathedral Library, MS 131 (fols. 27v - 28r)
Salisbury, Salisbury Cathedral Library, MS 9 (fol. 72r)


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\(^1\)MS 9: quaesiui.

\(^2\)MS 9: non uos cogo....occasio om.

\(^3\)MS 131: regnum et uita twice.

\(^4\)MS 9: Eligat.....incedat om.
Cogitemus ergo in mente quia licet mors non properaret senectus cotidie succedit. Labantur anni tempora fluunt et omnia quae uidentur temporalia sunt et finem habent. Ad extremum ergo diem karissimi uolentes nolentesque cotidie properamus. Igitur considerare debent peccatores assidue quam et qualem exusationem dicturi sunt in die iudicii ante tribunal domini quando ceperit eis dicere sedens in sede maiestatis suae reddere rationem uite suae. Et tunc incipiet reos accusare dicens eis. O homo ego te manibus meis de limo terrae formavi et feci. Ego terrenis artibus spiritum infudi. Ego tibi imaginem nostram similitudinemque conferre dignatus sum. Ego te inter paradisi delitias collocaui. Tu autem uitalia mandata contemnens magis deceptorem sequi quam dominum maluisti et tamen per

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5 J properat.
6 J Labuntur.
7 P om.
8 J accipiet.
9 J artus.
10 P in.
11 J uoluisti.

\textsuperscript{12}J post.
\textsuperscript{13}P et.
\textsuperscript{14}MS euageliste.
\textsuperscript{15}J reclamabat.
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