Continuity and Renewal in English Homiletic Eschatology, 
ca. 1150–1200

by

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

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Centre for Medieval Studies
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2012

Abstract

This study examines English eschatological homilies of the later twelfth century and their adaptation of both Anglo-Saxon traditions and sources introduced after the Norman Conquest. Later and non-homiletic texts are also discussed when these give clues to the continued prevalence of Anglo-Saxon and twelfth-century eschatological traditions in the later Middle Ages. Chapter 1 introduces the eschatology of the Anglo-Saxon homilists, describes English homily manuscripts written ca. 1150–1200, summarizes scholarly opinions on these texts, and details the author’s approach to the texts’ eschatological ideas.

Chapter 2 examines the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif, which deeply influenced Anglo-Saxon depictions of individual mortality. Two early Middle English texts—Lambeth III and a treatise on the vices and virtues—contain versions of the motif that indicate a familiarity with the earlier homilies, though they also adapt the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ in new ways.

The Old English texts in British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv are the focus of Chapter 3. These include a description of the coming of Antichrist, the first English text of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday,’ and a typological interpretation of the Babylonian captivity. These pieces draw on both the Old English homilists and works unknown in England until ca. 1100,
suggesting that twelfth-century English homilists did not sense any tension in combining ideas from pre- and post-Conquest traditions.

Chapter 4 describes the Middle English reflexes of two Doomsday motifs common in the Old English homilies—the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ and the ‘Four Angels of Judgment.’ The persistence of such motifs in later medieval England raises the possibility of a significant influence of Old English works on Middle English homiletic eschatology. The Conclusions section addresses this issue in further detail and suggests avenues of future research, while restating the importance of the twelfth-century homilies for the study of medieval English religious literature.
Acknowledgments

In completing this thesis I have depended on the kindness and experience of my committee members, of whom my supervisor, Andy Orchard, deserves first mention. I have benefited greatly from his knowledge and guidance at all stages of this project, and I consider it a privilege to have studied under him. Toni Healey not only contributed her enthusiasm for and profound familiarity with the homilies as a member of my thesis committee, but also taught me much about Old English both as my employer at the Dictionary of Old English and as my instructor in Old English philology. David McDougall’s keen eye for detail and thorough comments have brought about improvements in every chapter. I also thank Fabienne Michelet, who took part in the defence process and provided many incisive suggestions. Susan Irvine’s edition of the Bodley 343 homilies in large part inspired me to study twelfth-century English preaching, and I am honoured by her helpful participation in the defence as the external examiner.

I have also received support from many other scholars, including Thomas N. Hall, Mary Swan, Elaine Treharne, and Charles D. Wright. In the course of my research I have been fortunate to make the acquaintance of Carla Thomas and Mark Faulkner, who have been trustworthy friends and have contributed valuable guidance. Though Father Édouard Jeaneau was not directly involved in this project, I have learned much about medieval Latin and textual criticism as his research assistant. Grace Desa has miraculously guided me through a maze of administrative obstacles and requirements over the past six years, despite my own absentmindedness. Many others, both in Toronto and elsewhere, have supported me with their friendship. I have neither the space to list their names nor the capacity to adequately thank them for the happiness they have given me.

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7 September 2012
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>The Arnamagnæan Manuscript Collection (Reykjavík and Copenhagen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANQ</td>
<td><em>American Notes and Queries</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Archiv</td>
<td><em>Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>ASE</td>
<td><em>Anglo-Saxon England</em></td>
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<td>ASPR</td>
<td>Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>Anglo-Saxon Texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCCT</td>
<td>Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition</td>
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<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>British Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCCC</td>
<td>Cambridge, Corpus Christi College</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCCM</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSA</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum: Series Apocryphorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSL</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGL</td>
<td>Coptic Gnostic Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMCS</td>
<td><em>Cambridge/Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSASE</td>
<td>Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUL</td>
<td>Cambridge, University Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTM</td>
<td>Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters</td>
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<tr>
<td>EETS</td>
<td>Early English Text Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.s.</td>
<td>extra series</td>
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<td>o.s.</td>
<td>original series</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>s.s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JEGP</td>
<td><em>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Theological Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.s.</td>
<td>original series</td>
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<tr>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>new series</td>
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<td>KCLMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td><em>Leeds Studies in English</em> (new series)</td>
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<td>Leeds Texts and Monographs</td>
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<td>o.s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>new series</td>
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<tr>
<td>MÆ</td>
<td><em>Medium Ævum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>MRTS</td>
<td>Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTCNE</td>
<td>Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS</td>
<td>Nag Hammadi Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td><em>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>NQ</td>
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<td><strong>PMAA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PMLA</strong></td>
<td><em>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRIA</strong></td>
<td><em>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RB</strong></td>
<td><em>Revue bénédictine</em></td>
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<td><strong>RC</strong></td>
<td><em>Revue celtique</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RES</strong></td>
<td><em>Review of English Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SC</strong></td>
<td>Sources chrétiennes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SEMA</strong></td>
<td>Studies in the Early Middle Ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASS</strong></td>
<td>Toronto Anglo-Saxon Series</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOES</strong></td>
<td>Toronto Old English Series</td>
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Additional Notes

Abbreviated text titles: Wherever an Old or Middle English text is first mentioned in the body (and, in some cases, the footnotes) of any chapter, I have given, underlined and in parentheses, the text’s DOE short title or its abbreviated title from RMEPS. Some homilies are indexed both by the DOE and in RMEPS, and in such cases I give reference to both. Others, including some of the Lambeth and Vespasian homilies, have not been claimed by either project, and so lack such references.


Emphases: In some quotations, certain words or letters are set in boldface for emphasis. All such emphases are my own; they are not to be found in the respective editions of the works quoted.

Translations: All translations of passages from the Vulgate are from Challoner’s revision of the Douay-Rheims version. All other translations appearing in this thesis are mine unless otherwise noted.
Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 The Styles and Sources of Old English Homiletic Eschatology

One of the primary aims of the Anglo-Saxon homilists, and of medieval preachers in general, was to instruct the faithful in matters of eschatology. To borrow a definition used (though not formulated) by Richard Bauckham, we may consider the field of eschatology to encompass ‘personal eschatology,’ that is, ‘the future of individuals beyond death,’ as well as ‘historic and cosmic eschatology, which concern the future of human history and of the cosmos at the end of this age when God’s kingdom comes.’\(^1\) An eschatological homily, then, is one that focuses on the fate of each person’s body and soul after his or her death, the destiny of mankind in general at and after the Last Judgment, or both. At the same time, however, eschatological preaching is not solely concerned with future events, since descriptions of Doomsday, the terrors of hell, and the joys of heaven have as their proximate objective a moral and religious renewal on the part of the preacher’s audience. Thus, as Joyce Tally Lionarons has said, ‘The focus of an eschatological homily is … always at least implicitly on the present moment rather than the coming apocalypse, whether the homilist believes the end to be imminent or in the distant future.’\(^2\) Eschatological topics formed a central theme in the works of both named and anonymous Old English homilists. An eschatological tone dominates, for instance, in many of the homilies of the Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS. CXVII, s. x\(^3\))\(^3\) and in Wulfstan’s homiletic corpus.\(^4\)

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1 Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1. Note, however, that there can be no absolute line drawn between personal and historic eschatology, as many of the motifs and exempla discussed in this thesis will demonstrate.


3 For a discussion of the manuscript see D. G. Scragg, ed., *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, EETS o.s. 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), xxiii–xxv, xlii–lxxix. See especially homilies II, IV, VIII, IX, X, XIII, XV, XXI, and XXII. Unless otherwise noted, Old English manuscript dates and provenances are those found in N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). References to Ker’s *Catalogue* are to his manuscript and article numbers, unless otherwise specified.
Eschatological texts make up a smaller proportion of the corpus of Ælfric of Eynsham—the most prolific Anglo-Saxon homilist—than of those of Wulfstan and the anonymous homilists, but Ælfric nonetheless takes care to provide detailed descriptions of Doomsday and the portents to precede it.5

The eschatological styles and ideas of the Anglo-Saxon homilists have enjoyed a relatively high degree of academic interest in the last half-century, presumably because the more insistent tone and more vivid imagery of the homilies on the Last Things have attracted more attention from modern readers than has other Old English religious prose. The works of Milton McC. Gatch are of primary importance in this area.6 Drawing primarily on his study of Old English homiletic eschatology, Gatch made a distinction between Old English homiletic styles that has informed all subsequent work in Anglo-Saxon homiletics: the anonymous homilists were generally ‘prolix,’ ‘self-contradictory,’ and ‘heterodox,’ while the named homilists (and especially Ælfric, an enthusiastic proponent of the Benedictine Reform7) were orthodox and ‘organized.’8 In his monograph on the preaching of Ælfric and Wulfstan, Gatch concludes, ‘If one compares the work of the anonymous homilists and of Ælfric, he has the impression that two different theological traditions underlie their work. The former is picturesque, confused, disorderly. But

7 Some have questioned this term’s utility in Ælfric’s case. See Christopher A. Jones, ‘Ælfric and the Limits of “Benedictine Reform,”’ in A Companion to Ælfric, eds. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, BCCT 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 67–108, especially 104.
the abbot of Eynsham was cautious and orderly almost to a fault.’⁹ Reiterating this point, Gatch says later of Ælfric, ‘He required of himself consistency, clarity, and strict orthodoxy as opposed to the confusion and heterodoxy he found in the older English writers.’¹⁰

This belief in the general stylistic and doctrinal superiority of Ælfric and (perhaps to a lesser extent) Wulfstan has prevailed even in the works of those scholars who have laboured to liberate the anonymous homilies from the relative obscurity in which they had hitherto dwelt. D. G. Scragg, for instance, concedes that the prose of the Vercelli Book is ‘doctrinally heterodox, sometimes highly allusive and obscure, [and] always inferior in style and content to the work of the named writers of the period,’ and concludes that at least some of the Vercelli Homilies were ‘produced in an environment of intellectual impoverishment.’¹¹ Hildegard Tristram, meanwhile, states that ‘compositional eclecticism and rhythmical prose,’ both of which she considers characteristic of the homilies of Ælfric and Wulfstan, are ‘the hallmarks of the best of Anglo-Saxon homiletic writing at the turn of the millennium and in the eleventh century.’¹²

One would do well to be skeptical of such a dichotomous conception of the skills and ideologies of the Anglo-Saxon homilists. It is not within the scope of these remarks to discuss all the differences between the named and anonymous Old English homilists, but even a brief examination of the evidence shows that some nuances must be added to the traditional view. True, Ælfric and Wulfstan, who based their homilies on sober and systematic eschatologists like Julian of Toledo and Adso of Montier-en-Der, were generally more conventional and consistent in their eschatological descriptions than the anonymous authors, who often made use of imaginative and apocryphal accounts, some of which Ælfric specifically condemned.¹³ It should

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⁹ Gatch, *Preaching*, 102. I can only assume that Gatch’s characterization of Ælfric’s style as ‘cautious and orderly almost to a fault’ is a concession that his anonymous contemporaries and predecessors, while not always as discerning in their use of sources as Ælfric was, often surpassed him in rhetorical force.

¹⁰ Gatch, *Preaching*, 103.

¹¹ Scragg, *Vercelli*, xix, 252, 280.


¹³ Ælfric famously criticized readers of the *Visio Pauli* in a homily for the Tuesday of Rogationtide, (Malcolm Godden, ed., *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text*, EETS s.s. 5 [Oxford: Oxford University Press,
be remembered, however, that their more discerning taste in source materials and less ‘picturesque’ style do not mean that Ælfric and Wulfstan spoke of the end times with any less urgency than the anonymous writers. Both homilists, for example, were well-versed in medieval traditions on Antichrist, and, especially in their early careers, both explicitly stated that the world was nearing its end with a forcefulness and certainty rarely seen in even the most sensationalist anonymous works. It seems, as Gatch himself admitted, that Ælfric and Wulfstan were just as convinced as the anonymous homilists that they were living in the end times, if not more so.

Furthermore, it must be noted that if the anonymous collections seem ‘prolix and self-contradictory’ to modern scholars, much of the blame (if one is to call it that) should be assigned to scribes and compilers—for whom consistency of eschatological doctrine was not necessarily a key organizing principle in the production of new manuscripts—rather than to the unnamed

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14 Gatch, ‘Eschatology of the Anglo-Saxon Homilists,’ 211–12. See, e.g., the ‘Preface’ to the First Series of Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies (Clemoes, 175–6) and Wulfstan’s homilies Ia, Ib, and III–V (Bethurum, Homilies, 113–18, 123–41).

15 Ælfric says in his First Series ‘Preface’ that ‘menn behofiað godre lare swiðost on þisum timan þe is geendung þyssere worulde’ (Clemoes, 174, ll. 57–9; ‘men need good instruction most in this time, which is the ending of this world’). The first sentence to Wulfstan’s ‘Sermo Lupi ad Anglos’ flatly states that ‘ðeos woruld is on ofste, þit nealæcð þam ende’ (Bethurum, Homilies, 254, ll. 3–4; 261, ll. 7–8; 267, ll. 7–8; ‘this world is hastening, and it is nearing the end’).


17 The Vercelli Book, for example, was almost certainly not meant for public preaching, but for private devotional reading, in which context the doctrinal congruence of individual texts would have been less important. See Scragg, Vercelli, xix–xxiii. For a review of scholarship on the organization and purpose of the Vercelli Book, see Samantha Zacher, Preaching the Converted: The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies, TASS 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 32–42.
authors themselves. Even the homilies of Ælfric, who pleaded with later scribes to reproduce manuscripts of his works faithfully, \(^{18}\) were recombined and juxtaposed with texts whose content would have irked that circumspect abbot, \(^{19}\) and we can imagine that the anonymous homilists also had little control over the compilation of the manuscripts through which their works have come down to us. Despite the accidents of textual transmission, however, we can sometimes assign multiple homilies to the same anonymous author and thereby glimpse something of his character. Focusing on such instances, Scragg and Wright have shown that individual anonymous homilists could have styles and concerns as distinct and consistent as those of Ælfric or Wulfstan.\(^ {20}\)

One must admit, however, that the anonymous homilies’ reputation for heterodoxy and confusion is not wholly due to the idiosyncrasies of manuscript compilation. Internal contradictions abound within many of the homilies themselves. This is often seen in the so-called composite homilies, which excerpt and rearrange pieces of existing Old English texts. The author of Napier XXX (\textit{HomU 27}), for example, drew on the same exemplars as several of the Vercelli Homilies, some of which were composite texts themselves.\(^ {21}\) The various elements of composite homilies were often not integrated in a way that satisfies the modern reader’s desire for consistency, and such texts sometimes contain redundancies\(^ {22}\) and even contradictory

\(^{18}\) Clemoes, 177, ll. 128–34.

\(^{19}\) CCC 303, for instance, includes both Ælfrician pieces and anonymous homilies, including a text of the so-called ‘Devil’s Account of the Next World,’ another version of which appears in Vercelli IX. See Scragg, \textit{Vercelli}, xxix, 174–84.


doctrines. However, as Nancy Thompson has explained, such practices do not indicate that the anonymous homilists were ‘naively credulous [and] dull,’ but rather that their ‘veneration for the written word’ and exegetical outlook allowed them to see past or resolve contradictions that modern readers cannot. She summarizes her argument thus:

[The composite] homilists, while stressing their indebtedness to holy books, felt no particular obligation to render them exactly. They combined authorities in what seems like quite haphazard ways, added to or altered the sense of their texts, and gave exegetical commentary the status of scripture. The Bible itself was not immune to alteration. While such revisions seem at first sight to indicate the homilists’ laxness with respect to their religious authorities, a consideration of the particular case of scripture suggests just the opposite. In earlier ages, exegetes sought in Bible passages a universal truth that might be concealed in a literal reading. The Anglo-Saxon homilist handled all holy books with techniques once reserved for the Bible, looking beyond the letter for an appropriate meaning, and raising them, in effect, to the exalted status of scripture.

For many anonymous authors, then, consistency exercised no greater influence on the composition of individual homilies than it did on the compilation of the homiletic manuscript. The term ‘ascetic florilegium,’ first applied by Éamonn Ó Carragáin to the Vercelli Book as a whole, is just as accurate a description of many of the anonymous homilies that it and other Old English manuscripts contain.

Moving away from the modern bias in favour of the orderly which has often dominated the study of Anglo-Saxon homiletics, we can nevertheless appreciate that the anonymous homilists utilized a significantly different range of source material than did Ælfric and Wulfstan. Since many of the


23 For the example of a homily in CCCC 41 that contains two different depictions of the judgment of souls, see Nancy Thompson, ‘“Hit segð on halgum bocum”: The Logic of Composite Old English Homilies,’ Philological Quarterly 81 (2002): 383–419 at 408 et passim.

24 Thompson, 384.

25 Thompson, 408.

differences between the eschatological views of the named and unnamed Old English homilists derive from the sources they considered appropriate for translation and adaptation, it will be useful to provide a brief summary of the most important sources of Old English homiletic eschatology.\(^{27}\)

The books of the New Testament are of primary importance in Old English homiletic writing, especially for authors, such as Ælfric, who generally wrote ‘homilies’ in the strict sense—‘written text[s] marked for oral public delivery within a liturgical setting, usually by means of a direct address to the audience, and/or by the quotation of a scriptural pericope at the beginning of the text as a basis for exposition’—rather than less formally defined ‘sermons.’\(^{28}\) Among the Biblical treatments of eschatology, Christ’s words on the Last Things in the synoptic Gospels, especially Matthew 24–25, Luke 21, and Mark 13, had somewhat more of an influence on Old English homilies than the Apocalypse of John did. Wulfstan, for instance, based three of his most comprehensive treatments of the end times (Bethurum II, III, and V \(\text{WHom 2, 3, and 5}\)) on the three synoptic passages.\(^{29}\) Ælfric’s homily for the Second Sunday of Advent in his First Series of \textit{Catholic Homilies} \(\text{AECHom I, 40}\)\(^{30}\)—one of his three most important eschatological homilies\(^{31}\)—is based on Luke 21, the Gospel reading for the day. The Vercelli Homilies entirely

\(^{27}\) For a recent general discussion of the sources of Old English homilies, see Charles D. Wright, ‘Old English Homilies and Latin Sources,’ in \textit{The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation}, ed. Aaron Kleist, SEMA 17 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 15–66.

\(^{28}\) Thomas N. Hall, ‘The Early Medieval Sermon,’ in \textit{The Sermon}, ed. Beverley Mayne Kienzle, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental 81–3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 203–69 at 206. Many Old English homilies, however, straddle the line between ‘homily’ and ‘sermon’ to such an extent that strict categorization would be meaningless and misleading. Therefore, in this thesis I use the two terms interchangeably except when otherwise noted.


\(^{30}\) Clemoes, 524–30.

\(^{31}\) The others being the supplemental homilies ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ and ‘Sermo ad populum in octavis Pentecosten dicendus.’ The latter is a translation of Ælfric’s own redaction of Julian of Toledo’s \textit{Prognosticon futuri saeculi}, which attempts to synthesize the Gospel accounts and John’s Apocalypse. For a discussion and edition of the homily, see Pope, 407–52, 584–612. The \textit{Prognosticon} has been edited by J. N. Hilgarth in \textit{Sancti Iuliani Toletanae sedis episcopi opera, pars I}, CCSL 115 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976). Ælfric’s version of the text can be found in Gatch, \textit{Preaching}, 134–46. See also Enid M. Raynes, ‘MS. Boulogne-sur-Mer 63 and Ælfric,’ \textit{MÆ} 26 (1957): 65–73; Joyce Bazire and James E. Cross, eds., \textit{Eleven Old English Rogatentide Homilies}, KCLMS 4, 2nd ed. (Exeter: Short Run Press, 1989), 80–9.
neglect John’s Apocalypse in favour of the Gospels. This predilection for the Gospel accounts is not surprising: pericope-based homilies most often used the Gospel reading for the day as their starting point, and even homilists who did not strictly follow the pericopes would probably have preferred the Gospel accounts, parts of which at least were familiar to their audiences from readings at Mass, to other books of the New Testament, such as the Apocalypse, which had a more limited liturgical use. Moreover, the allusive and symbolic language of John’s Apocalypse may have been considered too complicated a subject for effective preaching, even by anonymous homilists who were more tolerant of obscure eschatological imagery.

Some anonymous preachers supplemented the eschatological material they found in the canonical scriptures with apocryphal and heterodox visions and apocalypses. One of the most important of these accounts is the Apocalypse of Thomas, a dramatic prediction of the terrors of the end times supposedly given to that apostle by Christ himself. Latin versions of this apocryphon are sources of four extant anonymous homilies, including Vercelli XV (HomU 6) and Homily VII of the Blickling manuscript (HomS 26; Princeton, Scheide Library, MS. 71, s. x/xi). Another key text for the anonymous Old English eschatological homilies was the Visio Sancti Pauli, a Latin adaptation of an originally Greek text which thoroughly describes the (explicitly indescribable) celestial vision mentioned by the apostle in 2 Corinthians 2–4. The

32 ‘[D]espite the constant references to Doomsday themes throughout the Vercelli homilies, none appears to draw directly on the language of the Apocalypse, preferring instead to cite the same familiar passages from the Gospels.’ Zacher, Preaching the Converted, 49.

33 Early medieval commentators freely admitted their difficulties in interpreting John’s Apocalypse. The author or redactor of a pseudo-Isidorian Apocalypse commentary even began his work by saying, ‘Multa quidem obscuritas in hoc habetur volumine’ (PLS 4, col. 1850; ‘There is a great deal of obscurity contained in this book’).


text was translated and read in Old English (much to the consternation of Ælfric\textsuperscript{37}), and the Latin redactions of the Visio strongly, though sometimes indirectly, influenced depictions of hell in the Old English anonymous homilies.\textsuperscript{38}

Rarer apocrypha also played a role. Perhaps the strangest among these is the so-called Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens (or Seven Heavens Apocryphon), a complex cosmological account of the celestial journey of good and evil souls after death, which was a source for at least two Old English homilies.\textsuperscript{39} The doctrinal and geographic origins of this apocalypse have become a point of contention for scholars of Insular religious literature and specialists in the apocrypha. In 1983, Jane Stevenson put forth the controversial hypothesis that the Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens is a descendant—albeit significantly altered and sanitized for a Catholic audience—of a second-century Gnostic Apocalypse of Paul,\textsuperscript{40} originally written in Greek but now surviving only in a Coptic codex from Nag Hammadi.\textsuperscript{41} Charles D. Wright adduced more influential of the Latin versions, can be found in Lenka Jiroušková, \textit{Die Visio Pauli: Wege und Wandlungen einer orientalischen Apokryphe im lateinischen Mittelalter unter Einschluß der altschechischen und deutschsprachigen Textzeugen}, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte 34 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).


\textsuperscript{38} Charles D. Wright, \textit{The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature}, CSASE 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 106–74.


\textsuperscript{40} Not to be confused with the more orthodox \textit{Apocalypse of Paul}, the Greek inspiration of the Latin Visio Pauli.

parallels from another early Gnostic work known as *Pistis Sophia*. More recently, Richard Bauckham and Michael Kaler have argued against Stevenson’s hypothesis, while John Carey has advanced a new case for a significant Egyptian Gnostic (particularly Ophite) influence. Whatever their ultimate origins, the existence of Old and Middle Irish versions of the *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens* and other apocryphal accounts used by the Anglo-Saxons, together with the well-known Irish tolerance for apocryphal material and the influence on Old English religious literature of certain Irish stylistic elements, has led many scholars to suppose that such apocrypha were introduced to Anglo-Saxon England from Ireland or Irish monastic foundations on the Continent.

For homiletic interpretation and elaboration of the canonical Biblical texts, the Anglo-Saxon homilists turned to works by patristic and early medieval Latin authorities. Augustine held a particularly important place among these, but we must qualify this statement somewhat when it comes to the Old English eschatological homilies. The pseudonymous texts that traveled under the name of Augustine were probably a greater influence on the eschatology of the anonymous


46 The Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture (SASLC) project has not yet produced a comprehensive account on Augustine in Anglo-Saxon England, but some work on the subject has been done by the Fontes Anglo-Saxonici Project, available at http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk, accessed August 2012. The extent to which Ælfric in particular relied on Augustine’s works will be immediately clear to anyone browsing the ‘Sources and Notes’ subheadings in Malcolm Godden, Ælfric, *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, EETS s.s. 18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), xlvii–xlix et passim.
homilists than Augustine’s genuine works. It should also be noted that, although Ælfric had direct access to much of the genuine Augustinian homiletic corpus, his use of Augustine’s eschatological exegesis was largely secondhand, derived from excerpts present in some of his other major eschatological sources, such as Julian of Toledo’s (fl. 680–690) Prognosticon futuri saeculi and Bede’s Commentarius in Lucam.

Besides Augustine, the Anglo-Saxon homilists drew on eschatological homilies by Caesarius of Arles (470–542), Gregory the Great, and Bede, among others. The Anglo-Saxon authors found many of their source homilies not in volumes dedicated to the works of individual authors, but in eclectic homiliaries—‘collection[s] of homilies, or texts commenting on passages from the Bible, which [follow] the order of the pericopes for the liturgical year.’ Carolingian homiliaries exercised a significant influence on the Old English homiletic collections in terms of both structural models and textual sources. Cyril Smetana and Joyce Hill have explored Ælfric’s dependence on the homiliary of Paul the Deacon—a collection, like many other homiliaries,

47 Even looking only at the major anonymous collections one can find many examples. See, e.g., Vercelli Homily X/Blickling IX (Scragg, Vercelli, 203–9; Morris, Blickling, 104–7). Blickling VIII (Morris, Blickling, 99, l. 12) cites ‘Agustinus’ by name. For a discussion of this passage see Claudia Di Sciacca, Finding the Right Words: Isidore’s Synonyma in Anglo-Saxon England, TOES 19 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 124–5. There is some evidence to suggest that ‘se æþela lareow’ (‘the noble teacher’) cited at the beginning of Blickling V (Morris, Blickling, 55, l. 1) is also a reference to pseudo-Augustine (Stephen Pelle, ‘Sources and Analogues for Blickling Homily V and Vercelli Homily XI,’ NQ 59 [2012]: 8–13 at 8–11).

48 Dates in this section (given for some of the lesser-known authors mentioned) are those of Godden, Introduction, Commentary, and Glossary, xli–lxxi.

49 Pope, 407–52, 586–9. Note also that Augustine had little, if any, direct influence on Wulfstan’s eschatological homilies (Bethurum, Homilies, 278–93).

50 See, e.g., Vercelli VIII and XIII (Scragg, Vercelli, 139–48, 233–8), Blickling X (on the sources of which, see James E. Cross, ‘“The Dry Bones Speak”—A Theme in Some Old English Homilies,’ JEGP 56 [1957]: 434–9), and Ælfric’s ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ (Pope, 588, 604). For a general survey, see Joseph B. Trahern, Jr., ‘Caesarius of Arles and Old English Literature: Some Contributions and a Recapitulation,’ ASE 5 (1976): 105–119.

51 Ælfric made use of both Gregory and Bede (through his Commentarius in Lucam) in his First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent (Godden, Introduction, Commentary and Glossary, 334–44) and the ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ (Pope, 584–9). See also Homily VI in Susan Irvine, ed., Old English Homilies from MS Bodley 343, EETS o.s. 302 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 146–78.


53 Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and Preaching,’ passim.
constructed entirely of homilies attributed to known patristic and earlier medieval authors. He also made occasional use of the more original (but still heavily patristically-inspired) homiliary of Haymo of Auxerre (d. ca. 865), and of that of Smaragdus (fl. 809–19), both of whom he cites by name in the ‘Preface’ to the First Series of Catholic Homilies. Haymo, for instance, seems to have been one of Ælfric’s many sources for his First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent, mentioned above.

The anonymous Old English homilists, too, may have found useful eschatological material in homiliaries such as that of Paul the Deacon. However, in addition to the impeccably orthodox collections favoured by Ælfric, they also consulted other Carolingian homiliaries which leaned towards the pseudonymous and anonymous. Perhaps the most important of these is the Homiliary of Saint-Père de Chartres, whose most important English witness, Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS. 25 (s. xi), has been thoroughly discussed and partially edited by James E. Cross. Texts present in this homiliary underlie, among other Old English anonymous homilies, at least four items in the Vercelli Book, including part of the vivid eschatological Homily XXI (HomM 13). Another recently-identified Carolingian cycle, a tenth-century work known as the Homiliary of Angers, has also proven to be a rewarding topic of study for Anglo-Saxonists. The recent discovery of the Taunton Fragment (HomM 16) has given this simple


56 Godden, Introduction, Commentary and Glossary, 335, 340.


58 The others are Vercelli III, XIX, and XX. Parallels (identified by Cross) from no fewer than ten items in Pembroke 25 are printed in Scragg’s apparatus fontium to Homily XXI. Scragg, Vercelli Homilies, 70–1, 310–12, 351–62; Cross, Cambridge, 96–173.

59 First identified and named by Raymond Étaix, ‘L’hômélière carolingien d’Angers,’ RB 104 (1994): 148–90. A version of the homiliary in an English manuscript was identified and edited by Aidan Conti, Preaching Scripture and Apocrypha: A Previously Unidentified Homiliary in an Old English Manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS
and largely original work a strong claim to being the only known Latin homiliary to have been translated more or less completely into Old English.\(^6^0\) In addition, a description of hell which the Angers homilist (or compiler) modified from a redaction of the *Visio Pauli* has been demonstrated to be the direct source for sections of two extant anonymous Old English homilies.\(^6^1\)

Besides the eschatological pieces found in the Carolingian homiliaries, the Old English homilists also consulted a variety of Latin commentaries and treatises which discussed the end times. As mentioned above, Ælfric made heavy use of the *Prognosticon futuri saeculi* of Julian of Toledo in his ‘Sermo ad populum in octavis Pentecosten dicendus’ (ÆHom 11).\(^6^2\) For other homilies, he drew on discussions of the last days in the *Commentarius in Lucam* and the *De temporum ratione* of Bede, who, in turn, derived much of his material from Jerome and other patristic sources.\(^6^3\) Ælfric and Wulfstan both made some use of Gregory’s *Moralia in Iob* in their discussions of the reign of Antichrist,\(^6^4\) but by far the most influential work on the subject for the Old English homilists was the *De ortu et tempore Antichristi* by Adso of Montier-en-Der (d. 992).\(^6^5\) Ælfric seems to have loosely based certain sections of his ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ (ÆHom 19) and much of his First Series ‘Preface’ on parts of Adso’s text.\(^6^6\) Wulfstan, who borrowed material from


\(^{6^1}\) Pelle, ‘Seven Pains.’


\(^{6^3}\) Godden, *Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, 335–44; Pope, 586–609.

\(^{6^4}\) Pope, 588, 605–6; see also Godden, *Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, 343. Wulfstan draws from Gregory in the Latin version of his homily ‘De Anticristo,’ but omits this passage in the Old English version (Bethurum, *Homilies*, 283–4).

\(^{6^5}\) D. Verhelst, ed., *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, CCCM 45 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976). The work also goes by the title *Libellus de Antichristo*, among others.

\(^{6^6}\) Godden, *Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, 5–6; Pope, 588.
Ælfric’s ‘Preface’ in Bethurum IV (WHom 4: ‘De Temporibus Anticristi’), also made independent use of Adso in Bethurum Ia/lb (WHom 1b: ‘De Anticristo’) and V (WHom 5: ‘Secundum Marcum’).\(^6^7\) Napier XLII (HomU 34), an anonymous Old English translation and homiletic adaptation of Adso’s work ‘possibly commissioned by Wulfstan,’ is found (along with the Latin original) in several manuscripts connected to the archbishop, including manuscripts of his so-called ‘Commonplace Book.’\(^6^8\)

In addition to Latin texts, the Anglo-Saxon eschatologists made occasional use of other Old English prose writers. Wulfstan, as was mentioned above, based parts of his treatment of Antichrist on Ælfric’s First Series ‘Preface,’ and perhaps also on the Old English version of Adso in conjunction with the Latin original.\(^6^9\) Wulfstan’s own works were mined relentlessly in the construction of composite eschatological homilies, most of which appear in Napier’s volume of homilies attributed to the archbishop. Napier’s inclusion of sixty-two texts in this work, while the genuine Wulfstanian homiletic corpus is closer to thirty-five items, shows just how widely the style and substance of Wulfstan’s homilies had diffused in the late Old English period.\(^7^0\) The anonymous homilists also borrowed extensively from one another, both textually and, perhaps, by mnemonic recollection (as may be the case in the homily ‘Be Heofonwarum γ be Helwarum’

\(^6^7\) Bethurum, Homilies, 281–6, 288–93.


\(^6^9\) Bethurum, Homilies, 281–6; Hollis, 424–5.

Several composite homilies, including Napier XXX, discussed above, borrowed from both named and anonymous authors. \(^{72}\)

Finally, the Old English anonymous homilists also made some use of Old English eschatological poems. To discuss this topic, however, requires acknowledging that the line between verse and prose was anything but clear in the Old English homilies. Wulfstan and the anonymous homilists often employed stress, alliteration, or rhyme for heightened rhetorical effect, and Ælfric’s homilies show a more or less regular alliterative and stress pattern, such that the question of whether he wrote rhythmical prose or prosaic poetry has still not been (and likely can never be) settled. \(^{73}\) Nonetheless, the occasional use in Old English homilies of pre-existing, traditional Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse is confirmed by cases such as Napier XXIX (HomU 26, based on the poem *Judgment Day II* \(^{74}\)) and Vercelli XXI (which quotes *An Exhortation to Christian Living* \(^{75}\)). Other poetic fragments, eschatological and otherwise, have since been identified by Stanley, Wright, and others, \(^{76}\) but whether these are further instances of

\(^{71}\) Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission,’ *passim*. The homily has been edited by Teresi, ‘*Be Heofonwarum* 7 *be Helwarum*.’

\(^{72}\) Scragg, *Vercelli*, 395.


\(^{75}\) It has, conversely, been suggested that the homily is the source of the poem. For a discussion see Scragg, *Vercelli*, 348–50, 357.

borrowing from earlier poems or evidence of homilists embedding original verse compositions into their prose cannot, at present, be determined.

In recent years, as scholars of medieval English religious literature have become increasingly aware that 1066 did not represent an absolute break in the tradition of early English homiletics, several important studies on the post-Conquest use and influence of Old English eschatological homilies have appeared.\textsuperscript{77} A main aim of this work is to explore the ways the eschatological homilies continued to be read, copied, rearranged, rewritten, and otherwise used during the latter part of the twelfth century, as well as to determine if and how they influenced contemporary, post-Conquest compositions. Before beginning this examination, however, I shall briefly discuss the major homiletic manuscripts of the late twelfth century, as well as the history of scholarship on the post-Conquest afterlife of Old English homilies.

1.2 English Vernacular Homiletic Manuscripts, ca. 1150–1200

In recent years, the continued copying and use of Old English texts in the twelfth century and beyond have generated considerable interest, and, as a result, scholars have taken new approaches to old questions of whether and to what extent Old English literary traditions survived into the early Middle English period. The Old English homilies have been at the forefront of this discussion, since they were copied and rewritten regularly throughout the twelfth century and into the first years of the thirteenth, when the last extant manuscripts containing works of Ælfric and Wulfstan were written. At the same time, homilies also represent one of the relatively few literary genres in which we know that new vernacular works continued to be composed in significant numbers in the second half of the twelfth century, as can be seen, for example, in the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies.

In order to set the stage more fully for a discussion of the primary texts I shall examine in this thesis, I provide below brief descriptions of all English prose homiletic manuscripts\textsuperscript{78} from the

\textsuperscript{77} See especially Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist’; Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission.’

\textsuperscript{78} I therefore leave out Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Junius 1 (Lincolnshire, s. xii\textsuperscript{2}), the \textit{Ormulum}, the eschatology and literary relationships of which are dissertation topics unto themselves.
period in question (ca. 1150–1200) in roughly chronological order, with references to fuller discussions undertaken by other scholars. Special mention is made of texts with a major eschatological focus, since these form the basis for the rest of this study. I have given the DOE short titles and the abbreviated titles from RMEPS where these are available, along with other pertinent information. Square brackets indicate modern, editorial titles.

1. London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv (Rochester or Christ Church, Canterbury, s. xii<sup>med</sup>)<sup>80</sup>

Ker 209: The ‘Warner Homilies’<sup>81</sup>

Eschatological texts: Warner XXVII (Notes 21 – [‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’]), XXVIII (ÆCHom I, 40 – a copy of Ælfric’s First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent), XXXIII (Notes 22 – [‘Signs of the Last Judgement’]), XXXVII, (ÆCHom II, 22 – ‘Sanctus Furseus Gesihðe,’ a copy of Ælfric’s Second Series homily for the Tuesday in Rogationtide),<sup>82</sup> XXXVIII (ÆCHom II, 23 – ‘Of Drihtelme,’ based mostly on another of Ælfric’s Second Series homilies for the Tuesday in Rogationtide),<sup>83</sup> XLII (LS 28; BL/Vesp. D.xiv/002 – ‘Of Seinte Neote,’ a homily on St. Neot which concludes with an apocalyptic

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<sup>80</sup> In addition to Ker, Catalogue 209, see the very full description of the manuscript by Elaine Treharne, ‘Homilies, etc.: London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ in The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220, http://www.le.ac.uk/english/em1060to1220/mss/EM.BL.Vesp.D.xiv.htm, accessed August 2012.

<sup>81</sup> I borrow the term ‘Warner Homilies’ from Janet Bately, Anonymous Old English Homilies: A Preliminary Bibliography of Source Studies (Binghamton, NY: SUNY Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1993), 71. These texts are not to be confused with those of London, BL, Cotton Vespasian A. xxii (see below, no. 8), which I have designated the ‘Vespasian Homilies.’

<sup>82</sup> Godden, Second Series, 190–8.

pronouncement reminiscent of Wulfstan’s ‘Sermo Lupi ad Anglos’ [WHom 20]), XLIV (HomU 57 – a discussion of Nebuchadnezzar and the ages of the world), XLVIII (HomU 17.2; BL/Vesp. D.xiv/004 – ['The Phoenix Homily'], a homily on the Phoenix that contains a detailed description of Paradise)

Cotton Vespasian D. xiv was edited in full by Warner, but her planned commentary on the manuscript never appeared. Selected anonymous pieces have since been re-edited and received full commentaries in dissertations by Handley and Schmetterer. The manuscript contains fifty-three Old English texts, but not all of these are preachable homilies, and the collection seems to have been intended for private devotion, possibly for female readers. Still, the majority of texts in Vespasian D. xiv are homiletic in content and tone. Most of these are from the Catholic Homilies and other works by Ælfric, but many of the Ælfrician pieces show significant abbreviation and other forms of editing. The manuscript contains English translations of a sermon by Ralph d’Escures (archbishop of Canterbury from 1114–22) and of parts of the Elucidarium of the twelfth-century writer Honorius Augustodunensis, and is thus an important witness to continuing composition in Old English after the Norman Conquest. Vespasian D. xiv also includes several anonymous texts not found in other manuscripts, including a piece on

Antichrist and a version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend, mentioned above. Eschatological texts make up a significant part of the fourth of the five quire blocks of the manuscript, and it seems that the compiler had a special interest in visionary and apocalyptic material. A fuller discussion of this manuscript can be found in Chapter 3.

2. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303 (Rochester, s. xii\textsuperscript{med})\textsuperscript{91}

Eschatological Texts: Ker 57, arts. 39 (HomS 48 – ‘Ewangelium de virginibus,’ on the Parable of the Ten Virgins),\textsuperscript{92} 40 (HomM 9 – ‘De inclusis,’ a version of ‘The Devil’s Account of the Next World’),\textsuperscript{93} 41 (ÆHom 11 – a copy of Ælfric’s ‘Sermo ad populum in octavis Pentecosten dicendus’), 46 (HomS 42 – Bazire-Cross Homily IV, a Rogationtide piece on the horrors of hell)\textsuperscript{94}

The large majority of the seventy-three texts in CCCC 303 are taken from Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies and Lives of Saints, but other Ælfrician texts and anonymous homilies are also included. The homiletic texts of the manuscript are partially arranged into temporale and sanctorale sections, but this organization is superficial, and the compiler of the manuscript seems to have been ‘picking and choosing from a range of earlier manuscripts’ in constructing the collection. \textsuperscript{95} Like Vespasian D. xiv, CCCC 303 includes a few English texts probably composed after the Conquest, and, also like Vespasian D. xiv, it may have been used for private study


\textsuperscript{91} Ker dates to s. xii\textsuperscript{1} and provides no provenance, but this description has been revised by Elaine Treharne, ‘The Production and Script of Manuscripts Containing English Religious Texts in the First Half of the Twelfth Century,’ in Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century, eds. Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne, CSASE 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 11–40 at 28.

\textsuperscript{92} Edited by Hildegard Tristram, ‘Vier altenglische Predigten aus der heterodoxen Tradition’ (unpublished PhD. diss., Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), 439–45.

\textsuperscript{93} Edited in Scragg’s apparatus to Vercelli IX (Vercelli, 174–84 [see also 151–7]) and separately by A. M. Luiselli Fadda, Nuove omelie anglosassoni della rinascenza benedettina, Filologia germanica: Testi e studi 1 (Firenze: Felice le Monnier, 1977), 187–8.

\textsuperscript{94} Bazire and Cross, 57–65.

\textsuperscript{95} Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 47.
rather than public preaching. It is perhaps important that three eschatological homilies (arts. 39–41), though not assigned to a particular Sunday or feast, immediately precede a block of Rogationtide pieces. One wonders if the tradition, most noted among the Anglo-Saxon anonymous homilists, of preaching about Doomsday during Rogationtide may have influenced the codex’s organization.

3. Cambridge, University Library II. 1. 33 (?Rochester or Canterbury, s. xii)

Ker 18

Eschatological Texts: Ker 18, arts. 40 (HomM 8 – Fadda Homily VII, an address of the soul to the body), 42 (WCan 1.2 – Fadda Homily IX, a composite homily, including parts of Vercelli XIX [HomS 34] and Wulfstan’s Canons of Edgar, as well as a unique description of the torments of hell), 43 (ÆCHom II, 23 – the vision of Drihthelm, a copy of one of Ælfric’s Second Series homilies for the Tuesday in Rogationtide)

CUL II. 1. 33 contains some forty-four Old English texts (by Ker’s reckoning), the great majority of which are homilies and saints’ lives by Ælfric. The compilation of the manuscript was rather complicated, as is the textual transmission of its Ælfrician contents. At least one of the scribes

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96 This is by no means certain, however. See the discussion in Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 47–8, 50–3.

97 The titles of the homilies ‘Ewangelium de virginitibus’ (art. 39) and ‘De inclusis’ (art. 40) likely refer to the feasts of virgins and cloistered religious, respectively, but in content these pieces have much more in common with the following eschatological texts than the preceding hagiographical ones. The title of Ælfric’s ‘Sermo ad populum in octavis Pentecosten dicendus’ (art. 41) appears in this manuscript as ‘Sermo quando uolueris de temporibus,’ evidently to justify its inclusion out of appropriate temporal sequence. Ker, Catalogue 57, art. 41; Pope, 415.

98 Bazire and Cross, xxiv.


100 Fadda, 139–57. ‘The homily is sometimes referred to as the Augustini sermo, since these words appear in a late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century hand at the start of the homily,… presumably indicating that the homily was considered to be an Augustinian compilation’ (Zacher, Preaching the Converted, 145, n. 18).

101 Fadda, 174–89.

102 Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 54–5.
of CUL Ii. 1. 33—there is no agreement as to how many there were—seems to have been trilingual, as he not only copied many of the main texts of the manuscript but also provided marginal notes in English, Latin, and French. Like the manuscripts discussed above, ‘CUL Ii. 1. 33 gives no sign that it was designed for public preaching,’ and it may have been meant ‘for private reading for monks or for reading aloud within a monastic setting.’ The hagiographical focus of the collection precludes a heavy emphasis on eschatology, but the compiler(s) of CUL Ii. 1. 33 must still have felt that the topic was important to address, as they found room for two anonymous texts on the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ and the torments of hell along with a copy of Ælfric’s account of the otherworldly vision of Drihtelm near the end of the collection. Needless to say, Ælfric would not have enjoyed the company.

4. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343 (West Midlands, s. xii)\(^{105}\)

Ker 310: Some independently edited Ælfrician and anonymous texts referred to as the ‘Belfour’ or ‘Irvine’ homilies\(^{106}\)

Eschatological Texts: Ker 310, arts. 33 (ÆCHom I, 40 – a copy of Ælfric’s First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent), 64 (HomU 37 – a copy of Napier Homily XLVI, a composite piece including a version of the Visio Pauli),\(^{107}\) 70 (a composite Wulfstanian homily, combining versions of Bethurum Ib, IV, and V),\(^{108}\) 79 (HomU 2 – Irvine VI, a homily on the Transfiguration with significant discussion of Doomsday), 80 (HomU 3 – Irvine VII, a homily combining Caesarius’s ‘Visit to the Grave’ exemplum with passages from Isidore’s Synonyma,

\(^{103}\) See Da Rold, ‘Homilies and Lives of Saints.’ A detailed palaeographical study of the manuscript can be found in Oliver M. Traxel, Language Change, Writing and Textual Interference in Post-Conquest Old English Manuscripts: The Evidence of Cambridge, University Library, II. 1. 33, Münchner Universitätsschriften: Texte und Untersuchungen zur englischen Philologie 32 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004).

\(^{104}\) Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 55.

\(^{105}\) For a discussion of the manuscript’s provenance, see Ker’s comments at the end of his description; Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 59–60; and Irvine, Old English Homilies, li–lii.

\(^{106}\) A. O. Belfour, ed., Twelfth-Century Homilies in Ms. Bodley 343, EETS o.s. 137 (London: Trübner, 1909); Irvine, Old English Homilies.

\(^{107}\) Napier, 232–42.

\(^{108}\) Bethurum, Homilies, 116–8, 128–41; edited as a whole by Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist,’ 651–63.
partly the same as the conclusion of Vercelli X [HomS 40], 109 85 (Grave – The Grave, a poem copied onto a blank page around the year 1200). 110

Bodley 343 is a massive collection of homiletic material, encompassing both a Latin copy of the Homily of Angers 111 and around seventy-five Old English texts. Most of these are from Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies, but several Wulfstanian pieces (unusually for the twelfth century112 and anonymous homilies are also included. As in the manuscripts discussed above, the Ælfrician homilies show little consistency in their textual transmission. Irvine explains this by conjecturing that ‘at some stage in transmission a compiler has attempted to build up chronological sequences from a series of smaller units or booklets.’ 113 Also like the earlier twelfth-century manuscripts, Bodley 343’s inclusion of non-homiletic pieces and its apparent lack of preacher’s marks have led scholars to doubt whether it was used for preaching to the laity. Nonetheless, the presence of a bare-bones Latin homiliary in the same manuscript suggests that, even if Bodley 343 was not preached from directly, it could at least be used as a resource for clerics in composing their own homilies. 114 Bodley 343 is the only twelfth-century manuscript to include not only Ælfrician and anonymous eschatological pieces, but also Wulfstan’s homilies on Antichrist, which the compiler or scribe intentionally reworked into a compendious, composite treatment of the subject.

109 For a discussion of sources, see Irvine, Old English Homilies, 183–96.
111 Conti, ‘Preaching Scripture and Apocrypha.’
113 For an overview, see Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 59.

Ker 173

Eschatological Texts: Wanley art. 6 (HomM 15) – ‘Sermo de Dom[i]na’, the same as Lambeth Homily XIV, about which see below)

Cotton Otho A. xiii, a composite manuscript made up of various Latin texts and English homilies, was partially burnt in the Cotton Fire of 1731, and the thirteen English texts it contained were lost. Wanley printed the incipits and explicits of these texts, one of which we know to have had an eschatological focus, as it is the same text as a homily from London, Lambeth Palace 487 on the veneration of Sunday and on Doomsday. Extracts copied from four of the homilies by Richard James in the seventeenth century survive, but have never been edited. The only previous conjecture on the date of the manuscript derives from comments in James’s transcript and in Wanley’s catalogue that ascribe it to the time of Henry II (r. 1154–89). Judging as best as I am able from Wanley’s incipits and explicits and James’s excerpts, the English homilies seem to me to have been written at a date close to the end of Henry’s reign, if not a little after, as the language seems contemporary with or slightly earlier than that of the Trinity (s. xiiex) and Lambeth Homilies (s. xii/xiii).

Cotton Otho A. xiii is the latest homiletic manuscript which Ker decided to include in his catalogue, and he was hesitant to extend his definition of ‘manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon’ even this far. Had the entire manuscript survived and its date and evident relationships to other

115 All the surviving incipits and explicits from this manuscript preserved in Wanley’s catalogue (see next note) are classified under this DOE short title.


117 The manuscript also had other texts in common with the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies. See R. Wülcker, ‘Übersicht der neuangelsächsischen Sprachdenkmäler,’ Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur 1 (1874): 57–88 at 80–7. As Mark Faulkner has brought to my attention, Otho I was a version of the sole English homily in Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS. Q. 29 (item 9 below).


119 Ker, Catalogue 173; Wanley, 233.
late twelfth-century collections been verified, he surely would have omitted this collection, too. The Trinity, Lambeth, and Vespasian Homilies (discussed below) were intentionally left out due to their ‘tenuous … relations with O[ld] E[nglish] manuscripts,’ despite the fact that the latter two collections drew on known Old English sources. The thorny question arises, then, of what we are to call the language of these manuscripts. This issue will be discussed more later on, adding the caveat that any absolute distinction between ‘late Old English’ and ‘early Middle English’ should be regarded as a modern imposition based on traditional historical periodization, rather than an objective reality grounded in linguistic evolution.

6. Cambridge, Trinity College B. 14. 52 (?Middlesex, s. xiiex)\(^{123}\)

The ‘Trinity Homilies’\(^{124}\)


\(^{120}\) See Ker, Catalogue, p. xix, n. 1. The manuscript was composite, and the first half of it (much of which survives) was indeed an Anglo-Saxon production of the beginning of the eleventh century. See Helmut Gneuss, Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, MRTS 241 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), 66, item 351, as well as the updated entry in his ‘Addenda and Corrigenda to the Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts,’ ASE 32 (2003): 293–305.


\(^{122}\) The collections have been referred to as such by, for example, Celia Sisam, Mary Richards, and Bella Millett (see bibliography for references), among others. This convention is, however, far from established. Mary Swan, for instance, designates as ‘Old English’ any text in the Lambeth and Vespasian Homilies which goes back to a known or supposed Old English source. See her ‘Preaching Past the Conquest: Lambeth Palace 487 and Cotton Vespasian A. xxii,’ in The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation, ed. Aaron Kleist, SEMA 17 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 403–23.


\(^{124}\) OEH2, 2–232.
XXIX (Cam/Trinity/B.14.52/029 – ‘De Sancto Andrea,’ a homily for the feast of St. Andrew which includes a version of the Soul’s Address to the Body), XXXV (not a homily, but a version of the Poema Morale, a poem on death and the afterlife). Minor treatments of death and judgment are scattered throughout the collection.

The texts in Cambridge, Trinity College B. 14. 52 and (probably) those of Cotton Otho A. xiii are the only collections of multiple English homilies from this period not to contain any Ælfrician matter. In fact, no connections have thus far been identified between the Trinity Homilies and any pre-Conquest English works, and it seems that the manuscript consists solely of twelfth-century compositions, many of which are shared with the Lambeth Homilies. The style and structure of the Trinity Homilies differ from those of the earlier collections in several respects, not the least of which is the presence of Latin quotations interspersed and translated throughout the texts. (The possible significance of these innovations is discussed below.) The thirty-four Trinity Homilies include chronological temporale and sanctorale sections, but not a full cycle of either type. The manuscript’s temporale runs from Advent to Pentecost (with a few omissions), while the sanctorale portion contains homilies for the birth of John the Baptist (24 June), Mary Magdalene (22 July), St. James the Greater (25 July), St. Lawrence (10 August), the Assumption (15 August), All Souls’ (2 November), and St. Andrew (30 November).

