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Architectural Representation in Medieval England

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Introduction to Architectural Representation in Medieval England

Hannah Bailey, Karl Kinsella, and Daniel Thomas

Architecture is a special and important category of evidence for our understanding of medieval England; it is not only one of the most tangible categories of evidence for the period, but also one of the most accessible. The architectural remnants of the Middle Ages — from castles and cathedrals to village churches — provide many people's first and most lasting point of contact with the medieval period and its culture. Such concrete survivals provide a direct link to the material experiences of medieval people, as well as to the ideologies and social or cultural practices which framed their lives.

The study of medieval architecture is, however, about more than these impressive and obvious material survivals. Such study must not only acknowledge these structures as cultural artefacts, but also recognize the myriad intersections that link these remnants to other aspects of the creative and intellectual life of medieval England. Physical architecture depends upon technological accomplishment, but it also reveals something of the values of the people that produce it. As technologies of architecture develop over time, so too do fashions and styles. In this way, architecture connects in a very direct way physical experience and social ideologies. As part of our daily experience, it is a familiar necessity of human life, but it can also make powerful cultural and political statements. Architecture tells us about the world, both reflecting cultural experience and also constructing it. And it does so in ways that are simultaneously closely connected to specific historical moments and also of continuing relevance as part of a diachronic discourse that reaches into both the past and the future.

At the same time, the physical structures of architecture also intersect with structures of thought and mental experience. Architectural structures, whether existing in the real world, in plans and diagrams, or in the imagined spaces of art and literature, can form a focus of memory and shared identity. The inherent role of architecture in organizing, dividing, and framing space provides a model for thinking about and representing more abstract ideas of categorization and division. Whilst architecture can itself signify allegorically and symbolically, the shared experience of architectural forms also provides a fertile source of allegory, metaphor, and imagery for theologians, artists, poets, and historians. In these and other ways, architectural expression is fundamentally interconnected with the cultural, intellectual, and imaginative achievements of a society or culture.

This interconnectedness is the focus of this special issue, which considers both the representation *of* architecture — whether material, visual, or textual — and the ways in

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which values and ideas are represented *through* architecture. Its contributors explore the various ways in which aspects of construction and design were conceived of, lived with, and imbued with significance in England in the period c. 650–1350. In so doing, the essays contained within draw upon a wide range of different sources and types of evidence, including archaeological excavations, material survivals of medieval buildings, architectural drawings, and imaginative representations of architecture in contemporary visual and textual sources. The subject matter of the essays ranges from matters of profound theological significance to the expression of immediate social relationships evident in the design of ordinary single-family dwellings. As such, the collection as whole draws attention to the pervasive importance of architectural representation in the medieval world.

This special issue also brings together multiple disciplinary perspectives. The collection has its origins in an on-going collaborative research project which aims to bring into contact individuals working with and on medieval architecture from a range of different scholarly backgrounds. Although architectural representation often forms a key part of work undertaken by, for example, archaeologists, historians, theologians, art historians, and literary scholars, such work has too often been carried on along rigid disciplinary lines, and in comparative isolation. As a result, the breadth and depth of the involvement of architectural representation in medieval culture has been largely underappreciated. In response to this situation, the Medieval Architectural Representation project set out to facilitate cross-disciplinary conversations and to explore inter-disciplinary methods of study.¹

The particular value of this special issue, therefore, is that, whilst the assembled articles contribute directly to particular fields of scholarship, they also, through their collective weight, indicate the potential for (and fruitfulness of) a new way of thinking about architectural representation that partly divorces it from traditional disciplinary boundaries. Part of this goal involves thinking about architectural representation in ways not defined purely in terms of teleological, historical narratives. The articles collected here focus specifically upon evidence from medieval England, with a chronological range that runs from the late fifth century to the early fourteenth, transcending traditional boundaries such as the Conversion and the Conquest. This span allows us to look beyond rigid historical periodization and to focus on the continuing significance of architectural representation across and within a broad period.

In accordance with these aims, the ordering of the following articles is intended to reflect shared thematic interests or approaches, rather than chronology or disciplinary background. The collection starts, therefore, with two articles which both address what might be called the typological function of architectural representation. In the first of these articles, Conor O'Brien offers a comprehensive re-evaluation of the famous bifolium illustration found on fols II^v–III^r of the early eighth-century Codex Amiatinus — one of the earliest surviving examples of English architectural illustration. Interpretations of this elaborate diagram have variously concluded that it depicts either the Temple of Jerusalem or the Mosaic Tabernacle, but recent scholarship has favoured the view that it represents a non-literal, exegetical conflation of elements of both structures. In this article, however, O'Brien shows how the diagram can be best understood not as a composite image, nor as an abstraction intended to serve as a

¹ We would like to thank all those who have participated in this project, including, but not only, those whose contributions appear in this issue, as well as the Balliol Interdisciplinary Institute for supporting the project in its earliest incarnation and University College, Oxford for supporting its development into a research network with a broader membership and remit. Further information about the activities of the Medieval Architectural Representation research group can be found on our website: <https://medievalarchitectureconf.wordpress.com>.

focus for meditation, but as an attempt to depict literally the Tabernacle described in Exodus. O'Brien situates the divergences between the diagram and the biblical description of the Tabernacle in a precise historical moment. In so doing, he not only offers a convincing reading of the diagram, but illuminates the phases and processes by which Bede and the Wearmouth-Jarrow community developed their ideas about the Temple and the Tabernacle over time. The article also emphasizes that the fact that certain aspects of the depiction invite a typological understanding of the Tabernacle should not detract from our appreciation of the diagram as a piece of literal architectural representation, since, for the medieval exegete, both the literal and typological levels of meaning are inherently present within each architectural form.

The second article in this issue similarly insists upon the potential of architecture to express both literal and non-literal meaning. In her discussion of the surviving crypts constructed at Wilfrid's foundations of Ripon and Hexham in second half of the seventh century, Meg Boulton considers the representational power of physical architectural structures. Boulton draws on details of the crypts' design, reconstructions of their potential liturgical uses, and textual records to show how these structures function allusively within their cultural, liturgical, and theological contexts. Though physically present to those who experience them *in situ*, the crypts simultaneously represent other architectural constructions, bringing into conjunction physically disparate spaces, and taking on the symbolic resonances associated with the spaces thus re-presented. So, the crypts at Hexham and Ripon not only allude to the Church in Rome and England's Roman inheritance, but also re-present and could be experienced as the Holy Sepulchre and, by extension, the Heavenly Jerusalem. In demonstrating this, Boulton offers an original reading of the function of a curiously shaped lintel in the crypt at Ripon, understood to mark a movement from the earthly to the heavenly at the threshold of the central chamber. The intertextual relationship between architectural forms has been traditionally articulated in terms of iconography; however, by taking a phenomenological approach Boulton provides a new and valuable reading of relatively well known structures, drawing on the experience of moving through the crypts and the significance of transitional spaces.

Doorways and thresholds also feature prominently in the next two articles in this issue. Following on from Boulton's discussion of the threshold at Ripon, the signification of doors and doorways as liminal and transitional spaces is the focus of Karl Kinsella's article. Kinsella takes an iconographical approach to the study of doorways, focusing on a range of examples of significant doorways drawn from Anglo-Latin and Old English textual sources, as well as Anglo-Saxon manuscript illustration. His study of the representational force of such doorways draws attentions to the use of architectural features in both text and image to frame abstract notions such as narrative progression or the delineation of material and spiritual spaces. That this use can be traced in both literary and visual sources suggests the prevalence of an iconographic understanding of architecture in Anglo-Saxon thought. By giving equal weight to Anglo-Latin literature, Old English literature, and manuscript illustrations, resisting biases towards either textual or visual evidence, or Latin or vernacular source, Kinsella produces a truly interdisciplinary account of the iconography of doorways.

Where Kinsella's article takes a broad view, exploring the significance of doorways in the works of several authors or illustrators, Daniel Thomas focuses more narrowly on the thematic use of doorways in a single, relatively short Old English text. Thomas explores the prominent imagery of the gates and keys in a little-known Old English homily featuring dramatic scenes at the gates of hell at the harrowing and judgement day. He traces the particular combination of details and motifs central to the homily's presentation of this architectural feature to a

range of sources and analogues and demonstrates that the text's thematic unity and didactic force both arise from the homilist's exploration of the potential for multiple signification of doors and doorways. In so doing, Thomas' analysis demonstrates how meaningful architectural representation can be even in relatively unimportant and unsophisticated texts. His analysis of the polysemy of doors and the depiction of hell as a bound space not only contributes to the growing study of Anglo-Saxon conceptions of place and space but also offers a sustained literary analysis of a much-neglected harrowing homily which deserves more attention both as a point in the nexus of Anglo-Saxon depictions of the harrowing of hell and also for its own curious humour and pathos.

From the locked doors of hell, Helen Appleton's article moves the discussion to the 'doorless house' of the grave. This article and the one that follows focus upon the imaginative construction or allegorical representation of whole buildings, whether domestic or ecclesiastical. Appleton establishes the importance of architectural imagery in the *contemptus mundi* discourses of early Middle English death lyrics. Focusing on the grave-as-house motif found in vernacular texts from the Anglo-Saxon period onwards, she shows how architectural vocabulary and imagery is routinely applied to and used to define this essentially non-architectural space. This figurative equation of the grave with the dwellings of the living acquired and carried powerful resonances associated with ideas of contemplation, contrition, and judgement in the developing lyrical traditions of the tenth to thirteenth centuries. So pervasive was this motif that later authors were able to deploy it in their work with striking concision. Appleton also demonstrates the longevity of the motif, showing how, over the centuries, successive authors adapted the architectural representation of the grave in order to develop more specific, contemporary cultural resonances. The article thus presents a striking example of both the continuity and the adaptability of this architectural motif across a period in literature often characterized by substantial change and discontinuity.

The representation of ecclesiastical architecture (as well as more mundane structures) forms the focus of Laura Varnam's article. Taking as her focus Robert Mannyng's early fourteenth-century penitential handbook *Handlyng Synne* (in which the churchyard is figured as a 'long house', possibly reflecting the motif of the grave as 'long home' in the lyrics discussed by Appleton), Varnam shows how architectural imagery and language functions both at a micro level within individual textual narratives and exempla and at a macro level as a structuring device for the text as a whole. She relates the prominence of architectural representations in Mannyng's work both to Geoffrey of Vinsauf's influential analogy of the poet as architect, and to a tradition of pastoral literature that draws upon the church building for its imagery and symbolism. Using Mannyng's 'Dancers of Colbek' exemplum as her primary case study, she shows how Mannyng's architectural imagery functions on multiple levels: the responsiveness of walls, roofs, and tombs to misbehaviour facilitates Mannyng's teaching on sin at a simple didactic level, but the architecture of the church also offers a concrete image to which abstract ideas about sin can be anchored. At the same time, the language of construction and framing also provides a method for thinking about poetic composition and the organisation of the text.

Rituals associated with the consecration of ecclesiastical buildings feature significantly in Varnam's analysis of Mannyng's architectural interests. In the penultimate article in the issue, Clifford Sofield demonstrates the importance of rituals associated with non-ecclesiastical architecture, particularly at the end of a building's lifecycle. Here, attention returns to the literal, physical architecture of early medieval England, as Sofield explores the archaeological

record of fifth- to ninth-century secular (mainly domestic) architecture. Sofield considers what social values are facilitated or reinforced by the form and function of architectural structures, and interprets those ritual activities associated with them of which traces have survived. He shows that formalized or ritualized treatment of buildings may be thought to reflect the mechanisms by which people constructed society in Anglo-Saxon England. The symmetry of early dwellings might reveal details about familial structures, while the later great hall complexes physically manifested the social processes that contributed to royal authority. Sofield also considers the implications of the (still later) practice of incorporating burials of ancestors and the 'young dead' into the architecture of farmsteads. Finally, he discusses the formalized or ritualized practices associated with the destruction of buildings in the fifth to seventh centuries as a potential source of evidence for how the human lifespan was conceived. Sofield's suggestion that the destruction and rebuilding of great hall complexes may have served to mark succession or regime change in early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms throws new light upon literary descriptions of high-status buildings such as the account of the construction of Heorot in *Beowulf* and the poet's references to its future destruction by fire. More immediately, however, the article also demonstrates how analysis of the forms of buildings and the rituals associated with their use can yield valuable information about the construction of households and communities in the Anglo-Saxon period.

The issue concludes with Hannah Bailey's discussion of the trope of architecture-as-reader — a patristic motif reflected in the Old English poems *Andreas* and *Christ III*. In this final article, Bailey turns again to consider the imaginative and symbolic force of architectural depiction in literary contexts. Like Varnam, she writes about the responsiveness of architectural features; Bailey's reading shows how such architectural features can not only be understood as the focus of exegetical interpretation, but can also function within literary narratives as authoritative exponents of exegetical processes of reading and uncovering meaning. As such, architectural features, in their innate understanding of divine mysteries, model an ideal human response — an ideal from which, as Bailey shows, their human counterparts frequently fall short. Bailey also shows how the shared use of the trope of architecture-as-reader in these two poems indicates, if not direct influence, at least that both text draw upon a very similar literary tradition. In this way, the article uncovers aspects of each poem's engagement with the allegorical and didactic functions of architectural representation and also contributes significantly to our critical understanding of the poetic and intellectual contexts in which such texts originated.

As will be apparent from these summaries — and as has been indicated above — the term 'architectural representation' has been interpreted in a variety of different ways in the essays in this special issue. This multiplicity is deliberate, encompassing both representations of architecture and architecture's capacity as a representational medium. As such, the physical architectural structures of medieval England are understood as symbolic expressions of familial and societal values, as well as deliberate statements of identifiable religious meanings. Architectural drawing is considered as a means of representing pictorially structures that have or had an external reality, but also as a way of expressing the figural significance inherent within such building. At the same time, the essays also emphasize the potential for architectural features within manuscript illustration to contribute in visual medium to a combined narrative of text and image. A number of the essays illustrate the various ways in which architectural language and imagery in texts functions as narrative frame, as symbolic expression, and as vehicle for conveying doctrinal and allegorical teachings.

The openness of the term ‘architectural representation’ reflects the inclusive and interdisciplinary goals of the Medieval Architectural Representation project. The articles within this special issue contribute in various ways to individual fields of scholarship, but the collaboration as a whole also benefits from identifying questions to be asked of textual and material sources that do not immediately present themselves within a mono-disciplinary approach. It benefits also from a specifically cross-period focus. What comes out of the collection of essays in particular is a demonstration of the lasting and pervasive importance of architectural representation across medieval culture. By taking a long view, this special issue not only highlights variety in the ways in which architecture signified, but also continuity. So, the responsiveness of architecture is a motif discussed by Varnam in relation to an early fourteenth-century penitential handbook and by Bailey in relation to much earlier Old English didactic verse. Similarly, Appleton’s contribution demonstrates the ongoing importance of the grave-as-house motif in pre- and post-Conquest literature, while her discussion also highlights the continued interest in bounded space revealed in the discussions of Anglo-Saxon literature and illustration by Kinsella and Thomas. And while Boulton and O’Brien both demonstrate how important architectural representation was to the self-conception of the early Anglo-Saxon Church, Sofield’s corpus of archaeological evidence spans the period of conversion and Christianisation and serves as a reminder of how the bias in written records can obscure the fact that architectural signification in medieval England was never solely a concern of the Church.

Ultimately, the intention behind this special issue has been to highlight the fact that medieval architecture is always representational, existing always in relation to other things, places, and people, never static, and always open to varied understanding. It is our hope that the issue will encourage further work, particularly of a cross-disciplinary, cross-period kind, into the place and function of architecture in the intellectual, social, and cultural life of the medieval world.

A note on quotations from edited texts

In quotations from Old English texts, the ampersand has been used to represent the Tironian note for *ond/and* when this appears in the original edition. Diacritical markers are routinely omitted and editorial emendations marked as such in the text have been silently accepted.

The text of the Vulgate is cited throughout from *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. by Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007), following the version *iuxta septuaginta* of the Psalms; translations follow the Douay-Rheims text contained in *The Holy Bible: Douay version, translated from the Latin Vulgate (Douay, A.D. 1609; Rheims, A.D. 1582)*, ed. by Bernard Griffin and Richard Challoner (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1956). Translations from other texts are the authors’ own except where stated.

The abbreviation *PL* stands for *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844–64).

Tabernacle, Temple or Something in Between? Architectural Representation in Codex Amiatinus, fols II^v–III^r

Conor O'Brien¹

Folios II^v–III^r of the Codex Amiatinus present one of the most fascinating architectural diagrams of the early Middle Ages — not least because there has been a large degree of debate over quite what the Amiatinus image depicts (figure 1).² Consequently this diagram raises some interesting questions about what medieval architectural representation *was*. Architecture and architectural language appear throughout early English literature in both Latin and the vernacular; pictorial depictions of architecture were not uncommon either, although the Codex Amiatinus provides one of the earliest surviving examples. A well-established body of scholarship on this architectural representation has sought to plumb the depths of the available materials which clearly had a significance far beyond simply depicting physical buildings and structures.³

The Amiatinus diagram has itself been the subject of a sophisticated analysis as an example of monastic mnemotechnical and meditational strategies.⁴ Rather oddly, such an approach aligns the diagram with the abstract complexity of cross-carpet pages in Gospel manuscripts of the same period, both becoming mandala-like foci for active meditation: the architectural quality of this depiction of an elaborate structure and its contents might seem, therefore, almost unimportant.⁵ Was early medieval architectural representation simply representation *with* architecture, where forms, images and language derived from buildings and their construction were imbued with external significance? Or was it the representation

¹ My thanks to the editors, both of this volume and *Leeds Studies in English*, for helping to improve this article; all errors remain my own.

² Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Amiatino 1, fols II^v–III^r.

³ E.g. Johanna Kramer, “‘Du eart se weallstan’: Architectural Metaphor and Christological Imagery in the Old English *Christ I* and the Book of Kells”, in *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. by Charles D. Wright, Frederick M. Biggs, and Thomas N. Hall (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 90–112; Mark Atherton, ‘The Image of the Temple in the *Psychomachia* and Late Anglo-Saxon Literature: Artistic and Literary Parallels in Liturgical Manuscripts and Homiletic Works’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*, 79 (1997), 263–85; Ruth Wehlau, ‘*The Riddle of Creation*’: *Metaphor Structures in Old English Poetry* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997). See also Hannah Bailey’s article below.

⁴ Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 231–37.

⁵ Carruthers, *Craft*, p. 236.

Architectural Representation in Codex Amiatinus

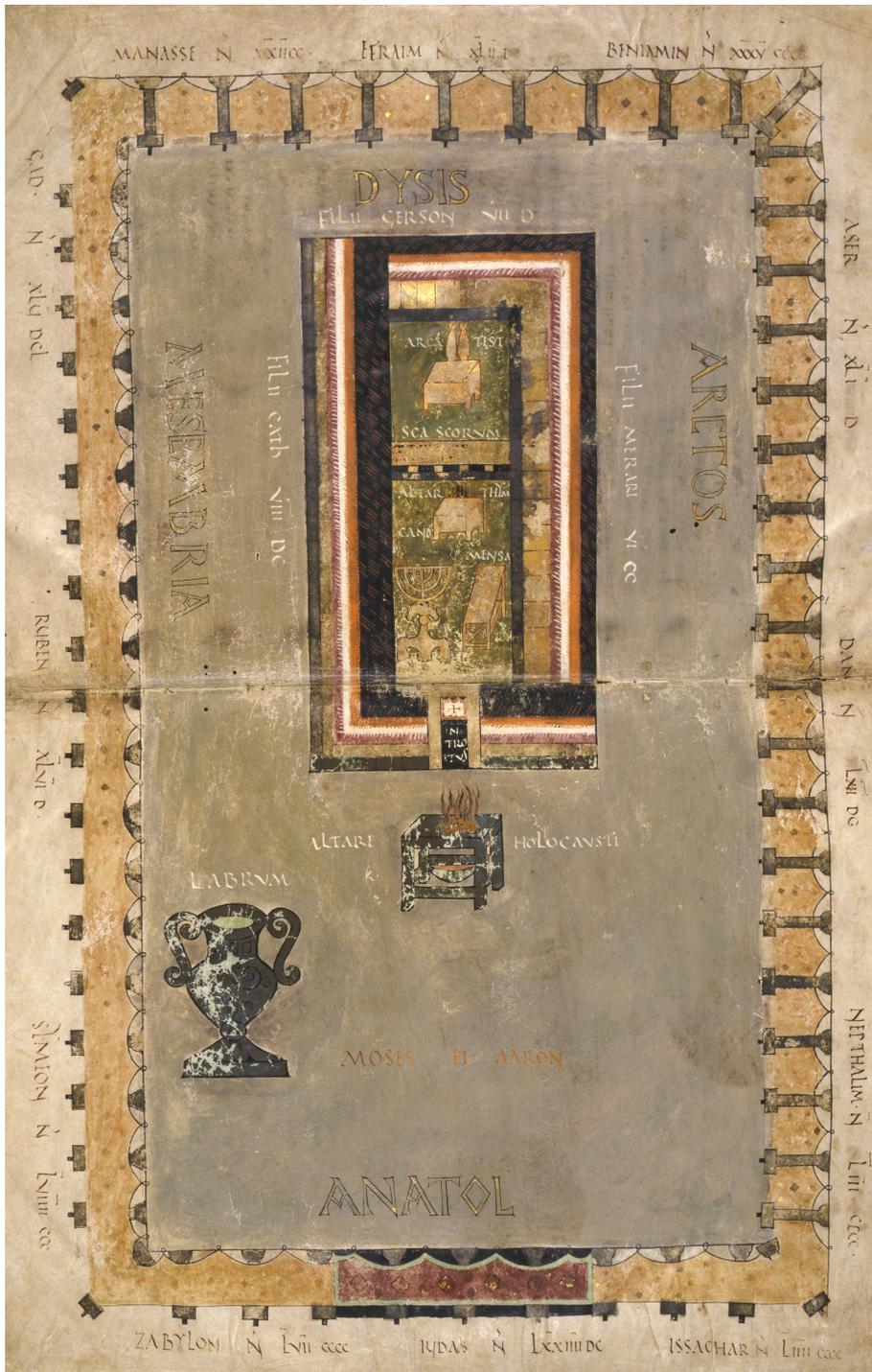


Figure 1. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Amiatino 1, fols II^v-III^r.

of architecture itself? Like any piece of monastic culture the Codex Amiatinus image was susceptible to complex use by individuals skilled in the arts of *lectio divina* and rumination. Nonetheless, it was also, I will argue, a representation of a specific piece of architecture, a particular built structure whose identity determined the content of the image. Attempting to understand the intentions of long dead artists is always risky, but by looking closely at the Amiatinus diagram and reading it in the light of the surrounding exegetical tradition, we can provide quite a plausible explanation of the dominant ideas which shaped the decisions made by its creators.

The Codex Amiatinus was produced at the Northumbrian monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow in the early years of the eighth century — finished at the latest by June 716. A pandect, an entire Bible in one volume, it constitutes the oldest complete copy of the Vulgate still in existence. Pandects were unusual in the early Middle Ages because of the vast quantity of parchment (and therefore livestock) which they consumed and the Amiatinus was one of three such volumes made at Wearmouth-Jarrow under the direction of Abbot Ceolfrith (in office c. 689–716).⁶ All of these consisted of a newly edited version of Jerome's translation of the Bible, clearly representing a major scholarly and artistic achievement on the part of the Wearmouth-Jarrow community.⁷ The Amiatinus (the only one of these manuscripts to survive intact) was probably always intended to be a gift for the pope; in Rome it would form a special link between the head of the universal Church and its two distant outposts in St Peter's church in Wearmouth and St Paul's in Jarrow, where the other volumes lay.⁸

That papal audience in part explains the striking *romanitas* of the manuscript with its highly readable uncial script and Mediterranean styles of decoration, which clearly differentiate it from other Insular manuscripts of the time.⁹ But the Codex's *romanitas* probably also derives from the extensive use of a Late Antique Bible from Italy as its exemplar. Painstaking detective work over many generations means that we can now be quite certain that the Codex Amiatinus was designed with the Codex Grandior, a now-lost pandect produced on the orders of the Roman monastic leader Cassiodorus in the sixth century, as its model, albeit one not followed slavishly.¹⁰ Possessing this magnificent manuscript inspired the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow to produce their own Bible and to give a Northumbrian spin to the Italianate style of the original.¹¹ The Amiatinus thus presented an argument about the

⁶ Richard Gameson, 'The Cost of the Codex Amiatinus', *Notes & Queries*, 39 (1992), 2–9.

⁷ For the text of the Codex Amiatinus: Richard Marsden, *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 140–201.

⁸ Celia Chazelle, 'Ceolfrid's Gift to St Peter: The First Quire of the Codex Amiatinus and the Evidence of its Roman Destination', *Early Medieval Europe*, 12 (2003), 129–57; Celia Chazelle, 'Painting the Voice of God: Wearmouth-Jarrow, Rome and the Tabernacle Miniature in the Codex Amiatinus', *Quintana*, 8 (2009), 15–59 (p. 48).

⁹ For a recent reappraisal of the manuscript's *romanitas* (and its ideological underpinnings): Jennifer O'Reilly, "'All that Peter Stands For": The *Romanitas* of the Codex Amiatinus Reconsidered', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 157 (2009), 367–95. For the Codex's script: Malcolm Parkes, *The Scriptorium of Wearmouth-Jarrow*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1982), p. 3.

¹⁰ Paul Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus and the Codex Amiatinus', *Speculum*, 71 (1996), 827–83.

¹¹ While traditionally the 'mirror-like faithfulness' of the way the Amiatinus replicated the Grandior was emphasised in scholarship (e.g. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Art of the Codex Amiatinus*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1967), p. 24), more recent work has highlighted the original Northumbrian contributions: Celia Chazelle, "'Romanness" in Early Medieval Culture', in *Paradigms and Methods in Early Medieval Studies*, ed. by Celia Chazelle and Felice Lifshitz (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 81–98; Lawrence Nees, 'Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Illustrated Bibles from Northwest Europe', in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, ed. by John Williams (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 121–77.

Anglo-Saxons' membership of the universal Church which was centred upon Rome, and this ecclesiological agenda has proved vital to many interpretations of the pandect.

Much within the Codex Amiatinus remains striking and worthy of comment, but perhaps the most impressive single element in the manuscript is the colossal architectural diagram which stretches across a complete bifolium of the opening quire. At one time secondary literature often referred to this as a depiction of the Temple of Jerusalem, but following serious attention to the pandect's artwork in the latter part of the twentieth century that identification was rejected in favour of the Mosaic Tabernacle as described in the book of Exodus.¹² On the face of it this was very clear from a relatively cursory study of the image, not least because Moses and Aaron's names are written within the enclosure which surrounds the sanctuary and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel and their numbers inscribed around the edge of the enclosure, mapping out the pattern in which they encamped around the Tabernacle in the desert.

In recent years, however, the certainty that the diagram is a depiction of the Tabernacle has faded away and a new interpretation has begun to gain ground. This rejects reading the Amiatinus image as a simple work of 'literal depiction' and suggests that it is 'architecturally ambiguous', a spiritual image of the Tabernacle and Temple combined, possibly with the New Jerusalem of Revelations also in the mix.¹³ Understanding the diagram not as a straightforward architectural plan or 'map', but as a complex piece of exegesis that comments upon the typological relationships between historical structures and eschatological states, which deliberately combines anachronistic details to warn the viewer away from thinking they gaze upon an image which merely represents architecture, has proved to be a popular approach.¹⁴ It certainly acknowledges the background of sophisticated monastic spirituality which lies behind the making of the Codex Amiatinus.

Bianca Kühnel provided one of the earliest readings of the diagram in this light. Amidst an erudite study of depictions of the Temple and the New Jerusalem in early Christianity, she pointed out the presence of a small cross upon the diagram, located just above the entrance to the Tabernacle proper. The effect of the cross, Kühnel argued, was to Christianize the Jewish structure and transform it from the desert Tabernacle into the promised heavenly Temple about which John speaks in Revelations — the viewer is meant to gaze through the architecture of the biblical structure and see the heavenly edifice of which it was a type.¹⁵ Kühnel also argued that the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow had been working off a model (the lost image from the Codex Grandior) that had combined Temple and Tabernacle in one image. Cassiodorus had described in his *Institutiones* how he had come to add the features of the 'Tabernacle and the Temple' to the Grandior and Kühnel read this as an explicit

¹² Bruce-Mitford, *Art of the Codex Amiatinus*, p. 3, still described the image as the Temple; the identification with the Tabernacle was clearly established by James W. Halporn, 'Pandectes, Pandecta, and the Cassiodorian Commentary on the Psalms', *Revue Bénédictine*, 90 (1980), 290–300 (p. 299); Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', p. 844 n. 85.

¹³ Jennifer O'Reilly, 'Introduction', in *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Seán Connolly (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), pp. xvii–lv (p. liii).

¹⁴ For the diagram as a map: P. D. A. Harvey, *Maps in the Age of Bede*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 2006), pp. 14–15.

¹⁵ Bianca Kühnel, 'Jewish Symbolism of the Temple and the Tabernacle and Christian Symbolism of the Holy Sepulchre and the Heavenly Jerusalem', *Jewish Art*, 12/13 (1986/1987), 147–68 (p. 166).

statement about the composite nature of the Grandior image which served as the Amiatinus's exemplar.¹⁶

These initial suggestions were later built upon by Jennifer O'Reilly, who made the key point that the details of the diagram do not entirely reflect the description of the Tabernacle provided in Exodus. The great bronze basin in which the priests washed their hands and feet, the *labrum* or laver, is in the wrong place in the Amiatinus Tabernacle enclosure: Exodus clearly indicates that it should be between the altar of holocausts and the sanctuary, but here it lies before the altar and just to one side of the entrance to the enclosure. This is where the laver's counterpart in the Jerusalem Temple, the bronze 'sea' which rested upon twelve bronze oxen, sat, and so O'Reilly here provided specific evidence to support Kühnel's idea that the pandect depicted a structure which was part Tabernacle and part Temple.¹⁷ She also pointed out that the traditional numerological meaning of 'Adam', whose name is spelt out by the cardinal directions, which appear in Greek (*Arctos, Dysis, Anatol, Mesembria*) within the Amiatinus Tabernacle, was forty-six: the number of years which it took to build the second Temple.¹⁸ In this way exegetical meaning was layered into the image in a manner intended to raise it above simple architectural representation. In recent years Alan Thacker has also read the entire image as a careful combination of Temple and Tabernacle, suggesting additionally that the pillared barrier around the enclosure (depicted at an angle in the Codex so that the viewer sees the external side of the East and South walls and the internal side of the North and West walls) brought to mind the cloister-like stone structures which surrounded the courts of the Temple.¹⁹

All these approaches to the Amiatinus diagram have much to commend them, but I want to suggest something slightly different here, arguing that the image is a rather more straightforward piece of architectural representation than they would suggest. The fact remains that most of the details of the image very closely follow the literal description of the Tabernacle provided in Exodus. Kühnel's supposition that Cassiodorus specifically designed his architectural diagram as a composite depiction of the Temple and Tabernacle appears to be a misreading of the *Institutiones'* phrase *tabernaculum templumque* as implying the two structures were one;²⁰ elsewhere, in his massive commentary on the Psalms, Cassiodorus spoke again about the images which he had added to the Codex Grandior in terms that leave little room to doubt that there were two distinct images, one of the Tabernacle and one of the Temple: 'For we ourselves made to be painted both the Tabernacle, which was its [the Temple's] image originally, and the Temple itself, and we chose to arrange them in our larger pandect [the Codex Grandior].'²¹ If the Wearmouth-Jarrow monks depicted a

¹⁶ Kühnel, 'Jewish Symbolism', p. 165; Cassiodorus, *Institutiones*, ed. by R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 23 (I.V.2): 'commonuit etiam tabernaculum templumque Domini ad instar caeli fuisse formatum; quae depicta subtiliter lineamentis propriis in pandecte Latino corporis grandioris competenter aptavi'.

¹⁷ O'Reilly, 'Introduction', p. liii.

¹⁸ O'Reilly, 'Introduction', pp. liii–liv. On the cardinal directions see also Carruthers, *Craft*, p. 236.

¹⁹ Alan Thacker, *Bede and Augustine of Hippo: History and Figure in Sacred Text*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 2005), pp. 28–30.

²⁰ As pointed out by Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', p. 834 n. 41. See note 16 above for the Latin.

²¹ Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum*, LXXXVI.1, in *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori. Expositio Psalmorum*, ed. by M. Adriaen, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 97–98, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1958), II, 789–90 (ll. 40–43): 'Nos enim et tabernaculum, quod eius imago primitus fuit, et templum ipsum fecimus pingi et in pandecte nostro corpore grandiores elegimus collocare'. I follow the reading established by Halporn, 'Pandectes', p. 294. All translations my own.

composite Temple/Tabernacle in their pandect then they had to actively construct such an image, there being no exemplar for them to follow.

Since the Northumbrian brethren did not recreate it in the Codex Amiatinus, the likely appearance of Cassiodorus's lost image of the Temple has had to be reconstructed from the evidence of the writings of Bede (d. 735), who examined the diagram when composing his exegesis on the Temple. From Bede we can deduce that the Temple was depicted as enclosed by multiple concentric walls, separating the various courts (of the priests, women, gentiles, etc.), which reflected the hierarchy of ritual purity operating in the Temple.²² Bede showed a good deal of interest in these structures, which he thought of as buildings, describing them on occasion as *porticus*: structures with an enclosed wall at one side and an open colonnade at the other, probably not dissimilar from the covered walkway which existed at eighth-century Wearmouth, and which seems to have been called a *porticus* by the community there.²³ If the Amiatinus artists wanted to bring the Temple *porticus* to mind then it would have made more sense had they represented multiple enclosures in their architectural drawing, since this formed such a distinctive part of the image of the Temple.

The decision to display only a single outer structure around the enclosure draws the diagram in the Codex much closer to the Tabernacle than to the Temple. Furthermore, an examination of the barrier depicted in the pandect suggests that the artists were certainly trying to show the temporary cloth structure of Exodus and not the elaborate stone buildings which Bede imagined around the Temple of Solomon. The pillars peek out above and below the barrier itself, which hangs down from a rod running along the top of the pillars,²⁴ regardless of the angle from which it is being depicted. A curtain and not a stone wall springs to mind on examining the Amiatinus image in detail. Such a depiction would not make much sense if the intention had been to represent a colonnade, cloister, or similar architectural structure. I remain unconvinced therefore that the cloth barrier of the Tabernacle here was designed to represent simultaneously the (stone) *porticus* of the Temple.²⁵

If the barrier around the Tabernacle enclosure was depicted with a close eye for such detailed accuracy, then it might be deemed that the cross above the entrance to the Tabernacle itself must be a deliberate anachronism, added by the monks to warn the viewer from reading the diagram too literally.²⁶ Certainly it may appear that way to us, but we should avoid importing anachronistic ideas about anachronism into the eighth century. Would the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow have seen a cross as necessarily out of place upon an ancient Jewish structure? It may prove helpful to remember that they understood the typological interpretation of Old Testament Jewish cult not as an intellectual game played by human

²² Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', pp. 853–59; see also the reconstructed image in *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany*, ed. by W. Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), pp. 142–43.

²³ Bede, *De templo*, II, in *Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 2A, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), pp. 141–234 (pp. 192–3); Bede, *In regum librum XXX quaestiones*, XVIII, in *Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 2, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 119 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), pp. 289–322 (pp. 311–12). See also Thacker, *Bede and Augustine*, pp. 30–31; Éamonn Ó Carragáin, 'The Term *Porticus* and *Imitatio Romae* in Early Anglo-Saxon England', in *Text and Gloss: Studies in Insular Learning and Literature Presented to Joseph Donovan Pheifer*, ed. by Helen Conrad-O'Briain, and others (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp. 13–34; Rosemary Cramp and others, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 2 vols (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005–06), I, 95–98, 112.

²⁴ Cf. Halporn, 'Pandectes', p. 299.

²⁵ Cf. Thacker, *Bede and Augustine*, p. 30.

²⁶ Kühnel, 'Jewish Symbolism', p. 166; Chazelle, 'Painting the Voice of God', pp. 44–45.

minds, but as the intended, 'real' meaning, encoded into the cult by God.²⁷ Bede believed that Moses had been openly shown the 'sacraments of Christ and the Church' and scripture alluded to this when it mentioned the models of the Tabernacle and its objects which Moses had seen upon Mt. Sinai.²⁸ Moses knew that Christ was to come and die upon the cross and built the Tabernacle in that knowledge: not an uncommon belief in early medieval theology.²⁹ The cross on the Tabernacle in the Codex Amiatinus suggested a typological interpretation, but that does not mean that it might not also have constituted accurate architectural representation in the minds of its artists.

Obviously, the Greek cardinal directions inscribed within the Tabernacle diagram are in part simply a guide to help the viewer orientate the image but they are weighed down with so much possible exegetical meaning as to render it impossible to narrow them to a single interpretation. In Insular culture the first letters of the cardinal directions (*Arctos*, *Dysis*, *Anatol* and *Mesembria*) were recognised as spelling out 'Adam', indicating the universal stretch of Adam's progeny to the four corners of the world;³⁰ such symbolism seems to me to be entirely in keeping with reading the diagram as the Tabernacle, traditionally understood as referring to the Church in this world.³¹ The numerical value of Adam's name as forty-six in turn connected it with Christ because of the forty-six years which it took to build the second Temple (identified by John 2.21 with Christ's body, which took forty-six days to grow limbs in Mary's virgin womb according to the Fathers); the Amiatinus artists were no doubt glad to have this Christological reference worked into their diagram (though it does not appear that Insular exegetes, unlike Augustine, often made the complete leap from the Greek directions to Christ's body as Temple).³² While all this enriches the diagram it does not necessarily make it an image of the Temple, or of the Temple and Tabernacle spiritually combined: the four Greek directions represent Adam 'through whose progeny the entire world was filled' with 'the corrupted lineage of the human race', for the salvation of whom 'the second Adam came, that is the Lord himself and our creator, born of a virgin'.³³ The Greek on the Amiatinus Tabernacle diagram probably served to prompt meditation on Christ's saving work for the entire human race, not recognition that this was a composite image of Tabernacle and Temple.

In other words, the only detail on the Amiatinus bifolium which I think really is problematic for reading it as an attempt to depict the Tabernacle is the great laver, the water basin, which is without a doubt (as O'Reilly showed) where it ought to be in the Temple. On

²⁷ Conor O'Brien, *Bede's Temple: An Image and its Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 50–51, 99–100.

²⁸ E.g. Bede, *De tabernaculo et vasis eius ac vestibis sacerdotum*, I, in *Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 2A, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), pp. 1–139 (p. 40): 'Ostensum namque est Moysi in monte exemplar candelabri quod faceret quia in altitudine intimae contemplationis didicit aperte multifaria Christi et ecclesiae sacramenta'.

²⁹ For some of the patristic background to such ideas: Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New York: Doubleday, 2008), p. 245.

³⁰ Karen Corsano, 'The First Quire of the Codex Amiatinus and the *Institutiones* of Cassiodorus', *Scriptorium*, 41 (1987), 3–34 (p. 10).

³¹ O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, p. 97.

³² Walter Berschin, 'Opus deliberatum ac perfectum: Why did the Venerable Bede write a Second Prose Life of St Cuthbert?', in *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200*, ed. by Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), pp. 95–102 (pp. 99–101); O'Reilly, 'Introduction', pp. liii–liv.

³³ Bede, *In Genesim*, I, in *Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, I, ed. by Ch. W. Jones, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 118A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1967), p. 93: 'multumque decebat ut nomen protoplasti omnes mundi plagas in se mystice contineret, per cuius progeniem mundus erat omnis implendus'; p. 26:

its own, this might seem like a rather weak argument for the composite image interpretation; the artists could have also included some of the many objects which existed in the Temple but not the Tabernacle, or they could have avoided including Moses and Aaron's names in the image and thereby historicizing the structure quite so ostentatiously. A solitary architectural reference to the Temple cannot stem the tide of evidence that this is the Tabernacle in the desert represented in loving detail. Why then did the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow decide to place the laver in the wrong location?³⁴ How could its peculiar position be consistent with their desire to show the Tabernacle of Moses? And why is the laver so oddly depicted as a massive classical vase with two arms, certainly looking very different from the great bronze 'sea' constructed by Solomon in the place of which this laver has been put?

The last question is the quickest and easiest to answer. The Codex Amiatinus almost certainly follows Cassiodorus in representing the laver as the Italianate water vessel which appears in its Tabernacle diagram; this is entirely in keeping with the other aspects of Late Antique Mediterranean style which can be seen in the manuscript.³⁵ We have reason to suppose that Cassiodorus would have conceived of the Temple's water basin as the kind of two-armed vase we see in the Amiatinus. He probably had in mind a water vessel or fountain of the kind often placed outside Late Antique churches, usually in a courtyard, for the congregation to wash their hands and feet before entering the house of God. At least some such water features were probably *canthari*, stone vases with two scroll-like arms, strikingly similar to the object depicted in the Northumbrian pandect.³⁶

At the beginning of the fifth century, Paulinus of Nola had just such a *cantharus* built within his magnificent church dedicated to St Felix at Cimitile, something which he wrote about in his surviving poetry. There he explicitly linked the water vessels of his courtyard with the 'sea' of Solomon's Temple, and indeed some Old Latin versions of the Book of Kings seem to have described the Temple's water basins as *canthari*.³⁷ Paulinus's writings were known in Wearmouth-Jarrow, where Bede drew upon them quite extensively (even adapting his *Life of Felix* from Paulinus's poetry), but there is no reason to suppose that the monks drew their image of the *cantharus* from a literary work.³⁸ Cassiodorus presumably drew upon his experience of Late Antique Italian church architecture and possibly also its exegesis when

'corruptamque ex se prosapiam generis humani procreavit, uenit secundus Adam, il est Dominus ipse et conditor noster, natus ex uirgine'.

³⁴ Assuming, of course, that the Northumbrian brethren *did* decide upon the laver's location. Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', pp. 884–85, argues that the Tabernacle diagram must be copied exactly from Cassiodorus's Codex Grandior as otherwise the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow would surely have placed the laver in the scripturally accurate position. As I show in what follows, there is good reason to suppose that the basin's location was a matter of deep thought at Wearmouth-Jarrow and unthinking copying here seems unlikely.

³⁵ See Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', p. 845.

³⁶ Annewies van den Hoek and John J. Herrmann, Jr., 'Paulinus of Nola, Courtyards, and Canthari', *Harvard Theological Review*, 93 (2000), 173–219. Ritual ablutions probably took place in early Anglo-Saxon monasteries also, but I know of little evidence for this practice and any water vessels used would not have been *canthari*. I am grateful to Daniel Anlezark for discussion on this point. See Anthea Harris and Martin Henig, 'Hand-washing and Foot-washing, Sacred and Secular, in Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval Period', in *Intersections: The Archaeology and History of Christianity in England, 400–1200*, ed. by Martin Henig and Nigel Ramsay (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), pp. 25–38.

³⁷ Van den Hoek and Herrmann, 'Paulinus', pp. 177, 181–82.

³⁸ For Bede's knowledge of Paulinus: Neil Wright, 'Imitation of the Poems of Paulinus of Nola in Early Anglo-Latin Verse', *Peritia*, 4 (1985), 134–51 (p. 135).

deciding how Solomon's bronze 'sea' would appear in his *Codex Grandior*; the monks at Wearmouth-Jarrow copied this in turn in the early eighth century.³⁹

Having suggested an explanation for the appearance of the laver, let us return then to the key question of its location. The solution here has already, I think, been proposed in passing by Celia Chazelle, who suggests that the image in the *Codex Amiatinus* encourages the viewer to look first at the laver and then move on to look at the altar of the holocausts, which is analogous to 'the entrance of the catechumen into the Church through the cleansing of baptism followed by the sacrifice of the eucharist'.⁴⁰ This, the baptismal significance of the laver's position at the entrance to the enclosure, probably explains why the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow chose to depict the Tabernacle in this interesting, and technically incorrect, fashion. As discussed above, typology formed part of the historical reality of the Tabernacle in Christian thought, but here in the *Amiatinus* diagram we can see a glimmer of tension within the desire to be both historically and exegetically accurate. Claiming a baptismal significance for a water-vessel designed for religious ablutions probably does not seem very insightful and the apparent 'obvious' nature of such an explanation seems to explain why Chazelle does not spend a lot of time discussing this interpretation. In fact, good reason exists to believe that a baptismal interpretation of the laver in the *Codex Amiatinus* resulted from substantial exegetical reflection at Wearmouth-Jarrow going beyond traditional understanding of the Jewish water basins.

Patristic exegesis on the whole had very little to say about the great laver of the Tabernacle or its counterpart, the Temple's bronze 'sea'. Pope Gregory the Great had written in some detail about the clothing of the Aaronic priesthood who serviced the Tabernacle and concerning the various sacred objects which were used in its cult, but he nowhere made the link between these water vessels and baptism. In his *Pastoral Care*, where most of his influential exegesis of the Tabernacle appears, he briefly discussed the 'sea' of the Temple (later repeating this interpretation word for word in one of his letters). His interpretation mainly focused on the twelve bronze oxen upon which the basin rested, interpreting them as pastors who cleanse sins through confession, not through baptism: 'whoever strives to enter the door of eternity may show his temptations to a pastor's mind, and, as it were, wash the hands of his thought and of his deed in the laver of the oxen'.⁴¹ The main focus of his work was on the moral difficulties for the pastor who, in helping others cleanse themselves of temptations, is exposed to those very temptations themselves.

Elsewhere, in one of his homilies preached in Rome, also focusing upon the issue of preaching and the Christian pastorate, Gregory addressed the laver of the Tabernacle, which he understood with reference to the internal cleansing of compunction: 'Moses put there a bronze laver in which the priests had to wash when entering the Holy of Holies, because God's

³⁹ The Greek images of the tradition decorating Cosmas Indicopleustes' *Christian Topography*, which probably supplied exemplars upon which Cassiodorus's *Codex Grandior* drew, often depict a vase with looped handles in the Tabernacle; this represents the jar of manna but might have influenced Western depictions of the laver: see Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 107, 264–65. The *Christian Topography* never mentions or depicts the laver and so provides no evidence for its location in Cassiodorus's image (Kominko, *World*, p. 122).

⁴⁰ Chazelle, 'Painting the Voice of God', p. 46.

⁴¹ Gregory, *Regula Pastoralis*, in *PL*, LXXVII, col. 34: 'ut quisquis intrare aeternitatis janua[m]: nititur, tentationes suas menti pastoris indicet, et quasi in boum lutere cogitationis vel operis manus lavet.' See also Gregory, *Registrum Epistularum*, I.24, in *S. Gregorii Magni Registrum Epistularum Libri I–VII*, ed. by D. Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 140 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982), p. 29.

law orders us first to wash through compunction, that our uncleanness may not be unworthy to enter the cleanness of the secrets of God.⁴² Gregory spent most of his time speaking about how the laver had been made from the mirrors of the Israelite women which suggested how Christians can gaze into the heavenly commandments and use them to see the sins within themselves, which must be repented for and washed away through compunction.⁴³

Gregory was almost certainly the most important Christian commentator on these Jewish water vessels before the eighth century and the few other exegetes who spent time addressing the lavers of either Temple or Tabernacle (the former much more popular than the latter) usually followed the general lines of his interpretation. Late Antique commentary by a Bishop Fortunatianus, preserved in a possibly Irish work on the gospels from a ninth-century Frankish manuscript, swiftly ran through a variety of meanings of the Temple's 'sea' and its oxen, but baptism never featured amidst its meanings:

Twelve calves having been made under the bronze sea and positioned in groups of three with the backs to the temple, the heads however to the four winds: the four gospels are revealed. The twelve calves are a figure of the twelve apostles. Being placed in threes demonstrates the Trinity. The sea indicates the world. The backs to the temple are turned away from the Synagogue. The heads to the four winds, that is to all the seed of Adam, which seems to be spread in the four parts of the world.⁴⁴

Another Irish commentary, probably of the eighth century, provided a rather more straightforward reading of the bronze 'sea': it signified the cleansing of one's heart in line with the sixth beatitude ('Blessed are the pure in heart').⁴⁵

Isidore of Seville saw the oxen as the twelve apostles who have washed the entire circuit of the world through teaching all its people so that they might be baptized.⁴⁶ This is in fact the only explicitly baptismal interpretation of the laver which I have been able to identify before the creation of the Codex Amiatinus. For Isidore, however, the bronze oxen dominated how he understood the laver as a whole, and so the baptism in question was the figurative baptism of the entire globe, the baptism of all the gentiles as instructed by Christ, rather than the sacrament as an important stepping stone in the life of a Christian, which Chazelle sees the Codex Amiatinus Tabernacle suggesting.⁴⁷ The issue of the laver or the bronze sea's position does not seem to have loomed very large for any of the exegetes examined here and in general their work suggests that the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow did not follow some pre-existing

⁴² Gregory, *Homilia XVII in Gregorius Magnus. Homiliae in Evangelia*, ed. by Raymond Étaix, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 141 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 116–35 (p. 124): 'Labrum quippe aeneum Moyses ponit, in quo sacerdotes lauari debeant et sancta sanctorum ingredi, quia lex Dei prius nos lauari per compunctionem praecipit, ut nostra immunditia ad penetrandam secretorum Dei munditiam non sit indigna.'

⁴³ Gregory, *Homilia XVII*, p. 125.

⁴⁴ *Quaestiones vel Glosae in Evangelio Nomine*, 53, in *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores. Pars I*, ed. by R. E. McNally, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 108B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1973), pp. 133–49 (p. 146): 'Nam uitulus sub mare aereo duodecim fabricatis et terno positos dorsa ad templum, capita autem a quattuor uentis, quattuor ostenduntur euangelia. Duodecim uituli duodecim apostolos figurantur. Terni positi Trinitatem demonstrant. Mare saeculum declarant. Dorsa ad templum auersa sinagoga. Capita a quattuor uentis, id est ad uniuersum semen Adam, qui est in quattuor partes mundi spansum esse uidetur.'

⁴⁵ *Liber Questionum in Evangeliiis*, in *Scriptores Celtigenae. Pars V*, ed. by J. Rittmueller, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 108F (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), p. 92 (5.9): 'Per sapientiam eorum cor mundatur, quam figurat "mare aeneum" in templo.'

⁴⁶ Isidore, *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Regum Tertium*, in *PL*, LXXXIII, col. 416 (I.8): 'Labrum autem orbem terrae intelligimus, cuius ambitum lustraverunt apostoli, docentes gentes, ut baptizarentur in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti'

⁴⁷ Isidore, *Quaestiones*, I.7–8, cols 415–16.

commentary in depicting the Tabernacle laver in the position of the Temple 'sea'. However, this does not mean that they blazed trails in an utterly revolutionary manner in their work on the Codex Amiatinus.⁴⁸

Mention of the four cardinal directions in the Fortunatianus exegesis certainly calls to mind the Greek directions in the Amiatinus diagram. Fortunatianus, and his later readers, may have made an instinctive leap from the Trinitarian and apostolic overtones of the twelve bronze oxen (arranged in four groups of three each) to the great commission of Matthew 28.19: *docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* ('teach ye all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost'). Certainly Isidore made this connection and it seems plausible that others did so also without recording the fact in writing. The Northumbrian monks were not the first Christians to see baptism hovering just beyond the standard interpretations of the laver. Nonetheless, it appears that in the early eighth century they took the link with baptism far beyond this traditional focus on universal mission, introducing a new attentiveness to the individual reception of the sacrament within the Church. This seems to have encouraged them to think, in a manner not previously attested, about the importance of the laver's location.

The work of Bede provides us with a wonderful view of the interpretations of scripture circulating in Wearmouth-Jarrow in the early eighth century, just when the Codex Amiatinus was being put together, and it allows us to see an increased interest in the water vessels of both the Temple and the Tabernacle at just this time. Bede first commented upon the bronze 'sea' in his massive work *On Luke*, which he was writing between roughly 710 and 715, that is in the years just before the Codex Amiatinus left Northumbria in 716 and when the finishing touches are likely to have been added to the manuscript. Discussing the fact that Christ was thirty years of age when he was baptized, Bede suddenly went off on a tangent about the great laver of the Temple: the connection being that the mouth of the water basin was thirty cubits in circumference. Having used numerology to bring the bronze 'sea' into his discussion of baptism, Bede declared that 'because mention of the bronze sea has been made, it is pleasing to inquire how it might agree with the rule of baptism also in the rest of its details' and went on to provide possibly the longest exegesis of the object yet written by a Christian.⁴⁹ Throughout, the focus remained upon the baptismal meaning of the laver, and Bede even considered the location of the laver — all in a section of the commentary (by no means one of Bede's most original) for which no direct sources have been identified.⁵⁰

Bede later returned to the bronze 'sea' very briefly in *On Luke* and here again the symbolism was baptismal and in a manner much closer to the significance of the sacrament for the individual than in Isidore's interpretation examined above. The 'sea' symbolised the 'life-giving waves by which all entering the Church are baptised'.⁵¹ A very similar interpretation appears in Bede's commentary on the Song of Songs, which he probably also wrote in the years just before 716.⁵² There, in fact, he went further than he did in *On Luke* and appears

⁴⁸ The next paragraph owes much to the comments and suggestions of Jennifer O'Reilly, whose sudden death prevented this article from further benefiting from her vast knowledge, always generously shared.

⁴⁹ Bede, *In Lucae Evangelium Expositio*, I, in *Beda's Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 3, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 120 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1960), pp. 1–425 (p. 86): 'Et quia maris aenei mentio incidit libet et in ceteris quomodo baptismi regulae congruat inquirere'.

⁵⁰ Bede, *Lucae*, I, p. 86.

⁵¹ Bede, *Lucae*, VI, p. 363: '... mare aeneum cuius unda uiuificatrice cuncti ecclesiam intraturi baptizentur'.

⁵² For the date of this commentary: Arthur Holder, 'The Anti-Pelagian Character of Bede's Commentary on the

to have effectively equated the Temple's 'sea' and the Tabernacle's laver in sharing the same baptismal significance, suggesting that both appeared at the entrance to the relevant cult site:

It was most beautifully figurally symbolised in the Tabernacle or the Temple of Solomon, in the entrance of which the laver or bronze sea was placed, where the priests, entering, washed their hands and feet certainly because of the mystery that the Lord provides us with a bath of heavenly teaching, a fountain of regeneration, initiated in which we can enter both the society of the present Church and the resting-place of the eternal house which is in heaven.⁵³

Bede here equated the meanings of the Tabernacle's laver and the Temple's sea, making them both symbolise baptism, by apparently 'mistakenly' putting them both in the same location: the mistake is effectively that of the Codex Amiatinus.

Why would Bede make this mistake? The wider discussion of baptism in which this sentence appears provides the context. Bede had been talking about the washing of the Temple sacrifices in the pool in Jerusalem known as *probatica*; this showed, he said, that it is right that those ought to be first washed in the waters of regeneration who would be led to the altar and offered to the Lord in sacrifice.⁵⁴ He mapped out here a sacramental pathway where baptism comes before the eucharist, understood as a sacrifice of the self as much as of Christ; it is a path which calls to mind the Temple's order of basin, altar, sanctuary rather than the Tabernacle's order of altar, basin, sanctuary. It is striking that Bede decided to write as if the Temple's order held good for the Tabernacle also and did so at probably the same time that decoration and design of the Codex Amiatinus was being completed.⁵⁵ We have here, I suggest, a window into the Wearmouth-Jarrow artists' reasoning when choosing to depict the Tabernacle with the Temple's water basin.

Close examination of what Bede said in *On the Song of Songs* shows that he associated the Tabernacle with 'the society of the present Church' and the Temple with 'the resting place of the eternal house which is in heaven'.⁵⁶ This interpretation was a common one in Bede's works, indeed it was well established in patristic tradition, and probably lies behind the Codex Amiatinus's makers' decision to represent only the Tabernacle in their manuscript.⁵⁷ As I have argued elsewhere, its makers probably intended the Amiatinus Tabernacle to be read as the present Church, as an image of the Church still struggling, wandering, journeying in the desert of this world: a reminder to the reader of the work they still had to do.⁵⁸ The journey through the sacraments which we have just seen Bede discuss constituted part of

Song of Songs', in *Biblical Studies in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Claudio Leonardi and Giovanni Orlandi (Florence: Sismel, 2005), pp. 91–103 (pp. 101–3).

⁵³ Bede, *In Cantica Canticozum*, IV, in *Beda's Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 2B, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 119B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), pp. 164–375 (p. 322): 'Quod apertissime ac pulcherrime figurabatur in tabernaculo uel templo Salomonis in quorum introitu labrum uel mare aeneum erat positum ubi ingressuri sacerdotes manus suas pedesque lauarent certi utique causa mysterii quia lauacrum nobis doctrinae caelestis quia fontem regenerationis dominus procuraret quo initiati uel praesentis societatem ecclesiae uel mansionem aeternae domus quae est in caelis possumus ingredi'.

⁵⁴ Bede, *Cantica*, IV, p. 322: 'in aquis regenerantibus prius ablui decet eos qui ad sanctum altare producendi et in hostiam sunt domino offerendi'.

⁵⁵ For the ways in which the making of the Codex Amiatinus was influencing Bede's writings (including *On Luke* and *On the Song of Songs*) at this time more generally: O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, pp. 184–87.

⁵⁶ See note 53 above.

⁵⁷ Arthur G. Holder, 'The Mosaic Tabernacle in Early Christian Exegesis', *Studia Patristica*, 25 (1993), 101–06 (p. 105), overstates Bede's originality here; see O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, pp. 44–45.

⁵⁸ O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, pp. 97–100.

this journey through life for the Christian; one entered the present Church through baptism and, paradoxically, therefore, the Temple's bronze 'sea' and its significant location were far more in keeping with the overall message of the Amiatinus diagram than the architecturally more accurate location of the laver between the altar and the sanctuary. The Codex's makers positioned the basin where they did not because they wanted to represent two structures at once, but because they wished to represent a single structure with a spiritual accuracy which surpassed that of the historic edifice itself. But they did this not because of any longstanding tradition, rather, because of what appears to be a creative piece of exegesis, built thoughtfully upon patristic foundations.

The making of the Codex Amiatinus seems to have provided the occasion for the development of this exegesis. In the years after 716 Bede turned to address the Tabernacle and the Temple in elaborately detailed commentaries, which necessarily had to address the specifics of the water basins; here he could not get away with the blurring of the lines between the different locations which we see in *On the Song of Songs* and in the Codex Amiatinus. Writing in the early 720s in *On the Tabernacle* Bede made clear that the laver built by Moses came after the altar of holocausts, not before, and that, while on the spiritual level one could understand it as the water of baptism, the details of Exodus indicated that this water vessel most perfectly symbolised the tears of compunction.⁵⁹ Gregory the Great's popular exegesis provided Bede's primary source here, as he explained that the laver's position refers to the progress one makes through the different types of compunction (tears of repentance preceding tears of joy) rather than through the sacraments.⁶⁰ Any baptismal interpretation was swiftly set aside, apparently because Bede believed that the details of the Tabernacle, specifically the position of the laver, could not sustain it. But when Bede wrote about the bronze 'sea' in *On the Temple* years later it was the baptismal significance of that object which dominated and defined his exegesis.⁶¹

On the Temple also touched upon the sacramental progression mentioned above. Bede understood the fact that the Temple's water basins for washing sacrifices came before the altar upon which the animals were then burnt as symbolising the way which the Christian moves from baptism to confirmation, where the Spirit descends like fire upon them through the hands of the bishop.⁶² This is slightly different to the eucharistic interpretation in *On the Song of Songs* (such flexibility in approach being a common feature of Bede's exegesis) but the essential point remained the same in the understanding of the Christian life as a journey through the sacraments, a journey symbolised by the relative positions of the cultic objects in the Temple.⁶³ *On the Tabernacle* and *On the Temple* help to make clear, therefore, that

⁵⁹ Bede, *De tabernaculo*, III, p. 136: 'Potest quidem hoc labio siue labro ut in sequentibus appellatur principaliter aqua baptismatis intellegi cuius lauacro necesse est purgentur omnes qui ecclesiae ianuas ingrediuntur. Verum quia in tabernaculum testimonii et altare holocausti positum est quia bis cotidie idem ipsi sacerdotes ...cum ingrederentur ad altare thimiama domino oblaturi in eo lauari praecepti sunt aqua autem baptismi non nisi semel lauari ualemus consequentius labrum hoc abluionem nobis compunctionis et lacrimarum commendat qua semper opus habemus maxime autem cum mysteriis caelestibus ministraturi appropiamus.'

⁶⁰ Bede, *De tabernaculo*, III, pp. 136–38.

⁶¹ Bede, *De templo*, II, pp. 207–12.

⁶² Bede, *De templo*, II, p. 214: 'lauatur namque in lutere hostia cum quis fidelium aqua baptismi perfunditur, offertur uero in holocaustum cum per impositionem manus episcopi donum spiritus sancti accipit.' Bede (as was standard in the early Church) understood confirmation as the completion of baptism, rather than an entirely separate sacrament, but the basic point still stands.

⁶³ For more relevant discussion on the link between Jewish cult and Christian sacraments in Bede's thought: Giovanni Caputa, 'Aspects of the Priestly Ministry According to Saint Bede', in *Priests of Christ: In the Church for the*

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the baptismal significance of the Old Testament water vessels was primarily associated with the Temple's 'sea', not the Tabernacle's laver, and that the reason for this was the position of the objects relative to the altar of holocausts. These texts help us to understand why the laver's position is the only aspect of the Amiatinus image which follows the Temple and not the Tabernacle.

I have argued that the diagram on folios II^v–III^r of the Codex Amiatinus constitutes a serious attempt at architectural representation in the sense that we might now understand the term: its purpose is primarily to depict the real structure of the Tabernacle as it existed within human history, not to represent an imagined composite building nor to build a purely abstract focus for meditation out of architectural features. But the Tabernacle, as a piece of architecture, had significance in itself; the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow understood it as having been built in order to express figural meaning and therefore the image which they included in the Codex Amiatinus was a representation of a representation. The Tabernacle's architectural features symbolised the Church in the present world but the Northumbrian monks seem to have realised something which none of their predecessors had, that one feature in the Temple (the bronze sea's position) expressed the sacramental journey of the Christian within the present Church far better than the alternative position of the Tabernacle's laver. They therefore decided to include the Temple's water vessel within the Amiatinus diagram, not to weaken its association with the Tabernacle, but, paradoxically, to strengthen it.

Pausing at the Threshold: Considering Space, Symbolism and Eschatology in the Wilfridian Crypts at Ripon and Hexham

Meg Boulton

The discussion of the seventh-century crypts in the Wilfridian foundations at Ripon and Hexham presented here arose from my wider research on conceptual space in Anglo-Saxon Art and Architecture, and is informed by an understanding of the crypts as complex architectural spaces and by the wider context and significance of such architectural spaces within this milieu. These crypts, constructed by Wilfrid at Ripon in 655 and Hexham in 674, are two of the earliest surviving extant architectural structures in England, unique in their form and completeness. As such, they present intriguing case-studies for the discussion of architecture, symbolic significance and ecclesiastical identity as constructed by the Roman Church as it established itself in Anglo-Saxon England through the building of churches in stone.

However, before turning to address the crypts themselves, because of their very uniqueness, it is first necessary to locate them within the scholarship of Anglo-Saxon architecture and to consider the intellectual contexts that shape and surround them. Given that ideas of space, place and symbolic significance are largely intangible and somewhat obscured by the fragmented reflection of Anglo-Saxon material culture as understood through the material record, the extant architecture of the sixth-ninth centuries functions as a vital source for research into such ideas — as important as text or image in informing scholarly (re)constructions of symbolic significance, materiality and meaning.

Arguably, architecture is among the most public of all art forms, a highly visible statement of identity, and the ecclesiastical buildings of Anglo-Saxon England were no exception to this — making a deliberate statement on the Anglo-Saxon landscape with their Romanising form and lithic material identity.¹ Placed, as these buildings were, prominently into the landscape, the physical structures of the early Anglo-Saxon Church would have been highly visible

¹ Jane Hawkes, 'Iuxta Morem Romanorum: Stone and Sculpture in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Styles*, ed. by Catherine E. Karkov and George Hardin Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 66–99; Michael G. Shapland, 'Meanings of Timber and Stone in Anglo-Saxon Building Practice', in *Trees and Timber in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. by Michael D. J. Bintley and Michael G. Shapland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 21–44. See also Michael G. Shapland, 'The Cuckoo and the Magpie: The Building Culture of the Anglo-Saxon Church', in *The Material Culture of the Built Environment in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale Owen-Crocker (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2015), pp. 92–116.

expressions of the material and ideological identity of the institution, as has been discussed by Jane Hawkes and Michael Shapland, among others. These stone-built spaces were striking, monumental forms, constructed in an idiom far from that of the indigenous wooden structures familiar in post-Roman Anglo-Saxon England before the advent of the Augustinian Mission in 597, and the subsequent (re)construction of stone buildings this heralded.² Wilfrid's crypts retain all the symbolic nuance and eschatological resonance of the other extant ecclesiastical buildings from the period, but arguably present them to an extended degree. The crypts retain all of the imposing qualities and identities of the stone buildings of the early church, but are constructed *underground* — adding to their alien and unfamiliar qualities. This imposing, unfamiliar architectural identity created by the use of stone — moreover, by stone placed under the earth in the case of the crypts — was arguably used to an imposing effect on those encountering them within the post-Augustinian culture of church building in Anglo-Saxon England.

Indeed, it is perhaps primarily through studying extant fabric from the period, such as that presented by the crypts, that we, as modern scholars, can experience a sense of connection to the people and the places of Anglo-Saxon England.³ However, such an encounter is rare, as many of the architectural spaces built in this period remain only as fragmentary and partial traces. This makes the Wilfridian crypts at Ripon and Hexham particularly important, as they present two well preserved architectural spaces from the seventh century that remain to be experienced today. Through engaging with these remarkable spaces, particularly when employing a phenomenological mode of inquiry as here, we can gain layered and multivalent insights into the subtleties of the relationships with space and place as produced in and by the Anglo-Saxon Church. Further, through considering the symbolic identity and architectural nuance presented by these crypts, it is possible to suggest that the Anglo-Saxon relationship to space reflects earthly *and* heavenly iterations of the sacred, both as it was encountered through the architectural, ecclesiastical spaces created by Wilfrid and his ilk and also how it was conceptually employed to frame an eschatological understanding of Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England.

While the spaces and structures of the Anglo-Saxon world are now frequently addressed using research methods springing from diverse fields, including art history, history, archaeology, literature, and theology, the foundational scholarship concerning the identification of Anglo-Saxon architecture as a discrete style came from a predominantly antiquarian milieu, the implications of which I have discussed elsewhere.⁴

² M. Boulton and J. Hawkes, 'The Early Churches of Kent: Rome and Jerusalem in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 300–950*, ed. by P. Barnwell, Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment, 4 (Donington: Tyas, 2015), pp. 92–118.

³ There is an argument to be made that such a sense of connection arises from a set of cultural constructs, and is therefore something we, as scholars, should be wary of — rather than being something we should embrace. However, such sites nevertheless offer unparalleled opportunities for an experiential encounter with past places, and as such these material remnants, and the connections they offer, are worthy of consideration as we seek to interrogate the past.

⁴ See Meg Boulton, '(Re-)Viewing "Iuxta Morem Romanorum": Considering Perception, Phenomenology and Anglo-Saxon Ecclesiastical Architecture' in *Sensory Perception in the Medieval World: Manuscripts, Texts, and other Material Matters*, ed. by Michael D. J. Bintley and Simon C. Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), pp. 207–26; Boulton and Hawkes, 'Early Churches of Kent'. This type of early scholarship prioritised the recognition, cataloguing, classification and description of the extant architecture above any other method of enquiry, and, as such, has a limited value to our treatment of such material today — which seeks to go beyond the recognition and classification of material and site.

Since this initial antiquarian interest in Anglo-Saxon architecture (which shaped the academic approach to these buildings for several generations), there has been considerable discussion of the subject, ranging from Thomas Rickman's foundational *Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture* in 1817,⁵ to the comprehensive catalogue of extant architectural fabric produced by Harold and Joan Taylor in the 1960s,⁶ to more recent work addressing the importance and significance of architecture in a more synthetic and comprehensive manner, such as that in Helen Gittos' recent publication on *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*,⁷ or Charles McClendon's *The Origins of Medieval Architecture: Building in Europe A.D. 600-900*.⁸

Regardless of the particularities of scholarly approach to the fabric, places and spaces presented by such architectural examples, the churches of Anglo-Saxon England, composed of stone, brick and glass 'in the Roman manner',⁹ are widely acknowledged to be remarkable structures.¹⁰ Besides offering insights into the scale and scope of the architectural, intellectual and ecclesiastical climate of early-Christian Anglo-Saxon England for the modern viewer, such buildings may also be understood as monumental archetypes that simultaneously occupy and present space/s and place/s beyond those of the lived, local landscape of the early English Church or those of the wider, global, institutional network of reflexive, built spaces that represented the Church in the medieval period. The physical space of a church in Anglo-

⁵ Thomas Rickman, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1817). For further reading providing a brief history of the scholarly engagement with Anglo-Saxon architecture see G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1925–26), II: *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (1925); Alfred William Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture Before the Conquest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930); E. A. Fisher, *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Architecture and Sculpture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959); E. C. Fernie, *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons* (London: Batsford, 1983); Richard Morris, *The Church in British Archaeology* (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1983); Charles B. McClendon, *The Origins of Medieval Architecture: Building in Europe A.D. 600–900* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). See also the essays in *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 300–950*, ed. by P. S. Barnwell (Donington: Tyas, 2015).

⁶ H. M. Taylor and J. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965–72).

⁷ Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁸ McClendon, *Origins*. For an analogous approach to Medieval architecture that is challenging and holistic in its treatment of the subject, and for similar discussion, albeit addressing a slightly later period see E. C. Fernie, *Romanesque Architecture: the First Style of the European Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

⁹ See Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (hereafter *HE*), I, 22–27, which gives the account of the arrival of the Augustinian Mission, and recounts their ecclesiastical activities and reuse of Roman structures once established in Canterbury. Cited from *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 68–79. For discussion of the churches constructed in Northumbria by Benedict Biscop, see Bede's *Historiam abbatum*, V.XXIV, where the church of St Peter's at Wearmouth is explicitly described as built 'in the Roman manner' (*iuxta Romanorum quem semper amabat morem facerent*). Cited from *Venerabilis Baedae Historium ecclesiasticum gentis Anglorum, Historiam abbatum ...*, ed. by Charles Plummer, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1896), p. 368. The translation is from 'Bede: Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow', in *The Age of Bede*, ed. by D. H. Farmer (New York: Penguin Classics, 1983). For further discussion of this site see Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, pp. 338–49, 432–46, and Rosemary Cramp 'Monkwearmouth and Jarrow: The Archaeological Evidence', in *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, ed. by Gerald Bonner (London: SPCK, 1976), pp. 5–18; 'Monastic Sites', in *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by David M. Wilson (Cambridge: Methuen Young Books, 1976), pp. 201–41; *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, Volume 1 and 2 (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005 and 2006); and 'Monkwearmouth and Jarrow in their Continental Context', in *Churches Built in Ancient Times*, ed. by Kenneth Painter (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1994), pp. 279–94.

¹⁰ See further Hawkes, '*iuxta Morem Romanorum*'.

Saxon England was simultaneously understood to connect the earth to the heavens, to create sacred space out of Anglo-Saxon place, to recall the temporally and spatially distant sacred spaces of Jerusalem, to evoke the institutional identity of the Church of Rome, and to eschatologically prefigure the heavenly Jerusalem to come — embodying a complex nexus of relational understandings largely performed through material presence and architectural identity.¹¹

That said, although the scholarly study of Anglo-Saxon architecture is now well established, with scholars regularly addressing iconographic and symbolic significances alongside studies of style and form as a matter of course, the analogous study of space (and to a lesser extent place) in Anglo-Saxon England is still somewhat in its infancy in art-historical circles. The ways in which the Anglo-Saxons may have conceptualised and experienced space are not overly analysed in established scholarship (although this has begun to be readdressed);¹² perhaps because any such approach to the extant material inevitably requires a certain amount of reconstruction, intuition and uncertainty alongside measured evaluation and analysis. In order to consider ideas of space, place, and acts of viewing as they may have carried weight and meaning in their own time, today's viewer must combine current ideas surrounding making, meaning and viewing with a scholarly understanding of the parameters and potential of medieval exegetical thought, conflating and collapsing assumptions we may hold about the manner in which space and surface functioned in the medieval world.¹³ Nevertheless, despite the potential difficulties surrounding a modern consideration of the spatiality of the medieval gaze, the surviving early medieval material demonstrates considerable thought on the subject of space, its (meta)physical properties and complexities, and its conceptualisation — as fully demonstrated by the crypts constructed by Wilfrid in his foundations at Ripon and Hexham.

While it is doubtless true that the architectural spaces that remain to remind and inform us of long-lost Anglo-Saxon building schemes give little immediate impression of the grandeur and intellectual sophistication of the original building(s) as they must once have stood in the

¹¹ For further discussion, see Meg Boulton, 'The Conceptualisation of Sacred Space in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria in the Sixth to Ninth Centuries', 2 vols (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2013).

¹² Despite the rather recent scholarly turn toward analysing ideas of space in art historical circles, the spatial turn has been well studied across the humanities, and has a more established scholarly focus within the field of literary scholarship. For discussion see James S. Duncan, Nuala C. Johnson, and Richard H. Schein, 'Introduction', in *A Companion to Cultural Geography*, ed. by James S. Duncan, Nuala C. Johnson, and Richard H. Schein, Blackwell Companion to Geography, 4 (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), pp. 1–8; Barney Warf and Santa Arias, 'Introduction: The Reinsertion of Space into the Social Sciences and Humanities', in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge 2009), pp. 1–10. See also *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, ed. by Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Sarah Semple, *Perceptions of the Prehistoric in Anglo-Saxon England: Religion, Ritual, and Rulership in the Landscape* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); and *Wearmouth and Jarrow: Northumbrian Monasteries in an Historic Landscape*, ed. by Sam Turner, Sarah Semple and Alex Turner (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2013). For an analogous treatment of ideas of conceptualising space in a slightly different context, see Scott T. Smith, *Land and Book: Literature and Land Tenure in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013). For a recent discussion of the role of spatial representation in Old English poetry, see Daniel Thomas, 'Spatial Dialectics: Poetic Technique and the Landscape of Old English Verse' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2012).

¹³ See further Boulton, '(Re)-viewing "Iuxta Morem Romanorum": "The End of the World as We Know It": The Eschatology of Symbolic Space/s in Insular Art', in *Making Histories: Proceedings from the Sixth International Conference on Insular Arts*, ed. by Jane Hawkes (Donington: Tyas, 2013), pp. 279–90; and 'Art History in the Dark Ages: (Re)considering Space, Stasis and Modern Viewing Practices in Relation to Anglo-Saxon Imagery', in *Stasis in the Medieval West?: Questioning Change and Continuity*, ed. by Michael D. J. Bintley and others (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 69–86.

medieval landscape, they *remain* nonetheless, albeit isolated or fragmented.¹⁴ The surfaces and spaces of the Wilfridian crypts, for example, must be encountered in an intellectual place formed somewhere between direct experience of them as physical, architectural spaces when one is stood within their confines, and one largely constructed through scholarly intuition and the imagination (as we have lost both the material that was housed in these spaces and the specific liturgical knowledge that would provide the context for their use). Such an engagement with these spaces, as places that may be both experienced and (re)constructed, must also acknowledge them as part of wider ecclesiastical structures, imaginatively actualising them as they might once have functioned within the context of the churches that surrounded them. This being so, the encounter with the crypts suggested here, lying, as it does, somewhere between an actual experience of their stone spaces and an imagined encounter with their prior iterations based on that experience, may prompt new understandings of the conceptualisations of space they present.

Complex spatial conceptualisation is clearly demonstrated throughout the extant sacred spaces and structures of Anglo-Saxon England, but it is perhaps demonstrated *particularly* well in spaces of the crypts at Ripon and Hexham. The crypts are unusual examples of a type of space already rare in an Anglo-Saxon context.¹⁵ Indeed, the effect of encountering them was once memorably described by Richard Bailey, who noted that ‘only on these two sites is it possible to stand completely enclosed within walls and roofs built during the first century of Anglo-Saxon Christianity’.¹⁶

The act of building the church at Ripon was described by Wilfrid’s biographer Stephanus in the following manner: ‘he built and completed from the foundations in the earth up to the roof a church of dressed stone supported by various columns and side aisles’.¹⁷ Meanwhile, of the crypt and ecclesiastical structure at Hexham, he writes:

The depth of the foundations in the earth, and its crypts, of wonderfully dressed stone, and the manifold buildings above ground supported by various columns and many side aisles, and adorned with walls of notable length and height surrounded by various winding passages with spiral stairs running up and down, for our holy bishop, being taught by the spirit of God, thought out how to construct these buildings; nor have we heard of any building on this side of the Alps, built on such a scale.¹⁸

¹⁴ Boulton, ‘The Conceptualisation of Sacred Space’, and “‘The End of the World’”, pp. 279–90. For scholarship revisiting these ideas see Jennifer O’Reilly, ‘Introduction’, in *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Seán Connolly (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), pp. xvii–lv; Jane Hawkes, ‘Stones of the North: Sculpture in Northumbria in the “Age of Bede”’, in *Newcastle and Northumberland: Roman and Medieval Architecture and Art*, ed. by Jeremy Ashbee and Julian M. Luxford (Leeds: Maney, 2013), pp. 34–53 and ‘A Sculptural Legacy: Stones of the North from the “Age of Wilfrid”’, in *Wilfrid: Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. by N. J. Higham (Donington: Tyas, 2013), pp. 124–35.

¹⁵ For the most recent scholarly discussion of the crypts in the wider context of Northumbrian ecclesiastical architecture, see Rosemary Cramp, ‘Northumbrian Churches’, in *Places of Worship*, ed. by Barnwell, pp. 152–68. For discussion of these spaces within the context of Wilfrid’s life, see essays in *Wilfrid: Abbot, Bishop, Saint*, ed. by Higham.

¹⁶ Richard N. Bailey, ‘St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham’, in *Studies in Insular Art and Archaeology*, ed. by Catherine Karkov and Robert Farrell (Oxford OH: American Early Medieval Studies and the Miami University School of Fine Arts, 1991), pp. 3–24.

¹⁷ Eddius Stephanus, *Vita Wilfridi*, pp. 34–37 (ch. 17): ‘nam Inhrypis basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terra usque ad summum aedificatam, variis columnis et porticibus suffultam, in altum erexit et consummavit.’ Text and translation from *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, ed. and trans. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927).

¹⁸ Eddius Stephanus, *Life of Wilfrid*, pp. 44–47 (ch. 22): ‘fabrefactam fundavit: cuius profunditatem in terra cum domibus mire politis lapidibus fundatam et super terram multiplicem domum columnis variis et porticibus multis

Today, almost nothing remains of the imposing above-ground architecture described by Stephanus that once stood over the crypt spaces, but the churches of Ripon and Hexham must once have been magnificent.¹⁹ The primary-source description is interesting, as it explicitly places Wilfrid in the role of architect, conceiving and constructing spaces that were designed and inspired by God. The structures he produced as described by Stephanus are complex and elaborate multi-storied stone spaces, which were overbuilt, in the case of Ripon, on a site which had prior Irish monastic associations, whose buildings were most likely made of wood.²⁰ The Wilfridian architecture thus contains all the ideological resonances that building in stone brought in the Anglo-Saxon world; but with the added complexity of crypt spaces that were constructed of stone *beneath* the earth.