Occasionally the sequence of these texts is interrupted by simple catechetical sermons—on such topics as the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer—that seem to have been meant for use quando volueris. The possible purpose of the Trinity Homilies has not been widely discussed, but Bella Millett suggests that they and the related Lambeth Homilies were meant to be preached ‘at diocesan rather than at parish level’ by ‘cathedral clerics,’ and that they were directed to a mixed lay and clerical audience. Wymer, on the other hand, sees in the collection’s frequent discussions of sexual ethics, childrearing, and superstitions clear indications that the homilies’ audience was primarily or exclusively lay. The eschatology of the Trinity Homilies ranges

from sober and catechetical (as in Trinity I, which expounds the familiar typological link between Advent and the Second Coming) to picturesque and hortatory (as in Trinity XXVIII and XXIX, which contain descriptions of death and Doomsday reminiscent of the earlier anonymous homilies).

7. London, Lambeth Palace 487 (West England, s. xii/xiii)
The ‘Lambeth Homilies’

Eschatological Texts: Lambeth III (‘Dominica Prima in Quadragesima,’ for the first Sunday in Lent), XIV (Lond/Lamb/487/006 – ‘In Die Dominica,’ a ‘Sunday List’ homily whose second half is a description of Doomsday; the same as homily 6 in Cotton Otho A. xiii), XVIII (not a homily, but a version of the Poema Morale)

Five of the seventeen homilies of Lambeth 487 also appear in Trinity College B. 14. 52 ‘in similar though not identical form,’ and both manuscripts include versions of the Poema Morale. In addition to these and other seemingly contemporary compositions, however, the Lambeth Homilies include three pieces (Lambeth IX–XI) that draw on Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies and one (Lambeth II) that adapts part of Wulfstan’s Be Godcundre Warnunge (WHom 19). Celia Sisam also conjectured an earlier origin for Lambeth I (Lond/Lamb/487/001) and III, the latter of which has several points of contact with pre-Conquest penitential homilies.

The differences in the style and sources of the various pieces of the collection may have a palaeographic basis, as Lambeth 487 seems to have been copied from two different exemplars, one of which was an older manuscript containing the Ælfrician and Wulfstanian material, and the other a newer compilation which contained, among other texts, all the homilies that the Lambeth

128 OEH1, 2–183.
129 Millett, ‘Pastoral Context,’ 45.
Homilies share with the Trinity Homilies. As is the case with the Trinity Homilies, frequent Latin quotations provide a framework for the English text of many of the Lambeth Homilies, to the point where they have been added even to Ælfrician pieces which did not originally contain them. Varied opinions on the intended audience of the Lambeth Homilies have been put forth over the years, including Millett’s hypothesis (mentioned above) that they were delivered to a mixed audience in a diocesan setting and Swan’s conjectures that they may have been used either for preaching in a small parish or for devotional reading by lay vowesses. Wymer, as with the Trinity Homilies, argues for a lay audience. Lambeth Homilies III and XIV provide the collection’s fullest treatments of eschatology, the former focusing on the death and afterlife of the individual and the latter on the Last Judgment.

8. London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. xxii (Rochester, s. xii/xiii)

The ‘Vespasian Homilies’

Eschatological Texts: Vespasian II (‘An Bispel’)

Vespasian A. xxii contains, in addition to many Latin pieces, four English homilies, all of which are incomplete. Vespasian I is a version of Ælfric’s ‘De Initio Creaturae,’ the introductory homily in the First Series of Catholic Homilies (ÆCHom I, 1), while Vespasian IV is a fragment of Ælfric’s homily for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (ÆCHom I, 24). Ælfrician echoes have also been detected in Vespasian II, which otherwise shows closer affinities to post-

136 OEHI, 217–245.
Conquest compositions by Anselm.\textsuperscript{138} Vespasian III has no known pre-Conquest antecedents or known Latin sources, but is similar to Lambeth XVI and Trinity XXX (Cam/Trinity/B.14.52/030).\textsuperscript{139} In addition to their complicated relationships to their sources, the Vespasian Homilies also present a palaeographic puzzle—they are written in an older, Insular minuscule (as opposed to the Continental script used elsewhere in the manuscript), but are laid out in the two-column format commonly used for Latin texts of the period.\textsuperscript{140} Theories about the possible purpose of the collection are as numerous as the (admittedly few) scholars who have devoted any attention to it. Mary Richards, focusing on the presence of ‘first-person asides interpolated into the texts’ as well as a perceived simplification of the structure and content of the Ælfrician pieces, stated that the Vespasian Homilies were clearly ‘intended for oral delivery,’ perhaps for the benefit of ‘the unlettered clergy.’\textsuperscript{141} Robert McColl Millar, Alex Nicholls, and Mary Swan, however, note that the texts were probably not preached in their current, fragmentary form, and suggest several other possible uses, including ‘raw material for subsequent sermon production, … use in a secular setting, or … ministry to a monastic audience.’\textsuperscript{142} Vespasian II, which provides an account of the going-out of souls of good men and sinners and a description of Doomsday, is the only one of the four pieces to discuss eschatology at any length.

9. Worcester, Cathedral Library Q. 29 (Worcester, s. xiii\textsuperscript{m})\textsuperscript{143}

The single English homily (Worc/Q.29/001) in this composite manuscript is preserved in a booklet that otherwise contains only Latin sermons. It is a version of the same Nativity homily that was the first piece in the now-burnt Cotton Otho A. xiii (manuscript 5, above). The homily

\textsuperscript{138} Richards, ‘Vespasian A. xxii,’ 99; Swan, ‘Preaching Past the Conquest,’ 415–7; Millar and Nicholls, 431 and 447, n. 8.

\textsuperscript{139} Swan, ‘Preaching Past the Conquest,’ 417.

\textsuperscript{140} Swan, ‘Preaching Past the Conquest,’ 420–1.

\textsuperscript{141} Richards, ‘Vespasian A. xxii,’ 99, 103.

\textsuperscript{142} Swan, ‘Preaching Past the Conquest,’ 422–3. See also Millar and Nicholls, 433; 449, n. 25.

was edited by E. G. Stanley in 1961 and then largely forgotten by scholars of medieval English, including nearly all who have worked on the continuity of the Old English homiletic tradition in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. I owe my knowledge of its existence to Mark Faulkner, with whom I am now collaborating on a study of the text and its Latin source. The Worcester Q. 29 homily does not have any appreciable eschatological content, but the fact that it survives in a mostly Latin manuscript has interesting implications for the circulation of early Middle English homilies.

1.3 Opinions on Continuity and Change in Late Twelfth-Century English Homilies

Scholars of medieval English religious literature have reached no consensus in classifying English texts written in the twelfth century, and especially in the second half of that century. One problem, of course, is the linguistic ambiguity of the texts themselves. The language of these works clearly differs from classical Old English (i.e., late West Saxon) in its orthographical and phonological development, its inflectional simplification and concomitant syntactic evolution, and its steadily increasing adoption of French and Latinate vocabulary. Still, texts in this hazily-defined middle ground preserve enough native vocabulary and rhythm to strike one as being as close or closer to Old English than to even the earliest texts in the traditional canon of Middle English literature. The fact that many earlier English works, particularly those of Ælfric, continued to be copied and their language updated into the early thirteenth century compounds these classificatory difficulties. The historical realities of the Norman Conquest and political

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145 Faulkner communicated this discovery to me by email (11 October 2011) and subsequently presented it in a paper he delivered at University College Cork in January 2012 (‘Twelfth-Century Sermons and the Survival of English Literature’), of which he has graciously provided me with a copy.

domination of England further complicate the issue, since they can hardly be separated from the linguistic and literary development of English.

What, then, are we to call the language of a period in which the older texts were still intelligible and influential but nonetheless linguistically and stylistically renovated, and in which contemporary compositions show both similarities to and important differences from pre-Conquest works? The relatively few scholars who have chosen not to ignore or dismiss these texts entirely have dealt with this problem in various ways. Richard Morris used the term ‘Old English’ to describe everything from the Blickling Homilies to thirteenth-century homilies and devotional poems. Nowadays ‘Old English’ usually has a more temporally restricted application, although some scholars, such as Mary Swan, continue to use it to refer to later copies of pre-Conquest works, ‘and also—in a few cases—texts newly composed in English after 1066 of which literary style and sensibilities, as well as the language, fit much more closely with Old English traditions than with Middle English ones.’

‘(Early) Middle English’ is also frequently applied to such texts, as is ‘Transitional English.’ Earlier scholars sometimes coined more creative terms such as ‘neuangsächsisch,’ ‘Semi-Saxon,’ or ‘Norman-Saxon,’ which, though they may now sound quaint, nonetheless represent the first attempts to confront the linguistic liminality of such texts.

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147 Swan, ‘Old English Textual Activity,’ 152. It should, however, be noted that Swan (loc. cit.) does not apply the term ‘Old English’ to post-Conquest texts ‘to imply an acceptance of a need to categorize the textual evidence in question as belonging on one side of a dramatic divide, but … to highlight an interwoven continuity and transformation of English linguistic and cultural identity.’


149 See Wülcker, op. cit.

150 Used, for example, by Phillipps to describe the ‘Worcester Fragments’: Thomas Phillipps, The Departing Soul’s Address to the Body: A Fragment of a Semi-Saxon Poem (London: L. J. Hansard & Co., 1845). See also OED ‘Semi-Saxon.’

This struggle to find a place for late twelfth-century English texts within the traditional historico-linguistic timeline of the development of English is, in a way, a symptom of what Elaine Treharne has called ‘a post-Enlightenment scholarly obsession with hierarchies.’ Yet the blossoming of terms to describe those works which fall between what we normally think of as ‘Old’ and ‘Middle English’ also reflects a genuine uncertainty about whether and to what extent such texts display any continuity with earlier, Anglo-Saxon traditions. This issue is particularly complicated in the diverse homiletic manuscripts of the later twelfth century. As is described above, such collections contain copies of the homiletic writings of both named and anonymous Anglo-Saxon authors. These texts evidently still held some interest even into the early thirteenth century, when many earlier manuscripts of them were glossed, most notably by the so-called ‘Tremulous Hand’ of Worcester. Several other twelfth- and thirteenth-century readers also glossed and annotated copies of Old English homilies. In some manuscripts, such as London, BL, Royal 7 C. xii and CCCC 302, these revisions seem to indicate that the older works

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153 I use the word ‘diverse’ purposely, as many older surveys of medieval English literature attribute to the late Old and early Middle English homilies a homogeneity that they do not possess. See especially George K. Anderson, Old and Middle English Literature from the Beginnings to 1485, History of English Literature 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950 [repr. Collier, 1962]), 167: ‘All the important collections of [Middle English] sermons unadulterated with legends are from the thirteenth century. These include the Bodley Homilies in prose, and the Lambeth Homilies, the Trinity College Homilies, the Kentish Sermons [by which he presumably means the thirteenth-century Kentish translations of five sermons by Maurice de Sully], and the Ormulum, all in verse. The structure of these sermons is almost uniform: first, a statement of the text, theme, or gospel story on which the sermon is to be based; second, an exposition of the same, with or without allegory; and finally, an exhortation and conclusion, with or without summation.’ Anderson clearly did not read most of these texts before passing judgment on them, since he pronounces the Lambeth Homilies, Trinity Homilies, and Kentish Sermons as verse, when they are all either completely or almost completely in prose. Still, one hardly envies the attention he gives to the Ormulum, the one collection he discusses in any detail: ‘The work, taken as a whole, is almost the dullest piece in English literature, if a superlative must be found’ (167).


155 A glossator known as the ‘Late Hand’ worked on Ælfric’s homilies in this manuscript. His alterations and possible motives are explored by Mark Faulkner, ‘Archaism, Belatedness, and Modernisation: “Old” English in the Twelfth Century,’ RES 63 (2012): 179–203.
were still being preached in some form. At the same time, however, some manuscripts of the period are composed largely of new works whose closest affinities seem to lie with contemporary Latin sermons. This is the case with many of the Lambeth Homilies and, it seems, most of the Trinity Homilies.

Faced with seemingly contradictory evidence—late copies of Old English homilies on one hand, the appearance of new homilies following Continental models on the other—scholars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have come to very different conclusions regarding the place of the late twelfth-century homily collections in the history of English religious literature. In 1932, R. W. Chambers, focusing particularly on evidence from sermons and devotional literature, argued for a continuous tradition of English prose composition from Alfred to *Ancrene Wisse* and beyond, and he found in collections such as Bodley 343 and the Lambeth and Vespasian Homilies one of the major conduits for the transmission of Old English traditions into the later Middle Ages. ‘The continuity of English prose,’ concluded Chambers, ‘is to be found in the sermon and in every kind of devotional treatise.’ Chambers conveniently left out of his consideration other twelfth-century English homily collections, such as the Trinity Homilies.

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156 On p. 189 of CCC 302 (s. xii), an early thirteenth-century hand has inserted a homiletic introduction into the middle of an expanded version of Ælfric’s First Series homily for the Second Sunday after Easter (ÆCHom I, 17 / I, 17 [App]). This addition has the effect of splitting one rather long homily into two homilies of more manageable size. If the manuscript was only being used for private, devotional reading (as many of the Old English homily collections surely were at the time), one might expect the glossing of archaic words, but more drastic, structural changes would be unnecessary. The simplest explanation for such alterations is, I believe, that the text was still being orally delivered, and that a thirteenth-century reader foresaw a situation in which its original length might pose practical and pastoral problems. The interpolated introduction runs as follows: ‘Men ða leffostan us lærewhun gedafenað þa soðem lære þe god sylf gesette. ðurch ys halgan witegan. þurch hine sylfne. eowh gelome seggan to eowhres lifes richtinge’ (‘Beloved, it is the duty of us teachers to say frequently to you the true teaching that God himself established through his holy prophets, for the guidance of your lives’). The page can be viewed through the website of the Parker Library on the Web project: http://parkerweb.stanford.edu/parker/actions/zoom_view.do?ms_no=302&page=189, accessed August 2012. Though the addition has been noted by several scholars (including Margaret Laing, in her *Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English* [Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993], 23; and Elaine Treharne, in her description of the manuscript for the *Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220* project), it has not been accurately transcribed or its implications addressed by any of them. I hope to examine the passage further in a separate article.

which have no known textual dependence on works of the Anglo-Saxon era, nor did he mention that much of the material in the Lambeth and Vespasian manuscripts has little or no direct connection to Old English homilies.

Chambers’s arguments for the importance of the late Old English and early Middle English homilies were soon developed further by R. M. Wilson, who was one of the first researchers to consider all the major homily collections of the period together. Anticipating the opinion of many later scholars, Wilson proposed Kent and the West Midlands as the two main geographical centres of English homiletic continuity in the post-Conquest period. He assigned to Kent both the Vespasian Homilies, which were certainly written there, and the Trinity Homilies, which are now thought to have been produced somewhat further north. He saw both of these collections as heirs to Anglo-Saxon traditions, though he offered little concrete evidence of dependence on earlier English sources in the case of the Trinity Homilies. Because of Kent’s proximity to France, Wilson argued that the Old English homiletic tradition died out there faster than in the more remote West Midlands, where he sees in collections like Bodley 343 and the Lambeth Homilies the first literary stirrings of the dialect of the Katherine Group. The teleological nature of Wilson’s argument seems to have engendered in him some disdain for the Trinity Homilies, which he considered the last gasp of a feeble attempt to preserve Old English traditions in Kent, as opposed to the Lambeth Homilies, which, because of their geographical origin and dialect, he respected as a representative of a more successful English resistance to Continental models. Despite their partially shared contents and frequent similarities in style, he calls the Trinity Homilies ‘a weakening of the Old English tradition…, rambling and incoherent,’ while the Lambeth Homilies ‘are strictly in the Old English homiletic tradition; plain straightforward expositions of the scriptural texts with little elaboration.’


159 Wilson, *Early Middle English Literature*, 109–10; Sawles Warde, xxii–xxiii.


161 Wilson, *Early Middle English Literature*, 110, 116. Traces of the same biases are evident even today. See especially Elaine Treharne, ed., *Old and Middle English c. 890–c. 1400: An Anthology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 281: ‘The sermons are not particularly well structured…. It may be that the author of these homilies created
Other scholars followed Chambers and Wilson in stressing the debt of the late twelfth-century collections to earlier models, but, lacking the nationalistic spirit with which both scholars approached these texts, they did not share their enthusiasm about the importance of such perceived continuity to English literary history. Rather than being seen as precious links in an unbroken chain of native prose composition stretching back to Alfred, the homily manuscripts of ca. 1150–1200 came to be looked upon as wholly derivative and unoriginal, as echoes of the once-great Old English vernacular homiletic tradition, which lingered in backwaters for a while after the Conquest before eventually ceding to the equally important Middle English sermon tradition of the later Middle Ages. Celia Sisam, for instance, considered the Lambeth Homilies the ‘last flicker’ of the formerly-bright flame of the Anglo-Saxon homiletic tradition.162 Later, Jerome Oetgen struck a similarly gloomy tone in describing the Trinity Homilies: ‘They hark back to the period when Old English homiletics flourished … [b]ut the manifestation of this ancient tradition in post-Conquest England was a pale reflection of the glory it once was.’163 Still more recently, H. L. Spencer has endorsed the conception that late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century homily collections ‘tended to find expression in harking back to older homiliaries,’ but she does not consider this supposed movement to recapture a lost golden age of Old English homiletics to have had any lasting significance.164

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162 Sisam, 110, n. 2. Cited (along with the following references) by Millett, ‘Pastoral Context’, 43–4.
The little research that was performed on homilies from *ca.* 1150–1200 during the twentieth century was often influenced either by text-critical concerns about recovering an authorial ‘original’—a pursuit for which late manuscripts were generally seen to be of limited utility—\(^{165}\) or by the study of linguistic development, which caused the texts to be valued more as representatives of a transitional language than of a valid literature. The result was that the texts were studied in isolation, consulted only when relevant to other, broader pursuits. Mary Swan’s recent summary of the study of post-Conquest Old English applies particularly well to the homilies:

> Post-Conquest Old English has never been studied holistically. The tendency has been not to consider the whole range of surviving manuscripts but rather to treat individual ones as isolated, marginal productions, and not indicators of wider Old English textual activity. The material has thus been studied piecemeal, as a postscript to Old English or as a precursor to Middle English textual and linguistic culture, or as dialectically idiosyncratic.\(^{166}\)

Put another way, the transitional nature of these texts has made them susceptible to a compartmentalized view of literary and linguistic history, which views their significance solely in relation to the better-defined literary and linguistic categories that preceded and followed them. Scholarly attempts to impose the Norman Conquest onto the history of English literature have caused twelfth-century texts to be forgotten, ignored, or forced into the realm of either the Anglo-Saxonist or the Middle English scholar (but not both). Kathleen Davis gives a pithy summary of this traditional viewpoint: ‘All things Old English flow backward; all genuine Middle English flows forward.’\(^{167}\)

This view of late twelfth-century homily collections as, at best, conservative and, at worst, obsolescent prevailed until the end of the last century, but began to be challenged in 2000 by the essays published in *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, a landmark collection in the study of post-Conquest Old English. In their introduction, editors Elaine Treharne and Mary Swan, noted that ‘manuscripts compiled between c. 1100 and c. 1200 have … rarely been

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\(^{165}\) See Treharne and Swan, 2, 7.

\(^{166}\) Swan, ‘Old English Textual Activity,’ 154–5.

examined in their own right, as witnesses to the continuation of a tradition of written composition in the vernacular,’ a situation that the essays in the volume took great steps toward alleviating.\textsuperscript{168} Especially relevant to the topic of this thesis are the contributions of Treharne and Susan Irvine, who provide detailed examinations of some of the most important homiletic manuscripts of the period.\textsuperscript{169}

Swan and Treharne’s volume also includes evaluations of the use of the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan and of certain anonymous homilists in the twelfth century. Swan herself contributed a study of the use and revision of Ælfric’s homilies in twelfth-century manuscripts, including Cotton Vespasian D. xiv, Lambeth 487, and CUL li. 1. 33.\textsuperscript{170} She concluded that such use proves that Ælfric’s works ‘must by this period be profoundly ingrained into popular homiletic tradition,’ and afterwards made further examinations of the post-Conquest afterlife of the Catholic Homilies in these and other manuscripts, exhibiting a special concern for identifying their possible readers and audiences.\textsuperscript{171} Jonathan Wilcox, meanwhile, examined the scantier evidence for the twelfth-century use of Wulfstan’s homilies.\textsuperscript{172} Although Wilcox concluded that Wulfstan ‘did not play a major part in the preaching life of twelfth-century England,’ his study nevertheless set the groundwork for more research into the archbishop’s post-Conquest influence, including Aidan Conti’s examination of the Wulfstanian material in Bodley 343.\textsuperscript{173} Loredana Teresi rounds out the examination of the re-appropriation of Old English homiletic material with her study of the anonymous eschatological homily ‘Be Heofonwarum γ be

\textsuperscript{168} Treharne and Swan, 2.
\textsuperscript{169} Treharne, ‘Production and Script’; Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use.’
\textsuperscript{170} Swan, ‘Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies in the Twelfth Century.’ For an earlier discussion of the same topic, see Millar and Nicholls, whose 1997 article on an Ælfrician text in Cotton Vespasian A. xxii is one of the few studies of this kind to predate Swan and Treharne’s volume.
\textsuperscript{171} Swan, ‘Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies in the Twelfth Century,’ 82. See also her ‘Preaching Past the Conquest,’ and consult the bibliography for further references.
\textsuperscript{172} Wilcox, ‘Wulfstan and the Twelfth Century.’
\textsuperscript{173} Wilcox, ‘Wulfstan and the Twelfth Century,’ 96; Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist.’ At least in the context of Bodley 343, Conti disagrees sharply with Wilcox’s assessment of Wulfstan’s homilies as ‘strikingly unrevised from their eleventh century form but for the updating of their language’ (Wilcox, ‘Wulfstan and the Twelfth Century,’ 84).
Helwarum,’ which survives in two early twelfth-century manuscripts. Teresi raised the interesting possibility that the authors of late composite homilies may have drawn on earlier homilies by memory rather than through the use of written exemplars. The efforts of all of these scholars have served to frame the continued use of Old English texts in the twelfth-century ‘not as the [result of] antiquarian copying of linguistically and thematically redundant texts, but rather as the transmission of material which was still considered valid and comprehensible.’

However, not all scholars of the late twelfth-century homily manuscripts predicate their study of these collections on an essential continuity of Old English traditions in the texts of the post-Conquest era. The authors mentioned in the preceding paragraphs are, it will be noticed, almost exclusively Anglo-Saxonists, and as such they have largely focused their studies on texts with identifiable Anglo-Saxon antecedents and have, for the most part, formed their judgments of post-Conquest homiletics based on these texts. Bella Millett, on the other hand, examining the anonymous homilies in the Lambeth and Trinity collections which Anglo-Saxonists have largely ignored, has come to very different conclusions. Millett has shown similarities in many of these texts to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Latin Scholastic ‘model’ sermons, which were constructed around a system of distinctiones according to the various senses of a scriptural word or phrase and divisiones of the sermon’s theme into shorter, more manageable elements. This system had its origins in earlier writings but was formalized in the so-called artes praedicandi, preachers’ manuals composed (many of them in England) in compliance with the calls of the Third and Fourth Lateran Councils (1179 and 1215, respectively) for a renewed emphasis on preaching. Looking at their use of these new traditions, Millett argues that the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies are fundamentally different from Old English homilies in their Latin sources, English prose style, and overall structure. She warns Anglo-Saxonists against reading too much into perceived similarities between such texts and pre-Conquest works, noting that ‘[t]he

174 Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission.’ Teresi later edited the homily in her article ‘Be Heofonwarum 7 be Helwarum.’
175 Swan, ‘Imagining a Readership,’ 146.
traditional scholarly reading of the Trinity and Lambeth collections as “backward-looking” may say less about the sermons themselves than about their readers.¹⁷⁸

Millett’s warning is a sensible one. Anglo-Saxonists should indeed avoid basing their opinions of twelfth-century preaching as a whole solely on copies and adaptations of pre-Conquest texts, while ignoring collections, like the Trinity Homilies, which make use of a contemporary tradition not closely related to Old English homiletics. Nevertheless, one might profitably question the validity of some of Millett’s individual arguments, such as her assertion that ‘the influence of contemporary developments in Continental Latin preaching on the English vernacular sermon tradition’ in the later twelfth-century represents a ‘discontinuity of English prose.’¹⁷⁹ Any claim that this sensitivity to Continental trends was a break in English practice cannot stand, since Continental authors and compilers always exerted a heavy influence on English vernacular homiletic composition. The influence of the homiliaries of Paul the Deacon and Haymo of Auxerre on Ælfric, and of other Continental homiliaries on the anonymous Old English homilists has been discussed above. Occasionally, whole Old English homilies were translated verbatim from Carolingian sources, as is the case with the Taunton Fragment and with Old English versions of two of the sermons of Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (d. after 921), preserved in CCCC 190 (HomS 9 and HomS 23).¹⁸⁰

The key issue in the discussion of continuity and change in the late twelfth-century homily collections, then, is not whether the homilists used Continental sources and models, but how they adapted them. In other words, were their translation and compilation styles similar to those used by the Old English homilists? Millett’s approach to this question is logically troubling, as she

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admittedly uses ‘almost exclusively Latin illustrations … to argue for the discontinuity of English sermon prose.’ While recognizing that such an approach ‘may seem perverse,’ she justifies it by claiming that ‘the style of the Middle English in the sermons [she discusses] shows very little influence from their Latin sources.’ Unlike the traditional ‘rhythmical and alliterative prose’ of the Katherine Group or the imitation of Latin style in Hali Meidhad or Sawles Warde, Millett argues,

The Middle English of the Lambeth and Trinity sermons discussed here … is a comparatively neutral medium, competent and functional but essentially utilitarian …. Its lack of distinctive stylistic features means that it cannot be used on its own to demonstrate either the continuity or discontinuity of English sermon prose; but the Latin structural frameworks which it incorporates link both the Lambeth and Trinity collections with some of the most recent developments in Continental Latin preaching.

Even if Millett’s assertion accurately describes the few sermons assessed in her study, it should not be assumed that all late twelfth-century anonymous sermons are stylistically ‘neutral.’ Trinity XXIX, for example, has recently been shown to contain alliterative and rhyming verse. Some rhyming poetry also appears in Vespasian II, as Millett herself discovered. Furthermore, even if alliterative prose is not utilized in the anonymous homilies of the Lambeth and Trinity collections as regularly as in Ælfric or Ancrene Wisse, it is far from absent. Thus,

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183 Millett, ‘Discontinuity of English Prose,’ 140.
185 OEH1, 233, ll. 32–3: ‘Þis deð all þiure drihte./ he blissed hus mid ðýeþes licht./ he sweueð hus mid þistre nicht’ (‘Your Lord does all of this. He gladdens us with day’s light; he puts us to sleep with the dark night’). See Bella Millett, ‘Change and Continuity: The English Sermon before 1250,’ in The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature in English, eds. Elaine Treherne and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 221–39 at 229. Millett analyzes the last two lines as an octosyllabic couplet and does not consider the first line (‘Þis deð all þiure drihte’) to be verse. She may be correct, but if we are less strict with the syllable count of the lines we can see a possible triple end-rhyme of ‘drihte,’ ‘licht,’ and ‘nicht.’ The Poema Morale shows that the early Middle English reflex of Old English drihten was considered to rhyme with liht and niht in at least some dialects (OEH1, 165, ll. 75–80; OEH2, 222, ll. 75–80).
186 Note, for example, Trinity XXVIII (OEH2, 173, ll. 21–5), which describes hell as ‘þe niðe wuengine. þat is ful of alle wosiðes. for þere hie [the sinful] shulen hauen shame. and grame … and wurmene cheu. and wallende fir and
while Millett is right in discouraging certain earlier scholars’ uncritical connection of all the contents of the ca. 1200 homily manuscripts to Anglo-Saxon traditions, it would be just as dangerous to indulge in what Mark Faulkner has called ‘a rhetoric of rupture’ by writing off every late twelfth-century homily without an explicit link to known pre-Conquest works as a new production, stylistically transparent and independent of earlier English homiletic practices.

The recent differences of opinion on continuity and change in the twelfth-century English homilies stem, for the most part, from differing approaches to the texts. An Anglo-Saxonist like Swan, focusing on the Ælfrician texts in the Lambeth Homilies, sees in them ‘an example of ongoing activity,’ evidence of an ‘ongoing capacity to compose and recopy Old English’ into the thirteenth century. Bella Millett, focusing on the anonymous, Continental-style texts in the same manuscript, sees a fundamental ‘discontinuity of English sermon prose.’ These two positions are not, however, diametrically opposed, nor are they mutually exclusive. Both sides generally agree that the twelfth-century collections were not (as previous scholars suggested) produced by or intended for an increasingly irrelevant, aging, and disenfranchised Anglo-Saxon minority. On the contrary, the appearance of adaptations of traditional material alongside texts based on new sources and models provides strong evidence of the continued relevance and resilience of the vernacular homiletic tradition.

The English homiletic literature of the late twelfth century, then, seems to be marked by the simultaneous influence of two traditions: an older, Anglo-Saxon tradition whose sources and structural inspiration derive from patristic and early medieval homilies and homiliaries, and a

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189 Millett, ‘Discontinuity of English Prose,’ 139.
190 Millett, ‘Pastoral Context,’ 44, 64.
newer tradition based on contemporary developments in Continental preaching. As Millett has said,

> There has been a tendency among scholars to assume that the relationship between older and newer preaching traditions, and between monastic and mendicant culture, would necessarily be one of opposition rather than collaboration, but there is some evidence in the surviving manuscripts that this was not the case. ¹⁹¹

The composition of the Warner, Lambeth, and Vespasian Homilies provides especially strong evidence that the older and newer traditions did not have an adversarial relationship. All of these collections contain adaptations of Old English texts side-by-side with demonstrably post-Conquest compositions.

Despite this apparent willingness on the part of late twelfth-century English homilists to make use of new sources, the very fact that they wrote in English (and not in Latin or Norman French) has been seen as deliberately antagonistic to the growing influence of Continental literary culture. Elaine Treharne, drawing on postcolonial theory, has provided the strongest recent statement of this opinion:

> The twelfth-century English homilies, hagiographies, debates, laws, gospels, Alfredian translations, encyclopaedic, and sapiential texts … reject the literal and metaphorical translation of English and of the English into something different; and they explicitly refuse to collaborate with the colonizers, instead ‘valorising the culture denigrated by colonialism’. ¹⁹² To read English produced in this period, then, is to share in the anticolonial discourse of its own, native litterati, a response I would label ‘literary resistance’. ¹⁹³

While a full evaluation of the accuracy of this claim would be outside the scope of these remarks, it should at least be noted that a sweeping characterization of twelfth-century homilists

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as members of a ‘literary resistance’ against the Anglo-Norman elite is problematic.\textsuperscript{194} True, they were participants in a literary culture which was subordinate in prestige to the Latin and French ones of the same period, and the passages that Treharne cites from the Warner and Trinity homilies do seem to criticize the political establishment.\textsuperscript{195} However, these same writers and their contemporaries had no qualms about borrowing from the homiletic traditions which accompanied the Norman clergy to England. For example, the author of Trinity XXIX, whose remarkable critique of the nobility is cited by Treharne, structures his homily around Latin quotations, and he adorns his work with verses representing both the native, alliterative and the Continental, rhyming poetic traditions.\textsuperscript{196} That English and French could even coexist in the same manuscript is shown by CUL Ii. 1. 33, a collection whose homiletic contents are almost entirely Ælfrician but which contains marginal notes in both languages, as well as Latin.\textsuperscript{197}

Treharne’s reading of the twelfth-century homilies as part of a subaltern culture’s attempt to validate its own language and traditions is interesting, and it provides a useful interpretive framework for examining certain elements of the texts. However, the homilists cannot be characterized simply as either ‘resisters’ or ‘collaborators.’ Another term which Treharne uses, ‘adaptors,’ is a more apt description.\textsuperscript{198} Whatever their opinions of the policies of the throne and of the Norman nobility may have been, the English homilists of the period do not appear to have seen the influx of new homiletic and literary traditions as something to be resisted. The ultimate role of preaching was primarily a pragmatic one: to nourish the souls of the audience.\textsuperscript{199} Any text that the twelfth-century homilists considered spiritually and morally edifying for an English-

\textsuperscript{194} For a more nuanced approach to the application of postcolonial theory to twelfth-century English literature, see Millett, ‘Change and Continuity,’ 226–30.
\textsuperscript{195} Treharne, ‘Categorization, Periodization,’ 264–8.
\textsuperscript{196} OEH2, 172–85. See Wymer, ‘A Poetic Fragment.’
\textsuperscript{197} See the discussion of the manuscript above for references.
\textsuperscript{198} Treharne, ‘Categorization, Periodization,’ 251, 253. See also her ‘Life of English in the Mid-Twelfth Century.’
\textsuperscript{199} Most of the English manuscripts that survive from the second half of the twelfth century are utilitarian in nature: homilies, hagiography, prognostics, laws, leechdoms, etc. See the list in Swan, ‘Old English Textual Activity,’ 152–4.
speaking audience, whether it was written by Ælfric or Ralph d’Esures, was fair game for translation and adaptation.

1.4 Approaching the Eschatology of the Late Twelfth-Century Homilies

The work of scholars such as Swan, Treharne, and Millett has started to bring to light the complex interchange of the old and the new within English homilies of the twelfth century. As is necessarily the case in such a new field of study, the work that has been done on these texts has generally been of a rather small focus, based on close readings of a few, selected texts in a search for either continuity or change. The relevance and continued utility of such in-depth studies is beyond doubt. However, if we are to gain an overall picture of the composition and character of the homily collections of ca. 1150–1200, broader assessments that take into account their recycling of Anglo-Saxon traditions, their incorporation of new models and sources, and evidence from related genres of religious literature are also necessary. The sheer number of texts that survive from this period and the fact that so few of them have received previous critical comment make a comprehensive study that discusses all their aspects infeasible, but narrowing the scope of investigation to a single homiletic topic can enable one to examine a kind of cross-section of all the relevant homiletic collections. In the rest of this thesis I will attempt to conduct such a survey, using eschatology as my primary topic of investigation. Eschatology is an ideal topic for two main reasons: (1) as the summary above suggests, the sources and development of Anglo-Saxon eschatology have already been thoroughly (though not exhaustively) studied, thus, in theory, enabling one to gain a clearer picture of what derives from Old English eschatological traditions in the late twelfth-century texts and what does not; and (2) eschatological material is plentiful in the manuscripts of ca. 1150–1200, as death and judgment were of perennial interest for English homilists in the Middle Ages.

The main objects for examination in this study will be the eschatological homilies listed in the summary of ca. 1150–1200 homiletic manuscripts given earlier in this introduction. These texts

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200 It is, of course, far from certain that any given English homilist or compiler even knew whose works he was adapting. See, e.g., Swan, ‘Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies,’ 63–4.
provide direct evidence of the continuity and change of English homiletic eschatology in the late twelfth century. An assessment of the degree of preservation of Anglo-Saxon traditions in these texts must take into account a wide variety of possible avenues of influence. The most direct of these, of course, is the copying of whole Old English eschatological homilies into late manuscripts. Even these texts, however, are not necessarily to be regarded as transparent examples of homiletic conservatism, as Aidan Conti has demonstrated in his study of the modified versions of Wulfstan’s Antichrist homilies in Bodley 343.\textsuperscript{201} In other cases, older homilies were not copied whole but rather excerpted, modified, and recombined with material from different sources in order to form composite homilies, as seems to have been the case, for example, in Irvine VII.

Besides recognizable textual transmission of older material, the possibility of less direct means of influence must also be investigated. One of these is mnemonic transmission, defined by Teresi as ‘pasting together … texts or portions of texts transmitted through memory.’\textsuperscript{202} Teresi considers mnemonically-transmitted texts to be based on borrowings from ‘themes’ rather than from ‘texts,’ and therefore to show significant similarities to earlier works in terms of content but little ‘lexical or syntactic affinity.’\textsuperscript{203} Although she makes an interesting case for memorial composition of the ca. 1100 homily ‘Be Heofonwarum \textsuperscript{7} be Helwarum,’ it would seem difficult to prove that any given text was mnemonically transmitted. The primary symptom which suggests mnemonic transmission to Teresi—‘the absence of an extant, recognisable direct ancestor, not only for the whole text, but also for its various parts,’\textsuperscript{204}—could be explained in any number of ways besides assuming that the author was relying on memories of homilies previously read or heard. The absence of a known source for a text proves only that such a putative source has not survived, not that it never existed. A homily’s lack of obvious lexical and syntactic correspondence with other homilies on the same theme could also be explained by its author treating textual sources with a higher degree of freedom than modern scholars have come

\textsuperscript{201} Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist.’
\textsuperscript{202} Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission,’ 100.
\textsuperscript{203} Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission,’ 99.
\textsuperscript{204} Teresi, ‘Mnemonic Transmission,’ 100.
to expect. Thus, while mnemonic transmission is certainly one reason why homilies might display topical resemblances to other texts while lacking verbal correspondences with them, it is perhaps safer to attribute such similarity to the inheritance of earlier motifs and formulae. Attention to thematic continuity and change in the late twelfth-century homilies may provide some evidence of how widely older homilies were still being read, even if it is of limited utility in determining exactly which of these homilies remained popular sources. At the same time, the appearance of new motifs can show which elements of contemporary Continental eschatological preaching took root first in England.

Another level at which the Old English and early Middle English homilies can be compared is their reliance on Latin sources. Source and analogue studies into Anglo-Saxon homilies have advanced significantly in recent years thanks to the ever-increasing digitization of medieval Latin writings and to dedicated projects such as Fontes Anglo-Saxonici and Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture (SASLC). To date, however, little source study has been conducted on the *ca.* 1150–1200 homily collections, with the exception of Bella Millett’s examinations of analogues to the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies in Continental model sermons.205 More work of this kind is necessary for an accurate picture of the evolution of English vernacular homiletics in the twelfth century. Did later writers, for example, rely to any significant extent on the same patristic and early medieval sources as the Old English eschatological homilists, or did they mainly draw on more contemporary Latin works? Related to this issue is the question of translation technique: when relying on new eschatological sources, did the twelfth-century English homilists use the same translation and adaptation strategies favoured by the Old English homilists? An important facet of this question is the attitude of the later homilists towards scriptural and patristic authority. The work of Nancy Thompson and others has shown that Old English anonymous homilists often took remarkable liberties with even the most sacred texts, and the present work will attempt to determine whether late twelfth-century eschatological homilies exhibit the same freedom.

The overall style and structure of the *ca.* 1150–1200 eschatological homilies are perhaps less tangible than their other traits, but are nonetheless important comparanda for establishing their

205 Millett, ‘Discontinuity of English Prose’ and ‘Pastoral Context.’
relationship to Old English texts. Much of the eschatological style of the pre-Conquest homilies derives from Irish and Hiberno-Latin traditions, as Charles D. Wright has shown in his thorough study on the subject.\textsuperscript{206} Several of these stylistic traits, including the frequent use of enumeration and inexpressibility topoi, continue to appear in the early Middle English homilies, but remain almost completely unexamined. Other important stylistic considerations include the use of embedded poetry or of highly ornamented prose in order to attain heightened rhetorical impact. This tactic was well known to Old English eschatological homilists,\textsuperscript{207} but the relationship of the embedded poetry and alliterative or rhyming prose in these texts to the ornamentation present in some early Middle English homilies has not yet been investigated.

While the most important and direct evidence of preaching trends in the late twelfth century is provided by the \textit{ca.} 1150–1200 English homilies themselves, there are a number of sources of indirect evidence that must also be examined if this investigation is to be truly comprehensive. Of great importance among these, I believe, is the corpus of medieval vernacular Icelandic and Norwegian homilies. The Church in Scandinavia, and particularly in Norway, maintained close relations with some English monasteries throughout the twelfth century and beyond.\textsuperscript{208} These contacts resulted in a significant Anglo-Saxon influence on the development of early Norse homiletics. The importance of Ælfrician texts in this interchange has been long recognized,\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{206} Wright, \textit{Irish Tradition}.

\textsuperscript{207} See, \textit{e.g.}, Stanley, \textit{‘The Judgement of the Damned,’} and Fünke, \textit{‘Studien.’}


and the recent work of Christopher Abram has also brought to light numerous parallels between Norse homilies and Old English anonymous texts.\textsuperscript{210}

The two largest and most important early Old Norse homiletic manuscripts—the ‘Icelandic Homily Book’ (Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, Cod. Holm. Perg. 15 4\textsuperscript{o}, s. xii/xiii)\textsuperscript{211} and the ‘Norwegian Homily Book’ (AM 619 4\textsuperscript{o}, s. xiii\textsuperscript{in})\textsuperscript{212}—are contemporary with the latest copies of Old English homilies. The homilies contained in these collections were probably composed at some point between the mid-twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the same period as the English texts under consideration here.\textsuperscript{213} One would, therefore, be justified in hypothesizing that the English homilies which exercised the greatest degree of influence on these early Norse texts were roughly contemporary with them—that is, they were either composed in the twelfth century or at least still considered relevant enough to be consulted and copied in mid- to late twelfth-century England. Abram and Conti have already shown this to be the case with many of the items in the Norwegian Homily Book,\textsuperscript{214} and further study into early Norse homiletics will surely turn up more connections to twelfth-century English homilies. Accordingly, throughout this study I will consider early Norse eschatological homilies which borrow from English texts as indirect, but valuable witnesses to twelfth-century English homiletic trends.

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\textsuperscript{210} Abram, ‘Anglo-Saxon Homilies’ and ‘Anglo-Saxon Influence.’

\textsuperscript{211} First edited by T. Wisén, Homiliú-bók: Íslánska Homilier efter en handskrift från tolfte århundradet (Lund: Gleerup, 1872). See also the more recent facsimile edition by A. de Leeuw van Weenen, The Icelandic Homily Book: Perg. 15 4\textsuperscript{o} in the Royal Library, Stockholm, Íslensk handrit: Series in Quarto 3 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1993).

\textsuperscript{212} Edited by Gustav Indrebø, Gamal Norsk Homiliebok: Cod. AM 619 4\textsuperscript{o} (Oslo: Dybwad, 1931 [repr. Universitetsforlaget, 1966]).

\textsuperscript{213} For discussions of the date of the homilies see Hall, ‘Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,’ 661, 704; Abram, ‘Anglo-Saxon Influence,’ 9; Oddmund Hjelde, Kirkens budskap i sagatiden (Oslo: Solum, 1995), 29.

\textsuperscript{214} In the first two homilies of that manuscript, Abram considers it ‘clear that … the influence of Anglo-Saxon homiletics is primary. We may be a little more specific, and say that the material contained in these Norse texts is most closely paralleled by the types of Old English homilies that were being copied into new English manuscripts in the twelfth century.’ See Abram, ‘Anglo-Saxon Influence,’ 34. Conti compares the sources and structure of the Norwegian Homily Book with those of the Lambeth and Trinity collections in ‘Gammelt og nytt i homiliebokens prekenunivers,’ in Vår eldste bok: Skrift, miljø og biletbruk i den norske homilieboka, eds. Odd Einar Haugen and Åslaug Ommundsen, Bibliotheca nordica 3 (Oslo: Novus, 2010), 165–86.
Generic and chronological distinctions, while useful in a heuristic sense, can nevertheless cut the scholar off from important evidence of the relationship between twelfth-century homilies and contemporary and later English literary traditions if applied too strictly. A willingness to engage more broadly with English religious literature is especially necessary when tracing the medieval development of certain commonplace eschatological motifs, as I shall attempt to do often throughout this work. Therefore, while works composed in the later twelfth century remain the primary focus of this work, evidence from sermons from the later Middle English period will be discussed occasionally below, when such texts provide clues to the continuing survival and evolution of elements of earlier English homiletic eschatology. Of special significance among these are a group of anonymous sermons surviving in the fifteenth-century manuscript BL, MS. Royal 18 B. xxiii, the authors of which seem to have been particularly conversant with earlier traditions. These texts and other later works play an important role in Chapter 4, in which I widen the chronological scope of the thesis somewhat in order to consider how eschatological ideas present in Anglo-Saxon and early Middle English homilies continued to affect English religious literature from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries.

In addition to later sermons, various other sources of evidence for eschatology in the Middle English period will also be considered, since eschatological motifs that originated in homiletic literature did not always remain confined to the pulpit. Early thirteenth-century devotional and moral treatises—especially those written in the so-called ‘AB’ language of the West Midlands, such as Ancrene Wisse, but also a little-studied southeastern work on the vices and virtues—are rich in eschatological content and can be useful as a means to corroborate trends observed in the late homily collections. Eschatology also looms large in early Middle English poetry. The best-known eschatological poems of the period are perhaps the Poema Morale; the Worcester Fragments, which are the remains of a soul-and-body poem copied by the Tremulous Hand into an early thirteenth-century manuscript; and The Grave, a short, alliterative poem added by

\[\text{Citations are from Woodburn O. Ross, ed., Middle English Sermons, Edited from British Museum MS. Royal 18 B. xxiii, EETS o.s. 209 (London: Oxford University Press, 1940).}\]

\[\text{Ferdinand Holthausen, ed., Vices and Virtues: Being a Soul's Confession of its Sins with Reason's Description of the Virtues, EETS o.s. 89 and 159 (London: Trübner, 1888–1921).}\]

\[\text{Moffat, ed., The Soul's Address to the Body.}\]
an early thirteenth-century hand to Bodley 343. All of these poems have ties, some more direct than others, to earlier and contemporary English preaching texts. Several slightly later poems, the most important of which are the related lyrics *Doomsday* and *The Latemest Day*, seem to have relied on earlier texts, and also provide valuable evidence on the continuity and change of eschatological traditions in the Middle English period. While investigations of these later and non-homiletic texts remain secondary to my exploration of the late twelfth-century eschatological homilies themselves and may at first glance seem overly digressive, I believe that the inclusion of such works in the scope of this thesis is necessary. By their participation in the same eschatological traditions as the twelfth-century homilies, they demonstrate that these collections were not literary dead ends, as they have often been seen, but rather important avenues of continuity in the history of medieval English religious literature.

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The contents of the remainder of this thesis are loosely based on the traditional distinction between personal and historic/cosmic eschatology stated at the beginning of this chapter. In Chapter 2, I investigate the former topic, examining the well-known English homiletic theme known as the ‘Visit to the Tomb.’ Shifting to the latter subdivision of eschatology, Chapter 3 will focus on the homiletic predilection for giving signs and warnings of the approach of the apocalypse. Most of this chapter will be devoted to the Warner Homilies, which contain several texts of this sort. In Chapter 4, I discuss the imagery and scenery of Doomsday itself, paying particular attention to two Insular eschatological motifs. The conclusion of this work will, I hope, be able to make some small contributions to modern scholarly understanding of the collaboration of old and new traditions both within and among the late twelfth-century English homilies and suggest possible directions for future research.

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218 See the discussion of the manuscript earlier in this chapter for references.

Chapter 2  
Visiting the Tomb in the Old and Early Middle English Homilies

2.1 The Origins of the Motif in Medieval Greek and Latin Literature

In his poem ‘Death and Eternity,’ published in the first book of his *Horae Lyricae* (1706), prolific English hymnologist Isaac Watts (1674–1748) included these four stanzas:

The tyrant, how he triumphs here!  
His trophies spread around,  
And heaps of dust and bones appear  
Through all the hollow ground.

These skulls, what ghastly figures now!  
How loathsome to the eyes!  
These are the heads we lately knew,  
So beauteous and so wise….

Some hearty friend shall drop his tear  
On our dry bones, and say,  
‘These once were strong, as mine appear,  
And mine must be as they.’

Thus shall our mouldering members teach  
What now our senses learn:  
For dust and ashes loudest preach  
Man’s infinite concern.  

In combining elements of the themes of *ubi sunt* and *memento mori*, Watts’s poem and the countless eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English and American epitaphs that borrow from it participate in an ancient eschatological tradition. While such themes do not depend on any particular religious background for their effectiveness, they found their full flowering when their warnings of mortality and material transience were coupled with Christian ideas about morality.


and the afterlife. In Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, several ecclesiastical writers in both eastern and western Christendom attempted to combine *ubi sunt* and *memento mori* into homiletic exhortations, to which one can give the general title ‘The Visit to the Tomb.’ These authors attempted to spur their listeners and readers to a consideration of their own mortality by instructing them to visit the tombs of dead (and often wealthy or powerful) men. Once there, the visitors are encouraged to realize that neither their possessions nor their physical beauty will be of any help or comfort to them after their own imminent deaths. After such reflection, the visitors are expected to replace their love of material wealth and their attachment to sins of the flesh with a sober recognition of eternal rewards and punishments.

‘The Visit to the Tomb’ became a favourite motif of the Anglo-Saxon anonymous homilists, and versions of it appear in many surviving texts dating from the Old English period or directly deriving from Old English originals: Vercelli XIII (*HomS* 43), for the Wednesday in Rogationtide; Vercelli XXII (*HomU* 7), for an unspecified occasion; Blickling VIII (*HomU* 19), for an unspecified occasion; Blickling X (*HomU* 20), for an unspecified occasion; Assmann XIV (*HomS* 6), for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany; and Irvine VII (*HomU* 3), for

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3 For a collection of several hundred passages featuring the *ubi sunt* theme, see Mary Ellen Quint, ‘The *Ubi Sunt*: Form, Theme, and Tradition’ (unpublished PhD diss., Arizona State University, 1981). The large majority of these are from late antique and medieval Christian texts, but Quint does provide some seventy classical Latin and Greek examples (her numbers 201–13; 301–58). Classical examples of the *memento mori* theme especially relevant to the present discussion can be found on Roman epitaphs, about which see Richmond Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1962), 256–8.

4 For a discussion of several Latin and Old English ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passages in light of the *ubi sunt* topos (especially as expressed in Isidore’s *Synonyma*), see Di Sciacca, *Finding the Right Words*, 123–30.

5 Scragg, *Vercelli*, 234–6. This homily is uniquely preserved in the Vercelli Book.

6 Scragg, *Vercelli*, 368–80. This homily is uniquely preserved in the Vercelli Book.

7 Morris, *Blickling*, 96–105. This homily is uniquely preserved in the Blickling manuscript, but its version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum is related to the one in Assmann XIV.

8 Morris, *Blickling*, 106–15. The portion of the homily containing the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum also survives as part of a composite Lenten homily in CCC 198, in which it is combined with a homily by Ælfric. See Ker, *Catalogue* 48, art. 62. The CCC 198 text was not collated for Morris’s edition, but it has since been edited by Mary Swan, ‘Ælfric as Source: The Exploitation of Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* from the Late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries’ (unpublished PhD diss., University of Leeds, 1993), 266–77.

9 Edited in Bruno Assmann, *Angelsächsische Homilien und Heiligenleben*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa III (Kassel: G. H. Wigand, 1889 [repr. 1964]), 164–9. The homily survives in CCC 302 (s. xii/xii) and London, BL, Cotton Faustina A. ix (s. xii’).
an unspecified occasion. Before moving on to a discussion of the early Middle English versions of the ‘The Visit to the Tomb’ and their relation to earlier vernacular texts, I shall briefly discuss the origins of the motif and summarize the influence of the various Latin versions in Anglo-Saxon England.

The importance of Greek and Syriac sources in the development of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif has been little discussed by scholars studying the later Latin and Old English texts, but the earliest attestations of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ all originate in the East. The most important of these appear in the hymns of Ephraem’s *Necrosima*, in Basil the Great’s *Homilia in illud: Attendite tibi ipse*, and in John Chrysostom’s *Ad Theodorum lapsum 1*. The latter two texts are especially significant for the history of the Latin versions of the motif used in Anglo-Saxon England. The ‘Visit to the Tomb’ portion from a Latin translation of Basil’s homily was excerpted by Prosper of Aquitaine in no. 392 of his *Sententiae ex Augustino delibatae*. Neither Ogilvy nor Gneuss records any Anglo-Saxon manuscript containing the whole of Prosper’s

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10 Irvine, *Old English Homilies*, 197–202. The homily survives in Bodley 343, from the second half of the twelfth century, about which see the discussion of twelfth-century homiletic manuscripts in Chapter 1.