The spaces of the crypts have proved a source of both fascination and of frustration for scholars: unique and disorientating to experience even today, they are, in fact, pretty tortuous to describe on paper, as demonstrated by previous scholarly accounts which leave the reader with an opaque and diffuse impression of their spatial reality. Their twists and turns and details (both in their similarities and differences to other extant crypts, on the Continent and in England) prove somewhat difficult to express in words (figure 1). Hexham crypt is described by Taylor and Taylor thus:

This wonderful underground structure has fortunately remained almost intact. It is of exceptional interest both in itself and also for comparison with the crypt at Ripon, which resembles it so closely. It has now only one entry, from the nave, by a steep flight of stone steps, all of which are original except for a few at the top. This western flight of steps led pilgrims into a barrel-vaulted chamber, about 9 ft by 5 ft, from which, no doubt through a strong grille, they would be able to view the relics that would be displayed in the main chamber, also barrel-vaulted, and about 14 ft by 8 ft. The pilgrims would then pass northward into a small rectangular chamber, whose ceiling is made of pairs of stone slabs placed to form a triangular-headed vault. From this chamber a narrow passage led eastward, beside the crypt, and then turned north, and then again east, up flights of about thirteen steps. From the main chamber of the crypt yet a third passage led into another small rectangular chamber with a triangular-headed vault, whence another narrow passage led eastward, and then south, and then again east, up steps, to the ground floor. No doubt this passage would have led to an area reserved for the clergy, while the other two communicated with areas open to the public.²¹

From this detailed description of below-ground architecture, the idea of a highly sophisticated space emerges, full of twists and turns and passages, a complex space to move through, displaying a range of building techniques and requiring skill to construct. Similarly, the earlier crypt at Ripon is described as follows:

suffultam mirabileque longitudine et altitudine murorum ornatam et liniarum variis anfractibus viarum, aliquando sursum, aliquando deorsum per coeleas circumductam, non est meae parvitatis hoc sermone explicare, quod sanctus pontifex nostre, a spiritu Dei doctus, opera facere excogitavit, neque enim ullam domum aliam citra Alpes montes talem aedificatam audivimus’.

¹⁹ This remains true even with the widely-acknowledged tendencies of Wilfrid’s biographer to employ exaggerated and grandiose rhetoric. For a contemporary scholarly engagement with the possible form of the church at Hexham see H. M. Taylor and J. Taylor, ‘The Seventh-Century Church at Hexham: A New Appreciation’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th series, 39 (1961), 103–34; Richard Bailey, ‘The Anglo-Saxon Church at Hexham’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th series, 4 (1976), 47–67; Eric Cambridge, ‘C. C. Hodges and the Nave of Hexham Abbey’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th series, 23 (1995), 51–138.

²⁰ Cramp, ‘Northumbrian Churches’, p. 156.

²¹ Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, p. 301.

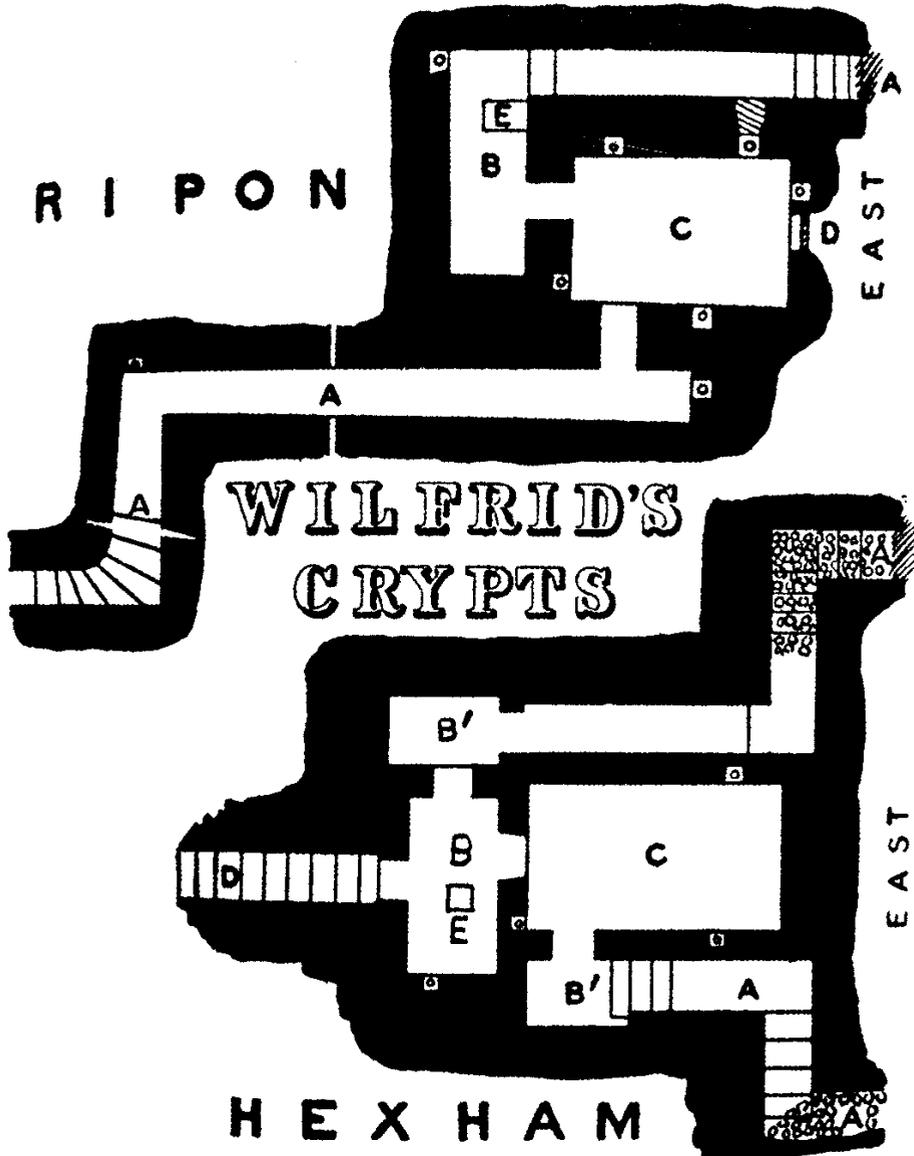


Figure 1. Plan of crypts at Hexham and Ripon (after G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London: Murray, 1925–26), II).

Space, Symbolism and Eschatology in the Wilfridian Crypts at Ripon and Hexham

Although there now remains of this church only a crypt of similar form to that of Wilfrid's other church at Hexham, the workmanship is of a quality which well justifies the use by Eddius of the description 'dressed stone'. It is similar to the crypt at Wilfrid's other monastery at Hexham; but has only two passages, one leading to the ante-chamber and one to the crypt itself, whereas the more ambitious arrangement at Hexham had three passages. The crypt at Ripon consists of an ante-chamber oriented from north to south, and a main chamber oriented from east to west covered by a barrel vault about 9 ft high from the floor to the crown of the arch. The walls of the chamber are built of carefully dressed large blocks of stone and contain four small recesses presumably designed to hold lamps. There is also a large recess or passage in the east wall, perhaps to receive large relics. The main chamber is entered from a western ante-chamber, or vestibule as at Hexham, but unlike Hexham this vestibule is covered by a quadrant-shaped half vault instead of a semi-circular barrel vault; and it has only one passage of access so that pilgrims must either have been allowed into the crypt itself or must have returned to the church by the single narrow passage.²²

Again, this description calls to mind an elaborate structure, composed of a series of spaces, involving complicated and controlled access to and through this underground place. More recently McClendon has discussed the twinned spaces of the crypts. He writes:

The subterranean crypt was a feature that had first appeared in Rome under Gregory the Great and no doubt this association was known to Wilfrid as it was to Bede who states that the "blessed Pope Gregory decreed that Mass should be said over the tombs of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul in their churches." Indeed, the angular passage-ways of the crypts at Ripon and Hexham show a striking resemblance to the crypt arrangement at St. Paul's-outside-the-Walls. Presumably, the designs of the crypts at Ripon and Hexham were meant to resemble the dark winding corridors of the catacombs as well, such as those that underlie the church of S. Agnese, built by Honorius I (625-38). In other words, it would seem that Wilfrid's crypts represent a conscious attempt to emulate one of the most recent architectural developments in Rome. To be sure, the plans of these crypts are not exact copies of their Roman counterparts. After all, Wilfrid had not been in Rome for twenty years at the time of their construction, and comparisons have also been made to subterranean burial chambers in Gaul, such as the "Hypogée des Dunes" in Poitiers [...] which may have inspired the central relic space. Nevertheless I would contend that the Roman element is predominant and not limited to the design of the crypts, for the building material is also Roman.²³

The suggested connection between the Wilfridian crypts and Rome is one that is frequently acknowledged in the scholarship on these spaces, and it is important to note that this is an idea that is not limited to the structures at Ripon and Hexham; rather it underlies much of the discussion of the ecclesiastical architecture of early Christian Anglo-Saxon England.²⁴ Unsurprisingly, the widespread importance of the inheritance, appropriation and emulation

²² Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, pp. 517–18. For further information, see Bailey, 'St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham' and *St Wilfrid's Crypts at Ripon and Hexham* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1993).

²³ McClendon, *Origins*, pp. 66–67.

²⁴ References to Rome and *Romanitas* within the stone architecture of Anglo-Saxon England are hard to escape, being a fundamental part of the scholarly discourse. For a cross section of this research see, for example, Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture*; Fernie, *Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 11–31; David Parsons, *Books and Buildings: Architectural Description Before and After Bede*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1987), p. 31; R. A. Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.15; J. Crook, *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Saints in the Early Christian West, c. 300–1200* (Oxford: Oxford University

of Rome to scholarly understandings of the post-Augustinian architecture of Anglo-Saxon England and the explicit connection between the Anglo-Saxon spaces of the crypts and the assumed *Romanitas* that shapes their identity as claimed by McClendon (following earlier scholarship) is noteworthy here, but not in an unqualified manner. Indeed, Rosemary Cramp highlights this question in her recent discussion of the crypts in their wider Northumbrian ecclesiastical context, where she picks up on Stephanus' description of the crypt as being the only one of its scale *north of the Alps*. She notes that 'in other words, it rivalled anything in Gaul [a place with which Wilfrid was intimately familiar], but not of course Rome'²⁵ — underlining that the Wilfridian crypts are an impression rather than a replica of Roman churches or spaces.²⁶

Both crypts have similar layouts, and imply similar influences, although there is some suggestion that the design at Hexham sought to improve that of the earlier design of Ripon. As set out in the scholarly descriptions of the crypts above, both structures have a long narrow passage on the north leading into an ante-chamber, both have a large central chamber, and both have another passage on the south leading away from the main space of the crypt. However, Hexham has an extra set of steps leading from the side-chamber up into the main body of the church above. This adaptation of the design at Ripon would have had an interesting effect if these spaces were, in fact, used for liturgical purposes, with those using the crypt for ritual purposes emerging from darkness below into the lighted church above — interesting, perhaps to think of in relation to celebrations such as Easter.

However, despite the widespread scholarly association with Rome presented in relation to the material form of Wilfrid's crypts (largely through the employment of symbolic *Romanitas* and the use of *spolia*),²⁷ McClendon's insistence on a Roman influence behind the spaces constructed to Wilfrid's design, while extremely persuasive and born out in other scholarly engagements with the crypt space/s, overlooks the equally plausible scholarly assertion that the crypt spaces have a strong association with ideas of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre, as first suggested by Bailey, as will be discussed below.

Both of these assertions of Anglo-Saxon architectural and spatial association with the geographically disparate spaces and structures of Rome and Jerusalem have merit, both are valid, and both are to be found in the material and conceptual identity presented by the crypts. As sites of conceptual locus for the early Christian Church, both Rome and Jerusalem offer much for the exploration of possible Anglo-Saxon conceptualisations of space

Press, 2000), pp. 91–93; Helena Hamerow, *Early Medieval Settlements The Archaeology of Rural Communities in North-West Europe 400–900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Hawkes, 'Iuxta Morem Romanorum', pp. 69–99 and *Sculpture on the Mercian Fringe: The Anglo-Saxon Crosses at Sandbach, Cheshire*, Brixworth Lecture (Brixworth: Friends of All Saints' Church, 2003), pp. 19–36; McClendon, *Origins*, p. 59; Catherine E. Karkov, *The Art of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011); Leslie Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art* (London: British Museum Press, 2012).

²⁵ Cramp, 'Northumbrian Churches', p. 158.

²⁶ See, for example, the argument made by Bailey ('St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham') that directly links the influence of the Roman catacombs to the form of the Wilfridian crypts. For further discussion of the scholarly distinction between what is said about a building's exemplar and the architectural reality of the subsequent structure, see Richard Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography of Architecture"', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 5 (1942), 1–33, and, as more specifically discussing the Anglo-Saxon crypts at Ripon and Hexham, Richard Gem, 'Towards an Iconography of Anglo-Saxon Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 46 (1983), 1–18.

²⁷ For a full discussion of the *spolia* in the Hexham crypt, see P. Bidwell, 'A Survey of the Anglo-Saxon Crypt at Hexham and its Reused Roman Stonework', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th series, 39 (2010), 53–146.

as demonstrated through the architecture of Wilfrid's crypts — which, like the wider context of Anglo-Saxon built structures — are founded on the implicit understanding that built earthly places can evoke other spaces through association, reception and actualisation.

In thinking through the scholarly reception of these spaces it is perhaps noteworthy that both McClendon and the Taylors, despite writing over four decades apart, employ similar methods of enquiry and modes of description to interrogate the crypts at Ripon and Hexham. Their descriptions of the subterranean spaces are full of references to the winding corridors of the crypts, the diverse types of stonework and *spolia* with which these spaces are constructed and, to a certain, albeit lesser extent, the probable manner in which they were used as liturgical or theologically significant sites within the wider architectural spaces of the churches that once stood over them.

All these aspects — material, structure, form, conceptual identity — collectively go to inform the academic understanding of these spaces. Recent research has stressed the significance of the reuse of Roman stone in Wilfrid's crypts on a more local level than the universalising narratives embedded in the material as it is discussed here, tracking the likely provenance of the raw material for these spaces to local Roman sites in the surrounding landscape and further tying the ecclesiastical identity of crypts to that of an ideological inheritor of Rome.²⁸ However, despite these marked architectural commonalities, the provenance of the material, and the ubiquity of critical references to a sense of *Romanitas*, it is interesting to note that these churches (and the crypts they contain), in spite of being explicitly linked in early medieval writing to a Roman style of building, bear little direct resemblance to any extant large-scale basilica of Rome, as noted by Cramp.²⁹ In order to fully explore the connections between Rome and stone in Anglo-Saxon England, then, it is necessary to look past strictures of form and notions of material identity or replication to examine the nuances and detail of surface and structure, paying close attention to the elaborate use of Roman *spolia* within the crypt spaces.

While associations with Rome, whether implicitly or explicitly (re)constructed in Anglo-Saxon spaces and structures, undoubtedly served to lend authority to the Anglo-Saxon Church — forming links with the institutional identity of the Church of Rome and thus, to a large extent, determining the liturgical and political identity of the Church in England — associations with Jerusalem (in both its earthly and heavenly incarnations) function in a slightly different manner. When the earthly Jerusalem was recalled within the Anglo-Saxon Church (mainly through symbolic references to the Temple, or the Holy Sepulchre), it is arguably less a matter of denoting earthly authority and power than of reminding the earthly of the unearthly, the temporal of the atemporal, and the present of the omnipresent, all understood through an eschatological lens. As stated, Bailey has argued that the crypt at Ripon is representative of the Holy Sepulchre, by means of a comparative analysis of the measurements and form of the crypt-space and the presence of the slab of stone in the corner of the crypt, which precisely replicates the directional (North West) setting and dimensions of the stone/grave-slab in Jerusalem. This Jerusalemic reading of the space, made possible through analysis of the dimension and symbolic scale of the central chamber of the Ripon crypt, is heightened and complemented by the symbolic associations suggested by the colouration of the plastered surface of the walls of the crypt, with the white(ish)/pink rendering of its

²⁸ Bidwell, 'Survey', pp. 53–146.

²⁹ Cramp, 'Northumbrian Churches', pp. 158–60.

plastered chamber, described by Bailey as a ‘primary aspect of the crypt’, as it would have been originally encountered (figure 2).³⁰ In the Anglo-Saxon lexicon, there is overwhelming symbolic significance attributed to whiteness and brightness, as primarily understood to be linked to the semantic fields of holiness, power, and covenant as demonstrated in the literature of the period.³¹ These associations, in turn, arguably connote secondary associations with the contemporaneous descriptions of the heavenly Jerusalem and Solomon’s Temple as described in the exegetical and visionary literature of the period. This association, highlighted by Bailey, plausibly makes the trace presence of white plaster still discernible on the stone surfaces of the crypt at Ripon (a feature that is far less discernible in the later structure of Hexham) doubly suggestive, as the plaster — alongside the architectural dimensions of the space — arguably emphasises the connection between the Anglo-Saxon crypt and with the metaphysical spaces and structures of Jerusalem, in both earthly and heavenly iterations.³² In this instance, while the dimensions of the chamber recall and actualise the space of the Tomb of Christ within the landscape of Anglo-Saxon England, as noted by Bailey, it may be further argued that such a reference goes beyond a mimetic (re)presentation of the Sepulchre, forcefully manipulating space and time as the sacred sites of Jerusalem are mapped onto an Anglo-Saxon landscape. Further, the chromatic significance of ‘white’, ‘bright’ and ‘shining’ with associated ideas of ‘holiness’ and an analogous understanding of the holy and the sacred being transmitted through a lineage of replicated sacred spaces could be understood to clearly link the space of the crypt with another of the sacred monuments of the Holy Land, such as the archetype of the Temple — which was exegetically understood to prefigure both the church on earth and the New Jerusalem to come — thus emphasising the possible, eschatological references made by these spaces.

It is possible to take the Jerusalemic reading suggested by Bailey one step further. Given the common practice throughout the medieval period of one space being referenced and recognised within another, consistently demonstrated throughout the early Church (most notably through (re)constructions of both physical, earthly spaces and representations of the metaphysical, imaginary spaces of the heavens beyond), the structure of the crypt at Ripon may be thought of not merely as a *representation* of the holy sepulchre (and so also of the associated space of the heavenly Jerusalem), but as a space which *actualises* the Holy Sepulchre *in* Ripon. In this reading of the subterranean space, as constructed through the architectural language and symbolism of the stone crypt (including the symbolic significance of the multivalent *spolia* on site) Jerusalem becomes *present* in the space of a crypt in Anglo-Saxon England; indeed, is presented by it. Spoliated material, that is to say (in this particular case) carved Roman stone that had a previous identity in an Imperial architectural context, here deliberately reused within the architecture of the Anglo-Saxon crypts, carries rich and multivalent significances, from both their original and secondary contexts of use. Thus, through the architectonic details and dimensions of the crypt at Ripon, the Holy Sepulchre becomes *present* in Northumbria, through the actualised, symbolic space employed to emphasise the unity of the Church across different geographies and temporalities. This involves an eschatological interplay of time, space, place, and material significance that is

³⁰ Bailey, ‘St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham’.

³¹ For further reading see P. B. Taylor, ‘The Old English Poetic Vocabulary of Beauty’, in *New Readings on Women in Old English Poetry*, ed. by H. Damico and A. Hennessey (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 211–21.

³² Bailey, ‘St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham’.



Figure 2. Central Chamber of Ripon Crypt, detail. Photograph the author's own.

explicitly connected with Jerusalem; however, as at Hexham, through the presence of dressed, carved, reused Roman stone, the ideological, cultural and material identity of Rome is also simultaneously and symbiotically presented in a relational understanding that evokes both the earthly and heavenly church (figure 3). Indeed, Cramp has suggested that in the deliberate use of these ornately carved Roman stones the creators of the Hexham crypt were setting out to induce ‘a disorienting feeling of entry into another world, and a more ancient word in which there were visible signs of the Roman past with the sculptures and inscriptions’.³³ This thought is an intriguing one, as it underscores the nuanced temporalities at play within the crypt as produced by the stone, which, like that at Ripon, presents potent and symbolic associations with both the Christian present, as linked to a Roman authority, and the eschatological future, as represented by Jerusalemic allusions.

It is perhaps important to note that the connection between the (re)building of the space/place of Jerusalem and the ‘actualisation’ of heavenly space arguably occurs to some degree in all ecclesiastical buildings. The Heavenly Jerusalem is a ubiquitous trope within the early Church, and may be considered a causal link in prompting the relationship between the conceptualisation of sacred space and its replication across architectural forms — heaven as prefigured by the earthly Church. Because of such established associations, it is an ideal that is seemingly deliberately and systematically implemented by Wilfrid across his programme of building in Northumberland. This fact is emphasised by the literary style of the *Vita* written by Stephanus, which is constructed with markedly Old Testament references. The linguistic style of the *Vita* consistently forms dynamic parallels with scriptural and Christological events, in a prefiguratory relationship also borne out in the architectonic form of the crypts. For example, of Wilfrid’s elaborate ecclesiastical adornment Stephanus writes: ‘as Moses built an earthly tabernacle [...] so the blessed Bishop Wilfrid wondrously adorned [the church ...] with gold and silver and varied purples’; ‘vested it in purple woven with gold’; ‘supported by various columns and many side aisles, and adorned with walls of notable length and height’ and he ‘provided for this manifold building splendid ornaments of gold, silver, and precious stones’.³⁴ With such explicit reference to the tabernacle and to Moses (the giver of the Old Law, and the keeper of the Old Covenant with the Israelites), Wilfrid’s actions are made to take on the aspect of the Old Testament prophet providing for God’s chosen people, here the Christian community of Northumbria as laid out through powerful echoic rhetoric.³⁵ Consequently, through the description of these elaborate schemes of building (themselves rare occurrences in the extant literature) the architecture constructed by Wilfrid also takes on scriptural significance, becoming irrevocably associated with the pre-figuring structures of

³³ Cramp, ‘Northumbrian Churches’, p.160

³⁴ Eddius Stephanus, *Life of Wilfrid*, pp. 34–37 (ch. 17): ‘sicut enim Moyses tabernaculum seculari manu factum ad exemplar in monte monstratum a Deo ad copncitandam Israhelitico populo culturae Dei fidem distinctissimis varis coloribus aedificavit, ita vero beatissimus Wilfrithus episcopus thalamum veri sponsi et sponsae in conspectu populorum, corde credentium et fide confitentium, auro et argento purpuraeque varia mirifice decoravit. Nam Inhrypis basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terra usque ad summum aedificatam, variis columnis et porticibus suffultam, in altum erexit et consummavit’.

³⁵ For an analogous argument about a conceptual connection between the Anglo-Saxons and the Israelites, see Flora Spiegel, ‘The *tabernacula* of Gregory the Great and the conversion of Anglo-Saxon England’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 36 (2007), 1–13. See also Nicholas Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989) and *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2007). There is much to be said about the manner in which these spaces may speak to the way the Anglo-Saxons envisioned their identity as tied to place, as understood through symbolic material and structure, but it is beyond the scope of this article to do so.

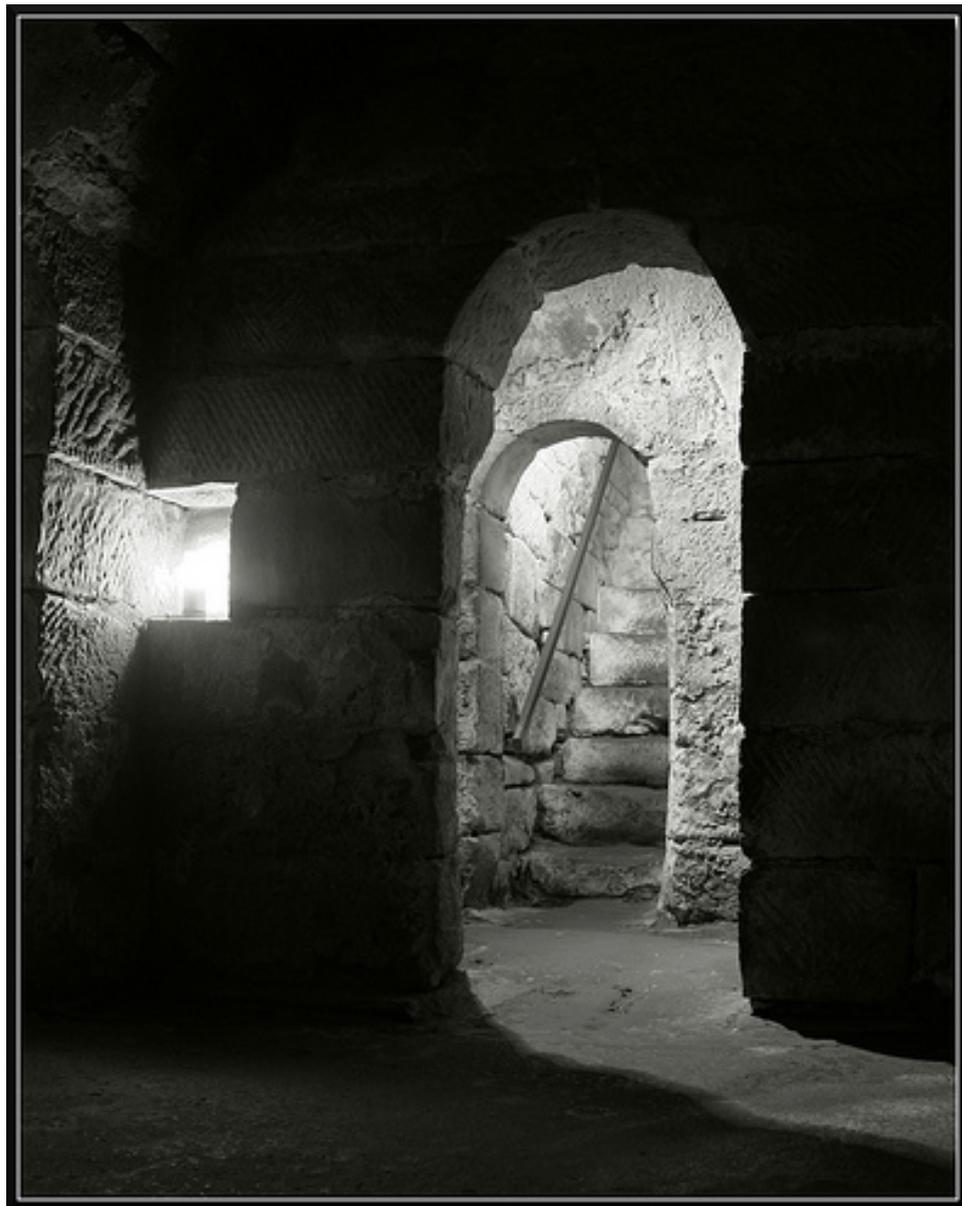


Figure 3. Central Chamber of Hexham Crypt, detail. Photograph author's own.

the Old Testament, whereby archetypal ideas of Tabernacle and Temple were reflected in the churches and crypts built to house the sacred in Anglo-Saxon England. Through close reading of such passages, combined with the evidence for such symbolic understandings presented by the extant spaces of the crypts themselves, the conclusion may be drawn that Wilfrid was consciously and deliberately (re)constructing Jerusalem in seventh-century Northumbria through the crypt space at Ripon, as well as borrowing from the Imperial language and inheritance of Rome.

Compared to the relatively solid evidence for such associations presented by Ripon's chromatic and architectural reference/s to Jerusalem, identified by means of the crypt's form, plasterwork, dimensions and, most persuasively, the unique presence of the Christological 'tomb' slab in the central chamber as identified by Bailey, the crypt at Hexham is somewhat more ambiguous as an articulation of the heavenly Jerusalem. Indeed, at first glance, it offers no immediately apparent Jerusalemic symbols, if by 'Jerusalemic' we mean references to the Temple or Sepulchre as arguably demonstrable in the earlier structure built by Wilfrid at the foundation in Ripon. Hexham, instead, seems to draw its chief influence from Rome, as outlined in much of the scholarship surrounding the crypts. The symbolic significances of this would have far-reaching implications for its identity as a built space. Yet, on closer inspection, it becomes clear that it too may have been perceived to function in a complex network that goes beyond a single set of associations in a manner similar to the crypt at Ripon which coherently presents both Rome and Jerusalem through its material identity.

While the walls of Hexham are not rendered today, as are the surfaces that survive at Ripon, and therefore cannot be definitively stated to have been *white, per se*, the crypt at Hexham may well have 'shone', due to the lamps in niches in the central chambers of both crypts — eight at Ripon and four at Hexham, which would have provided ample light for the space.³⁶ This said, the idea of the crypts 'shining' may not have been limited to the proven use of lamps within these subterranean spaces, but may also have been linked to the probable use and contents of the crypts. That is to say, the suggested display of relics that likely went on in these spaces, which may well have been constructed to provide access for their veneration.³⁷ If the crypts were designed to hold relics as part of their function, which seems highly probable, then the proximity of these sacred objects to these subterranean structures would have lent further associations to the space. The presence of such relics in Ripon and Hexham would form a direct link to the bodies of the sacred, understood to reside in the heavens,³⁸ thus forming a direct connection between the sanctified space of heaven, and the sacred space of the crypts built into the Anglo-Saxon earth, enshrining the relics in the macro context of the architectural surroundings of the crypts (and indeed the wider structures of the churches that surmounted them) — as well as the micro context of the reliquaries that likely contained them. The connection between heaven and earth physically enacted by the relics would have affected the space of the crypt in both a material and immaterial sense; creating a sacred environment constructed by means of the relics themselves,³⁹ especially if these were contained within

³⁶ Cramp, 'Northumbrian Churches', p. 158; Bailey, 'St Wilfrid, Ripon and Hexham'.

³⁷ Cramp, 'Northumbrian Churches', pp. 160–61.

³⁸ Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). For further discussion see Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400–Circa 1204* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2013) and *The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016).

³⁹ Karkov, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 60.

shining metal or jewel-encrusted reliquaries such as those found across the Insular world and Continental Europe — all of which may have added to the shining characteristics of the crypt spaces.

Further support for such interpretations at Hexham are found in the physical articulation of the space, as was implicitly suggested by Paul Bidwell in his examination of the Roman fabric used in the crypt as part of the paper he presented at the 2009 Wilfrid conference in York.⁴⁰ He employed a cross-section diagram of the space of the Hexham crypt which demonstrated the steeply pointed triangular roof lines of the two small chambers marking the ‘ends’ of the access passages, an architectonic detail not immediately visible to someone standing in the physical space of the crypt (figure 4). This steeply pitched, triangular feature found in the side chambers of the crypt sharply sets these spaces apart from the flat ‘roofs’ that top the passages leading to these spaces and connects them to the central chamber. It is noteworthy that, seen in cross section, these side chambers strongly recall a profile view of the house-shaped shrines so typical of the period. This visual, architectonic counterpoint within the structure of the crypt forcibly evokes the precious small-scale shapes and spaces of shrines and reliquaries. This is both suggestive and significant as it explicitly connects the space of the crypt (which is more than likely to have been a processional space with controlled access to the chambers of the crypt and its sacred contents) with an archetypal space designed to hold and house the sacred. This echoic use of a shrine shape, in both the macro and micro contexts of reliquary and architectural structure, actively engages the sacred — bringing the sacred into the Anglo-Saxon built environment through the symbolism and shape of the fabric of the structure itself.

As with the possible architectonic references to Jerusalem noted at Ripon, the multivalent articulations of the abbreviated shrine shapes built into the stone spaces of the side chambers at Hexham *may* also support an oblique reference to the Holy Sepulchre, albeit differently to the symbolic articulation found at Ripon. The Sepulchral interpretation at Hexham is arguably formed through the understanding of the space of the Holy Sepulchre itself being considered to be the definitive ‘empty’ reliquary. That is to say, the space of the Sepulchre was the place that once contained the most sacred body in Christian theology, but that body subsequently rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, leaving no corporeal relics for later veneration by the Church. Thus, the space of the Sepulchre performs to mark or enshrine the space of the absent body, which remains conceptually present by the very marking of its absence.⁴¹ Consequently, the demarcation of the sacred space of the Sepulchre serves to make present the absent body of Christ in an atemporal, intangible sense, frequently evoked through the contained and empty space of the tomb, later turned into the more permanent form of a monumental church that enclosed and enshrined the tomb itself. Thus, through this systematic and consistent enshrining of sacred space/s and sanctified bodies (themselves understood to create and produce intercessional devotional encounters with the heavens), all subsequent shrines, reliquaries, and the wider containing spaces of churches constructed by the early Church could be said to reference this first, empty, relicless space. If so, this association would reinforce the precious and conceptually complex nature of the many and varied containers

⁴⁰ Bidwell, ‘Survey’, pp. 53–145.

⁴¹ For further discussion on this topic, see Johanna Kramer, *Between Earth and Heaven: Liminality and the Ascension of Christ in Anglo-Saxon literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 72–106. See also Robert Pogue Harrison, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).



Figure 4. Detail of the spolia in the side chamber of Hexham Crypt. Photograph author's own.

of sacred objects and spaces housed within the architecture of the Church — including the Wilfridian structures that are the subject of this discussion.

The seemingly deliberate and systematic employment of the conceptual spaces of both Rome and Jerusalem seen across the spaces of Wilfrid's crypts enabled an eschatological 'visualisation' of heaven *and* an expression of the institutional identity of the earthly Church to be actively present in the churches of Hexham and Ripon as understood through their physical, material and architectural articulations.

Bailey's argument that the crypt at Ripon is representative of the Holy Sepulchre is further supported by the distinctive form of the passage-ways within the crypt. Like those at Hexham with their peculiar spoliated triangular rooflines (made of single large slabs of reused, carved Roman material that differ from the more usual squared stone blocks of *spolia* that form the bulk of the masonry in the crypts) the passageways at Ripon have a unique appearance — although again, there are marked visual distinctions in the form of both crypts, Ripon lacking the distinctive shrine-shapes of the later crypt at Hexham. The corridor spaces of Ripon, like those at Hexham, produce a sense of disorientation and unearthly unfamiliarity when one moves through the narrow underground passageways, which is arguably intrinsic to the success of the manner in which the crypts perform as complex spaces. The blind turns and perceived dead ends of the constricted corridors present powerful in-between spaces for those moving through the crypt — somewhere between the above-ground and the below, between the entrance to the subterranean crypt and the central chamber, and, perhaps, through the intercessionary capabilities of the relics the crypts were likely to have contained, somewhere between heaven and earth.

The corridors of the Anglo-Saxon crypts are expressive of the liminal experience of being caught between one place and another, or perhaps more accurately, of being on the threshold of one space and the next, a feeling and understanding that is extremely significant in terms of the probable underlying symbolic identity of the spaces. In a unique example found within the crypt space at Ripon there is a section of spoliated masonry that is of particular note: namely the end point of the passage leading to the central space of the structure, which terminates in a doorway leading to the central chamber of the crypt. This doorway has an unusual appearance, both as an example of Anglo-Saxon stone work, and as compared to the other doorways within the crypts, at both Ripon and at Hexham. When traversing the narrow and dimly lit confines of the corridor this doorway appears suddenly, unexpectedly; it forms a squared opening at the end of a blind turn which, although narrow, gives a glimpse of the larger, lighter space of the chamber beyond.

This is, in and of itself, both dramatic and symbolic, light appearing out of darkness, with the doorway revealing the space of the central chamber that evokes the space of the Sepulchre, the salvation offered by the institution of the Church and the heavenly Jerusalem. This effect would add a dramatic, performative element to any liturgical function the crypt may have held. However, when standing in the space of the central chamber looking back toward the doorway through which one has entered the space, the doorway takes the form

⁴² I am grateful to Richard Morris and David Stocker for discussions of the form and possible significance of this doorway within the overall architecture of the crypt. They have been exceptionally generous with their time and expertise. For further discussion of possible analogous masonry that employs reused Roman stone affecting the identity of the space through explicit *Romanitas*, albeit in a later setting, see their forthcoming discussion of the stonework in the crypt at Lastingham, originally delivered at the *Spolia* conference, held at Durham in March 2013; Richard Morris and David Stocker, 'CASUAL, FUNCTIONAL AND ICONIC? The Roman past in Anglo-Saxon Lastingham and elsewhere', to be edited by Sarah Semple.

of a round-headed opening: the horizontal lintel is replaced by a round-headed one over the *same* doorway.⁴² This change in architectural form as employed within the crypt is seemingly deliberate, as it is the only instance of the phenomenon in either of the crypts constructed by Wilfrid, and is a striking and anomalous feature of the space (figures 5a & 5b). The main question surrounding the suggestion that this feature may be deliberately used as a piece of symbolic masonry within the crypt hinges on ascertaining whether or not the transformatory, shifting shape preserved in the lintel as it bridges one side of the threshold to the other was intended in the Anglo-Saxon context of its spoliated use within the crypt or not. If not, then it might be pertinent to ask whether the stone was carved into its present dual form at the time the crypt was constructed — if, as with the majority of the stone employed in the crypts constructed under Wilfrid's auspice, it was reused Roman stone.

Given that we lack concrete information about the probable use and function of these crypt spaces, the likelihood of determining the 'original intention' of a specific piece of stonework is slim; particularly given the allusive or truncated nature of most architectural descriptions that appear in the contemporaneous literature, that present scanty outlines largely concerned with documenting when and where churches were built. The relative obscurity that surrounds much Anglo-Saxon architecture is an unavoidable facet of engaging with these spaces and structures. In the absence of any authorising textual background informing us of their purpose and function, it is necessary to treat the material fabric of the buildings as the primary source for scholarly engagement with them. That being so, we must look to the spoliated lintel itself to tell us what it can of its possible nature.

In his consideration of the lintel, Bailey observed that that the mason clearly wanted a 'round arch' effect on the inner face (lending it its distinctive semi-circular form as viewed from the central chamber) but had 'given up' when cutting all the way through — although the work is almost the equivalent of full arching. 'Clearly the Wilfridian masons were aiming at round headed doorways throughout both their crypt structures, whatever the nature of the lintel with which they started'.⁴³ This observation does not allow for the possibility of a deliberate shift in form, created through the employment of the lintel, such as that suggested here; however, the visual coherence of both sides of the lintel as seen and experienced from either the passageway or the central chamber would seem to suggest a certain amount of deliberation in the choice of carving (if carved in situ), or of careful and considered (re)use (if original *spolia*, as is more likely the case)⁴⁴ — as well as in the thoughtful placement of the stone — all of which produced such a marked iconographic effect at one of the most intriguing architectural points of the crypt. If this is indeed the case, then the use of this threshold within the crypt adds an additional layer to the symbolic nexus of stone within the space as a whole. The carved lintel, positioned as it is, at one of the most significant threshold spaces in the crypt, presents an irregularity of form that arguably supports Bailey's reading of the crypt as being designed to reference the Holy Sepulchre, with its potent Jerusalemic references.

This reading is made possible through the symbolic forms presented by the doorway, and the shifting shape of the lintel that frames it to either side. Aniconically, the curved form seen from the central chamber functions as an abbreviated symbol for the dome of the heavens, as understood across the space and form of domes and apsidal spaces throughout Christian ecclesiastical architecture. In a similar manner, but in an opposing iconographic reading, the

⁴³ Richard Bailey, personal communication, 1/12/2015.

⁴⁴ When visiting the site, Richard Morris and David Stocker both expressed the opinion that this piece of Roman stone was likely reused in this form when it was placed within the crypt.



Figure 5a. Detail of the carved lintel leading to the central chamber of Ripon Crypt. Photograph author's own.