15 See Di Sciaccia, ‘Unpublished *Ubi Sunt* Piece,’ 231–2. I follow the numbering of M. Gastaldo (*Prosperi Aquitanii Opera*, vol. II, CCSL 68a [Turnhout: Brepols, 1972], 364–5); in some earlier editions this passage is no. 390 of the *Sententiae*. See *PL* 45, cols. 1897–8; *PL* 51, col. 496A–B.
Sententiae, but no. 392 survives as a separate piece in CCCC 448 (s. x1 or xmed).\(^{16}\) James E. Cross and Claudia Di Sciacca have shown that this section of Prosper’s Sententiae was, in turn, combined with a passage from Isidore’s Synonyma (as mediated by Defensor’s Liber scintillarum) in a Latin sermon surviving in CCCC 190 (s. xi), a version of Wulfstan’s ‘Commonplace Book’.\(^ {17}\) That Wulfstan himself read the sermon is shown by his use of parts of it (though not the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exhortation) as a source for his own Latin homily ‘De cristianitate’ (Bethurum Xb) and its Old English counterpart (Bethurum Xc; WHom 10c).\(^ {18}\) Therefore, although no extant Old English homilies seem to have directly depended on Prosper’s version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif, it was certainly known in Anglo-Saxon England and was read by Wulfstan and members of his circle. (On the close relationship of the CCCC 448 text of Prosper’s Sententia 392 to the CCCC 190 sermon, see the appendix to this chapter.)

John Chrysostom’s Ad Theodorum lapsum 1 includes a similarly important version of the motif, although its influence on the later Latin texts is more difficult to determine. Chrysostom penned the Greek original of his treatise some time in the late fourth century. Despite the title given to the work by later copyists and editors, the work is not directed to a Theodore, but ‘to an unnamed lapsed Christian, urging him to flee despair, repent, and return to his former life of virtue.’\(^ {19}\) Some time in the early fifth century, Chrysostom’s work was translated into Latin, along with several other genuine and spurious texts attributed to the bishop, by a deacon known as Anianus of Celeda.\(^ {20}\) Little is known of this figure, besides the fact that he seems to have been a Pelagian

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\(^{16}\) Gneuss, Handlist, 38, item 114. A related work by Prosper, his Epigrammata, survives in numerous pre-Conquest English manuscripts. See J. D. A. Ogilvy, Books Known to the English, 597–1066, PMAA 76 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1967), 229; Gneuss, Handlist, items 12, 114, 190, 365f, 415.


\(^{20}\) Dumortier, 30–4.
and was probably from North Africa. Despite the heresy of its translator, the Latin translation of Ad Theodorum lapsum I—usually given the title De reparatione lapsi—became very popular throughout medieval Europe, and it circulated with a well-known collection of Chrysostom and pseudo-Chrysostom sermons first described by André Wilmart. De reparatione lapsi was one of the few genuine works by Chrysostom known to the Anglo-Saxons, and it was present in England since at least the early eighth century.

The ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage in the Latin De reparatione lapsi was reused and adapted by several medieval authors. The author of a pseudo-Augustinian Sermo de symbolo, which is unfortunately of unknown date and provenance, copied this section of Chrysostom’s work almost word-for-word. In the tenth century, the abbot Odo of Cluny borrowed heavily from the passage for his third book of Collationes. Finally, and perhaps most significantly for our purposes, the relevance of the passage to vernacular homilies in the medieval North is shown by


22 A 1907 survey turned up forty-seven manuscripts of the work, and many more have certainly been catalogued since. See Chrysostomus Baur, S. Jean Chrysostome et ses œuvres dans l'histoire littéraire, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des Conférences d'histoire et de philologie, fasc. 18 (Louvain: Bureaux de Recueil, 1907), 65.


24 Samantha Zacher has recently shown that a Latin translation of another of Chrysostom’s homilies was the source of Vercelli VII (HomU 11) in her chapter ‘The Source of Vercelli VII: An Address to Women,’ in New Readings in the Vercelli Book, eds. Samantha Zacher and Andy Orchard, TASS 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 98–149.

25 Ogilvy, 111; Hall and Norris, 168–75. See also Wilmart (‘La collection,’ 306, n. 2), who identified three twelfth-century English manuscripts that include the work: London, BL, Royal 6. A. xii; London, Lambeth Palace Library 145; and Cambridge, Trinity College Library B. 2. 36.

26 Dumortier, 278. For the original Greek, see Dumortier, 124.

27 PL 40, cols. 1189–1202 at 1200. The text was mentioned by Cross (‘‘Dry Bones Speak,’’ at 434, n. 1), who does not seem to have recognized that the passage in question was drawn from Chrysostom.

28 PL 133, col. 614A.
an Old Norse adaptation of it that appears in a Christmas homily in the Icelandic Homily Book.\textsuperscript{29} I reproduce Anianus’s Latin and the Old Norse below, in order to give an example of a typical Latin ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exhortation and its vernacular use:

\textit{Anianus of Celeda, De reparacione lapsi} – \textit{Dumortier, 278, ll. 17–28}

\begin{quote}
Quid profuit illis qui in luxuria corporis et prae sentis vitae voluptatibus usque ad diem ultimum perman serunt?
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Intuere nunc sepulcra eorum et vide si est aliquod in eis iactantiae suae vestigium, si aliqua divitiarum vel luxuriae signa cognoveris.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Require ubi nunc vestes et odoramenta peregrina, ubi spectaculorum voluptas, ubi assecularum turmae et conviviorum.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Cessit opulentia, risus et iocus et immoderata atque effrenata laetitia, quo abiit? Quo abscessit? Ubi illa nunc et ubi ipsi? Qui finis utrorumque?
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Intuere diligentius et accede propius ad singulorum sepulcra et vide cineres solos et foetidas vermium reliquias…\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

\textit{IHB, ‘Nativitas Domini’} – \textit{De Leeuw van Weenen, 23} – 26 – 24’4

\begin{quote}
Huat stopar nú þéim er lifþo imonþ holdséns oc i epterlífe þessa lífs. alt til dauþa dags.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Forom vérl til grafa þeirra oc þeckiom hvárt vér megem fiÑa þar necquert marc hreosne þeirra eþa lostaseme eþa aþþeófa.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
hvar ero klépe góþ eþa mioc vandaþar fóþlor eþa marger meÑ þeir es þéim þionoþo.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Líþen er óstílþ hlátr oc léicr. Alitille stundo hverfa þeþer aller hluter a bráut sem réycr.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
oc es þar ecke efter nema bein éin oc maþka dâun þeirra er óto hold þeirra.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29} For a more detailed discussion of Chrysostom as a source for the Icelandic Homily, see my forthcoming article, ‘A New Source for Part of an Old Icelandic Christmas Homily,’ \textit{Saga-Book} 36 (2012).

\textsuperscript{30} ‘What did it avail those who persisted in the luxury of the body and the pleasures of the present life until their last day? Look at their tombs now, and see if there is in them any trace of their boasting; see if you can discern any signs of their luxury or their riches. Look now at where their clothing and exotic perfumes, where the luxury of their spectacles, where the throngs of attendants and dinner guests have gone. Their opulence has ended. Their laughter, their sport, and their immoderate and unbridled delight—where has it gone? Whither has it withdrawn? Where now are these things, and where are the men themselves? What is the end of them both? Look harder, and come closer to the tombs of each of them, and see only ashes and the stinking leavings of worms…’

\textsuperscript{31} ‘What now does it avail those who lived in luxury of the flesh and in the indulgence of this life until the day of their death? Let us go to their graves and consider whether we might find there any sign of their boasting or their lust or their riches. Where are their fine clothes, or their very choice food, or the many men who ministered to them? Gone is their unruly laughter and sport. In a short time all these things pass away like smoke, and there is nothing left but bones alone, and the stench of the maggots who ate their flesh.’
Despite its obvious popularity and importance elsewhere, there is no direct evidence of the influence of Chrysostom’s ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage on pre-Conquest English literature. However, Anianus’s translation may have contributed to Anglo-Saxon versions of the motif by influencing later Latin authors whose works were definitely utilized by Old English homilists. Any evident similarities between *De reparatione lapsi* and the later texts are discussed in the following pages.

Caesarius of Arles, writing in early sixth-century Francia, effected the next major development of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ tradition and also had the greatest influence on Old English homilists’ versions of the motif. Caesarius’s *Sermo* 31 ‘De eleemosynis’ contains an exhortation to visit the graves of the wealthy, the first half of which shares some interesting verbal similarities with the Latin *De reparatione lapsi*. Compare, for instance, Anianus’s ‘ubi spectaculorum voluptas’ with Caesarius’s ‘ubi luxoriae voluptas, ubi spectacula,’ and, more strikingly, Anianus’s ‘Intuere diligentius et accede propius ad singulorum sepulcra et vide cineres solos et foetidas vermium reliquias’ with Caesarius’s ‘Considerate diligentius et videte superborum sepulchra, et agnoscite quia nihil in eis aliud nisi soli cineres et foetidae vermium reliquiae remanserunt.’ Given the popularity and widespread distribution of Anianus’s translations, one wonders if Chrysostom’s treatise might have exerted some influence on Caesarius’s own version of the motif, and, indirectly, on the Old English homiletic tradition.

While Caesarius may have depended on earlier versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif for inspiration in writing *Sermo* 31, he seems to have been solely responsible for an important variation on the theme: the addition of an imagined speech to the visitor from the remains of the tomb’s occupant, dubbed the ‘Dry Bones Speak’ exemplum by James E. Cross. Though Cross has thoroughly investigated this passage, its importance to the English homiletic tradition justifies quoting it in full once again:

> Si velis, o homo, audire, ipsa tibi ossa arida poterint praedicare. Clamat ad te pulvis alterius de sepulchro: Ut quid, infelix, tantum pro saeculi cupiditate

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33 Dumortier, 278; Morin, I. 135.
34 Cross, “‘Dry Bones Speak.’”
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Although Caesarius does not seem to have followed earlier Latin authors in adding the bones’ speech, one can perhaps discern echoes of Roman epitaphs, in which similar warnings of mortality, albeit very short, were common. Lattimore prints two particularly relevant examples: ‘cariss(ime) viator, quod tu et ego, quod ego et omnes’; ‘quod tu es ego fui, quod nunc sum et tu eris.’ Living in post-Roman Gaul, where ancient epitaphs could presumably still be seen, Caesarius and his listeners could well have been among the viatores who saw such messages. Caesarius’s ‘Dry Bones Speak’ exemplum, therefore, can be read not only as an abstract exhortation, but also as a vocalization and enhancement of the same memento mori reminders which they themselves saw at local cemeteries.

The significant influence that Caesarius’s Sermo 31 exercised on the Old English homiletic tradition was first described by James E. Cross in a short but important 1957 article. He found that sections of Vercelli XIII and a homily in Bodley 343 (now Irvine VII) were fairly close translations of the ‘Dry Bones Speak’ exemplum in Caesarius’ sermon. Despite the twelfth-century date of Bodley 343, the vocabulary of Irvine VII suggests that the homily was compiled

35 Morin, I. 135. ‘If you wish to listen, o man, the dry bones themselves will be able to address you. The dust of another calls to you from the tomb: “Why, you wretch, do you rush about so much out of desire for things of this world? Why do you give yourself over to serving such cruel masters, that is, vices and crimes?” The dead man calls to you from the tomb: “Look at me, and see yourself; behold my bones, and let either your licentiousness or your greed horrify you. What you are, I once was; what I now am, you will be. If vanity dwelt in me, at least let iniquity not consume you; if lust corrupted me, at least let chastity adorn you. See my dust, and abandon your evil desire.” In such a way, then, the dead man calls to us from the tomb.’

36 Lattimore, 257. ‘Dearest traveler: what you are, so was I; what I am, so must all be’; ‘What you are, I once was; what I now am, you will also be.’ Among the longer examples given by Lattimore (257), the following Republican epitaph also seems relevant: ‘Heus tu, viator lasse, qu[i] me praetereis,/ cum diu ambulareis, tamen hoc veniendum est tibi’ (‘Hey you, weary traveler who passes me; though you walk for a long time, you must still come this way’).

rather earlier, probably at some point in the eleventh century. Cross makes a convincing case that part of Blickling X was also based on a version of Caesarius’s exemplum, although the adaptation of the original exemplum in this text is much more imaginative, as will be discussed in more detail below. Another copy of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage from Blickling X is found in a composite homily for Lent surviving in CCCC 198 that also contains Ælfrician material. Cross did not mention this piece, but its version of the exemplum does not differ significantly from that of the Blickling manuscript.

The final Latin version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ that seems to have influenced the Anglo-Saxon homilists is the pseudo-Augustinian Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo. This text does not include an address from the dead man, but its catalogues of the vices and luxuries of the wealthy still make it one of the longest versions of the motif in medieval literature. The sermon is notable for its lengthy ubi sunt passage, which is typical of the piece’s rhetorical style:


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38 Irvine, Old English Homilies, 181–3.
39 Cross, “‘Dry Bones Speak,’” 438–9. As Cross notes (439), the Blickling X author may have used a variant form of Caesarius’s ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum surviving in pseudo-Augustine Sermo 66 Ad fratres in eremo (PL 40, cols. 1352–3).
41 PL 40, cols. 1341–2.
42 PL 40, col. 1341. ‘Where, then, have all these things gone? Where their pomp, their accoutrements, their exquisite feasts? Where now are those who thronged around them in furious hosts, who praised them at home and in public? Where is the decoration of their homes and the expensive luxury of their garments? Where is the display of their jewels and their huge weight of silver? Where, in the end, is their greed itself, which, though it does every day whatever it wants, does not know when it must lose everything? Where is the wisdom and the carefully contrived discourse in public places? Where is the applause of praise and the constant fawning of friends? Where are the abject flocks of servants and the shining lights of lamps? Where is the crowd of dependents going before them?’
Throughout this passage one can find similarities to the other ‘Visit to the Tomb’ texts discussed above. Its most striking parallels, however, are to John Chrysostom’s *Ad Theodorum lapsum 1*, whose *ubi sunt* passage Thomas N. Hall has called a ‘textual cousin to the passage in *Sermo 58 ad fratres in eremo*’. Interestingly, the original Greek text of the treatise is closer to the pseudo-Augustinian homily than Anianus’s Latin translation is, especially in its description of the crowds of flatterers and hangers-on that attended the wealthy man: ‘Ποῦ νῦν εἰσίν οἱ μετὰ πολλοῦ μὲν τοῦ τύφου, πολλῶν δὲ ἀκολούθων σοβοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς ἁγορᾶς, οἱ τὰ σημικὰ ἐνδεδυμένοι καὶ μύρων πνέοντες καὶ παρασίτους τρέφοντες καὶ τῇ σκηνῇ προσηλωμένοι διὰ παντός, ποῦ τούτον ἡ φαντασία ἐκεῖνη νῦν ;’ Whether such similarities are due to a conscious imitation of Chrysostom by the author of the pseudo-Augustinian sermon or dependence on a common source is unclear. Cross discovered that some version of *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo* was the source for a ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage present in Blickling VIII, which was itself the source for an abbreviated version of the motif in Assmann XIV, a composite eschatological homily that survives in CCCC 302 and Cotton Faustina A. ix. More recently, Di Sciacca has found that the Latin sermon is the source for parts of a ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage in Vercelli XXII, which otherwise depends on Isidore’s *Synonyma*.

The figure at the top of the next page describes the sources and relationships of all known instances of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif written in Anglo-Saxon England. Most of the information it contains is based on the works of other scholars discussed above, but since no earlier study has provided a concise summary of the complex origins of the Anglo-Saxon versions of the motif, a visual aid will, I hope, be helpful.

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43 Hall, ‘John Chrysostom.’

44 Dumortier, 124, 11. 15–9. ‘Where are they now who used to strut through the market place with much pomp, and a crowd of attendants? Who were clothed in silk and redolent with perfumes, and kept a table for their parasites, and were in constant attendance at the theatre? What has now become of all that parade of theirs?’ (translation from W. R. W. Stephens, ‘Two Letters to Theodore after His Fall,’ in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series*, vol. 9, ed. Philip Schaff [New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1889], 87–116 at 97–8). The existence of similarities between *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo* and Chrysostom’s text is noted by Di Sciacca, *Finding the Right Words*, 241–2, n. 134.

45 Cross, ‘“Ubi Sunt,”’ 38–40.

2.2 Personalizing the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ in the Old English Homilies

The ‘Visit to the Tomb’ and ‘Dry Bones Speak’ motifs in the Old English homilies and their relationships to their Latin sources have been well studied. Of primary importance are two articles by James E. Cross, who brought most of the Latin-Old English correspondences to light and explored some of the changes made by the Anglo-Saxon homilists to their source material.\(^{47}\) Claudia Di Sciacca has recently revived scholarly interest in these texts by situating them in the wider medieval *ubi sunt* tradition, particularly as represented by the influential *Synonyma* of Isidore of Seville.\(^ {48}\) Nevertheless, the style of the English adaptations of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ still awaits a fuller investigation. One particularly understudied stylistic trend is the tendency among some Anglo-Saxon homilists to personalize the exemplum—that is, to make it more relevant to the audience by postulating a closer relationship between the dead man in the tomb and the audience members than is present in the Latin sources. Some steps that the Blickling X

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\(^{47}\) Cross, “‘Ubi Sunt’”; “‘Dry Bones Speak.’”

author takes to this end were noticed and briefly discussed by Cross, but the efforts of other homilists to personalize the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ remain largely undiscussed. The increasingly close relationship between the dead man and the audience in the Old English texts is not only interesting in its own right, but also important for a study of the (largely overlooked) early Middle English iterations of the motif, which continue to draw the audience closer to the tomb’s occupant in much the same way.

The earliest surviving Old English versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum (though not necessarily the earliest in terms of date of original composition) are Vercelli XIII and Vercelli XXII. As Cross has noted, ‘Without being a literal translation, [Vercelli XIII] follows the Latin text rather closely.’ This closeness is evident when one compares Caesarius’s description of the tombs’ occupants with the Old English: ‘Considerate diligentius et videte superborum sepulchra…’ / ‘Hwæt wunaþ þysses mid ðam men oferhydum in ðære byrgenne…’. No relationship whatsoever between the unnamed ‘proud’ deceased and the homilist’s audience is implied in either text. Thus, while these versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum are powerful reminders of mortality, they lack any information that would make the dead man’s address personally relevant to the homilists’ listeners and readers. Indeed, the Old English author arguably tones down the rhetorical force of his source even more by moving the scene clearly into the realm of the hypothetical: ‘Ðus cleopedon þa ban to us gif hie sprecan meahton of þære byrgenne.’ A similar concession is found in Irvine VII, which led Cross to speculate that the audience of the two Old English homilies may have been ‘less sensitive … than the people who heard Cæsarius’s Latin exhortation,’ although it is just as likely that the authors of the two Old

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49 Cross, “‘Dry Bones Speak,’” 438–9.
50 Cross, “‘Dry Bones Speak,’” 435.
51 Morin, I. 135. ‘Look closer and see the tombs of the proud.’
52 Scragg, Vercelli, 234, ll. 19–20. ‘What of all this [wealth, luxury, etc.] remains with the proud man in the tomb?’
53 Scragg, Vercelli, 235, ll. 33–4. ‘Thus the bones would cry to us from the grave, if they were able to speak.’
54 Irvine, Old English Homilies, 198, ll. 16–8.
English homilies simply used a variant text of the Latin sermon that included some precedent for such comments.  

The Vercelli XIII author’s conservative and impersonal adaptation of Caesarius’s *Sermo* 31 is paralleled in many respects by the Blickling VIII homilist’s treatment of *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo*. The Blickling VIII ‘Visit to the Tomb’ is a close translation of its Latin source, and, as in the pseudo-Augustinian sermon, the tombs’ inhabitants have no direct relationship to the audience members: ‘Ite ad sepulcrum mortuorum, et videte exempla viventium’  

/ "Ic eow halsige, cwaþ Agustinus, “þæt ge gongan to byrgenne weligra manna, þonne magon ge geseon sweotole bysene.""  

Vercelli XXII, though its use of *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo* is much more limited, is even more conservative in its translation of the Latin: ‘Gangað to deadra manna bebyrignesse geseoð þær lifigendra bysene.’  

Unlike Blickling VIII, Vercelli XXII retains the sentence in its Latin source that claims that the tomb’s occupant ‘[f]uit et ipse nobis similis aliquando,’ but this vague statement of similarity is as personal as the earlier Old English adaptations of *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo* get. However, in Assmann XIV, which borrows from a version of Blickling VIII, we begin to see signs that at least some English homilists wanted to construct a more concrete relationship between the dead man (or men) in the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif and their audiences.

As mentioned above, the composite piece edited as Assmann XIV survives in two late Old English manuscripts: CCCC 302, from around 1100, and London, BL, Cotton Faustina A. ix, from the first half of the twelfth century. Significantly, the author of this piece replaces the

55 Cross, “‘Dry Bones Speak,’” 437. Frankly, I find the second option more plausible. It is difficult to imagine why more sophistication should be expected of a sixth-century Gaulish audience than of a tenth- or eleventh-century English one, especially if, as Wright has argued, Vercelli homilies XI–XIII were meant to be delivered to a group of clerics (Wright, ‘Vercelli Homilies XI–XIII’).

56 *PL* 40, col. 1341. ‘Go to the tombs of the dead and see examples for the living.’

57 Morris, *Blickling*, 99, ll. 12–4. “I entreat you,” said Augustine, “that you go to the tombs of wealthy men; then you will be able to see a clear example.”


59 *PL* 40, col. 1341. ‘this man was once like us.’ Vercelli XXII says, ‘îo hie wæron us gelice on þysse worulde’ (Scragg, *Vercelli*, 374, ll. 125–6; ‘They were once like us in this world’).
nonspecific exhortation to visit the tombs of the dead that introduces the exemplum in his Old English source with a more creative preface:

Oft wæ habbað gescawod, to hwilcum þingum we sculan gewurðan, syððan we deade beoð. We magan geseon, þonne man binnan mýnスター byrgene delfeð and þa ban þaron findeð, hwilce we beon scylan. Hwar byð þonne heora wela, þe hi ahtan her on life?…

The Assmann XIV homilist provides a tangible and grisly illustration of death’s effects by drawing on a scene familiar to his audience, which was presumably monastic or at least frequently heard Mass in a monastery. When new graves had to be dug and old ones either cleared out or moved, these people came face-to-face with the remains of their predecessors or, possibly, the monastery’s benefactors, some of whom they must have known either personally or by reputation. In this context, the description of the process of decomposition taken from the pseudo-Augustinian source becomes all the more powerful: ‘Ac heora lichaman licgað on eorðan and beoð to duste gewordene and þæt flæsc afulað and wirmum awealleð and nyðer afloweð in þa eorðan.’

The author of another twelfth-century Old English homily, Irvine VII, attempted to personalize the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ in a rather different way. In adapting and abbreviating the version of the exemplum from Caesarius’s Sermo 31, the Irvine VII homilist both adds an explicit acknowledgment on the part of the passerby that he knew the dead man and attempts to soften some of Caesarius’s criticisms of the dead man’s way of life:

60 Assmann, 165, ll. 32–6. ‘We have often seen what will become of us after we die. We can see, when a grave is opened in the monastery and the bones are found therein, what we must be. Where then is their wealth, that they had here while they lived?’

61 Antonette di Paolo Healey has rightly pointed out to me that the descriptions of the wealth of the dead in Assmann XIV may make better sense if we imagine that the graves’ occupants were donors to the monastery, rather than monks themselves. Such a critique of past benefactors could have the added effect of encouraging future ones to be more generous.

62 Assmann, 165, ll. 40–2. ‘But their bodies lie in the earth and are turned to dust, and their flesh putrifies and wells up with worms and flows down into the earth.’ See PL 40, col. 1341: ‘Jacet in sepulcro redactus in pulverem; defluxerunt carnes ejus quas deliciae nutriebant; absesserunt nervi a compagibus suis; sola remanserunt ossa, que servabant in exempla viventium, ut cognoscantur reliquiae mortuorum’ (‘He lies in the tomb, reduced to dust; the flesh which delicacies nourished has melted away; the sinews have receded from their joints. Bones alone remain, which are preserved as an example for the living, so that the remains of the dead may be recognized’).
Ac loca þenne on þa buriȝnes and sæȝ to þe sylfum: Hwæt, þæs mon iu on þissre worlde wunsumlice lyfede þe ic ær cuðe. Denne mąþon þa dyrlæ ban us læren, and þæs deaden dust of þare buriȝnes to us cwæðon wolden, ȝif heo specen mihten: To hwan, þu earme, on þisse worlde ȝytsungum swinces? Oðer to hwam þu on oferhydo þe sylf up ahæfstan on oferstum and on unþeaw æs, and sunne to swyðe fyliȝedest? Beheald me, and onscyne þine yfelæ þoncæs and onȝit þe sylfum. Sceawe mine ban her on þissere molde and biþeng þe sylfen. Iu ic wæs swylc þu nu eart, and ȝyt þu iwurðæst swulc ic nu eom. Geseoh mine ban and mi dust, and forlæt þine yfele lustæs. 63

There is no precedent in the Latin source for the statement in Irvine VII that the dead man was an acquaintance, perhaps even a friend, of the visitor to his tomb. Caesarius’s visitor seems to know something about the dead man, but is quite harsh in his evaluation of his moral character: ‘O miser, et iste aliquando pro cupiditate currebat, et iste dum viveret in saeculo libidini serviebat.’ 64 Significantly, the Irvine VII author also leaves out several admonitions by the dead man in which he acknowledges his own sinfulness: ‘Si in me permansit vanitas, vel te non consumat iniquitas; si me luxuria corrupit, vel te castitas ornet.’ 65

The combined effect of the alterations in Irvine VII is a mitigation of the moral rebuke of the dead man that one finds in the homily’s Latin source and in most earlier versions of the motif. In some of these, the tomb’s occupant is explicitly damned. Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo introduces a graphic description of the pains of hell with such a condemnation: ‘Putatur enim requiescere corpus ejus: in inferno habitat anima ejus, et non videbit ulterior lumen.’ 66

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63 Irvine, Old English Homilies, 197, l. 6 – 198, l. 16. ‘But look then on the tomb and say to yourself: “See, this man whom I knew before once lived joyfully in this world.” Then the porous bones can teach us, and the dead man’s dust would say to us from the tomb, if it could speak: “To what end, wretch, do you toil in the greed of this world? Or why do you proudly exalt yourself in arrogance and vices, and commit sin so greatly? Behold me, and abandon your evil intention, and perceive yourself. See my bones here in this dirt and recognize yourself. I once was what you are now, and you will become as I am now. See my bones and my dust, and abandon your evil desires.”’

64 Morin, I. 135. ‘O wretch, this one once hurried about because of his greed, and while he lived in the world he served his lust.’

65 Morin, I. 135. ‘If vanity abided in me, at least do not let iniquity consume you; if wantonness corrupted me, at least let chastity adorn you.’

66 PL 40, col. 1341. ‘For his body is thought to be at rest, but his soul dwells in hell, and will never again see light.’
statement is reflected in both Blickling VIII and Assmann XIV. The damnation of the tomb’s occupant in Caesarius’s sermon is more implicit, but the audience is certainly meant to infer from the long catalogues of his vices both in the Latin sermon and in Vercelli XIII that the dead man is in hell. On the other hand, by removing references to the immorality of the dead man, Irvine VII preserves the hope that he may in fact be saved at the Last Judgment. The author of the Old English homily may have thought this partial rehabilitation to be important precisely because he postulated a relationship, albeit hypothetical, between the dead man and the members of his audience. While any listener or reader would willingly have accepted the premise that a wealthy stranger to whom he had no particular attachment was damned for his sins, the preacher may have felt, understandably, that his audience would be less receptive to the exemplum if he had told them that the one being eternally tormented was a friend of theirs.

Blickling X and CCCC 198, which posit an even closer connection between the visitor and the tomb’s occupant, also provide an even more positive outcome to the story and implicitly offer hope for eternal life to sinners if they reform their ways. As Cross has discussed, in the version of the exemplum in these homilies the dead man

is now ‘an influential man’ ['sumum welegum men & worldricum'] who died, not every dead Dives. He has a loving relative who, for grief and sorrow at the rich man’s death, left his native land and lived abroad for many years; and during his voluntary exile ‘this grief of his never grew less but greatly oppressed and afflicted him’ ['him næfre seo langung ne geteorode, ac hine swiþe gehyrde & þreade'].

After he returns to his country to visit the tomb and hears the bones’ speech, the visitor takes the admonishments of his dead relative to heart and turns to a life of prayer. By this act he not only earns salvation for himself but also frees his relative’s soul from its (presumably purgatorial rather than infernal) torments. By adapting his source in this way, the Anglo-Saxon author of the Blickling X/CCCC 198 ‘Visit to the Tomb’ story retains the rhetorical force of the dead

67 Morris, Blickling, 101, ll. 6–8: ‘[H]ie sceolan æfter þem wiencum éce edwit þrowian, buton him seo sôþe hrow gefultumige’ (‘After these pompoms they must suffer eternal shame, if true penitence does not aid them’); Assmann, 165, l. 44: ‘[H]i scylan æfter þam eorðwelan edwit prowian’ (‘After these earthly riches they must suffer shame’).
69 Morris, Blickling, 113, ll. 28–33; Swan, ‘Ælfric as Source,’ 276, ll. 197–203.
man’s address while offering his audience the hope that, if they lead virtuous lives, they can aid both themselves and their dead friends and relatives.

2.3 Two Early Middle English Versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’

The personalization of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ that began in the Old English homilies continued in the early Middle English period. Two particularly interesting versions of the exemplum survive in Lambeth Homily III, which I shall discuss below, and in a treatise on the vices and virtues. This little-studied text survives uniquely in London, BL, MS. Stowe 34 (olim 240), from the first quarter of the thirteenth century. 70 Ferdinand Holthausen, who edited and commented on the text (but never wrote an introduction), dated the treatise’s composition to ca. 1200, 71 and the editors of the MED have accepted his dating. Other scholars, including Joseph Hall and Gustav Schmidt, believed that archaisms in vocabulary, phonology, and inflection pointed to a somewhat earlier date, perhaps some time in the very late twelfth century. 72 The dialect of the work points to an eastern or southeastern provenance, and most scholars who have attempted to provide a more specific localization have settled on Essex. 73 Hall has suggested that, somewhere in the text’s transmission, ‘a scribe of the northern border of the South-Eastern area has turned a composition in the dialect of the Middle or Western South into his own, with occasional retention of Southern forms,’ 74 but no later scholar has evaluated the possibility of southern or western origins for the text.

70 The most detailed codicological description of the manuscript is in the British Library’s Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, available online at http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/welcome.htm, accessed August 2012.

71 Holthausen, I. 1.


74 Hall, Selections, II. 443.
The Stowe 34 *Vices and Virtues* is a dialogue between a soul and Reason (Latin ‘Ratio’ or English ‘Scadwisnesse’), generically reminiscent of Boethius’s *Consolatio philosophiae* or Isidore’s *Synonyma*, though apparently not textually related to either work.\(^75\) The dialogue begins imperfectly, and much, if not most, of the soul’s confession of its sins to Reason has been lost. However, the entirety of Reason’s response, which describes and encourages the various virtues, has been preserved. The sources of the text are largely patristic, and include Augustine, Gregory, and Jerome, but Hall and Holthausen also noted similarities to other Old and early Middle English texts and occasional echoes of the works of more contemporary Latin authors like Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of St. Victor.\(^76\)

The phonology and vocabulary of *Vices and Virtues* are very conservative and contain few traces of Anglo-Norman influence, and the style of the work is highly reminiscent of Old English preaching.\(^77\) Indeed, more than one cataloguer, glancing quickly at Stowe 34, has classified the manuscript as a collection of homilies.\(^78\) Though there is no conclusive evidence of a textual relationship between *Vices and Virtues* and any particular Old English work, one can often note striking similarities to the Anglo-Saxon homiletic style in the text, especially when the author waxes eschatological. See, for instance, the following description of hell:

\[
[\text{Æ}]ure \text{ ðar is wop and woninge for ðare michele hæte and unȝemæte brene, and ðar is chiueringe of toðen for ðe unmate chele; and ðar is sorwȝe and sarinesse for ðare muchele ortrewnesse ðe cump of ðan þeðanke ðe hie næure mo godd ne sculen isien ne nan of his halȝen, ne sibbe ne framde ðe iborȝen sculen bien, ac aure ma wunien mid ða eifulle dieulen, ðe bieð swa laðliche and swo grislich an to lokin, ðat jif a mann iesiȝe nu anne al swilch al se he is on his ȝekynde, he scolde sone bien ut of his iwitte, and ðis þolijen æure ma wið-uten ande. }\]

\(^79\) Ne mai ic

\(^75\) Hall, Selections, II. 444.

\(^76\) Hall, Selections, II. 444; Holthausen, II. 159, 177, 189, 201.

\(^77\) See Hall, Selections, II. 444.

\(^78\) In addition to the British Library’s *Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts*, mentioned above, see their general *Manuscripts Catalogue* (http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/manuscripts/index.asp, accessed August 2012), which describes the manuscript’s contents as ‘short homilies on the various virtues and vices, in English.’

\(^79\) As Holthausen (II. 161) noticed, this sentence is similar to a description of the devils in *The Wooing of Our Lord*: ‘þe ahefulle deueles of helle. þat hwuch of ham swa is lest laðeliche. and grureful. mihte he swuch as he is to monkin him scheawe! al þe world were offeard him ane to bihalde for ne mihte na mon him seo and in his wit wunie’ (*OEH1*, 271, l. 36 – 273, l. 3; ‘the awful devils of hell, the least horrible and terrible of whom, if he could show himself to mankind, would alone so frighten all the world that no man could see him and remain sane’).
This passage includes alliterative doublets closely related to those common in Old English homilies (‘wop and woninge,’ ‘sorwȝe and sarinesse’), shows traces of the inexpressibility topoi so popular in Anglo-Saxon descriptions of hell and its torments, and concludes with a version of the ‘thought, word, and deed’ triad, which often appears in Old English works written under Irish influence. Another notable echo of the Anglo-Saxon homilists is the collocation ‘sibbe/framde,’ which appears frequently in the works of Wulfstan and his imitators, particularly in the context of descriptions of the reign of Antichrist: ‘Ne byrhð se gesibba þonne gesibban þe ma þe þam fremdan.’

In a chapter extolling the virtue of fasting, the author of the early Middle English Vices and Virtues includes a condemnation of its opposite vices, gluttony and drunkenness, that seems to owe something to earlier English versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ exemplum:

*Quoniam ebriosi regnum dei non possidebunt* [1 Corinthians 6:10], ‘De michele drinkeres sōlīcīc naure, naure heuene riche ne sculen bruken.’ Du ðe ðis befelst and ne wilt [bien] beswiken, ga to his berieles ðe ðis beuall mid þe oððer beforen ðe, and ðenk hu anliche he lið fraðe ðe he was bewune mide to drinken and to pleiȝen, and ðu ðiester he lið ðar ðe he was bewune to ðe faire fiere and to ðe brihte kandeles, and ðench þat ðe fule wombe is crewlinde full of weormes, ðe he was bewune to fellen mid gode metes and swete drenches, and

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80 Holthausen, I. 17, l. 32 – 19, l. 10. ‘Always there is weeping and mourning because of the great heat and immeasurable burning, and there is chattering of teeth because of the great cold; and there is sorrow and pain because of the great despair that comes from the thought that they [i.e., the damned] will never again see God or any of his saints, or anyone, kin or stranger, who will be saved. Rather they will forever dwell with the terrible devils, who are so loathsome and so horrible to look at, that if a man should now see one of them as he is in his nature, he would immediately go mad and suffer this forever without end. I cannot think, nor say with my mouth, nor write in a book all the pains of hell. Woe to them that they were ever created, those who merit those pains!’

81 Cf., e.g., Ælfric’s Supplementary homily for the Friday of the third week of Lent (ÆHom 5): ‘þær bið wop and wanung on ealra worulda woruld’ (Pope, I. 300, l. 276; ‘there shall be weeping and mourning forever and ever’).

82 Cf., e.g., Bethurum II (WHom 2): ‘… þa sorga γ ða sarnessa þe on woruld becumad foran to þam timan þe Antecrist weðed γ ealle woruld bregaþ’ (Bethurum, Homilies, 121, ll. 49–52; ‘… the sorrows and the pains that will occur in the world up until the time that Antichrist rages and terrifies the whole world’).


84 Bethurum, *Homilies*, 125, ll. 34–5. ‘A relative will not be able to preserve his relative any more than he would a stranger.’
fonde; ȝif þe herof noht nagrist, nart þu naht liues þar ðe ðu libben scoldest. Wa mai bien ðe ilke mann ðe þis ȝesikþ and ȝehered and na ðe bettre ne bieð!

The wording of this passage and its focus on gluttony and drunkenness at the expense of other vices is not directly paralleled in any of the Latin or Old English versions of the motif, but it obviously belongs to the same tradition as the earlier texts. Most notably, it provides evidence of the further personalization of the motif, which, as we have seen, began in the Anglo-Saxon period. In *Vices and Virtues*, the reader is told to imagine the tomb’s occupant as a friend with whom he may have caroused in his earlier life. This level of closeness in the proposed relationship between the dead man and the tomb’s visitor is paralleled in the Old English homilies only in the creative reworking of Caesarius’s sermon in Blickling X. However, *Vices and Virtues* represents a significant development in framing the motif not as an exemplum in the strict sense (‘Listen to the story of a man who visited his relative’s tomb’), but as a direct command to the reader (‘Go and visit your friend’s tomb’). Also unlike Blickling X, there is no explicit indication that the visitor’s gluttonous friend might, in the end, be saved. However, signs of the developing concept of purgatory are plentiful in *Vices and Virtues*, and may have offered the reader at least some hope that any deceased friends and family members who did not assiduously practice the virtue of fasting might eventually be liberated from their torments.

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85 Holthausen, I. 139, ll. 1–12. ‘*For drunkards shall not possess the kingdom of God.* “The great drinkers truly shall never, ever enjoy the kingdom of heaven.” You who practice this and do not wish to be deceived, go to the tomb of him who used to practice this with you or before you, and consider how lonely he lies from all his friends with whom he was accustomed to drink and play, and how dark he lies who was accustomed to the fair fire and to the bright candles, and consider that the foul belly is crawling full of worms that he was accustomed to fill with good foods and sweet drinks, and try; if you do not shudder at this, you are not living as you should. Woe is the man who sees and hears this and is not the better for it!’

86 One may, nevertheless, note certain similarities to pseudo-Augustine *Sermo 58 Ad fratres in eremo* (*PL* 40, col. 1341) and the texts derived from it. Compare especially the following excerpt of the Latin sermon to the text cited above: ‘*Ubi applausus laudum, et adulatio amicorum assidua? Ubi servorum subditi greges et lampadarum radiantia lumina? Ubi antecedentium turba clientium? Transierunt omnia ista ab oculis ejus, et ultra non erit memoria ejus. Jacet in sepulcro redactus in pulverem; defluxerunt carnes ejus quas deliciæ nutriebant.*’

87 Cf. Holthausen, I. 63, l. 27 – 65, l. 7: ‘*Ne haue ðu hope te fader ne te moder, te sune ne te dohter, te broðer ne te swuster, ne te nan ier[ð]lich mann, ðanne þin lichame lið under ierðe, getwamd fram alle liuiende manne, all-ane, fule, stinkende, full of wermes, and on ða þiestermesse fram alle lihté, and ðu, earme saule, on ðe wallende brene of ðe hote fiere, and eft, embehwile, on ðe chieurinde chele, ðat tu ðe seluen naht ne miht helpen, þer ðanne ðu habbe ðiene sennes al aboht, and all bie iclensed of alle ðine misdædes ðurh ða pines ðe ðu þolest, and ðurh masses and þieness ðe me doð for ðe. ðanne ðe wilere wroðen ðat tu ðe seluen ne haddest betere iholpen ðare hwile ðe ðu mihtest. Hu scolde godd, oðer any of his halȝen, oðer ani of ðine friend, sibbe oðer framde, hauen rewðe oðer mildse of ðe, seððen ðu ðe seluen ne hafst nu hier none of ðe seluen?’* (‘Have no hope in father or mother, in son or daughter, in brother or sister, or in any mortal man, when your body lies under the earth, separated from all living men, alone, foul, stinking, full of worms, and in darkness away from all light, and you, wretched soul, are in
Another interesting, late version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ can be found in Lambeth Homily III, which deals with the necessity of confession during Lent. In her discussion of Lambeth 487, Celia Sisam counted Lambeth III as one of the manuscript’s homilies that ‘certainly go back to Old English.’ She offered no hard evidence for this assertion at the time, but later scholars have found notable similarities to earlier homilies. Malcolm Godden pointed out the presence in Lambeth III of several ideas that appear in Old English homilies, including, significantly, a version of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif, discussed in detail in Chapter 4 below. More recently, Elaine Treharne has uncovered an Ælfrician source for part of the homily’s conclusion. At the same time, however, a passage about the unworthy reception of the Eucharist is apparently based on an excerpt from the Elucidarium of Honorius Augustodunensis, and shows that the author or reviser of Lambeth III was also open to newer influences.

the billowing heat of the hot fire, and afterwards at times in the shivering cold, such that you cannot help yourself before you have paid for all your sins and are cleansed from all of your transgressions through the pains that you suffer, and through masses and prayers and almsgiving that are done for you. Then you will be sorry that you did not help yourself better while you could. How could God, or any of his saints, or any of your friends, either relatives or not, have pity or mercy on you, since you have none on yourself here?’). Old and early Middle English versions of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ contain similar statements of the efficacy of masses and almsgiving for the souls of the dead, though these emphasize the dead man’s own actions rather than those of his survivors. See especially the soul’s rebuke in the thirteenth-century lyric the Latemest Day ‘Selde wole me for þe messes lete singen/ Oþeir in holie chiriche makin hei offringe’ (Brown, 48, ll. 57–8); cf. also ll. 20–3 of the second of the Worcester Fragments (Moffat, 35): ‘Noldest þu ma>kien l<o> fe wiþ ilærede men,/ ȝiven ham of þine gode þ(et) heo þe fo<re> beden./ Heo mihten mid salmsonge þine sunne acwenchen,/ mid <ho> re messe þine misdeden fore biddæn’ (‘You would not offer praise with clerics, give them of your property that they might pray for you. They could have extinguished your sins with their singing of psalms, prayed for your transgressions with their masses’). On the ‘Soul’s Address’ in Old and Middle English, see Dorothy Haines, ‘Rhetorical Strategies in Old English Prose: A Study of Three Dramatic Monologues’ (unpublished PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1998), 44–126. The classic study of the so-called ‘birth of purgatory’ in the twelfth century is Jacques Le Goff, La naissance du purgatoire, Bibliothèque des histoires (Paris: Gallimard, 1981). Important criticisms of his work, particular with regard to English homiletic and religious literature, can be found in Ananya Jahanara Kabir, Paradise, Death, and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature, CSASE 32 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Forbes, ‘Diuiduntur in quattuor.’

Sisam, 110, n. 4. Since O’Mara and Paul do not include the piece in RMEPS, they seem to have come to the same conclusion.


I discuss this connection in my article ‘Source Studies in the Lambeth Homilies,’ forthcoming in JEGP. The influence of Honorius on late Old English homiletic literature is described in Chapter 3. For another discussion of possible Old English and later influences on the homily, see Treharne, ‘The Life and Times,’ 229–36.
The Lambeth III version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ not only exhibits a development of the personalization of the motif seen in the other texts here examined, but also reflects the continued use of other Old English eschatological traditions:

Ga to þine feder burinesse oðer þer eni of þine cunne lið in. and esca hine hwet he habbe biðeten mid his wohe domas. and mid his reuneg. mid his licome lustes. mid his òðre sunne. hwile he wes her on þisse liue. Soðliche he walde seggen ȝif he mihte speken. wa is me þet ic efre dude swa muchele sunne. and heo ne ȝe bette. for swilche pine ic habbe þet me were leofere þenne al world þah hit were min most ic habben an alpi þraþe summe lisse and summe leðe. and ec mostic underfon minne licome and beon on worlde a mare ic walde fein pinian and sitten on forste and on snaue up et mine chinne. and þa ȝet hit walde [MS. walð] me þunchen þet softeste beð. and þet wunsemeste þet ic efre ibad moste ic beon of þisse earme liue. and þaþet þu maht understonden þenne þu stondest et his burienesse þet he wes prud and wlonc. swa þu eft nu. and þu forwurðest. eca swa he is nu al to nohte; and þu nast neure hwenne; Leof wes he on liue and lað is he nuðe. and þa wrecche saule forloren. 92

As we have seen, the dead man’s speech is based ultimately on Caesarius’s Sermo 31, but there are few verbal similarities between this text and Lambeth III. On the other hand, the author’s addition of a clause making this address explicitly hypothetical (‘ȝif he mihte speken’) is reminiscent of the similar comments in Vercelli XIII and Irvine VII, and suggests that his immediate source was an Old English text, which he drew on either textually or from memory. The author also draws on earlier English traditions in personalizing the motif. Like the Blickling X homilist, the Lambeth III author postulates a familial relationship between the visitor and the dead man, but the latter piece is much more direct and its tone much bleaker. While in Blickling X, the mourner’s prayers earn salvation for both him and his dead relative, in Lambeth III, the audience is told to imagine that their own fathers are either damned or (less likely) suffering some irremediable interim punishment for their sins. 93 Interestingly, a passage in the fifteenth-

92 OEH1, 35, ll. 4–19: ‘Go to your father’s tomb or where any of your kinsmen lie, and ask him what he has gained with his unrighteous judgments, and with his robbery, with his bodily lusts, with his other sins while he was here in this life. Truly he would say, if he were able to talk: “Woe is me that I ever committed such great sins and did not atone for them, for I am in such pain that it would be better for me than all the world, if I could have it, to have for a single instant some rest and some ease. And if I were able to take up my body again and be in the world, I would gladly be tortured and sit in frost and snow up to my chin, and yet it would seem to me the softest and most pleasant bath that I ever took, if only I could escape this wretched existence.” And yet you should understand, when you stand at his tomb, that he was proud and haughty, as you are now, and you shall wither away just as he has, all to nothing, and you will never know when. He was beloved in life, but he is loathsome now, and the wretched soul is lost.’

93 The statement that the kinsman’s ‘wrecche saule’ is ‘forloren’ does not leave much hope for the latter option.
century treatise *Memoriale credendium* suggests that some version of this highly personalized form of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif remained popular into the late Middle English period: ‘Go to the buryeles of thy fader & moder; and suche schalt thou be, be he never so fayr, never so kunnynge, never so strong, never so gay, never so lyȝt.’

A central element of the Lambeth III ‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage is the dead man’s lament of his sins and his willingness to suffer extreme earthly torments if he could escape them. In the Old English homiletic tradition, the dead man’s pain is a major element only of the Blickling X version, in which his relative’s prayers are able to liberate him from these unspecified torments. The dead man’s lament in Lambeth III can, I believe, be more fruitfully compared with elements of the Old English ‘Devil’s Account of the Next World,’ sometimes called the ‘Anchorite Legend’ or the ‘Theban Legend,’ and the descriptions of heaven and hell that circulated with it. This exemplum, whose oldest and best-known version appears in Vercelli IX, tells of an anchorite who seizes a devil and forces him to relate the joys of heaven and the horrors of hell.

A notable rhetorical technique in these texts is the description of the terrible earthly torments which the souls of the damned would gladly suffer in exchange for release from hell's tortures. While the earthly pains which the dead man in Lambeth III gives are different and much less elaborate than those in Vercelli IX, their purpose is comparable—to explain to the audience that the worst imaginable earthly pains, even when suffered for extremely long periods of time, are nothing compared to the torments of hell:

\[\text{[G]if hwylc man bið on helle ane niht, þonne bið him leofre, gif he þanon mot, þæt he hangie siofon þusend wintra on þam lengestan treowe ufeweardum þe ofer sæ staneð on þam hyhstan sæclife, ðe syn þa fet gebundene to ðam hehstan telgan}\]

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95 The motif was first described as such by Fred Robinson, ‘The Devil’s Account of the Next World,’ *NM* 73 (1972): 362–71. See also the rebuttal to Robinson’s hypothesis of the relationships between the various versions of the exemplum in Donald G. Scragg, ‘“The Devil’s Account of the Next World” Revisited,’ *ANQ* 24 (1986): 107–10. The Vercelli IX version can be found at Scragg, *Vercelli*, 174–82, ll. 144–205.
This passage is placed in the mouth of the captured devil only in Cotton Tiberius A. iii (Scragg’s manuscript M), but its stylistic similarity to the rest of the ‘Devil’s Account’ and its presence alongside the ‘Account’ in Vercelli IX and other manuscripts are strong evidence that it was originally a part of that exemplum, or at least closely associated with it.

Old English texts of the ‘Devil’s Account’ circulated throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, and an abbreviated version of it is found in the homily ‘De inclusis’ (HomM 9) from the mid-twelfth-century manuscript CCCC 303 (Scragg’s manuscript H). There is also some evidence from the Continent that exempla related to the ‘Devil’s Account’ continued to circulate in Europe into the thirteenth century and beyond. One of the thirteenth-century Middle High German St. Georgen Sermons, a version of which also survives in the ca. 1300 Middle Dutch Limburg Sermons, contains an interesting description of the beauty of God and heaven, part of which is related to a holy man by a devil who had possessed another man. While this passage does not contain any literal parallels to Old English versions of the ‘Devil’s Account,’ its author’s imaginative

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96  Scragg, Vercelli, 170, ll. 122–30. ‘If any man were in hell for one night, he would rather, if he could get out, hang for seven thousand years at the top of the longest tree that stands over the sea on the highest sea-cliff, with his feet bound to the highest branch and his head hanging downward and his feet above, with blood pouring out of his mouth, with each of the evils that can ever exist in hell afflicting him along with the highest waves that the sea can bring forth, and all the rocks on all the cliffs striking him—all of this he will happily suffer as long as he should never have to return to hell.’

97  Edited in Scragg, Vercelli, 174–84.


100  A fifteenth-century Middle Dutch adaptation of a German sermon by Meister Eckhart contains similar imagery. See C. G. N. de Vooys, ‘Meister Eckart en de Nederlandse mystiek,’ Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis 3 (1905): 50–92 at 70–1.
torments and luxuries, his expressing of their durations in terms of millennia, and his use of inexpressibility topoi suggest that he was acquainted with a similar tradition:

St. Georgen Sermon 3 – Schiewer and Seidel, 13–14, ll. 15–31

Daz únsir herre schöne ist, daz sprichit sanctus Petrus: ‘In quem desiderant angeli prospicere.’
‘Er ist also schöne, daz in die engil lustliche vnvrirdrozinliche zallen ziten ansehlint.
Also sprichit sanctus Augustinus: ‘Vnde solte ain mensche tusint tusint iar leben in allen dien vröden, die sin herce erdenchin künde, die solti der mensche alle uirsmahin dar umbe, daz er got núwan zaime ainigosten male anséehe in siner gotlich vi nde ensolti er in jedoach dar nah niemer mer gesehien.’

Vnde sprichit ioh noh me: ‘Vnde wäre daz mugilich, daz ain mensche also lange leben mehti, vnz daz ain tube dez meris griez ûz gefûrti vnnde ie ze tvsint iaren ain griezeli dannen fûrti, du iar solti der mensche in arbaitin lebin, dar umbe daz er got gesæhi undir sinen ûgen.’


Limburg Sermon 2 – Kern, 190, ll. 3–24

Dat onse Here scone es, dat sprict S. Peter: ‘In quem desiderant angeli prospicere: hi es also scone dat heme die engele lustelike ende onuerdritelike tallen tiden ane sien.’
Also sprict S. Augustin: ‘Al sulde en mensce dusent dusentech iaren leuen in al der uroden die sin herte erdincken conste, die solde der mensce al uersmaen op dat hi Gode nit dan tenen male en sege in sine sconheit, al en solde hine oec nimmermeer dar na gesien.’

Ende nog sprict hi mee: ‘Ende were dat een mensce also lange leuen mogte ont dat ene duue dis mers griet ut gedrvge, ende ten dusenteg iaren een gritken ut druge, al di iaren sulde der mensce in arbeide leuen in din dat hi Gode tenen male sege in sin anscin.

Een mensce was beseten mettin bosen geste, ende een gut man quam te heme ende begonste met heme te redene ende uragede heme uan din himelrike ende uan din engelen ende uragede wie scone onse Here were. Due sprac der euel geest: “Owi, du hefs mi te vele geuraget: wi scone Got si in sinre gotliker herscapheit, dan mogten alle tongen teuollen nit geseggen. Mer op dat ickene tenen male sulde sien also alsicken eens sach, dar ombe woldic al die arbeit liden die alle menscen leden hebben ogte liden sulen die ie geboren worden ogte geboren sulen werden ont an din iunsten dag….”

101 About our Lord’s beauty, St. Peter says: “On whom the angels desire to look: He is so beautiful that the angels joyfully and tirelessly look upon him at all times.” As Saint Augustine says: “If a man could live for a thousand thousand thousand years (Dutch version: a thousand thousand years) in all the joy that his heart could imagine, he would gladly give all this up so that he might see God in his divine beauty for only the briefest instant and should never thereafter see him again.” He also says: “And if it were possible that a man could live as long as it would take for a dove to bring out a pearl [i.e., from the sea], and he brought only one grain of sand every thousand years, that
The first part of this motif in the two sermons is attributed to Augustine, and was probably adapted from a passage in his *De libero arbitrio*, but this work contains no parallels for the idea of the dove’s bringing forth a pearl or for the devil’s address to a holy man. Charles D. Wright, however, has found exempla comparable to the latter element in several thirteenth-century Latin sources, both Continental (such as Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus miraculorum*) and Insular (as in a Franciscan *Liber exemplorum* written in Ireland by an Englishman). All of these texts suggest that the Lambeth III author’s use of eschatological imagery related to or inspired by some version of the ‘Devil’s Account’ was not simply a resuscitation of some antiquated Insular motif, but rather a participation in a tradition that remained current into the later Middle Ages.

Furthermore, the Lambeth III version of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif shows sporadic contacts with Anglo-Saxon texts in its use of alliterative collocations, a number of which appear in Old English prose and poetry. Examples are described in the table below:

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man would gladly live in hardship for all those years so that he might see God in the face.” A man was possessed by an evil spirit, and a good man came to him and began to speak with him, and he asked him about heaven and about the angels, and he asked him how beautiful God was. Then the devil (Dutch: the evil spirit) said: “O, you have asked me too much! All tongues could not fully say how beautiful God is in his divine dominion; but if I could see him for an instant as I once saw him, I would suffer all the hardship that all those who were ever born and will ever be born until Doomsday have ever suffered.’’

102 ‘Tanta est autem pulchritudo iustitiae, tanta iocunditas lucis aeternae, hoc est incommutabilis uritatis atque sapientiae, ut, etiam si non liceret amplius in ea manere quam unius diei mora, propter hoc solum innumerables anni huius uitae pleni deliciis et circumfluentia temporalium bonorum recte meritoque conumerentur’ (W. M. Green, ed., *De libero arbitrio libri tres*, CSEL 74 [Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1956], 153–4; ‘For so great is the sweetness of his justice, so great the happiness of the eternal life—that is of the unchangeable truth and wisdom—that even if one were not allowed to remain in it for more than one day, for this period alone a man would rightly and justly reject innumerable years full of delights in this life and the abundance of temporal goods’). One can nevertheless note that the millennial terms of the German (‘tusint tusint tusint iar’) and Dutch (‘dusent dusentech iaer’) texts seem to have been introduced by the sermon’s author. The passage from *De libero arbitrio* is quoted by Wright (*Irish Tradition*, 208) as an analogue for certain elements of Insular versions of the ‘Devil’s Account.’

Lambeth III ‘Visit to the Tomb’ collocations

| ‘mid his licome Iustes’ | Popular in Old English literature. Cf., for instance, the homily for the Saturday for the fourth week in Lent in Ælfric’s Supplementary collection (ÆHom 6): ‘… is him leofre to lieganne on his lichaman Iustum þonne he ænig þing swince and hys softnyse forleose.’,104 |
| ‘summe lisse and summe leðe’ | Also popular, but cf. especially the homily for the fifth Sunday after Pentecost in Ælfric’s Supplementary collection (ÆHom 14): ‘Ne sceolde he næfre softnyse brucan, se ðe ne mæg geþafian his underþeoddum mannum þet hy lisse habban on heora lifes geswincum, þonne he eaðe mihte him liðian foroft, þæt he him sylf hæfde sume lisse his sawle. God lufað þa liðnyssse, þæt man lissige oðrum on hefegum geswincum þe men habbað on gewunan.’,105 |
| ‘Leof wes he on liue and lað is he nuðe’ | Judgment Day II (JDay II), 1. 244: ‘leofest on life/ lað bið þænne’106 | Adrian and Ritheus (Ad), no. 44: ‘Saga me hwæt þam men si leofust on his life and laðest æfter his deade?’107 |

The apparent debt of early Middle English homiletic works to Old English versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif is significant not only because it provides corroborating evidence that Anglo-Saxon texts were read and used into the thirteenth century, but because it shows that the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan, whose influence on very late collections like the Lambeth and Vespasian homilies has been long recognized, were not the only homilies still circulating among later preachers. All the extant Old English versions of the ‘Visit to the Tomb’ are preserved in

104 Pope, I. 321, ll. 207–8.
105 Pope, II. 499, ll. 62–8.
107 James E. Cross and Thomas D. Hill, eds., The Prose Solomon and Saturn and Adrian and Ritheus, McMaster Old English Studies and Texts 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 40.
anonymous works. Such homilies, perhaps due to their perceived stylistic inferiority and doctrinal heterodoxy, have often been ignored in studies of the continuity of English religious literature in the centuries after the Conquest. The evidence presented above, however, suggests that the anonymous homilies continued to exert some influence on early Middle English homilists, at least in the area of personal eschatology. In the following chapters I shall turn to matters of historic and cosmic eschatology in the late Old and early Middle English homilies, in which we shall see that both the named and the unnamed Old English homilists also had a significant impact.
Chapter 3
Signs and Warnings of Doomsday: Vespasian D. xiv and Late Old English Apocalyptic Prophecy

3.1 The Signs of Doomsday's Approach and the Reign of Antichrist in the Old English Homilies

The identification and interpretation of the events preceding the Last Judgment were significant concerns of the Anglo-Saxon homilists. All of Ælfric's major eschatological works contain treatments of these topics. The most widely circulated of these was his First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent (ÆCHom I, 40). In expounding Luke 21:25–33—one of Christ’s clearest and most concise statements of the signs and wonders of the end times and the usual pericope for the day—Ælfric utilizes traditional sources, including Bede’s Commentarius in Lucam and Gregory’s Homiliae in evangelia. Wulfstan followed many of the same patristic and early medieval traditions on the signs before Doomsday in his eschatological homilies, though his highly rhetorical style and greater degree of freedom and originality often make specific borrowings more difficult to identify. In addition to the Latin authorities on the topic consulted by Ælfric and Wulfstan, the anonymous Old English homilists often made use of apocryphal sources that attempted to give fuller accounts of the days leading up to the Last Judgment than they found in the canonical books or in more sober commentators. Of these, the Apocalypse of Thomas, which gives detailed descriptions of the wonders and cataclysms to occur on the seven days leading up to Doomsday, was by far the most influential. Four Old English adaptations of this apocryphon, deriving from various recensions of the Latin text, are found in the extant homiletic corpus.

1 Clemoes, 524–30.
2 Godden, Introduction, Commentary, and Glossary, 334–44. See also Pope, 590–608.
3 Bethurum, Homilies, 282–93.
4 The four Old English texts are Blickling VII (HomS 26; Morris, Blickling, 82–97); Vercelli XV (HomU 6; Scragg, Vercelli, 249–65); Bazire-Cross III (HomS 44; Bazire and Cross, 40–55); and a homily from CCC 41 (HomU 12.3). The last is partially edited and its relationship to the Latin and other Old English versions discussed in Max Förster, ‘A New Version of the Apocalypse of Thomas in Old English,’ Anglia 73 (1955): 6–36. Several discussions of the Old English versions and their relationship to the Latin texts have appeared in recent years, the most important of which are Swan, ‘The Apocalypse of Thomas’; Charles D. Wright, ‘The Apocalypse of Thomas: Some
In addition to explaining the astronomical wonders and natural disasters that are to herald the Last Judgment, the named Old English homilists devoted a great deal of attention to the figure of Antichrist. Ælfric discussed the characteristics of Antichrist and his reign in his Supplementary ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ (ÆHom 19) and in his First Series English Preface (ÆCHom I [Pref]).

Wulfstan picked up the same theme with enthusiasm, using material from both Ælfric’s Preface and Adso’s De ortu et tempore Antichristi (one of Ælfric’s own sources for information on Antichrist traditions) to craft the eschatology of his own homilies. A complete Old English translation of Adso’s work, surviving as Napier XLII (HomU 34), was produced by someone close to Wulfstan’s circle and perhaps with the guidance and encouragement of the archbishop himself. Besides Napier XLII, the treatment of Antichrist by anonymous Old English homilists of the pre-Conquest period was far less concerted and systematic than those of Ælfric and Wulfstan. Most mentions of Antichrist in the anonymous homilies—those, anyway, which do not borrow directly from Ælfric and Wulfstan themselves—describe his life and reign in only the vaguest terms. In his discussion of the approach of Doomsday, for example, the author of Blickling XI (HomS 46) refers to Antichrist’s arrival as simply the last in a long series of signs preceding Doomsday:

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6 Godden, Introduction, Commentary and Glossary, 5–6; Pope, 588.

7 Especially Bethurum IV and V (WHom 4 and 5). For a source analysis of these, see Bethurum, Homilies, 288–93.

8 Napier, 191–205. See the discussion of the sources of Wulfstan’s eschatology in Chapter 1 for references to fuller discussions of this text.

9 Note, for instance, the verbatim parallel (noticed by Cross) between Bazire-Cross VIII: ‘antecrist bið sylf deoful and ðeah mennisc man geboren’ (HomS 30; Bazire and Cross, 111, l. 71; ‘Antichrist will be the very devil and nonetheless born as a mortal man’) and Bethurum IV: ‘He byð sylf deofol ðæah mennisc man geboren’ (Bethurum, Homilies, 128, ll. 6–7). The latter phrase is itself an adaptation of Ælfric’s statement in his First Series Preface that ‘se antecrist … þæah mennisc mann þæð deofol swa swa ure hælend is søðlice mann. þæð god on anum hade’ (Clemoes, 175, ll. 73–4).
Occasionally, ‘Antecrist’ appears as an appositive for Satan himself, as in Vercelli II/XXI (HomU 8/HomM 13): ‘La hwæt, men him ne ondrædæþ þæt mycle dioful Antecrist mid his hellwitum γ mid his yrmpþum γ his þam saran suslum þe him bioþ to edleane hira firena golden.’

This statement shows a fundamental difference from the more subtle use of the word by Ælfric and Wulfstan, who draw a distinction between the devil as a spiritual entity confined in hell and Antichrist, the devil’s physical incarnation.

The fact that Ælfric, Wulfstan, and many of their anonymous counterparts lived around the turn of the millennium has led some scholars to question whether the Anglo-Saxon homilists’ interest in the signs of Doomsday’s approach and in the nature of Antichrist might have been the result

10 Morris, Blickling, 117, ll. 31–4. ‘All the signs and portents that our Lord said would come to pass before Doomsday have occurred, with the sole exception that the accursed stranger Antichrist has not yet come here into the world. It is not long, however, before that too shall come to pass….’ The homilist’s phrasing is perhaps influenced by one or more Latin sermons attributed to Ephraem. See especially the Sermo de compunctione cordis (Sermo asceticus): ‘Scripture enim compleqt sunt; et signa que praedicta sunt iam consummata sunt; et non est quod reliquum sit. nisi adversarii nostri anticristi aduentus horribilis’ (‘For the scriptures have been fulfilled, and the signs which were foretold have already come to pass, and there is nothing that remains except the terrible coming of our adversary, Antichrist’). The Latin text was printed by Kilian Fischer (Libri Sancti Effrem [Freiburg im Breisgau, ca. 1491], fols. 2r–10v), but is here cited from fol. 123r of London, Lambeth Palace 204 (s. x/xi), which more closely resembles the wording of Blickling XI. The beginning of the sermon in this manuscript is glossed in Old English, suggesting it may have been known to some Anglo-Saxon homilists. Cf. also a statement in the Ephraemic Sermo de fine mundi (PLS 4, col. 609), which seems to be related: ‘Debemus itaque, fratres mei, intellegere, quid inmineat vel incumbat. Iam facta sunt fames et pestilentiae, commotiones gentium et signa, quae a Domino praedicta sunt, iam consummata sunt, et non est aliud, quod superest, nisi aduentus mali in expletione regni Romani’ (‘My brothers, we ought therefore to understand what is coming or what threatens. Famines and plagues have already occurred. The uprisings of peoples and the signs foretold by the Lord have already been completed, and there is nothing that remains except the coming of the evil one at the end of the Roman kingdom’). On the knowledge in Anglo-Saxon England of ‘Ephraem’s’ works, particularly the Sermo asceticus, see Patrick Sims-Williams, ‘Thoughts on Ephrem the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England,’ in Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, eds. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 205–26; Jane Stevenson, ‘Ephraim the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England,’ Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies 1 (1998): 253–72 at 266–7. A general survey of the circulation of Ephraemic texts in the early medieval West can be found in David Ganz, ‘Knowledge of Ephraim’s Writings in the Merovingian and Carolingian Age,’ Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies 2 (1999): 37–46.

11 Scragg, Vercelli, 56, ll. 34–6. ‘Alas, that men do not fear the great devil Antichrist with his hell-pains and with his torments and his grievous tortures, which will be meted out to them in return for their sins.’ See also Scragg, Vercelli, 359, ll. 183–5.

12 See sense 1.c. of DOE ‘antecrist’; Lionarons, 61.
of a millenarian expectation that the world would end in or around the year 1000. Most inquiries have answered this question in the negative, at least as far as Ælfric and Wulfstan are concerned. Leo Carruthers reminds us of the crucial distinction between apocalypticism and millenarianism with respect to the Old English homilies. The former, he notes, ‘announces the approach of Doomsday as a cataclysmic upheaval of the universe, the signs of which are prophesied by Christ in the Gospels,’ while millenarianism, ‘[w]ith its over-insistence on numerology…, tends to be more extreme than apocalypticism—more crankish, one might say, and fringing on the heretical.’ Ælfric and Wulfstan, Carruthers says, are more accurately characterized by the former than by the latter. He argues that their insistence on the proximity of the Last Judgment depended more on political and social factors—including both universal concerns and those specific to ca. 1000 England—than on an obsession with the date. Malcolm Godden, discussing the frequent indications in the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan that they believed they were living in the end times, nonetheless finds evidence in both authors’ writings of ‘a cyclical sense of time, a recognition that apocalypse is always with us.’

Wulfstan’s homilies present a particularly complex view of the turn of the millennium which merits some further discussion. Ariane Lainé, comparing the author’s earlier eschatological homilies (Bethurum I–V [WHom 1b–5]) with the later ‘Sermo Lupi’ (Bethurum XX [WHom 20.1–20.3]), sees in these texts a gradual weakening in the urgency of warnings about the Antichrist and Doomsday as Wulfstan’s career progressed, but attributes this development to his

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13 For discussions of such fears (no longer considered to be as widespread as once believed), see the collection of essays edited by A. Gow, R. Landes, and D. C. Van Meter, The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950–1050 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). In addition to Godden’s article in this volume (about which see below), an especially relevant contribution is that of Daniel Verhelst, ‘Adso of Montier-en-Der and the Fear of the Year 1000,’ 81–92. Verhelst’s insistence on the gullibility and irrationality of medieval laymen is disagreeable, but his examination of the circumstances of the composition of Adso’s De ortu et tempore Antichristi remains valuable.

14 The words ‘apocalyptism’ and ‘apocalypticism’ are equivalent and equally valid; I have changed Carruthers’s term purely for the sake of consistency.


16 Carruthers, ‘Ending the Millennium,’ 23.

17 Godden, ‘The Millennium, Time, and History,’ 158; see also 175–7.
experience as an archbishop rather than to frustrated millenarian expectations. The idea that Wulfstan always considered the end to be imminent but never attached much specific importance to the year 1000 seems at first difficult to reconcile with the archbishop’s statement on the coming of Antichrist’s reign in his homily ‘Secundum Marcum’ (Bethurum V):

Nu sceal hit nyde yfelian swyðe, forðan þe hit nealæcð georne his timan, ealswa hit awritten is γ gefyrn wæs gewitegod: *post mille annos soluetur Satanas* [cf. Apocalypse 20:7]. Þæt is on Englisc, æfter þusend gearum bið Satanas unbunden. Þusend geara γ eac ma is nu agan syðdan Crist was mid mannum on menniscan hiwe, γ nu syndon Satanases bendas swyðe toslopene, γ Antecristes tima is wel gehende, γ ðy hit is on worulde a swa leng swa wacre.\(^1\)

Lainé considers this more literal interpretation of the Biblical millennium an exception to the more careful approach Wulfstan usually takes in his homilies.\(^2\) Richard North, on the other hand, makes much of this passage, stating flatly that it shows that ‘Wulfstan was a chiliast’ (*i.e.*, a millenarian).\(^3\) William Prideaux-Collins has expressed a similar opinion.\(^4\) Wulfstan’s own words, however, show that he was not a complete literalist in his understanding of ‘post mille annos.’\(^5\) He admits that it has been more than a thousand years since the beginning of the Christian era, yet does not announce that Satan has been let loose or that Antichrist has begun his

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19 Bethurum, *Homilies*, 136, ll. 40–7. ‘Now it must necessarily get worse, because it is getting very close to his [Antichrist’s] time, just as it is written and was prophesied of old: *post mille annos soluetur Satanas.* That is in English: after a thousand years Satan will be released. A thousand years and more has now passed since Christ was among men in human form, and now Satan’s bonds are very much loosened, and Antichrist’s time is close at hand, and thus the world continues to worsen with time.’

20 Lainé, 175.


23 On this point, see Lionarons, 47: ‘[G]iven that Wulfstan does not refer to the millennial concept in the earlier eschatological homilies, one wonders whether his statement here is not more of a rhetorical flourish than an endorsement of millenialism in a sermon that is otherwise devoted to a consideration of time and typology as they relate to the figure of Antichrist, whose advent Wulfstan continues to place in the future.’
reign. Instead he warns, both in Bethurum V and in homilies likely composed after the year 1000, that these things are coming soon. His detailed explanations of Antichrist’s birth and reign in Bethurum V and in his other homilies are clearly descriptions of future events. Although he certainly considered the new millennium a significant turning point, and may have thought of it as corroborative evidence that the last days were approaching, Wulfstan, living in an age of Viking invasion and political upheaval, would hardly have needed to rely on the calendar for signs that the end was nigh.

The most extensive treatment of the significance of the millennium in an Old English homily is found in Napier XLVII (HomU 38). This text and Napier XLVIII (HomU 39) are the only pre-Conquest Old English homilies not written by Ælfric and Wulfstan that can be ascribed to a known Anglo-Saxon author, namely, Byrhtferth of Ramsey. The homilies appear back-to-back in CCCC 421 (s. xi), a codex which, along with its companion volume CCCC 419, consists mainly of Ælfrician, Wulfstanian, and pseudo-Wulfstanian homilies. The two texts are adaptations of material from the conclusion and postscript of Byrhtferth’s Enchiridion (written ca. 1011), and both are highly eschatological in tone. Napier XLVII, derived from Byrhtferth’s discussion of the six ages of the world, begins with a new introductory paragraph that was perhaps composed by Wulfstan, although neither the archbishop nor Byrhtferth seem to have

24 Despite the lack of a distinct future tense in Old English, both Ælfric and Wulfstan consistently use ‘is’ to refer to the present and ‘bið’ for the future. For a clear example of Wulfstan’s use of the latter in his eschatological homilies, see the first paragraph of Bethurum IV (Homilies, 128–30). See also Godden, ‘The Millennium, History, and Time,’ 162–3 et passim.


28 For a discussion of the date of the work, see Baker and Lapidge, xxvi–xxviii.
been directly responsible for recasting the material from the *Enchiridion*.\(^{29}\) After the Wulfstanian exordium, the homily begins immediately to address the significance of the millennium:

> Leofan men, se halga Johannes cwæð: æfter þam þusende bið se deofol unbunden. Nu is þæt þusendfeald getæl agan æfter mennisclicum getæle, ac hit is on þæs hælendes andweardnesse, hwænne he hit geendige. Ðæt þusendfeald getæl is fulfremed, ac se wat his geendunge, þe ealle þing mid his agenre mihte gesceop. Manega men wenað, þæt þes middaneard scule standan on six þusend wintrum, forðan þe god ælmihtig gescop ealle þing binnan six dagum. Ac þæt getæl wise witan hit on oðre wisan getrahtnedon. Ða six dagas … getænjað, þæt we scylon on geswince libban her on life and æfter þissum life for urum godum dædum mede onfon æt urum scyppende on þam seofoðan dæge.\(^{30}\)

Byrhtferth warns his audience that, although a thousand years have passed since Christ’s Incarnation, the true ending of the present age cannot be predicted by human calculation; it is in the hands of God alone. He specifically argues against so-called ‘sabbatical millennialism,’ the idea that the ages of the world corresponded to the days of the week and that the Second Coming would therefore occur on the seventh day, which was supposed to begin at the end of the thousand years mentioned in Apocalypse 20:7.\(^{31}\) Ælfric addresses the same topic in his Second Series homily ‘In natale sanctarum virginum’ (*ÆCHom II, 44*), in which he says that attempts to predict the Second Coming based on ‘þa six þusend geara fram adame’ cannot succeed,\(^{32}\) but Byrhtferth’s refutation of sabbatical millenialism is more nuanced and thorough.

One wonders what audience the adapter of Napier XLVII had in mind when he recast this section of the *Enchiridion* as a homily. Ælfric’s and Byrhtferth’s suggestions that at least some of the

\(^{29}\) See the discussion in Baker and Lapidge, cxxiii, n. 4. The addition occurs on Napier, 242–3 (ending at l. 21).

\(^{30}\) Napier, 243, l. 22 – 244, l. 11. ‘Beloved men, St. John said: After this thousand [years] the devil will be released. That thousandfold number has now passed according to human reckoning, but it is at the saviour’s dispensation when he will bring it to an end. The thousandfold number is now complete, but he, who created all things with his own power, knows its ending. Many men believe that this world will last for six thousand years, because almighty God created all things within six days. But wise counselors have explained that number differently. The six days … mean that we must live in toil in this life, and after this life receive the reward for our good deeds from our creator on the seventh day.’ For Byrhtferth’s original text, see Baker and Lapidge, 236, ll. 77–90.


less learned English clergy were holding to an overly literal interpretation of the year 1000 may provide a clue. The frequent claims in tenth-century Insular homiletic and exegetical literature that Doomsday itself was the seventh ‘age’ of the world and that it would last a thousand years show that sabbatical millennialism might have had some currency among Byrhtferth’s contemporaries.  

This belief about Doomsday is not exclusive to English and Irish works, but it does appear in Insular texts more frequently than elsewhere. The clearest statement of the theme occurs in a discussion of the octave of Easter from the *Catechesis Celtica* (Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica, Reg. lat. 49), a *ca.* 900 Hiberno-Latin compilation:

> Item isti VIII dies pascae signis (ficant) VIII tempora vitaeae praeentis a principio mundi usque ad judicium, quia sub forma sdomadis constituit deus hunc mundum. Ipsa est VII aetas dies iudicij, in quo iunt mille anni, dum iudicentur uiui et mortui secundum merita uniuscuiusque. Ipse est VIII dies uita aeterna, quam dabit deus sanctis suis sine fine in summa ciatu cael.

A similar conception of Doomsday appears in another *Catechesis Celtica* homily, which is based on the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. After describing the seven days leading up to the Last Judgment, the author says: ‘In ista die iudicij, sicut Petrus ait: Erit dies unus tamquam mille anni et mille anni tamquam dies unus. Mille erit dies unus impii et peccatoribus. Sanctis autem et iustis mille anni quasi dies unus erunt.’ The idea that the millennial duration of Doomsday will apply only to the wicked has a precedent in earlier medieval texts.

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33 Many of the Insular sources discussed below are listed in Wright, *Irish Tradition*, 114, n. 42.

34 For an in-depth discussion of the manuscript, see Martin McNamara, ‘Sources and Affiliations of the *Catechesis Celtica* (MS Vat. Reg. lat. 49),’ *Sacrī Erudiri* 34 (1994): 185–237. The collection’s close relationship to anonymous Old English homilies is discussed in Wright, *Irish Tradition*, 58–9 et passim.

35 André Wilmart, ed., ‘Catécheses celtiques,’ in *Analecta Reginensia*, Studi e Testi 59 (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, 1933): 29–112 at 56. ‘These eight days of Easter represent the eight periods of the present life from the beginning of the world until Judgment Day, for God established this world in the form of a week. The seventh age is Judgment Day, in which one thousand years will elapse, during which time the living and the dead will be judged according to each one’s merits. The eighth day is the eternal life which God will give to his holy ones without end in the highest city of heaven.’

36 Martin McNamara, ‘The (Fifteen) Signs before Doomsday in Irish Tradition,’ *Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne* 20 (2007): 223–54 at 237. ‘On that Day of Judgment, as Peter says: One day will be as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. One day will be a thousand years to the unrighteous and the sinners. For the holy and just, on the other hand, a thousand years will be like one day.’

37 Possibly the earliest sign of this concept in the West can be found in the *De cursu temporum* of Quintus Julius Hilarianus, a fourth-century African bishop and eschatologist: ‘Nam sanctis dei in resurrectione unus erit dies, et tantum erit prolongatus in lucem dies iste sanctorum, quantum impii illis in mundo cum poena uiuentibus mille
The thousand-year Doomsday also appears in vernacular Irish literature, *e.g.* in the tenth-century *Saltair na Rann* and in the eleventh-century homily *Scéla Laí Brátha*. Similar statements from anonymous Old English homilies suggest that sabbatical millennialism had also gained a foothold among some of the Anglo-Saxon clergy. A description of Doomsday from an Easter homily in CCCC 162 (HomS 27; s. xi) states that ‘be þæs dæges þrymme and his ege is awriten numerabuntur anni’ (Karl Frick, ed., *Chronica Minora*, vol. I, Bibliotheca scriptorum graecorum et romanorum Teubneriana [Leipzig: Teubner, 1892], 172; ‘For the holy ones of God, the resurrection will occur in one day; and that day of the holy ones will be prolonged to the same extent that one thousand years will pass in it for the wicked, who will be living with punishment in the world’). An eighth-century Spanish exposition of the Apostles’ Creed describes the idea in more detail and explicitly transfers the millennial torment of the wicked to Doomsday: ‘Iustis aperta erit uia; inuisti in medio ignis retinendi erunt. Tunc sedeuit Dominus supra sedem magestatis sue, et congregabuntur ante eum omnes gentes, et exierunt Angeli, et separabant malos de medio iustorum’ [Matthew 25:31]. Eritque dies ille, sicut annos mille, in qua iudicaturus est Dominus populum suum, sicut dicit Propheta: *Mille anni tanquam dies una* [2 Peter 3:8; cf. Psalm 89:4], <dies una> tanquam mille anni. Sancti uero et martyres et confessores, qui in hoc saeculo fideles abuerunt, adprehendere eos et eicere de tribulatione iudicii’ [PLS 4, cols. 2149–50: ‘A way will be open for the just, but the unjust will be held in the middle of the fire. Then our Lord will sit upon the seat of his majesty, and all peoples will be gathered before him, and the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just. And that day will be as a thousand years, in which the Lord will judge his people, as the prophet says: *A thousand years are as one day*, <one day> as a thousand years. But the saints and martyrs and confessors who kept the faith in this world—these they [<i.e.</i>, the angels] will take and remove them from the distress of the judgment’). Caesarius of Arles appears to hint at the concept in his *Sermo* 179, but does not endorse it outright: ‘Et cum de die iudicii scriptum sit, quod erit DIES UNUS TAMQUAM MILLE ANNI, ET MILLE ANNI TAMQUAM DIES UNUS, unde scit unusquisque utrum diebus, an mensibus, aut forte etiam et annis per illum ignem sit transiturus?’ (Morin, II. 686: ‘And since it is written about the day of judgment that ONE DAY IS AS A THOUSAND YEARS, AND A THOUSAND YEARS AS ONE DAY, how is each person to know whether he will have to pass through that fire for days, or months, or perhaps even years?’).


39 ‘Ocus scérait fri airfitiud in domain-seo rocharsat … ar m-bith dóib mile bliadna i tenid bratha. Ar is é-sin ré lathí bratha mar innisit trachtaireda na canoni nóimi’ (‘And they shall separate from the delight of this world which they loved…, after they have been a thousand years in the fire of Doom. For that is the length of Doomsday as the commentators on the holy canon declare’). Text and translation from Whitley Stokes, ed., ‘Tidings of Doomsday,’ *RC* 4 (1879–80): 245–57 at 252–3. Recent analyses of the text can be found in Uáitéar Mac Gearnait, ‘The Middle Irish Homily *Scéla Laí Brátha*,’ *Apocrypha* 20 (2009): 83–114; Elizabeth Boyle, ‘Eschatological Justice in *Scéla Laí Brátha*,’ *CMCS* 59 (Summer 2010): 39–54. The author of the Middle Irish ‘Dá bron flatha …’ (‘The Two Sorrows of the Kingdom of Heaven’) may have been acquainted with the same tradition, although he turns the duration of Doomsday into a kind of numerical *gradatio*, in which souls burn in fiery rivers ‘nan deich mile bliadna γ deich cét mbliadna in each mile’ (‘for ten thousand years, and there are ten hundred years in each thousand’); Georges Dottin, ‘Les deux chagris du royaume du ciel,’ *RC* 21 [1900]: 349–87 at 378). See Wright, *Irish Tradition*, 173.
and gecweden þæt se an dæg byð swa lang swa þusend wintra.'

Interestingly, the word ‘geþuht’ has been added above the second ‘swa’ in this sentence by what seems to be another hand. This addition suggests that a later reader of the manuscript thought it necessary to expunge the passage of overt millennialism by altering the original wording of the homily to state that Doomsday would only seem like a thousand years. A possible echo of the millennial duration of Doomsday also appears in Napier XLIII (HomU 35), a version of the Sunday Letter that, ironically, survives in CCCC 419, the sister volume of the manuscript (CCCC 421) containing Byrhtferth’s injunction against interpreting the millennium too literally. Other possible indications of sabbatical millennialism among the Old English anonymous homilists appear in the various versions of the ‘Devil’s Account of the Next World.’ One element of this account, discussed in Chapter 2 above, is the devil’s statement that the torments of the damned are so great that a man who had spent one night in hell would gladly hang by the feet from a tree on a sea-cliff for thousands of years rather than return there. The version of the

40 Clare A. Lees, ‘Theme and Echo in an Anonymous Old English Homily for Easter,’ Traditio 42 (1986): 115–42 at 122–3, ll. 159–61. ‘Regarding this day’s glory and its terror it is written and said that this one day will be a thousand years long.’ Lees (‘Theme and Echo,’ 138, n. 71) mentions the similarity of this passage to the Catechesis Celtica and to the ‘Devil’s Account of the Next World,’ about which see below.

41 This is also the judgment of Lees, ‘Theme and Echo,’ 115. The relevant manuscript page (CCCC 162, p. 390 at l. 13) can be viewed through the Parker Library on the Web project at the following URL: http://parkerweb.stanford.edu/parker/actions/zoom_view.do?ms_no=162&page=390/, accessed August 2012.

42 One finds an analogous concept in the Old English text of the Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens (HomU 12.2), which also vacillates between claims that the wicked will actually be punished for a certain number of years and that it will only seem like a longer period of time to them because of the harshness of the torments. Compare the descriptions of the fourth and fifth heavens: ‘Ealle ða sawla þara soðfæstra and ðara synfulra farað þurh þone lig: þa soðfæstan in anes eagan birhtme þone lig oferferað; ðam synfullan þyncæð in þam lig .xii. wintra fyrst in ðisse worlde’ (Willard, Two Apocrypha, 4, ll. 26–8; ‘All the souls of the righteous and of the sinful go through the fire: the righteous pass over the fire in the twinkling of an eye; to the sinful it seems like a period of twelve years in this world’); ‘And ealle ða sawla ðara soðfæstra and sinfulla ferað ofer þone flod; and swa ic ær cwæð, þa soðfæstan in anes eagan birhtme oferferað hi, and ða sinfullan beoð celde and cwilmde .xii. wintra lengo’ (Willard, Two Apocrypha, 5, ll. 31–4; ‘And all the souls of the righteous and the sinful pass over the flood; and, as I said before, the righteous pass over it in the twinkling of an eye, and the sinful are [?]frozen and tortured for twelve years’).

43 Napier, 210, ll. 4–6; Dorothy Haines, Sunday Observance and the Sunday Letter in Anglo-Saxon England, AST 8 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2010), 154, ll. 106–7. ‘And þæt bið gedon, þæt þusend daga bið gedon to anum summandægæ; and ponne on þam ðæge forbyrðð heofon and eorðe…’ (‘And it will come to pass that a thousand days will pass on one Sunday; and then on that day heaven and earth will burn up…’). Haines (Sunday Observance, 155) translates ‘a thousand days will come to one Sunday,’ but cf. DOE ‘ge-dōn past part.,’ sense 1.b.

44 See Scragg, Vercelli, 170–1.
'Devil’s Account' in Homily IX of the Vercelli Book (HomS 4), which specifies the duration of the hypothetical hanging torture as ‘siofon þusend wintra,’ is millennially suggestive, though not explicit. 45 Compare, however, the variants of this exemplum from two homilies in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 115, fols. 140v–147v (HomU 15.1; s. xi2, Scragg’s MS. L) and London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fols. 86v–88v (HomU 15; s. xi3med, Scragg’s MS. M), which state that

L: … þonne wile he þis eall lustlice geþafian, þeah he scyle syx þusen[da] wintra γ eac þæt ðusend þe domes dæg on gewyrþ, wið þon þe he næfre ma þa helle ne gesece. 46

M: … þonne wile se man eal lustlice æfre ma þolian, γ þeah he scure þonne gyt þusend wintra þarto γ þæt þusend þe se domes dæg scel on geweorþan, wiþ þan þe he yft ne þurfe næfre ma þa helle gesecan. 47

The separation of the ‘syx þusen[da] wintra’ from the thousand-year Doomsday in the L text of the homily is particularly reminiscent of the literalist conception of the ages of the world against which Ælfric and Byrhtferth argued.

Such claims that Doomsday itself would last a thousand years may not seem very threatening in themselves, but this particular element of sabbatical millennialism was often associated with apocatastasis, an eschatological doctrine deemed heretical. This doctrine, in the form usually attributed to its major proponent, Origen, held that all of God’s rational creations, including the damned, the fallen angels, and Satan himself, would eventually be reconciled to God after a long period of purification. 48 Origen did not attempt to specify the duration of this purgation, but several Western eschatologists who argued against apocatastasis claimed that Origen taught not only that it would last a thousand years, but that it would take place on Doomsday. See, for instance, Christian of Stavelot’s comments on Matthew 25:46:

45 Scragg, Vercelli, 170, ll. 123–4. ‘seven thousand years.’

46 Scragg, 171, ll. 96–8. ‘… then he would suffer all this gladly, though he should have to endure it for six thousand years and also that thousand during which Doomsday shall occur, as long as he never again had to return to hell.’

47 Scragg, 171, ll. 14–7. ‘… then that man would gladly suffer all of this forevermore, even if he should have to add on a thousand more years to it and also that thousand during which Doomsday will occur, as long as he should never have to return to hell again.’ The text is also edited in Robinson, ‘The Devil’s Account.’

ET IBUNT HI IN SUPPLICIUM AETERNUM. Duabus uicibus in hoc loco dominus hoc affirmat quod suppliantia aeterna erunt impii: sic dicuntur impii in aeternis suppliciis esse, sicut dicuntur iusti in uita aeterna, etsi [lege et si] impii non essent semper cruciandi nec iusti semper glorificandi, sicut dicunt Greci: Origenis [sic] eorum doctor eximius errauit putans diem iuditii spatium mille annorum obtinendum, ut in hoc spatio uenirent omnes impii, acta poenitentia, ad ueniam, et ipse diabolus, et per multos annos ita docuit. Cum autem audisset ista duo uerba ‘ignem aeternum’ et ‘supplitium aeternum,’ recognouit errorem suum et uenit in sinodo et puplice confessus est se recognouisse errasse, quod impii aeternaliter debuissent cruciari sicut et iusti in uita aeterna aeternaliter laetari, et accepit paenitentiam et abstinuit a missae officio usque ad diem mortis suae. 49

One finds similar objections in the writings of Beatus of Liébana, 50 Hrabanus Maurus, 51 and Haymo of Auxerre, 52 among others. 53 None of the Old English texts that posit a thousand-year Doomsday contains any overt sign of belief in an apocatastatic eschatology, but the close association of the two concepts in the Latin commentary tradition may have caused more educated Anglo-Saxon clerics like Ælfric and Byrhtferth to worry that some of their contemporaries might be teaching that the torments of the damned were not eternal. 54 Such fears

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49 R. B. C. Huygens, ed., Expositio super Librum generationis, CCCM 224 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 468: ‘AND THESE SHALL GO INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT. The Lord affirms twice here that the punishments of the wicked will be eternal. The wicked are said to be in eternal punishments, just as the just are in eternal life. And if the wicked were not always to be tormented, neither would the just always be glorified. This is what the Greeks say. Origen, their great teacher, was mistaken in thinking that the day of judgment would last for a period of a thousand years, so that in this period, all the wicked, and even the devil himself, might receive pardon after they had done penance. He taught this for many years, but when he heard these two phrases, “everlasting fire” and “everlasting torment,” he recognized his error. And he went to the synod and publicly confessed that he had recognized his error, and that it was fitting that the wicked be eternally tormented just as the just will eternally rejoice in eternal life. And he accepted penance and abstained from saying Mass until the day of his death.’ The odd mention of Origen’s penitence is likely a reference to a spurious Latin text known as the Planctus Origenis, in which Origen laments his past sins (which are not specified) before his fellow priests and his lay flock; cf. Di Sciacca, Finding the Right Words, 160. The Planctus was printed by Jacques Merlin in his Secundus tomus operum Origenis Adamantii (Paris, 1512), fols. 157v–159r.


52 Expositio in Apocalypsin, PL 117, cols. 1110C–D.


54 The author of an Irish homily on St. Michael in Leabhar Breac seems to have shared a similar anxiety: ‘bid annsin din thormfaiter na hanfhireoin iar n-il-bliadnaib, ciąg ni do digbáil a pêne, amal domúinet ecnaide, acht do thornach a pian’ (‘there the impious shall be visited after long years, and not for a mitigation of their punishment, as [some] learned men think, but for increase of their punishments’; Robert Atkinson, ed., The Passions and Homilies
could easily have been reinforced by the claims in some anonymous Old English homilies, such as Vercelli XV (HomU 6), that various saints would intercede for and rescue a portion of the damned during the Last Judgment.\(^{55}\)

It seems likely, then, that the eschatological portion of Byrhtferth’s *Enchiridion* was adapted into a homily in order to counter the spread of sabbatical millennialism among some Anglo-Saxon preachers or to prevent such an idea from being fostered among the laity. One should not, however, infer from the texts quoted above that the Old English anonymous homilists were universally millennialist in their interpretation of the year 1000. A significant counterexample is the author of Blickling XI. This homily, which discusses the ages of the world and states that it is currently the year 971, seems to be building up to a millennial pronouncement, but instead backs away from giving a specific date for Doomsday and stresses that not all the ages of the world have been exactly one thousand years:

> Ne wæron þas ealle gelice lange, ac on þyssum wæs þroþu þusend wintra, on sumre læsse, on sumere eft mare. Nis forþon nærig mon þe ðæt an wite hu lange he ure Drihten þas gedon wille, hwæþer þis þusend sceole beon sceorre ofer þæt þe lengre. Þæt is þonne æghwylcum men swiþe uncuþ, buton urum Drihtne anum.\(^{56}\)

Nor is it clear that all of the anonymous homilists who did write about the world lasting six thousand years or about Doomsday lasting one thousand were any more mathematically rigid in their understanding of the word ‘þusend’ than the author of Blickling XI was. It is probable that


\(^{56}\) Morris, *Blickling*, 119, ll. 2–7. ‘Not all of these [ages] were the same length, but in this there were three thousand years, in some less, in some more. Therefore there is no man who knows how long our Lord will make this one, whether this thousand will be shorter or longer than that one. That is completely unknown to everyone, except to our Lord alone.’ See Godden, ‘The Millennium, Time, and History,’ 156–7; Lionarons, 46–7.
some, even most of them, saw the term as a figurative expression for a very long span of time, and that their apparent sabbatical millennialism was simply the traditional Christian concept of the ages of the world expressed in a novel manner. The fact that the millennial torments of the ‘Devil’s Account’ remained popular enough to be copied into the later eleventh century, when the year 1000 was a distant memory, suggests that the anonymous homilists and their audiences did not always take such concepts literally.57

Indeed, the most important piece of evidence that the preoccupation in Old English homilies with the approach of Doomsday did not result from a pre-millennial panic is the continued copying and composition of such texts throughout the eleventh century and during much of the twelfth. Godden has attributed the continuing relevance of the eschatological homilies of Ælfric and Wulfstan to a decrease in their apocalyptic urgency and emphasis on the millennium,58 but this assessment does not seem to take into account which works of the two authors were actually copied into the later eleventh and twelfth centuries. The eschatological section of Ælfric’s First Series Preface is excerpted in Oxford, Bodleian Library Hatton 115 (s. xi3) and Junius 121 (s. xi3/4).59 Bodley 343 (s. xi2), the latest manuscript to contain a significant number of Wulfstan’s works, not only contains his three most urgent apocalyptic homilies (Bethurum Ib, IV, and V), but combines them into a single long homily on Antichrist.60 In addition to other interesting alterations, the Bodley 343 composite Antichrist homily changes Wulfstan’s original statement about Satan’s bonds, which are no longer ‘swyðe toslopene’ (‘very much loosened’), but ‘unslo pene’ (‘undone’).61 Such a change shows both that the compiler or scribe of the manuscript realized that it was now even further past the ‘mille annos’ of Apocalypse 20:7 than it was when Wulfstan wrote ‘Secundum Marcum,’ and that he considered warnings of the

60 This text has been discussed and edited by Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist.’
61 Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist,’ 658, l. 266. The ‘un-’ in ‘unslo pene’ here represents a redundant use of the prefix, not an expression of reversal of the act of loosing; cf. OED ‘unloosed, adj.’
imminent arrival of Antichrist and Doomsday to be no less relevant in his own time than Wulfstan did 150 years earlier.

New texts dedicated to explaining the signs before Doomsday and characterizing the reign of Antichrist continued to be composed in the twelfth century, too. The most significant collection of these appears in London, BL, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv, which displays a fascinating mixture of Anglo-Saxon and imported traditions on the days immediately preceding the Last Judgment.

3.2 The Compilation and Origins of Vespasian D. xiv

Since the rest of this chapter will be devoted to Vespasian D. xiv, a more extensive summary of scholarly opinion on the manuscript’s provenance and on the rationale behind its composition than appears in the introduction to this thesis is called for. Vespasian D. xiv is a composite codex, consisting of an Old English manuscript of the twelfth century and a ninth-century copy of Isidore’s *Synonyma*. The fifty-three texts of the Old English section of the manuscript are mostly adaptations of homilies by Ælfric, but also include translations of a homily by Ralph d’Escures and of excerpts from the *Elucidarium* of Honorius Augustodunensis, in addition to several anonymous pieces. Many of these texts are too short and disjointed for practical use in preaching as they stand, and some, such as two prognosticatory texts about the weather (Warner XXVI and XXXIV [Prog 5.1 and 5.2]), are not preachable at all, but a homiletic and hagiographic tone pervades the collection nonetheless. Rubie D.-N. Warner’s 1917 EETS edition, the corresponding commentary for which was never written, remains the only edition of the entire English portion of the manuscript. Certain items had been edited already before Warner’s volume, and some of the anonymous texts have since been reedited and commented.

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63 Since it was known already in 1920 that this volume would not appear, Max Förster provided a very full commentary in his ‘Der Inhalt der altenglischen Handschrift Vespasianus D. XIV,’ *Englische Studien* 54 (1920): 46–68.

64 See Schmetterer, 39–53.
on in dissertations by Rima Handley and Viktor Schmetterer, although these are not widely available.\textsuperscript{65}

With the exception of Schmetterer, who believes that the manuscript is ‘aus dem frühen 12. Jahrhundert,’\textsuperscript{66} all recent scholars who have examined Vespasian D. xiv have favoured a date closer to the middle of the century.\textsuperscript{67} Discussions on the provenance of the manuscript have not enjoyed the same unanimity. Ker at first believed that Vespasian D. xiv was written in either Rochester or Canterbury, but eventually rejected the latter.\textsuperscript{68} Mary Richards attempted in 1973 to prove that Rochester was the manuscript’s provenance through a detailed analysis of its language and orthography.\textsuperscript{69} In 1974, however, Handley adduced convincing historical arguments that Christ Church, Canterbury was the better fit.\textsuperscript{70} While Susan Irvine does not completely discount the possibility that the manuscript may have been written in Rochester,\textsuperscript{71} Elaine Treharne has stated that ‘incremental evidence does point more convincingly to Canterbury.’\textsuperscript{72} George Younge has recently brought forth even more evidence suggesting a Canterbury origin.\textsuperscript{73} However, in the present lack of scholarly consensus it is safest to conclude that Vespasian D. xiv was produced in a Southeastern scriptorium, probably either Rochester or Christ Church, Canterbury.

\textsuperscript{65} Handley, ‘A Study’; Schmetterer, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{66} Schmetterer, 3.

\textsuperscript{67} In addition to the works cited in the preceding notes, see Mary P. Richards, ‘On the Date and Provenance of MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv ff. 4–169,’ \textit{Manuscripta} 17 (1973): 31–5 at 31.

\textsuperscript{68} Ker, \textit{Catalogue} 209 (especially his comments at the end of the entry). See also his \textit{Medieval Libraries of Great Britain} (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1941), 25. Both are cited in Richards, ‘On the Date and Provenance,’ 31.

\textsuperscript{69} Richards, ‘On the Date and Provenance.’


\textsuperscript{71} Irvine, ‘Compilation and Use,’ 51.

\textsuperscript{72} Treharne, ‘Homilies, etc.: London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv.’

The intended audience and use of Vespasian D. xiv cannot be known for certain, but the fact that many of the manuscript’s texts are neither the right length nor in an appropriate form (or even genre) to function as preached homilies suggests that the book was produced for private reading and teaching. Such is also the opinion of Handley, Irvine, and Mary Swan. The presence on fol. 4r of two prayers, copied in a late twelfth-century hand, one of which is addressed by ‘ego ancilla tua’ to the Virgin Mary, suggests that the book was in female ownership shortly after its production, and possibly that it was intended specifically for the instruction of female religious or pious laywomen. Swan has provided the fullest discussion of the manuscript’s possible female audience, arguing that Vespasian D. xiv and other twelfth-century homiletic manuscripts may have been meant for a community of secular vowesses, although the book could just as easily have been directed towards any group of English-speaking women. George Younge agrees that the manuscript was likely not meant for public use, but argues for a monastic, specifically Benedictine, audience.

Mary Richards considered the sometimes significant editing and abbreviation of the Ælfrician texts in Vespasian D. xiv an indication that its compiler(s) wanted to ‘avoid doctrinal complexity and legendary accretions’ and instead focus on the basics of the Christian faith. Younge concurs, saying, ‘Throughout the codex, original material is altered to suit the requirements of a linguistically and theologically unsophisticated audience.’ If this is true, such alteration would provide evidence of the level of education of the collection’s presumed readers. Some simplification is certainly present in the adaptations of Ælfric’s works, and the manuscript as a whole is not difficult reading. However, these general characteristics do not necessarily imply that the book’s readership was wholly uninterested in legendary narratives or incapable of

75 See references in previous note.
76 Swan, ‘Imagining a Readership,’ 152–3 et passim.
77 Younge, ‘An Old English Compiler.’
78 Richards, Texts and Their Traditions, 93.
79 Younge, ‘An Old English Compiler.’
appreciating doctrinal subtlety. For instance, it is difficult to see how a manuscript that contains numerous and often fantastic visions of heaven and hell as well as texts drawing on other popular eschatological traditions like the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ can be considered devoid of ‘legendary accretions.’\footnote{Handley’s comment (‘British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 245) that Warner XXVII (‘On the Coming of Antichrist’) has been ‘stripped of most of its legendary accretions’ is similarly perplexing. The piece is brief, to be sure, but retains many of the most familiar elements of the medieval Antichrist legends and even adds some of its own, as will be discussed in detail below. Note also the additions to the Vespasian D. xiv version of Ælfric’s homily ‘De Initio Creaturae.’ One of these is based on an obscure hexameral tradition that it took three days and nights for the rebel angels to fall from heaven into hell, an account that can only be described as legendary. See my article ‘Ræd, Unræd, and Raining Angels: Alterations to a Late Copy of Ælfric’s Homily “De Initio Creaturae,”’ \textit{NQ} 57 (2010): 295–301 at 297–301.}

Nor would we expect a compiler who worried greatly about his audience’s response to ‘doctrinal complexity’ to include in his manuscript a piece like Warner XLIII (HomU 56)—a translation of a homily by Ralph d’Escares that tackles the difficult question of what the Biblical narrative of Christ’s visit to the house of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38–42) has to do with the Virgin Mary.\footnote{See Treharne, ‘The Life of English in the Mid-Twelfth Century.’} Furthermore, the prayers copied on fol. 4r show that the only known twelfth-century user of the manuscript was at least educated enough to read and write Latin, even if this ‘ancilla’ preferred instruction and devotional reading in her own language.\footnote{Swan discusses the ramifications of the ability of the Vespasian D. xiv ‘ancilla’ to read Old English (‘Imagining a Readership,’ 152), but the fact that she understood Latin and still preferred English seems just as important.}

Handley showed in her description of the manuscript that Vespasian D. xiv comprises five quire blocks,\footnote{Handley, ‘British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 243.} of which block D (fol. 76v–103r; Warner’s items XXVII–XXXIV) is the most important for our purposes. This block was written entirely in the main hand of the manuscript and focuses mainly on eschatology and prophecy, as can be seen especially in the following texts:

\textbf{Warner XXVII} (Notes 21): A summary of prophecies on Antichrist

\textbf{Warner XXVIII} (ÆCHom I, 40): Ælfric’s First Series homily for the Second Sunday in Advent
**Warner XXXI** (Nic [C]): An Old English translation of the Gospel of Nicodemus

**Warner XXXIII** (Notes 22): The Old English ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’

The ‘Fifteen Signs’ text was added as filler at the end of block D, as was Warner XXXIV (Prog 5.2), a text on the significance of thunder in various months of the year. Another prognostic text—Warner XXVI (Prog 5.1), which predicts the weather of the year based on which day of the week January 1 falls on—was added to fill out the last quire of the previous block, perhaps around the same time. Thus, although short prophecies and prognostics like Warner XXVI and XXXIII–XXXIV were used to fill out quires, their position in the manuscript immediately before and after a grouping of eschatological and prophetic material suggests that their selection for this task may not have been haphazard, as Handley asserts, but rather designed to support the overarching themes of block D.