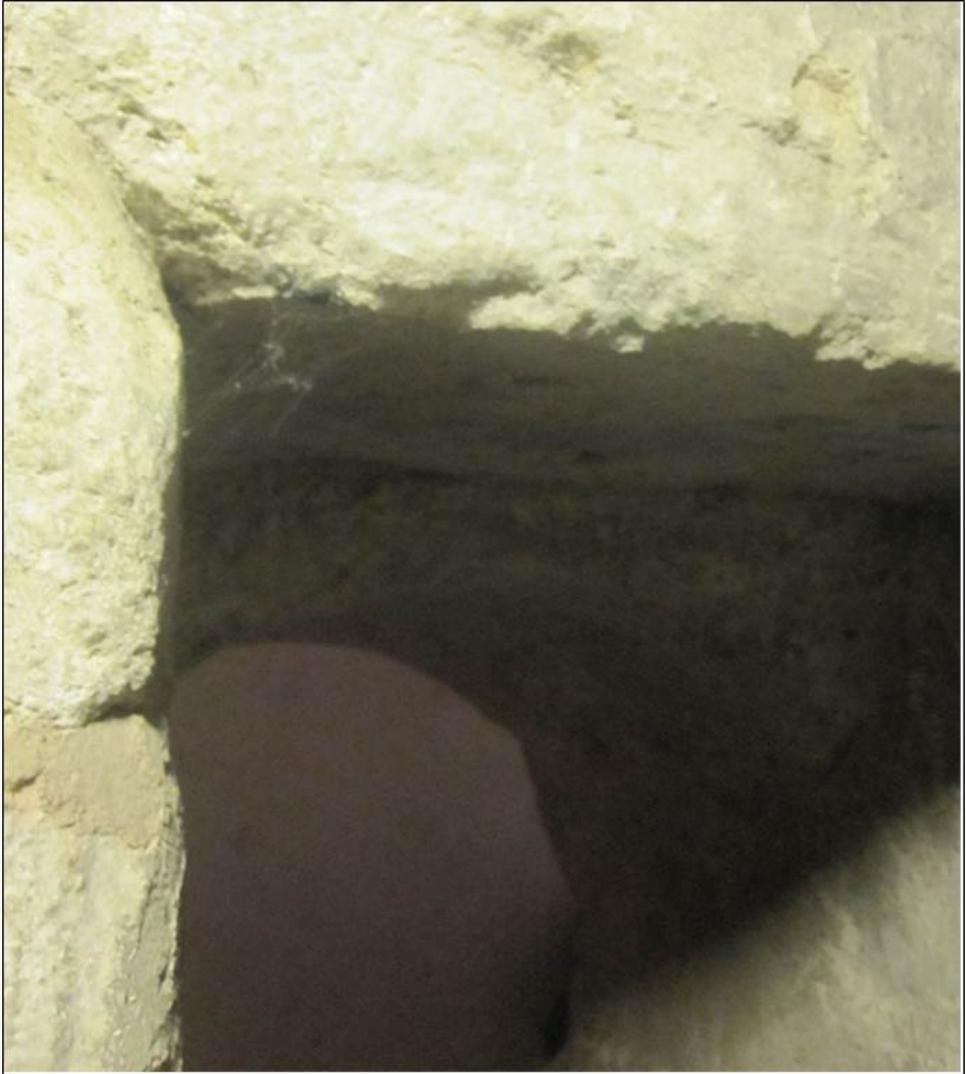


Figure 5b. Detail of the carved lintel leading to the central chamber of Ripon Crypt. Photograph author's own.

straight line and squared form of the doorway seen from the corridor side of the crypt, arguably represents the square, rectilinear form which is commonly understood to denote the four corners of the earth within ecclesiastical art and architecture of the early medieval period.

With these symbolic readings of dome and square in mind as they were understood to function throughout the church, it is possible to understand the act of walking through the doorway of the crypt at Ripon as symbolic and highly charged. According to this interpretation the very act of crossing the liminal threshold into the central chamber is transitional and performative in nature. Once the doorway is crossed, and the straight lintel is left behind for the curved, rounded arch that gives on to the central (Sepulchral) chamber, the earthly space is similarly left behind and, as the space of the crypt is entered, so too is the implied space of the heavenly kingdom as presented by the evocation of the space that once housed the body of Christ. In this reading of the crypt the crossing of this central threshold is thus understood to be a transformative act, which, again, would be emphasised and underscored by the sacred nature of any relics contained within the space — lending a tension to the moment of entering or exiting the central chamber, paused between the earthly and the heavenly.

Given the overtly eschatological framework of the early Church, and the widespread belief in the coming end of earthly time — alongside the conceptualisations of space, structure and time as understood through material expressions such as those demonstrated within the architectural space of Wilfrid's crypts and the early Church more generally — the crypts of Ripon and Hexham may be interpreted as creating a complex nexus of conceptual spaces which were understood to perform within the wider eschatological context of the earthly Church. The crypts are complicated and sophisticated spaces, constructed of stone, comprised of *spolia*, and built under the surface of the earth, presenting the disparate spaces of Rome and Jerusalem through material and symbolic vocabularies performing across time and space. The crypts built into the Anglo-Saxon landscape draw together the past, physical, earthly spaces of the history of the Church through representations of Old and New Testament structures in Jerusalem; the earthly site of its present authority, through references to the contemporary ecclesiastical structures of Rome, the New Jerusalem and the progenitor of the Augustinian mission of (re)conversion under Gregory. Moreover, when read in an eschatological context, the crypt spaces constructed by Wilfrid at Ripon and Hexham also perform to shed light on the heavenly Jerusalem of future times for the earth-bound Christian community of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria — an eschatological message that is underlined and supported by the very stones of Wilfrid's architectural constructions, serving, as they do, to embed the salvific message of the Church deep within the soil of Anglo-Saxon England.

Doorways as Liminal Structures in Anglo-Saxon Text and Image

Karl Kinsella

Introduction

In his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bede tells the famous story of the conversion of King Edwin of Northumbria by the missionary Paulinus. While conversing with his men about the wisdom of this, one of the ‘king’s men’ offered ‘wise words’.¹ He says:

This is how the present life of man on earth, King, appears to me in comparison with that time which is unknown to us. You are sitting feasting with your ealdormen and thegns in winter time; the fire is burning on the hearth in the middle of the hall and all inside is warm, while outside the wintry storms of rain and snow are raging; and a sparrow flies swiftly through the hall. It enters in at one door and quickly flies out through the other. For the few moments it is inside, the storm and wintry tempest cannot touch it, but after the briefest moment of calm, it flits from your sight, out of the wintry storm and into it again. So this life of man appears but for a moment; what follows or indeed what went before, we know not at all.²

The analogy is striking, not least because of Bede’s use of tangible and recognisable architectural features to convey the transitions between certain spaces; that is, between the material and spiritual realms. By characterising architecture in this way, Bede implicitly assumed two things: that the reader will understand that the openings of the ‘hall’ mean something other than their literal appearance, and that these openings are a comprehensible way of signifying the transitions of birth and death. This article will argue that these assumptions, and the use of doorways in this way, were not particular to Bede, but a common method of signifying transitions between states or spaces in Anglo-Saxon texts and images.

¹ Bede, *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), ii. XIII, p. 183. All references to the *Ecclesiastical History* are to this edition.

² Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, ii. XIII, pp. 182–85: “Talis” inquit “mihi uidetur, rex, uita hominum praesens in terris, ad comparationem eius quod nobis incertum est temporis, quale cum te residente ad caenam cum ducibus ac ministris tuis tempore brumali, accenso quidem foco in medio et calido effecto cenaculo, furentibus autem foris per omnia turbinihus hiemalium pluuiarum uel niuium, adueniens unus passerum domum citissime peruolauerit; qui cum per unum ostium ingrediens mox per aliud exierit, ipso quidem tempore quo intus est hiemis tempestate non tangitur, sed teman paruissimo spatio serenitatis ad momentum excursu, mox de hieme in hiemem regrediens tuis oculis elabitur. Ita haec uita hominum ad modicum apparet; quid autem sequatur, quidue praecesserit, prorsus ignoramus”.

Doorways acted as symbolic expedients to relay parts of a narrative that included movements between earthly and spiritual realms. The capacity of gates and doorways to define the nature of the enclosed spaces is discussed elsewhere in this issue;³ in this article, however, my focus is upon the invisible moment of transition implicit in the representation of a doorway.

My objective is to take Bede's particular instance and to inductively move through similar appearances of doorways in different texts and images. We will see that a fascination with the liminal property of doorways is not restricted to Anglo-Latin literature, but appears in at least one example of Old English literature as well. Having established the textual occurrences of doorways as a means of framing movements between types of spaces, I will move the investigation to images of doorways. By combining the study of textual and visual instances in a single study the broad nature of the phenomenon should become clear.

The premise of this argument requires us to understand that representations of doorways are more significant than their simple or literal appearance, and that Bede's analogy is transferable from text into image. Richard Krautheimer exposed the allegorical nature of architecture and its medieval representations, which began a long tradition of scholarship on the subject, including work on Anglo-Saxon examples.⁴ Architectural iconography takes the simple forms of buildings, including doorways, and demonstrates that they have wider historical and symbolic value. One example of architectural iconography that Krautheimer focused on was the importance of the round shape of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, a shape that was copied in other examples around Europe. The round or sometimes polygonal form was recognised as being derived from and in some way intrinsically connected to the original building at Jerusalem. Similar to my approach, Krautheimer and others use both texts and images to argue for the particular significance of architecture: that buildings can refer to historical examples of other structures through their form and relative sizes. My paper builds on this earlier scholarship by following a similar selection of textual and visual sources to draw conclusions about the possible meaningful properties of a particular architectural element.

Before focusing on representations of openings and transitions, we must set the stage and state the linguistic basis for the relationship between doorways and spatial transitions, specifically in a Latin context.⁵ One medieval definition of doorways emphasised their liminal nature. In his *Etymologiae*, Isidore of Seville (d. 636) provided a supposed source for the meaning and derivation of terms relating to doorways under the entry for 'entrances' (*De aditibus*). Isidore explained, 'a portico (*porticus*), [is named such] because it is a passageway

³ See Daniel Thomas' article below.

⁴ Richard Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography of Medieval Architecture"', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 5 (1942), 1–33. The potential problems of this iconographic approach were outlined in Paul Crossley, 'Architecture and Meaning: The Limits of Iconography', *The Burlington Magazine*, 130 (1988), 116–21. See also Richard Gem, 'Towards an Iconography of Anglo-Saxon Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 46 (1983), 1–18.

⁵ There are a number of modern works that consider liminality in its different contexts, both medieval and modern. See, for example, Subha Mukherji, *Thinking on Thresholds: the Poetics of Transitive Spaces* (London: Anthem Press, 2011). For architectural spaces, although for a later period see, Megan Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001). *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, ed. by Elina Gertsman, Jill Stevenson, and Pamela Sheingorn (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012) is a collection of papers which considers liminality in its medieval art historical context. Doors and their relationship with sacred space are discussed in Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959), p. 25. For a phenomenological interpretation of interior and exterior spaces in poetic representations, see Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), pp. 211–31.

rather than a place where one remains standing, as if it were a gateway (*porta*).⁶ Isidore placed emphasis on the movement a *porta* facilitates; it is not a place for ‘standing’.⁷ Elsewhere we can see that meanings for the terms *porticus*, *porta*, and *limina* (‘threshold’) elided to form a comprehensive structural idea referring to the point of entry between two spaces. For example, early medieval descriptions of St Peter’s old basilica in Rome offer a wealth of evidence for the study of Latin architectural terminology. Many of the Roman bishops were buried at the western entrance to the basilica, an area referred to as *ad limina Sancti Petri* (‘at the threshold of St Peter’s’), but also as the *porticus*.⁸ So at the meeting point between one of the holiest spaces in Christianity — St Peter’s — and the more profane space of the atrium in front of the cathedral, there was a threshold and a *porticus* at the point of transition. Other evidence suggests that the association of the threshold with movement between sacred and profane spaces was paralleled in other contemporary sources, which referred to the threshold as the *superlimens*.⁹

In an Anglo-Saxon context we can see a similar concern for the threshold as a place of transition. The western porch at St Peter’s Monkwearmouth provides a useful example of how an Anglo-Saxon porch marked the transition between material and spiritual realms. The western tower at St Peter’s contains five stages and was added to the west side of the nave in the tenth or eleventh century; however, the decoration on the west side of the porch indicates that it was present during the late seventh or eighth century.¹⁰ The porch was associated with the *porticus ingressus* described by Bede as where the bones of Abbot Eosterwine were first buried before being removed to somewhere within the church.¹¹ The significance of the bones’ placement, in this instance, implies an association between burials and the inherently liminal nature of boundaries.¹² The importance of the porch at St Peter’s is underlined by the decoration on it, which is ‘significant’ in some way.¹³ The inner side of the north entrance

⁶ Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. by Stephen A. Barney and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), XV.vii.1–4, p. 311. ‘Aditus ab eundo dictus, per quem ingredimur et admittimur. Vestibulum est vel aditus domus privatae, vel spatium adiacens aedibus publicis. Et vestibulum dictum eo quod eo vestiuntur fores, aut quod aditum tecto vestiat, aut ab stando. Porticus, quod transitus sit magis quam ubi standum sit, quasi porta; et porticus, eo quod sit apertus.’ *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, Etymologiarum sive origenum, libri xx*, ed. by W. M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), II, XV.vii.1–4.

⁷ The relationship between the two terms *porticus* and *porta* is complicated because of their different usage in Anglo-Saxon England and contemporary French and Italian sources, but Ó Carragáin takes a wider view and argues that there is a spectrum of meanings associated with *porticus* that many would have understood. See Éamonn Ó Carragáin, ‘The Term *Porticus* and *Imitatio Romae* in Early Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Text and Gloss: Studies in Insular Learning and Literature Presented to Joseph Donovan Pheifer*, ed. by Helen Conrad O’Briain and others (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp. 13–34 (p. 20). For further discussion on the problems of translating this architectural term see *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Sean Connolly (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), pp. xiii–xvi.

⁸ Ó Carragáin, ‘The Term *Porticus*’, p. 20.

⁹ For example, in the early eleventh-century description of the reconstruction of the abbey church at Saint Benigne in Dijon the chronicler makes references to the ‘western threshold’ (*superliminare occidentale*). *Recueil de textes relatifs à l’histoire de l’architecture et à la condition des architectes en France au moyen âge*, ed. by Victor Mortet (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1911), p. 30. Similar references can be found at pp. 402–03.

¹⁰ Rosemary Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 2 vols (London: English Heritage, 2005), I, p. 43.

¹¹ Bede, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, trans. by Christopher Grocock and I. N. Wood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), pp. 178–79.

¹² Helena Hamerow, ‘“Special Deposits” in Anglo-Saxon Settlements’, *Medieval Archaeology*, 50 (2006), pp. 1–30, p. 9.

¹³ Richard Bailey, ‘Sutton Hoo and Seventh-Century Art’, in *Sutton Hoo: Fifty Years After*, ed. by Robert Farrell and Carol Neuman de Vegvar (Oxford: Oxbow, 1992), pp. 31–41 (p. 33).

jamb is carved with intertwining beasts whose combined tails form the shape of a tau-cross.¹⁴ Jane Hawkes draws attention to the importance of the snakes' placement on the inner side of the portal, so that 'they would not be seen until the threshold was actually being crossed'.¹⁵ Having passed the threshold, the cross made by the intertwining of snakes' tails seems to act as a marker that a new space has been entered into, whether it be from the sacred to the mundane or vice-versa.¹⁶ Our awareness of the importance placed on crossing the threshold in this specific example can help us recognize the wider cultural value given to such liminal space.

Texts with Doorways

This relationship between doorways, liminality, and space is not restricted to Isidore's wide-ranging work, but carries over into an Anglo-Latin text that included architectural descriptions. As we will see, the significance of liminality in the textual tradition seems to align well with the visual examples, which are discussed below. The ninth-century work *De abbatibus* used doorways as frames to illustrate transitions between the spiritual and material realms. *De abbatibus* is a poem by the monk Aethelwulf. It provides a list, and rich discussion, of six abbots of a monastic cell associated with Lindisfarne that was founded at the beginning of the eighth century.¹⁷ The poem has been dated to some point between 803 and 821, during the bishopric of Ecgberht of Lindisfarne.¹⁸ Aethelwulf described the buildings and liturgical vessels commissioned and paid for by each abbot in some detail, and was most likely influenced by Alcuin's poetical history of the church of York.¹⁹ H. M. Taylor recognised that the relatively lengthy architectural descriptions could be useful for determining details about the internal composition of smaller Anglo-Saxon minsters.²⁰ Despite this scholarship on the importance of *De abbatibus'* Latin architectural vocabulary and descriptions, there has been little written about Aethelwulf's use of architecture to frame the different narratives he included. Frequently, these narratives take the abbots from the earthly realm into an indefinable spiritual realm.

Two examples illustrate Aethelwulf's use of doorways as a liminal space. The first contrasts movement within a space with the assumption of the Virgin Mary's bodily remains into heaven; the second frames the movement of a heavenly host's entrance into the visible realm.

Chapter 14 is titled 'Concerning Abbot Sigbald, a worthy priest', and provides an account of the building constructed under the fourth abbot, Sigbald (pp. 35–39). The poet describes

¹⁴ For a diagram see, H. M. Taylor and Joan Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), I, p. 437 (fig. 206).

¹⁵ Jane Hawkes, 'Symbolic Lives: The Visual Evidence', in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. by John Hines (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), pp. 311–47 (p. 325).

¹⁶ Hawkes, 'Symbolic Lives', p. 325. Hawkes also notes the snakes' significance as symbols of birth and death, reinforcing their identity as suitable marker for thresholds.

¹⁷ Aethelwulf, *De Abbatibus*, ed. and trans. by A. Campbell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. xxiii. Text and translation are cited from this edition.

¹⁸ *De Abbatibus*, ed. and trans by Campbell, p. xxiii.

¹⁹ *De Abbatibus*, ed. and trans. by Campbell, pp. xxx–xxxi. For links between Aethelwulf and York poets see, Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Latin Literature 600–899* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), pp. 381–98.

²⁰ H. M. Taylor, 'The Architectural Interest of Aethelwulf's *De Abbatibus*', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3 (1974), 163–73 and 'The Position of the Altar in Early Anglo-Saxon Churches', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 53 (1973), 52–58.

the chancel and choir of the church as well as a golden chalice that is ‘covered in gems’ (p. 36). When the church was completed:

Hoc templum ingrediens dum pura mente sacerdos
iam missas celebrans Sigbald visitare parabat
fontibus e calidis salse daecurrere gutte
incipiunt, Christi magnus quas excitat ardor
pectore de puro, trepidant nec guttura cantum.
sanctam cumque diem sacravit virgo Maria,
qua volitans caelos meruit penetrare per altos,
vel qua presenti generata redditur orbi.
vel qua prepulchrae susceptat gaudia vitae,
vel qua celsithronum meruit generare tonantem²¹

Sigbald was for the first time entering (*ingrediens*) this church in purity of mind, and was about to celebrate mass, salt tears began to flow from warm fountains, and these [the tears] his great zeal for Christ called forth from his pure heart, and his throat held not back from song. And when the Virgin Mary blessed the sacred day on which she had it granted to her to rise up and penetrate the lofty skies, or that upon which she was born and given to the present world, or that on which she received the joys of life which was very lovely, or that on which she had it granted to her to bear the thunderer high-enthroned.

While Aethelwulf does not explicitly refer to a doorway in this passage, he does describe Sigbald as entering (*ingrediens*) into the church for the first time, so we must assume that the abbot moves into the church, occupying neither one place nor another. Aethelwulf uses the present tense to describe Sigbald’s actions in the remainder of the chapter, as if holding the transition in the reader’s mind. Aethelwulf then juxtaposes Sigbald’s reaction to this new church and the mass with a series of feast days associated with the Virgin Mary. First, he refers to the Assumption of Mary’s bodily remains; next to the birth of Mary; following this, Aethelwulf refers to the Incarnation. These three feast days allude to transitions made between the heavenly realm and the earthly one: the Incarnation celebrates Christ’s entrance into the world, and the Assumption celebrates Mary’s bodily entrance into Heaven.

Chapter twenty-one relates the extraordinary scene of a troop of angels moving into the church to sing, while two brothers look on in awe. Aethelwulf sets the scene by describing the time at which the events happened: ‘This house once in the time of dark night, the brothers, following their usual custom, were at pains to enter after their hymns, to complete their solemnities of spirit’.²² He continues by highlighting the specific time at which the events occurred: ‘They [the brothers] desired to hurry thence to their beds, but I left the church after them all with its doors shut, and approached another brother, whom I accompanied’.²³ The events occur at a liminal moment in the monastic day, between the end of the *opus dei* and going to bed — not during the high point of the mass, but in the moments between the daily hours. This sense of a liminal time is then reinforced by a spatial analogue. The poet makes a particular point of writing that the doors were shut. The two brothers then hear the heavenly music, and see ‘a great troop’ making the music. The poet continues: ‘The spirits entered the

²¹ pp. 36–39.

²² ‘Hunc dudum nigre sub tempore noctis | moribus ex solitis post ymnos visere certant | fratres, atque sue complent sollempnia mentis’ (pp. 52–53).

²³ ‘ocius inde suos cupiunt adcurrere lectos | ast ego post omnes conclusis postibus aulum | deseruique alium fratrem comitatus adiui’ (pp. 52–53).

church, which was shining with a starry light'.²⁴ In order to enter the church, the spirits must have first opened the doors and moved through them. The host continues to sing in the church before they vanish and the witnesses proceed to the dormitory, shaken by the experience. At one level the scene is like Bede's analogy of the swallow: it portrays a shift from the outside to inside, and the transition between spaces framed by doors.

The poet's ekphrastic approach to architectural description at times takes advantage of doorways as a narrative expedient, using them to signify movement not just between spaces but between material and spiritual realms.²⁵ In this sense, *De abbatibus* echoes Bede's analogy of the swallow, perhaps not directly, but certainly by acknowledging that doorways can mean something other than their literal appearance or representation.

Points of transition between two spaces, and a 'porch' used to facilitate that movement, appear in an Old English, as well as a Latin, context. The Old English *Visions of Leofric*, which has a single late eleventh-century manuscript witness in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 367, offers one such example.²⁶ The titular Leofric was a contemporary of Edward the Confessor, and died in 1057.²⁷ The significance of the architectural descriptions in this text has been noted elsewhere, and this paper seeks only to draw out the parallels between it and the liminal properties of doorways discussed above.²⁸ Leofric was a powerful man who supported Edward in his rise to power during the middle of the eleventh century. In this short text, Leofric is portrayed as a particularly holy layman, who received three visions of divine origin. In the first vision, a miraculous event occurs when Leofric visits the abbey cathedral of Christ Church, Canterbury with the king. Leofric arranges with the sacristan so as to be admitted into the church later at night to pray; however, the sacristan is drunk and so he is not able to hear Leofric knocking to get into the church.²⁹ As a result, Leofric begins to pray and 'then during his prayers the door was suddenly opened, and he at once went in, and prayed to his Lord with uplifted arms'.³⁰ The sight of the door opening shocks Leofric's companion so much that he faints.

There are two important elements here. First, the text specifically mentions the presence of a porch ('an forehus'). While there is some debate over to what this actually refers, it would

²⁴ 'intrans sidereo candentem luce delubrum | spiritus' (pp. 52–53).

²⁵ For a discussion of the wider implication of architectural description in ekphrastic works, see Ruth Webb, 'The Aesthetics of Sacred Space: Narrative, Metaphor, and Motion in *Ekphraseis* of Church Buildings', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 53 (1999), 59–74.

²⁶ On the date of the manuscript, see N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), no. 64.

²⁷ A. S. Napier, 'An Old English Vision of Leofric, Earl of Mercia', *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 26 (1908), 182–86 (p. 183). The text is cited by line number from this edition.

²⁸ Milton McC. Gatch, 'Miracles in Architectural Settings: Christ Church, Canterbury and St Clement's, Sandwich in the Old English *Vision of Leofric*', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 22 (1993), 227–52.

²⁹ Napier, 'Leofric', ll. 26–33: 'þa spræc he on æfen wið þone cyrcward & hine georne bæd þæt he hine inn lete þænne he þa dura cnylde; ac he þæt forgyrde for his druncennysse. Ða þa he to þære dura com & þær langsumlice swyðe cnucede & georne cunnode, hwæðer he hi on ænige wisan undon mihte, ne mihte na. Ða he þære cyrcward gehyrde ofer eall hrutan, þa ne wænde he him nanes incymes, ac feng þa on his gebedo, swa his gewuna wæs, forþær wæs an forehus æt þære cyrcan duru' ('then in the evening he spoke with the churchwarden and eagerly bade him that he let him in when he struck at the door; but he neglected that for his drunkenness. Then he came to the door and knocked there for a very long time and eagerly tried whether he could in any way unlock them, but could not at all. When over everything else he heard the churchwarden snoring, then he expected no entrance for himself, but took then to his prayers, as was his custom, because there was a porch at the church door').

³⁰ Napier, 'Leofric', ll. 34–35: 'Ða on þam gebede wearð seo duru færinga geopenad, & he þa sona in eode, & hine to his Drihtene gebæd up ahafenum earmum'.

seem that there was a covered space of some sort which emphasized the entrance into the church.³¹ The porch acted as a liminal space through which one walks from the everyday world into the church. The church is the most important sacred space within any monastery, and to walk into it is to step closer to the divine presence. The architecture of the church is a pale imitation of the pleasures that await the saved souls at the end of time, of the celestial Jerusalem with its high roofs and ornament, and is representative of a divine habitation.³² In this context, the walls of the cathedral acted as a boundary wall demarcating the sacred space, and the porch is the only location one may pierce that boundary.

The second element concerns who actually controls entry into this sacred space. While Leofric asked the sacristan to let him in, human sin obstructed him. As emphasized by the second element in the Old English *cyrward* ('church-guardian'), the sacristan acted as God's guard, but did not carry out his duty appropriately. Leofric's only option was to appeal directly to God, who grants access to his space quickly — the true power in the church opens the door. The authoritative grant of free movement between the profane and sacred space underlies the sense of power relationships at Canterbury. The narrative underlines this hierarchy of power by mentioning the presence of the king at Canterbury at the same time. There is only one true king in the monastery, whose power is manifest by the opening of a door and admittance into the sacred space, his space.

The author of the *Visions* specifically states that Leofric gained access to the southern porch of Christ Church, a location of possibly significant affective power. The Romanesque arrangement of Canterbury as a monastic cathedral was, and is, relatively unusual because the cloister is situated to the north of the basilica.³³ The south door was then accessible by lay people who may have been excluded from the cloister side of the church. Burials at the nearby abbey church of SS Peter and Paul were clearly demarcated between those placed in the north and south chapels, dedicated to St Gregory and St Martin of Tours respectively.³⁴ The St Gregory chapel was intended for the burial of significant members of the community of Christ Church, including the archbishops until the eighth century.³⁵ The side dedicated to St Martin — that is the southern *porticus* — was intended to be used for royal burials, and 'provided an image of the continuity of the kingdom'.³⁶ This distinction between burials in the northern and the southern parts of the church appears in other churches, where the north holds the bodies of the community, and the south, people of royal power.³⁷ Thus, while Leofric is

³¹ Gatch, 'Miracles in Architectural Settings', p. 230. For further discussion of the southern porch see, Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury: Christ Church from 597 to 1066* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984), pp. 39–40.

³² For the later period, see Laurence Hull Stookey, 'The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources', *Gesta*, 8 (1969), 35–41. For a wider view see Joseph Sauer, *Symbolik Des Kirchengebäudes Und Seiner Ausstattung in Der Auffassung Des Mittelalters: Mit Berücksichtigung Von Honorius Augustodunensis Sicardus Und Durandus* (Münster: Mehren u. Hobbeling, 1964). On the complex symbolism of ecclesiastical space, see also the article by Meg Boulton above.

³³ In most cases the cloister is placed south of the nave. Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 182.

³⁴ A reconstructed plan is provided in Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983), pp. 36–37.

³⁵ Ó Carragáin, 'The Term *Porticus*', p. 29.

³⁶ Ó Carragáin, 'The Term *Porticus*', p. 29.

³⁷ In a survey of Anglo-Saxon churches, Martin Biddle concluded that 'there seems to have been an early preference to use the north porticus for those members of the community [...] who were later sainted' ('Archaeology, Architecture, and the Cult of Saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture, and Archaeology in Honour of H.M. Taylor*, ed. by L. A. S. Butler and R. K. Morris (London:

at Christ Church, Canterbury and not SS Peter and Paul's there is still a suggestion that the particular doorway through which he entered was one associated with regnal power — an arrangement that echoes the power structure discussed above, whereby only the true king is able to grant access the divine space.

Anglo-Latin and Old English descriptions of doorways, as well as their appearance in certain narratives from the Anglo-Saxon period, seem to point to a particular way in which architectural representations relate to transitions between types of spaces. In *De abbatibus* the doors frame movement between different types of spaces, especially between material and spiritual realms. Unusual events, such as angels swooping into a church after their appearance in the night sky, make sense in the light of this convention. The singing host enters into the material realm through the door the brother had recently shut, passing through from their heavenly home to the realm of the brothers by means of the door. This same association of doorways with movement between the mundane and spiritual is at work in Leofric's problematic entry into the church at Canterbury. However, Leofric's story is perhaps more explicit about the role doorways can play in supernatural narratives. Entrance into the spiritual realm is gained via the authority of God, who bars and grants entry according to his own will. While these two examples cannot be taken as a universal principle of doorways and their facility to shift between spaces, the two textual examples do indicate a possibility of that facility. It remains to be seen how such architectural representations can be mapped on to visual examples, so we can gain a fuller picture of possible wider trends.

Images with Doorways

The relationship between doorways, liminality, and space described above extends into the realm of Anglo-Saxon visual culture, where it presents an opportunity to imply movement in an inherently static medium. By comparing a theme — doorways as indicators of material to spiritual transitions, or vice-versa — across text and image, the iconographical significance of the doorway in Anglo-Saxon architectural representations becomes clearer. Text and image can combine to form a coherent narrative of particular events, but the individual parts of the image, including the architectural representations, take on particular significance in that narrative.³⁸ One strategy in Anglo-Saxon images correlates to textual examples described above, where doors provide a sense of movement between different types of spaces. In this context, the doorways continue to provide stages for transitions between different types of spaces, and simultaneously convey a dynamic sense of movement between those two spaces, despite the tableau-like nature of the image. In a sense, doorways create movement in the mind of the viewer, even though it is impossible to perfectly represent that movement on a two-dimensional surface.

In comparison to other Anglo-Saxon image sequences, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11 contains a relatively large number of architectural representations, and doorways in

Council for British Archaeology, 1986), pp. 1–31 (p. 11)). The importance of the southern *porticus* for royal burials in a number of Anglo-Saxon churches is discussed in Deborah Maukopf Deliyannis, 'Church Burial in Anglo-Saxon England: The Prerogative of Kings', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 29 (1995), 96–119 (p. 102).

³⁸ For a discussion of the relationship between text and image in eleventh-century England, see Richard Brilliant, 'The Bayeux Tapestry: A Stripped Narrative for their Eyes and Ears', *Word & Image*, 7 (1991), 98–126. See also Catherine E. Karkov, *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England: Narrative Strategies in the Junius 11 Manuscript* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

particular.³⁹ Furthermore, there are a number of instances of transitions between material and spiritual spaces, similar to the examples in *De abbatibus* and the *Visions of Leofric*. Junius 11 is a well known late tenth- or eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon manuscript containing several Old English poems, including two (*Genesis A* and *Genesis B*), which together relate the fall of the rebel angels and the story of the book of Genesis up to chapter 22, where Abraham shows his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac.⁴⁰ A single scribe is responsible for pp. 1–212, which contain *Genesis A*, *Genesis B*, *Exodus*, and *Daniel*, while pp. 213–29, containing the poem *Christ and Satan*, were carried out by a further two or three scribes.⁴¹ There are a large number of contemporary illustrations accompanying the text as well. Spaces were left for illustrations throughout the first scribe's work (pp. 1–212), but only those on pp. 1–88 are filled, with an additional image on p. 96, and sketches laid down on p. 99.⁴² Two artists did the work for pp. 1–88, while a third was responsible for p. 96, as well as for the drawing of a lion on p. 31. The manuscript was most likely completed in St Augustine's, Canterbury, although this is not known for certain. The manuscript was, Barbara Raw argues, 'intended for the use of educated laymen'.⁴³

The relationship between text and image in the manuscript is not always clear, giving the impression that at times they are at variance.⁴⁴ In fact, some of the images of Junius 11 may not have been created for the Old English text, but might instead have been copied from a Carolingian model: Raw identifies similar forms and compositions in a group of ninth-century Bibles from the Tours school and argues that the evidence indicates that some of the images in Junius 11 drew on Carolingian exemplars. In contrast, Catherine Karkov argues that the images follow the text of the poems rather carefully, providing a parallel commentary or visual exegesis.⁴⁵ Either way, the text and images as they are known to us were produced in Canterbury at the end of the tenth century. Despite the problems regarding the exact relationship between them and their possible models, it is clear that the architectural representations in the manuscript were an important part of the narrative.⁴⁶

The architectural representations on page 3 demonstrate the role architecture, broadly speaking, plays in the construction of narrative in the images of Junius 11. There are three tiers, with the sequence of the rebel angels' fall placed in each, chronologically moving from top to bottom. The top register contains a two-tiered building on the left, with impressive

³⁹ Images of the manuscript can be accessed via <http://image.ox.ac.uk>.

⁴⁰ There is some disagreement regarding the date of the manuscript. For dating from the middle of the tenth century, see Michael Lapidge and Helmet Gneuss, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), no. 640. For a relatively wide-ranging discussion on the subject, see Benjamin C. Withers, *The Illustrated Old English Hexateuch, Cotton Claudius B.iv: The Frontier of Seeing and Reading in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 59–61. Also, see Leslie Lockett, 'An Integrated Re-examination of the Dating of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 31 (2002), 141–173 (p. 173).

⁴¹ Barbara Raw, 'The Probable Derivation of Most of the Illustrations in Junius 11 from an Illustrated Old Saxon *Genesis*', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 5 (1976), 133–48 (p. 134).

⁴² Thomas H. Ohlgren, 'Five New Drawings in the MS Junius 11: Their Iconography and Thematic Significance', *Speculum*, 47 (1972), 227–33 (p. 233).

⁴³ Raw, 'The Probable Derivation', p. 135.

⁴⁴ For an overview of the scholarship that considers the problems of the relationship between text and image in Junius 11, see Karkov, *Text and Picture*, pp. 3–7.

⁴⁵ Karkov, *Text and Picture*, p. 8.

⁴⁶ Raw only briefly discusses some of the architectural forms, and suggests that they reinforce her wider point that the Junius 11 images derive from a number of different sources ('Probable Derivation', p. 137).

towers, columns and gables. To the right are a host of angels bringing crowns as gifts towards a building placed on the left. In the middle of the composition the artist has set Lucifer (before his fall), who ushers in the angels. This display of orderly and impressive architectural elements is contrasted with the scene on the bottom register. Here, the host of the rebel angels falls into the mouth of the leviathan, with a roof, tower, and Lucifer's broken throne accompanying them. The entire page is framed by a series of pilasters, capitals, and columns placed around the edges of the page.⁴⁷ This marginal architecture acts as a boundary encompassing the entire page, and the walls of Junius 11, including those on the borders, are important because they delimit particular types of spaces.

Previous research has tended to stress the use of architecture as a framing device in medieval manuscripts and to emphasize its lack of narrative function; it does nothing but act as a method for softening the edges of the manuscript, adding ornament but not meaning.⁴⁸ Jean Fournée likened marginal images of architecture to the early medieval canon tables, well known in an Insular context from examples such as the Book of Kells or the Lindisfarne Gospels. Oleg Grabar grouped architectural frames under the title of 'codicological' ornament, defining these architectural representations as being 'structural but non-illustrative part of the decoration of manuscripts'.⁴⁹ While Grabar and others do not consider the case of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in particular, for Grabar especially, the use of architecture in this way is necessarily part of its presence on the manuscript page. It mediates the structure of the manuscript page with little or no relation to the narrative: it is all form and no content. However, the examples of architecture in Junius 11 demonstrate that walls can act as boundaries, delimiting a particular type of space, similarly to how the church walls acted in Leofric's attempt to enter the church at Canterbury.

On page 11, God the father stands on what appear to be steps while set within a crenulated city wall. Adam and Eve stand at the bottom looking upward and surrounded by the foliage and animals of Paradise. Catherine Karkov detailed the significance of the walls and boundaries in Junius 11, and by extension the openings set within those walls.⁵⁰ In this context, the walls act as a boundary that defines God's separation from Adam and Eve, imposing a strict hierarchy on the arrangement. In this instance, the artist defined two types of spaces to reflect that hierarchy: the space of God, who stands in the centre of the city of heaven, and the space of creation where Adam and Eve look on. Adam is shown on the left of Eve where he stands gazing into the city through an opening cut into the wall, with the boundary only hinted at by a continuous line which completes the circuit. As a result, he has a mostly unobscured view of God. This is in contrast to Eve's position to the right of Adam, from whom she is separated by foliage; Eve's vision of God is completely obscured from her position. Her spatial separation from both Adam and God hints at her spiritual isolation and subsequent blame for the fall of Adam and mankind. According to Karkov's analysis, the wall serves two purposes: first, it frames

⁴⁷ Asa Simon Mittman and Susan M. Kim, 'Locating the Devil "Her" in MS Junius 11', *Gesta*, 54 (2015), 3–25. Similar architectural frames appear in other parts of the manuscript — see, for example, pp. ii and 41.

⁴⁸ Jean Fournée, 'Architectures symboliques dans le thème iconographique de l'Annonciation', in *Synthronon. Art et Archéologie de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age*, ed. by A. Grabar (Paris: Bibliothèque des cahiers archéologiques, 1968), pp. 225–35 (p. 225); Oleg Grabar, *The Mediation of Ornament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 160–66.

⁴⁹ Grabar, *Mediation of Ornament*, p. 166.

⁵⁰ Catherine E. Karkov, 'Margins and Marginalization: Representations of Eve in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11', in *Signs on the Edge: Space, Text and Margin in Medieval Manuscripts*, ed. by S. L. Keefer and R. Bremmer (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 57–84 (pp. 60–61). The subject of the image is unclear.

the image of God, marking him as a distinct and important entity who even the pre-lapsarian Adam and Eve cannot approach; second, the wall functions as a narrative device by excluding Eve from direct contact with God, placing her at the bottom of a hierarchical order.⁵¹ In a sense, the lack of access to the divine realm is illustrated by a portal that is inaccessible to Eve.

Karkov's analysis aligns well with Anglo-Saxon and early medieval conceptualization of city walls and boundaries, and their role in delimiting an urban border that stands against the wilderness, marking the threshold between two spatial identities: urban and suburban.⁵² Magennis noted that 'cities appear primarily in Old English biblical poetry [...] as images of society and of success and achievement'.⁵³ The walls that surrounded them provided a physical division between town and country and were 'the most frequent symbol of a town or city' in medieval representations.⁵⁴ Walls, and their points of access, provided a 'corporate identity' to those who lived within the boundaries of the early medieval city. In the Anglo-Saxon period specifically, walled towns indicated 'royal allegiance,' where the leader of the community was the king.⁵⁵ The walls did not necessarily imply political independence, but it would have been clear to travellers crossing the thresholds of gateways that a new type of space was being entered, possibly echoing the significance of the porch at St. Peter's, discussed above.⁵⁶ A similar relationship appears in a twelfth-century manuscript that depicts King David sitting in the centre of rectangular city walls with gates placed at the cardinal directions.⁵⁷ Musicians play at his feet as soldiers line the battlements and the doors of the city are closed. David is much larger than the other figures and it is clear that he controls the urban space implied by the presence of the walls. The walls on page 11 of the Junius 11 manuscript parallel this arrangement, illustrating the royal nature of God by portraying a representation of his kingdom in the form of city walls.

Movement through a clearly defined city-wall was regulated and in the later Middle Ages city gates included 'complex iconographic elements, proclaiming wealth, status, identity, and independence of urban communities to travellers and traders'.⁵⁸ In this description of the medieval city, walls and gates as access points become vehicles of meaning, conveying markers of the community's identity to those travelling through them. Indeed, in rare cases, 'there is good evidence for gateways but no enclosing wall'.⁵⁹ The lack of any defensive qualities in these cases would imply that another possible purpose lies behind city gates, in addition to

⁵¹ The image must attempt to convey an impression of these sorts of relationships and not an actual view of Adam and Eve's proximity to God because the couple and God are shown closer and conversing on p. 10.