Quire block E, on the other hand, was written by multiple hands and does not have any discernible, unified theme, but nonetheless contains several texts with eschatological elements:

**Warner XXXVII–XXXVIII** (ÆCHom II, 22 and 23): Ælfric’s Second Series Homilies on the visions of Furseus and Drihthelm, for the Tuesday in Rogationtide

**Warner XLII** (LS 28; BL/Vesp. D.xiv/002): A homily on St. Neot whose conclusion seems to be inspired by Wulfstan’s *Sermo Lupi*

**Warner XLIV** (HomU 57): A discussion of the Babylonian captivity and the seven ages of the world

**Warner XLVII** (HomU 17.2; BL/Vesp. D.xiv/004): The Old English ‘Prose Phoenix,’ which contains a description of Paradise

With the exception of the ‘Prose Phoenix,’ the importance of which in the development of English ideas about the afterlife has been discussed in detail by Ananya Jahanara Kabir, the

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84 Not a text with an evident eschatological focus, perhaps, but, as Handley points out, the Harrowing of Hell in the Gospel of Nicodemus ‘was considered to be a type of the Second Coming’ (Handley, ‘British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 246).

85 ‘The material thus introduced has clearly been inserted simply to fill up space: it is largely fragmentary and insubstantial’ (Handley, ‘British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 243).


87 Kabir, 167–89.
anonymous eschatological texts of Vespasian D. xiv have garnered little critical comment. The remainder of this chapter will consist of examinations of three of the manuscript’s anonymous items—Warner XXVII, XXXIII, and XLIV, all of which seem to have been composed post-Conquest\(^88\)—and discussions of their relationships to older, Anglo-Saxon and newer, Continental traditions on the signs of the Second Coming and the nature of the last days.

3.3 Warner XXVII: ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’\(^89\)

A short text on the nature of Antichrist and his reign introduces quire block D of Vespasian D. xiv, immediately preceding a version of Ælfric’s most popular eschatological work, his First Series homily for the Second Sunday of Advent. Warner gave the fitting header ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’ to this item, and it is difficult to provide it with a more specific title than this. The text takes up a little over one manuscript folio and only about thirty lines of text in Warner’s edition. A later reader has made several changes to the text.\(^90\) Although they were printed by Warner, none of these ‘corrections’ is necessary, some of them make no sense, and all are based on misunderstandings of the first scribe’s language; hence, I have not included them in the quotations of the text below. They remain interesting, however, since such alterations are not present in the neighbouring texts of this part of the manuscript. They therefore indicate that a later reader specifically consulted and desired to update this piece. Warner XXVII is hardly long enough to be preached as it stands, so it does not seem appropriate to call it a homily per se. Nevertheless, its introductory clause, ‘Hit sæigð on halgen bocan…’,\(^91\) is the same kind of non-specific appeal to authority that often appears at the beginnings of Old English anonymous

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\(^88\) This is also the opinion of Younge (‘An Old English Compiler’).

\(^89\) Much of the material in this section was published in an earlier form in my article ‘The Revelationes of Pseudo-Methodius and “Concerning the Coming of Antichrist” in British Library MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ \textit{NQ} 56 (2009): 324–30 (© copyright by Oxford University Press). The partial reproduction of this article here is by permission of Oxford University Press.

\(^90\) Handley (‘A Study,’ 145) believes this hand to be of the later twelfth century, but the total of seven or eight characters written by the corrector hardly provides enough data for a confident dating.

\(^91\) Warner, 66, l. 27. ‘It says in holy books…’
homilies, and (as we shall see) some of the ‘holy books’ on which the author drew can be identified with confidence in the Latin and Old English homiletic traditions.

The first sentences of Warner XXVII describe the widespread chaos that will afflict the world before the coming of Antichrist, and infer from contemporary events that his coming must be very near indeed:

Hit sæigð on halgen bocan, þæt æfter gearan ymbryne swa gewurðen scule, þæt eall middeneard mid hæðenra þeode geðrynge, 93  γ mid heoran 94 hæftnysse swa swyðe gedrecked  γ gedrefod wurðed, þæt hine uneaðe ænig riht gelefed mann mid þan heofonlicen kinges tacne gebletsigen mote,  oððe gesenigen durre. Pas geswæncennyse we mugen nu mycele mare on us sylfen ongyten, þonne we hit on bocan leornigen. 95

The idea that invasions by heathen peoples will occur in the last days derives ultimately from Christ’s warning in Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8, and Luke 21:10 that nation will rise against nation, but the author of Warner XXVII has made use of several other sources in employing this motif. One is immediately struck by the strange claim, not present in any Biblical eschatological

92 Cf. Vercelli IX – ‘Men ða leofestan, manað us  γ myngaþ þeos halige boc …’ (‘Most beloved men, this holy book admonishes and reminds us …’; Scragg, Vercelli, 158, l. 1); Vercelli X (HomS 40) – ‘Her sagð on þyssum halegum bocum …’ (‘It says here in these holy books …’; Scragg, Vercelli, 196, l. 1); Vercelli XV – ‘Men þa leofestan, sægð us on þyssum bocum …’ (‘Dearest men, these books tell us …’; Scragg, Vercelli, 253, l. 1).

93 After ‘geðrynge’ the later reader has added ‘by’ (< Old English beo, 3rd sg. pres. subj. of beon), which, as Schmetterer (122) comments, shows that ‘geðrynge nicht mehr als Substantiv erkannt, sondern für ein Partizip (statt geþringed) gehalten wurde. Daher ist auch Warners [66] Paraphrase “all the earth will be thronged with heathen people” falsch.’

94 The later reader has altered ‘heoran’ to ‘heordan.’ Handley (‘A Study,’ 145) states that either ‘heora(n)’ or ‘heordan’ make good sense, and that it is impossible to tell which is the correct reading. The original reading ‘heoran’ has been explained as a late variant of ‘heora’ by Max Förster, ‘Kleinere Mittelenglische Texte,’ Anglia 42 (1918): 145–224 at 222 (cf. MED ‘heren [pron.]’). Schmetterer (122–3), on the other hand, defends the alteration on the grounds that ‘keine Beispiele von heoran=heora in der HS gibt.’ He also disputes Förster’s claim that the character is in a later hand, believing instead that it is the main scribe’s own correction. I have only been able to examine the manuscript on microfilm, but Förster’s opinion on the hand of this alteration seems correct to me. Furthermore, David McDougall has suggested to me (private communication, 2 February 2011) that the probable lack of initial aspiration in the twelfth-century pronunciation of ‘hæftnysse’ could have contributed to nunnation. Finally, if (as I argue below) the author depended on Gregory the Great’s homily for the First Sunday of Advent, the phrase in question would correspond roughly to Gregory’s ‘earumque pressuram,’ which would provide external support for reading ‘heoran’ as the genitive plural demonstrative pronoun.

95 Warner, 66, l. 27 – 67, l. 1. ‘It says in holy books that after the passage of years it will come to pass that the whole world will be so troubled and oppressed by the horde of heathen nations and by their captivity that any orthodox man will not easily be able to bless himself or dare to sign himself with the heavenly king’s sign. We are now able to perceive these afflictions much greater in looking to ourselves than by learning about them in books.’
source, that faithful people will be unable to bless themselves with the Sign of the Cross. Handley adduces as a probable source an excerpt from a tract on Antichrist by pseudo-Ephraem Syrus, which states that those who receive the Mark of the Beast (cf. Apocalypse 13:16–7) will be unable to make the Sign of the Cross. 96 This text is certainly an interesting parallel, but it is unlikely to be a source. Beyond their superficial similarity, the two texts actually make very different points: in the pseudo-Ephraem tract those who have received the Mark of the Beast are unable to make the Sign of the Cross, while in Warner XXVII it is those who remain faithful that are thus afflicted. Handley also leaves aside the question of how a Greek work presumably unknown in medieval England could have been a source for a late Old English text.

Handley also cites a passage from Ælfric’s Supplementary ‘Sermo de die iudicii’ 97 as a parallel to the inability of faithful people to make the Sign of the Cross, and here she is on surer footing:

Nú ne bið hit na swa on Antecristes timan; he tintregað þa halgan, and eac tācna wyrcað, and þa halgan ne magon on þam timan gewyrcað ðenige tācna, ac hi yfele beoð forþam gedrefede, þonne se deofol wyrcað menigfealde wundra, and hi sylfe ne magon nane mihte gefremman on manna gesihðe. 98

Wulfstan used the same passage as a source for his homily ‘Secundum Marcum’ (Bethurum V), 99 which was itself cited as a parallel to Warner XXVII by Schmetterer. 100 Wulfstan’s version of the motif runs as follows: ‘Ac hit ne bið na swa on Antecristes timan. Ne magan þonne halige men on þam timan ðenige tacna openlice wyrcað, ac sculan þolian eal þæt heom man to deð.’ 101 Ælfric and Wulfstan differ from the author of Warner XXVII in using ‘tacn’ to refer to a miracle


97 Handley, ‘A Study,’ 146.

98 Pope, 606, ll. 356–62. ‘It will not be so in Antichrist’s time [i.e., God’s holy people will not be able to perform miracles]; he will torture holy people and also work signs, and the holy ones will not be able to perform any signs at that time, but they will be sorely disturbed when the devil makes many miracles and they themselves are not able to perform any in men’s sight.’

99 Pope, 584–5.

100 Schmetterer, 122.

101 Bethurum, Homilies, 138, ll. 61–64. ‘But it will not be so in Antichrist’s time. Holy men will not be able to openly perform any signs at that time, but they will have to suffer all that is done to them.’
rather than the Sign of the Cross. This change in sense of this word might perhaps be explained by mnemonic transmission. If the author of Warner XXVII was drawing on memories of one of these Old English homilies rather than looking at a written text, he may have misremembered his source as stating that holy men will be unable to openly bless themselves with the Sign (‘tacne’) of the Cross. The use by both Ælfric and the Warner XXVII author of the past participle of ‘drefan’ in their versions of this prophecy may provide some evidence that the latter was working from recollection of the former’s work. Such hypotheses are always unverifiable, of course, and it is just as possible that Warner XXVII represents a purposeful reinterpretation of an idea from Ælfric’s or Wulfstan’s homilies. In any case, the Anglo-Saxon homilists are far likelier sources than pseudo-Ephraem Syrus for the idea that God’s faithful will be unable to perform ‘tacna’ during the last days.

The opening of Warner XXVII also depends partially on Gregory the Great’s homily for the First Sunday in Advent, which discusses the war and turmoil of the last days in much the same terms. Elements of the first sentences of Warner XXVII seem to be based on a statement from Gregory’s text:

Warner, 66, ll. 28–30; 66, l. 31 – 67, l. 1: …
eall middeneard mid hæðenra þeode geðrynge,
† mid heoran hæftnysse swa swyðe gedrecced
† gedrefod wurðeð …. Þas geswæncennysse we
mugen nu mycele mare on us sylfen ongyten,
þonne we hit on bocan leornigen.104

Gregory, Homilia in euangelia 1, (Étaix, 6, ll. 14–6): Nam gentem super gentem exsurgere
earumque pressuram terris insistere plus iam in
nostris tribulationibus <cernimus>105 quam in
codicibus legitimus.106

The first sentence of Warner XXVII perhaps does not approach the wording of the Latin closely enough to suggest Gregory as the source, but the Old English homily’s statement that we can see

102 Handley, ‘A Study,’ 146.
104 ‘… the whole world will be so troubled and oppressed by the horde of heathen nations and by their captivity …. We are now able to perceive these afflictions much greater in looking to ourselves than by learning about them in books.’
105 ‘cernimus’ or ‘cognoscimus’ are added after ‘tribulationibus’ in several manuscripts whose variants are reported by Étaix.
106 ‘For we discern nation rising against nation and their oppression afflicting these lands more now in our own troubles than we read about it in books.’
the prophesied afflictions more clearly with respect to ourselves ‘þonne we hit on bocan leornigen’ is too similar to Gregory’s text to be a coincidence. The same Gregorian homily was also the main source for ÆLfric’s homily for the Second Sunday of Advent, as ÆLfric himself says and as Malcolm Godden has thoroughly discussed. However, the author of Warner XXVII does not seem to be borrowing from ÆLfric, who rendered Gregory’s statement significantly differently: ‘Witodlice on þisum niwum dagum arisan ðeoda ongean þeodum γ heora ofþryccednys on eorþan gelamp swiðor þonne we on ealdum bocum rædað.’ Indeed, Warner XXVII provides a closer translation of the last part of Gregory’s sentence (‘plus … legimus’) than does ÆLfric, suggesting that the author of the late Old English text was working directly from the Latin rather than from ÆLfric’s homily.

After this initial description of apocalyptic signs, Warner XXVII summarizes the rebellion and fall of the devil, with whom the author identifies the figure of Antichrist:

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\begin{align*}
&\text{Þas witen γ þas gedrefodnysse þonne gewurðeð, γ ateowodnysse þæs awyrgoden Antecristes tocyme, se þe on þysne middeneard toweard is to cumene, þæt is se wiðersace}^{111} \text{ deofol þe æt frymðe wið Godes gesceafte gewann, γ þurh his oferhyd aðand. Sæde þæt he mihte rixigen ofer heofones γ beon gelic Godes sune. Þa ne mihten heofones his oferhyd ahebben, ac wearð he mid mihte on helle grundes mid his gemæccen besænct.}^{112}
\end{align*}
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107 ‘Se halga gregorius us trahtnode þises godspelles digelnyssse’ (Clemoes, 525, l. 20; ‘St. Gregory explained the mysteries of this Gospel passage for us’).
109 Clemoes, 525, ll. 33–5. ‘Certainly, in these recent days nations have arisen against nations, and their oppression occurs on the earth more often than we read in ancient books.’
110 For a discussion of ÆLfric’s translation of this sentence, see Godden, ‘The Millennium, Time, and History,’ 159–61.
111 The later reader has added ‘γ se’ between ‘wiðersace’ and ‘deofol,’ removing what was likely a deliberate asyndeton on the part of the author. See Schmetterer, 123. David McDougall has pointed out to me (private communication, 2 February 2011) that Old English ‘deofol’ is often not preceded by a demonstrative when it refers specifically to Satan; cf. Pope’s glossary to ÆLfric’s Supplementary Collection, s.v. ‘deofol.’
112 Warner, 67, ll. 1–12. ‘These pains and afflictions will occur then, along with indications of the coming of the accursed Antichrist, who is to come into this world, that is the adversary, the devil, who at the beginning strove against God’s creation and became arrogant on account of his pride. He said that he could reign over the heavens and be like the Son of God. Then the heavens could not sustain his pride, but he was made by force to sink into the abyss of hell with his companions.’
The ultimate source for some of the wording in this passage is Isaiah 14:14, in which Lucifer utters his well-known boast, ‘ascendam super altitudinem nubium ero similis Altissimo’.

The detail that the heavens themselves could not support Lucifer because of his pride is not Biblical, but does have a precedent in Old English religious literature. In his *Libellus de veteri testamento et novo*, Ælfric states that, after Lucifer was overcome by pride and began to gather others to his cause,

Da næfde he nan setl hwær he sittan mihnte, for ðæn ðe nan heofon nolde hine aberan ne nan rice næs þe his mihte beon ongean Godes willan, þe geworhte ealle ðinc. ða afunde se modiga hwilce his mihta wæron, þa þa his fet ne mihton furðon ahwar standan, ac he feoll ða adun, to deofle awend, and ealle his gegadan of ðam Godes hirede into helle wite be heora gewirhtum.

I have not found this tradition in any Latin text or in any other Old English work. As is the case with the aforementioned connections to Ælfric’s and Wulfstan’s homilies, the phrasings of the motif in Warner XXVII and the *Libellus* are not particularly close. As the similarities between these texts are more thematic than verbal, it is possible that we are again dealing with mnemonic recollection of source texts on the part of the late Old English author. An abridged copy of Ælfric’s *Libellus* in Bodley 343 shows that the work was still being read in the later twelfth century. Given its availability and similarity to this section of Warner XXVII, it seems likely that the *Libellus* was the late Old English author’s source for the idea that the heavens would not support Lucifer.

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113 ‘I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High.’

114 Richard Marsden, ed., *The Old English Heptateuch and Ælfric’s Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo: Volume 1, Introduction and Text*, EETS o.s. 330 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 203, ll. 78–83. ‘Then he had no throne to sit on, for no heaven would bear him, nor was there any kingdom that he might possess against the will of God, who created all things. Then the proud one found out how much power he really had, when his feet could not stand anywhere; he fell down, having been changed into a devil, along with all his companions from the retinue of God into the torment of hell on account of their deeds.’


116 The scribe or compiler of Vespasian D. xiv seemed to be particularly interested in hexameral traditions regarding Lucifer’s fall. See Pelle, ‘Ræd, Unræd,’ 297–301.
It may be briefly noted that the depiction of the fall of Lucifer as a literal loss of footing, seemingly first used in English by Ælfric, had a long life in the religious literature of medieval England. The metrical Life of Adam from the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates’ MS. 19.2.1, ca. 1330–40), for instance, deploys this theme to almost comic effect. When Christ realizes what Lucifer has been doing in his absence, he leaves Paradise (where he had presumably been at work creating Adam and Eve) and returns to heaven. Upon his return, it is said that

He seyȝe where Liȝtbern set,
And bad him loke to his fet.
And Liȝtbern anon riȝt,
For pride, þat in him was liȝt,
In holy writ we heren telle,
He sanke adoun into helle…. 117

A possible reminiscence of the same idea appears in the slightly later Middle English Lyff of Adam and Eue from the Vernon manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. poet.a.1, late s. xiv): ‘And tho that yaf kepe to that word [i.e., God’s word] bilaften stille and the othure fellen adoun that co[n]sented to Lucifer, for heo neoren not stable toforen.’ 118 These Middle English texts suggest that the reduction of Lucifer’s rebellion to a pathetic inability to remain aloft in heaven, utilized (and perhaps invented) by Ælfric and borrowed by the author of Warner XXVII, had become a robust element of popular English traditions on the fall of the angels by the later Middle Ages. 119

After its summary of Satan’s fall, Warner XXVII moves on immediately to a summary of the circumstances of Antichrist’s birth and career. Some of this brief description is too general to be connected to any one text, but part of it certainly derives from the Revelationes of pseudo-Methodius. Attributed to the early church father Methodius of Olympus (or Patara), the


119 One might also detect some influence from this motif on depictions of the fall of Lucifer in medieval English drama. See, e.g., Clifford Davidson and Nona Mason, ‘Staging the York Creation, and Fall of Lucifer,’ Theatre Survey 17 (1976): 162–78 at 171–2.
Revelationes were composed in Syriac in the seventh century and were translated into Greek and Latin by the early eighth.\(^{120}\) A detailed description of the work’s content would be outside the scope of this examination; Michael Twomey’s brief summary hits the most important points:

The original version of the Revelationes is a Syriac apocalypse divided into historical and prophetic sections. It recounts the Creation, Fall, and Flood, followed by the succession of empires, the Arab invasions, the eventual triumph of the Last Roman Emperor, the coming of the Antichrist, and the end of the world.\(^{121}\)

Given the influence the Revelationes exerted on medieval eschatological ideas elsewhere and the clear interest in such topics in Anglo-Saxon religious literature, it is surprising that there is no evidence for the presence of the work in England before the Norman Conquest. As Twomey describes, of the almost two dozen pre-twelfth-century Latin manuscripts of the Revelationes, only two are of English origin, and neither of these predates 1075.\(^{122}\)

Most connections proposed by Anglo-Saxonists between the Revelationes and Old English literature have been indirect. Thomas D. Hill has noted echoes of the Revelationes in the figure of Noah’s fourth son, who appears in certain Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies.\(^{123}\) These correspondences, however, are not exact, nor do they necessarily indicate a direct acquaintance with the Revelationes. Late twelfth-century notes in a manuscript of the Old English Hexateuch (discussed in more detail below) cite Methodius as a source, but are in fact taken from quotations

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\(^{121}\) Twomey, ‘Pseudo-Methodius,’ 19.


of pseudo-Methodius excerpted by Peter Comestor. The Revelationes served as a kind of ultimate source for Napier XLII, but only insofar as the latter text is a translation of Adso’s De ortu et tempore Antichristi, which was influenced by the Revelationes.

None of these texts, then, gives definitive evidence that the Revelationes were used as a source by any Old English author. A prophecy in Warner XXVII, on the other hand, shows a clear dependence on pseudo-Methodius:

He [Antichrist] byð acænnod on þan ungesæligen wongstyde þe Corozaim hatte, γ he byð gefedd on Betsaida, γ he rixeð on þære byrig þe Capharnaum gedwédon is, γ þonne blisseð seo būrh Corozaim, for þan þe he on hire byð acænnod, γ þonne gefagenað Betsaida, for þan þe he on hire gefedd byð, γ þa būrhware on Capharnaum mid mycelyre oferhyde onhafene byð, γ on his rice swyðe gefagenigeð. For þyssen ungeðwærnyssen, Drihten on his godspelle þa ungesælignyssen cydde mid þan þrym worden, þa he swa cwæð, ‘Wa þe Corozaim, wa þe Betsaida, wa þe Capharnaum, for þan þe þu talest þæt þu oð heofon ahafen seo, þu mid færlicen ryre on helle Grundes gereosest.’

Christ’s speech in this passage is scriptural (cf. Matthew 11:21, 23), but the interpretation of his words as a prophecy of the life of Antichrist is not. Rather, as Handley and Schmetterer have shown, this part of the Old English text seems to be a slightly modified but still close translation of a section of the Latin Revelationes of pseudo-Methodius. This section corresponds to chapters 13.21–14.1 in Aerts and Kortekaas’s edition of Recension 1 of the Revelationes:

[C]um suplebuntur decim et demedium anni, apparebit filios perditiones. Hic nascitur in Chorozaim et nutrietur in Bethsaida et regnavit in Gapharnaum. Et

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126 Schmetterer (128) and Handley (‘A Study,’ 424) correct Warner’s erroneous ‘þa þa.’
127 Warner, 67, ll. 12–22. ‘He [Antichrist] will be born in the unhappy place that is called Corozaim, and he will be raised in Bethsaida, and he will rule in the city that is called Capharnaum. And then Corozaim will be glad, because he was born in her; and than Bethsaida will rejoice, because he was raised in her; and then the citizens of Capharnaum will be lifted up with great pride, and will greatly rejoice in his rule. On account of these disturbances, the Lord in his gospel made known those misfortunes with the three words, when he thus said, “Woe to you Corozaim, and woe to you Bethsaida, and woe to you Capharnaum; because you believe that you will be raised up to heaven, you will fall down to the abyss of hell with a sudden fall.’”
128 Handley, ‘A Study,’ 148–9; Schmetterer, 107–111, 127–8. The authors seem to have arrived at their conclusions independently. I focus here primarily on Handley because of her chronological priority.
laetabitur Chorozaim eo quod natus est in ea, et Bethsaida, propter quod nutritus est in ea, et Capharnaum ideo, quod regnaverit in ea. Propter hanc causam in evangelio Dominus tertio sententiam dedit ‘Vae,’ dicens: ‘Vae tibi, Chorozaim, vē tibi Bethsaida, et tibi, Capharnaum, si usque in caelum exaltaveris, usque ad infernum discendes.’

The clear similarities between the Old English text and the Revelationes were first noticed by Handley, who compared these passages and claimed pseudo-Methodius as a probable source for the Old English text.130 Much work has been done on the Revelationes since this time, but, as no other source has been found from which pseudo-Methodius (and by extension, the author of the Old English ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’) might have drawn for this information, Handley’s explanation seems to have been correct. Indeed, the unique nature of this passage of the Revelationes has been recently asserted by Aerts and Kortekaas:

Die Exegese, in der behauptet wird, daß der Antichrist in C(h)oraz(a)in geboren, respektive in Bethsaida erzogen und in Kapharnaum regieren wird, ist von Pseudo-Methodius selbst erfunden oder aus einer unbekannten Quelle entwickelt worden …. Alle byzantinischen und west-mittelalterlichen Mitteilungen dieser Art gehen auf Ps[eudo-]M[ethodius] zurück.131

The closest Old English analogue to the prophecy in ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’ appears in the aforementioned homily Napier XLII:

On þyssere byrig Babilonia, þe hwilon wæs æþelost and wuldorfullost burh ealra burha and Persa rices heafod, bið Antecrist geboren. And on ðam twam burhum Bethsaida and Corozaim, hit sægð, þæt he bið afedd, and þær he wunað ærest. Þa burha ðreade Crist mid his halgan muðe, þa þa he þus cwæð, ‘Ve tibi Bethsaida,

129 Aerts and Kortekaas, I. 185–7. ‘When ten and a half years are completed, the son of perdition will appear. He will be born in Corozaim, and raised in Bethsaida, and he will reign in Capharnaum. And Corozaim will rejoice because he was born in her, and Bethsaida because he was raised in her, and Capharnaum because he will reign in her. For this reason the Lord gave the saying “woe” three times in the gospel, saying, “Woe to you, Corozaim; woe to you Bethsaida, and to you Capharnaum; if you would be raised up to heaven, you will fall down to hell!”’ The bizarre spellings are characteristic of the text as a whole, and may indicate (as Aerts and Kortekaas believe) a Merovingian origin for the Latin translation. Note especially ‘filios’ for ‘filius,’ ‘perditiones’ for ‘perditionis,’ and the confusion of intervocalic ‘b’ and ‘v.’

130 Handley, ‘A Study,’ 148–9. See also Schmetterer, 107–111, 127–8. Förster (‘Der Inhalt,’ 52) noted that a Byzantine dialogue and the thirteenth-century Syriac Book of the Bee contain the same description of Antichrist’s birth, but such parallels are certainly to be attributed to common inheritance from the Revelationes.

131 Aerts and Kortekaas, II. 123.
This paragraph is a close translation of a section of Adso’s *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, the homily’s main source:

[…]* ciuitatem Babilonie. In hac enim ciuitate, que quondam fuit inclita et gloriosa urbs gentilium et caput regni Persarum, Antichristus nascetur. Et in ciuitatibus Bethsaida et Corozaim nutriri et conseruari dicitur, quibus ciuitatibus Dominus in euangelio improperat, dicens: Ve tibi Bethsaida, ue tibi, Corozaim."

The tradition represented by Napier XLII and Adso is clearly related to that of the *Revelationes*, but it differs in important details. For instance, the birthplace of Antichrist is said to be Babylon rather than Corozaim, and Capharnaum has disappeared from the prophecy completely. The Vespasian D. xiv text sides in every detail against Adso and with the *Revelationes*, which must have acted as its source.

132 Napier, 194, ll. 9–17. ‘In this city, Babylon, that once was the noblest and most glorious city of all cities and capital of the kingdom of Persia, will the Antichrist be born. And it says that he will be raised in the two cities Bethsaida and Corozaim, and there he will dwell first. Christ rebuked these cities with his holy mouth, when he thus said, “Vae tibi Bethsaida, vae tibi, Corozaim,” that is in English, “Woe to you, o woe, Bethsaida, and woe to you Corozaim.”’

133 Verhelst, 24, ll. 46–51. ‘[…] the city of Babylon. For in this city, which once was a renowned and glorious city of the gentiles and the head of the kingdom of the Persians, will the Antichrist be born. And he is said to be raised and protected in the cities of Bethsaida and Corozaim. The Lord rebukes these cities in the gospel, saying, “Woe to you Bethsaida, woe to you Corozaim.”’

134 For a further (though perhaps outdated) discussion of these two traditions, see Charlotte D’Evelyn, ‘The Middle-English Metrical Version of the *Revelations of Methodius*, with a Study of the Influence of Methodius in Middle-English Writings,’ *PMLA* 33 (1918): 135–203 at 189–90. For other comparisons between (the Latin) Adso and Pseudo-Methodius in relation to ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist,’ see Handley, ‘A Study,’ 148; Schmetterer, 110–111.

135 Besides Middle English translations of the *Revelationes*, the only other Insular text to preserve a comparable account of Antichrist’s birth is the Middle Irish ‘Sgél Ainnte Crisd’ the earliest text of which is in the fifteenth-century Book of Lismore. Here it is said that Antichrist ‘co n-oilfidhi isin Carubban, ocus gu mbeth ‘na chomhnuidhi isin cathair re n-abarthar Besasta’ (‘would be reared in the Carubban and that he would reside in the city which is called Besasta’). Though apparently related to the *Revelationes* and Adso, these place names seem corrupt, and bear no close resemblance to those in Warner XXVII. For the text and translation, see Douglas Hyde, ‘A Mediaeval Account of Antichrist,’ in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis*, ed. R. Sherman Loomis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927), 391–8 at 394, 396. See also Martin McNamara, ‘The Irish Legend of Antichrist,’ in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst*, eds. F. García Martínez and G. P. Luttikhuizen, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 82 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 201–19 at 212–3.
Neither Handley nor Schmetterer attempted to determine which version of the *Revelationes* the author of ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’ may have used as his source. Indeed, until recently, the existence of differing recensions of the texts of pseudo-Methodius was little known to Anglo-Saxonists. However, the work of Michael Twomey on the manuscript tradition of the *Revelationes* in early medieval England has made more widely known to scholars of Old English both the existence of two Latin recensions of the *Revelationes* and the significant differences between these recensions. In the wake of Twomey’s work, it is important to identify the version of the *Revelationes* to which the Old English author had access. The wording of Warner XXVII strongly suggests that the author used a Recension 1 version, because some details present in the Old English text are left out of the relevant section of Recension 2:


Recension 2 is missing the detail that Corozaim, Bethsaida, and Capharnaum will rejoice because of Antichrist’s associations with them. It also simplifies the rather garbled clause ‘in evangelio Dominus tertio sententiam dedit “Vae.”’ Aerts and Kortekaas believe that ‘tertio’ in this sentence should be understood as ‘ter,’ while the Old English translator, who has retained the phrase, takes a slightly different but still intelligible approach and renders ‘tertio sententiam’ as ‘mid þan þrym worde.’

The fact that ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’ uses a Recension 1 text of the *Revelationes* is interesting because all surviving medieval English manuscripts of the *Revelationes* except one

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136 D’Evelyn, 201. ‘Then the son of perdition will appear, who is called Antichrist. He will be born in Corozaim. He will be raised in Bethsaida. And he will rule in Capharnaum. Because of this the Lord said in his gospel, “Woe to you Corozaim, woe to you Bethsaida, woe to you Capharnaum. If you will be raised up to heaven, you will be plunged into hell.”’ For the same passage in another Recension 2 text, see Otto Prinz, ‘Eine frühe abendländische Aktualisierung der lateinischen Übersetzung des Pseudo-Methodios,’ *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 41 (1985): 1–23 at 15.

137 Aerts and Kortekaas, II. 123.

138 Schmetterer (128) believes that ‘tertio’ should be construed with ‘evangelio’ as a reference to Luke, ‘the third gospel,’ and he therefore believes that the Old English translator erred. The relevant condemnations are indeed found in Luke 10:13–15, but they also occur in Matthew 11:21–23, so a reference by pseudo-Methodius to a particular gospel would be strange. The interpretation of ‘tertio’ as ‘ter’ adopted by Aerts and Kortekaas should be considered correct.
are of Recension 2.\textsuperscript{139} The sole English manuscript of Recension 1 of pseudo-Methodius—Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS. 165—was composed at Salisbury and dates from the late eleventh century.\textsuperscript{140} One would not be unjustified in setting a tentative \textit{terminus post quem} for the composition of the Old English text to around this time. While it cannot be proven that Salisbury Cathedral Library, MS. 165 was the first Recension 1 manuscript in England, there is no convincing evidence that the text was known or available to the English before the Norman Conquest. In any case, it is clear that Recension 1 of the \textit{Revelationes} was not entirely neglected by Old English authors, despite the preference in later medieval England for Recension 2 texts.

Based on Hill’s connection of early West Saxon royal genealogies to the \textit{Revelationes} and on the presence of notes ascribed to Methodius in the Genesis section of the Old English \textit{Hexateuch}, Twomey has argued that the \textit{Revelationes} were seen in early medieval England more as a source of Biblical history than as an apocalypse.\textsuperscript{141} While such a claim cannot be refuted on the basis of a single text, I believe that ‘Concerning the Coming of Antichrist’ in Vespasian D. xiv must be considered at least a very important exception to Twomey’s conclusion, since it clearly uses the \textit{Revelationes} as a source of apocalyptic lore.

The author of Warner XXVII may not have been the only twelfth-century English writer to attempt to incorporate material from the \textit{Revelationes}—apparently a new eschatological source to the English—into a text based largely on earlier Latin and Old English treatments of the end times. The compiler of the composite Wulfstanian Antichrist homily in Bodley 343 (an amalgam of Bethurum Ib, IV, and V) may have had the same idea, since he inserted into this text a reference to the invasions of Gog and Magog at the end of the world which also seems to derive from pseudo-Methodius. The followers of Antichrist are described as ‘Gog ã Magog, þæt beoð þa mancyn þe Alexander beclysde binnan muntclysan.’\textsuperscript{142} Conti has discussed this passage in some detail, noting the Biblical origins of Gog and Magog (especially Ezekiel 38:1–6 and

\textsuperscript{139} Twomey, ‘\textit{Revelationes},’ 370–2.

\textsuperscript{140} Twomey, ‘\textit{Revelationes},’ 370–2 \textit{et passim}.

\textsuperscript{141} Twomey, ‘\textit{Revelationes},’ 378–379.

\textsuperscript{142} Bethurum, \textit{Homilies}, 138, n. 66; Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist,’ 654, ll. 109–112. ‘Gog and Magog, that is the races that Alexander enclosed within a mountain prison.’
Apocalypse 20:7–9) and the development of the story of their imprisonment in the medieval
Alexander legends. The closest Latin parallel adduced by Conti is from the De imagine mundi
of Honorius Augustodunensis, but, given the knowledge of pseudo-Methodius in post-
Conquest England and his influence on at least one other Old English writer, one might also
consider Recension 1 of the Revelationes a possible source:

Continuo ergo supplicatus est Deum Alexander, et exaudivit obsecrationem eius et
praecipit Dominus Deus duobus montibus, quibus est vocabulum ‘Uberra
Aquilonis,’ et adiuncti proximaverunt invicem usque ad duodecim cubitorum. Et
construxit portas aereas…. In novissimis vero temporibus secundum Ezechielis
prophetiam, que dicit: ‘In novissimo die consummationes mundi exiet Gog et
Magog in terra Israel,’ qui sunt gentes et reges quos retrusit Alexander in
finibus Aquilonis….  

Both the rather close verbal similarities between this section of the Revelationes and the Old
English homily, and the marginal notations of a reader of Salisbury, Cathedral Library 165
provide evidence that pseudo-Methodius may have been the source for the compiler of the
Bodley 343 text. As Twomey has noted, the Salisbury manuscript contains the marginal note
‘D. M.’ (‘dignum memoria’) at precisely this section of the Revelationes, in which the
imprisonment of Gog and Magog occurs, and which precedes the description of the rise of
Antichrist. That pseudo-Methodius was apparently considered an authority on eschatological
topics by at least one English reader of the Latin Revelationes and by the author of Warner
XXVII suggests that the text may also have been known to the compiler of the Bodley 343
composite Antichrist homily.

The author of Warner XXVII is an heir to a complex tradition on the birth and reign of
Antichrist. In addition to apparent borrowings from the works of Ælfric and possibly Wulfstan,

143 Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist,’ 643–5.
144 Conti, ‘Revising Wulfstan’s Antichrist,’ 644; PL 172, col. 123D.
145 Aerts and Kortekaas, I. 113–7. ‘Immediately therefore Alexander prayed to God, and he heard his plea, and the
Lord God commanded two mountains, whose name is ‘The Breasts of the North,’ and they drew near to each
other until they were twelve cubits apart. And he [Alexander] built brazen gates [i.e., across the remaining span]…. In
the end times, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, which says: ‘On the last day at the end of the world Gog and
Magog will go out into the land of Israel,’ which are the races and kings which Alexander contained in the
lands of the north….’
146 Twomey, Revelationes,’ 374 and 383, n. 19.
he makes independent use of a homily of Gregory the Great which influenced earlier Old English authors. He did not, however, confine himself to traditional Anglo-Saxon sources, as he included in his work an extensive borrowing from the *Revelationes* of pseudo-Methodius, which does not seem to have been used by pre-Conquest Old English authors and was likely not available in England before the close of the eleventh century. This author’s skillful adaptation and recombination of his sources bears witness to a remarkable diversity in the kinds of eschatological texts available to authors of English religious prose in the mid-twelfth century, and to their willingness to consult both older and newly-arrived books in search of material for their works. The motives behind the writing of Warner XXVII can only be guessed at, but I would suggest that it was included in Vespasian D. xiv as a companion piece for Ælfric’s homily for the Second Sunday of Advent, which immediately follows it in the manuscript. Ælfric’s homily, though it contains a thorough account of the signs of the last days, includes little discussion of Antichrist, and the manuscript’s compiler may have thought it prudent to fill that gap with a short text on this figure. Warner XXVII may even have been written specifically for inclusion in Vespasian D. xiv or in one of its immediate exemplars. The absence of other witnesses to this text and its apparent lack of scribal errors may indicate a short transmission history and relatively recent composition, though such evidence cannot ultimately be considered conclusive, especially in such a short work.

### 3.4 Warner XXXIII: The First English Text of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’

The ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ is the conventional name given to a group of texts that purport to list the various wonders and natural disasters to occur on each of the fifteen days leading up to the Last Judgment. The earliest securely datable version of the legend appears in a tract by Peter Damian (d. 1072) entitled *De novissimis et Antichristo*. Various forms of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ are also given by Peter Comestor, Thomas Aquinas, and Jacobus de Voragine,

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147 The classic study of the tradition is Heist, *Fifteen Signs*. Heist’s argument for an Irish origin of the tradition should be reexamined in light of more recent research, but his work remains a useful summary.

and in the *Collectanea* of pseudo-Bede, a collection of Hiberno-Latin material that probably dates from the early medieval period, but whose earliest surviving witness is a printed edition from the sixteenth century. Many Latin versions attribute the text to St. Jerome, but this is certainly false. The differences between most of the Latin texts are relatively minor, but certain vernacular versions of the legend—especially a popular Old French poem and texts descended from it—diverge widely from what seem to have been the original ‘Fifteen Signs’ as represented by the Latin lists.

Warner Homily XXXIII is the earliest English version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend, and one of the earliest surviving ‘Fifteen Signs’ texts in any vernacular. The few scholars who have devoted any attention to the Vespasian D. xiv text of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ have concerned themselves primarily with identifying the Latin text or texts to which it is most closely related. Such studies have succeeded in showing certain affinities between the Vespasian D.

149 For a thorough list of texts and references, see Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 204–14. The most recent edition of the *Collectanea* is Martha Bayless and Michael Lapidge, eds. and trans., *Collectanea pseudo-Bedae*, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae 14 (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1998). The text of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ appears on 178, which is the source for all references to the pseudo-Bede version given here.

150 See PL 141, col. 1611 and PL 145, col. 840.


153 The brevity of Heist’s treatment of the homily (*Fifteen Signs*, 125–7) can be excused because of the huge scope of his work. More surprising is the lack of any significant discussion of the text’s unique qualities in the commentary to the edition of Handley (‘A Study,’ 257–83). Giliberto’s article is also heavily focused on listing Latin parallels, but it surpasses Handley’s work somewhat in that it brings in more vernacular analogues and examines the Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs’ text in its manuscript context (‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 293–309).
xiv list and those of Peter Damian and pseudo-Bede, but they have largely ignored its literary qualities, historical circumstances, and the possible motives behind its translation. This myopic approach has caused the Vespasian D. xiv text to be seen merely as a carrier of the Latin legend, and its own cultural background and performative aspects have been given scant, if any, consideration. As a result, scholars have made only the briefest mention of the many unique elements in the Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs.’

The most important of these new elements in Warner XXXIII is the addition of homiletic or moralizing explanations to many of the signs. The author signals his intention to provide such explanations in the first sentence of the text:

\[
\text{On þan nexten fiftene dagen beforen domesdæge, sculen gewurðen foretacnen, þe bodieð γ tacnieþ þone styrnlicne ege, þe God sceaweð þan arleasen, þone he demen sceal rihtwisen γ unrihtwisen.}\]

These additions, presumably created by the English author himself, provide more evidence about the circumstances of the text’s composition and of the attitudes of its audience than do any of the signs themselves, but since the additions appear only in the Old English and are therefore useless for determining Latin antecedents, early studies of the text paid them very little attention.\(^{155}\)

Concetta Giliberto, the most recent examiner of Warner XXXIII, provides a somewhat fuller account of these peculiarities, concluding:

\[
\text{[T]his text reveals a peculiar propensity to find an explanation, namely an acceptable reason for all the calamities heralding the Last Judgement. Signs four to nine and thirteen and fourteen include a moralising tail-piece, which is alien to traditional accounts of the Fifteen Signs. Its function is to offer a justification for the occurrence of the fatal events predicted before Doomsday and to reinforce the idea that the ultimate purpose of the apocalyptic signs is the triumph of God’s justice and the delivery of humankind from bondage to sin.}\]

\(^{154}\) Warner, 89, l. 33 – 90, l. 1. ‘On the last fifteen days before Doomsday signs shall come to pass, which will herald and represent the severe terror that God will show towards the impious when he judges the righteous and the unrighteous.’

\(^{155}\) Heist says nothing of these additions, and Handley (‘A Study,’ 264) mentions them only in passing.

\(^{156}\) Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 305.
The additions to the Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs’ are of varying character. The moralization for the sign for the seventh day, for instance, is a universally relevant statement of divine impartiality:

\[
\text{On þan seofeðen dæige wurðeð geemnode denen γ dunen, swa β eall eorðe byð smeðe γ emne. β betaunced, β God ne forsihð þæs þearfendan ansene, ne ne wurðeð þæs mihtiges mannes modignysse, ac besicð to ælces mannes gewyrhten.}^{157}
\]

The closest parallel in the Latin tradition comes from the \textit{Collectanea pseudo-Beda}, which says that on the tenth day ‘omnes colles et ualles in planiciem conuertentur, et erit equalitas terrae.’\(^{158}\)

The multiple possible meanings of ‘equalitas,’ which can indicate both physical evenness and equality in an ethical sense, may have inspired the Old English author to construe the sign as a representation of God’s fairness. In addition, the sign itself would certainly have reminded him of its probable Biblical inspiration, Isaiah 40:4 (‘omnis vallis exaltabitur et omnis mons et collis humiliabitur’\(^{159}\)), whose moral implication is obvious.

The explanations of some of the other signs in Warner XXXIII are more puzzling. The sign recorded for the fourth day, for example, runs as follows:

\[
\text{On þan feorðen dæige, ealle sælice deor γ fissces heo æteowigieð bufe þan yðen γ bellgigeð swa swa mid manniscre reorde, ac þehhweðere ne understant nan mann heora gereord bute God ane; γ β byð to tacnunge þære eorre, þe God cyðð þan synfullen on domes dæige.}^{160}
\]

The miraculous and indecipherable ‘speech’ uttered by sea creatures is a familiar element in the ‘Fifteen Signs’ tradition. Again, the \textit{Collectanea pseudo-Beda} provides the closest Latin parallel: ‘Quarta die pisces et omnes beluae marinae, et congregabuntur super aquas et dabunt

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\(^{157}\) Warner, 90, ll. 20–4. ‘On the seventh day all valleys and hills will be leveled, so that the whole earth will be smooth and even. This signifies that God does not despise the appearance of the poor, nor does he respect the pride of the powerful man, but examines each man’s works.’

\(^{158}\) Bayless and Lapidge, 178. ‘All hills and valleys will be turned to level ground, and there will be evenness of the earth.’ See Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 299.

\(^{159}\) ‘Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.’

\(^{160}\) Warner, 90, ll. 7–11. ‘On the fourth day, all sea creatures and fishes will appear above the waves and shout out as with a human voice, but nonetheless nobody will understand their speech except for God alone; and this is a sign of the anger that God will show toward the sinful on Doomsday.’
uoces et gemitus, quarum significationem nemo scit nisi Deus.' However, the explanation for this sign seems, at first glance, to have little to do with the event itself. Why should the bellowing of sea creatures be seen as a representation of God’s anger toward the sinful? Such an explanation only makes sense if the animals themselves are seen as angry, and the sound they make imagined as an intentionally frightening one. This differs from the Latin sign, in which the ‘gemitus’ (‘groanings’) of the sea creatures seems to indicate that they dread the approach of Doomsday. This anxiety is explicit in a similar sign from an Old French poem on the subject, which also circulated in Norman England:

Li quinz signes ert mont orribles
Et de touz ces li plus freniques,
Quar trestoutes les mues bestes
Vers le ciel leveront les testes:
A Dieu vourront merci cryer,
Mais eles ne pourront paller. …
L’une gitera plus grant breit
C’orandroit ne font dis e set.

This poem portrays animals as distressed by the approach of Doomsday, as do many other texts in the ‘Fifteen Signs’ tradition. By contrast, the author of the Vespasian D. xiv text makes animals not victims of the terror to precede the Last Judgment, but instruments of it. Their cries are frightening not only because of the visceral fear that such a spectacle will inspire, but also because they anticipate and prefigure God’s terrible condemnation of the wicked on the Last Day.

161 Bayless and Lapidge, 178. ‘On the fourth day the fishes and all sea creatures will gather upon the waters and utter voices and groans, whose meaning nobody knows except God.’ See Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 297–8.
162 For an Anglo-Norman version of the poem that was appended to the mystery play Le Jeu d’Adam, see Léon Palustre, ed., Adam: Mystère du XIIe siècle (Paris: Dumoulin, 1877), 139–69. The poem itself probably dates from the later twelfth century, though no extant English manuscripts of it are earlier than the thirteenth. See Mantou, 39.
163 Kraemer, 70–1, ll. 135–40, 143–4. ‘The fifth sign will be very terrible and the most violent of all, for all dumb animals will raise their heads toward heaven. They would cry out to God for mercy, but they cannot speak. … Each one of them will make a cry greater than seventeen make now.’ See also Mantou, 161–2, ll. 135–40, 143–4.
The cooperation of the animal world with God’s judgment is even more explicit in the sign for the eleventh day, which, while it does not display the author’s characteristic moralization, nonetheless shows significant differences from its presumed Latin source(s):

\[
\text{On þan ændeleften dæge eorneð wilddor beo tunen, ðelden, manna wunungen, swa swa heo beon wittlease.}
\]

The closest Latin parallel is here the sign for the twelfth day in Peter Damian’s *De novissimis et Antichristo*: ‘Omnia animalia terræ de silvis et montibus venient ad campos rugientia et mugientia non gustantia et non bibentia.’ The animals in the Old English text are, however, more violent and transgressive than in Damian’s description. In the Latin, they restrict their activity to making unsettling noises and roaming the fields—coming too close for human comfort, perhaps, but at least not putting people in imminent danger. In Vespasian D. xiv, on the other hand, wild beasts run violently through towns and homes. Like the sea creatures in sign four, these animals become active participants in divine retribution.

In his sign for the twelfth day, the author of Warner XXXIII reiterates that the boundary between the animal world and the human world will be breached:

\[
\text{On þan twelften dæige eorneð mænn geon d eall middeneard byfigende dræende Cristes tocyme to demene cwican deaden, swa þe se were ne gret his wif, ne þe wif hire were, þeh heo heom gemeten, ac byð swa swa wittlease unspecende. Ne heo ne eteð, ne heo ne drincað.}
\]

The description of animals invading human habitations on the eleventh day is thus immediately followed by a claim that men will lose their higher faculties, becoming, in a sense, like animals. This appears to have been the effect the English author intended, since he has strengthened the parallelism between the two events by placing them side-by-side. The Damian version of the

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165 Warner, 90, ll. 33–4. ‘On the eleventh day wild beasts will run through towns and fields and the dwellings of men, as if they were mad.’

166 *PL* 145, col. 840D. ‘All the animals on earth will come from the forests and mountains to the fields, growling and groaning, and they will not eat or drink anything.’ See Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 300.

167 Warner, 90, ll. 35–9. ‘On the twelfth day men will run throughout the whole earth trembling and dreading the coming of Christ to judge the living and the dead, so that the husband will not speak to his wife, nor the wife to her husband, even if they come across each other, but they will act as though mad and mute. They will neither eat nor drink.’
legend, on the other hand, whose signs the Old English text seems to be adapting here, assigns them to the twelfth and fourteenth days. ¹⁶⁸

The cooperation of the natural world with God’s wrath seen in the signs for the fourth and eleventh days finds its most interesting manifestation in the sign for the sixth day:

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On þan sixe nadæge sculen slean togedere ealle stanes lytle þ mycele, þ ælc stan tobytt on feower holten, þ ælc þàre holten fiht wið oðer, oððet heo eall to duste gewurđed. þ heo doð forþan, þ þa arlease mænn of heom worhten staples þ castles, þ heo þær mid swæncten geleaffulle mænn þ Godes þearfen. ¹⁶⁹
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As with most of the other signs in Warner XXXIII, the so-called ‘battle of the stones’ has clear roots in the Latin tradition. Peter Damian’s sign for the ninth day, for instance, has the closely related statement that ‘[o]mnes lapides tam parvi quam magni scidentur in quatuor partes, et unaquaeque pars collidet alteram partem…. ’¹⁷⁰ Again, though, the moralizing addition is unique to the Old English. The stones of the Vespasian D. xiv text are even more direct agents of divine punishment than the animals of the previous signs are. While the bellowing of the sea creatures in sign four merely prefigures God’s anger, and the rampaging beasts of sign eleven are not given any specific motive for their actions, the stones of sign six not only lash out against the world of man, but seem to be doing so in purposeful vengeance for their misuse in the construction of towers and castles. These buildings are singled out again in the sign for the ninth day:

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¹⁶⁸ See Gibilerto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 300–1. Damian’s sign fourteen runs as follows: ‘Signum decimi quarti diei: Omne humanum genus, quod inventum fuerit, de habitaculis et de locis in quibus erunt velociter abscedent, non intelligentes neque loquentes; sed discurrent ut amentes’ (PL 145, cols. 841A–842A; ‘The sign of the fourteenth day: the whole human race which is to be found at the time will rush out quickly from their homes and the places in which they are staying; they will neither understand nor say anything, but they will run about as mad people’).

¹⁶⁹ Warner, 90, ll. 15–20. ‘On the sixth day all stones, great and small, will crash together, and each stone will break into four parts, and each of these parts will fight with the other, until they all become dust. They will do this because impious men made towers and castles out of them, which they used to afflict faithful men and God’s poor.’

¹⁷⁰ PL 145, col. 840D. ‘All stones both great and small will break into four parts, and each part will strike another part.’ Gibilerto (‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 298) inexplicably suggests that pseudo-Bede sign 8 is the closer analogue: ‘Octaua die debellabunt petrae adinuicem, et unaquaeque in tres partes se diuidet, et unaquaeque pars collidet aduersus alteram’ (Bayless and Lapidge, 178; ‘On the eighth day all stones shall fight each other, and each of them will split into three parts, and each part will strike another’).
On þan nigeðen dæige tofealleð castles, γ steples, γ hus, γ circen, γ ealle getimbrunge lytle γ mycele, for þan þe þa synfulle hæfden þaron heora wununge.¹⁷¹

The list of specific types of buildings to be destroyed, in which castles and towers take first place, seems to be an innovation of the English author, whose source was probably similar to the simple declaration in pseudo-Bede that ‘omnia aedificia destruentur.’¹⁷²

Of all the ‘Fifteen Signs’ in Warner XXXIII, these two carry the clearest political subtext. Stone castles were the military and symbolic seats of Norman power, and the many castle-building projects undertaken by Norman kings and noblemen in England in the wake of the Conquest must have struck the Anglo-Saxon population as a strange and disconcerting alteration to their landscape.¹⁷³ These architectural developments even had linguistic repercussions. By the late eleventh century, the Old English word *castel*, which (like its Latin origin, *castellum*) originally meant ‘village’ or ‘town,’ adopted the meaning of Anglo-Norman *castel*, ‘castle’ or ‘fort.’¹⁷⁴ Seth Lerer has analyzed the native reaction to castle-building and other Norman impositions on the English landscape as represented by late Old English poetry and early Middle English lyrics. He notes, for example, that a commentary on this activity appears in a rhyming poem on the death of William the Conqueror in manuscript E of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, better known as the ‘Peterborough Chronicle’ (*ChronE*), under the year 1086. The poem’s first lines read, ‘Castelas he let wyrcean/ γ earme men swiðe swencean.’¹⁷⁵ A better-known description of Norman castle-building in the ‘Peterborough Chronicle’ appears in the entry for 1137, roughly contemporary with the compilation of Vespasian D. xiv, which decries the treachery of rebellious nobles during King Stephen’s reign (1135–41) and the Anarchy:

¹⁷¹ Warner, 90, ll. 26–8. ‘On the ninth day castles and towers and houses and churches and all buildings great and small will fall, because the sinful made their dwelling in them.’

¹⁷² Bayless and Lapidge, 178. ‘All buildings will be destroyed.’ See Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday in Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 300.


¹⁷⁴ *DOE* ‘castel.’ See also Lerer, 135, n. 17.

Hi hadden him manred maked γ athes suoren, ac hi nan treuthe ne heolden; alle he wæron forsworen γ here treothes forloren, for æuric rice man his castles makede γ agænes him heolden γ fylden þe land ful of castles. Hi suencten suyðe þe uurecece men of þe land mid castelweorces; þa þe castles uuaren maked, þa fylden hi mid deoules γ yuele men.\textsuperscript{176}

The association by English authors of Norman castle-building with the oppression of the native population is not unique to the later contributors to the ‘Peterborough Chronicle.’ Manuscript D of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ChronD) also continues for a time after the Conquest, and its entry for 1066 references William the Conqueror’s castle-building projects in much the same terms:

\begin{quote}
[\textit{Wyllelm}] leide gyld on mannum swiðe stið, γ for þa on þam lengtene ofer sæ to Normandige, γ nam mid him Stigand arcebiscop, γ Ægelnað abbod on Glæstingabiri, γ Eadgar cild, γ Edwine eorl, γ Morkere eorl, γ Wælþeof eorl, γ manege oðre gode men of Englalande, γ Oda biscop γ Wyllelm eorl belifen her æfter γ worhton castelas wide geond þas þeode, γ earm folc swencte, γ a syððan hit yflade swiðe.\textsuperscript{177}
\end{quote}

Read without context, the statement in sign six of Warner XXXIII that the stones will destroy each other because ‘þa arlease mænn of heom worhten steples γ castles, ð heo þær mid swæncten geleaffulle mænn γ Godes þearefen’ appears to be a general warning to powerful men that they should not use their position to afflict the poor. This is certainly a legitimate interpretation of the sign, but comparing the text to the aforementioned statements from the Chronicle suggests that the English author and his angry stones have another, more specific target in mind: the Norman nobility:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Chron. D, 1066}: Oda biscop γ Wyllelm eorl belifen her æfter γ \textit{worhton castelas} wide geond þas þeode, γ earm folc \textit{swencte}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{176} Irvine, \textit{Anglo-Saxon Chronicle} E, 134. ‘They [the nobility] had done homage to him [King Stephen] and had sworn oaths, but they kept no pledge; they all perjured themselves and their promises were broken, for every powerful man made his own castles and held them against him, and they filled the land full of castles. They greatly afflicted the wretched men of the land by forcing them to build the castles, and when these castles were done, they filled them with devils and evil men.’

\textsuperscript{177} G. P. Cubbin, ed., \textit{The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition}, vol. 6 (MS. D) (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), 81. ‘[William] imposed a very heavy tribute on the people, and he traveled across the sea to Normandy in the spring. He took with him Archbishop Stigand, Ælnoth the abbot of Glastonbury, the child Edgar, the earls Edwin, Morkere, and Waltheof, and many other good men of England. Bishop Odo and the earl William remained here afterwards, and constructed castles everywhere throughout this nation, and afflicted the miserable people, and ever since then conditions have worsened greatly.’
The justification provided for the battle of the stones in the ‘Fifteen Signs’ text does not overtly mention the contemporary political climate in England, but it has clear verbal echoes with the complaints of Norman oppression in manuscripts D and E of the Chronicle. All of these texts link the building of castles with the misery of the English population, each of them using a form of the verb *swencan*, ‘to afflict’ or ‘to distress.’ Indeed, the excerpts from the Chronicle show that castles were synonymous with Norman oppression in the minds of some post-Conquest English writers, and it seems unlikely that the author of the Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs’ would have used such similar language if he were not in some way reflecting on the same political realities.

In the hands of an author who was a member of—or at least identified with—the native English population in a time of Norman domination, the battle of the stones in the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ is transformed from a traditional item in a list of apocalyptic terrors into a willful retaliation by the elements themselves, which side with the oppressed English against Norman rule. The author thus places his hope for a redress of English grievances against their conquerors in the wonders and catastrophes of the last days, when the natural world, participating enthusiastically in its own destruction, will at last avenge the Norman abuse of the English landscape. Evidence of this hope can be discerned in some of the other Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs,’ as well. The spontaneous migration of animals from the forests to the towns and villages in the aforementioned sign for the eleventh day might have seemed to the English author like poetic justice for Norman attempts to establish royal forests and limit public hunting of deer and other game. Here again, the natural world itself foils Norman attempts to control, restrict, and quantify it.

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179 See Lerer, 134–6.
The world’s plant life, as portrayed by the author of Warner XXXIII, is also equipped with an anti-establishment motive for its actions in the last days:

On þan fiften dæige, ealle wyrte γ ealle treowwes ageafeð read swat swa blodes dropen. Þæt doð þa wyrtn, for þy þa synfulle mæn heo træden, γ þa treowwen, for þan þe þa synfulle hæfden freome of heom γ of heora wæstmen.¹⁸⁰

One wonders here if the author may be thinking of the Norman imposition of taxes and dues on produce. Such burdens were, of course, particularly hard for the native population to bear after bad harvests, as the ‘Peterborough Chronicle’ notes on several occasions. The year 1103, for example, records both the appearance of blood from the ground and the hardship caused by a combination of high taxes and a bad harvest:

On þisum geare eac æt Heamstede innan Barrucscire wæs gesewen blod of eorðan. Dis wæs swiðe gedeorfsum gear her on landise þurh mænifealde gyld γ þurh orfcwealma γ wæstma forweorþenesse, ægðer ge on corne γ eac on eallon treowwæstman.¹⁸¹

One should not infer from this report that the author of the Vespasian D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs’ was attempting to remind his audience of a current event. The bleeding of plants and trees is certainly derived from the Latin tradition,¹⁸² and the lack of internal evidence as to when or where our text was written militates against reading too much into perceived similarities with the Chronicle entry. Nonetheless, the sign’s justification—that the plants will bleed because of the actions of sinfully acquisitive men—fits in well with an overall theme of the retaliation of the English landscape against the Norman nobility.

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¹⁸⁰ Warner, 90, ll. 12–5. ‘On the fifth day, all plants and all trees will issue a red sweat like drops of blood. The plants will do this because sinful men walked upon them, and the trees, because the sinful had profit from them and from their fruits.’

¹⁸¹ Irvine, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle E, 112. ‘This year at Hampstead in Berkshire there was seen blood from the ground. This was a very difficult year in this country because of the many tributes and because of the death of livestock and the loss of crops, both in grain and also in all kinds of produce from trees.’ See also the entry for 1110 (Irvine, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle E, 116).

The idea that the signs preceding Doomsday are a reaction by the elements against mankind’s wickedness has an Anglo-Saxon precedent. In his homily ‘Secundum Lucam’ (Bethurum III), Wulfstan envisions both contemporary natural disasters and those foretold in Scripture as punishments meted out by nature for human misuse of God’s creations:

Leofan men, clæne wæs þeos eorðe on hyre frumsceafte, ac we hi habbað syððan afylede swyðe γ mid urum synnum þearle besmitene…. And forðy us eac swencað γ ongean winnað manege gesceafta, ealswa hit awritten is: Pugnabit pro Deo orbis terrarum contra insensatos homines [Wisdom 5:21]. Dæt is on Englisc, eal woruld winneð swyðe for synnum ongean þa oferhogan þe Gode nellad hyran. Seo heofone us winð wið þonne heo us sended styrnlice stormas γ orf γ æceras swyðe amyrred. Seo eorðe us winð wið þonne heo forwynned eordlice wæstmas γ us unweoda to fela asendeð.¹⁸³

One cannot discount the possibility that Wulfstan’s interpretation of apocalyptic disasters as a retaliation against mankind’s abuse of creation had some influence on the author of Warner XXXIII, whose work makes much the same point (albeit more extensively and dramatically). There are, however, differences between the two authors’ treatments of this theme, the most important of which is the specificity of the latter as compared to the former. The natural world in Wulfstan’s text is indiscriminate in its anger, targeting the human race as a whole for the crimes of its less virtuous members. On the other hand, while the disasters in Warner XXXIII will presumably affect all people, both their intended targets and the sins for which these people are to be punished are in several instances very clearly defined. The singling out in Warner XXXIII of those who receive unjust profits from the land and who attempt to impose their will upon it by the building of castles and towers seems to indicate an authorial preoccupation with the faults of the ruling class.

In his concern to provide relevant justifications for the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday,’ the author of the Vespasian D. xiv text was participating in a literary reaction by some authors of

¹⁸³ Bethurum, *Homilies*, 124, l. 27–9, 34 – 125, l. 41. ‘Beloved men, this earth was clean at its beginning, but we have subsequently defiled it greatly and severely polluted it with our sins…. And therefore many creations afflict us and struggle against us, just as it is written: Pugnabit pro Deo orbis terrarum contra insensatos homines. That is in English: All the world will struggle greatly against the arrogant ones, who do not desire to obey God. The sky struggles against us when it sends severe storms and badly damages livestock and fields. The earth struggles against us when it denies its fruits and sends forth too many harmful weeds.’ Wulfstan goes on to discuss the apocalyptic darkening of the sun and moon and falling of the stars, though these are given a more allegorical than literal interpretation. For the possibly related idea that the corrupted state of nature is a reflection of the evil of man, see Irvine Homily VI, ll. 80–92 (Irvine, *Old English Homilies*, 152 and 169–70).
English religious prose against Norman cultural and sociopolitical hegemony. Elaine Treharne, viewing post-Conquest English writings from a postcolonial standpoint, has recently found other more or less thinly-veiled criticisms of the twelfth century political establishment in England, one of which—a life of St. Neot whose author waxes nostalgic on how much better King Alfred was than more recent rulers—also survives in Vespasian D. xiv. However, while postcolonial theory may provide a useful interpretive framework in some cases, to view all post-Conquest English homiletic prose as an intrinsically subversive effort of a subaltern culture to validate its literary traditions, as Treharne does, is problematic. The compiler of Vespasian D. xiv certainly had no qualms with placing works of Anglo-Saxon homilists side-by-side with those of Norman ecclesiastics, and the Englishmen who translated the latter texts seem to have seen the influx of new homiletic and literary traditions as something to be embraced, not resisted. Millett justly cites Vespasian D. xiv as evidence for her assertion that ‘[t]he value attached by English monks to … earlier traditions did not necessarily exclude a pragmatic openness to new influences.’

In light of the current analysis of the Old English ‘Fifteen Signs,’ Warner XLIII, an Old English translation of a homily by Ralph d’Escures, presents an especially fascinating example of this kind of cultural interchange. This text presents an entirely different view of Norman architecture by constructing an extended simile between the Virgin Mary and a well-fortified castle. That the English translator chose consistently to render Ralph’s castellum with Old English castel shows that the connotation of the latter word was context-dependent, and that it did not always evoke the same negative attitudes with which the Chronicle writers and the author of Warner XXXIII viewed it. Indeed, Warner XXXIII itself may have derived from a source introduced by the Normans. There is no evidence that any texts of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ tradition were known in England before ca. 1100. The earliest datable manifestations of the

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184 Treharne, ‘Categorization, Periodization,’ 265–8 et passim.
185 Millett, ‘Change and Continuity,’ 228.
187 Handley (‘A Study,’ 266–8) provides a list of all known English manuscripts of the pseudo-Bede, Comestor, and Damian types of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday.’ The oldest texts of these three types in her catalogue are, respectively, Cambridge, Trinity College O. 1. 59 (fol. 88v, s. xii); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 101 (p. 50, s.
‘Fifteen Signs’ legend are all Continental. It has generally been argued that the Hiberno-Latin Collectanea pseudo-Bedae antedates these by centuries, but, since the only manuscript of the collection has been lost, the real date of the pseudo-Bedan version of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ remains uncertain. There is, furthermore, no reason to assume that every item in this collection would have been available in pre-Conquest England, even though many certainly were.

Warner XXXIII, then, one of the more interesting English criticisms of Norman rule, may derive from a tradition that Norman ecclesiastics themselves brought to England. As is the case when one considers the author of the rhyming couplets on the death of William the Conqueror in the ‘Peterborough Chronicle,’ one wonders whether the writer intended the irony that the modern reader feels when faced with a work criticizing a ruling class on whose literary influence the very form of the work seems to depend. It is in no way clear, however, that the author of Warner XXXIII knew that the book or books he took his source material from were Norman in origin.

See the introductory chapters to Bayless and Lapidge, especially Lapidge, ‘The Origin of the Collectanea,’ 1–12. If the text of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ present in the Collectanea pseudo-Bedae was written in the eighth or ninth century (when most of the other items of the collection seem to have been composed), it would have antedated the earliest datable attestation of the legend, that of Peter Damian, by some two or three hundred years. Lapidge, who argues for an early dating for the collection, does not sufficiently address this problem, simply stating, ‘There is nothing to preclude … an eighth century date [for the “Fifteen Signs”]…, but nothing as yet to confirm it’ (9). Heist (Fifteen Signs, 95–7), on the other hand, dated the pseudo-Bede version of the ‘Fifteen Signs’ to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, when the earliest surviving manuscripts following the pseudo-Bedan schema were written. The only way I can reconcile Lapidge’s ninth-/tenth-century dating of the Collectanea exemplar with Heist’s eleventh-/twelfth-century dating of the pseudo-Bede ‘Fifteen Signs’ is to suppose that the ‘Fifteen Signs’ were interpolated into the Collectanea long after its original compilation, either by the copyist of a later manuscript which Johann Herwagen used as the copy-text for his 1563 editio princeps, or perhaps by Herwagen himself. Of course, it is also possible that Heist was mistaken in dating the ‘Fifteen Signs’ legend to the eleventh century, but the necessary alternative—that a legend formulated in the eighth century existed only in the Collectanea pseudo-Bedae for three centuries before suddenly exploding in popularity beginning in the 1070s—seems highly unlikely to me.

See Lerer, 137. ‘The ironies of the obituary extend even to its form, as William is given an elegy mimed in the couplets of a man who “him on locodan γ oðre hwile on his hirede wunedon.”’
nor, had he known, that he would have cared. The translator of Warner XLIII, for instance, made no more effort to signal that he was basing his text on the work of a Norman bishop than most other anonymous Old English writers made to cite their sources.

The one twelfth-century writer of English who explicitly references a Norman author does so in quite positive terms, showing that Norman ecclesiastics could be held in as high regard as earlier authorities even by those who chose to compose at least partly in English. The illustrated Old English Hexateuch in the eleventh-century manuscript Cotton Claudius B. iv contains late-twelfth-century Latin and English marginal notations drawn largely from the Historia Scholastica of Peter Comestor—a French theologian who flourished in the middle of the twelfth-century—and from other compilations of a post-Conquest date. Some of Comestor’s sources, including Josephus and (pseudo-)Methodius, are mentioned by name in notations where the English writer is adapting portions of the Historia Scholastica that specifically cite them. In some places, however, where the annotator is translating or citing statements from other sources or for those for which Comestor does not reference an older authority, the notes simply cite ‘Norman’ or ‘Normannus.’ It is unclear if this figure was a monk actually (sur)named ‘Norman(nus)’ or if the term is simply a nickname for a well-known and respected Norman

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190 The English notes (HeptNotes) were first edited by Crawford, The Old English Hexateuch, 408–22. They are also edited separately and their language commented upon in S. J. Crawford, ‘The Late Old English Notes of MS. (British Museum) Cotton Claudius B. iv,’ Anglia 47 (1923): 124–35. Crawford (‘The Late Old English Notes,’ 124–5), considering the strange language of these additions, considers their scribe ‘to have been imperfectly acquainted with English,’ and believes ‘there is some reason … to suppose that he may have been copying notes supplied to him.’ More recently, A. N. Doane and William P. Stoneman have provided an edition of all the annotator’s contributions—both Latin and English—in an extensive study of the twelfth-century additions to the manuscript in their volume Purloined Letters: The Twelfth-Century Reception of the Anglo-Saxon Illustrated Hexateuch (British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv), MRTS 395 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011). Doane and Stoneman (185–212) disagree with Crawford’s opinion that the twelfth-century scribe was a foreigner (presumably a Norman), concluding instead that he was a native speaker of Kentish English who was not entirely comfortable composing written English based on the late West Saxon literary standard. On Comestor as the source for the notes, see also Twomey, ‘Pseudo-Methodius,’ 19; Sarah Larratt Keefer, ‘Assessing the Liturgical Canticles from the Old English Hexateuch Manuscripts,’ in The Old English Hexateuch: Aspects and Approaches, eds. Rebecca Barnhouse and Benjamin C. Withers, Publications of the Richard Rawlinson Center (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), 95–130 at 129, n. 61.

191 ‘Norman cwæð Matusalem gestride. lamech da he was -c-l-x-x-v-i: wintre’ (Doane and Stoneman, 33; ‘[The] Norman said: Methuselah begot Lamech when he was 187 years old’). See also Doane and Stoneman, 36.

192 Doane and Stoneman, 38, 51, 81, 91, 104, 127, and 150.

193 This is the opinion of Doane and Stoneman (350–1), who point to ‘Norman(n)us,’ a monk living at St. Augustine’s, Canterbury (where the notes seem to have been composed) from around 1176 to 1200.
instructor at the place of the notes’ composition, but in either case the appellation could hardly refer to anyone who was not of Norman French ancestry. It is also not plainly apparent if this ‘Norman(nus)’ himself added the notes to the manuscript or if they were added by others under his instruction or at his encouragement. However, the fact that the annotator felt no discomfort in naming an evidently Norman source for explanations added (partly in English) to an Old English Biblical manuscript suggests that neither he nor the members of his community saw any conflict in referring native, English-speaking readers to the works of contemporary French theologians.

Returning to the author of Warner XXXIII, we can nevertheless observe that, while the primary aim of English religious prose in the post-Conquest period remained the salvation of souls, homilists who wrote for an English-speaking audience in the twelfth century must have faced a new pastoral problem: how to minister to congregations whose members found themselves under the dominion of a foreign nobility whose language, culture, and policies they did not understand. The Vespasian D. xiv version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ represents one English author’s response to that problem. He attempts to reassure his audience of the existence and inevitability of divine justice despite the attempts of Norman kings to impose their own will on

194 No one named ‘Norman’ is recorded in the Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England database (http://www.pase.ac.uk, accessed August 2012) from before the Norman Conquest, suggesting that it was not in common use among the Anglo-Saxon populace. That the name probably continued to be associated with those of French extraction for some time after the Conquest is suggested by its use as a surname in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by people whose given names (Godfrey, Robert, Simon, etc.) are French in origin. See Doane and Stoneman, 350, nn. 39–40; *OED* ‘Norman, n.’ and adj.

195 See Doane and Stoneman, 354–6.

196 Doane and Stoneman take an opposing view. They are rather of the opinion that the notes reveal ‘a tension between the old monastic style of scholarship and that of the twelfth century Paris schools and other “modern” sources from which the material is drawn’ (statement taken from the authors’ summary, available at http://acmrs.org/publications/catalog/purloined-letters, accessed August 2012). Where Doane and Stoneman see tension, however, I see a remarkable instance of cooperation and continuity, by which the work of Anglo-Saxon translators was glossed with Latin and English notations adapted from an important French Scholastic text. The characterization by Doane and Stoneman of the notes as a ‘forgery’ is also, I believe, misguided. The authors see both the attempt to compose some of the notes in Old English and the lack of any explicit citation of Peter Comestor’s name or of the name of his work as purposeful attempts to suppress ‘the “modernity” of the source’ and to give the notes ‘the whiff of antiquity’ (Doane and Stoneman, 358–9). However, if some forger were trying to mask his sources’ modern, Continental origins from an English audience, one would hope he would know better than to constantly cite ‘Norman(nus),’ ‘(the) Norman,’ as the Cotton Claudius B. iv annotator does. We are therefore left with two alternatives: either the annotator was a very inept forger (which seems rather unlikely given the breadth of his knowledge), or there was no ulterior motive behind his work. I favour the latter option.
the English people and landscape. The policies with which he is concerned are perhaps best exemplified by the *Domesday Book*, ‘in which,’ as Seth Lerer summarizes, ‘every acre, every tree, every ox, cow, and pig held by the populace [was] cataloged.’ The first English text of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday,’ however, shows that even the most meticulous catalogues and the strictest regulations will finally cede to God’s reckoning. In the end, even *Domesday* is no match for Doomsday.

3.5 Warner XLIV: On the Babylonian Captivity and the Ages of the World

Warner XLIV, a brief text contained on fols. 158r–159r of Vespasian D. xiv, discusses the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity, interpreting them as a representation of the seven ages of the world. Like the other pieces here discussed, the piece has a homiletic and educational tone, but, at only a few hundred words, it is doubtful that it was meant for oral delivery. However, while it cannot be called a homily in the strict sense, labeling the piece a ‘fragment,’ as Warner and others have done, cannot be justified, either. Such a classification implies that we possess only a small part of a ‘complete’ English text that is now lost. Though undoubtedly appropriate in some cases, the designation ‘fragment’ is overused in assessments of twelfth-century works. There is no evidence, for instance, that Warner XXVII or Warner XLIV, both called fragments by editors, were excerpted from larger works. Neither text has suffered any serious damage in transmission, and neither contains any internal indication that it is not a

197 Lerer, 136. See the first entry for 1085 in the ‘Peterborough Chronicle’ (Irvine, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* E, 94).
198 See, for instance, the characteristic homiletic opening, ‘We rædē on bocan þ … ’ (Warner, 129, l. 26; ‘We read in books that …’).
199 Warner, viii, 139; Förster, ‘Der Inhalt,’ 60; Handley, ‘A Study,’ 44–5 and ‘British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,’ 246. See also Tristram, *Sex aetates mundi*, 82.
200 Such as, for example, Warner L, a version of an Ælfrician homily (*ÆCHom* I, 10) in which the manuscript ends in the middle of a sentence.
201 In addition to the works cited above, see Handley, ‘A Study,’ 135.
complete and self-contained unit. The presence of excerpts from the works of Ælfric\textsuperscript{202} in the manuscript does not prove that its other short texts are fragmentary. Indeed, brevity and directness would have been valued by a compiler selecting texts for a manuscript like Vespasian D. xiv, which, as discussed above, seems to have been intended for private devotional use and for instruction on the basics of the Christian faith. Treharne’s ‘The Age of the World’ is thus in every way a better title for this piece than Warner’s ‘Fragment concerning Nebuchadnezzar.’\textsuperscript{203}

Especially in this context, a text’s short length alone does not meet the burden of proof for labeling it a fragment. The inclination to such terms in the study of post-Conquest texts depends on old ideas about the collapse of English literary production in the twelfth century, resulting in the wrongheaded assumption that any short text that does not appear in full elsewhere must be a fragment of something from an earlier age.\textsuperscript{204}

The section of Warner XLIV that is relevant to the present discussion is its treatment of the ages of the world, which takes up approximately the last half of the text. This discussion is sufficiently brief to quote in full here:

\begin{quote}
Þas hundseofentig gearen [\textit{i.e.}, of the Babylonian captivity] betacniged þa seofon elden þysses lifes, fram þan time þe Adam of Paradis ascoven wæs, oðð þa geendunge þysses middeneardes, γ swa swa Darius king on þan sixtugeðen wintre alesde ḫ folc, γ sænde to heora earde ænne dæl þæs folcas, swa ure Drihten on þær sixen elde heregode helle, γ alesde mancynn, γ gebrohte sume to heofone-rices blisse, γ sume get here anbideð oððet seo seofoðe elde agan beo. For ponne we cumed to fullfremedre blisse mid sawlen γ mid lichamen, seo elde þe we nu lytle ær embe spæcon, is geteald beo seofon þusende (gearen), þe agane scule beon ær þes middeneard geændige, swa swa hit awritten is.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{202} Warner I, II, XXIII, XXXIX are all extracts of varying length taken from the works of Ælfric. For references, see Treharne, ‘Homilies,’ items 3, 4, 25, and 41.

\textsuperscript{203} Treharne, ‘Homilies,’ item 46.

\textsuperscript{204} A similar attitude seems to inform Wymer’s designation (‘A Poetic Fragment’) of a passage of rhyming and alliterative verse in Trinity Homily XXIX as a ‘poetic fragment.’ Might not the homilist have composed these lines himself, as was so often the case in both Old and Middle English homilies?

\textsuperscript{205} Warner, 140, ll. 7–17. ‘These seventy years signify the seven ages of this life, from the time that Adam was expelled from Paradise to the end of this world, and just as the king Darius freed the people in the sixtieth year, and sent one portion of that people to their homeland, so our Lord harrowed hell in the sixth age, and freed mankind, and brought some to the bliss of the heavenly kingdom, while some still await the end of the seventh age here, for then we will come to perfect bliss with soul and body. This age, which we have just now mentioned, is reckoned to be seven thousand (years), which must pass before this earth ends, as it is written.’
The word ‘gearen’ is added by a later hand (not, it seems, the same one that made additions to Warner XXVII), presumably as a clarification, but this last sentence is still difficult to parse. The sense, however, seems not to be that the last age of the world is to last seven thousand years, but that at the end of the seven ages—which, combined, will last seven thousand years—the world will end. After this passage, a large initial ‘M’ in red ink introduces a calculation of the world’s age at Christ’s birth: ‘Mann sægð fram þan time þe ærest Adam gescapen wæs, oððe Cristes tocyme, wæron agane fif þusend γ fif hundred γ fif γ twentig geare, swa swa writen seggeþ.’ Although Ker may have been correct in considering this sentence a separate article, it was obviously included because of its relation to the subject of the preceding text.

Max Förster, who made the first significant attempt at a commentary on the anonymous texts of Vespasian D. xiv, noted similarities between Warner XLIV and a Septuagesima sermon from the Speculum ecclesiae of Honorius Augustodunensis (fl. ca. 1100–1150), and considered this Latin text the source of the Old English piece. Honorius remains a shadowy figure. Nothing is known of his birthplace or ethnicity besides the fact that, despite his traditional appellation, he was not from Autun. He was, however, in England early in his career, and he seems to have written both his Elucidarium and the Speculum ecclesiae in or around Canterbury. Interestingly, parts of the former text were translated into Old English and immediately follow Warner XLIV in Vespasian D. xiv. If Förster’s proposal of a relationship between a sermon

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206 Alternatively, perhaps, if the sentence is taken more literally as meaning that the seventh age of the world will last seven thousand years, it may owe something to the idea in Bede’s De temporum ratione that the seventh age runs concurrently with the first six. If this were the case, however, the author’s apparent belief that the seven ages of the world will each last one thousand years would be difficult to explain. See Tristram, Sex aetates mundi, 28–9, 37; Charles W. Jones, ed., Bedae opera de temporibus, PMAA 41 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1943), 202.

207 Warner, 140, ll. 17–19, with corrections from Treharne, ‘Homilies,’ item 46. ‘It is said that from the time that Adam was first created until the coming of Christ there had passed 5525 years, as the writings say.’ The last four words are added in a later hand, in red ink. They are followed by several Latin pen trials. For similar calculations in the Old English prose ‘Solomon and Saturn’ dialogue and other texts, see Cross and Hill, 27–8, 72–3, 79–83.

208 Ker, Catalogue 209, art. 47.

209 Förster, ‘Der Inhalt,’ 60–1. The sermon is printed in PL 172, cols. 851D–856B.


211 Warner, 140–5.
from the *Speculum ecclesiae* and Warner XLIV is correct, it would provide corroborative
evidence that Honorius was a valued source for twelfth-century Old English religious writers.
Tristram, however, has called into question whether the correspondences between the two texts
are convincing enough to warrant Förster’s assertion.212 A closer comparison of the two texts is
thus called for.

In no part of Warner XLIV does the Old English match up as closely with Honorius’s Latin as it
does in the translations of the *Elucidarium* in Warner XLV–XLVI (Eluc1, 2).213 If Warner XLIV
is an adaptation of part of the *Speculum ecclesiae*, then, it is presumably the work of a different
translator than the one responsible for the other pieces. The closest similarities between Warner
XLIV and Honorius’s sermon occur at the beginning of the Old English text:

Nabuchodonosor etenim rex Babyloniae, Hierosolimam obsidens destruxit, populum in Babyloniam captivum duxit, qui ibi septuaginta annis in tristicia habitabat, canticum laetitiae non resonabat. Organa ut [lege ad uel in] salices suspendit, juxta sedens flevit.214

We rædeð on bocan ṁ Nabugodonosor geheregode Jerusalem, ṣ genam ṃ Judeisce folc þe he þær fand, ṣ lædde heo to his burh Babilone, ṣ dyde heo þære on þeowte hundseofentig wintre, ṣ þahwile þe heo þær wunedan, heo geswican heora losfangen ṣ heora blissen.215

After this point, however, the correspondences between the texts are less close, and the Old
English contains many details not found at all in the Latin sermon. Both texts make the point that
the joy of the first Jews who returned to Jerusalem was not complete until their wives and
children returned also, but Honorius does not mention the agency of the kings Darius and Cyrus

\[\text{212 Tristram, *Sex aetates mundi*, 82.}\]
\[\text{214 *PL* 172, col. 854D. ‘Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed it, and led its people captive to Babylon. They lived there for seventy years in sadness, and did not sing songs of joy. They hung up their harps upon the willows [cf. Psalm 136:2–3], and sat weeping nearby.’}\]
\[\text{215 Warner, 139, ll. 26–30. ‘We read in books that Nebuchadnezzar plundered Jerusalem, and captured the Jewish people that he found there, and led them to Babylon, his city, and held them captive there for seventy years. And while they dwelt there, they ceased from their songs of praise and their happiness.’}\]
in these events, whereas the author of Warner XLIV not only discusses these figures, but interprets Darius as a type of Christ. The interpretation of the age of the world offered by the Old English author (quoted above) is correspondingly more detailed than that given by Honorius:

Per septuaginta annos quibus populus in Babylone affligebatur septem milia annorum intelliguntur, quibus genus humanum in hac vita peregrinatur. Sicut enim septem primis diebus omnis creatura disponitur, ita per septem milia annorum hic mundus extendi creditur.

Honorius does not mention the ages of the world at all, while the Old English author uses his knowledge of this tradition to compare Darius’s plunder of Jerusalem in the sixtieth year of the Babylonian captivity to Christ’s Harrowing of Hell in the sixth age. Warner XLIV, furthermore, has no obvious liturgical relevance, while Honorius’s sermon describes the practices of the church during Septuagesima and the connection between the seventy days before Easter and the seventy years the Jews spent in Babylon. However, occasional verbal parallels

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216 ‘Finitis septuaginta annis, ad Hierosolimam remeat, Pascha cum gaudio celebrat; postea cum uxores et filii venerunt, duplex gaudium habuerunt’ (PL 172, col. 854D; ‘After those seventy years had passed, they returned to Jerusalem and celebrated the Passover joyfully; afterwards, when their wives and children arrived, they had a twofold joy’).

217 ‘Ac ha ha, ha sixtig wintre agane waren, ha com Darius king, and gewann ha ceastre Babilonie, ha freode he Judeissee folc swa swa God wolde. Of sloh honne kyg he he fand. Sum[e] fos folas ha geceren to heora earde Jerusalem, ha sume ha get bæften belæfden, ha blissodan ha ha to heora earde comen, ac seo blisse nes na fullfremod for heora wifen, ha cildan ha siblingan he getet wæron on Babilonie belæfde. Ac ha ha hundseofontig geare wæron fullice agane, ha com sum oðer king Cyrus genæmmed, ha faren ham to Jerusalem. Ha Judeissee folc, he heare belæfð wæron, ha heo togeædere comen, ha wæs heora blisse fullfremod’ (Warner, 139, l. 30 – 140, l. 7; ‘But when sixty years were completed, then Darius the king came and conquered the city of Babylon, and freed the Jewish people according to God’s will, and killed the king that he found there. Some of the people then returned to Jerusalem, their homeland, and some still remained behind; those who came to their homeland rejoiced then, but their joy was not perfect on account of their wives and children and relatives who had been left behind in Babylon. And when the seventy years were completely finished, another king named Cyrus came and allowed the Jewish people who had been left there to return to Jerusalem, and when they were reunited their joy was perfected’).

218 PL 172, cols. 855B–856A. ‘The seventy years during which the people was afflicted in Babylon are understood as the seven thousand years, during which the human race sojourns in this life. For just as all creation was established during the first seven days, so this world is believed to last for seven thousand years.’


220 PL 172, cols. 856A–B.
continue to be found, as ‘cum corpore et anima simul in gloria exultabunt’\textsuperscript{221} / ‘we cumeð to fullfremedre blisse mid sawlen ġ mid lichamen.’\textsuperscript{222}

A comparison of the \textit{Speculum ecclesiae} Septuagesima sermon and Warner XLIV therefore yields mixed results. On one hand, the beginning and end of the Old English text contain enough similarities to Honorius’s sermon that one suspects some relationship between the texts. At the same time, however, Honorius could not have been the only source for the Old English author, who goes into significantly greater detail concerning the typological associations of the Babylonian captivity and the ages of the world than does the Latin sermon. One possible explanation for this ambiguous evidence would be that the author of Warner XLIV based his account on Honorius’s sermon, but supplemented it with his own knowledge of the typology of the Babylonian captivity and the ages of the world. These two topics were, in fact, related, since the Babylonian captivity was considered to mark the beginning of the fifth age by both Augustine and Bede, whose influential schemata were subsequently employed in many Old English and medieval Irish texts.\textsuperscript{223} While his incorporation of the figure of Darius into his account suggests that the author of Warner XLIV was familiar with the Augustinian or Bedan calculation of the ages of the world, his own ideas on the topic are quite different, and seem instead to derive from Honorius. The ‘Chiliasmus’ of these authors (as Tristram describes it), finds its closest parallels in the sabbatical millennialism that sometimes appeared in Irish and Anglo-Saxon anonymous homilies, and which Byrhtferth of Ramsey argued against in his \textit{Enchiridion}.\textsuperscript{224} A significant difference between Warner XLIV and these earlier texts, however, is that it does not claim that the seventh millennium will comprise Doomsday and the Last Judgment, but rather that the world will end \textit{after} the seventh millennium is complete. If the Old English author shared the opinion of many of his predecessors and contemporaries, including the one who was responsible for calculating the year of Christ’s birth in the short text appended to Warner XLIV in the manuscript, he presumably believed Christ had been born between 5000 and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{221} PL 172, col. 856B. ‘… we will rejoice in glory with \textbf{body and soul} together.’
\item \textsuperscript{222} Warner, 140, 14. ‘… we will come to perfect bliss \textbf{with soul and body}.’
\item \textsuperscript{223} See the numerous references and outlines in Tristram, \textit{Sex aetates mundi}, 22–3, 26–30, 36–43, 45–48.
\item \textsuperscript{224} In addition to Tristram, \textit{Sex aetates mundi}, 50–2, see the discussion of the topic in the introduction of this chapter.
\end{itemize}
5600 years after the creation of Adam. This would put the date of Doomsday at least a few centuries after his lifetime. Therefore, even if he was a proponent of a literal sabbatical millennialism (and there is no reason to believe that he conceived of the number thousand any more literally than the earlier Old English homilists did), he did not use his discussion of the ages of the world as numerical evidence for the proximity of Doomsday.

* * *

The preceding case studies have shown that, in composing their texts on the approach of Doomsday, the authors of Warner XXVII, XXXIII, and XLIV all made use of both pre-Conquest Latin and Old English sources and traditions, and of texts either written after the Conquest (such as the works of Honorius Augustodunensis) or brought to England by Norman ecclesiastics (such as the pseudo-Methodius Revelationes and probably the Latin ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’). Their adaptations of these works show various intentions and agendas, but the authors have in common their willingness to supplement eschatological ideas derived from Anglo-Saxon texts with newly-written or newly-imported works. In this way, the texts of Vespasian D. xiv bear witness to the continued relevance of earlier traditions on the signs of the end times, the reign of Antichrist, and the approach of Doomsday.

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225 See Tristram, Sex aetates mundi, 36–49; Cross and Hill, 82.
The number of Old English homilies that treat Doomsday itself and the many issues and questions surrounding it is difficult to determine. The heading ‘Day of Judgment’ in Robert DiNapoli’s *Index of Theme and Image to the Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* provides references to scores of Old English homiletic treatments of various aspects of Doomsday,¹ which is all the more impressive when one considers that DiNapoli does not include in his work most of the anonymous homilies, whose tone is often heavily eschatological. The issue is further complicated by the sporadic appearance of Doomsday descriptions in many homilies that do not otherwise focus on eschatology. Vercelli XI (HomS 36), for instance, is a Rogationtide homily based on Caesarius’s *Sermo* 215, which discusses correct Christian behaviour and the proper use of temporal wealth, but towards the end of the piece its author abandons his source, laments the condition of the nation, and warns of the imminence of the world’s ending.²

Given the popularity of the Doomsday theme in Old English homilies, a chapter that attempted to trace the development of all elements of Anglo-Saxon depictions of the Last Judgment in early Middle English religious literature would have to be either so cursory as to be useless or so long as to be tedious. In the following pages, therefore, I shall examine the later history of two specific Doomsday motifs which seem to have originated or become common in the Anglo-Saxon period, and which continued to be used and developed in the early Middle English homilies and in related religious literatures.³ Both of these motifs, it will be shown, continued to appear in late medieval and even early Modern English texts. Although these works are not the primary focus of this thesis, I shall discuss such parallels in them where they occur, in order to show that the Old English homilies may have had a greater effect (albeit an indirect one) on later English eschatological literature than hitherto recognized.

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² Scragg, *Vercelli*, 225.

³ I shall, therefore, omit a comprehensive account of the Latin sources of Anglo-Saxon ideas of Doomsday, and shall provide instead more focused discussions on the sources of the various motifs to be treated. The major sources of Old English homiletic eschatology are discussed in the introductory chapter.
4.1 The Four Trumpeting Angels

4.1.1 Origins of the Motif

The waking of the dead and the gathering of the human race on Doomsday to witness the universal judgment are key elements of Christian eschatological imagery, and provide a good starting point for the current examination of the sources of early Middle English homiletic depictions of Doomsday. Early medieval Insular texts generally assigned these tasks either to the archangel Michael or to four angels of unspecified name and rank. Both versions have precedents in Scripture and in early medieval Latin works, as will be discussed briefly below.

The idea that Michael is to wake the dead on Doomsday seems to be the more securely Biblically-grounded of the two options, since 1 Thessalonians 4:16 states that ‘ipse Dominus in iussu et in voce archangeli et in tuba Dei descendet de caelo et mortui qui in Christo sunt resurgent primi.’\(^4\) Paul does not name this archangel, and most medieval Latin commentators make no attempt to identify him. Neither Hrabanus Maurus\(^5\) nor Heiric of Auxerre,\(^6\) for instance, provide the figure with any title more specific than ‘archangelus.’ An exception, however, is the ninth-century author Sedulius Scottus, whose *Collectaneum in beati Pauli epistolas* glosses ‘et in voce archangeli’ thus:

\[\textit{Et in voce archangeli: hoc est cœlestium virtutum, aut in manifestatione vocis archangelicae; aliter, in voce Christi, sive Michaelis, aut Gabrielis, quod interpretatur fortitudo Dei, qui dicit: surgite, expergiscimini.}\]^7

Raymond J. S. Grant has noted that some of the New Testament apocrypha, such as the Coptic *Acts of Andrew and Paul*\(^8\) and the Greek *Revelation of John*,\(^9\) also name Michael as the figure

\[^4\] The Lord himself shall come down from heaven with commandment, and with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead who are in Christ, shall rise first.’

\[^5\] *Enarrationes in epistolas beati Pauli*, PL 111, cols. 556C–D.


\[^7\] *PL* 103, col. 221A. ‘And in the voice of the archangel: that is of the heavenly powers, or in the manifestation of an archangelic voice; otherwise, this can be understood as the voice of Christ, or of Michael, or of Gabriel (whose name means “strength of God”), who will say, “Arise, wake up.”’ ‘Fortitudo Dei’ is a standard Latin etymology of Gabriel. See, e.g., Jerome’s *De nominibus Hebraicis*, PL 23, col. 843.
who will wake the dead, but it is unnecessary to assume that such exotic works exercised any influence on the texts here under investigation.\textsuperscript{10} Without clear evidence to the contrary, one must assume that these apocrypha were unknown to the medieval Irish and English, and the claim in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 that an archangel would wake the dead could easily have made any Insular author think of Michael, the chief archangel.\textsuperscript{11}

It is perhaps significant that Sedulius Scottus, an Irishman, while going against the prevailing exegetical trend in naming Michael as a possible candidate for the archangel of 1 Thessalonians 4:16, nevertheless agrees in this respect with the authors of many later Irish vernacular texts. Two Middle Irish homilies express the idea that Michael will wake the dead on Doomsday. The first of these, entitled ‘Scéla na Esérgi’ (‘Tidings of the Resurrection’) dates to the tenth or eleventh century and was copied (along with ‘Scéla Laí Brátha’) in Lebor na hUidre by a twelfth- or thirteenth-century interpolator.\textsuperscript{12} This text gives the theme as follows:

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\textsuperscript{9} Not to be confused with the canonical Johannine Apocalypse. The text was edited by Constantin von Tischendorf, \textit{Apocalypses Apocryphae} (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1866), 70–94. A translation can be found in Alexander Walker, ‘Revelation of John,’ in \textit{Ante-Nicene Christian Library} XVI, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1870), 493–503. For a response to the implausible notion that the text may have influenced \textit{Christ III}, see ‘Apocalypse of John,’ in Frederick M. Biggs, ed., \textit{Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: The Apocrypha}, Instrumenta Anglica mediaevalia I (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), 66. On the text’s possible relationship to a Middle Irish apocryphon, see McNamara, \textit{Apocrypha in the Irish Church}, 95–8.

\textsuperscript{10} Raymond J. S. Grant, ed., \textit{Three Homilies from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41} (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1982), 75. Strangely, Grant cites these texts but neglects to mention 1 Thessalonians 4:16, the far likelier source for the idea in early Insular texts. The Old English homily which Grant is discussing will be examined in more detail below.

\textsuperscript{11} It is, nonetheless, surprising that the medieval Irish settled on Michael and not Gabriel, who, as God’s frequent messenger in the Bible, might seem a more natural choice to deliver the final summons. Gabriel is given this role in many other traditions, including medieval and early modern Armenian and Breton eschatological literature and early American hymnody. See Michael E. Stone, ‘Two Unpublished Eschatological Texts,’ \textit{Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha} 18 (2009): 293–302 at 299, 301; Pierre-Yves Lambert, ‘Visions of the Other World and Afterlife in Welsh and Breton Tradition,’ in \textit{Apocalyptic and Eschatological Heritage: The Middle East and Celtic Realms}, ed. Martin McNamara (Dublin: Four Courts, 2003), 98–120 at 116; ‘Gabriel’s Trumpet,’ ‘Old Church Yard,’ and ‘The Last Trumpet,’ in Jacob Knapp, \textit{The Evangelical Harp: A New Collection of Hymns and Tunes Designed for Revivals of Religion, and for Family and Social Worship} (Utica, NY: Bennett, Backus, and Hawley, 1845), 22–3, 36–7, 40–1.

\textsuperscript{12} For a summary of opinions on the date of the interpolations, see Mac Gearailt, 84–5.
Atchluinfet and sin na hulī daini filet i n-adnaiichtib guth meic De. Combad guth corptha atberad Ísu sund do éstecht dona marbaib i. guth ñd árchaingil Michil doraga d’erfuacra na hesergi co coitchen for in cintūd ndóenda co n-epri friu fo tri i. ergid uli a bas. Ís guth nemchorpda atbeir Ísu sund d’estecht dona marbaib i. forcongra spírtda cumachta diasneti in Chomded nad chumaing nach nduíl do imgabail. ¹³

One still finds in this text the doubts present in Sedulius’s comment regarding whether Christ’s voice or that of an archangel will accomplish the task. No such hesitation is found in the other homily, dating from ca. 1100 but surviving in the fifteenth-century Leabhar Breac, which (though its phrasing shows clear affinities to that of ‘Scéla na Esérgi’) states flatly that ‘dodéna Míchel árchaingel a erfuaccra for na hulib dóinib, co n-epera friu fo thri, “ercid.”’¹⁴ The twelfth-century ‘Airdena inna cóic lá ndéc ria mbráth,’ an Irish version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend surviving in the Book of Lismore, likewise incorporates the idea into its depiction of the Last Judgment. ¹⁵ The eschatological conclusion to a list of the miracles surrounding Christ’s birth from the fifteenth-century Liber Flavus Fergusiorum is also noteworthy, since it comments on Michael’s waking of the dead in both Latin and Irish, which raises the possibility that Hiberno-Latin texts containing the idea may have circulated more widely among Insular readers:

¹³ ‘Then all the men who are in graves will hear the voice of the Son of God. It may be a corporeal voice that Jesus would here utter to be heard by the dead, to wit, the voice of the archangel Michael who will come to proclaim the Resurrection generally to the human race, so that he says to them thrice: “Arise ye all out of death!” Or it is an incorporeal voice that Jesus here utters to be heard by the dead, to wit, the spiritual command and the unspeakable power of the Lord, which no creature can avoid.’ Text from R. I. Best and Osborn Bergin, eds., Lebor na hUidre: Book of the Dun Cow (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1929), 82, ll. 2509–2516; translation from Whitley Stokes, ed. and trans., ‘The Tidings of the Resurrection,’ RC 25 (1904): 232–59 at 235, 237. Brief discussions of the text and its background can be found in McNamara, Apocrypha in the Irish Church, 141; McNamara, ‘Some Aspects,’ 67–9; and James F. Kenney, The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical, Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies 11 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929 [repr. Octagon Books, 1966]), 738.

¹⁴ ‘The archangel Michael shall utter his proclamation to all men, when he shall thrice bid them “Arise.”’ Atkinson, 142, ll. 3625–7; 390. See also p. 141, ll. 3592–6 in the same text. On the date of the homily, see Gearóid S. Mac Eoin, ‘Observations on Some Middle Irish Homilies,’ in Inland und Europa im früheren Mittelalter: Bildung und Literatur, eds. Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Michael Richter (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996), 195–211 at 206–8. Another text in Leabhar Breac also assigns the waking of the dead to Michael: ‘Is e [Michel] so in t-árchangel as a guth res-a n-erigfe in cined doena do luaithred in talman il-lo bratha, in tan doberthar do in ni diligfe’ (Atkinson, 219, ll. 6394–6; 457: ‘It is the Archangel Michael at whose voice the human race shall arise from the ashes of the earth at the day of judgment, when there shall be assigned to each what he shall deserve’).

In quo die sucitabit Michael archangelus corpora omnium té morte tuba ter cantaturus dicens: ‘Surgite.’ Is lósín do-gená Michael arcaingel furguacra na heisergi forna huile dainib cu n-aibera friu fo tri: ‘Ergidh.’ Et resurgent omnis gentes. Ereochaid na huile o bass isin ló sin frisin forcongur sin …  

The only Old English text to assign the waking of the dead exclusively to Michael is, in a way, an exception that proves the rule that the motif was predominately Irish. The relevant passage occurs in one of the homilies (LS 24) written in the margins of CCCC 41 (s. xi\textsuperscript{med}), a manuscript of the Old English translation of Bede’s Historia ecclesiastica:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{þis is se halga heahengel Sanctus Michael se ðe on þam neahstan dæge worulde ende γ æt þam egesfullan dome he ðonne ða deadan aweceð mid dryhtenes hæse; beoruhtere stefene he clipað γ þus cwìð, ‘Surgite! Surgite! Arisað! Arisað!’ γ ðonne arisað ealle ða deadan …\end{align*}\]

This homily is a highly unusual encomium of St. Michael, which provides a litany of about twenty-five of the archangel’s responsibilities and accomplishments, many deriving from apocryphal sources. Grant, the homily’s editor, thought the text might have been influenced by Irish traditions, and his suspicions were confirmed when Charles D. Wright brought to light a

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16 ‘On that day the archangel Michael will raise the bodies of all from death, blowing thrice on the trumpet and saying: "Arise!" On that day the archangel Michael shall utter the proclamation of resurrection to all men so that he shall say to them three times: “Arise.” And all nations will arise. All men shall arise from death on that day at that proclamation ….’ Text and translation of Middle Irish from Martin McNamara et al., eds., Apocrypha Hiberniae I: Evangelia Infantiae, 2 vols., CCSA 13–4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), II. 616–7. The close relationship of the text to the Leabhar Breac homily quoted above is discussed on 553–61 of the same edition. Though it is outside the scope of this chapter to discuss Modern reflexes of this medieval tradition in detail, one can briefly note that the association of Michael with the archangelic trumpeter of 1 Thessalonians seems to have remained an element of Irish eschatology into the twentieth century. In A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Joyce, perhaps remembering sermons he had heard in his youth, includes the following passage in Stephen’s vision of the Last Judgment: ‘The archangel Michael, the prince of the heavenly host, appeared glorious and terrible against the sky. With one foot on the sea and one foot on the land he blew from the archangelical trumpet the death of time. The three blasts of the angel filled all the universe. Time is, time was but time shall be no more’ (James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man [New York: Viking Press, 1964], 113; quoted in Thomas N. Hall, ‘Medieval Traditions about the Site of Judgment,’ Essays in Medieval Studies 10 [1993]: 79–97 at 85). Especially noteworthy is Joyce’s specification of Michael’s triple trumpet blast, which is nowhere to be found in the Bible but does recall the triple call to arise appearing in all the medieval Irish texts noted above.

17 The idea does appear in some late Middle English works, but these follow a version of the Michael legend in the Legenda aurea. See Richard Freeman Johnson, Saint Michael the Archangel in Medieval English Legend (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 102–3.

18 Grant, 64, ll. 131–5. ‘This is the holy archangel St. Michael who on the last day at the world’s end and at the terrible judgment will wake the dead with the Lord’s command; with a loud voice he will call out and say “Surgite! Surgite! Arise! Arise!” And then all the dead will arise ….’

19 See the introduction and commentary by Grant, 42–55, 67–77.
similar work in Middle Irish from the *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*, which may be based on the same (likely Hiberno-Latin) sources as the Old English homily.  

While 1 Thessalonians 4:16 provides all the support one would need to assign the waking of the dead and the summoning of the human race to Michael, the scriptural basis for the competing Insular idea that four unspecified angels will perform the task is less clear. There are several passages, both in the synoptic gospels and in John’s Apocalypse, that discuss the various roles of the angels on Doomsday and emphasize the idea that the entire world will be affected:

*Matthew 24:31* – et mittet angelos suos cum tuba et voce magna et congregabunt electos eius a quattuor ventis a summis caelorum usque ad terminos eorum

*Apocalypse 7:1* – post haec vidi quattuor angelos stantes super quattuor angulos terrae tenentes quattuor ventos terrae ne flaret ventus super terram neque super mare neque in ullam arborem

*Apocalypse 8:2* – et vidi septem angelos stantes in conspectu Dei et datae sunt illis septem tubae

*Apocalypse 8:6* – et septem angeli qui habebant septem tubas paraverunt se ut tuba canerent

These verses never quite coalesce into a concrete claim that an angel will be dispatched to each of the earth’s four corners to sound the call to Judgment, though it would not be difficult for later writers to misremember them as saying such. I would, however, like to suggest an alternative explanation for the origins of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ (as I shall call them for the sake of convenience) in a version of the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Thomas*.

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20 Wright, *Irish Tradition*, 262, n. 167. For an edition and translation of the Irish text, see Roland Perron, ‘*In laudem sancti Michaëlis*: The Irish and Coptic Analogues and the Anglo-Saxon Context,’ (unpublished MA thesis, McGill University, 2005), 88–91. Perron’s conclusion that the Old English homily is heretical is an oversimplification, but his work remains valuable in that it conveniently collects the text’s most important analogues.

21 ‘And he shall send his angels with a trumpet, and a great voice: and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them.’

22 ‘After these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that they should not blow upon the earth, nor upon the sea, nor on any tree.’