⁵² For a definition of what constitutes an urban space, see Keith D. Lilley, *Urban Life in the Middle Ages, 1000–1450* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 3–4.

⁵³ Hugh Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 156.

⁵⁴ *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Russia from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century*, ed. by H. B. Clarke and Anngret Simms, BAR International Series, 265, 2 vols (Oxford: BAR, 1985), II 440. See Daniel Thomas' paper below for further discussion of hell envisioned as a 'stronghold', and 'bound space'.

⁵⁵ Oliver Creighton and Robert Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), p. 61.

⁵⁶ Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls*, pp. 22, 36.

⁵⁷ Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 14, fol. 13^v. While the manuscript is not strictly an insular one, the similarity to p. 11 of MS Junius 11 is striking. Yolanta Zaluska, *L'enluminure et le scriptorium de Cîteaux au XIIe siècle* (Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis, 1989), p. 193.

⁵⁸ Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls*, p. 36.

⁵⁹ Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls*, p. 8. For an example from the early Middle Ages, the major

their defensive properties, a purpose focused on identifying the moment of transition between spaces. Chiara Frugoni has identified these types of experiences in medieval sources.⁶⁰ The city walls create a group identity in those who live within the city walls, a place implicitly identified by its inhabitants as a protected space, separated from the chaos of the wilderness that lies beyond the city limits.⁶¹ In such instances, the portal or gate becomes an architectural element of transition that embodies the liminality of these two spatial identities: the broken ground of the hinterland, and the ordered urban environment. As we can see, the city walls on page 11 of Junius 11 perform two jobs: first, they identify the openings of structures as having some sort of narrative significance; second, they relate architectural structures, such as walls and gateways, to a hierarchy of control which placed Eve at the bottom and God at the top. Thus, doorways are not only markers of transitions but indicators of who actually controls movement through them, as in Leofric's experience at Canterbury.

The importance of doorways and openings in Junius 11 as points of transition is not limited to page 11. The expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden is illustrated on page 46. An impressive doorway appears on the left of the image with steps leading up to the opening where an angel stands brandishing a sword and blocking entry. To the right we see Adam and Eve standing on rough earth with a variety of fauna below their feet. The couple are fully clothed and Adam holds a spade, as an indication of man's difficult future. There is no structure attached to the doorway; it is a gateway standing on its own as if in the middle of a field. Neither the text of *Genesis A* nor the description of the scene in Genesis 3.24 makes reference to a structure of any sort and therefore the gateway in which the angel stands is an addition by the artist. The addition may not be Anglo-Saxon in origin, with Raw suggesting that the scene may be derived from a Carolingian exemplar, an explanation that partly accounts for the divergence between text and image. The presence of the doorways helps the reader to understand the narrative. Adam and Eve have been expelled from one type of space to another type of space — that is, from Paradise to the mundane and recognisable world. The artist has marked this transition by including the door, beyond which we see depicted the undulating ground of Paradise, remarkably similar to the ground on which Adam and Eve stand. The artist may have wished to distinguish between the two different spaces and instead of representing them as physically different marked the transition between the two instead. The narrative of the scene implies movement from Paradise to the area outside of Eden, a transition given emphasis by the presence of the doorway.

Conclusions

Umberto Eco stated that 'if boundaries are not recognized, then there can be no *civitas*'.⁶² *Civitas*, in this context, means more than an urban setting, and even more than an area enclosed by city walls. Instead, it simultaneously corresponds to more abstract notions of civility and modes of behaviour according to particular areas.⁶³ The boundary between civility

ecclesiastical settlement of Kildare in Ireland had no boundary wall, but there were areas designated as 'urban' and 'suburban'. Clarke and Simms, *Comparative History*, p. 57.

⁶⁰ Chiara Frugoni, *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World*, trans. by William McCuaig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 5.

⁶¹ Frugoni, *A Distant City*, p. 5.

⁶² Umberto Eco, *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 27.

⁶³ C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilising Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210*

and incivility must necessarily exist, but the actual line of that boundary is difficult to identify. In the case of cities or towns, there is a point of transition between an urban area and a suburban one, and gateways are a convenient way of marking that in both text and image. Doorways are inherently liminal architectural objects, and their presence and representation in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts demonstrates a receptiveness to this property. The relationship between story, text, and image in Anglo-Saxon examples of doorways is necessarily indirect. The way in which the artist or author takes advantage of the transitional expedient doorways provide depends on the medium itself: the author of the *Visions of Leofric* demonstrates God's power over who enters his house, and the artist of MS Junius 11 uses doorways to convey transitions in a static medium.

In some texts from the period, doorways frame certain events and act as a platform for movements between material and spiritual realms. Thresholds act as boundaries that allow the narrative to shift the nature of the space in which events take place, doing so in an expedient manner. In *De abbatibus* there is a mixture of spaces with people experiencing supernatural events, such as a host of angels singing, or a dream-vision in a heavenly church. In order to express a sense of movement, the author creates a sense of ambiguity when representing the particularities of the architecture. Leofric's attempt to gain access to the church at Canterbury is hindered by the door and the drunken sacristan. Only God can grant him access, demonstrating that the movement between realms is not as free as Bede's swallow, but is controlled and mediated by God. Doorways, of course, do not mark all such transitions, but their presence in descriptions of visions can perhaps be explained as markers of liminality.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in visual representations of doorways, such as those of the Junius 11 manuscript. Far from architectural representations being simply 'codicological' or mere ornament, they take part in the narrative, and doorways in particular act as areas of controlled transitions. God limits Eve's access to himself, as demonstrated by her obscured view of him. Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise is represented as a movement out of an unattached gateway guarded by the angel. The presence of doorways as markers of movement is perhaps even more important in images, because they imply Adam and Eve walking out of Paradise without having to represent every single step. Doorways are liminal objects both linguistically and visually.

The Gates of Hell: Invasion and Damnation in an Anonymous Old English Easter Vigil Homily

Daniel Thomas

In an Easter homily from the first series of his *Catholic Homilies*, Ælfric of Eynsham follows his principal source — Gregory the Great's *Homilia XXI in Evangelia* — in drawing a typological link between Christ's harrowing of hell and Sampson's escape from the besieged city of Gaza (Judges 16.1–3).¹ As Sampson disdains to leave Gaza empty-handed, carrying with him the very gates of the city, so too Christ breaks down the doors of hell and returns to heaven with the souls of the righteous as his spoils.² In his adaptation of this passage, however, Ælfric builds upon the typological connection established by Gregory, moving towards a moral or tropological conclusion:

For ðan þe ure hælend crist tobræc hellegatu. & generode adam & euan & his gecorenan of heora cynne. and freolice of deaðe aras & hi samod: & astah to heofonum. þa manfullan he let beon bæftan to þam ecum wítum & is nu hellegeat belocen rihtwisum mannum. & æfre open unrihtwisum. (ll. 165–70)

Therefore our Saviour Christ broke down the gates of hell and redeemed Adam and Eve and His chosen of their descendants, and rose freely from death together with them, and

¹ Cited from 'XV *Dominica Pascae*', in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: the First Series: Text*, ed. by Peter Clemoes, Early English Text Society, s. s., 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 299–306. Translations are my own throughout. On Ælfric's use of Gregory in this homily, see M. R. Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, Early English Text Society, s. s., 18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 119–27. Ælfric offers the same interpretation in his translation-cum-commentary on the Book of Judges (*The Old English Heptateuch and Ælfric's Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo: Volume One: Introduction and Text*, ed. by Richard Marsden, Early English Text Society, o. s., 330 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 190–200 (p. 198, ll. 253–66)). A similar typological understanding of the escape from Gaza is suggested by the representation of this scene on two stone monuments from the ninth century: the Cundall-Aldborough cross shaft and the Masham column. See further, Jane Hawkes, 'Anglo-Saxon Sculpture: Questions of Context', in *Northumbria's Golden Age*, ed. by Jane Hawkes and Susan Mills (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), pp. 204–15 (pp. 206–11).

² Gregory, *Homilia XXI in Gregorius Magnus. Homiliae in Evangelia*, ed. by Raymond Étaix, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 141 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 173–79 (ll. 149–54): 'Samson uero nocte media non solum exiit, sed etiam portas tulit, quia uidelicet Redemptor noster ante lucem resurgens, non solum liber de inferno exiit, sed ipsa etiam inferni claustra destruxit. Portas tulit et montis uerticem subiit, quia resurgendo claustra inferni abstulit et ascendendo caelorum regna penetrauit' ('Truly, Sampson not only went out in the middle of the night, but also carried off the gates, for our redeemer, rising before daybreak, not only went out free from hell, but also destroyed the very gates of hell. He carried off the gates and went to the summit of the hill, because by rising he carried off the gates of hell and by ascending he entered the kingdom of heaven.').

Invasion and Damnation in an Anonymous Old English Easter Vigil Homily

ascended to heaven. He allowed the sinful to remain behind in that eternal torment, and the gate of hell is now locked for righteous men, and ever open for the unrighteous.

Ælfric's insistence that only the righteous were redeemed during the harrowing may have been intended to clarify a point of doctrine left potentially ambiguous in Gregory's Latin.³ Ælfric's final comment, however, shifts the focus of the homily from an understanding of the harrowing as a discreet moment in salvation history to a recognition of its ongoing moral significance for humanity in the present.⁴ The indeterminacy of the simultaneously open and closed gates of hell can be resolved only at the personal level, in accordance with each individual's moral standing.

Extending Gregory's typology in this way, Ælfric draws upon the potentially rich signification of gates and doorways as architectural features. The typological connection to Sampson's escape from Gaza presents the harrowing in terms of a violent escape from captivity, focusing attention on egress from a bound and defended space. Christ's destruction of these gates thus dramatizes an instance of failed containment, in which the enforced openness of the entrance to hell is positively valued. However, as Ælfric's focus shifts from historical past to tropological present, and from a focus on egress to a focus on ingress, the signification of the gates of hell is inverted, such that the impenetrability of hell as an enclosure is valorised and the final image of the open gates of hell is made to carry negative moral connotations.

The central importance that the gates of hell assume in Ælfric's brief explication of the harrowing should not perhaps be surprising. Anglo-Saxon depictions of hell are not generally rich in architectural details, tending to focus instead upon the pain and torment inflicted therein. The gates of hell do, however, feature prominently in depictions of the infernal regions, especially in contexts which interpret the torments of hell in terms of imprisonment and containment.⁵ As we have seen already in this issue, Anglo-Saxon writers were keenly aware of the essentially liminal nature of gates and doorways as thresholds on the boundary between defined spaces.⁶ My concern in this paper is, however, less with the liminality of gateways than with their multivalency; their potential to allow or to deny movement across a threshold can fundamentally define the nature of the space beyond a doorway — a fact which is particularly evident in vernacular Anglo-Saxon depictions of hell. In the absence of detailed depictions of other architectural features such as walls and buildings, it is frequently upon the image of these gates that the conception of hell as a bound space rests. With the example of Ælfric's account in mind, therefore, the present article will focus upon the depiction of the gates of hell in one anonymous Old English Easter homily, examining how the presentation of the gates of hell in this text exploits the potential of doors and doorways to signify in multiple ways, and how this impacts upon the spatial understanding of hell as a bound space. The homily I focus on has received little attention and less praise from modern readers, perhaps not unreasonably.⁷ In the context of the current collection of essays, however, it is worth stressing the extent to which even so apparently unsophisticated a text can be seen to engage meaningfully with the signification of architectural representation.

³ Godden, *Introduction, Commentary, and Glossary*, p. 126.

⁴ Karl Tamburr, *The Harrowing of Hell in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2007), p. 23.

⁵ Lori Ann Garner, *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), pp. 83–85.

⁶ See the above article by Karl Kinsella. See also Johanna Kramer, *Between Earth and Heaven: Liminality and the Ascension of Christ in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), pp. 107–46.

⁷ According to Jackson J. Campbell, the anonymous Anglo-Saxon homilist was 'a writer of very minor talent' and

The homily in question survives in two late copies. The earlier of the two is Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41, a famous manuscript containing principally a copy of the Old English translation of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, executed in a hand dated to the first half of the eleventh century.⁸ A large-scale and handsome volume, the manuscript seems to have been intended as a high-status production. But already by the mid-eleventh century, use was made of the generous margins left by the original design of the manuscript, into which were copied some seventeen texts of varying lengths — in both Latin and Old English — by a scribe writing in an angular hand distinct from either of those in which the *Old English Bede* was copied.⁹ The present homily is one of these, copied into the margins of pages 295–301 of the manuscript (Cameron no. B8.5.3.2).¹⁰ This text of the homily was edited by William Hulme in 1904.¹¹ However, Hulme seems to have been unaware of the existence of a second, slightly shorter, copy of the homily which occupies pages 72–75 of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 303, a twelfth-century collection of homilies, mostly by Ælfric (Cameron no. B8.5.3.3).¹² This second version of the homily has never yet been independently edited, although its text is collated with that of CCCC MS 41 in the edition of the latter text of the homily in an unpublished dissertation by Jocelyn Price.¹³

Apparent scribal errors and corrections indicate that both surviving texts were copied from pre-existing manuscript copies, but Price's study of the differences between the two texts suggests that, whilst these exemplars were similar in most details, the surviving copies bear witness to distinct recensions of the homily.¹⁴ It is possible, then, that the homily — which for convenience I shall refer to as the 'Corpus homily' — enjoyed a longer and more diverse circulation than these two late witnesses would seem to suggest.¹⁵ The homily opens with a bookish reference to certain unnamed volumes from which the contents of the homily have apparently been drawn: 'her sagað an þissum bocum' ('it says here in these books', p. 610, l. 1). This deictic reference to 'þissum bocum' reflects something of a formulaic opening in vernacular homilies, but the frequency with which the Corpus homily refers to a putative textual source — especially in its opening section ('her sægeð', p. 610, l. 13, p. 611, l. 20; 'hit

the homily itself is 'rather poorly written': 'To Hell and Back: Latin Tradition and Literary use of the "Descensus ad Inferos" in Old English', *Viator*, 13 (1982), 107–58 (pp. 141–42). Cf. Antonette di Paolo Healey, 'Anglo-Saxon Use of the Apocryphal Gospel', in *The Anglo-Saxons: Synthesis and Achievement*, ed. by J. Douglas Woods and David A. E. Pelteret (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1985), pp. 93–104 (pp. 99–100).

⁸ N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), no. 32. Cf. Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), no. 39.

⁹ For an attempt to unravel the complex sequence of marginal additions to the manuscript, see Thomas A. Bredehoft, 'Filling the Margins of CCCC 41: Textual Space and a Developing Archive', *Review of English Studies*, n. s., 57 (2006), 721–32.

¹⁰ Cameron numbers are cited from Angus Cameron, 'A List of Old English Texts', in *A Plan for the Dictionary of Old English*, ed. by R. Frank and A. Cameron (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), pp. 25–306.

¹¹ William H. Hulme, 'The Old English Gospel of Nicodemus', *Modern Philology*, 1 (1904), 579–614. The text is cited from this edition.

¹² Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 57.

¹³ Jocelyn M. Price, 'An Edition of the Anonymous Old English "Harrowing of Hell" Homily found in the margins of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 41, pp. 295–301' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2004). This edition came to my attention only in the final stages of preparing this article. I have, however, attempted to take account of Price's work in what follows.

¹⁴ Price, 'Edition', pp. 192–99.

¹⁵ Price, 'Edition', pp. 200–05.

sagað', p. 610, ll. 9, 11; 'cwæð se writtere', p. 611, l. 31) — seems unusually insistent.¹⁶ It is tempting to assume that these references indicate the existence of one or more direct textual model(s) for all or part of the Corpus homily, either in the vernacular, or perhaps more likely in Latin. The identification of any such source has, however, proved problematic, and the Corpus homily remains, I think, unique in the surviving record for its precise combination of details and motifs, the origins of which are not to be found in any one single surviving source.¹⁷

In the later CCCC MS 303 copy, the homily is identified by the Latin rubric *Sermo in resurrectione domini* ('Sermon on the Resurrection of Our Lord'). Together with its opening statement that Christ's resurrection took place 'on ðas niht [...] þe nu to niht wæs' ('on that night which was now tonight', p. 610, ll. 2–3), this clearly indicates that the homily was intended for delivery at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday. No such descriptive rubric is attached to the text in the earlier copy in CCCC MS 41, but the homily is preceded in this manuscript by a Latin quotation from Psalm 117.24 ('haec est dies quam fecit Dominus exultemus et laetemur in ea' ['this is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice therein']), the text of which was used as a gradual in the liturgy for Holy Week. The homily does not, however, address the events of the resurrection as recorded in the canonical Gospels. Rather, the homily consists of a dramatic account of the harrowing of hell, followed at greater length by an account of the last days and of the terrors of judgement day.

Given its subject matter, the appearance of the gates of hell as a dominant image in the Corpus homily might not be surprising. Yet the extent to which the entrance to hell features as the focal point of dramatic action in this text is nevertheless striking. Structurally, the gates of hell perform an enveloping function, appearing prominently in the opening and closing episodes of the homily and providing a basic thematic unity that connects the different parts of the text. However, a comparison of the contrasting ways in which these features are presented across the homily as whole suggests an attentiveness to their potential for multiple signification that recalls that evident in Ælfric's Easter homily.

Christ's Entry into Hell

The harrowing of hell is, of course, a highly appropriate topic for an Easter homily, and points of connection between the celebration of Christ's victory in hell and the liturgy of the Easter Vigil in particular make this an especially fitting subject for the Corpus homily.¹⁸ In his resurrection at Easter, Christ breaks out of hell, releasing in the process the righteous

¹⁶ For variants of this formulaic opening, see, for example, Vercelli homilies X and XV. A closer parallel for the insistent reference to a source in the Corpus homily might be found, however, in Vercelli homily IX, in which the opening reference to 'þeos halige boc' ('this holy book', l. 1) is recalled repeatedly throughout the text (ll. 32, 84, 115, 144, 214), though no direct source for the homily has been identified. The Vercelli homilies are cited by line number from *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, ed. by D. G. Scragg, Early English Text Society, o. s., 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). The possibility that the deictic references in the Corpus homily might have been self-referential and performative, or that they might have come to be understood in this way, is perhaps suggested by the evidence of the CCCC MS 303 copy of the text, in which the opening formula is rendered singular rather than plural ('her segh on þissere boc', p. 72, l. 34) and in which an exhortative aside — not present in the CCCC MS 41 text — directs the audience: 'understandeð þæt ge beforan eow rædan geherað' ('understand that which you hear read before you', p. 74, ll. 29–30).

¹⁷ Cf. Campbell, 'To Hell and Back', pp. 141–42; Price, 'Edition', pp. 135–87.

¹⁸ Tamburr, *Harrowing of Hell*, pp. 5–10; M. Bradford Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), pp. 139–41.

souls imprisoned within. As the typological link to Sampson's escape from Gaza suggests, this release is frequently presented as a kind of gaol break in patristic and early medieval literature. Yet accounts of the harrowing are also, of course, narratives of invasion: a breaking in as well as a breaking out. So much is evident from even a cursory examination of the impressive miniature of the harrowing contained in the mid-eleventh century Tiberius Psalter (London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius C. vi, fol. 14^r (figure 1). Looking at this miniature, one's eye is immediately drawn to the massive figure of Christ, apparently stooping down to lift the righteous from the jaws of a gaping hell-mouth. Despite the benevolence that this pose suggests, something of the violence of the Harrowing is also evident in the miniature. In the foreground, Christ tramples upon the captive figure of Satan, and behind and to the left of him we see the door of hell, standing open, at an angle that seems to suggest that it has been wrenched violently off its hinges.¹⁹ Images such as this one, which place emphasis on the ferocity and sense of invasion associated with the harrowing, suggest an alternative way of conceiving of hell as a bound space. They show how, rather than as an oppressive, prison-like enclosure, hell might be conceived in terms of a stronghold: a place defended from within, equipped with doors whose purpose is not only to keep its inhabitants in, but also to keep invaders out. It is a conception that imagines the enclosure of hell not as punitive, but as protective.

This is an aspect of the harrowing that is given particular prominence in the narrative account of the Corpus homily:

Men þa leofestan, her sagað an þissum bocum ymbe ða miclan gewird þe to ðisse nihte wearð: þæt ure Drihten, Hælend Crist, on ðas niht gewearð, þe nu to niht wæs, þæt he of deaðe aras to midre nihte, and he astah niðer to helwarum to þan, þæt he wolde þa helle bereafian, and swa gedyde, and þæt ealdor deoful oferswiðan. And hit wearð him cuðlice ætiwed þæt he swa wolde gedon. Þæt dioful is geciged and nemned Satanas, þæt is, ealdor deoful inwite; and he rixað and wunað in helle nypewardre. Vre Drihten astah in ða helle to ðan, þæt he wolde þa halga saula þanon generian. Hit sagað þæt þa comon manige men to hellegatum, and þa men wæron atelice and swiðe laðlice gewordene. And hit sagað þæt ða men wæron þære helle and ðara deofla geatweardas, þæt hi woldon þa helle belucan wið uris Drihtenes fore and wið his þydercyme. Her sægeð þæt hi wurdun hrædlice afyrhtede, þa ure Drihten com an þas niht to ðære hellegatum, þæt ða loco burstun and niðer feollon ongean hine. And he eode þa ing, ure Drihten, and bræc þa helle and nerede ða halgan sawla ðe an ðan wite ær lange sæton. And hi wæron þa sprecende, þa helware, him betwunum, and hi cwædon: 'Hwæt taliað we hwæt ðes cempa sie ðe into us gæð? Taligað we hwæðere usse geatweardas slapen, þa ðes fyhtling in to us eode? Oððe taligað we hwæðer he hæbbe his ware gesette wið usne ordfruma? Oððe he hine ofslegene, and þurh þæt he into us eode?' (p. 610, ll. 1–22)

Beloved men, it says here in these books about the great event which occurred on this night: that it pleased our lord, Christ the saviour, on this night which was now tonight, that he arose from death in the middle of the night,²⁰ and he descended down to the inhabitants

¹⁹ This illustration, which is indebted to the iconography of the Utrecht Psalter, has been discussed by K. M. Openshaw, who argues that the depiction of Christ trampling the devil provides 'the visual key' to a series of illustrations in the manuscript which comprise a 'typological picture programme of the triumph of Christ over Satan': 'The Battle Between Christ and Satan in the Tiberius Psalter', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 52 (1989), 14–33 (pp. 19, 32). See also Kathleen M. Openshaw, 'Weapons in the Daily Battle: Images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter', *The Art Bulletin*, 75 (1993), 17–38.

²⁰ On the impersonal use of *geweorðan* in this construction, see T. Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary: Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), s.v. *geweorþan* V. I. a. (β).



Figure 1. Christ Harrowing Hell, Cotton Tiberius C. vi, fol. 14^r. © The British Library Board.

of hell, because he intended to plunder hell and to overcome that chief devil, and so he did. And it was clearly made known to him [i.e. the devil] that he [i.e. Christ] intended to do so. That devil is called and named Satan: that is, the chief devil in torment;²¹ and he reigns and dwells below in hell. Our lord descended into hell because he intended to deliver from there the blessed souls. It says that many men then came to the gates of hell, and those men were become terrible and very horrible. And it says that those men were the gatekeepers of hell and of the devils, and that they intended to lock hell against our lord's approach and against his coming. It says here that they were suddenly afraid, when our lord came on that night to the gates of hell, and that the locks burst asunder and fell down before him. And then he entered in, our lord, and broke open hell and delivered the holy souls that had previously sat long in torment. And then the inhabitants of hell were speaking amongst themselves, and they said: 'Lo, who do we think that champion might be, who enters into us? Think we that our gatekeepers slept when the warrior came into us? Or think we that he has agreed his treaty with our leader? Or that he has slain him, and by means of that he entered into us?'

There is, to my mind, a pleasingly dramatic quality to this account of Christ's entry into hell. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis that the account places on the gates of hell themselves, both in the description of how they were locked against Christ's coming and in the subsequent speech of the inhabitants of hell, in which the inability of the gatekeepers to withstand his entry is again raised. The result of the inclusion of these details is to focus attention on the entrance to hell as the locus of dramatic action, emphasising the violent and invasive aspect of Christ's entry. This emphasis is produced, moreover, by a combination of details that cannot be precisely paralleled in any other surviving harrowing narratives of a comparable date.

The major source of information about the harrowing throughout the medieval period was the Latin text of the apocryphal *Evangelium Nicodemi*. Accordingly, in his edition of the CCC MS 41 text, Hulme suggested that the *Evangelium* was probably the textual source referred to in the opening of the Corpus homily, despite the extensive differences between the depiction of the harrowing in the homily and that in the Latin apocryphon.²² More recently, however, Jackson J. Campbell has emphasized the apparent independence of the Corpus homily's account, not just from the *Evangelium*, but from all other sources of information about the harrowing which may have been available in Anglo-Saxon England. Indeed, the idiosyncrasy of the homilist's account led Campbell to suggest that the writer may in fact have been 'merely remembering a few odds and ends about the Descent which he had read long before'.²³ It seems likely, however, that the selection of these 'odds and ends' reflects a more careful approach to the construction of the text than Campbell allows for, and it is the case at least that comparison of the Corpus account of the harrowing with those in texts such as the *Evangelium* can help to throw light upon the Old English text's particular interest in the gates of hell as a significant architectural feature.

One of the more striking details in the homiletic narrative of the harrowing is the description of how these gates were defended by their demonic guardians. While the gatekeeper of hell was to become an established comic feature in dramatic representations of the harrowing in the later medieval period, amongst Anglo-Saxon texts the Corpus homily's reference to gatekeepers is unusual.²⁴ It is a detail that might, however, stand comparison with

²¹ My translation here follows the reading from CCC MS 303: *ealdor deofol on wite*.

²² Hulme, 'Gospel of Nicodemus', pp. 590–91. Cf. Healey, 'Apocryphal Gospel', pp. 99–100.

²³ Campbell, 'To Hell and Back', p. 142.

²⁴ The familiarity of the dramatic figure of the gatekeeper of hell is suggested by Shakespeare's later parody of the

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a similar episode in the account of the harrowing in the *Evangelium*. The medieval tradition of the *Evangelium* is notoriously complex and poorly understood, and individual copies of the apocryphon vary considerably in outline and detail.²⁵ A common feature of many of the *Evangelium* texts, however, is the description of how Hades, or sometimes Satan, orders his followers to bar the gates of hell and resist Christ's entry into the infernal realm. This episode is dealt with only briefly in the recension of the apocryphon generally identified as *Evangelium A* — the recension most likely to have been known in Anglo-Saxon England:

Et dixit inferus ad sua impia officia: Claudite portas crudeles aereas et vectes ferreos supponite et fortiter resistite, ne captivemus tenentes captivitatem. (V (XXI):1)²⁶

And Hades said to his impious servants: 'Close the cruel gates of bronze and put bars of iron upon them, and resist strongly, lest holding them captive we be captured.'

As it stands, this passage bears only a general resemblance to the equivalent account in the vernacular text. Nothing in the Corpus homily equates to the direct speech in *Evangelium A*, nor to the biblical allusion to brass gates and iron bars.²⁷ At the same time, there is no parallel in the Latin text for dramatic details included in the Old English text such as the multitude of gatekeepers, their terrible appearance, and their sudden fear at Christ's approach. However, if we turn to the recension of the Latin text known as *Evangelium B*, we find that the treatment of this episode is both more extensive than in *Evangelium A*, and closer to the account found in the Old English homily:

Tunc Satanus dux mortis advenit, fugiens territus, dicens ministris suis et inferis: Ministri mei et omnes inferi, concurrite, portas vestras claudite, vectes ferreos supponite, et pugnate fortiter et resistite, ne tenentes captivemur a vinculis. Tunc impia official eius omnia conturbata sunt et coeperunt portas mortis cum omni diligentia claudere, serasque et vectes ferreos paulatim iungere, omniaque ornamenta sua strictis manibus tenere et proclamare ululatus dirae vocis ac terribilissimae. (II (XVIII):2)²⁸

Then Satan, prince of death, approached, fleeing in terror, saying to his servants and the infernal ones: 'My servants and all of the infernal ones, run together, close your gates, put bars of iron upon them, and fight strongly and resist, lest they seize us and we be captured with chains'. Then all his impious servants were troubled and they began to close the gates of death with all care, and one by one to attach bolts and iron bars, and to grasp all their equipment tightly in their hands, and to give cry in a fearful and most hideous voice.

Manuscripts of *Evangelium B* appear from the late-eleventh or early-twelfth century, and there is no evidence that *Evangelium B* was known in England before 1200.²⁹ The medieval tradition

role in his famous depiction of the Porter in *Macbeth* Act II scene 3. See further, Glynne Wickham, 'Hell-castle and its Door-keeper', *Shakespeare Survey*, 19 (1970), 68–74; Kurt A. Schreyer, *Shakespeare's Medieval Craft: Remnants of the Mysteries on the London Stage* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 135–61. In an Anglo-Saxon context, the image of the sleeping guardians recalls the sleep of the Geats during the famous account of Grendel's approach to Heorot at *Beowulf* ll. 703b–09, as well as the more clearly comic image of the sleeping sacristan in the *Visions of Leofric* discussed in the above article by Karl Kinsella.

²⁵ See further, Zbigniew Izydorczyk, 'The Unfamiliar *Evangelium Nicodemi*', *Manuscripta*, 33 (1989), 169–91.

²⁶ Cited from *Evangelii Nicodemi pars altera sive Descensus Christi ad Infero: Latine A*, ed. by Constantine von Tischendorf, in *Evangelia apocrypha* (Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1876), pp. 389–416.

²⁷ Cf. Psalm 106.16; Isaiah 45.2.

²⁸ Cited from *Evangelii Nicodemi pars altera sive Descensus Christi ad Infero: Latine B*, ed. by Constantine von Tischendorf, in *Evangelia apocrypha* (Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1876), pp. 417–32.

²⁹ Izydorczyk, 'Unfamiliar *Evangelium*', pp. 181–82; Thomas N. Hall, 'The *Euangelium Nichodemi* and *Vindicta*

of the apocryphon was marked, however, by considerable ‘cross-pollination’, and it has been suggested that the account of the *Descensus* contained in *Evangelium B* might have circulated independently before its incorporation within the longer text.³⁰ With this in mind, the mini-narrative of the defence of hell contained in *Evangelium B* offers a tantalizing parallel to that in the Old English homily. Again, there is nothing in the Old English text that parallels the direct speech in the Latin account — attributed here to Satan rather than Hades — but the *Evangelium B* text differs from the shorter *Evangelium A* account not only in narrating the actions of the gatekeepers, but also in granting the gatekeepers some degree of subjectivity through the reference to their distress at the coming of Christ (‘conturbata sunt’).

In both of these details, the *Evangelium B* text resembles more closely the account in the Corpus homily than does the *Evangelium A* account. The resemblance might, moreover, be supported by some further, admittedly rather indistinct, parallels between the two accounts. The vernacular text’s description of the guards as ‘þære helle and ðara deofla geatweardas’ (‘the gatekeepers of hell and of the devils’), for example, might potentially reflect a misreading or variant of the statement in the Latin that Satan addressed ‘ministris suis et inferis’, while the homily’s account of the ‘terrible and very horrible’ appearance of these gatekeepers (‘atelice and swiðe laðlice’) recalls the Latin construction describing the hideous voices of Satan’s followers (‘dirae [...] ac terrimae’). Even in the homily’s description of the arrival of many men at the gate of hell (‘þa common manige men to hellegatum’) we might see an echo of Satan’s order that his followers should ‘run together’ (‘concuritte’) to bar the entrance way.

None of these resemblances is sufficient to posit a relationship between the Corpus homily and either the *Evangelium B* account of the harrowing or its putative forerunner — though such a relationship is not impossible. Comparison of the two accounts as analogues is, however, still instructive. Although the architectural image of the gates of hell features in both texts, it is the vernacular homily that focuses particularly upon this feature as a narrative locus.

In the homily, the account of the fear of the gatekeepers at the coming of Christ is immediately followed by a description of how the locks of the gates of hell burst open and fell down against Christ’s approach (‘ða loco burstun and niðer feollon ongean hine’). Details such as this are commonplace in narrative accounts of the harrowing, but a close analogue for this description can again be found in the *Evangelium B*, which recounts Christ’s entry into hell in similar terms: ‘portae mortis et serae comminutae et vectes ferrei confracti sunt et ceciderunt in terram’ (VIII (XXIV), ‘the gates and bars of death were shattered and the bars of iron were broken and fell to the ground’). However, where the vernacular homily describes the destruction of the gates of hell directly after the account of the terror of the gatekeepers, so that the failed defence of hell occurs in a single continuous action centred around the architectural feature, in the Latin text the defence of the gates and Christ’s dramatic entry are separated by some five chapters’ worth of lengthy speeches uttered by Satan, by Hades, and by the patriarchs awaiting the coming of Christ.

The Corpus homily’s focus on the gates is maintained, moreover, in the incredulous speech of the devils that immediately follows Christ’s entry into hell. As Campbell notes, speeches expressing the confusion of the devils are found in many accounts of the harrowing, but his further suggestion that the particular questions asked in the Corpus homily are ‘totally different

saluatoris in Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Two Old English Apocrypha and their Manuscript Source*, ed. by J. E. Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 36–81 (pp. 53–54).

³⁰ Izydorczyk, ‘Unfamiliar *Evangelium*’, pp. 180, 184.

from any others' must be redressed.³¹ In fact, the ultimate source for these questions is to be found in the Latin account of the harrowing that circulated from the mid- to late-fifth century in three related sermons from the so-called 'Eusebius Gallicanus' collection:³²

vbi iam ianitores dormierunt, cum iste bellator claustra uexabat? [...] Numquidnam iste cum auctore nostro composuit? aut forte aggressus et ipsum uicit, et sic ad nostra regna transcendit? (*Homilia XII*, ll. 17–24)³³

Where slept the gatekeepers, when that warrior was rattling the gates? [...] Surely he has not made a treaty with our leader? Or perhaps he attacked and conquered him, and thus he approaches into our realms?

The homilies in question are known to have been available in England from at least the eleventh century, and may have been available much earlier.³⁴ Moreover, the account of the devils' accusatory speech common to all three homilies seems to have also circulated independently. From at least the tenth-century, this passage appears as an interpolation in some copies of the influential account of the harrowing known as 'Pseudo-Augustine' *Sermo 160* (comprising most of section two in the text printed by Migne).³⁵ That this text was known in Anglo-Saxon England is clear, although whether or not the interpolated text was available is less certain.³⁶ Moreover, a similar, but not identical, extract from the 'Eusebian' homilies — containing the parallels with the Corpus homily — also appears as a preface to the Latin text of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* in seven surviving British manuscripts dating from the twelfth century onwards.³⁷

³¹ Campbell, 'To Hell and Back', p. 141. The incredulity of the devils may plausibly relate to the typological link between the harrowing and the exchange of speeches in Psalm 23.7–10 drawn in the *Evangelium Nicodemi* and other texts. Cf. Kramer, *Between Heaven and Earth*, pp. 129–30 and n. 49.

³² *Homilia XII 'De pascha, I', Homilia XII A 'De pascha, I A', and Sermo 8 'De resvrrctione Domini'* in Eusebius 'Gallicanus': *Collectio Homiliarum*, ed. by Fr. Glorie, 3 vols, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 101, 101A, 101B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1970–71), i, 141–50; ii, 881–86. For a discussion of the problematic provenance of this collection, see Lisa Kaaren Bailey, *Christianity's Quiet Success: The Eusebius Gallicanus Sermon Collection and the Power of the Church in Late Antique Gaul* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), pp. 29–38.

³³ Cf. *Homilia XII A*, ll. 20–27; *Sermo 8*, ll. 50–57.

³⁴ J. E. Cross, 'Saint-Omer 202 as the manuscript source for the Old English texts', in *Two Old English Apocrypha and their Manuscript Source*, ed. by J. E. Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 82–104 (p. 102 n. 40).

³⁵ Cited from *Sermo CLX. De Pascha, II*, in *PL*, xxxix, cols 2059–61. See further, Zbigniew Izydorczyk, 'The *Evangelium Nicodemi* in the Latin Middle Ages', in *The Medieval Gospel of Nicodemus: Texts, Intertexts, and Contexts in Western Europe*, ed. by Zbigniew Izydorczyk (Tempe, Arizona: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1997), pp. 43–101 (pp. 49–50, 98).

³⁶ The *Sermo 160* account lies behind the harrowing material in the ninth-century 'Book of Cerne', as well as the homiletic treatments in Blickling homily VII and in the Easter homily contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 121, and perhaps also the entry for 26th March in the *Old English Martyrology*. None of these texts, however, bears any trace of this reference to the sleeping gatekeepers. See further, David N. Dumville, 'Liturgical Drama and Panegyric Responsory from the Eighth Century? A Re-Examination of the Origin and Contents of the Ninth-Century Section of the Book of Cerne', *Journal of Theological Studies*, n. s., 23 (1972), 374–406; Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos": una inedita omelia anglosassone', *Studi Medievali*, 13 (1972), 989–1012; J. E. Cross, 'The use of patristic homilies in the Old English Martyrology', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 14 (1985), 107–28 (pp. 117–20); Donald Scragg, 'A Late Old English Harrowing of Hell Homily from Worcester and Blickling Homily VII', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. by Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe and Andy Orchard, 2 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), ii, 197–211.

³⁷ Izydorczyk, 'Unfamiliar *Evangelium*', p. 180. For details of these manuscripts, see Zbigniew Izydorczyk, *Manuscripts of the Evangelium Nicodemi: A Census* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993), nos. 44, 46, 72, 143, 146, 159, 228. Although always attributed to Augustine in these manuscripts, the text of

The similarities between the Latin text(s) and the corresponding speech in the Old English homily are too close to be explained as the homilist's vague reminiscences of a text read long ago. That some version of the Latin text lies behind the reference to the sleeping gatekeepers in the vernacular homily seems beyond doubt, though whether this was a 'Eusebian' homily, an augmented text of *Sermo 160*, or an unidentified intermediate source cannot be said with any confidence.³⁸ There is nothing, however, either in the 'Eusebian' homilies or in *Sermo 160* that equates to the wider dramatic emphasis in the Corpus homily on the gates and gatekeepers of hell. Indeed, the particular combination of details in the Corpus homily — the defence of the gates of hell, their dramatic destruction, and the ironic reference to sleeping gatekeepers — appears to be unparalleled in harrowing narratives available in the early medieval period. The effect of this narrative sequence is not only to emphasize the violence of the harrowing, but also, through the dramatic focus upon the gates of hell, to present the event from the perspective of the demonic inhabitants of hell as a terrifying invasion of an apparently secure and defended place. This aspect of the harrowing receives considerably more attention in the homily than does Christ's departure from hell and his release of the righteous prisoners, which is dealt with relatively briefly.³⁹

The focus on the gates of hell in the early part of the Corpus homily thus conceptualizes the architecture of hell in defensive terms. To an extent not paralleled in other accounts of the harrowing, the homilist presents a narrative of invasion focused around the image of the gates themselves and their failure to prevent incursion from without. This emphasis is in stark contrast, however, to the depiction of hell as a bound space that we find in the later part of the Corpus homily.

Judgement Day

The account of the harrowing and resurrection with which the homily begins occupies a little more than a third of the longer text edited by Hulme (p. 610, l. 1–p. 611, l. 30). Following a short description of the terrors of the last days (p. 611, l. 31–p. 612, l. 8), the bulk of the homily — a little more than half of its total length — then consists of an account of judgement day (p. 612, l. 8–p. 614, l. 5). In their presentation of Christ's agency as saviour and judge, the connection between these two moments in salvation history — the harrowing and judgment day — might seem inevitable, and yet this specific juxtaposition is perhaps made less commonly than might be expected. The clearest parallel for this combination of elements in the Corpus homily comes, in fact, from another Old English Easter homily, Blickling homily VII (*Dominica Pascha*). Despite general similarities, however, the treatment in these two homilies is sufficiently different in detail to make any direct connection seem unlikely.⁴⁰

the passage in fact reflects the 'Eusebian' homilies (corresponding to *Homilia XII*, ll. 10–27) more closely than it does the printed text of *Sermo 160*.

³⁸ So, too, Price, 'Edition', pp. 149–52.

³⁹ 'And ure Domine nam þa Adam be his handa and teah hine up of þære helle and ealle ða halgan saula þe ðæron wæron. And on ðæne dæg, ðe nu to-dæg is, micelne here þara halegra saula he lædde mid him up of ðære helle and brohte to heofenum and gefylde þa setl mid þam saulum ðe lange ær weste stodon' (p. 611, ll. 26–30, 'And then our Lord seized Adam by his hand and drew him up from hell, and all of the souls of the holy who were therein. And on that day, which is now today, he led a great host of the holy souls up with him from hell and brought them to heaven and filled with those souls the dwellings that had long previously stood desolate').

⁴⁰ Campbell, 'To Hell and Back', p. 138.

The final section of the Corpus homily opens with a description of Christ's appearance, seated on his throne with the wounds of his passion displayed, and recounts the terror of that moment for the souls awaiting judgement, before proceeding with an account of Christ's words to mankind (p. 612, l. 31–p. 613, l. 17), for which the ultimate source was the influential *Ego te, homo* address from Caesarius of Arles' *Sermo 57*.⁴¹ Following the conclusion of this speech, the text of the homily in CCCC MS 41 — but not that in CCCC MS 303 — continues with a rare homiletic motif known as 'delivering the damned', which describes how the Virgin Mary, St Peter, and the Archangel Michael successively intercede with Christ on behalf of a portion of the sinful (p. 613, ll. 18–30). Though apparently sufficiently widely-known to be condemned on doctrinal grounds by Ælfric, this intercession motif survives only here and in a slightly more developed form in Vercelli homily XV.⁴² Its omission from the copy of the Corpus homily in CCCC MS 303 — the major point of difference between the two copies of the text — may reflect its unorthodox and theologically problematic nature.⁴³ In both witnesses, however, the final entry of the blessed into heaven is preceded by a striking depiction of St Peter locking the entrance to hell after the descent of the damned:

And nimað þanne þa deofolo ða lafe and lædað to helle, and he gæþ þonne æfter, Sanctus Petrus, and belicþ þa helle and wyrpð þa cæge on þone grund, þa næfre siððan Gode an geminde ne cumað. (p. 613, ll. 31–33)

And then the devils shall seize that remnant and lead them to hell. And he, St Peter, shall go after them, and lock hell and cast the key into the abyss, so that it will never afterwards come into the mind of God.⁴⁴

This description of the locking of hell is both arresting and unusual. No Latin source or analogue has been identified to date, but alongside the Corpus homily, it can be found in two further, apparently related, Old English homilies. Of these, one is, again, Vercelli homily XV. Here, as in the CCCC MS 41 text, the locking of hell follows directly from the 'delivering the damned' motif (ll. 184–99). The other analogue is the homily known as Assmann XIV (ll. 130–39), a composite homily that may well be drawing upon a version of Vercelli XV at this point.⁴⁵ In this text, however, as in the copy of the Corpus homily in CCCC MS 303, the locking of hell is not preceded by the 'delivering the damned' motif.

The possible relationships between these three homilies are difficult to discern, but certain similarities of structure and subject matter are evident. The account of judgement day in both Vercelli XV and the Corpus homily includes the details of Christ displaying his wounds, the delivering of the damned motif (in the longer Corpus text only), and the locking of hell. The

⁴¹ See further *Vercelli Homilies*, ed. by Scragg, pp. 140–42. On Caesarius' influence more broadly, see Joseph B. Trahern, 'Caesarius of Arles and Old English Literature: Some Contributions and a Recapitulation', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 5 (1976), 105–19.

⁴² For Ælfric's condemnation, see 'XXXIX In Natale Sanctum Uirginum', in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, *Early English Text Society*, s. s., 5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 327–34, ll. 184–98. See further Mary Clayton, 'Delivering the Damned: A Motif in OE Homiletic Prose', *Medium Aevum*, 55 (1986), 92–102; Thomas D. Hill, 'Delivering the Damned in Old English Anonymous Homilies and Jón Arason's Ljómur', *Medium Aevum*, 61 (1992), 75–82; Price, 'Edition', pp. 174–86.

⁴³ Sarah Cutforth, 'Delivering the Damned in Old English Homilies: An Additional Note', *Notes & Queries*, n. s., 40 (1993), 435–37.

⁴⁴ The translation of 'on þone grund' as 'into the abyss' here reflects the variant reading 'on þone seað' ('into the pit') in CCCC MS 303 (p. 75, l. 25), as well as the explicit statement that Peter casts the key into hell in the textual analogues cited in the following discussion. The capitalization and word division of the final clause reflects Price's correction of Hulme ('Edition', p. 214).

⁴⁵ *Angelsächsische Homilien und Heiligenleben*, ed. by Bruno Assmann, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa 3 (Kassel: XXXXX, 1889), pp. 164–69.

omission of the delivering the damned motif in Assmann XIV may be explained by doctrinal concerns, as has been suggested in the case of the shorter Corpus text, but the sequence of events in Assmann XIV does include, before the condemnation of the damned, an abbreviated version of the same *Ego te, homo* address (ll. 124–30) that appears in both versions of the Corpus homily. A textual lacuna at the corresponding place in the surviving copy of Vercelli XV raises the likelihood that this detail originally formed part of this homily as well, providing the source for the abbreviated account preserved in Assmann XIV.⁴⁶ The treatment of these details in the two versions of the Corpus homily is not sufficiently close to either Vercelli XV or Assmann XIV to suggest direct borrowing. However, the similarities in the structure of the accounts, including the use of very rare homiletic motifs, strongly suggests that a common source underlies all three vernacular accounts of judgement.⁴⁷

The effect of the description of the locking of hell — in all three homilies — is clearly to emphasize the finality of damnation. This is especially clear in the Corpus homily. In both Vercelli XV and Assmann XIV we are told that Peter locked hell because he could not bear the sight of the suffering of the damned:

& þonne wendeð him sanctus Petrus þanon fram þære helle dura, & he ðonne weorpeð ða cearfullan cæge ofer bæc in on þa helle. Ðis he deð for ðam þe he ne mæg locian on ðæt mycle sar & on ðam myclan wanunge & on ðam myclan wope þe þa earman sawla dreogað mid ðam deoflum in helle tintrego (Vercelli XV, ll. 195–98).

And then St Peter shall turn then from the door of hell, and he shall then cast the dreadful key over his shoulder into hell. He shall do this because he is unable to look upon that great pain, and upon that great lamentation, and upon that great weeping that the wretched souls endure amongst the devils in the torments of hell.⁴⁸

This statement undoubtedly fits the compassionate presentation of Peter as intercessor in the ‘delivering the damned’ motif, but it nevertheless seems unsatisfactory as an explanation for the emphasis on the locking of hell in these texts.⁴⁹ As we have seen, the equivalent passage in the Corpus homily is quite different, with Peter apparently casting the key of hell into the abyss in order to forestall any possibility of divine mercy in the future (‘þa næfre siððan Gode an geminde ne cumað’).⁵⁰

The emphasis on the finality of judgement in this passage from the Corpus homily recalls the illustration of the locking of hell that forms part of the famous judgement miniature contained in the Winchester *Liber Vitae* (London, British Library, MS Stowe 944, fol. 7^r:

⁴⁶ *Vercelli Homilies*, ed. by Scragg, pp. 250–52. Cf. D. G. Scragg, ‘The Corpus of vernacular Homilies and Prose Saints’ Lives before Alfred’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 8 (1979), 223–77 (pp. 231, 245–46).

⁴⁷ For further discussion, see Clayton, ‘Delivering the Damned’, pp. 94–96.

⁴⁸ Cf. Assmann XIV, ll. 135–37.

⁴⁹ Indeed, this explanation of Peter’s actions runs counter to the common Gregorian notion that the sight of the torments of the damned in fact reinforces the joys of the blessed in heaven. On this motif, and especially its use in the Old English poem *Christ III*, see Timothy D. Arner and Paul D. Stegner, ‘“Of þam him aweaxeð wynsum gefea”: The Voyeuristic Appeal of *Christ III*’, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 106 (2007), 428–46. Cf. below note 53.

⁵⁰ The metaphorical description of damnation as ‘not coming to the mind of God’ seems to have had some formulaic currency in Anglo-Saxon England. Accounts of judgement in both *Christ III* ll. 1536b–37a (‘Nales dryhtnes gemynd | siþpan gesecað’ [‘afterwards they will by no means come to the lord’s mind’]) and Cynewulf’s *Elene* ll. 1302b–03 (‘Gode no syððan [...] in gemynd cumað’ [‘never afterwards ... come into the mind of God’]) express the torments of the damned in this way. In the poem *Daniel*, on the other hand, Nebuchadnezzar’s soul is said to turn ‘in godes gemynd’ (‘into the memory of God’, l. 629b) following his return to sanity and to the true faith after his period of madness.

figure 2), an image which seems to draw upon just this same homiletic motif.⁵¹ Albeit that it is an angel, rather than St Peter, depicted here locking hell, the miniature resembles the homiletic accounts closely in its representation of the angel locking the door of hell, turning away, and throwing the key over its shoulder into hell.⁵² Architectural detail dominates the depiction of heaven and hell in the upper and lower registers of this miniature, and there is a clear and strong opposition between the open door of heaven at the top of the page and the closed door of hell at the bottom.⁵³ In both cases, the door functions as a means of inclusion and exclusion, but where the one welcomes and secures, the other confines and constrains. In this contrast, hell is again depicted as a secure enclosure — not least through the paradoxical image of the key of hell apparently passing through a solid wall in the bottommost register. Logically, this detail undercuts the conception of hell as a hermetically sealed space. Less pedantically, however, the image powerfully suggests the hopelessness of those imprisoned within — as is dramatically realised in both the Vercelli XV and Assmann XIV accounts, in which the noise made by the key falling into hell is imagined: ‘eala, broðor mine, hu mycel & hu hlud bið se cynll þonne seo cæge fealleð in ða helle’ (‘alas, my brothers, how great and how loud will be the knell when that key falls into hell’, Vercelli XV, ll. 198–99).⁵⁴

Conclusions

The locking of hell, in both text and miniature, expresses the torments of the damned in architectural terms. A locked door to which there is no key effectively ceases to function as a door. Its potential for varied signification is denied, as the meaning of both the door and the space beyond is defined absolutely. Curiously, although their presence is implicit in the act of locking hell, neither copy of the Corpus homily actually refers directly to either doors or gates at this point. This is in contrast to the accounts in both Vercelli XV and Assmann XIV, where doors are specifically mentioned. Nevertheless, it is in the Corpus homily that the dramatic motif of the locking of hell contributes most significantly to the wider thematic structure of the text.

The Corpus homily is unique in several details. No other text from Anglo-Saxon England can match the emphasis that the homily places on the gates of hell as a locus for the dramatic action of the harrowing — an emphasis that seems to have been the result of deliberate selection and organization of material. Nor is the emphasis on the gates of hell as a defensive feature matched in comparable texts from this period. At the same time, the juxtaposition of this account of the harrowing with the dramatic ‘locking of hell’ motif that we find in the

⁵¹ Cf. Catherine E. Karkov, ‘Judgement and Salvation in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*’, in *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Kathryn Powell and Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2003), 151–63. As Karkov demonstrates, the composition of the miniature contributes significantly to the manuscript’s theological and political message regarding the salvific benefits of both royal patronage and ecclesiastical intercession.

⁵² This connection has been discussed by David F. Johnson, who explains the appearance of two keys in the bottom register of the miniature as an example of simultaneous representation of sequential action (‘A Scene of Post-Mortem Judgment in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*’, *Old English Newsletter*, 34 (2000), 26–30 (p. 26)).

⁵³ This opposition is also emphasized by the contrast within the miniature between the upwards gaze of the two sinners being thrust into hell in the bottom register and the downward gaze of the two figures looking out of a window in the upper register. This opposition has been connected to the Gregorian idea that the vision of the joys of heaven forms an additional punishment for the damned and the vision of the torments of hell enhances the bliss of the saved (Johnson, ‘Post-Mortem Judgement’, pp. 27–29). Cf. above note 49.

⁵⁴ Cf. Assmann XIV, ll. 138–39.



Figure 2. The Liber Vitae Judgement Scene, MS Stowe 944, fol.7^r. © The British Library Board.

Corpus homily is not mirrored in either of the other surviving witnesses to this motif. The result of this juxtaposition is a text dominated by an architectural conception of hell. Both the terror of the devils at the harrowing and the suffering of the damned on judgement day are represented in the homily through the respective opening and closing of the gates of hell. But the contrasting representation of these gates — first locked from within to keep invaders out, then locked from without to keep captives in — serves a didactic as well as a structural purpose.

We have seen at the beginning of this article how, in his own account of the harrowing, Ælfric exploits the multiple signification of doorways in order to promote a tropological message regarding the urgency of moral choice: within the world, the gates of hell are simultaneously open or closed to each individual based upon their actions and intentions. The approach in the Corpus homily is different. The structure of the Corpus homily creates a contrast according to which the same architectural feature — the gates of hell — comes to represent, in the first instance, salvation, and, in the second instance, damnation. But whereas Ælfric presents these alternatives in terms of simultaneous and unrealized potentialities, the Corpus homily establishes a contrast between the significance of the gates in the past at the harrowing — at the moment at which salvation becomes available to mankind — and their significance in the future at judgement — at the moment at which salvation (or damnation) becomes a reality for each individual. In this way, we might think, the homily depends upon an analogical interpretation of the gates of hell as an architectural feature, viewing their changing significance in the context of salvation history. What both texts have in common, however, is that for each author, the didactic message of the text is founded upon a keen sensitivity to the rich potential signification of architectural representation.

The Architecture of the Grave in Early Middle English Verse

Helen Appleton

A short rhyming lyric on death found in Latin and English versions on fol. 47^v of Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.39 (323), a late thirteenth-century manuscript containing many such lyrics, neatly contrasts the dwelling places of life with those of death:¹

Cum sit gleba tibi turris,
Tuus puteus conclauis,
Pellis et guttur album
Erit cibus vermium.
Quid habent tunc de proprio
Hii monarchie lucro?

Unde anglice sic dicitur:

Wen þe turuf is þi tuur
Ant þi put is þi bour,
þi wel ant þi wite þrote
Ssulen wormes to note.
Wat helpit þe þenne
Al þe worilde wne?²

When the glebe is your tower and a pit your chamber, skin and white throat will be worms' food. What will these possess of their own wealth of the kingdom then?

Wherefore it is said in English thus:³

¹ The lyric is no. 6456 in *The DIMEV: An Open-Access, Digital Edition of the Index of Middle English Verse*, ed. by Linne R. Mooney, Daniel W. Mosser, and Elizabeth Solopova, with Deborah Thorpe and David Hill Radcliffe, <http://www.dimev.net> [accessed February 2017]. Future references to the *DIMEV* are given in parenthesis. Ralph Hanna III dates the manuscript s. xiii^{ex} and places it in Worcestershire: 'Reconsidering the Auchinleck Manuscript', in *New Directions in Later Medieval Manuscript Studies*, ed. by Derek Pearsall (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2000), pp. 91–102. Karl Reichl dates the MS 1255–60, from Herefordshire or Worcestershire: *Religiöse Dichtung im englischen Hochmittelalter: Untersuchung und Edition der Handschrift B.14.39 des Trinity College in Cambridge* (München: Fink, 1973), pp. 48–46, 49–54. See also M. R. James, *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), p. 444.

² *Religiöse Dichtung*, ed. by Reichl, p. 444.

³ Translation of the Latin by Thomas Gibson Duncan, *A Companion to the Middle English Lyric* (Woodbridge:

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When the turf is your tower and your pit is your bower, your skin and your white throat
shall be of benefit to worms. What help to you then is all of the world's joy?

These paired lyrics depict the architecture of life transformed into that of the grave; this image of the grave as an unsettling transformation of the built spaces of its occupant's life is found in several early medieval death lyrics, and can be traced back to Old English material.⁴ They also exemplify the use of architectural representation to depict the grave in a *contemptus mundi* tradition, warning against worldliness by reminding the reader that worldly wealth, as symbolised by architecture suggestive of courtly status, is transitory and cannot save the body from corruption.

These paired lyrics also illustrate how the 'grave-as-house' tradition could be adapted to echo contemporary fashions, ensuring the greatest possible cultural resonance. These lyrics, as Duncan Thomas notes, are not simple translations of each other: the English lyric is a more sophisticated rendering than the Latin in terms of its architectural imagery.⁵ While the Latin speaks more generally of a *turris* and a *conclave*, the built space of the English text is loaded with romance resonances. As Thomas observes, the use of *bour* in the English lyric, 'Wen þe turuf', in conjunction with the white skin and throat, conventional signs of aristocratic female beauty, suggest that its addressee is a high-status lady.⁶ The contrast between courtly status and post-mortem decay is made more acute by the implied figure of a beautiful woman. Assonance and alliteration are employed in the English lyric to link the features of the castle and the grave more closely than in the Latin, intensifying their connection. The commonplaces of romance have been drawn into this depiction of the grave to present a culturally resonant image of post-mortem decay that warns against the sin of worldliness by revealing the transitory nature of material wealth. In this way 'Wen þe turuf' exemplifies a pattern of adaptation, influence, and convergence that can be traced in the architectural representation of the grave in early Middle English lyrics.

The artful brevity of the representation of the grave as an architectural space in 'Wen þe turuf' draws on a well-established tradition that can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period.⁷ This study will track the origins, development, and adaptation of this kind of grave-as-house imagery in early Middle English lyrics on death to argue for its pervasive cultural resonance. Social shifts and an increasing emphasis on the sin of worldliness reconfigure the design of the grave from the basic domestic architecture of the house, seen in twelfth-century texts such as the Worcester *Soul's Address to the Body* fragments, into the high-status courtly dwelling of 'Wen þe turuf', drawing on the *contemptus mundi* tradition popular in Middle English death lyrics. Yet throughout the period, the perverted domestic architecture of the grave is used to induce fear; it remains a hellish image associated with eschatological

Brewer, 2005), pp. 205, n. 33. Translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

⁴ This article focuses on the broad category of death lyrics. Many of the texts discussed belong to the Soul-and-Body genre, whose complexities are far beyond the scope of this piece. The authoritative study is that of Théodor Batiouchkof, 'Le débat de l'âme et du corps', *Romania*, 20 (1891), 1–55, 513–78. See also Rudolph Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 50 (1935), 957–83.

⁵ Duncan, *Middle English Lyric*, p. 205.

⁶ Duncan, *Middle English Lyric*, p. 205. See *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. by Sherman M. Kuhn, Hans Kurath and Robert E. Lewis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952–2001), <http://quod.lib.umich> [accessed February 2017], s.v. *Bour*: 'Sense 1 (a) A dwelling, house, mansion, cottage; (b) a shelter, den; (c) a bower. Sense 2 (a) An inner room; esp., a bedroom; (b) a lady's chamber; also, a suite for ladies, the women's quarters'.

⁷ Eleanor K. Heningham, 'Old English Precursors of the Worcester Fragments', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 55 (1940), 291–307.

themes. These associations make grave-as-house imagery an extremely effective and widely understood warning against sin; the success of ‘Wen þe turuf’ as a prompt for contemplation depends on the strength of these cultural resonances, which allow its architectural metaphor to stimulate consideration of broader themes.⁸

That the grave is conceptually a house because it is a dwelling is an ancient idea in Christian thought: Psalm 48.12 condemns the rich with the verse ‘et sepulchra eorum domus illorum in aeternum’ (‘and their sepulchres shall be their houses for ever’). The concept of grave-as-house is reflected iconographically in the architectural record; several house-shaped shrines and grave markers survive from the early medieval period, such as the Fordwich stone of c. 1100, which is a skeuomorph of a house, complete with pillars and a tiled roof.⁹ The textual record provides further evidence, such as the house-shaped shrine of St Chad, described in Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* iv.3, and the house-shaped chrismal of Ældhelm’s *Aenigmata* 55.¹⁰ Douglas Moffat has drawn attention to archaeological evidence of house-like burials in early Anglo-Saxon England.¹¹ These house-shaped graves suggest that the image of grave-as-house was a cultural commonplace appropriated by these poems and given an unpleasant nature in order to evoke terror. The horror in these death lyrics is derived primarily from the body’s imagined awareness of its post-mortem environment, perverting conventionally comforting domesticity. In these poems the occupant of the grave is consistently addressed in the second person, blurring distinctions between body and reader. The house of the grave ceases to be a neutral image, and, through the experiences of its occupant, which echo the suffering of the sinful soul in hell, it becomes a frightening image of the reader’s own future.

As Rosemary Woolf notes, the earliest depiction of the grave as an architectural space in English literature is found in Old English prose.¹² Homily IX in the late tenth-century Vercelli Book describes five likenesses of hell.¹³ The fourth likeness is the grave:

⁸ Heningham, ‘Precursors of the Worcester Fragments’.

⁹ Anon., ‘Proceedings at Meetings of the Royal Archaeological Institute’, *Archaeological Journal*, 86 (1929), 258–60, fig. 7. A fragment of a similar monument survives in St Mark’s, Lincoln: Paul Everson and David Stocker, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England: Lincolnshire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 284. For a discussion of house-shaped shrines in Anglo-Saxon England see Leslie Webster, ‘A Recently Discovered Anglo-Carolingian Chrismatory’, in *Matter of Faith: An Interdisciplinary Study of Relics and Relic Veneration in the Medieval Period*, ed. by James Robinson, Lloyd De Beer, and Anna Harnden (London: The British Museum, 2014), pp. 66–74. Hogbacks have also been interpreted as evoking houses, although their relationship to gravesites is debated. See Howard Williams, ‘Hogbacks: the Materiality of Solid Spaces’, in *Early Medieval Stone Monuments: Materiality, Biography, Landscape*, ed. by H. Williams, J. Kirton and M. Gondek (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2015), pp. 241–68; ‘“Clumsy and Illogical”? Reconsidering the West Kirby Hogback’, *The Antiquaries Journal*, 96 (2016), 69–100; ‘Citations in Stone: The Material World of Hogbacks’, *European Journal of Archaeology*, 19 (2016), 497–518.

¹⁰ Bede, *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), pp. 346–47. Aldhelm, *Aldhelmi Opera*, ed. by Rudolf Ehwald, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi*, 15, 2 vols (Berlin: Weidmann, 1913–19), 1 (1913), 122.

¹¹ Douglas Moffat, ‘The Grave in Early Middle English Verse: Metaphor and Archaeology’, *Florilegium*, 6 (1984), 96–102.

¹² Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 83.

¹³ The homily’s textual history is complex: see *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, ed. by Donald Scragg, Early English Text Society, o. s., 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 151–57. The image of grave-as-house is also found in versions of the text in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 340 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 115.

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Ðonne is ðære feorðan helle onlicnes byrgen nemned, for þan þæs huses hrof bið
[gehnæg]led þe him onufan ðam breostum siteð ... Hafað him þonne syððan þry gebeddan,
þæt is þonne groot & molde & wyrmas. (ll. 101–06)¹⁴

The fourth likeness of hell is named the grave, for the roof of that house, which sits over his breast, bows down ... He then has three bedfellows, that is grit and earth and worms.

The grave is imagined as a house whose roof presses on the chest of its occupant and offers no protection from the depredations of the worms. The claustrophobic imagery echoes the typical representation of hell in Old English texts as a narrow space full of torments.¹⁵ J. E. Cross identified a Latin parallel to this section of the homily in the tenth-century *Catechesis Celtica*.¹⁶ However, as Charles Wright has noted, the image of grave-as-house is unparalleled — it may be an Anglo-Saxon innovation, perhaps influenced by Job 17.13: ‘si sustinero infernus domus mea est in tenebris stravi lectulum meum’ (‘if I wait, hell is my house: and I have made my bed in darkness’).¹⁷ This image of grave-as-house with hellish associations is picked up and developed by successive generations of English writers, who employ the image to encourage contemplation and contrition.

The short alliterative poem *The Grave* (DIMEV 5543), copied in a late twelfth-century hand on f. 170^r of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343, has attracted critical praise for its macabre style; the poem offers a witty presentation of the grave as an architectural perversion of the dwelling-places of life.¹⁸ The speaker of *The Grave* employs an unsettlingly measured tone to deliver an elaborate metaphorical description of the grave, stating: ‘ðe was bold ʒebyld er þe iboren were’ (‘for you a house was built before you were born’, l. 1). This house is not a happy home:

Ne bið no þin hus healice itinbred,
Hit bið unheh and lah þonne þu list þerinne;
Ðe helewæzes beoð laʒe, sidwæzes unheʒe,
þe rof bið ibyld þire broste ful neh.
Swa ðu scealt on molde wunien ful calde,
Dimme & deorcæ þet den fulæt on honde,
Dureleas is þæt hus & dearc hit is wiðinnen
Ðær þu bist feste bidytt, & dæð hefð þa cæʒe.
Ladlic is þet eorð hus & grim inne to wunnien,
Ðær þu sceat wunine & wurmes þe to deleð.
Ðus ðu bist ileʒd & ladæst þine fronden;

¹⁴ *Vercelli Homilies*, ed. by Scragg, p. 168. See also Charles D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁵ For example, the devil in Cynewulf’s *Elene* claims to have been confined by God in an ‘engan ham’ (‘narrow home’, l. 920a), and in *Juliana* comes from one (l. 323a); hell is described by Satan as an ‘ænga styde’ (‘narrow place’, l. 356a) in *Genesis B*. All Old English poetry is cited from *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition*, ed. by George P. Krapp and Elliot van Kirk Dobbie, 6 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931–53).

¹⁶ J. E. Cross, ‘The Literate Anglo-Saxon — on Sources and Disseminations’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 58 (1972), 67–100 (pp. 73 n. 4, 95, text given in 95 n. 5).

¹⁷ Hell and the grave are also equated in the poem *Christ and Satan* which describes hell as a ‘grim græfhus’ (‘grim grave-house’, l. 707a).

¹⁸ Douglas D. Short, ‘Aesthetics and Unpleasantness: Classical Rhetoric in the Medieval English Lyric *The Grave*’, *Studia Neophilologica*, 48 (1976), 291–99 (p. 292); Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric*, p. 83. The final three lines of *The Grave* appear to be an addition: see Eve Siebert, ‘A Possible Source for the Addition to the Grave’, *American Notes & Queries*, 19 (2006), 8–16. Bodley 343 is a twelfth-century manuscript containing Old English homilies. See *Old English Homilies from Ms Bodley 343*, ed. by Susan Irvine, Early English Text Society, o. s., 302 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

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Nefst ðu nenne freond þe þe wylle faren to.
Ðæt efre wile lokien hu þe þæt hus þe likie
Ðæt æfre undon ðe wule ða dure
... & þe æfter lihten,
For sone þu bist ladlic & lad to iseonne. (ll. 7–22)¹⁹

And now your house is not built high; it is short and low, when you lie within it; the end-walls are low, the side-walls not high, the roof is built very near to your breast. So you shall dwell in the earth, very cold. Dim and dark, that den will quickly become foul, door-less is the house and dark inside, where you are shut fast, and death has the key. That earth house is hateful and grim to dwell within, there you shall dwell and worms shall tear you apart. Thus you will be laid, and hateful to your friends. You will not have any friend who will go to you. That will ever ask how you like that house, that will ever undo that door for you, ... and afterwards deliver you, for immediately you will be loathsome and hateful to behold.

The Grave contrasts the fundamentally unpleasant house to be occupied by the body with the idealised spaces of life: the house of the grave is not ‘healice itinbred’ (‘built high’), rather it is ‘unheh’ (‘un-high’).²⁰ The negative prefix emphasises the perversion of idealised domestic space. Its low roof is explicitly designed to crush the body, oppressing rather than protecting: ‘Swa ðu scealt on molde wunien ful calde’ (‘so you shall dwell in the earth, very cold’, l. 5). The dark and inescapable house, which no friend will ever enter, extends the image of containment; the world is indifferent to the body’s feelings, in implicit contrast to the way in which visitors interact with the domestic spaces of the living.²¹ As Eleanor Heningham notes, the image recalls Vercelli IX, implicitly presenting a hellish space, but its terror has been increased through the poet’s indulgent amplification of the basic metaphor.²²

A further probable echo of hellish space is to be found in the paradoxical image of the ‘dureleas’ house which has a key, held by death. The house is ‘dureleas’ as it has no way of ingress or egress during the life of the world, but that it has a key, held by death, can be read as an oblique reference to the bodily resurrection at Doomsday when the graves will be opened by God, recalling Revelation 1.18: ‘et ecce sum vivens in saecula saeculorum et habeo claves mortis et inferni’ (‘and behold, I am living for ever and ever and have the keys of death and of hell’).²³ In his commentary on Revelation, *Explanatio Apocalypsis*, Bede interprets this image as denoting not only God’s mastery over death, but also the power of the church in the forgiveness of sins:

¹⁹ *Middle English Debate Poetry*, ed. by John W. Conlee (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991), p. 5. The ellipses mark a lacuna in the manuscript at l. 21.

²⁰ For a discussion of the use of the word *heahgetimbru* to describe heaven in Old English texts, see Hannah M. Bailey, ‘*Heahgetimbru*: A Reassessment of *Christ III* ll. 972–976’, *Notes & Queries*, n. s., 63 (2016), 346–51, although the usage here is more similar to *heahtimber* in *The Gifts of Men* l. 45.

²¹ The image of the body as loathsome to its former friends occurs elsewhere; cf. Blickling Homily X: *The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century: From the Marquis of Lothian’s Unique Ms. A.D. 971*, ed. by Richard Morris, Early English Text Society, o. s., 18 (London: Trübner, 1874–80), p. 111, but the playful expansion discussing the friends’ lack of solicitude is unique to *The Grave* (although Blickling Homily VIII lists the flattery of friends in its *ubi sunt* passage: *Blickling Homilies*, ed. by Morris, p. 99).

²² Heningham, ‘Precursors of the Worcester Fragments’, p. 305.

²³ On the image of hell as a locked space, see also the above article by Daniel Thomas.

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Non solum, inquit, mortem resurrectione devici; sed et ejusdem mortis habeo dominium. Quod etiam Ecclesiae Spiritum sanctum insufflando tribuit. *Quorum*, inquires, *dimiseritis peccata, dimittuntur eis*, et caetera.²⁴

Not only, he says, have I overcome death by my resurrection, but I have dominion over death itself. He shares this as well with the Church by breathing onto it the Holy Spirit, saying, *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.*²⁵

The keys' association with sin, resurrection and judgement suggests an implicit moral purpose to *The Grave*: the fate of the body, trapped in a hellish space, reminds the reader of the extent of Christ's power. This leads to contemplation of the fate of the soul and the necessity of appealing to Christ for salvation, an idea developed in later treatments of the grave-as-house image.

The Grave constructs the grave as a likeness of hell in order to remind its reader both of inevitable bodily decay, and of the fate of the sinful soul. The repeated use of second person pronouns means that, as Douglas Short observes, 'the audience find themselves to be as much the focus of the poem as the grave itself'.²⁶ The image of death holding the key prompts the reader to recall the bodily resurrection, when graves will open, but the poem's distant and indifferent tone does not suggest the ultimate destination of the grave's occupant; rather it implies the inexorable nature of Judgement. Although the poem's addressee is clearly a body, *The Grave*, like 'Wen the turuf', is not, as Louise Dudley points out, a Soul-and-Body text: both poems' unidentified speakers adopt a tone unlike that of the vituperative soul in Soul-and-Body material.²⁷ While Soul-and-Body poems tend to dwell on the fate of the wicked, as Dudley notes: 'The power of "The Grave" lies in the fact that it is describing the fate of everyone, saint as well as sinner'.²⁸ Confronted with the universal future dwelling place of the grave, rendered unsettlingly immediate through the poem's fluid tenses, combined with oblique references to Judgement and uncertainty about the body's identity or fate, the discomfited reader must then question the state of their own soul.

The more explicit moralising of another early Middle English text, the Worcester *Soul's Address to the Body* fragments, suggests that eschatological associations are what the doorless house in *The Grave* is intended to evoke. In 1837 Sir Thomas Phillipps came upon fragments of a manuscript containing Ælfric's *Grammar* and early Middle English poetry, which had been copied in the early-thirteenth century by the Tremulous Hand of Worcester.²⁹ Phillipps's discovery was rebound as Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F. 174, where the seven fragments of *The Soul's Address to the Body* (A-G) are now found on fols 63^v-66^v. These fragments are assumed to be the remains of a complete poem spoken by a sinful soul to its body; as in the earlier Old English poems *Soul and Body I* and *II*, only the soul speaks, berating its mute body.³⁰ The soul is typically accusatory and anguished, in marked contrast to

²⁴ Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844-65), xciii (1850), col. 137a.

²⁵ Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*, trans. by Faith Wallis (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), p. 115. The quotation is from John 20.23.

²⁶ Short, 'Aesthetics and Unpleasantness', p. 295.

²⁷ Louise Dudley, 'The Grave', *Modern Philology*, 11 (1914), 429-42.

²⁸ Dudley, 'The Grave', p. 439.

²⁹ See Christine Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand of Worcester: A Study of Old English in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

³⁰ *The Old English Soul and Body*, ed. by Douglas Moffat (Cambridge: Brewer, 1990). The body is also mute in

the distanced voice of *The Grave*. The Worcester *Soul's Address* is generally dated to the latter half of the twelfth century and, like *The Grave*, makes use of the image of the grave as a doorless house.³¹ Several of the fragments describe the grave as a dark, constricting house, using, as Heningham highlights, lines identical to those of *The Grave*.³² Two fragments describe the grave as a 'durelease huse' (B l. 40b, E l. 8b), but whereas *The Grave* distils the terror to simple architectural details, the *Soul's Address* uses architecture as part of a wider-ranging diatribe, making explicit that which must be understood by the reader of *The Grave*. These two twelfth-century poems establish a pattern repeated in the thirteenth-century death lyrics discussed below: broader discussions of sin and death employing architectural representation allow for the production of pithy works such as *The Grave* and 'Wen þe turuf' by ensuring that the image of grave-as-house conjures certain associations for the medieval reader, allowing even brief texts to impart a weighty moral message.

Fragment C describes the grave occupied by the body in lines almost identical to those of *The Grave* (ll. 29–31), but here the image is a clear contrast with the house of life, and relates directly to the body's uncharitable behaviour:

Noldest þu on þine huse herborwen þeo wrecchen,
 ne mihten heo under þine roue none reste finden;
 noldest þu nefre helpen þam orlease wrecchen,
 ac þu sete on þine benche underleid mid þie bolstre,
 þu wurþe cneow ofer cneow ne icneowe þu þe sulfen
 þet þu scoldest mid wurmen wunien in eorþan.
 Nu þu hauest neowe hus, inne beþrunge;
 lowe beoþ þe helewewes, unheiȝe beoþ þe sidwoces,
 þin rof liiþ on þine breoste ful neih. (C, ll. 23–31)

You did not wish to harbour wretches in your house, nor might they find any rest under your roof; you would never help the poor wretches, but you sat on your bench, underlain with your bolster, you crossed knee over knee, you did not know yourself that you should dwell with the worms in the earth. Now you have a new house, hemmed in inside; the end walls are low, the side walls are un-high, your roof lies very close on your breast.

The constricting architecture appears to be a punishment for the enjoyment of worldly comforts while others suffered, harking back to the image of the grave as a likeness of hell in Vercelli IX. The repeated sounds of 'cneow ofer cneow ne icneowe þu þe sulfen' intimately connect the body's behaviour to its fate in its 'neowe hus'. Similarly, the reference to the 'durelease huse' in l. 40 of Fragment B comes after a condemnation of the greed of the body: whereas the spiritual state of the occupant in *The Grave* is unknown, that of the Worcester fragments is explicitly sinful.

The other use of the phrase 'durelease huse' in the Worcester *Soul's Address* supports reading this image as related to Judgement. Fragment E states:

the fragmentary Soul-and-Body poem in the Trinity S. Andrea homily (*DIMEV* 186). See Kathryn Wymer, 'A Poetic Fragment on the Soul's Address to the Body in the Trinity Homilies', *Notes & Queries*, 55 (2008), 399–400.

³¹ *The Soul's Address to the Body: The Worcester Fragments*, ed. by Douglas Moffat (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press 1987), p. 25. Quotations are from this edition. The fragments' sequence has been debated. See Douglas Moffat, 'The Worcester *Soul's Address to the Body*: An Examination of Fragment Order', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 20 (1984), 123–40.

³² Heningham, 'Precursors of the Worcester Fragments', pp. 304–05. The relationship between the two texts (mutual dependence or direct borrowing) has been the subject of critical debate. See Dudley, 'The Grave'.

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Nu þu bist bihuded on alre horde fulest,
On deope seaþe, on durelease hus.
Þu scalt rotien and brostnian, þine bon beoþ bedæled
of þære wæde þe heo weren to iwunede;
brekeþ liþ from liþe, liggeþ þe bon stille,
oþ ure drihten eft of deaþe heo aræreþ,
so he alle men deþ þonne domesdai cumeþ.
Þonne scalt þu, erming, up arisen,
imeten þine morþdeden, þeo þe murie weren,
seoruhful and sorimod so þin lif wrouhte. (E, ll. 7–16)

Now you are concealed in the foulest of hoards, in a deep pit, in a door-less house. You shall rot and decay, your bones will be separated from the clothes to which they were accustomed; limb will break from limb, the bones will lie still, until our Lord raises them again from death, as he will do to all men when Doomsday comes. Then you shall, wretch, rise up, sorrowful and sad-minded, meet/measure your deadly sins, which were pleasing to you when wrought in your life.

The body is reminded by the soul that they shall be reunited by Christ at Doomsday. Later in Fragment E the image of the grave closed by death until God opens it is made more explicit:

Nu þu bist afursed from alle þine freonden;
nu is þin muþ forscuttet for deaþ hine haueþ fordutted,
ne biþ he ne nammare undon ær cume þæs heiȝe kings dom.
Þonne hit biþ isene so hit on psalme seiþ:
reddituri sunt de factis propriis rationem,
Þonne sculen þeo soule seggen hore deden
wisliche þurh wisdom, for drihten hit wot;
þonne heo onfoþ hore dom of drihtenes muþe,
Also hit is awriten of drihtenes muþe:
ite maledicti in ignem eternum.
Þonne sculen wit siþien to alre seoruwe mest,
faren mid feondes in þet eche fur,
beornen þer efre, ende nis þer nefre,
et qui bona egerunt ibunt in uitam eternam,
þonne sculen þeo goden mid gode siþian,
echelice wunien in alre wuldre mest [...]’ (E, ll. 37–52)

Now you are removed from all of your friends; now your mouth is stopped up, because death has obstructed it; it will not be opened any more until the judgement of the high king comes. Then it will be seen, as it says in the psalm: *they shall give an account of their own deeds*, then the souls shall recount their deeds wisely through wisdom, for the Lord knows it; then they receive their judgement from the Lord’s mouth, moreover it is written from the Lord’s mouth: *depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire*. Then we two shall journey to the greatest of all sorrows, travel with fiends into the eternal fire, burn there ever after, there will never be an end, *and those who have done good works will depart into everlasting life*; then the good shall journey with God, eternally dwell in the greatest of all glories [...]

³³ See Helen Appleton and Francis Leneghan, ‘Introduction: The Psalms in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England’, *English Studies*, 98 (2017), 1–4.

Here the soul echoes the idea found in *The Grave* that friends abandon the body. The first Latin phrase, which comes not from a psalm but from the Athanasian Creed, authorises the preceding image of Doomsday.³³ At this point the body will be released from the grave and reunited with its wicked soul to face eternal damnation, while the good, as another line from the Athanasian Creed assures, go to eternal glory. The eschatology here renders explicit that which is implicit in *The Grave*.