23 ‘And I saw seven angels standing in the presence of God; and there were given to them seven trumpets.’

24 ‘And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound the trumpet.’
In his brief discussion of the motif, James E. Cross brought up the possibility that the prevalence in Old English homilies of the idea of four angels waking the dead and gathering the human race on Doomsday may have been ‘reinforced by the Apocalypse of Thomas: “erunt voces ad quattuor angulos caeli.”’ At the time he made this observation, Cross was unaware of the existence of a version of the Apocalypse of Thomas in which the idea is stated explicitly. The text in question is found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 26 (s. xiii), one of the English manuscripts of the Apocalypse of Thomas recently edited by Charles D. Wright. At the end of its description of the seven days leading up to the Last Judgment, the Hatton Apocalypse of Thomas contains the following claim:

Ad .i.iii.`or´ uentis sonabant montes ut tuba et uenient .i.iii.`or´ angelis cum tubis suis. Primus angelus cantabit cum tuba et resurgent prophete. Secundus angelus cantabit cum tuba et resurgent martyres. Tercius angelus sonabit tuba et resurgent omnes boni homines simul cum gaudio in christo. Quartus angelus cantabit cum tuba et resurgent impii peccatores.

Though the Hatton manuscript is considerably younger than the Old English homilies and its wording of the motif is not a very close match to any of them, it seems to reflect a tradition present in at least some of the versions of the Apocalypse of Thomas known to Anglo-Saxon authors. Versions of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ appear in two Old English homiletic versions of the Apocalypse of Thomas—the first in Blickling Homily VII (HomS 26), the second preserved in CCCC 162 and Hatton 116 (HomS 44, edited as Bazire-Cross Homily III)—as well as in two versions of the Old English Gospel of Nicodemus (Nic [D], [E]) with eschatological conclusions that have been shown to rely on the Apocalypse of Thomas:

25 Bazire and Cross, 42; cf. also Max Förster, ‘A New Version of the Apocalypse of Thomas,’ 26, n. 70.
26 The text can be found in Wright, ‘Apocalypse of Thomas,’ 51–64.
27 Wright, ‘Apocalypse of Thomas,’ 64. ‘The mountains shall sound from the four winds as a trumpet, and four angels will come with their trumpets. The first angel will blow on the trumpet and the prophets will rise. The second angel will blow on the trumpet and the martyrs will rise. The third angel will sound the trumpet and all good men will rise together with joy in Christ. The fourth angel will blow on the trumpet and the wicked sinners will rise.’
28 The first of these, preserved in CCCC 41, is edited in W. H. Hulme, ‘The Old English Gospel of Nicodemus,’ Modern Philology 1 (1904): 579–614 at 610–4. The second, preserved in the twelfth-century manuscript CCCC 303, remains unedited, but is identical to the CCCC 41 in most respects.
The Blickling VII version is especially interesting in that it attempts to strike a compromise between the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ motif and the predominantly Irish tradition that Michael is to raise the dead. While it was probably originally associated with the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, the ‘Four Angels’ motif appears in other Old English works with no other apparent connections to the apocryphon, as well. Vercelli Homilies II (*HomU* 8) and XXI (*HomM* 13) and Napier Homily XL (*HomU* 32) mention them, though these are really all versions of the same homily.34 Another noteworthy appearance of the motif is in Vercelli Homily VIII (*HomS* 3), in which the

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30 ‘After these things it will be near to the seventh day, and St. Michael the archangel will order the four trumpets to be blown at the four corners of the earth, and all the bodies will awaken from death.’

31 ‘On the seventh day, at the seventh hour of the day the sign of Doomsday will appear, and at the four parts of the earth four angels will stand and blow four trumpets…. Then shall arise from the four parts of the earth all those men who suffered death with sudden terror.’

32 ‘And our Lord will then send his four angels, and they will blow four trumpets at the four corners of the earth.’

33 ‘And our Lord will then send his four angels, and they will then blow four trumpets at the four parts of the earth.’

Anglo-Saxon author adds the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ in a departure from his sources, Caesarius’s *Sermones* 57 and 58.\(^{35}\)

It is, of course, difficult to prove that a version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* related to the one contained in Hatton 26 influenced English homilies and was not instead influenced by them, since the earliest Old English appearances of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment,’ those in the Vercelli Book, antedate the Hatton manuscript by some 250 years. However, one can find some corroborating evidence that the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ were a part of a version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* known in Insular circles by examining a passage in a Welsh poem on Doomsday, *Yrymes Detbrawt*. The poem survives in a fourteenth-century manuscript, but seems to have been composed several centuries earlier.\(^{36}\) The relevant passage begins as follows: ‘Pan discynho Pater y dadel a’e nifer / A chryn go-petror….’\(^{37}\) Heist has argued convincingly that *Yrymes Detbrawt* draws on a version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*.\(^{38}\) If his theory is correct, it is far likelier that the Welsh author based his work on a Latin text of that apocryphon than on an Old English one. One can therefore push back the introduction of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ into an Insular Latin text of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* to some time perhaps as early as the tenth century—early enough to have influenced any of the Old English texts under consideration.

\(^{35}\) Scragg, *Vercelli*, 145, ll. 34–7. ‘chi þone cumað, þa englas, to þam feower endum þysses middangeardes þyra byman blawað’ (‘And then they, the angels, will come to the four ends of this earth and blow their trumpets’).

\(^{36}\) Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 48–9 (but see his n. 47); Lambert, 108.

\(^{37}\) ‘When Pater comes down to meet his flock, with horns/trumpets (blowing, sounding) in the four directions.…’ Text and translation from Lambert, 108. Heist (*Fifteen Signs*, 152–3) cites the same passage from Henry Lewis, ed., *Hen gerddi crefyddol* (Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1931), 11. Other Welsh versions of the ‘Four Angels’ appear in two early Latin texts, both surviving in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts: *Armes Dydd Brawd*, a poem related to *Yrymes Detbrawt* (ed. Lewis, 14–17; cf. Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 33–4, 70–2); and a prose version of the Comestor recension of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday.’ The latter is especially interesting in that it not only exhibits a rhetorical repetition of the number four (first seen in many of the Old English homiletic versions of the motif), but also is one of the latest texts to contain the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif, discussed below: ‘Y pymthegved dydd y daw pedwar angel o bedwar ban byd i ganu bedwar Klariwns i alw y tri llu, un nevol ac un daiarol ac un uffernol, ir lle a elwir y val o Siosaffat’ (‘The fifteenth day four angels will come from the four corners of the world to play four clarions to call the three bands, one heavenly and one earthly and one infernal, to the place that is called the Valley of Josaphat.’ Text and translation from W. W. Heist, ‘Welsh Prose Versions of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday,’ *Speculum* 19 [1944]: 421–32 at 424–5).

\(^{38}\) Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 72.
An unedited homily on the Last Judgment surviving in St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 146 (s. ix\(^1\)) provides more evidence of the association of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ with some early version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*.\(^{39}\) A somewhat garbled version of the motif appears in the homilist’s description of Doomsday (p. 272, ll. 12–3): ‘Tunc tubis angelis sonabunt. *per quattuor partis terræ*’ (apparently meaning, ‘Then the angels will sound their trumpets throughout the four parts of the earth’). Significantly, this part of the homily also claims that ‘mare siccabitur. et omnis aque quæ in mundo sunt peribunt.’\(^{40}\) This detail is not found in any of the canonical descriptions of Doomsday. However, Cross has noted that it is present in several Latin and Old English texts closely connected to the *Apocalypse of Thomas*.\(^{41}\) The drying up of the sea is also found in some Irish works related to the *Apocalypse of Thomas*.\(^{42}\) All of these analogues suggest that this element originated in or was associated with some version of the apocryphon. The fact that the only manuscript containing the full text of the Doomsday homily in question was composed at St. Gall, a centre with strong Insular ties, is another indication that the relevant version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* may have been an Insular production.

The only Irish text to assign the waking of the dead to four angels instead of Michael is a fragment of an apocryphal apocalypse of John contained in *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*. In a description of Doomsday which draws from other Insular eschatological traditions (including the Fifteen Signs), it is said that ‘eirghi .iii. haingil a ceithribh hairdibh in beatha & adearuid cu hard ingantach “Eirghi! Eirghi! Eirghi! Eirghi!”’\(^{43}\) A colophon in the manuscript says that the Irish

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\(^{39}\) The homily is part of a collection of seventeen homilies, all unedited, which survive in this manuscript and also imperfectly in St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 124 (s. ix\(^1/4\)). Both manuscripts are described and digitized on the website of the e-codices: Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland project, http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en (accessed August 2012).

\(^{40}\) St. Gall 146, p. 272, ll. 16–7. ‘The sea will be dried up, and all the waters of the world will perish.’

\(^{41}\) Bazire and Cross, 139, n. 12.

\(^{42}\) See McNamara, ‘The (Fifteen) Signs,’ 233, 239, 241, 253.

text was translated from Latin by Uighisdin Mac Raighin, an Augustinian canon who died in 1405, but the sources of the text remain largely unknown.\footnote{44} The \textit{Apocalypse of Thomas} was probably known in medieval Ireland,\footnote{45} and it is possible that a version of that text related to the one surviving in Hatton 26 influenced the description of Doomsday in this apocalypse, but there is at present no proof that this work or any other is behind the sole Irish witness of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment.’\footnote{46}

4.1.2 The ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century England

Given the paucity of medieval witnesses to the motif outside England, we would be justified in considering the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ a primarily English eschatological feature, which likely developed and was popularized during the Anglo-Saxon era as a result of the influence of a version of the \textit{Apocalypse of Thomas}.\footnote{47} The use of the motif by English authors did not, however, end or experience any noticeable decline with the close of the Old English period, and versions of it can be found in texts of many genres from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and even in much later works.

\footnote{44}Mac Niocaill, ‘Beatha Eoin Bruinne,’ 249; McNamara, \textit{Apocrypha in the Irish Church}, 96–8.

\footnote{45}McNamara, \textit{Apocrypha in the Irish Church}, 119–21.

\footnote{46}If the annal recording his death is to be believed, Mac Raighin was a widely read man; he is called ‘suígh gen rasabhra i nd-eagna dhiadha γ domhanta etir léghend γ shenchas γ eladhnaibh imdha ele archeana, γ ollamh daeirlabhra iarthair Eorpa, fear tecair in liubhair-sea γ liubhar imdha ele etir beathaidh naemh γ shenchas’ (‘an undisputed master of sacred and secular wisdom, including Latin learning, history, and many other sciences, ollamh of eloquence for Western Europe, compiler of this book and of many other books, including Lives of Saints and histories.’ Text and translation from Séamus Ó hInnse, \textit{Miscellaneous Irish Annals: A.D. 1114–1437} [Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1947], 176–7). Mac Raighin therefore could have come across the motif in some rare Latin apocryphon no longer extant.

\footnote{47}A fifteenth-century German poem on the Last Judgment is the only certainly non-Insular vernacular text containing the motif that I have found. See L. A. Willoughby, ‘Two Unpublished Middle High German Poems,’ \textit{Modern Language Review} 5 (1910): 297–336 at 317–8 (cited in Heist, \textit{Fifteen Signs}, 187). It should be noted as well that the ‘Four Angels’ appear in \textit{Mandeville’s Travels} (see the edition of P. Hamelius, 2 vols., EETS o.s. 153–4 [London: Trübner, 1919], I. 76). However, as the national identity of this work’s author and the circumstances of its composition are still points of contention, it would perhaps be rash to use the text as evidence of the continued popularity of the motif in later medieval England (a proposition for which there is already sufficient proof, as is discussed below). For a brief discussion of the disputed origins of the work, see Tamarah Kohanski, ed., \textit{The Book of John Mandeville}, MRTS 231 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), xx–xxii.
The earliest Middle English text containing a version of the ‘Four Angels’ motif is the fourteenth homily in Lambeth 487 (Lond/Lamb/487/006).\(^{48}\) This homily is one of the many medieval ‘Sunday Lists,’ which, as Clare Lees explains, ‘enumerate notable scriptural events which occurred, or are said to have occurred, on Sunday, in order to strengthen reasons for veneration of the day.’\(^{49}\) The source of this text was a popular Latin Sunday List sermon beginning ‘Veneranda est nobis haec dies’ (or words to that effect). Originally a Hiberno-Latin composition of perhaps the tenth century, the sermon survives in nearly fifty manuscripts which date from ca. 1000 to ca. 1500, and which are found in all corners of Europe.\(^{50}\) The Middle English homily was almost certainly composed well after the Norman Conquest. It contains a very high proportion of Latin quotations (usually supplied with English translations), a trait common in post-Conquest compositions but rare in Old English.\(^{51}\) Furthermore, the version of the Latin source closest to the text used by the homily’s author is found in a thirteenth-century French manuscript (Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale 309), which suggests that the immediate manuscript source of Lambeth XIV may have been brought to England by Norman clerics.

Towards the end of the piece, both Lambeth XIV and its source set aside the topic of the veneration of Sunday in favour of a description of Doomsday and heaven.\(^{52}\) It is here that the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ motif is introduced into the Middle English text:

\begin{align*}
\textit{Latin Source (from Laon, BM 309, fol. 39\textsuperscript{v})} & & \textit{Lambeth XIV (OEH1, 143, ll. 15–21)} \\
\text{Dominus noster cum uirtute ueniet terribilis in flamma ignis (cf. Psalm 96:3), et inflammabit aduersarios suos et eos qui operantur iniquitatem.} & & \text{Dominus noster cum uirtute ueniet. & cetera. Vre Drihten wile cumen dreycle in fures liche and wile for-berne alle his fon. and heom þet beoð iwunede uuel to done. Tunc cantabunt angeli sicut tuba uoce magna et}
\end{align*}

\(^{48}\) Another version of this text was present as homily 6 in Cotton Otho A. xiii, but the part of the manuscript containing the homily was destroyed in the Cotton Fire. See Wanley, 233; Wülcker, 57–88.


\(^{50}\) For details, see my forthcoming piece, ‘Source Studies in the Lambeth Homilies.’

\(^{51}\) So much of the homily is Latin that Dorothy Haines considers it macaronic (\textit{Sunday Observance}, 59, n. 134). Wymer (‘Tradition and Transition,’ 71), however, argues that such homilies are not macaronic in the strict sense, since every Latin quotation in them is immediately translated into English. See also Millett, ‘Pastoral Context,’ 51–2.

\(^{52}\) These descriptions have much in common with Doomsday scenes in homilies from the \textit{Catechesis Celtica}, as I discuss in my forthcoming article.
magna tuba & mortui resurgent. *penne sculen engles mid beme blauwen on fower haluwe þe world.* and alle dede arisen and steorren sculen þeostren. and þe sunne hire liht forleose. and steorren sculen from heouene falle. 54

Lambeth XIV anticipates some other Middle English texts (including, as we shall see, *Ancrene Wisse*) in referring not to four angels *stricto sensu*, but to an undetermined number of angels blowing trumpets at the four corners of the world. One might therefore wonder whether this should really be considered a version of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ motif. However, similar descriptions of the blowing of trumpets in which the angels are not enumerated occur as early as Blickling VII, and these obviously belong to the same tradition as the other texts discussed above. Furthermore, the identification of the source of Lambeth XIV is particularly helpful here, since it shows that the Middle English author added the reference to the world’s four corners himself. His source text (both in the full Latin sermon and in his quotation from it) mentions only angels and a trumpet. It is thus likely that the author of Lambeth XIV was already familiar with the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ before he started writing his text, probably because of a knowledge of the motif’s use in earlier English homilies.

Significant appearances of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ occur also in the various versions of *Ancrene Wisse*. This well-known text, which was intended as a rule for anchoresses but came to enjoy a much wider readership, was originally written in English in the West Midlands around the second quarter of the thirteenth century, and was subsequently translated into Anglo-Norman in the later thirteenth century and into Latin in perhaps the early fourteenth. 55 In Part 4 of the

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53 ‘Our dreadful Lord will come with might in the flame of fire, and he will burn up his foes and those who carry out injustice. Then the angels will sing as a trumpet in a great voice and the dead will rise. And the stars will darken, and the sun will be obscured, and the moon will not give its light. Heaven and earth will burn, and the stars will fall from heaven.’

54 ‘Our Lord will come with might, etc. Our Lord will come terribly in the likeness of fire, and will burn up all his foes and those that are accustomed to do evil. *Then the angels will sound a great trumpet and the dead will rise. Then the angels will blow with trumpets at the four corners of the world,* and all the dead will rise. And the stars will darken, and the sun will lose its light, and the stars will fall from heaven.’

work, in a well-known passage describing the proud as the devil’s trumpeters, the author introduces the angelic trumpeters of God as a warning. The following table shows the ‘Four Angels’ motif in *Ancrene Wisse* along with its immediate context as it appears in selected Middle English (CCCC 402), Anglo-Norman (BL, Cotton Vitellius F. vii), and Latin (Oxford, Merton College C. l. 5) manuscripts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle English – Corpus version (Millett, 81, ll. 475–80)</th>
<th>Anglo-Norman – Vitellius F. vii (Herbert, 138, l. 26 – 139, l. 2)</th>
<th>Latin – Merton C. l. 5 (D’Evelyn, 75, ll. 15–21)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A]h ȝef ha wel þohten of Godes bemeres, of þe englene bemen þe schulen o fowr half þe world biuore þe grurefulle dom grisliche blawen, ‘Ariseð, deade, ariseð! Cumemð to Drihtines</td>
<td>Mes sil bien pensassent des businours. dieu des busines des angres qil sonerent en quatre parz del mond horriblement deuant lorrible iugement. Leuez morz. leuez venez al iugement nostre</td>
<td>Sed si bene cogitarent de tubatoribus Dei, de tubis angelorum qui in quatuor partibus mundi ante terribile iudicium sonabunt, ‘Surgite, mortui, surgit! Venite ad iudicium Creatoris ut</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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56 This section of *Ancrene Wisse* is, for instance, used as a sample text in J. A. Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre’s *Book of Middle English*, 3rd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 106–11. The editors’ claim (108, n. to ll. 4–5) that the four angels of Apocalypse 7:1 were the source for this motif is, as we have seen, an oversimplification, but their comparison of the passage to Donne’s sonnet, ‘At the round earth’s imagined corners,’ introduces an important parallel discussed in further detail below.


As in Lambeth XIV, the number of trumpeting angels is not stated explicitly, but it is clear from the wording of the passage that *Ancrene Wisse* reflects the same tradition as the earlier texts. The Latin and Anglo-Norman translations of the text are of particular interest in the history of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ tradition. Through these translations, a motif probably deriving from Old English homilies gained an unexpectedly wide societal and chronological diffusion. The Latin version of the text, for instance, enjoyed an inherently extended chronological relevance (if not a particularly wide circulation), as its language did not need to be updated while the vernaculars changed and evolved. The Anglo-Norman translations, meanwhile, seem to have been read by French-speaking aristocratic laywomen, and one such translation was even available in France.

While Lambeth XIV is the latest appearance of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ that I have found in an extant English homily, the continuing influence of the motif on Middle English eschatological texts can be seen in works from other genres. Of chief importance among these is early Middle English lyric poetry. Two examples occur in the manuscript Cambridge, Trinity College, B. 14. 39, a trilingual West Midlands collection dated to ca. 1250 by the MED. The first, generally referred to as ‘A Light Is Come to the World,’ survives only in Trinity B. 14. 39 and consists of a retelling of and reflection on Christ’s passion followed by a brief prayer to the

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60 ‘But if they thought well about God’s trumpeters, of the angels’ trumpets that shall terribly call out at the four corners of the world before the fearful judgment, “Arise, dead, arise! Come to the judgment of the Lord that you may be judged!”—there no proud trumpeter shall be saved—if they thought well about this, they would soon enough blow less loudly in the devil’s service.’ This is a translation of the Middle English only, but the parallel French and Latin versions do not differ significantly from the original.

Blessed Virgin to secure her son’s mercy on the human race at the Last Judgment. During this eschatological conclusion, the author gives the following description of the angels’ appearance on Doomsday:

Wen vour engles bemen blouit,
Lef us him þenne to cnowen,
On his rist hond arisen. (ll. 108–110)

Later in the same manuscript, there occurs the earliest surviving version of the impressive eschatological lyric usually called ‘Doomsday’ in modern editions. In addition to the Trinity manuscript, this poem survives in London, BL, Cotton Caligula A. IX (ca. 1275); Oxford, Bodleian Library Digby 86 (a. 1300[?]); and Oxford, Jesus College 29 (a. 1300). The Trinity text, however, is the only one to include a reference to the ‘Four Angels’:

Foure engles in þe dairet blouit here bemen,
þenne comit ihesus crist his domes forto demeN. (ll. 9–10)

All the other texts refer to ‘the angels’ blowing trumpets, but do not specify their number as four. It is impossible to know which reading is the more original, but even if the poem did not at first contain the motif, it is noteworthy that the scribe or compiler of the Trinity manuscript was familiar enough with the ‘Four Angels’ to add them to his text.

A final thirteenth-century poem surviving in Trinity B. 14. 39 also provides an important witness to the ‘Four Angels’ tradition. However, unlike the case with ‘Doomsday,’ the Trinity manuscript is here the only text of the poem that does not explicitly contain the motif in question. This work is a poetic ‘Debate of the Body and the Soul,’ which concludes with a seven-day list of signs of the approach of Doomsday, apparently drawing on some form of the Apocalypse of

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62 The text is edited in Brown, 34–7.
64 Edited, respectively, in Brown, 44–6; Edmund Stengel, Codicum manu scriptum Digby 86, in Bibliotheca Bodleiana asservatum (Halle an der Saale: Libraria Orphanotrophei, 1871), 96–8; Richard Morris, An Old English Miscellany, EETS o.s. 49 (London: Trübner, 1872), 163–9.
The versions of the text surviving in Digby 86 and London, BL, Harley 2253 (ca. 1325) give the sign for the sixth day as follows:

**Digby 86 (Clark, 135, ll. 81–2)**

\[\text{þe seste dai aȝein þe non},\]
\[\text{for aungles sulen wonden},\]
\[\text{Blouen þat al þis world shal } <\text{quakien}>,\]
\[\text{wîp horns in honde.}\]

**Harley 2253 (Clark, 135, ll. 75–6)**

\[\text{þe seste day ayen þe dom}\]
\[\text{shule four aungles stonde},\]
\[\text{blowe þat þis world shal quaque},\]
\[\text{wîp beme in here honde.}\]

The Trinity version of the stanza appears somewhat garbled, but nonetheless seems to be pointing to the same motif as the other two texts: ‘þe sexte day again þe miracles he sal maken./ ffour sulen stonden and blauuen, þat al þis werld sal quaken.’ 66

The appearance of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ in yet another text based on an Insular (though as yet unidentified) version of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* provides further evidence that this apocryphon was instrumental in the dissemination of the motif in medieval England.

### 4.1.3 The ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ in Later Medieval England

Several texts indicate that the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ remained a part of English eschatology long after the Old and early Middle English homilies, which were probably the main sources for the knowledge of the motif in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had ceased to be widely read. In the first part of the fourteenth century, for instance, Adam Davy, whose works survive only in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud 622 (s. xivex), incorporated the motif into the last day of his poetic version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend, in a manner reminiscent of its use on the last or next-to-last day in the various vernacular texts of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*:

\[\text{Þe xv. dai, schollen .iij. Aungels comeþ a .iijj. half mydlerde,}\]
\[\text{& blowen þorouȝ-out al þe werldeþ þat vche man schal be aferd. (ll. 19–20)}\]

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66 Clark, 135, ll. 88–9.

Around the same time, the author of the extremely popular *Pricke of Conscience*—a nearly 10,000-line Northumbrian eschatological poem that survives in well over one hundred medieval manuscripts—adopted a version of the motif:

Our Lord yhit þan, or he com doun,  
for to sytte in dome in proper parsoun,  
sal send byfor, als þe buke tels,  
in four partys his angels,  
with þair beme þat þai sal blaw,  
þat alle þe world sal here and knaw... (ll. 4957–4962)

The enduring popularity of the *Pricke of Conscience* throughout the rest of the medieval period must have ensured that many English scribes and readers from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries also encountered the ‘Four Angels of Judgment.’

4.1.4 The ‘Four Angels of Judgment’: Conclusions

Subtle changes in the form and wording of the ‘Four Angels of Judgment’ were introduced to English versions of the text since its earliest vernacular appearances in the Old English homiletic adaptations of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. At times, the emphasis was laid on the number of trumpets or their presence at the four corners of the world rather than on the angels themselves. One can justifiably question, therefore, whether the later iterations of the theme really descend from the earlier ones, or simply represent convergent but ultimately independent developments of eschatological ideas taken from John’s Apocalypse and Matthew 24. It seems unlikely, however, that the ideas about the angelic summons to Judgment present in these books would be conflated multiple times in the same way over several centuries, and that such conflations would occur almost exclusively in England, if there were not some continuous vernacular tradition at work. It is, furthermore, important to note that there are no significant temporal gaps to account for in the medieval transmission of the motif. At the time Lambeth XIV and *Ancrene Wisse* were written, English readers like the Tremulous Hand were still making use of the Anglo-Saxon homilies; when the *Pricke of Conscience* was composed in the early fourteenth century,

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thirteenth-century lyrics like ‘Doomsday’ were still being copied, and Ancrene Wisse was still popular and would continue to be read for another two centuries. Indeed, given the frequent appearances of the ‘Four Angels of Doomsday’ until the sixteenth century, one wonders if we might have in the opening lines of one of John Donne’s ‘Holy Sonnets’ a late remembrance of the motif in English:

At the round earth’s imagined corners blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go… (ll. 1–4)\textsuperscript{70}

4.2 ‘The Three Hosts of Doomsday’

4.2.1 Origins of the Motif

In 1973, Malcolm Godden discussed a motif common in Old English penitentials and homilies.\textsuperscript{71} In Godden’s words, the motif, later termed the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ by Andrew Breeze,\textsuperscript{72} generally runs as follows: ‘it is better to be shamed for one’s sins before one man (the confessor) in this life than to be shamed before God and before all angels and before all men and before all devils at the Last Judgement.’\textsuperscript{73} The ‘Three Hosts’ or allusions to them appear in some form in about twenty Old English texts, most of which are homilies.\textsuperscript{74}

The ultimate source of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ as they appear in the Old English texts remains somewhat hazy, and it is possible that no one antecedent text is to be identified. The

\textsuperscript{70} John Donne, Poems, ed. E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1896), 160. See Burrow and Turville-Petre, 108, n. to ll. 4–5; Bazire and Cross, 42–3. Iconographic and artistic depictions of the Last Judgment show that the motif’s influence lasted into at least the nineteenth century. Blake’s ‘Vision of the Last Judgment’ was to depict four trumpeting angels, as his 1808 and 1810 plans for the work and his 1808 sketch of it show. See Geoffrey Keynes, The Complete Writings of William Blake (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 443, 609. I owe this observation to David McDougall.

\textsuperscript{71} Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif.’


\textsuperscript{73} Godden, 222. Godden notes that ‘[t]o describe it as a motif is not very accurate since there is a standard form of expression involved as well as a particular idea or set of ideas, but no better term offers itself.’

\textsuperscript{74} The most complete list is in Breeze, 71–3.
motif’s origins seem to lie in Latin homiletic literature. Charles D. Wright has found references
to the shame of sinful men before all men and angels on Doomsday in homilies by Gregory the
Great and Eligius of Noyon. 75 These homilies make no mention of the presence of the host of
hell at the Last Judgment, but seem to be part of a tradition similar to texts of the ‘Three Hosts’
type. An appearance of the theme in one of Alcuin’s letters also omits the host of devils, though
it does warn the impenitent that they will face the ‘accusationem diabolicæ fraudis’ on
Doomsday. 76 Finally, an anonymous homily for the first Sunday of Lent in a ninth-century
collection from northern Italy contains an exhortation similar to other texts of the ‘two-hosts’
type:

Ecce nunc tempus adest, in quo et peccata vestra confiteri Deo et sacerdoti, et per
ieiunia et orationes et lacrimas atque elemosinas delere debetis. Quare erubescat
peccator manifestare peccata sua, quae et Deo et angelis omnibus atque cunctis
electis animabus sunt nota et manifesta? 77

The enumeration of three hosts—i.e., of heaven, earth, and hell—is a common device in Celtic
vernacular texts and in Latin texts written under Celtic influence. 78 Many, though not all, 79 of
these instances are explicitly linked to the Last Judgment. For instance, the conclusion to a
homily in the Catechesis Celtica, a collection of homiletic matter surviving in a (probably)
Breton manuscript of the tenth century, contains the sentence: ‘Beati quos benedicet dominus
coram tribus famili<i>s caeli et terrae et inferni…’. 80 Likewise, the Old Irish ‘Airdena inna cóic
lá ndéc ria mbráth’ states that on Doomsday ‘tinoilfid … muinnter nimi & talman & ifrinn isin

77 Paul Mercier, ed., Quatorze homélies du IXe siècle d’un auteur inconnu de l’Italie du Nord, SC 161 (Paris: Cerf,
1970), 186. ‘Behold, now the time has come to confess your sins to God and to the priest, and you ought to wipe
them away through fasts and prayers and tears and almsgiving. Why should a sinner be ashamed to make his sins
known, which are already known and manifest to God and to all angels and to all the souls of the elect?’
78 For examples, see Breeze and Wright, Irish Tradition, 85–8.
79 One of the items in the Catechesis Celtica, for example, refers to Christ as ‘princeps familiae caeli et terrae et
inferni.’ Wilmart, ‘Catéchèses celtiques,’ 46. For this and references to more examples, see Wright, Irish Tradition,
85.
80 Wilmart, ‘Catéchèses celtiques,’ 110–11. ‘Blessed are they whom the Lord will bless before the three households
of heaven, earth, and hell.’ Cf. Breeze, 76. The Breton provenance of the manuscript is accepted by Wright and
Breeze but not uncontested. See, for example, Martin McNamara, ‘Sources and Affiliations,’ 197–8.
comdhail-sin. As Breeze notes, the motif was also popular in Welsh religious literature throughout the later Middle Ages. An especially relevant example occurs in a poem attributed to Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch (fl. ca. 1280), in which the description of the three hosts is juxtaposed with the shame felt by sinners on the Last Day.

While the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ were obviously popular in the Celtic vernaculars, the motif probably entered Old English religious literature via Latin texts. An exact source cannot be identified with confidence, and it is possible that no single Latin work exerted the decisive influence. Nevertheless, the phrasing of a version of the motif in a sermon attributed to Boniface is strikingly similar to many of the Old English versions:

Et melius est uni homini confiteri peccata, quam in illo tremendo judicio coram tribus familiis, coeli teræque, et inferorum, publicari, et confundi pro peccatis, non ad emendationem, sed ad poenam perpetuam.

Compare, for example a version of the Old English pseudo-Egbertine *Ordo confessionis*, which warns that ‘betere þe is þæt ðe scamige nu beforan me [i.e., the priest] anum. þonne eft on domes dæge beforan gode. and beforan eallum heofenwaran. and eorðwaran. and eac helwaran.’ The wording of the formula in most of the Old English texts (especially those of Ælfric and the penitentials) is reasonably close to that of the Latin sermon, but it is unlikely that this sermon was the immediate source of the motif as it appears in Old English. Despite its traditional attribution, the sermon was almost certainly not written by Boniface (d. 754), as its author seems

81 ‘the household of heaven and earth and hell will gather into that meeting.’ Text and translation from Stokes, ‘Fifteen Tokens of Doomsday,’ 316–7.
82 Breeze, 76.
84 *PL* 89, col. 851D. ‘And it is better for anyone to confess his sins to one man than that they be disclosed in that terrible judgment before the three households of heaven, of earth, and of the inhabitants of hell and that he be confounded for those sins not to his correction, but to his eternal punishment.’ See Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 235–6; Breeze, 74.
85 Quoted from BL, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fol. 96’ in Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 223. ‘It is better for you to be ashamed now before me alone, then afterwards on Doomsday before God and before all heaven-dwellers and earth-dwellers and also hell-dwellers.’
to have added to his small homiliary an instruction on baptism composed after 811.\textsuperscript{86} The sermon thus has no intrinsic connection to Anglo-Saxon England. Furthermore, as Breeze notes, the pseudo-Boniface sermons were not widely copied, ‘and there seems to be no evidence for their influence in England.’\textsuperscript{87}

While Latin works such as the \textit{Catechesis Celtica} and pseudo-Boniface probably played a role in the initial distribution and popularization of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday,’ once the motif entered the Insular vernacular literatures, be it by means of one Latin source or many, it seems to have been primarily transmitted through texts in those vernaculars rather than continually re-adopted from the same Latin source(s). The relationships of many of the Old English versions of the motif have been thoroughly explored by Godden, whose article gives a good idea of the remarkable popularity of the motif among Anglo-Saxon homilists.\textsuperscript{88} Indeed, the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ enjoyed an influence unparalleled by most other eschatological motifs, since the motif was used both in the major anonymous collections (\textit{e.g.}, in Vercelli IV \textit{[HomU 9]} and Blickling VII \textit{[HomS 26]}) and by Ælfric and Wulfstan, whose more sober treatments of the end times are often seen to contrast with those of the anonymous homilists.\textsuperscript{89} Ælfric, as Godden has noted, seems to have introduced an important variation into the motif by rephrasing it to include ‘a relative clause instead of a comparison (“he who is not ashamed now must be shamed later”).’\textsuperscript{90} See, for example, Ælfric’s homily for Ash Wednesday from his \textit{Lives of Saints} (\textit{ÆLS [Ash Wed]}):

\begin{quote}
Ne sceamige nanum mann þæt he anum lareowe his gyłtas cyðe, forðan þe se þe nele his synna on ðissere worulde andettan mid soðre behreowsunge, him sceal
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{87} Breeze, 75; Bouhot, 185–190. Breeze (76) makes a case that ‘the penitential motif … of shame before a confessor being better than shame before the three hosts of Doomsday was in fact devised either by an Irishman, or, less probably, a Continental scholar well-read in Hiberno-Latin.’ However, as many of the earliest sources of the motif are of doubtful provenance, I do not find his arguments especially convincing. While Breeze and Wright have documented Irish influence on and possible Celtic origins for the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday,’ whether a motif with so many permutations can be ascribed to a single scholar or even a regional group of scholars is far from clear.

\textsuperscript{88} Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 222 et passim.

\textsuperscript{89} For a list of the relevant texts of Ælfric and Wulfstan and for more anonymous texts, see Breeze, 71–73.

\textsuperscript{90} Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 222.
sceamian ætforan Gode ælmihtigum, and ætforan his engla werodum, and ætforan eallum mannum, and ætforan eallum deoflum æt ðam micclan dome þær we ealle gegaderode beoð. Þær beoð cuđe ure ealra dæda eallum þam werodum, and seđe ne mæg for sceame his gyltas anum menn geandetta, him sceal þonne sceamian ætforan heofonwarum and eorðwarum and helwarum, and seō sceamu him bið endeelas.⁹¹

4.2.2 The ‘Three Hosts’ in Early Middle English Homilies

Despite changes to English homiletic literature in the centuries after the Conquest, the vernacular life of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif did not end with the close of the Anglo-Saxon period. Godden and Wright have identified three occurrences of the motif in two ca. 1200 homily manuscripts, which, as we have seen, are crucial to the understanding of the afterlife of Old English homilies. Lambeth Homily III, contains the familiar exhortation that

betere eow is þet eow sceamie bi-foren þam preoste ane; þenne on domes-dei biforen criste. and bi-foren al heuene wara. and bi-foren al eorðe wara. and bi-foren al helle wara. and þa hweþere þine saule feren scal in to eche pine.⁹²

Lambeth III is a rather conservative homily despite its late date, and it contains excerpts from many Anglo-Saxon penitential homilies.⁹³ The contemporary Trinity Homilies, however, are not generally considered to have any direct connections to pre-Conquest material.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, Wright identified versions of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif in eschatological scenes in two of the Trinity Homilies.⁹⁵ Since he does not quote or comment on these examples, I reproduce them here:

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⁹¹ W. W. Skeat, ed., Ælfric’s Lives of Saints, EETS o.s. 76, 82, 94, and 114 (London: Trübner, 1881–1900), I. 272, ll. 167–175. ‘Let no man be ashamed to reveal his sins to one teacher, because he who does not wish to confess his sins with sincere penitence in this world must be shamed before almighty God, and before the hosts of his angels, and before all men, and before all devils at that great judgment in which we will all be gathered. There the deeds of us all will be made known to all those hosts, and he who cannot for shame confess his sins to one man must then be shamed before all the inhabitants of heaven, earth, and hell, and that shame will be endless for him.’

⁹² OEHI, 35, l. 34 – 37, l. 2. ‘It is better for you to be ashamed before the priest alone than on Doomsday before Christ and before all heaven-dwellers and before all earth-dwellers and before all hell-dwellers, and nevertheless your soul shall then go into eternal punishment.’ See Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 226–7.


⁹⁵ Wright, Irish Tradition, 87, n. 176.
**Trinity IX (Cam/Trinity/B.14.52/009; Septuagesima): Babilonia interpretatur confusio.** babilonie bitocneð shame. *Et significat corpus subditum peccato.* and bitocneð þe synfulle lichame. *Quod est confusum quoniam dominus spernit illud.* þe is riht attenshame. for þat he erneð here. þat ure louerd ihesu crist him she[n]deð. and wile shufe fro him a domes dai. biforn alle heueneware and herðe ware. and ec helleware; þus queðende. *Ite maledicti in ignem eternum. et cetera.* witeð ge awerhgede gostes in to helle. 96

**Trinity XII (Cam/Trinity/B.14.52/012; First Sunday in Lent):** Siðen he [i.e., Christ] setteð þe synfulle on his lifthalf. and witeð hem þat hie bi here lif dages ne wolden him quemen. and here agene synnes. on dede. and on speche unhileð hem seluen. and shameliche hem bigredeð. and fule shendeð. biforen al heueneware. and eorðeware. and helle ware. and þenne sendede ure louerd ihesu crist hem mid saule. and mid lichame into helle. 97

Both of the Trinity homilies modify the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ to omit any mention of confession, which is a key element in earlier homilies as well as in many later works that include the motif. Nonetheless, these warnings of shame on Judgment Day for one’s sins before the hosts of heaven, earth, and hell strongly echo the Old English texts.

Interestingly, Lambeth III, Trinity IX, and Trinity XII exhibit particularly conservative lexical choices in their versions of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday.’ The Old English compound element -wara, ‘dwellers’ was likely falling out of regular use by the time the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies were written. The *MED* gives only two citations of the element -wāre that postdate the year 1200, excluding its use in demonyms and toponyms which presumably had already achieved a fixed form in the Old English period. The later of these two works is dated earlier than 1250. 98

Significantly, the other post-1200 citation of -wāre consists of the ‘eorð ware’ and

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96 *OEH2*, 53, l. 31 – 55, l. 2. ‘Babilonia, interpretatur confusio—Babylon means “shame”—*et significat corpus subditum peccato*—and signifies the sinful body—*quod est confusum quoniam dominus spernit illud*—which is put to shame because he [i.e., the sinner] merits here that our Lord Jesus Christ will shame him and cast him away from him on Doomsday before all heaven-dwellers and earth-dwellers and also hell-dwellers, saying: *Ite maledicti in ignem eternum, etc.*—“Go, you accursed spirits, into hell.”’

97 *OEH2*, 67, l. 30 – 69, l. 5. ‘Afterwards he will set the sinful on his left hand, and he will reproach them because they would not please him during their lives. And their own sins in action and in speech will reveal themselves and shamefully upbraid and disgrace them before all the inhabitants of heaven, earth, and hell. And then our Lord Jesus Christ will send them with soul and body into hell.’

98 *MED* ‘wāre (n. pl.).’ The work in question is a poem on the Harrowing of Hell, edited by W. H. Hulme, *The Middle English Harrowing of Hell and Gospel of Nicodemus*, EETS e.s. 100 (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), 18, l. 217.
‘heouene ware’ used in *Ancrene Wisse* in a section connected to an expanded version of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday,’ which I will discuss shortly.\(^99\) The Old English terms *heofonwara*, *eorþwara*, and *helwara* thus appear to have entered early Middle English largely as a unit, most often in the specific context of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif.

### 4.2.3 The ‘Three Hosts’ in *Ancrene Wisse*

The appearance of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif in the *ca*. 1200 Lambeth and Trinity Homilies shows that it retained its popularity long after the Norman Conquest, but no scholar has attempted to trace the later history of the motif in the Middle English period. This is surprising since, as is demonstrated below, the ‘Three Hosts’ were consistently employed in the eschatology of English homiletic and devotional works throughout the rest of the Middle Ages. Of these post-1200 examples, the earliest occurs in Part 5 of *Ancrene Wisse*. The ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ are introduced in a discussion of confession as an expansion and commentary on a quotation from Nahum 3:5–6. As above, I here print the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif in *Ancrene Wisse* along with its immediate context as it appears in selected Middle English (CCCC 402),\(^100\) Anglo-Norman (BL, Cotton Vitellius F. vii),\(^101\) and Latin (Oxford, Merton College C. I. 5) manuscripts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle English – Corpus version (Millett, 122, ll. 313–326)</th>
<th>Anglo-Norman – Vitellius F. vii (Herbert, 228, l. 14 – 229, l. 12)</th>
<th>Latin – Merton C. I.5 (D’Evelyn, 123, ll. 8–21)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alswa sched þin heorte—þet is, al þet uuel þet is i þin heorte. Jef þu ne dest nawt, lo hu gruerefulliche Godd seolf þreatde þe þurh Naum þe prophete: <em>Ostendam gentibus nuditatem tuam et regnis</em></td>
<td>ausi espandez vostre queor cest tout le mal qest en vostre q[uor] Si vous nel fetes. Veez come tres harougement dieu meismes vous manace. par Naum le prophete. <em>Ecce ego ad te dicit dominus ostendam</em></td>
<td>Sic effunde cor tuum, id est, totum malum quod est in corde tuo. Si sic non facias, ecce quam terribiliter Deus ipse tibi comminatur per prophetam Naum, iij° : Ecce ego ad te, dicit Dominus, ostendam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{100}\) For the corresponding passage in the Cleopatra text, see Dobson, *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwle*, 238–9. For the version in the Gonville and Caius text, see Wilson, *Ancrene Riwle*, 17, ll. 2–20. For the Vernon text’s version, see Zettersten and Diensberg, 114, l. 35 – 115, l. 11. For the version in Cotton Titus D. xviii, see Mack, 114, ll. 3–20. The Lollard *Recluse* understandably omits the words ‘to þe preost i schrifte,’ but otherwise largely parallels the other texts. See Zettersten, 136, ll. 4–16.

\(^{101}\) For another Anglo-Norman translation of the same passage, see Trethewey, 76, ll. 2–22.
In all three versions, the hitherto amorphous hosts are imagined as discrete kingdoms, bringing the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif into line with the ‘regnis’ of the quotation from Nahum. The form of the motif in Ancrene Wisse is otherwise similar to the appearances of the ‘Three Hosts’ in Old English homiletic literature. Ælfric’s version of the motif, which emphasizes that those who are not shamed now before a confessor must be shamed later before the three hosts, is

102 The following translation is of the Middle English version: ‘In the same way empty out your heart, that is, all the evil that is in your heart. If you do not do this, see how terribly God himself threatens you through Nahum the prophet: Ostendam gentibus, etc. (Nahum 3:5–6) “You would not reveal yourself to the priest in confession, and I will show your naked wickedness to all people, and your shameful sins to all kingdoms—to the kingdom of earth, to the kingdom of hell, to the kingdom of heaven—and I will bind all your vileness onto your own neck, as is done to a thief led to the judgment; and thus, with all your iniquity bound about you, you shall fall into hell.” O, says St. Bernard, quid confusionis, quid ignominij erit quando dissipatis folijs et dispersis vniuersa nudabitur turpitudo! Sanies apparebit …’
a particularly notable antecedent. In fact, the only major difference between Ælfric’s version of the motif and that which appears in *Ancrene Wisse* is that in the latter work we see the situation not from a homilist’s perspective but from that of Christ, who, having summoned heaven, earth, and hell to judgment, makes good on Ælfric’s threat by shaming those who refused to shame themselves in confession. In the English and Anglo-Norman texts, a subsequent expansion of a quotation attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux echoes and recapitulates the motif, though in this instance only the earthly and heavenly observers are mentioned. As is the case with the ‘Four Angels of Judgment,’ the Anglo-Norman and Latin versions of *Ancrene Wisse* are of particular importance in the history of the ‘Three Hosts.’ In fact, a sixteenth-century manuscript of the Latin translation of *Ancrene Wisse* furnishes one of the latest examples of the motif I have been able to find, and shows that it remained an element of English eschatology into the early Modern period.

As Dobson and Dance have discussed in their notes to Millett’s edition, part of Christ’s speech to the damned in *Ancrene Wisse* has an analogue in Thomas of Chobham’s *Summa de arte praedicandi*. This text, which provides a close parallel to the image of the thief, notes that the sinful man carries with him ‘in conspectu Dei et angelorum iudicium damnationis sue.’ If he had access to a similar text, the author of *Ancrene Wisse* may have been reminded of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ by this mention of the watchful eyes of God and his angels, which then prompted him to alter and expand on his source by including the full version of the motif. The author also departs from a close translation of the Bernard quotation by introducing the hosts of heaven and earth.

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103 The manuscript in question is London, BL, MS. Royal 7 C. x. See Millett, *Ancrene Wisse*, I. xxii. The latest example, as mentioned above, occurs in a seventeenth-century manuscript of a Welsh version of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend, for which see Heist, ‘Welsh Prose Versions,’ 424–5.


105 Millett, *Ancrene Wisse*, II. 220; *PL* 184, col. 469.
It would probably be unwise to search for a specific text to account for the *Ancrene Wisse* author’s knowledge of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday.’ Still, it bears mentioning that Old English homilies remained in use in the West Midlands, the place of *Ancrene Wisse*’s composition, until at least the year 1200. For example, the Lambeth Homilies, which draw on Old English texts and contain an explicit instance of the motif, are found in a West Midlands manuscript. The work of the Tremulous Hand shows that homilies from much earlier Old English manuscripts could still be read (albeit with increasing difficulty) into the first decades of the thirteenth century. If he was exposed to the texts of Old English homilies, the author of *Ancrene Wisse* could well have found the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in them.

Nonetheless, it is more likely that no single source is to be identified for the version of the motif in *Ancrene Wisse*. The ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ seem to have become a kind of commonplace in English eschatological and penitential texts long before *Ancrene Wisse* was written. Many of the Old English versions of the ‘Three Hosts’ have no firm relationships to other versions, and, as I have already discussed, the motif occurs in two Trinity Homilies which otherwise seem to have few direct connections to earlier works. The author of *Ancrene Wisse*, therefore, could have encountered versions of the motif in any number of texts. Alternatively, he may never have seen it in written form at all, but instead heard it preached. The examples from the Lambeth and Trinity Homilies demonstrate that the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ continued to be popular in early Middle English homilies, which the author presumably heard often.

4.2.4 The ‘Three Hosts’ in Middle English Literature of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

Although the present study focuses mainly on English religious literature from around the second half of the twelfth century, the continued appearance of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in later Middle English texts is worthy of discussion, since it allows us to follow the development of an eschatological motif throughout the Middle Ages. By the fourteenth century, certain instances of the motif begin to exhibit a more varied and diffuse character. For example, the treatise *On Prayer*, ascribed to the famed Northumbrian hermit and mystic Richard Rolle (d. 1349), admonishes people to amend their lives ‘or þat day comme þat heuene and erthe and helle mone

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dampne vs for oure ill dedis.\textsuperscript{107} There is no mention here of shame in confession being preferable to shame on Doomsday, and the inhabitants or realms of heaven, earth, and hell have been replaced by a simple listing of the locations themselves. Still, the threat of condemnation before a celestial, terrestrial, and infernal audience on Doomsday for failure to repent in the present world suggests that \textit{On Prayer} belongs to the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ tradition, though it employs the motif in an original way.

Around the same time, the author of the \textit{Pricke of Conscience} adopted the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif but also modified it somewhat:

\begin{verbatim}
Alle þat sal com byfor Crist þat day,
Sal strayt acounte yhelde, ar þai passe away,
Of alle þair lif howe þai here lyved,
Þan sal be sene what þai God gryeved
And byfor alle þe werld shewed sal be,
Oppenly and noght in privité;
And byfor halghes and aungels bright,
And byfor devels horribel til mans sight,
And byfor alle wykked men alswa,
Þat sal be dampned til endles wa. (ll. 5612–5621)\textsuperscript{108}
\end{verbatim}

Presumably, the ‘Three Hosts’ in this passage are represented by (1) saints and angels, (2) devils, and (3) ‘wykked men’ (l. 5620). The first two are conventional enough, but the author’s focus on the wicked element of the earthly host is a modification unique to the \textit{Pricke of Conscience}, and is perhaps meant to emphasize that the people who we would least like to know our hidden failings will see them clearly at the Last Judgment. Alternatively, the ‘Three Hosts’ in this passage could be interpreted as (1) ‘alle þe werld’ (l. 5616), \textit{i.e.}, the host of earth, (2) saints and angels, \textit{i.e.}, the host of heaven, and (3) devils and evil men, \textit{i.e.}, the host of hell. However, this interpretation would destroy the parallelism in ll. 5618–5620 that gives the passage its rhetorical force. It is more likely that ‘alle þe werld’ should be understood figuratively (as in French, ‘tout le monde’) as meaning all the creatures present at Doomsday, regardless of their provenance. In

\textsuperscript{107} C. Horstmann, ed., \textit{Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole, an English Father of the Church and His Followers}, (London: Sonnenschein, 1895), I. 299.

\textsuperscript{108} Morris, \textit{Pricke of Conscience}, 152.
addition, like *On Prayer*, the *Pricke of Conscience* lacks specific mention of the necessity of sacramental confession, a key component of most earlier English versions of the motif.

Of all the fourteenth-century Middle English examples of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday,’ the one that most closely approaches the motif’s original formulation is found in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. The *Parson’s Tale*, a prose treatise on the vices and virtues and on penance, concludes with an exhortation not to let oneself be hindered from confession for any reason, including worldly embarrassment:

> A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle his thougthes and alle his werkes, to hym may no thyng been hyd ne covered. Men sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doom to hem that been nat penitent and shryven in this present lyf. For alle the creatures in hevene, in erthe, and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world. (ll. 1062–1064)\(^{109}\)

Though obviously not directly derived from a homily of Ælfric or from any other Old English text, Chaucer’s version of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif, like that in *Ancrene Wisse*, has notable similarities to Ælfric’s warning that those who do not submit themselves to shame now must be shamed before all the inhabitants (in Chaucer, ‘creatures’) of heaven, earth, and hell on Doomsday.

Scholars have long recognized that Chaucer made use of two thirteenth-century Latin tracts as his chief sources for the *Parson’s Tale*: Raymond of Pennafort’s *Summa de paenitentia* and William Peraldus’s *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*.\(^{110}\) In general, Chaucer follows Pennafort closely in the concluding section of the *Parson’s Tale*, but there is nothing in this source that parallels the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ passage. Intriguingly, however, the section of Pennafort’s treatise that Chaucer replaces with the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ quotes Nahum 3:5 (‘revelabo pudenda tua in facie tua et ostendam gentibus nuditatem tuam et regnis ignominiam tuam’), the exact same verse the author of *Ancrene Wisse* uses to introduce his


version of the motif. It is likely that this very passage inspired Chaucer to depart from close adherence to his source and expound instead on the shameful revelation of sins to ‘alle the creatures in hevene, in erthe, and in helle’ on Doomsday.

The apparent association of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ with Nahum 3:5 by both Chaucer and the Ancrene Wisse author does not necessarily imply that the former was acquainted with the work of the latter (though this is not an impossibility). A more likely scenario might be that both Chaucer and the Ancrene Wisse author are witnesses to an English exegetical tradition on Nahum that predates either of them. The eschatological implications of Nahum 3:5 were recognized already in the ninth century by Haymo of Auxerre, and the verse continued to be interpreted in this light later in the Middle Ages. While I have not been able to find any explicit versions of the ‘Three Hosts’ in Latin commentary traditions on Nahum, it is natural that this eschatological motif, which was so influential in England, should have become associated with this passage by English writers.