Few later depictions of the architecture of the grave can match the panache of *The Grave*, but many texts share and develop the Worcester fragments' explicit association of grave-as-house imagery with worldly wealth and eschatological contemplation. Death lyrics placing emphasis on the consequences of worldliness were popular in the thirteenth century. One such is *The Latemest Day* (DIMEV 5640), a piece in monorhyming quatrains found in differing versions in four thirteenth-century manuscripts. The poem has been connected to the Worcester fragments and makes connections between grave-as-house imagery and eschatology.³⁴ In each of its manuscripts *Latemest Day* is preceded by the poem *When I Think on Doomsday* (DIMEV 6339), suggesting eschatological associations, and it concludes with an instruction to live right as 'mou we quemen crist at þe stronke dome' ('we must please Christ at the mighty judgement', l. 100). But although the poem employs architectural imagery for the grave of a wealthy man, it takes little interest in the buildings occupied in life, breaking the interconnection of the two spaces seen in the twelfth-century poems. To find the origins of 'Wen the turuf's equation of high-status dwellings to the grave, we must first explore the introduction of courtly architecture to the death lyric in an extremely influential twelfth-century Anglo-Latin Soul-and-Body poem, the *Visio Philiberti*.

The *Visio Philiberti*, which appears to be a free reworking of the *Royal Debate* (an earlier Anglo-Latin Soul-and-Body text), is preserved in many English and continental manuscripts, and was adapted into several vernaculars, but there is critical consensus that it is of English origin.³⁵ The *Visio Philiberti* is a complex text; David Baker and Neil Cartlidge have identified 188 manuscripts containing various versions, and suggest many more remain to be identified.³⁶ Unsurprisingly, there is no authoritative edition.³⁷ The discussion below focuses on the text

³⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86; Oxford, Jesus College, MS 29, Part II; Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.39; London, British Library, MS Cotton Caligula A.IX, 247. The Digby text has been edited by Edmund Stengel: *Codicem Manu Scriptum Digby 86: In Bibliotheca Bodleiana Asservatum* (Halle an der Saale: Orphanotrophen, 1871), pp. 98–101; the Caligula text and Jesus texts by Richard Morris: *An Old English Miscellany Containing a Bestiary, Kentish Sermons, Proverbs of Alfred, Religious Poems of the Thirteenth Century, from Manuscripts in the British Museum, Bodleian Library, Jesus College Library, etc.*, Early English Text Society, o. s., 49 (London: Trübner, 1872), pp. 168–85; and the Trinity and Caligula texts by Carleton Brown: *English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), pp. 46–54. The text is cited from Brown's edition. Heningham ('Precursors of the Worcester Fragments', p. 293) thinks the poem is 'little more than a condensed version of The Worcester Fragments'; Moffat (*Soul's Address to the Body*, pp. 41–42) is more sceptical.

³⁵ On its relation to the *Royal Debate* see: Eleanor K. Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul Preserved in Ms. Royal 7 A.iii in the British Museum* (New York: [published by the author], 1939), pp. 25–43. On provenance see: *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*, ed. by Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1841), p. 95; Robert W. Ackerman, 'The Debate of the Body and the Soul and Parochial Christianity', *Speculum*, 37 (1962), 541–65, (p. 543); Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric*, p. 91. On adaptations: Neil Cartlidge, 'In the Silence of a Midwinter Night: A Re-Evaluation of the *Visio Philiberti*', *Medium Ævum*, 75 (2006), 24–45.

³⁶ David P. Baker and Neil Cartlidge, 'Manuscripts of the Medieval Latin Debate between Body and Soul ("Visio Philiberti")', *Notes & Queries*, 61 (2014), 196–201. Although the poem has been attributed to both Walter Mapes and Robert Grosseteste, neither attribution is currently in favour.

³⁷ The most numerous version (131 manuscripts) has been edited by Wright, *Latin Poems*, pp. 95–106; other versions by Édélestand Du Ménil, *Poésies populaires latines antérieures au douzième siècle* (Paris: Brockhaus et Avenarius, 1843), pp. 217–30; Theodor Georg von Karajan, *Frühlingsgabe für Freunde älterer Literatur* (Wien: Ritter von

edited by Thomas Wright, which appears to represent an early version. The *Visio Philiberti* narrates a vision received on a winter's night of a debate between a soul and its body. The chief innovation of the *Visio Philiberti* and its source the *Royal Debate*, in comparison to earlier Soul-and-Body material, is that the body actively participates in a dialogue with the soul, offering its own perspective on the grave.

The romance inflection to the architecture of the grave in 'Wen the turuf' is a distinct and clever innovation, but the use of courtly buildings to represent the transitory nature of worldly power was firmly established by the thirteenth century, influenced by the use of such architecture in the *ubi sunt* section of the *Visio Philiberti*.³⁸ The poem also contains grave-as-house imagery, but the two traditions are not explicitly connected: the grave encourages contemplation of sin through its hellish associations; the *contemptus mundi* imagery associated with architecture reinforces the contrast between the spaces of life and death. *Visio Philiberti* has a distinctly courtly air; as Cartlidge notes, 'the Soul's complaint against the Body is presented specifically in terms of a scenario that is distinctly and recognisably feudal'.³⁹ Architectural lexis is not found in the *Royal Debate*, but is key to conveying the elevated status of the deceased in the *Visio Philiberti*. In the poem's *ubi sunt* passage, the soul addresses the body, saying:

non es nunc in turribus de petris quadratis,
sed nec in palatio magnæ largitatis;
nunc jaces in feretro parvæ quantitatis,
reponenda tumulo qui minimo est satis!
Quid valent palatia, pulcræ vel quid ædes?
vix nunc tuus tumulus septem capit pedes. (ll. 17–22)⁴⁰

You are not now in towers of squared stone, nor in your lavish palace; now you lie on a small bier, to be put in a tomb which just satisfies! Of what use are your palaces or beautiful house? your tomb now scarcely occupies seven feet.

This is only one image among many in a long debate, but its emphasis on architectural representations in a *contemptus mundi* section is a clear precursor to 'Wen þe turuf'.⁴¹ But the grave is not yet a metaphorical castle: here grand architecture is simply contrasted with the narrow grave whose smallness mocks its occupant's ambitions. The image is an old one: as several critics have noted, the E-Text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* employs it in its entry on death of King William (1087): 'Se þe wæs ærer rice cyng & maniges landes hlaford, he næfde þa ealles landes buton seofon fotmæl' [He who was previously a powerful king and the lord of many lands he then had nothing of all the land but seven feet of space].⁴² The chronicle's

Möslé's Witwe und Braumüller, 1839), pp. 85–97. The Du Méril text has been translated by Clark Sutherland Northup, 'Dialogus inter Corpus et Animam: A Fragment and a Translation', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 16 (1901), 503–25. The challenges of editing are discussed by Cartlidge, 'A Re-Evaluation of the *Visio Philiberti*', pp. 24–25.

³⁸ *Ubi sunt* passages are a long-established commonplace of texts concerned with death. See J. E. Cross, 'Ubi sunt Passages in Old English: Sources and Relationships', *Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund. Arsbok* (1956), 25–44; Claudia Di Sciacca, 'The "Ubi Sunt" Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 105 (2006), 365–87; Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric*, p. 96.

³⁹ Cartlidge, 'A Re-Evaluation of the *Visio Philiberti*', p. 30.

⁴⁰ *Latin Poems*, ed. by Wright, p. 96.

⁴¹ The comparable *ubi sunt* passage of the *Royal Debate* lacks this focus on stonework.

⁴² *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Ms. E*, ed. by Susan Irvine (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), p.

rendering is more effective as, like *The Grave* and ‘Wen the turuf’, it compares like-for-like: here land is contrasted with land. Although the *ubi sunt* passage in the *Visio Philiberti* draws an explicit contrast between the architecture of life and the grave, it compares architecture with space: the paradox of the two alike, yet unlike buildings is not present here.

Later in the *Visio Philiberti* the grave is described as an architectural space. In the version of the text edited by Wright there are two references to grave-as-house. The Soul asks the Body:

Tua domus qualiter tibi modo placet?
tibi nonne summitas super nasum jacet?
excæcantur oculi, lingua tua tacet;
nullum membrum superest quod nunc lucro vacet. (ll. 55–58)⁴³

How does your house please you now? Doesn't its top lie above your nose? Your eyes are blinded, your tongue is silent; no limb is left that might have time for profit.

The Body later responds:

Tamen quando fueram vivens tibi ficta,
ea quæ nunc respicis sunt mihi relictæ,
putredo cum vermibus, et est domus stricta,
quibus sum assidue fortiter afflicta.
Et scio præterea quod sum surrectura
in die novissimo, tecumque passura
pœnas in perpetuum : o mors plusquam dura,
mors interminabilis, fine caritura! (ll. 215–22)⁴⁴

Nevertheless, when I was alive, formed to you, those things which you now see were bequeathed to me: rotteness with worms, and this is a narrow house, by which I am constantly afflicted, and furthermore I know that I will rise on the last day and will suffer with you perpetual punishment. O death, more than cruel! O interminable death, lacking end!

As in the vernacular texts discussed above, the body, afflicted by worms, occupies a ‘domus stricta’. The narrow house is again connected to worldliness and Doomsday, suggesting that these bodily torments are a foreshadowing the worldly soul’s fate in hell. This image is very much in the same tradition as *The Grave* and the *Soul’s Address*; despite the earlier appearance of courtly architecture, the grave remains a house. The introduction of architecture as one of the symbols of the worldliness traditionally seen to lead to the narrow house of the grave and to hell paves the way for the merging of the courtly architecture of the *contemptus mundi* tradition with the image of the grave-as-house in ‘Wen þe turuf’, but rather than explicitly contrasting the earlier *turribus* and *palatum* of life with the narrow house of the grave, the poet employs the images in parallel. The *Visio Philiberti* represents an intermediate stage of the process between grave-as-house and grave-as-castle.

The material of the *Visio Philiberti* lends itself to reconfiguration, as its manuscript history shows; the contents of the poem are, as Cartlidge notes, ‘adaptable, open to reappropriation, and impersonal in a way that made it seem like common cultural property’.⁴⁵ The modification

96. See Heningham, ‘Precursors of the Worcester Fragments’, p. 305.

⁴³ *Latin Poems*, ed. by Wright, p. 97.

⁴⁴ *Latin Poems*, ed. by Wright, p. 103.

⁴⁵ Cartlidge, ‘A Re-Evaluation of the *Visio Philiberti*’, p. 37.

of this material in the vernacular shows the extent to which Cartlidge's observation holds true, as the courtly architecture of the *ubi sunt* passage of the *Visio Philiberti*, together with the image of grave-as-house, was appropriated and adapted in thirteenth-century Middle English poems on death such as *Als I Lay in a Winteris Nyt* (DIMEV 605) and *In a Pestri Stude I Stodi* (DIMEV 2462).

Als I Lay in a Winteris Nyt is one of the most affecting Middle English Soul-and-Body debates; Robert Ackerman terms it a 'bleakly powerful homily on the wages of sin and the need for repentance'.⁴⁶ *Als I Lay* survives in seven manuscripts, the earliest of which (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108) is late thirteenth-century.⁴⁷ *Als I Lay* draws on the *Visio Philiberti*, as well as the earlier *Royal Debate* and its Anglo-Norman adaptation *Un Samedi par Nuit*, but employs conventional imagery with delicacy and flair, leading Woolf to describe the debate section as 'probably the cleverest passage in all Middle English lyrics'.⁴⁸ The poem depends on Latin materials, but the vernacular allows for an extra layer of courtliness and worldliness, as both body and soul, freed from the feminine gender dictated by the Latin nouns *anima* and *caro*, can become those of a wealthy knight.

Als I Lay includes a long *ubi sunt* section in which the soul mocks the courtly pleasures once enjoyed by the body, which include castles and towers, employing the architectural imagery found in the *Visio Philiberti* but absent from the *Royal Debate* and *Un Samedi par Nuit*. In *Als I Lay* the grave begins to be represented as a courtly architectural space as the explicitly sepulchral *tumulus* of *Visio Philiberti* is replaced with the more domestic *bour*:

ʒwere beon þi castles and þi toures,
þi chaumbres and þi riche halles
I-peynted with so riche floures,
And þi riche robes alle?
þine cowltes and þi couertoures,
þi cendels and þi riche palles?
Wrechede is nouʒ þi bour!
Tomoruwe þouʒ schaly þer-inne falle! (ll. 25–32)⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ackerman, 'Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 565.

⁴⁷ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. a.1 (Vernon MS); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 108 (ll. 1–48, 185–642 only); London, British Library, MS Add. 22283 (ll. 1–198 only); London, British Library, MS Add. 37787; London, British Library, MS Royal 18 A.X; Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates' 19.2.1 (Auchinleck MS). There are numerous editions of the text from these manuscripts, such as: Wilhelm Johannes H. Linow in Wilhelm Johannes H. Linow and Hermann Varnhagen, *De Desputisoun Bitwen þe Bodi and þe Soule nebst der ältesten altfranzösischen Bearbeitung des Streites zwischen Leib und Seele* (1889), pp. 1–112; *Latin Poems*, ed. by Wright, pp. 334–46; *Middle English Debate Poetry*, ed. by Conlee, pp. 20–49. The relationship between the various manuscripts has been analysed by Linow (*Desputisoun*, pp. 5–10). See also J. Justin Brent, 'The Eschatological Cluster — Sayings of St. Bernard, Vision of St. Paul, and Dispute between the Body and the Soul — in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Laud Misc. 108', in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Laud Misc. 108: The Shaping of English Vernacular Narrative*, ed. by Kimberly K. Bell and Julie Nelson Couch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 157–76.

⁴⁸ Linow (*Desputisoun*, pp. 10–13) makes connections to the *Visio Philiberti* and the Anglo-Norman poem, while Heningham (*Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul*, pp. 25–36) argues for the influence of the *Royal Debate*. See also Ackerman, 'Debate of the Body and the Soul', pp. 543–44. *Un Samedi par Nuit* has been edited by Wright (*Latin Poems*, pp. 321–33) and by Hermann Varnhagen (in Linow and Varnhagen, *Desputisoun*, pp. 115–96). Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric*, pp. 98–102.

⁴⁹ Quotations from the edition of Conlee (*Middle English Debate Poetry*, pp. 20–49, based on MS Laud Misc. 108 (pp. 20–23, 29–49) with material from the Auchinleck MS (pp. 23–29).

Where are your castles and your towers, your chambers and your rich halls painted with such rich flowers, and all of your rich robes? Your quilts and your covers, your costly and expensive fabrics? Your bower is now wretched! Tomorrow you shall fall in there!

The grave in *Als I Lay* is repeatedly characterized as a bower rather than a house, which in the context of the imagery of castles and towers, with which it rhymes, and the identity of the deceased as a knight, constructs the grave as a courtly chamber.⁵⁰ The poem as a whole, as J. Justin Brent notes, displays ‘a persistent concern with the genre of romance’, playing with imagery of courtly lovers and dwelling on the knight’s delight in hunting.⁵¹ Yet this courtly *bour* of seven feet, which has replaced the palace, exhibits the same unpleasant characteristics as the more basic grave houses:

Fram þe palays þat þou I lay,
Wiþ wormes is now y-taken þin in;
Þi bour is bilt wel cold in clay,
Þe rof schal take to þi chin.
Þou þat neuer in all þi liue
Of þis warldes mock miȝtest be sad,
Now schaltow haue at al þi siþe
Bot seuen fet, vnneþe þat. (ll. 77–84)

From the palace in which you lay, with worms you are now taken in; your bower is built very cold in clay, the roof shall touch your chin. You that never in life of all this world’s things might have your fill, now you shall have for all of your journey but seven feet, scarcely that.

The narrator of *Als I Lay* ends the poem with an instruction to repent, made all the more compelling by his physically manifested terror: ‘On ile a her a drope stod | For friȝt and fer þer as I lay’ (‘on every hair a drop of sweat stood, for fright and fear there as I lay’, ll. 611–12). *Als I Lay* concludes with a note of consolation:

Þo þat sunful ben, I rede hem red
To schriuen hem and rewen sore:
Neuere was sunne i-don so gret
Þat Cristes merci ne is wel more. (ll. 621–24)

To those that be sinful, I give the counsel to shrive themselves and regret sorely: there never was a sin done so great that Christ’s mercy is not a greater good.

Repentance, however late, will allow the reader to avoid being dragged to hell like the sinful soul in the poem’s horrifying dénouement.

The transmuted architecture of the grave is a key component of *Als I Lay* but it is not its primary conceit; the poet makes much more of hunting as a symbol of worldliness: the mock-chivalric image of the soul, mounted on a devil, savaged by hellhounds, then flung into the pit by fiends is the culminating horror on which the reader should dwell. For the poet of *Als I Lay*, unlike those of ‘Wen the turuf’ and *The Grave*, architectural imagery is not the most effective way to express the knight’s fall and to induce repentance. Yet the architecture of the grave clearly remained a popular prompt to contrition in the thirteenth century though its capacity to terrify by blurring the comforting domestic spaces of life with the horrors of death, enabling the poet of ‘Wen the turuf’ to produce a text that, like *The Grave*, succinctly taps into broader cultural resonances to provide an effective meditation on sin.

⁵⁰ The poem plays around with the two primary meanings of *bour* and their connotations.

⁵¹ Brent, ‘Eschatological Cluster’, p. 157.

The Architecture of the Grave in Early Middle English Verse

The continued importance of architectural representations of the grave can be seen in *In a Pestri Stude I Stod*, a thirteenth-century Soul-and-Body text which comes closest to the playful imagery of 'Wen the turuf'. *Pestri Stude* survives in three manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.39, and London, British Library, MS Harley 2253. In the poem, the unwilling body of a nobleman engages in a dialogue with his scolding, taunting soul. The soul dominates, having a long monologue on the signs of Doomsday, maintaining the grave's association with judgement. Life and its pleasures are connected to buildings, as the soul carps at the body that 'in halle þou were ful kene, þe whil þou were on liue' ('you were quite keen in hall, while you were alive', l. 5).⁵² After an account of the body's deceit and pride the soul berates it with an *ubi sunt* passage:

Bodi, wer beþ þine solers and alle þine toures?
Þine feire cloþes and þine couertoures?
Ful louue shalt þou fallen for alle þine boures.
To Jhesu wille ich callen, he be mi socours. (ll. 45–48)⁵³

Body, where are your chambers and all your towers? Your fair clothes and your coverings?
You shall fall very low for all your bowers. I will call to Jesus, he will be my succour.

The body's immediate reply recognises an exchange of dwelling place:

Wrecche gost, þou vend auei, fare þer þou shalt fare;
Me is wo i-nou, mine sides beþ colde and bare;
Min hous is maket of cleie, þe woues beþ colde and bare;
Pei þou chide niȝt and dai, ne sege ich þe namore. (ll. 49–52)

Wretched ghost, you turn away, go wherever you will go; there is woe enough for me, my sides are cold and bare; my house is made of clay, the walls are cold and bare; though you chide me night and day, I will say no more to you.

In a line reminiscent of 'Wen the turuf', the towers and chambers are equated with the body's clay house, whose cold bare sides remind the reader that it is of no protection at all. Here the architectural space of the grave is being directly contrasted to the courtly built spaces of life.

The image of the body's torment within the architecture of the grave as a prolepsis of the fate of the worldly after Judgement becomes explicit as the poem nears its conclusion with the soul's account of the signs of Doomsday. At this point in the Digby manuscript *Pestri Stude* runs into a separate Doomsday poem (*DIMEV* 6339) with, as Conlee notes, no indication of break.⁵⁴ In the Trinity and Harley manuscripts *Pestri Stude* concludes with the soul's return to hell, and the poem reflects on the fate of the body, here from the Harley manuscript text:

Whiles he wes in worlde, he hevede frend ant kyn.
When he is graved under mold, al cold ys hys yn.
The wormes sitteth on ys brest ant eteth of ys chyn.
Ne haveth he frend on erthe that thenketh opon hym. (ll. 101–04)⁵⁵

⁵² Quotations from the edition of Conlee (*Middle English Debate Poetry*, pp. 10–17), based on MS Digby 86, except where indicated. The Harley text has been edited by Susanna Greer Fein: *The Complete Harley 2253 Manuscript*, 3 vols (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2014), II, art. 22. All three texts are edited in *Religiöse Dichtung*, ed. by Reichl, pp. 339–65.

⁵³ The variant from the Harley manuscript is 'Vader, ant Holy Gost, shild me from helle shoures!' ('Father and Holy Ghost shield me from hell showers', l. 40), rendered more poignant by the ultimate fate of the soul.

⁵⁴ Conlee, *Middle English Debate Poetry*, p. 17, n. 106.

⁵⁵ Cited from *Harley 2253 Manuscript*, ed. by Fein.

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While he was in the world, he had friends and kin. When he is buried underground, all cold is his inn. The worms sit on his breast and eat from his chin. He hasn't a friend on earth who thinks

The depiction of the grave as a cold inn suggests the lodging there is temporary, causing the reader to contemplate the bodily resurrection, described by the soul in Digby manuscript ll. 85–87 (ll. 79–81 in the Harley manuscript text).⁵⁶ The poem continues with a contemplation of the failure of wealth to buy off death, suggesting what we should learn from its earlier lines through commonplace images of the architecture of the grave:

Her we haveth houses of lym ant of ston,
Ant alle we shulen hem leven, everuchon;
Fare we shule to a bour that is oure long hom —
Nouther more ne lasse bote from the hed to ton;
Ther shal rotie ure fleyshe al to the bon.

When the flor is at thy rug, the rof ys at thy neose,
Al this worldes blisse nis nout worth a peose.
Bote yef Jesu Cristes merci among us more were,
To wrothere hele that ever we in londe comen here.

To thin holy halewen, Crist, bring us alle yfere.
Amen. (ll. 118–28)⁵⁷

Here we have houses of lime and of stone, and we will relinquish them all, every one; we will travel to a bower that is our lasting home — neither more nor less than from the head to the toe; there will our flesh rot entirely to the bone. When the floor is at your back, the roof is at your nose, all this world's bliss is not worth a pea. Unless Jesus Christ's mercy be greater among us, we on earth will always come here to an evil outcome. To your holy saints, Christ, bring us all together. Amen.⁵⁸

Here the grave is playfully portrayed as both a long home and a tiny house, reminding the reader of how small the grave will be, and how great the length of time that it must be occupied.⁵⁹ The use of *bour* takes on courtly associations, as in *Als I Lay*, following as it does from images of towers, rich clothes, and stone buildings. *Pestri Stude* concludes with a final reminder of the uselessness of worldly wealth, and an appeal for help to avoid the fate depicted in the poem.⁶⁰ The architectural imagery serves as the finale; the horrors of the grave urge the reader to direct themselves to Christ and join with the voice of the narrator in an appeal to be brought together with the saints.

From the final images of *Pestri Stude* it is a short step to 'Wen the turuf', which relies on a distillation of the longer text's concluding imagery; the courtly architecture lost at

⁵⁶ The Trinity manuscript reads 'Nu he lies in þe graue, he holdet in þarin' ('now he lies in the grave, he remains therein', l. 122): *Religiöse Dichtung*, ed. by Reichl, p. 363.

⁵⁷ The Trinity manuscript is broadly similar but retains a four-line stanza form: *Religiöse Dichtung*, ed. by Reichl, pp. 364–65.

⁵⁸ Translation by Fein.

⁵⁹ Similar images of the churchyard as a 'longe hous' and the grave a 'long home' in Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* are discussed by Laura Varnam in the article below.

⁶⁰ The same image occurs in a lyric found in Trinity College B.14.39, *Proprietates Mortis* (DIMEV 6383): 'þanne lyd min hus vppe min nose | off al þis world ne gyffe ihic a pese' ('when my house lies above my nose, I don't give a pea for all this world', ll. 21–22). *English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century*, ed. by Brown, p. 130.

death becomes equated with the architecture of the grave to position the lyric firmly in the *contemptus mundi* tradition, aided by the echo of the folly of worldlings in Psalm 48.12. The use of second-person pronouns and the absence of a frame identifying the addressee in ‘Wen the turuf’ draw the reader into the text, as in *The Grave*. Although *bour* next to the image of the beautiful white throat suggests a female addressee, its use for the spaces occupied by knights in *Als I Lay* and *Pestri Stude* would also allow a male figure; the focus on architecture, rather than clothing or hunting contributes to the lyric’s broad resonance. The final lines of ‘Wen the turuf’ recall the expansive treatments of the same theme in the other texts, leading the reader to contemplate all the ways in which wealth will fail to protect the body, and the impossibility of buying one’s way into heaven at Doomsday.

The powerful distortion of the comfort conventionally associated with the home in life ensures the enduring resonance of the grave-as-house image in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This contrast between the spaces of life and death highlights the transitory and problematic nature of worldly wealth, making grave-as-house an effective image in the *contemptus mundi* tradition. ‘Wen the turuf’ is, like *The Grave*, a condensation of themes found in longer texts, reliant on architectural contrasts to make its point and to encourage the reader, through the horrifying image of a hellish domestic space, to turn away from sin. The poet of ‘Wen the turuf’ trusts that the reader will bring the conventional associations of certain architectural imagery to their interpretation of the text. As Woolf notes in her discussion of the short lyric ‘Nu þu unseli bodi up-on bier list’ (*DIMEV* 3809), ‘one *ubi sunt* question, especially when it contains an evocative touch of romance phraseology, is not necessarily less effective than a whole series’.⁶¹ Indeed, in the case of ‘Wen the turuf’, it is perhaps more so: the act of answering the solitary question posed requires the reader to unpack myriad associations and engage in a thorough contemplative exercise, facilitated by the accumulated resonances of the architecture of the grave.

⁶¹ Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric*, p. 93.

‘Synne to shewe, vs to frame’: Representing the Church in Robert Mannyng’s *Handlyng Synne*

Laura Varnam

In his influential treatise on poetics, the *Poetria Nova* (c. 1200), Geoffrey of Vinsauf famously used the metaphor of the architect as a didactic exemplum for the poet:

Si quis habet fundare domum, non currit ad actum
Impetuosa manus: intrinseca linea cordis
Praemetitur opus, seriemque sub ordine certo
Interior praescribit homo, totamque figurat
Ante manus cordis quam corporis; et status ejus
Est prius archetypus quam sensilis. Ipsa poesis
Spectet in hoc speculo quae lex sit danda poetis.
Non manus ad calamum praeceps, non lingua sit ardens
Ad verbum: neutram minibus committe regendam
Fortunae; sed mens discrete praeambula facti,
Ut melius fortunet opus, suspendat earum
Officium, tractetque diu de themate secum.
Circinus interior mentis praecircinet omne
Materiae spatium.¹

If a man has a house to build, his impetuous hand does not rush into action. The measuring line of his mind first lays out the work, and he mentally outlines the successive steps in a definite order. The mind’s hand shapes the entire house before the body’s hand builds it. Its mode of being is archetypal before it is actual. Poetic art may see in this analogy the law to be given to poets: let the poet’s hand not be swift to take up the pen, nor his tongue be impatient to speak; trust neither hand nor tongue to the guidance of fortune. To ensure greater success for the work, let the discriminating mind, as a prelude to action, defer the operation of hand and tongue, and ponder long on the subject matter. Let the mind’s interior compass first circle the whole extent of the material.²

Like the master builder, the poet is advised to plan the structure of his work and ‘circle’ the material thoroughly in his mind before he handles it poetically. The construction of the text, like the construction of a building, is ‘archetypal before it is actual’. The *Poetria Nova* was

¹ *The Poetria Nova and its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine*, ed. and trans. by Ernest Gallo (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1971), p. 16 (ll. 43–56).

² *Poetria Nova*, trans. by Margaret F. Nims, rev. ed. with introduction by Martin Camargo (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2010), p. 20.

the most popular treatise on rhetoric in the late Middle Ages, as Martin Camargo explains: 'as a standard curricular text and the supreme authority on the art of poetry, the *Poetria Nova* exerted an influence on writing practices and literary aesthetics that extended far beyond the immediate pedagogical contexts of its use. For the better part of three centuries, every poet, whether writing in Latin or one of the vernacular languages, would have experienced that influence'.³ Geoffrey's use of the metaphor of the master builder is a cornerstone of late medieval architectural representation and the connection that he sets up between material and poetic composition forms part of the intellectual background to the early fourteenth-century penitential handbook *Handlyng Synne* by Robert Mannyng (c. 1283–c. 1338) that will be the subject of this article. Geoffrey of Vinsauf begins his teaching on the art of poetry by correlating architectural and textual composition. In this article, I will show how Robert Mannyng also exploits the didactic potential of architectural construction in his attempt to teach the reader how to 'handle sin'; rather than constructing a house, Mannyng builds an archetypal parish church and churchyard to frame and locate his pastoral guidance.

The church was the building at the heart of medieval religious life and Mannyng draws on both the symbolism and the material reality of church architecture to support his didactic purpose in the text. He reminds us that we 'handyl synne euery day | yn wrde & dede al þat we may' and, paradoxically, that deliberately cultivating such 'handling' is a productive part of the penitential process.⁴ 'Handyl so to ryse from all', Mannyng urges, 'þat none make þe eft to falle' (ll. 109–10). In Mannyng's formulation, sin is tangible; it is something to be touched and handled. But the Middle English *hondlen* also means to 'manipulate', to 'deal with' and 'act upon'.⁵ As Mark Miller summarises, 'the insistent materiality of sin, the way it attaches to us in all of our dealings with the world, means that it is at the same time manipulable if we gain the proper training' and it is this training that Mannyng's penitential handbook aims to provide.⁶ The text frames and materialises sin through architectural representation in order to teach the reader how to recognise and deal with it.

In the first part of this article I will contextualise *Handlyng Synne* as part of the literature of pastoral care that flourished in the wake of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), focusing in particular on the ways in which the text's representation of the church might resonate with the architectural allegories of Robert Grosseteste and William of Durandus, both of whom use the church as a didactic model. In the second part, I will show how Mannyng establishes the church as a frame, both metaphorical and material, for the public exposure of sin, a fundamental step in the process of learning to recognise and then handle it. In Mannyng's examination of sacrilege, the damage done to material fabric of the church, from churchyard walls to tombs, plays a crucial role in demonstrating the effect of misbehaviour on the sanctity of the church. The final section will demonstrate how these themes are explored in Mannyng's most famous exemplum, 'The Dancers of Colbek'. Architectural representation emerges as a rich symbolic resource for Mannyng, both for the construction of his text and the edification of his readers as he teaches them how to successfully handle sin.

³ Camargo, 'Introduction', p. 15.

⁴ Robert Mannyng, *Handlyng Synne*, ed. by Idelle Sullens (Binghamton, New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1983), ll. 89–90. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition by line number.

⁵ *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. by Sherman M. Kuhn, Hans Kurath and Robert E. Lewis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952–2001), <http://quod.lib.umich> [accessed February 2017], s.v. 'hondlen', senses 2 and 3c. Hereafter the *Middle English Dictionary* is cited as *MED*.

⁶ Mark Miller, 'Displaced Souls, Idle Talk, Spectacular Scenes: *Handlyng Synne* and the Perspective of Agency', *Speculum*, 71 (1996), 606–32 (p. 613).

Robert Mannyng and the Context for *Handlyng Synne*

Robert Mannyng tells us in the prologue to *Handlyng Synne* that he addresses ‘alle crystyn men vndyr sunne’ (l. 57), the ‘gode men of brunne [Bourne]’ (l. 58), and most especially the Gilbertine community at Sempringham in Lincolnshire (l. 60). Mannyng was a Gilbertine canon at Sempringham and it has been suggested that he was either master of novices or, as has been proposed more recently by Joyce Coleman, the *hospitarius* or guest-master responsible for the pilgrims who came to visit the priory.⁷ Coleman argues that *Handlyng Synne* was written ‘both to edify the pilgrims and to induce them to contribute to the rebuilding of the priory church’, an ambitious project which began in 1301.⁸ Mannyng started work on *Handlyng Synne* in 1303 (as he tells us in line 76) and the text’s promotion of the importance of caring for the church building to prevent sacrilege could have encouraged visiting pilgrims to donate to the building work that was visible around them.

None of the surviving manuscripts of *Handlyng Synne* date from Mannyng’s lifetime, however. As Sullens records, ‘nine manuscripts contain all or parts of *Handlyng Synne*’ and the three most complete manuscripts date to c. 1400: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 415 and its two copies, Folger Library, MS V.b.236 and London, British Library, MS Harley 1701.⁹ The surviving manuscripts demonstrate that *Handlyng Synne* remained popular and relevant long after Mannyng’s initial composition; indeed, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborn MS a2 may be as late as the mid-fifteenth century, a century and a half after Mannyng initially produced the text for the Sempringham community.¹⁰ The sustained usefulness of the text also attests to the enduring need for material in the vernacular that encouraged good behaviour among priests and laity, particularly in relation to their spiritual and material home on earth, the church.

As a penitential handbook, *Handlyng Synne* came out of the flourishing tradition of pastoral care literature that was generated by the injunctions of the Fourth Lateran Council on yearly confession and the education of the laity. Texts such as Mannyng’s provided priests with entertaining exempla in the vernacular to teach the laity the key components of moral behaviour and such material was frequently recycled and borrowed from other sources, with expansions and additions as necessary. *Handlyng Synne* is itself a ‘translation, adaptation, and expansion’ of the Anglo-Norman *Manuel des Pechiez*, a text often attributed to William of Wadington.¹¹ Following the *Manuel*, *Handlyng Synne* is ‘highly schematic in layout’, as Mark Miller has recognised: after a short prologue, the text proceeds with clearly organised sections on the Ten Commandments (ll. 147–2990), Seven Deadly Sins (ll. 2991–8586), Sacrilege (ll. 8587–9500), Seven Sacraments (ll. 9501–11310), and Confession (ll. 11311–

⁷ Raymond G. Biggar, ‘Mannyng, Robert (d. in or after 1338)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17986> [accessed 17 September 2015]. Joyce Coleman, ‘Handling Pilgrims: Robert Mannyng and the Gilbertine Cult’, *Philological Quarterly*, 81 (2002), 311–26 (p. 312).

⁸ Coleman, ‘Handling Pilgrims’, pp. 312 and 318.

⁹ Sullens, *Handlyng Synne*, pp. xviii–xix.

¹⁰ Sullens, *Handlyng Synne*, pp. xxiii and xxviii–xxxi.

¹¹ Biggar, ‘Mannyng, Robert’. Sullens argues in her 1983 edition of *Handlyng Synne* that the attribution to Wadington is generally discredited (p. xxxviii) but Matthew Thomas Sullivan reassesses the case for Wadington in his 1990 D. Phil. thesis and concludes that Wadington is indeed the author, identifying him as a ‘secular canon and prominent figure in legal hierarchy of the Diocese of York’ (‘The Original and Subsequent Audiences of the *Manuel des Pechés* and its Middle English Descendants’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1990), abstract).

12638).¹² Each section and subdivision is signposted: for example, 'the first comaundement: pou shalt haue no god but one', 'here begynne þe seuene dedly synnys. The first dedly synne ys Pryde', 'þe first poynt of shryfte'.¹³ The text then alternates between 'exemplary narratives and a combination of commentary, ethical and religious instruction, and general descriptions of the topic or topics at hand'.¹⁴ The exempla are often identified with the phrase 'a tale', as Sullens replicates in her edition, and this combined with the section headings makes the text easy to navigate and its overarching framework clear to the reader. I want to suggest that the clearly demarcated structure of the text is in part supported by the architectural language and role of the church within the text. The use of architecture as a structuring device for thought is well attested by the work of Mary Carruthers on medieval memory and Christiania Whitehead on architectural allegory.¹⁵ The church was one of the primary architectural models used for such purposes, alongside the temple, the ark, and the cloister. Texts such as the *Rationale divinorum officiorum* by William of Durandus (c. 1280s), for example, read church architecture allegorically in order to construct an ideal community, with each architectural feature assigned to an appropriate member of the congregation.¹⁶ The pavement represented the poor in spirit and the common people, for example, and the pillars signified the bishops and teachers who uphold the temple of God.¹⁷ Operating on a strictly hierarchical schema, the *Rationale* put each member of the community in their place and constructed an ideal social order, an order that was reinforced by the practicalities of accessing church space.¹⁸ The laity were traditionally housed in the nave whereas priests had control of the chancel, the most sacred space of the church.

Church architecture was also used to organise and catalogue pastoral material in the Middle Ages. In the 1220s Robert Grosseteste used St Paul's assertion that Christians are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3.16) to structure his teaching on confession and penance in his short treatise the *Templum Dei*.¹⁹ Aimed at educating priests and supporting their pastoral work, the text constructs a twofold temple of God. The corporeal temple represents the human body and the spiritual temple — built on the foundations of faith, with walls of hope and a roof of love — represents the soul. The enumeration of the features of each temple enabled Grosseteste to systematize his teaching on the *cura animarum*, and the *Templum*

¹² Miller, 'Displaced Souls', p. 608. Cynthia Ho also describes the text as having a 'carefully numbered and subdivided organizational scheme': 'Dichotomize and Conquer: "Womman Handlyng" in *Handlyng Synne*', *Philological Quarterly*, 72 (1993), 383–401 (p. 383).

¹³ Sullens, *Handlyng Synne*, pp. 7, 77, and 282 respectively. Sullens does not include this rubrication in the line numbering.

¹⁴ Miller, 'Displaced Souls', p. 609.

¹⁵ Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003).

¹⁶ *The Rationale divinorum officiorum of William Durand of Mende: A New Translation of the Prologue and Book One*, trans. by T. M. Thibodeau (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). I discuss the Middle English translation of the *Rationale* known as *What the Church Betokeneth* in Laura Varnam, 'Church', in *A Handbook of Middle English Studies*, ed. by Marion Turner (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), pp. 299–314 (pp. 301–04).

¹⁷ *Rationale*, trans. by Thibodeau, pp. 19–20. On the association of pillars with religious figures, see the article by Hannah Bailey below.

¹⁸ For more on this tradition, which goes back to the *De gemma animae* (c. 1120) of Honorius Augustodunensis, see Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, pp. 49–60.

¹⁹ 'Templum Dei sanctum est, quod estis uos', in Robert Grosseteste, *Templum Dei*, ed. by Joseph Goering and F. A. C. Mantello (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1984), p. 29. I am grateful to Karl Kinsella for referring me to the *Templum Dei*.

Dei remained popular into the fifteenth century, even being translated into Middle English.²⁰ Grosseteste's name became synonymous with penitential literature, especially after he issued his constitutions in 1238, reinforcing the importance of lay education in the wake of the Fourth Lateran Council. Indeed, the Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 415 copy of *Handlyng Synne* erroneously attributes the French source text to Grosseteste: 'here begynneþ þe boke þat men clepen yn frenshe manuele pecche þe weche boke made yn frenshe Roberd Grosteste Bysshop of Lyncolne'.²¹

There was, then, an established tradition of pastoral literature drawing on architectural representation for structure and support. Sacred buildings such as the church and temple were already imbued with symbolic and sacred power and it is against this background that we can see Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* operating. As mentioned above, Mannyng was translating and adapting the *Manuel des Pechiez* which Matthew Sullivan dates to the mid thirteenth-century, placing it after the Fourth Lateran Council and in the milieu of the *Templum Dei*.²² *Handlyng Synne* is not allegorical in the same way as the *Templum Dei* or Durandus's *Rationale* but it does exploit the symbolic potential of church architecture as part of its teaching strategy. The church building was without doubt a crucial resource for the late medieval parish priest who could make use of its structure and decorations, such as stained glass and wall paintings, when preaching and draw on the power of its sanctity to encourage good behaviour from his parishioners. The church was where the laity came to confess their sins; indeed, they brought their sins with them to church and in many pastoral care texts the building becomes a magnet for vice and profane practice. This is especially the case, as we might expect, in material dealing with sacrilege which focused specifically on the threat that lay misbehaviour posed to the church and its furniture. In order to teach the laity to avoid this sin, pastoral care texts must first illustrate it and in *Handlyng Synne*, sacrilege is represented and materialised in the architecture itself. Churchyard walls are broken, temporary structures fall down, and the inhabitants of overly elaborate tombs are ejected from the church by devils and fiends. Architectural representation — material and metaphorical, allegorical and the subject of narrative — is a rich resource for the edification of the laity in *Handlyng Synne*. As Mannyng reminds us in the opening of his section on sacrilege, '3yt mowe we weyl nat werche | 3yf we forgete holy cherche' (ll. 8591–92).