The use of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in English eschatological and penitential exhortations continued well into the fifteenth century. Some notable instances of the motif’s use occur in the sermons of BL, MS. Royal 18 B. xxiii. The manuscript itself was compiled around 1450, though the sermons contained therein vary in date from ca. 1378–1417. Three of these sermons include descriptions of Doomsday that derive from the ‘Three Hosts’ motif. As in the

111 Correale and Hamel, I. 563, ll. 28–9.
112 PL 117, cols. 176B–C.
113 See, for example, Rupert of Deutz’s commentary on the minor prophets: PL 168, cols. 569, 573. Petrus Reginaldus, a fifteenth-century French Franciscan, provides a notable later example: ‘Naum iii. Reuelabo pudenda tua in facie tua et ostendam gentibus nuditatem tuam. O deus, quid facient turpia sua videre. Quanta esset verecundia vni honesto viro vel honeste mulieri nudum vel nudam esse coram magna multitudo populi. Certe maior verecundia et maior pena et confusio erit ipsis damnatis nudos esse coram tanta multitude demonum …’ (‘Nahum 3: And I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will shew thy nakedness to the nations. O God, what will the men and women do then, who now fear that their misdeeds will be seen? As much shame as there is for an honest man or an honest woman to be naked before a great crowd of people, surely there will be more shame and greater pain and confusion for the damned to be naked forever before such a great multitude of demons’). Quoted from Speculum finalis retributionis (Lyons: Antonius Du Ry, 1528), f. 15vb.
114 Citations are Ross, ed., Middle English Sermons.
115 Ross, xxxiv–xl.
*Pricke of Conscience*, the numerical patterning of the motif has become somewhat looser, but the sermons are nonetheless clearly related to the ‘Three Hosts’ tradition. Sermon 17 ([BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/017](#)), for example, warns:

> And bot þou make dewly amendis or þat þou diee, els þi cursed synne shall be oponlye knowon to al þe world at þe Day of Dome before þe holy Trinite and þe seyntes and angles of heven and be-fore all þe feendes of hell.\(^{116}\)

As in the *Pricke of Conscience*, if we were to adapt this text to the traditional formulation of the motif we would be forced to take the ambiguous ‘al þe world’ as referring to the earthly host. Although this might be a somewhat more plausible option in this case than in the *Pricke of Conscience*, it would be misguided to try to force the framework of the original appearances of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif onto its later incarnations, since this would deny the dynamic nature of the motif and its adapters’ originality.

Indeed, the differing versions of the motif throughout its history in English literature show that it remained sufficiently vivid and relevant to be modified by various authors for different circumstances. The author of Sermon 38 from the same manuscript ([BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/038](#)), for example, adds the motif to a story from the *Vitas patrum*, in which St. Ephraem challenges a prostitute to practice her craft with him in public. Responding that she would be ashamed to do so, the prostitute is rebuked by Ephraem, who says to her, ‘Si homines erubescis, quanto magis erubescere oportet Deum, abscondita tenebrar um redarguentem?’\(^{117}\) The author of the Middle English sermon saw in this passage an opportunity to insert an extended version of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif:

> And þan seid þis holy man, ‘Arte þou more ashamed of þis litill pepull þat is here þan þou arte of God almyghtye, and of is blessed modur, and of þe seyntes, and of all þe blessed soules þat are in heven, and of all þe dewels, and of all þe dampned soules þat are in hell and shall be, þe wiche shall oponly see and knowe at þe Day of Dome all þi wikked werkes and dedis þat þou hast don but ziff þou amende þe or þat þou die?’\(^{118}\)

\(^{116}\) Ross, 102, ll. 26–30.

\(^{117}\) *PL* 73, col. 324A. ‘If you are ashamed before men, how much more should you be ashamed before God, who can convict you of things hidden in darkness?’ Cited in Ross, 363.

\(^{118}\) Ross, 219, l. 35 – 220, l. 5.
Similarly, the author of Sermon 6 (BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/006), seeing a reference to the deeds ‘[o]mnium omnino hominum, sive in cælo, sive in inferno’ in his source (the Elucidarium of Honorius Augustodunensis), was reminded of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ and incorporated them into his text. The fact that an early fifteenth-century sermon manuscript contains such a high density of instances of the motif is interesting and suggests that the motif may have been used continuously in the English homiletic tradition throughout the Middle Ages. While at least two centuries elapsed between the composition of the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies and the items in Royal 18 B. xxiii, the apparent gap in appearances of the motif in homilies and sermons may well be due to manuscript loss or to a general lack of study into Middle English sermons, many of which remain unedited. Indeed, I cannot claim to have searched every edited Middle English sermon for the motif, and it is likely that many variations of it remain to be discovered.

Yet another clear example of the ‘Three Hosts’ is found in the early fifteenth-century Memoriale credencium, called by its editor a ‘manual of theology for lay people.’ This text, like Chaucer’s Parson’s Tale, bases its section on penance on Raymond of Pennaforte’s Summa de paenitentia. Significantly, while there is ‘no close connection between these English versions’ of the treatise, the Memoriale credencium inserts a version of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif in the same spot Chaucer did, replacing a paragraph which cites Nahum 3:5. The Memoriale reads:

þis lettyng [i.e., shame of confessing] may wel be ouercome: with thynking of þe grete schame þat synful men þat nulleþ not schryue hem of hare synnus: schul

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119 PL 172, col. 1172D. ‘of all men, whether in heaven or in hell.’
120 Ross, 28, ll. 29–33.
121 A somewhat outdated list of unedited Middle English sermons can be found in V. M. O’Mara, ed., Study and Edition of Selected Middle English Sermons, LTM n.s. 13 (Leeds: University of Leeds Press, 1993), 2–12. See also O’Mara and Paul’s RMEPS, which contains descriptions of many unedited texts.
123 Kengen, 15.
124 Kengen, 15.
haue at þe daye of dome. For þulke þat nulleþ schew hare synnus here to man: þan þey schulle be schewed to alle þe men of þe world and to alle þe aungels of heuen.\(^{125}\)

To this passage manuscript C of the *Memoriale* (Cambridge, University Library, Dd. 1. 1 [s. xv\(^{\text{med}}\)]) adds the expected conclusion ‘[and] be forn alle þe deuelles of helle.’\(^{126}\) Even if this cannot be claimed to be the original reading (no other manuscripts of the text contain it),\(^{127}\) the fact that a scribe would add the third host of Doomsday to a sentence containing only the first two shows that the motif was familiar enough in the fifteenth century that it could be completed from memory. It is also noteworthy that the author of the *Memoriale* seems to have been reminded of the motif from his source’s citation of Nahum 3:5 independently of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Parson’s Tale*, which, as we have seen, make the same connection. This further strengthens the argument that the ‘Three Hosts’ had become a standard element in the exegesis on this verse in the later Middle Ages in England.

### 4.2.5 Other Echoes of the ‘Three Hosts’ in Middle English

There remain some Middle English texts whose Doomsday scenes show more distant relationships to the ‘Three Hosts,’ but which still appear to owe something to the motif. Of prime importance among these is Trinity Homily XXIX (Cam/Trinity/B.14.52/027, ‘De Sancto Andrea’), in which the condemned are surrounded by various groups of accusers and spectators:

\[
\text{Danne stondeþ þo wreches also þo. þe wo beð. and lokeð up. and dun. and al abuten. and sen buuen hem godes wraððe. þe hem fram him drieð. and beð þar of swiðe ofdradde. and no wunder nis. Hie iseð bineðen hem deflen þe hem gredeliche kepeð. and beð swiðe of grisen; and ful eadã mugen. Hie iseð bisides hem swilche þe hem waren her cuðe. and bieð swiðe of-shamede. of hem. and mid here owen sinnes þe him swo biclepieð. and ben sore ofgramede. and wið hem seluen alre sorest. for þat hie hadden swo fulliche suneged.}^{128}\]

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\(^{125}\) Kengen, 165, l. 21 – 166, l. 3.

\(^{126}\) Kengen, 8; 166, n. 3.

\(^{127}\) Cf. the lists of instances of the motif in Godden and Breeze, which include Old English texts in which one of the hosts seems to have dropped out or not been there in the first place.

\(^{128}\) OEH2, 173, ll. 7–15. ‘Then the accursed will stand as those in woe, and will look up and down and all around, and will see above them the wrath of God that drives them away from him, and they will be greatly afraid, and that is no wonder. They will see beneath them devils who greedily grope at them, and they will be greatly terrified, and very easily may be. They will see beside them those that were known to them, and they will be greatly ashamed of
There is no enumeration of hosts here, and the angels do not make an appearance. The sinner is, however, confronted with divine (God), infernal (devils), and terrestrial (his fellow men) witnesses to his damnation. A Latin analogue and possible source of this section of Trinity XXIX can be found in the *Meditatio ad concitandum timorem* of Anselm of Canterbury, and a comparison of the two passages suggests the author of the Middle English homily may have been acquainted with the ‘Three Hosts’ tradition. Anselm’s text states, ‘O angustiae! Hinc erunt accusantia peccata, inde terrens justitia; subtus patens horridum chaos inferni, desuper iratus judex; intus urens conscientia, foris ardens mundus.’ Whereas Anselm’s pairs of introductory adverbs (‘Hinc … inde,’ ‘subtus … desuper,’ ‘intus … foris’) create a dichotomous Doomsday landscape, the Trinity homilist establishes a threefold scheme both by his own use of adverbs (‘up. and dun. and al abuten’; ‘buuen hem,’ ‘bineðen hem,’ ‘bisides hem’) and through his triple repetition of ‘swiðe’ before a past participle (‘ofdradde,’ ‘of grisen,’ ‘of-shamede’). A similar effect is achieved by the author of the second homily in Cotton Vespasian A. xxii, whose description of Doomsday also seems related both to the ‘Three Hosts’ and to Anselm’s meditation: ‘Wat sceol se wrecce don. þe bufon iséȝð his hlaford þe he ȝegremed áfeð. under him helle muð open. abuuten him al folc. him selfe bi sandlice senne beswapen.’

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129 F. S. Schmitt, ed., *S. Anselmi Cantuarensis opera omnia*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: F. Frommann, 1984), III. 78–9. ‘O, anguish! On one side there will be sins accusing, on the other justice threatening; below the terrible abyss of hell lying open, above the judge angry; within a burning conscience, outside the world in flames.’ A Middle English translation of the meditation, formerly attributed to Richard Rolle, is extant. This text renders the Latin thus: ‘O þe anguyssches and þe annuyes þat schullen þanne bee: For on þat oo syde schullen bee synnes accusynge, on þat oother syde streit riȝtfulnesse soore afferynge; bynethe, þe open derkenesse of helle, aboue, þe wrathful domesman; withinne, a smertynge conscience, and withoute, þe bremynge world.’ See Horstmann, *Yorkshire Writers*, II. 445. A similar binary description of Doomsday can be found in a mid-thirteenth century sermon surviving in Cotton Cleopatra C. vi (BL/Cleopatra C.vi, a manuscript of *Ancrene Wisse*) and Cambridge, Trinity College B. 1. 45 (Cam/Trinity/B.1.45/001), here cited from the former (Dobson, *Ancrene Riwle*, 111): ‘harde mai þe grisen agein þat wretful dai of dom þanne þou schalt sen and vnderstandin alle þe pines and te michele meseise þat iusu crist dri. for þi luue in erþe oþe ton half þe. And oþe toþer half þe þu schalt sen al redilike γ al opinlike biforn al þe world alle þo ilke sinnes þat tu hast don agennis his forbode wid þou oper wid worde oper wid worke; but it be hire þoru uerrai penance ibet.’ Förster prints parallel texts of the two versions in his ‘Kleinere mittelenglische Texte,’ 147–51.

130 *OEH1*, 239, ll. 29–32. ‘What will the wretch do, who sees above him his Lord whom he has angered, under him hell’s mouth open, around him all people, himself enveloped in shameful sin?’ Joseph Hall (Selects, II. 284) first called attention to the possible relationship between this passage and Anselm’s *Meditatio*. The English homily and its possible sources are briefly discussed in Millett, ‘Change and Continuity,’ 228–30.
4.2.6 The ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in Old Norse Homilies

Several scholars have demonstrated the significant influence of the Anglo-Saxon homiletic tradition on early Scandinavian preaching.\(^{131}\) It is not surprising, then, that in addition to its popularity in Middle English literature, the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif also appears in at least one Old Norse homily. This text is the second primarily eschatological homily in the so-called Norwegian Homily Book (AM 619 4°, s. xiii\(^{in}\)), named after its place of origin.\(^{132}\) After a self-deprecating exordium, in which the homilist asks God for the skill to begin his discourse wisely, he continues:

> En hvar mega ec bætr mina rðo hþfia hællr en minna goða menn á þa ena miclu ogn er þetþ þetta man verða. þa er þriu fylki scalu saman coma á doma-degi. allr en helgi himnescr vars drottins lýðr. ok allt man-kyn hværr í þeim sama licam sem nu hefir. ok allir dioflar or hælvti coma þar.\(^{133}\)

To my knowledge, this clear example of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif has not been recognized as such by any scholar of the Norwegian Homily Book.\(^{134}\)

It must be admitted that there is no proof that the Norwegian homilist was using an Anglo-Saxon source. The Irish church also seems to have influenced early Scandinavian homiletics,\(^{135}\) and it

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\(^{131}\) See especially Abram, ‘Anglo-Saxon Homilies’ and ‘Anglo-Saxon Influence.’ For a more general summary see Hall, ‘Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,’ 678–81.

\(^{132}\) Hall, 692–697. For a more detailed account of the manuscript, see Kirsten M. Berg, ‘Homilieboka—for hvem og til hva?’ in Vår eldste bok: Skrift, miljø og biletbruk i den norske homilieboka, eds. Odd Einar Haugen and Åslaug Ommundsen, Bibliotheca nordica 3 (Oslo: Novus, 2010), 35–76. The manuscript was edited by Indrebø, Gamal Norsk Homiliebok. The folia that contain this homily were not originally a part of the manuscript, but were written by the same scribe and added to the volume early in its history.

\(^{133}\) Indrebø, 168, ll. 21–25. ‘And how could I better start my counsel than by reminding good men of the great terror that will come to pass after this [life], when the three hosts will come together at Doomsday? All the holy heavenly people of our Lord; and all mankind, each in the same body as he now has; and all the devils from hell will come there.’

\(^{134}\) In the most complete study of the manuscript, Oddmund Hjelde discusses the passage but does not recognize the motif. See his Norsk preken i det 12. århundre: studier i Gammel Norsk homiliebok (Oslo, 1990), 397. In another study (Kirkens budskap, 112), Hjelde compares the passage to a Doomsday scene in the traditional Norwegian religious ballad Draumkvæde. However, the correspondences between the two texts are not close, and it would be stretching the evidence to say that Draumkvæde contains a version of the motif. The relevant passage can be found in Michael Barnes, ed., Draumkvæde: An Edition and Study, Studia Norvegica ethnologica et folkloristica 16 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974), 177–178.
is possible that the homilist took his motif from a Celtic- or Hiberno-Latin text. See, for example, the *Catechesis Celtica* example above, which refers to the Last Judgment occurring ‘coram tribus familì<š>s caeli et terræ et inferni.’ Like the Old Norse text, the number of hosts is stated explicitly (‘tribus familì<š>’/’þriu fylki’), and there is no mention of shame or encouragement to confess. Nonetheless, both of these elements have parallels in Old English homilies, for example in Vercelli Homily X (*HomS* 40), in which Satan addresses God before the Last Judgment saying:

> Gearalice witon þas heregas þry ðe mid þe wæron—an is se heofoncunda se ðe mid fered þe þenaþ, oðer is ðæt eorðlice mægen þe [þu her somnost γ to þrymdome cumen is, ðrínde is þæt hellcunde werod þe] hyder cwom to þan þæt hie woldon þine domas gehyran, hu þu þam forworhtum scrifan woldest—eall þis mægen wat, þe her to þys geste com, þæt [þin] heahs þrymmes anes eall afyllde γ mid soðfæstnesse γ mid rihtwisnesse geseted.

Vercelli X, in fact, parallels the Old Norse homily in every important respect. In both texts, the ‘Three Hosts’ are described in a Doomsday context without discussion of shame and penance. In both the Old English and Old Norse texts the hosts are described in martial terms (‘þriu fylki’/‘heregas þry’), whereas in Irish and Hiberno-Latin texts the more neutral words ‘familia’ or ‘muintir’ (its Irish equivalent) prevail. The extended description of the ‘Three Hosts’ and


136 Erik Gunnes believed that an unknown Latin homily was the source for most of the text, but gave little evidence for this assertion. See Astrid Salvesen, trans., *Gammelnorsk Homiliebok*, intro. and commentary by Erik Gunnes (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), 182.

137 Wilmart, ‘Catéchèses celtiques,’ 110–111.

138 Scragg, *Vercelli*, 200, ll. 69–75. ‘Truly we know—i.e., the three armies that were with you, the first being the divine army that accompanies and serves you, the second being the earthly host which you have here summoned and which has come to glory [or ‘to the glorious Judgment’?], the third being the hellish troop which has come hither because they would hear your judgments and how you would sentence the wicked—this whole host, which has come to this gathering, knows that your throne is filled solely with glory and is established with truth and righteousness.’

their respective provenances in the Norse homily is also paralleled in Vercelli X but appears in no Irish text with which I am acquainted. These similarities do not prove that the Vercelli homily or any other Old English text was the proximate source for the Norse homily, but they do show that the Norwegian homilist utilized a formulation of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif which was closer to a version that circulated in Anglo-Saxon England than to known Irish and Celtic-Latin versions.

Two passages from the the conclusion of an All Saints’ Day homily from the Icelandic Homily Book (Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, Cod. Holm. Perg. 15 4°, s. xii/xiii) may provide more distant parallels to the ‘Three Hosts’ motif:

Skipon su ǫll es maþr hagar svá likam sinom eþa bréyter honom aláun eþa imyrkre. at han meosde scammasc slícs at hféss fyr alþýþo mana. hvárt sem han véler umb þat éinsaman eþa skipter þui viþ ananman. þa á han þat aht til scriptar at bera viþ lærþamen. oc béota yfer þat viþ guþ.140

Afgeorþ su hverr er maþr hefer eige béotta i þessom héime. þa a han þar þeirrar at scammasc fyr guþe oc fyr ðollom helgom.141

The homily only refers to God and the saints as witnesses to a sinner’s shame on Doomsday. Therefore, if this is a permutation of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif, it has been significantly abbreviated. One might plausibly wonder if the Icelandic homilist was drawing instead on the aforementioned homily of Gregory the Great, who lists only two hosts. However, the Icelandic homily’s emphasis on confession as the means to avoid such shame is more reminiscent of homilies of the ‘Three Hosts’ type than of the examples from Gregory or Eligius of Noyon, which make no mention of the sacrament. Thus, while certainty is unattainable in this

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140 De Leeuw van Weenen, 21’14–9. ‘All that conduct wherein a man deals or behaves with his body in secrecy or in darkness in such a way that he would be ashamed of such behaviour before the general populace of men, whether he engages in that alone or takes part in that with another man, then he must confess all that to clerics and atone for it to God.’

141 De Leeuw van Weenen, 21’12–3. ‘For every offense for which a man has not atoned in this world he must be shamed there [i.e., at the Last Judgment] before God and before all saints.’
case, it is possible that the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif, perhaps adapted from an English source, was the inspiration for this section of the Icelandic All Saints’ Day homily. If this is the case, the influence of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ is to be seen in both of the most important Old Norse homily collections.

4.2.7 ‘The Three Hosts of Doomsday’: Conclusions

The preceding examination has shown that the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday,’ though initially spread through Old English homilies and penitentials, remained popular in England in the centuries following the Norman Conquest and continued to appear in Middle English texts into the fifteenth century. As I said earlier, the use of the motif by authors like Chaucer does not necessarily indicate that the Old English homilies containing the motif were still being widely read and used as sources after the early thirteenth century. Rather, the popularity of the ‘Three Hosts’ in Old English texts had turned the motif into something of a homiletic and devotional commonplace by the early Middle English period. Thus, even if the Old English texts that originally popularized the motif in England were no longer widely copied or read after the early thirteenth century, this memorable image of Doomsday had become such a characteristic element of English vernacular eschatology that it remained in constant use until the late Middle English period. At the same time, the appearance of the motif in the Norwegian Homily Book provides yet more evidence of the profound influence on early Scandinavian homiletics exercised by Old English homilies.

The extensive history of motifs like ‘The Four Angels of Judgment’ and the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in the Middle English period should perhaps encourage scholars to look for other thematic connections between Old and Middle English religious texts, even though such relationships have previously seemed improbable. The fact that Old English texts gradually fell out of use during the course of the thirteenth century does not mean they did not influence later Middle English works. Often, however, such influence occurred not at the level of direct, textual dependance, but through well-known themes and motifs that became part of the Old English homiletic landscape and continued in popular use despite changes in language and literary trends. Malcolm Godden’s suggestion in 1973 that students of medieval English religious literature
should pay more attention to the study of the ‘circulation, development and use’ of commonplaces ‘within the vernacular literature’ appears to have been well founded.\textsuperscript{142}

\textsuperscript{142} Godden, ‘Old English Penitential Motif,’ 221–2.
Conclusions

In order to summarize the relationship of Anglo-Saxon eschatological traditions to English homilies and homiletic texts of the later twelfth century, I will again return to the traditional distinction, made at the beginning of this thesis, between personal and historic/cosmic eschatology. In the realm of personal eschatology, I examined in Chapter 2 the history of the popular ‘Visit to the Tomb’ motif in the pre- and post-Conquest periods, and have shown that two early Middle English texts—Lambeth Homily III and a passage from the *ca. 1200 Vices and Virtues*—almost certainly drew on Old English homiletic versions of the exemplum. While the Old English and early Middle English versions are not close enough to determine exactly which of the pre-Conquest texts were read or heard by the authors of the Middle English works, the similarities in vocabulary and tone and a shared propensity to personalize the motif are clear signs that the works belong to the same vernacular tradition. The evidence of such a debt to the Old English homilies is reinforced, in the case of the Lambeth III homilist, by borrowings from and similarities to motifs in other surviving Anglo-Saxon eschatological texts.

In Chapter 3, I shifted the focus of this study to historic/cosmic eschatology by exploring the anonymous eschatological prophecies in the Warner Homilies of London, BL, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv. By and large, these are based on texts (the *Revelationes* of pseudo-Methodius, the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’ legend, etc.) which do not seem to have been known in England before the Conquest. At the same time, however, the English adaptations of these works are quite free, and continue to show frequent and important contacts with Anglo-Saxon compositions, most notably the works of Ælfric and various versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. In Chapter 4, I turned from relations between specific texts to the issue of eschatological motifs, focusing on the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ and the ‘Four Angels of Judgment.’ Although neither of these was unique to Anglo-Saxon eschatology in the early Middle Ages, they were utilized more often and with greater creativity by the Old English homilists than by Continental writers. The English homilists of the late twelfth century continued to use both of these motifs, and their appearance in *Ancrene Wisse* confirms their continuing relevance into the early decades of the thirteenth century. Since the two motifs were so widespread in the Old English eschatological homilies, their continuing appearance in early Middle English homiletic and religious literature can provide no sure indications of exactly
which of the Anglo-Saxon works continued to be read in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Nevertheless, the fact that the motifs remained so popular provides strong evidence of the lasting influence of the Old English homilies in the centuries after the Conquest, even if such influence sometimes remains intangible.

In the areas of both personal and historic/cosmic eschatology, I believe, we may justly conclude that the influence of earlier Old English religious prose on the later twelfth-century homilies was substantial. On the other hand, however, in all the collections considered here, one can see traces of what Millett has called a ‘pragmatic openness’ to newer sources and styles imported after the Norman Conquest. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Millett and others have detected subtle signs of this openness in the organization and structure of the later homily collections. However, in many texts examined in this thesis, the influence of contemporary Anglo-Norman and Continental traditions is more obvious. The use of post-Conquest sources in the Warner Homilies, mentioned above, is one such instance, as are echoes of the works of authors like Anselm and Honorius Augustodunensis. The incorporation of new sources and influences in the twelfth-century homilies, clearer now than ever before, finally puts to rest the notion that they represent only a ‘fossilized reflex’ of a ‘dead Old English standard.’ At the same time, however, the innovations of the texts should not be overstated. Even the Trinity Homilies and the anonymous texts in Lambeth 487, most of which lack direct connections to Anglo-Saxon works and are structurally similar to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Continental Latin sermons, contain motifs and verbal similarities to the Old English homilies that can only be explained if we consider them part of the same, living tradition.

If the transmission of Old English eschatological ideas in the early Middle English homilies does not represent antiquarianism, then, by the same token, the use of newer sources in the late collections does not make them novel. The best terms to characterize the attitudes of the late twelfth-century homilists, therefore, are continuity and renewal. This continuity was not, however, a result of some sort of nascent English nationalistic sentiment, as Chambers and

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1 Millett, ‘Change and Continuity,’ 228

Wilson saw it. Treharne’s application of postcolonial theory to the issue and consequent view of the ‘conservatism’ of twelfth-century English as a native reaction to Norman hegemony is also flawed, at least when it comes to the homiletic corpus. Though one can discern anti-Norman undertones in works like the Vespasan D. xiv ‘Fifteen Signs’ and the homily on St. Neot, criticisms of the political establishment, where they are found, are always a secondary concern for the twelfth-century homilists. The Old English eschatological homilies remained in use because they remained relevant, and they remained relevant either because they were considered doctrinally sound and consistent, like Ælfric’s works, or because they transmitted popular and vivid collocations and motifs that an English audience would appreciate, like the anonymous and Wulfstanian texts. This continued relevance allowed elements of Old English homiletic eschatology to be fused with and renewed by the influx of newer ideas and texts imported after the Conquest.

Since there must be instances of continuity between the Old English homiletic corpus and the early Middle English collections that fall outside the bounds of inquiry of this thesis, the next logical step in determining the extent of the influence of Anglo-Saxon works on the twelfth-century homilies would perhaps be to broaden the investigation to homiletic topics other than eschatology. Another avenue of further research, however, would be opened by widening the chronological scope of the investigation rather than the thematic one. Unfortunately, in comparison to the twelfth-century texts, the number of surviving thirteenth-century prose homilies written in English is very small indeed. Besides the one English homily in Worcester, Cathedral Library Q. 29 (s. xiii, no. 9 in the discussion of manuscripts in Chapter 1), which is a copy of a twelfth-century text, RMEPS includes only three thirteenth-century manuscripts:

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3 See especially Faulkner, ‘Archaism.’

4 I do not include here the complicated case of Sawles Warde. Many scholars have called the piece a homily or sermon, but whether it was designed to be orally delivered remains unclear. Bennett and Smithers (Early Middle English Verse and Prose, 2nd ed. [Oxford: Clarendon, 1968], vi), for instance, classified the text as a ‘prose allegory.’ Indeed, there is little internal indication that Sawles Warde was meant to be preached as it stands, but Wolfgang Becker nonetheless considers it a homily and has brought to light several Latin sermons that are drawn from the same source, part of book IV of the pseudo-Anselmian De custodia interioris hominis (‘The Literary Treatment of the Pseudo-Anselmian Dialogue De custodia interioris hominis in England and France,’ Classica et mediaevalia 35 [1984]: 215–33). The standard edition of Sawles Warde is still that of Wilson, but for a recent parallel-text edition of the three manuscript witnesses that corrects some of Wilson’s misreadings, see Koichi Kano, ‘The Sawles Warde: A Three-Manuscript Diplomatic Parallel Text, Trial Version,’ Komazawa Daigaku
1. **Cambridge, Trinity College B. 1. 45 (s. xiii)**: In addition to numerous Latin and French texts, contains two English sermons (Cam/TrinityB.1.45/001; /002), the first of which is an eschatological text based on a quotation attributed to St. Bernard.5

2. **London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C. vi (main text ca. 1225–30, sermon added after 1284)**: Contains a text of *Ancrene Wisse*, into which has been copied a version of the same eschatological sermon (BL/Cleopatra C.vi) as in Trinity B. 1. 45. The sermon is written by the same hand in both manuscripts.6

3. **Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 471 (s. xiii)**: The ‘Kentish Sermons’ (Bodl/Laud 471/001 – /005), thirteenth-century Southeastern translations of French versions of five sermons by Maurice de Sully, a twelfth-century bishop of Paris.7

As the surviving thirteenth-century English homilies are so few and have received even less critical study than the twelfth-century collections discussed in this thesis, it is difficult to determine how much, if any, influence Anglo-Saxon works had upon vernacular preaching at the time. The available evidence for textual or thematic continuity with the Old English homilies shrinks even further when we remove from consideration the Kentish Sermons, which are fairly close translations of their French models.

However, although there are few homilies from the thirteenth century in which we might look for signs of the continued relevance of ideas about the Last Things originating in the Anglo-Saxon period, there seems to be at least some evidence from the huge Middle English sermon corpus of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the eschatological styles of the Old English homilists

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6 Edited by Förster (see previous note) and Dobson, *Ancrene Riwle*, 110–11.

7 The best edition and study remains that of Hall (*Selections*, I. 214–22; II. 657–75).
influenced English religious literature throughout the Middle Ages. I have already described some instances of this continuity above, especially in the examination of Doomsday themes in Chapter 4. A particularly interesting collection in this respect is the ca. 1450 manuscript London, BL, Royal 18 B. xxiii, discussed above in relation to the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ motif. The Royal 18 B. xxiii sermons contain several descriptions of hell that echo the Old English anonymous homilies, particularly those whose close relations to Irish and Hiberno-Latin texts have been examined by Charles D. Wright in *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature*. Sermon 33 of the Royal manuscript (BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/033), for Palm Sunday, recalls an Insular idea about the intensity of the fires of hell, an earlier version of which appears in ‘Be Heofonwarum  γ be Helwarum’:

‘Be Heofonwarum  γ be Helwarum’ – Teresi, 228, ll. 55–6  

Þær bið ungemet cyles  γ hætan, nigon syðan hattræ þonne domes dægges fyr.  

And som shall brenne in ðe grett flame[s] of fyre, ðe wiche is ix tymes hotter ðan is any fire in ðis world.

Another description of hell in Sermon 40 (BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/040), for Christmas, is reminiscent of the ‘Devil’s Account of the Next World’ and the ‘Iron House’ motif, both of which are best known from Vercelli Homily IX and its analogues:

Iff þer were a towne so ordeynd þat it were full of nayles longe and sharpe, the poynetes being inward, and þat all þise nayles were fure hote, I trow þer is no man þat wold be rolled a myle-vey in þis toune for all þe reame of Ênglond. And þit were þis peyn but in towchynge all-on, in sensu tactus solum, and bot a myle-vey. A, good Lord, how gret peyn shall þer be eternally in euery parte of mans v wittes, not only a myle-vey, but while God is God in heven.

Other echoes of the ‘Devil’s Account’ can be found in Sermon 48 in the Royal manuscript (BL/Royal 18.B.xxiii/048), which is probably for one of the Sundays in Advent.

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8 ‘There shall be immeasurable cold, and heat nine times hotter than the fire of Doomsday.’


11 Ross, 240, ll. 13–21.

Descriptions of the afterlife with clear connections to Old English eschatological motifs are found in other collections, too. The sermon for the Feast of the Ascension (BL/Claudius A.ii/037) in John Mirk’s late fourteenth-century Festial describes the sublimity of heaven with a numerical gradatio reminiscent of those often found in much earlier English and Irish homilies, though the author attempts to appeal to a more specific authority: ‘A grete phylosophur Raby Moyses seyth þat hit is as fer fro erthe to heven as an hol man myth lyvon a thowsand ȝere and iche day gone a thowsand myle.’ A remarkable example of the persistence of the Insular ‘x without y’ method of describing heaven can be found in the Lollard ‘Sermon of Dead Men’ (Bodl/Rawl C.751/001), edited from two fifteenth-century manuscripts by Gloria Cigman:

Þere shal be ȝouþe wiþouten any age. Þere shal be feyrnes wiþouten ony spot of filþe. Þere shal be helþe wiþouten ony sikenes. Þere shal be riches wiþouten ony pouerte. Þere shal be kunnyng wiþouten ony ignoraunce. Þere shal be rest wiþouten ony werines. Þere shal be fulnes wiþouten ony wanting. Þere shal be worship wiþouten ony vileny. Þere shal be largenes wiþouten ony þristing. And shortly, al þat may be good shal be among þat cumpany.

Nearly every oppositional pair in this description is paralleled in Old English, Irish, or Hiberno-Latin homilies, as is the rhetorical repetition of ‘þere’ at the beginning of each clause.

13 Wright, Irish Tradition, 249–52 et passim.
14 Susan Powell, ed., John Mirk’s Festial, Edited from British Library MS Cotton Claudius A. II, EETS o.s. 334–5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009–11), I. 141, II. 29–32. Cf. Vercelli IX: ‘enme swa mycel swa from heofenes hrofe is to þysse eorðan, þonne is leornod on halgum bocum þæt sio hel sie swylc twa deop, þæt nis na þe unwidre’ (Scragg, Vercelli, 170, II. 114–6; ‘And as great as the distance is from the height of heaven to this earth, it is learned in holy books that hell is twice that deep, and it is not any less wide’). Neither Powell (Festial II. 368), nor O’Mara and Paul (RMEPS, II. 988) provide any evidence for their assumption that this ‘Moyses’ in the Middle English sermon is to be identified with Maimonides. The cosmological authority of ‘Raby Moyses’ in the Middle English text is related to a passage in a brief fourteenth-century poem on the distance from the earth to heaven, also ascribed to a ‘Rabe moyses’: ‘VII. thowsond wyntur and .VII. hondred ȝere/ A mon myȝt walke ar he come þere’ (A. Hahn, ‘Zu Pricke of Conscience V. 7651–7686,’ Archiv 106 [1901]: 349–50). Both this poem and the statement in the sermon seem to be derived from the Legenda aurea, but the transformation of the original measurements into a numerical gradatio is unique to the Festial. See Powell, Festial, II. 368, who cites Th. Grässe, ed., Jacobi a Voragine Legenda Aurea, vulgo Historia Lombardica dicta (Dresden and Leipzig: Libraria Arnoldiana, 1846), 321.
16 Hildegard Tristram, ‘Stock Descriptions of Heaven and Hell in Old English Prose and Poetry,’ NM 79 (1978): 102–13; Wright, Irish Tradition, 102–5. The final sentence also evokes some Hiberno-Latin descriptions of heaven. See, e.g., an Easter sermon in Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. perg. 254 (s. viii): ‘Ut infinita in breui comprehendam, omne malum et omnis dolor non uidebitur, et omnem [sic] bonum non deest aut deesse numquam postes’ (fol. 183); ‘That I might briefly summarize the infinite, every evil and every pain will not be seen, and every
This glance at later medieval English eschatological sermons is of course too cursory to be conclusive, but, added to the several fourteenth- and fifteenth-century examples of continuity discussed in the chapters above, it does suggest that Anglo-Saxon homiletic traditions continued to exercise some influence on English religious literature throughout the Middle Ages. The fact that such influence was almost certainly indirect, with familiar motifs transmitted and modified through an unknowable number of intermediate texts, reinforces the importance of the study of the twelfth-century homilies to the wider field of English literature. Compared to collections like the Lambeth and Trinity manuscripts, both the Old English and late Middle English homilies have been well studied. The fact that scholars have overlooked or ignored apparent similarities between the two traditions is not surprising, since it would be difficult for anyone to be at once familiar enough with the Old English and late Middle English homiletic corpora, both of which are substantial, to notice these connections in passing. However, the late twelfth-century homilies can serve as an introduction to emergent trends in high and late medieval preaching for Anglo-Saxonists, and can help familiarize scholars of later works with the many Old English homiletic traditions that English authors continued to utilize after the Conquest. A holistic understanding of medieval English preaching and religious literature, therefore, depends upon a renewed interest in the study of the homilies of ca. 1150–1200, which have at least as much in common with Ælfric and the Vercelli Book as with John Mirk and Richard Rolle.

good thing is not lacking or can ever be lacking’). The manuscript, which also contains the Apocrypha Priscillianistica, can be viewed online at http://www.stgallplan.org, the website of the St. Gall Monastery Plan project (accessed August 2012).
Appendix 1: A More Exact Source for Elements of the CCCC 190 Sermon ‘In nomine domini’

Claudia Di Sciacca has recently published the first complete edition of a Latin sermon from the version of Wulfstan’s ‘Commonplace Book’ in CCCC 190, to which she has given the title ‘In nomine domini,’ after the text’s incipit. As I discussed in Chapter 2 above, Cross and Di Sciacca have shown that an extended *ubi sunt*/‘Visit to the Tomb’ passage in this text derives from two principal Latin sources: Isidore’s *Synonyma* (by way of Defensor’s *Liber scintillarum*) and no. 392 of Prosper of Aquitaine’s *Sententiae*. The only known Anglo-Saxon manuscript in which *Sententia* 392 has survived is CCCC 448, and even here it is not transmitted with the rest of the *Sententiae*. The manuscript’s medieval provenance is Winchester, but it may have been written elsewhere in the South (perhaps Glastonbury) or at Worcester. M. R. James dated CCCC 448 to s. x² or s. x med².

In her edition and study of the sermon ‘In nomine domini,’ Di Sciacca prints *Sententia* 392 from Gastaldo’s CCSL edition of Prosper’s works.³ The portions of ‘In nomine domini’ drawn from Prosper often differ somewhat from Gastaldo’s text. These differences are all relatively minor, and one could easily dismiss them as the sermon author’s own adaptations without giving them a second thought.⁴ However, the text of *Sententia* 392 in CCCC 448 often agrees with ‘In nomine domini’ against Gastaldo’s critical text and most of the other manuscripts he collated, and must represent a version closer to the sermon author’s exact source. In the table below, I give the correspondences between these two versions of *Sententia* 392 and ‘In nomine domini.’ Agreements of CCCC 448 and the CCCC 190 sermon against Gastaldo’s text are in boldface. Comments are given as footnotes.

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⁴ On the pitfalls of relying on edited texts in source scholarship, see Charles D. Wright, ‘A Doomsday Passage in an Old English Sermon for Lent, Revisited,’ *Anglia* 128 (2010): 28–47.
Prosper, Sententiae, no. 392: Gastaldo, 364–5


Circumspice eos qui ante te similibus splendoribus fulsere.

[Vbi] ... exercituum duces, satrapiæ, tyranni? Non omnia puluis? non omnia fauillae?...

Respice sepulcra, et vide quis servus, quis dominus, quis pauper, quis dives. Discerne, si potes, uinctum a rege, fortem a debili, pulchrum a deformi.

Memor itaque naturae, non extollaris aliquando. Memor autem eris, si te ipsum respexeris.

Prosper, Sententiae, no. 392: CCCC 448, fols. 89v–90r

Respice te ipsum quia mortalis es, quia terra es et in terram ibis;

Circumspice eos qui ante te similibus fulsere splendoribus;

Vbi exercituum duces satrape et tiranni? Nonne omnia puluis? Nonne omnia fauillæ?

Respice sepulcra et vide quis servus, quis dominus, quis pauper, quis dives. Discerne, si potes uinctum a rege, fortem a debili, pulchrum a deformi;

Memor itaque naturæ si semper fueris. Non extollaris aliquando; Memor autem eris si te ipsum respexeris;


O homo respice te ipsum quia mortalis es, quia terra es et in terram ibis;...

Circumspice eos qui ante te magnis fulsere splendoribus....

ubi sunt exercituum duces, satrape et tyranni? nonne omnia puluis? nonne omnia fauillæ?


Memor itaque naturæ si semper fueris, non extollaris aliquando; memor autem eris si te respexeris.

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5 I have transcribed these excerpts from the images of the manuscript on the website of the Parker Library on the Web Project, accessed April 2012.

6 Gastaldo collates twenty manuscripts and early printed editions of the Sententiae. Of these, only three lack ‘et’ between ‘es’ and ‘quia.’

7 This transposition is recorded in three of Gastaldo’s manuscripts and in several printed editions.

8 No replacements of ‘non’ with ‘nonne’ are recorded in Gastaldo’s variants.

9 No addition of ‘si semper fueris’ is recorded in Gastaldo’s variants.

10 The following is a translation of the CCCC 448 version, with important variants from the CCCC 190 sermon added in parentheses: ‘Look at yourself (CCCC 190: O man, look at yourself), for you are mortal, for you are earth and to earth you will return. Look about for those who shone before you with similar (CCCC 190: great) honours.... Where are the leaders of armies, satraps, and tyrants? Are not all these things dust? Are they not all ashes?... Look upon the tombs and try to see who is a slave, who is a lord; who is poor, who is rich. Distinguish, if you can, a conquered man from a king, a weak man from a strong one, a handsome man from an ugly one. If you always remember your nature you will never exalt yourself, and you will remember if you look at your own state.’
If CCCC 448 was written at Worcester, as Gneuss has suggested it may have been, it could, in theory, have been the manuscript source for the sermon in Wulfstan’s ‘Commonplace Book.’ However, some of the variant readings shared by CCCC 448 and ‘In nomine domini’ appear in other works that quote Prosper’s Sententiae, most notably Thomas of Ireland’s Manipulus florum (composed ca. 1300). This suggests that these variants may have been characteristic of an Insular recension of Sententia 392 that was known both to Wulfstan’s contemporaries and to later authors, and which may have continued to circulate separately from the rest of Prosper’s work.

Appendix 2: More Insular Echoes in the Eschatology of the Norwegian Homily Book

Along with the important parallels from the Norwegian Homily Book presented above, it would also seem appropriate to discuss other traces of probable English (or at least Insular) influence on the eschatology of this collection. As was stated in the introductory chapter and in the discussion of the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in Chapter 4, the Anglo-Saxon homilies seem to have exerted a strong influence on early Norse preaching. This influence is especially apparent in the eschatological homilies of the Norwegian Homily Book (NHB), which show frequent parallels to Old English texts. Christopher Abram has, for instance, demonstrated that a version of the popular ‘Men with Tongues of Iron’ motif appearing in the first NHB Christmas homily (‘De natiuitate domini sermo’) is a nearly word-for-word match to part of an Old English homily, ‘Be Heofonwarum ū be Helwarum’ (HomS 5).\(^1\) Other scholars have found parallels to Old English works in the same homily, many of them in the context of a dramatized address given by Christ (as judge) to the souls of the damned on Doomsday. It is this address that I would like to discuss in some more detail.

Many medieval works dramatized Christ’s condemnation of the wicked at the Last Judgment. One of the most influential of these was Sermo 57 of Caesarius of Arles. This sermon contains an address, often referred to simply as the ‘Ego te, homo’ after its opening words, in which Christ enumerates the favours he has given mankind and the hardships he endured for it, demanding finally that the wicked account for squandering the gifts so lavishly bestowed upon them.\(^2\) The address was a source for several Old English works, including Christ III and Vercelli VIII.\(^3\) It


\(^2\) Morin, I. 251–4. Similar Doomsday addresses by Christ are found in other Latin sermons, including the Ephraemitic ‘De die iudicii’ (Assemani and Assemani, VI. 579; Fischer, 16–17’). The relationships between the Latin versions of the address have not been examined, but it does seem that Caesarius’s sermon was the most influential with regard to the Old English homilies. Caesarius’s speech and its English descendants are discussed in detail in Haines, ‘Rhetorical Strategies,’ 127–97.

\(^3\) For a summary, see Scragg, *Vercelli*, 139–42. After Scragg published his edition, a fragment of another Old English homily that drew on the ‘Ego te, homo’ was discovered by R. I. Page, ‘An Old English Fragment from Westminster Abbey,’ *ASE* 25 (1996): 201–7 at 205–7.
also influenced Christ’s address to the damned in the NHB Christmas homily, as Mattias Tveitane and Oddmund Hjelde have shown.\footnote{Tveitane, 134–5; Hjelde, \textit{Norsk preken}, 108–110. Hjelde’s theory that the Old Norse homily’s version of the speech was descended from Caesarius’s sermon indirectly, through the mediation of an anonymous treatise entitled \textit{De rectudine catholicae conversionis} (\textit{PL} 40, col. 1186), deserves further scrutiny, as little seems to be known about the origins and date of this text.} Several elements of the Norse address, however, cannot be explained by recourse to any known version of Caesarius’s sermon. One such element is the speech’s opening, in which Christ repeats words from Psalm 51: ‘ða svarar drotten var með malom Dauðið propheta. \textit{Quid gloriaris in malitia qui potens es in iniquitate}. Hvät dyrcaðer þu þa stund er þu vart a veroldo. at tu æcci gott gærðir. ok ecci gott vildir þu gera.’\footnote{Indrebø, 34, ll. 8–11. ‘Then our Lord answers with the words of the prophet David: ‘\textit{Quid gloriaris in malitia, qui potens es in iniquitate}? Why did you rejoice while you were in the world, such that you did no good, and desired to do no good?’} As Tveitane pointed out, the same quotation from the Psalms is used in an Insular apocryphon known as the ‘Three Utterances of the Soul,’ which survives in Latin, Old English, and Irish homilies.\footnote{Tveitane, 133; Willard, 31–57 \textit{et passim}. See also Mary F. Wack and Charles D. Wright, ‘A New Latin Source for the Old English “Three Utterances” Exemplum,’ \textit{ASE} 20 (1991): 187–202.} In these texts, the Psalm is chanted by a chorus of demons who lead the unjust soul to eternal damnation:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Latin (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 2628), Willard, 44–6}
\begin{quote}
Tunc dividunt se in duo hostes, alius proueniens, alius consequens. Et canunt de canticulis David, dicentis, ‘\textit{Quid gloriaris in malitia, qui potens est [sic] iniquitate. Tota die inusticia [sic] cogitauit lingua tua.}’\footnote{‘Then [the demons] divide themselves into two troops, one proceeding and the other following. And they sing from the canticles of David, saying, “Why did you rejoice in wickedness, you who are mighty in iniquity? All the day your tongue has devised injustice.”}"
\end{quote}
\item \textit{Old English (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 114), Willard, 44–6}
\begin{quote}
ðonne æfter þam gelædað þa awyrgedan gastas þa sawle to helle, and ðus cwéfað, ‘Todælað eow on twegen heapas, oðer hyre sy beforan farende, oðer æfter fyliende.’ And hi singað ðone sang þe Dauíd sang in þam sealme, and ðus cwæð, ‘\textit{Quid gloriaris in malitia,’ et cetera...}’ Hwæt wuldrast þu in wean, þu þe ware ær mihtig on wohnesse? Ælce dæge þin tunge hogad unrihtwisnesse...’\footnote{After this, the accursed spirits lead the soul off to hell, and say, “Divide yourselves into two hosts, one going before the soul and the other following it.” And they sing the song that David sang in the psalm, saying “\textit{Quid gloriaris in malitia, etc.”} ... “Why did you glory in evil, you who were mighty in iniquity? Every day your tongue devised unrighteousness....”}
\end{quote}
\end{itemize}
Tveitane believed the Norse text to be somehow connected to the ‘Three Utterances’ sermons, but naturally found it strange that the same scriptural words should be transferred from the mouths of demons to the mouth of Christ. I do not think, however, that this is an especially surprising development, given the kind of text the Norse author was composing. Much of the address, and indeed a sizable portion of the rest of the homily, is a piecing-together of various eschatological motifs and formulae, likely recalled from other texts the author had read or heard, or at most only very loosely based on written antecedents. In such a free composition, it is not surprising that the devils’ taunt from the ‘Three Utterances’ sermons should be repurposed as an accusation by Christ. This could have occurred accidentally because of a fault in the compiler’s memory, but he more likely inserted it deliberately because it seemed congruous to the tone of his Caesarian source.

In addition to its possible relationships to Vercelli VIII and the Old English ‘Three Utterances’ homilies, Christ’s address to the wicked in the NHB Christmas homily contains a seemingly unnoticed echo of another Old English Doomsday scene—that of Vercelli Homily X. In this homily, Christ upbraids the souls of the wealthy for having ignored his plight while he was in the guise of the poor. Part of this address has some striking verbal similarities with Christ’s words in the NHB homily:

**Vercelli X (Scragg, 207, ll. 181–5)**

Þonne þu, welega, ne þu þinne dryhten lufast, ne ðu him milste æt hafast, ne ðu, yrming, ne most lifiant naht lange. Hwæt, wendest ðu, wlanca, gif ðu me seald þines awiht þæt þe þonne wære þin woruldgestreon a gelytlod? Eala, þæt ðu lyt hogostest ymb þone ende þines lifes. ¹⁰

**NHB Christmas Homily (Indrebø, 34, ll. 12–6)**

þa er vesalingar como til hus þins ok baðo gefa sér olmoso fyri guðs sacar. þa vildu þer æcci þæim gefa. ok racoð þa fra durum yðrum. Hvæt ætlæðer þu hinn arma sala ef þu gæfer þæim olmoso. at tu værer rænt fé þinu. ok þu hafðer æigi mild hiarta á veroldo. ¹¹

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⁹ Tveitane, 133.

¹⁰ ‘At that time you, o wealthy man, did not love your Lord, nor did you have mercy on him; and you, wretch, could not live for very long. Well, did you think, haughty one, that if you gave me anything that your own worldly wealth would ever be decreased? Alas, that you thought so little about the end of your life!’

¹¹ ‘When the needy came to your house and requested that alms be given to them for God’s sake, you would not give to them, and you drove them from your doors. Well, did you think, you wretched soul, that if you gave them alms, you were deprived of your own wealth? And you were not merciful on earth.’
Christ’s questions in the two texts seem to be related, though it is unclear whether this is due to direct influence of the Old English text on the Old Norse or dependence on a common source. In any case, the presence of yet another verbal parallel to an Old English work in the NHB Christmas homily provides corroborating evidence of significant Anglo-Saxon influence on this text.

In addition to the ‘Three Hosts of Doomsday’ in the second NHB Doomsday homily and the various echoes of Old English homilies in the first Christmas homily, one may also be able to discern Insular influence in the introduction to another eschatological piece in the manuscript. Hjelde has pointed out various parallels among Old English and Latin homilies to the first NHB Doomsday homily. A characteristically Insular description of the state of the world on Doomsday that appears in the Hiberno-Latin ‘Sunday List’ sermon ‘Veneranda est’ (discussed above in relation to Lambeth Homily XIV) also seems to be related to the Norse homily. At the beginning of the eschatological portion of this sermon, the author strings together ideas from a series of Biblical verses—Matthew 25:32, Nahum 1:5, and Psalm 96:5—to create a vivid picture of the Last Judgment. The same ideas appear in the same order in the first NHB Doomsday homily (correspondences marked by superscript letters):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin sermon (from Laon, BM 309, fol. 39v)</th>
<th>NHB first Doomsday homily (Indrebø, 101, l. 31 – 102, l. 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Et congregabunt ante eum omnes gentes(^a) (Matthew 25:32) et contremescet uniuersa terra(^b) a facie Dei (Nahum 1:5) sicut aqua maris fluctuantis. Tunc montes liquescent sicut cera a facie ignis.(^c) (Psalm 96:5)(^{14})</td>
<td>þar scal þa allt mankyn kuma í gægn honum.(^a) Dæ skelfr oll iorð(^b) fyrir aga mycclum, þa scal ór himnum cuma sa hinn hæiti ældr en ór þæim ældi scal brenna hin viða verold, þa renna sem vax hæit eða biorg oc stæinar monu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While Hjelde noticed the similarity of the Psalm verse to the Norse text, he did not adduce the other Biblical passages as parallels. Unfortunately, most of the rest of the Norse homily is lost, and so we have little else to compare to its possible Latin source. Furthermore, although the Latin sermon likely originated in an Insular-influenced context, its popularity in the rest of Europe means that, if indeed it were a source for the Norse homily, it could have reached Scandinavia from almost anywhere. Nevertheless, it is telling that similar Latin descriptions of Doomsday seem to have influenced both twelfth-century English homilies, such as Lambeth XIV, and twelfth-century Norse ones, such as the first NHB Doomsday homily.

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15 ‘All mankind shall come before him. Then the whole earth will quake because of great fear. Then hot flame will come from heaven and out of that flame the whole world shall burn; mountains and rocks will melt like hot wax or boiling lead.’

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