Constructing a Framework for Handling Sin

Handlyng Synne opens with a prayer to God and a statement of purpose:

Fadyr and sone & holygost
þat art o god of myztys most.
At þy wrshepe shul we begynne
To shame þe fend & shewe oure synne.
Synne to *shewe*, vs to *frame*,
God to wrshepe, þe fende to shame. (ll. 1–6, italics mine)

²⁰ See Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, pp. 24–27 and for the fifteenth-century Middle English *Templum Domini*, Roberta D. Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle: A Study in the Mediaeval Allegory of the Edifice with Especial Reference to Religious Writings* (Pennsylvania: Bryn Mawr, 1930), pp. 90–112.

²¹ Sullens, *Handlyng Synne*, p. 3.

²² Sullivan, 'Original and Subsequent Audiences', p. 18. Durandus's *Rationale* (c. 1280s) postdates the *Manuel* but it represents the culmination of a long tradition of architectural allegory. See Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, pp.

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The verbs *shewe* and *frame* here are crucial. To *shewe* in Middle English means 'to examine', 'to be visible', 'to exhibit in public, display', and 'to teach', all of which correspond to Mannyng's aim in the text with regard to sin.²³ 'Vs to frame' is more complex, however, especially when considered in the light of the extant manuscripts of *Handlyng Synne*. To *frame* means to 'benefit or profit, to do good, to strengthen or comfort spiritually', and the text clearly intends to benefit 'vs', the reader, by its teaching. This meaning, deriving from the Old English 'fremian', dates from 1175 until the second quarter of the fourteenth-century; indeed, the final quotation in the *Middle English Dictionary* is from Mannyng's own *Chronicle of England*, which dates from 1338.²⁴ The *Middle English Dictionary* also includes a second verb, *framen*, which has an architectural and a literary meaning: 'to join or frame timber, to construct a building'; and 'to fashion something, compose a story'.²⁵ The architectural meaning is attested from the end of Mannyng's lifetime, c. 1330, and the literary meaning from c. 1400, the date of the surviving manuscripts of *Handlyng Synne*. The verb derives from the noun 'frame' (a framework of any kind) and, by the end of the fourteenth-century, the connection between architectural framing and the creative framing at work in a text was being exploited by Chaucer in *Troilus and Criseyde*. When Pandarus has set his plot in motion to unite the lovers at his house in Book III of *Troilus*, the narrator comments: 'This tymber is al redy up to frame'.²⁶ Pandarus's plan is imagined architecturally; his plot is the timber frame of a house that represents the lovers' union metaphorically. Chaucer also uses architectural representation at the end of Book I when Pandarus first considers how he should approach Criseyde with the news of Troilus's love for her. Here Chaucer draws directly on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's architectural metaphor in the *Poetria Nova*, with which I began this article:

For everi wight that hath an hous to founde
Ne renneth naught the werk for to bygynne
With rakel hond, but he wol bide a stounde,
And sende his hertes line out fro withinne
Aldirfirst his purpose for to wynne.
Al this Pandare in his herte thoughte,
And caste his werk ful wisely or he wroughte.²⁷

Pandarus's architectural approach to his orchestration of the love affair mirrors Chaucer's own careful construction of his poem; he too 'caste his werk ful wisely or he wroughte'. Chaucer was, of course, writing more than fifty years after Mannyng but by the time of the extant manuscripts of *Handlyng Synne*, c. 1400 and after, the architectural and literary meaning of 'frame' had gained currency. When the prologue of *Handlyng Synne* declares that the purpose of the text is 'synne to shewe, vs to frame', it means to benefit us spiritually (the first meaning of the verb 'framen') but by the end of the fourteenth-century (and perhaps before), 'to frame us' might also imply the metaphorical construction of a framework. In the poem as a whole, Mannyng has composed a clear framework within which the reader is taught to handle sin, as I suggested in my description of the poem's structure above. But this framework can also be found at the narrative level as individual instances of sin often take place in the church and churchyard in the text's narrative exempla. Within the section on sacrilege in particular, the state of the material frame of the church and churchyard is crucial in determining whether

50–51.

²³ *MED*, s.v. 'sheuen' (v.(1)), 1a, 2a, 4a, and 8a.

²⁴ *MED*, s.v. 'framen (v.(1))', 1.

²⁵ *MED*, s.v. 'framen (v.(2))', 1a and 2.

²⁶ *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), Book III, l. 530, p. 520.

²⁷ *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Benson, Book I, ll. 1065–71, p. 488.

or not a sin has been committed: walls that are broken or collapse are clear signs of sin and individuals who are removed from within the protection of the church walls are marked out as sinners.

The concept of a frame that is both architectural and metaphorical is theorised by Victor Turner in his essay 'Frame, Flow, and Reflection: Ritual and Drama as Public Liminality'. Turner argues that framing enables a society to analyse itself and in *Handlyng Synne*, the walls of the church and churchyard operate as precisely such frame for the examination of sin and the reinforcement of sacred space. Turner states that:

To look at itself a society must cut out a piece of itself for inspection. To do this it must set up a *frame* within which images and symbols of what has been sectioned off can be scrutinized, assessed, and, if need be, remodelled and rearranged. In ritual what is inside the frame is what is often called the "sacred," what is outside, the "profane," "secular" or "mundane." To frame is to enclose in a border. A sacralised space has borders.²⁸

A frame can be permanent, such as temple walls, or 'situational', such as an improvised structure that is erected temporarily or a border traced out through ritual procession.²⁹ In this model, a society engages in a process of self-examination through the use of a framing device which has the additional function of establishing the demarcation between sacred and profane space. In *Handlyng Synne*, the architectural frame of the parish church enables the Christian community to examine its sins, both personal and communal, and the walls of the church and churchyard are a crucial element in maintaining the identity of the church as a sacred space. The liturgical ritual for the consecration of a church established the binary of sacred space inside and profane space outside the church and churchyard, in part through ritual aspersion of the walls and the procession of the clergy around the outside of the church, which reinforced the border performatively.³⁰ Once the consecration ceremony is complete, however, it is up to the congregation to maintain the church's sanctity through virtuous behaviour and care for the material fabric, and this forms the primary focus of Mannyng's pastoral advice in the section on sacrilege in *Handlyng Synne*.

Mannyng defines sacrilege as 'mysdede to holynes' and begins with stealing and church breaking:

Al þyng þat men wypholde,
Stole or reft, 3yue or solde,
Wypoute leue of here wytyng,
þat kepe holy cherches þyng,
Al swych þyng ys sacrylage,
Wypoute leue ys al outrage.
Now of þe fyrste þat we haue spoke:
Þey þat haue cherches *broke*
And stole þo þynges þat were þer ynne,
Sacrylege men calle þat synne. (ll. 8603–12, italics mine)

The verb 'breken' in Middle English can be used both of material objects and bodies and has multiple meanings: 'to destroy the wholeness of an object', 'to make forced entry', 'to break

²⁸ Victor Turner, 'Frame, Flow, and Reflection: Ritual and Drama as Public Liminality', *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 6 (1979), 465–99 (p. 468).

²⁹ Turner, 'Frame, Flow, and Reflection', p. 468.

³⁰ See Brian Repsher, *The Rite of Church Dedication in the Early Medieval Era* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998), pp. 45, 48, and 58–59.

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open' something sealed, 'to commit a sin, transgress' (including to fail to keep the sacraments or holy days).³¹ To 'break' the church is to violate its integrity and sanctity, and this also applies to the churchyard as well as the church itself. Mannyng explains:

Vnkynd man ys he hardyly
Pat yn cherche 3erd doþ vyleyny.
Oure long hous hyt ys to come
To rest yn tyl þe day of dome.
Parfore we shuld, 3yf we were kynde,
Kepe hyt clene wyþ gode mynde.
And þese prestes me þynkþ do synne
Pat late here bestes fyle þer ynne. (ll. 8655–62)

Here the churchyard is refigured as an architectural space: 'oure long hous [...] to rest yn tyl day of dome'. The church was described as the house of God on earth in medieval literature, drawing on Jacob's exclamation when he observed the ladder of angels ascending and descending from heaven (Genesis 28.17), and here the churchyard becomes a house of rest in which mankind awaits judgement day. The *MED* defines 'hous' as a 'building for human residence' but figuratively as 'the grave or bier', citing the late twelfth-century poem *The Grave*.³² In Mannyng, rather than an individual grave, the entire churchyard is transformed into a communal 'longe hous', long perhaps denoting both the shape of the grave and the length of time mankind will abide within it before judgement day.³³ It is also possible that 'longe hous' is a translation of the Latin term *domus longa*, discussed by Gwyn I. Meirion-Jones, who concludes that the Latin term refers to a rectangular dwelling in which 'man and beast are housed at opposite ends, under one roof, with entry by a common lateral door'.³⁴ If the long-house does usually contain cattle, the allusion in *Handlyng Synne* would be ironic because Mannyng urges the reader to keep the churchyard clean, especially from animals that 'fyle [defile] þer ynne' (l. 8662).

Refiguring the churchyard as a dwelling place for mankind leads Mannyng to invoke man's very nature as a reason to avoid desecrating their future 'longe hous': 'vnkynd man ys he hardyly | þat yn cherche 3erd doþ vyleyny' (ll. 8655–56). 'Kynde' in line 8659 ('3yf we were kynde') is a polysemous word in Middle English, encompassing man's nature, reason, instinctive moral feeling, and his relationship with his fellow human beings.³⁵ Ellen K. Rentz comments in her analysis of this passage in *Handlyng Synne* that 'as a space shared by the living and the dead, the churchyard represents the extended generations of the parish; its users are spiritual kin and their conduct should reflect that affinity'.³⁶ In the Middle Ages the laity were

³¹ *MED*, s.v. 'breken', 1a, 11a, 12, 15, and 23a.

³² *MED*, s.v. 'hous', 1a and b. The *MED* refers to the poem under an alternative title, 'Body and Soul (1)'. In her article above, Helen Appleton argues that the 'perverted domestic architecture of the grave is used to induce fear' and that the grave-as-house imagery is 'an extremely effective and widely understood warning against sin'. Here, Mannyng's graveyard-as-house imagery is employed as a warning against sacrilege but this is not because the space is terrifying in itself but because it is assumed that the reader will not wish to despoil the place in which they will rest until Judgement Day.

³³ See *MED*, s.v. 'long (adj.(1))', senses 1 ('of space, distance: long, extensive, far-reaching; also fig. large, great') and 2a ('of periods of time: of great duration, long-lasting'). On the collocation 'long hom', see also the above article by Helen Appleton.

³⁴ Gwyn I. Meirion-Jones, 'The Long-House: A Definition', *Medieval Archaeology*, 17 (1973), 135–37 (p. 137). I am grateful to Elizabeth Solopova for this reference.

³⁵ *MED*, s.v. 'kinde', 1a, 5b, 9–11.

³⁶ Ellen K. Rentz, *Imagining the Parish in Late Medieval England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2015),

responsible for the upkeep of the churchyard, just as they were responsible for the nave of the church, but as *Handlyng Synne* makes clear, the churchyard was not always the sacred space it was supposed to be. Indeed, in David Dymond's words, the churchyard was 'God's disputed acre', a place of 'action and noise, of ambiguity and conflict'.³⁷ Part of this conflict was due to secular activities in the churchyard, as we shall see in the 'Dancers of Colbek' exemplum, but in lines 8661–62 Mannyng singles out priests' animals in particular that 'fyle [defile] þer ynne', 'filen' here referring both to the act of defecation itself and the desecration of the churchyard that results.³⁸ This can, however, be prevented if man employs his natural 'kindness' and ensures that he keeps control of his animals, as the exemplum that Mannyng then tells makes clear.

This narrative is Mannyng's own addition to the *Manuel des Pechiez* and it concerns a knight, rather than a priest, whose manor 'was nat fro þe cherche ful fere':

And was hyt þan as often falles,
 Broke were þe cherche 3erd walles.
 Þe lordes hyrdes often lete
 Hys bestes yn to þe 3erd & etc.
 Þe bestes dede as þey moste nede,
 Fyled oueral þere þey 3ede. (ll. 8677–82)

A bondman reproaches the knight for allowing his animals to defile the graves but the knight asks indignantly, 'what wrshepe shuld men make | aboute swyche cherles bodyes blake?' (ll. 8693–94). The bondman replies that 'þe lord þat made of erþe erles | of þat same erþe made he cherles' (ll. 8699–8700). The rhyme between earls and churls here reinforces that they are indeed of the same 'kind', if not the same social class. Duly chastened, the knight 'closed þe cherche 3erde' (l. 8711) and his animals no longer defile its sanctity. Mannyng's social critique is evident here but what is also important is the responsibility that is placed on individuals whose lands border the churchyard for the upkeep of its boundaries. Mannyng's comment that the churchyard walls are broken 'as often falles' suggests that this narrative does not reflect an isolated incident, and indeed Katherine French notes that enquiries as to whether cattle were grazing in the churchyard feature in lists of Episcopal visitation questions, suggesting that the issue was of significant concern.³⁹ Similarly, in the late fourteenth-century, John Mirk directs the clergy to ask parishioners if they have left open the churchyard gate, thus allowing animals to enter, in his list of questions for confessional examination.⁴⁰ The integrity of churchyard walls and vigilance over any points of entry were essential for the prevention of sacrilege and parishioners' attitudes to the walls, and the community of the departed that they enclosed, act as a litmus test for vice and virtue.

This is also the case when Mannyng's narrative moves into the church itself in the next exemplum in the sacrilege section. This exemplum concerns a rich lawyer called Valentine. Mannyng tells us that he served the church 'more for mede þan godnes and honour' (l. 8750) but, nevertheless, he was buried within the building:

p. 28.

³⁷ David Dymond, 'God's Disputed Acre', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 50 (1999), 464–97 (p. 466).

³⁸ See *MED*, s.v. 'filen (v.(2))', 1, 2a, and 2b.

³⁹ Katherine L. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 32.

⁴⁰ John Mirk, *Instructions for Parish Priests*, ed. by Edward Peacock, Early English Text Society, o. s., 31 (London: Trübner, 1868), p. 46.

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Be fyrst nyght þat he was þer leyde,
Be wardeynes of þe cherche vpbrede,
And herd one crye, ruly and shryl,
As he were put out aʒens hys wyl.
Be wardeynes asked what þat myght be:
'Ryse vp we alle and go we se.'
Pere he was byryed þyder þey ran
And saye many fendes aboute þys man,
And of hys graue þey vp hym pulde,
Oute of þe cherche drawe hym þey wlde.
Be deueles drowe hym by þe fete
As hyt were kareyne þat dogges etc. (ll. 8755–67)

When the churchwardens enter the church they discover that Valentine's body has been dragged out of its grave by fiends and they run back to their beds in fright. When they return to the church the following morning and inspect the grave, the body is missing:

Per yn al aboute þey soght
But þe body fond þey noght.
Þey opunde þe dores & loked aboute
And fond þe body lyggyng þer wyþ oute (ll. 8773–76).

The binary prepositions 'in' and 'out' are crucial here as Valentine's position in relation to the church signifies his spiritual state. To be dragged 'out of þe cherche' by fiends clearly demonstrates that Valentine has no right to lie at rest in that most sacred of spaces: 'þer he lay fyrst, he was nat wrþy' (l. 8780).⁴¹ The churchwardens' thorough search of the building, including opening the church doors, emphasises this, especially given that during the night they had already seen Valentine's body expelled from the church so they should already know that it is no longer inside. Mannyng then explains that it is Valentine's elaborate tomb that is to blame for his fate:

But hys soule had pyne þe more
For þe pompe & pryde þat he was leyd þore.
Lordes are bysy aboute to haue
Proud stones lyggyng an hygh on here graue.
Þurgh þat pryde þey mowe be lore
Þogh þey had do no synne byfore.
Hyt helpeþ ryght noght þe *tumbe of pryde*,
Whan þe soule fro pyne may hyt nat hyde. (ll. 8781–88, italics mine)

Here it is the architectural representation itself — the tomb which Valentine has commissioned to represent him after death — that is the cause of sacrilege. The tomb is a sinful construction and as a result even a virtuous man can be lost, 'þogh þey had do no synne byfore'. The use of the adjective 'hygh' compounds the sinful nature of the tomb because when referring to architecture, it often connotes 'pride and ostentation'.⁴² In pastoral care texts it is crucial that church architecture, whether the building itself or a tomb within it, is virtuous in representation and in construction. We see concern with the latter in the fifteenth-century exempla collection

⁴¹ For more on devils enforcing the sanctity of the church, see Laura Varnam, *The Church as Sacred Space in Middle English Literature and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), pp. 145–60.

⁴² *MED*, s.v. 'heigh', 1a.

The Alphabet of Tales, which includes a narrative concerning a usurer who built a church with the proceeds from ‘his ravyn [robbery] & his vsurye [money-lending]’.⁴³ When the bishop and clergy arrive to consecrate this newly constructed church, they discover a devil sitting on the altar who demands, ‘Why halows þou my kurk? Sese! for þe iuridiccion þeroff longis vnto me; ffor it is byggid all of ravyn & vsurie’.⁴⁴ The clergy flee and the devil sets the church on fire, destroying it entirely. A building constructed from the wages of sin belongs to the devil and cannot be consecrated as a sacred space, as the devil’s use of the legal language of jurisdiction makes clear. In this narrative, church architecture cannot remain standing unless it is built on virtuous foundations. As in the case of Valentine’s tomb, we find devils acting, paradoxically, to ensure that sacrilege does not take place. Fiends remove Valentine’s body from the sacred space of the church in *Handlyng Synne*. In *The Alphabet*, the devil prevents the clergy from consecrating a sinful structure.

In Mannyng’s most famous exemplum, ‘The Dancers of Colbek’, much expanded from his source, material architecture is also employed as an essential indicator of sin. In fact, the architecture itself emerges as a more proficient reader of sin than the participants in the narrative.⁴⁵ In the exemplum, the dancers who carol in the churchyard are condemned to continue dancing for a year, but when the Emperor takes pity on them and constructs a temporary shelter as protection from the weather, the structure keeps falling down. The dancers’ sin of sacrilege will not be hidden away. However, the collapse of the architecture does not resolve the narrative’s moral complexities, unlike the exemplum of the usurer’s church above. At the end of the episode Mannyng betrays an anxiety that men might say that the events related confirm the proverb ‘þe nere þe cherche, þe ferþere fro god’ (l. 9247). If this is indeed the case, the sanctity of church architecture is in considerable peril.

The Dancers of Colbek: Architecture Falling Down

Mannyng introduces this exemplum with a warning against carolling, wrestling, singing, and playing games in the churchyard ‘whyl þe prest standeþ at messe’ (l. 8998):

And specyaly at hygh tymes,
Karolles to synge & rede rymes.
Noght yn none holy stedes
Pat myghte dysturble þe prestes bedes. (ll. 9003–06)

The ‘Dancers of Colbek’ are then introduced to demonstrate the effect of sacrilegious carolling and dancing. Twelve mad fools arrive in the town of Colbek to fetch the priest’s daughter Ave and encourage her to join their dance. They dance and sing around the churchyard while the priest, Robert, is trying to conduct the mass inside. Hearing the noise from his position at the altar, Robert walks out into the church porch and forbids them to continue, inviting them instead to enter the church and ‘comeþ yn on feyr manere | Goddes seruise for to here’ (ll. 9072–73). By disrupting Robert’s liturgical performance, the dancers commit sacrilege. As Mark Miller puts it, their activity is ‘a sin against the church itself by way of a perversion or

⁴³ *The Alphabet of Tales*, ed. by Mary Mcleod Banks, Early English Text Society, o. s., 126–7 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Trübner, 1879), p. 198.

⁴⁴ *The Alphabet of Tales*, ed. by Banks, p. 199.

⁴⁵ On the motif of architecture-as-reader, see also the article by Hannah Bailey below.

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parody of the celebration inside the church, the mass whereby the Christian community is rightly constituted and affirmed'.⁴⁶

The dancers refuse Robert's invitation, however, and continue with their performance. Robert is 'sore agreed' (l. 9080) and in his exasperation at their truculent behaviour, he curses them:

He preyed god þat he on beleued,
And for seynt magne þat he wilde so werche,
Yn whos wrshepe sett was þe cherche,
Þat swych a veniaunce were on hem sent
Ar þey out of þat stede were went,
Pat þey myghte eure ryght so wende
Vnto þat tyme twelfmonth ende. (ll. 9081–89)

The dancers' hands immediately lock together and they are condemned to continue their performance for twelve months. Robert sends his son A₃one to free Ave from the dance but Mannyng declares ominously that 'al to late þat wrd was seyð, I for on hem alle was þe veniaunce leyð' (ll. 9100–01), and when A₃one seizes Ave's arm, he only succeeds in pulling it off, leaving her body to continue to dance regardless. A₃one takes the severed arm to Robert, declaring, 'þy cursing now sene hyt ys, I wyþ veniaunce on þyn owne flesshe' (ll. 9120–21). As many critics have noted, it is here that the moral of the exemplum splits in two; on the one hand, the narrative is a warning to the laity against carolling in the churchyard, on the other, it is a warning to priests who are quick to anger.⁴⁷ Robert buries Ave's arm, we presume in the churchyard, but the following morning, 'he fond hyt lyggyng aboute þe graue' (l. 9131). Robert buries the arm on two further occasions and each time he discovers it above the grave in the morning. Expelled from consecrated ground as Valentine's body is ejected from the church, Ave's arm will not remain at rest in the earth and so Robert brings it into the church and 'ordeyned hyt for to be I þat eury man myghte wyþ ye hyt se' (ll. 9140–41). The arm remains uncorrupted but unlike the relic of a saint or a votive offering at a shrine, the arm operates as a sign of sin rather than sanctity.⁴⁸ It is essential that the congregation should be able to see the arm, the symbol of Robert's failure to save his own flesh and blood from the curse. There is a breakdown of both sacred space and social order here. The sanctity of the churchyard is disturbed and this is paralleled by the disruption in the priest's own family. Mannyng explains in the prologue that he intends to 'shewe' sin and here it is clearly made visible for our profit. Robert cannot be allowed to bury the arm in consecrated ground as this would compound the sacrilege already taking place in the churchyard, performed by the cursed dancers, of whose group his own daughter is a member. The sacrilege extends beyond threatening the sacred space of the church to destabilise the parish community as a whole, starting with the parish priest.

⁴⁶ Miller, 'Displaced Souls', p. 610.

⁴⁷ See Kate Greenspan, 'Lessons for the Priest, Lessons for the People: Robert Mannyng of Brunne's Audiences for *Handlyng Synne*', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 21 (2004), 109–21 (p. 113). Miller argues that 'our sense of what the narrative is about, and so of what the sin or sins relevant to it as a piece of instruction might be, keeps getting overturned' and the multiplicity of interpretations 'complicates the moral geography of the tale' ('Displaced Souls', pp. 611–12).

⁴⁸ Pilgrims often left votive offerings at shrines in the shape of the body parts which they hoped the saint would heal. See Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 97–99.

The fate of the arm is additionally significant for the structure of the tale because it indicates the likely outcome of the next event in the narrative. After he describes how the arm is placed in the church for all to see, Mannyng returns to the dancers, informing us that they continue to dance without experiencing tiredness, hunger, or thirst, and they remain impervious to the weather:

Ne mete ete ne drank drynke,
Ne slepte onely a lepy wynke.
Nyght ne day þey wyste of noun,
Whan hyt was come, whan hyt was gown.
Frost ne snogh, hayl ne reyne,
Of cold ne hete felt þey no peyne.
Her ne nayles neure grewe,
Ne solowed cloþes ne turned hewe.
Þundur ne lyghtnyng dede hem no dere,
Goddess mercy dede hyt fro hem were. (ll. 9150–59)

Somewhat paradoxically, we hear that God's mercy protects the dancers from thunder and lightning, but this, I would suggest, is because it is crucial that the spectacle remains to be seen so that their sin is shown as an example. Neither fully alive nor fully dead, the dancers' bodies exist in a liminal state but the performance they stage transforms the churchyard into profane space for the duration of their punishment. The original instance of sacrilege caused by the dance is endlessly repeated and as a result, the priest has cursed his own liturgical performance to be disrupted and desecrated for a whole year. Robert is entirely complicit in the act of sacrilege and behaves 'unkindly' both to his fellow men and his sacred office.

The spectacle of the dancers draws an audience and the Emperor Henry arrives from Rome and attempts to help them. He is overcome with emotion and 'wepte sore l for þe myschef þat he sagh' (ll. 9166–67). He then employs carpenters ('wryghtes') to build a 'coueryng' over them because of the weather:

He dede come wryghtes for to make
Coueryng ouer hem for tempest sake,
But þat þey wroghte, hyt was yn veyn,
For hyt com to no certeyn,
For þat þey sette on o day,
On þe touþer, down hyt lay.
Ones, twys, þrys, þus þey wroght,
And al here makyng was for noght.
Myght no coueryng hyle hem fro cold
Tyl tyme of mercy þat cryst hyt wold. (ll. 9168–77)

A 'coueryng' here means a 'roof or ceiling' and to 'hyle' them from the cold means to 'protect and shelter' the dancers, but also to hide and 'conceal' them.⁴⁹ Just as Ave's arm is expelled from the earth three times, so the roof that is erected over the dancers falls down three times. The carpenters' 'makyng was for noght'. But this is not because the workmanship was poor or the building materials were ill-gotten, as we saw with the usurer's church, but because the dancers' sin must remain visible for the edification of those who observe it. For all his tears at their plight, Emperor Henry has not read the dancers' performance correctly. They cannot be affected by the weather so his desire to protect them is misplaced. He describes their predicament as 'myschef' which means 'misfortune, affliction, trouble' but also 'wickedness,

⁴⁹ *MED*, s.v. 'coveringe (ger.(1))', 3b and 'hilen', 1c and d, 1a and 2.

wrongdoing', and it is the latter meaning that the *MED* cites for the line in *Handlyng Synne*.⁵⁰ The Emperor might see the dancers as experiencing affliction but their dance is in fact a sign of wrongdoing, not a misfortune to be pitied.

Kate Greenspan argues that Mannyng's audience would have recognised a different but related aim in the Emperor's order to build the shelter: an attempt to 'entomb' the dancers and 'protect the community' from being contaminated by their sin.⁵¹ She suggests that the dancers' 'lack of response to external stimuli, unconsciousness of their surroundings, and failure to eat, sleep or grow might well betoken death to a medieval audience' and as a result, until the dancers 'have been rendered inert by decomposition, the cursed carollers threaten the common welfare. Their continued exposure prevents worms and decay from acting upon them and bringing them to rest'.⁵² The dancers' continued performance threatens the community as it perpetuates the initial act of sacrilege and disturbs the everyday running of the parish church. But rather than protecting the community by burying the dancers, the overarching purpose of *Handlyng Synne* necessitates that they are displayed for the public good. After exhorting the reader in the prologue to handle sin so that we can 'ryse from alle', Mannyng concludes:

Parfore may hyt & gode skyle why
Handlyng synne be clepyd *oponly*.
For hyt touchyþ no *pryuyte*
But *opon* synne þat callyd may be. (ll. 137–40, italics mine)

Sin must be made visible openly and, although it was not his intention, the repeated collapse of the Emperor's shelter in fact foregrounds this imperative. Each time the structure attempts to conceal the dancers and separate their act of sacrilege from the community, it falls to the ground, revealing their sin openly once more.

For the carpenters themselves, their 'makyng was for noght', in that the structure they erect fails to perform its purpose, but Mannyng's own textual reconstruction of the event endows it with didactic meaning. Architectural vocabulary pervades this section of the 'Dancers' tale that Mannyng has deliberately expanded from his source text. We are told that the structure that the carpenters 'sette on o day, l on þe touþer, down hyt lay' (ll. 9172–73). Here the verb *setten* means 'to build and construct, to locate in a fixed position', but it is used earlier in the 'The Dancers of Colbek' to mean 'consecrated' or 'dedicated to', when Mannyng mentions St Magnus 'yn whos wrshepe sett was þe cherche' (l. 9083).⁵³ The carpenters 'set' the roof over the dancers but because they are desecrating the churchyard, it cannot be allowed to remain standing. Mannyng also exploits the double meaning of the verb *maken* in this section. The primary meaning is to construct or build and it is used twice in this sense in the exemplum: when the carpenters 'make' the covering for the dancers (l. 9168) and when Mannyng asserts that their 'makyng was for noght' (l. 9175).⁵⁴ Like *setten*, the verb *maken* can also be used of religious foundations but Mannyng uses it in its additional sense of 'write or compose' in the prologue to *Handlyng Synne*:

For lewed men y vndyr toke
On englyssh tonge to *make* þys boke,
For many beyn of swyche manere
Pat talys & rymys wyle bleþly here
Yn gamys, yn festys, & at þe ale,

⁵⁰ *MED*, s.v. 'mischef', 1a and 4.

⁵¹ Greenspan, 'Lessons for the Priest', p. 116.

⁵² Greenspan, 'Lessons for the Priest', p. 116.

⁵³ *MED*, s.v. 'setten', 2a and 4a.

⁵⁴ *MED*, s.v. 'maken', senses 1 ('to create'), and 2 ('to construct or produce a thing').

Loue men to lestene trotouale,
Pat may falle ofte to velanye
To dedly synne or outhere folye.
For swyche men haue y *made* þys ryme
Pat þey may weyl dyspende here tyme
And þer yn sumwhat for to here
To leue al swyche foul manere
And for to kun knowe þer ynne
Pat þey wene no synne be ynne. (ll. 43–56, italics mine)⁵⁵

Mannyng has ‘made’ *Handlyng Synne* so that ‘lewed men’ who fall into sin because of their love of secular tales can be educated by his moral tales to ‘knowe’ and recognise sin. ‘þer ynne’, inside his book, are edifying tales that make sin visible for our profit and in the ‘Dancers of Colbek’ Mannyng ensures that his narrative ‘making’ reveals, rather than conceals, the sin of the dancers. The carpenters’ material making is in vain but Robert Mannyng’s poetic construction is profitable and edifying.

Conclusions

Once the twelve months are over, the cursed dancers fly into the church and lie in a swoon on the pavement for three days. Brought back to life, they confront Robert and accuse him of being the ‘ensample and enchesun [cause] l of oure long confusyun’ and the ‘maker [...] of oure trauayle’ (ll. 9194–96), declaring that ‘to þy long home sone shalt þou wende’ (l. 9199). Recalling the ‘longe hous’ of the churchyard, the ‘long home’ to which Robert is destined is his grave. When the dancers rise up to leave the church, his daughter Ave remains behind, lying dead on the pavement, and Robert himself promptly dies. The dancers leave the church but although they are no longer joined together, they are still ‘hoppynge aboute’ (l. 9225) and aside from one who is healed at the shrine of St Edith, they remain in this state without ‘amendement’ (ll. 9226–37).⁵⁶ The ambiguity of this ending, which sees the majority of the dancers remain in their state of punishment, is compounded by Mannyng’s conclusion, which focuses on the ambiguous potential of responses to the tale:

Parfore men seye & weyl ys trowed,
þe nere þe cherche, þe ferþere fro god.
So fare men here by þys tale:
Some hold hyt but for a troteuale.
Yn ouþer stedes hyt ys ful dere,
And for gret merueyle þey wyl hyt here.
A tale hyt ys of feyr shewyng,
Ensample & drede azens cursyng.
Pys tale y told to *make 3ow aferd*
Yn cherche to karolle or yn cherche 3erd;
Namly azens þe prestes wyl,
Leueþ whan he byddeþ 3ow be styl. (ll. 9246–57, italics mine)

⁵⁵ *MED*, s.v. ‘maken’, 5.

⁵⁶ ‘Amendement’ means ‘correction’, ‘improvement in health’, ‘reparation or redress (of a wrong)’, and most relevant here, ‘salvation’, ‘penance, atonement’. *MED*, s.v. ‘amendement’, 1a, 2, and 5b and c. It is also related to the verb ‘amenden’ which also means to correct or emend a text, and to repair a building, which ties in with the architectural language discussed above. *MED*, s.v. ‘amenden’, 1b and 2a.

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The tale is an 'ensample' against cursing and the word 'ensample' here recalls the dancers' designation of Robert as the 'ensample [...] of oure long confusyun' (l. 9194). But it is also a warning against carolling in the church or churchyard. The tale is held by some men to be a 'troteuale', a favourite word of Mannyng's that means 'idle tale-telling, a trifle, a piece of foolishness'.⁵⁷ But elsewhere ('yn ouper stedes') it is seen as a 'gret merueyle', that is, a wonderful event — or in narrative terms, a miracle account.⁵⁸ This ability for the narrative to signify in multiple ways and to fulfil multiple generic categories simultaneously might explain Mannyng's use of the proverb 'þe nere þe cherche, þe ferþere fro god'. Introduced with the phrase 'þarfore men seye & weyl ys trowed', the bold proverb that follows sounds definitive but as Mark Miller argues, this would be to oversimplify the tale and misread the 'cherche'. If the proverb were true, Miller writes, 'then "the church" would no longer be a *church*, a house of God'.⁵⁹ The introductory phrase should therefore be read as a deliberate exaggeration; men might well *say* that this is the case but the reader should be able to recognise from their own experience that the proverb is not entirely accurate. Miller goes further and suggests that 'this bit of common knowledge [...] expresses an impulse to over-specify the tale's fearfulness, as if it could be located in a particular place and so avoided'.⁶⁰ Keeping away from the church will not protect the individual from sin; it will prevent him or her from learning how to handle it properly. Mannyng declares in the prologue that 'euery whare ys begynnyng of synne' (l. 120) but as his exempla show, in the parish church sin finds its end through careful handling and constant vigilance.

The use of the proverb does, however, provoke the reader to engage with the core issue at the heart of *Handlyng Synne's* exploration of sacrilege: when the individual enters the church and churchyard, bringing their sins for confession or enacting new ones because of 'unkindness', do they in fact come closer to God or are they in constant danger of being expelled from the church community? This is an issue that, I have suggested, the text addresses using architectural representation as its method. The architecture of the church — the churchyard walls, elaborate tombs, and temporary shelters — act as 'a tool, a machine for thinking', to borrow a phrase from Mary Carruthers.⁶¹ The materiality of walls, roofs, and tombs, and their responsiveness to misbehaviour facilitates Mannyng's teaching on sin and the language of construction and framing also provides a method for thinking about poetic composition and the organisation of the text. The nearer we are to the church in *Handlyng Synne*, the further we are from falling into the same sins as the 'Dancers of Colbek', proud Valentine, or the knight with the unruly animals. Robert Mannyng frames sin in the architecture of the parish church to the profit of his book and his readers.

⁵⁷ *MED*, s.v. 'troteuale'.

⁵⁸ *MED*, 'merueille' 1a ('a wonderful feat'), 1b ('a miracle'), and 2 ('a written account or spoken report of a marvellous thing or event').

⁵⁹ Miller, 'Displaced Souls', p. 626.

⁶⁰ Miller, 'Displaced Souls', p. 626. Whiting cites Mannyng as the first reference for the phrase as proverbial; see B. J. Whiting, with H. W. Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases: From English Writings Mainly Before 1500* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 85.

⁶¹ Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 276.

Shaping Buildings and Identities in Fifth- to Ninth-Century England

Clifford M. Sofield¹

Nearly all buildings in fifth- to ninth-century England, from humble houses to ‘great halls’ to early churches, were wooden structures that have long since disappeared from the landscape, leaving only postholes and wall trenches behind for archaeologists to uncover. Nevertheless, the archaeological remains of buildings constitute a fundamental source of direct evidence for daily life and community structure in Anglo-Saxon England. The architectural form of a building, its location within a settlement, and the artefacts and materials found in and around it all provide evidence for its economic use. Within a single settlement, the number of buildings, the range of building types, and the spatial organization and density of structures together reflect the social and economic structure of the resident community. Comparing these characteristics among settlements across a given area contributes to an understanding of social structure on a local, regional, and national scale.

Some Anglo-Saxon buildings and groups of buildings also exhibited formal — or formalized — architectural elements, such as internal architectural symmetry and alignments of buildings. Evidence for ritual — or ritualized — activities associated with buildings has also been found, such as the deliberate placement of objects in and around their foundations. Formal architectural elements and so-called ‘placed’ deposits have been mined for clues to social ideals, ritual activities, and worldview.

This article suggests a new approach to interpreting the archaeological remains of Anglo-Saxon buildings. It explores whether some of the ways people in Anglo-Saxon England formalized the architecture of their buildings, and ritualized their use, may have mirrored the processes they used to construct social identities. Specifically, it discusses the formal use of space in some buildings, especially those with high-status associations, and asks whether the ways in which space was formally organized reveals something about the mechanisms by which communities formed internal and external relationships, and kings constructed royal authority. It presents evidence for ritualized activity associated with the construction or demolition of buildings, and suggests that this evidence not only reveals how ‘lifecycles’ of

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Architectural Representation 650–1350 working group for many stimulating discussions and creative exchanges, which both overtly inspired and subtly infiltrated this article. I would especially like to thank Daniel Thomas, Hannah McKendrick Bailey, and Karl Kinsella for their insightful comments and suggestions in response to an earlier draft. Finally, I am grateful for the helpful feedback of the anonymous reviewer.

buildings were perceived, but also how human lifecycles were perceived and constructed. By considering how people shaped buildings, perhaps we can learn how people shaped society.

Symbolism, Structure, Practice

Why should the way people treated buildings in Anglo-Saxon England have anything to do with the way they shaped society? The connection lies in the idea that buildings may have been perceived as resonating with, or even embodying, aspects of Anglo-Saxon worldviews, by which I mean the (perhaps widely varying) range of ways people in Anglo-Saxon England perceived the world and their place in it. Setting aside archaeological evidence, it is possible to find hints that this was the case in the written record of the Anglo-Saxon period. For example, it is easy to find examples from Anglo-Saxon literature in which writers describe architectural elements of buildings in terms of human lifecycles or bodies. In a well known metaphor, also discussed in this issue by Karl Kinsella, Bede employs the architecture of an Anglo-Saxon royal hall to illustrate the ephemerality of human life, and the mystery of what lies beyond:

This is how the present life of man on earth, King, appears to me. [...] You are sitting feasting with your ealdormen and thegns in winter time; the fire is burning on the hearth in the middle of the hall and all inside is warm, while outside the wintry storms of rain and snow are raging; and a sparrow flies swiftly through the hall. It enters in at one door and quickly flies out through the other. [...] So this life of man appears but for a moment; what follows or indeed what went before, we know not at all.²

The specific architectural elements to which Bede refers are the parts of the hall that, for him, make it resemble a human life: the hearth providing the warmth of life; the protective walls that divide life from death; and the two doors, presumably opposed and so close together that a sparrow passes between them in a moment, that represent life's beginning and end. All of these architectural elements agree with archaeological evidence for late sixth- to early seventh-century 'great hall' architecture from excavated royal sites like Cowdery's Down and Yeavinger.³ They are also characteristic of some ordinary houses in southern and eastern England of the fifth to seventh centuries.⁴ So Bede's metaphorical depiction of worldly human existence resonates with domestic architecture of the broader period.

Buildings can serve as metaphors in literature, but can real buildings relate in some way to cosmology? The idea is not a new one in archaeology. The sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu argued that among the Kabyle, in northern Africa, the recurring performance of particular, symbolically charged activities in particular parts of the house resulted over

² Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 182–85 (ii.XIII): “‘Talis’ inquires ‘mihi uidetur, rex, uita hominum praesens in terris, ad comparationem eius quod nobis incertum est temporis, quale cum te residente ad caenam cum ducibus ac ministris tuis tempore brumali, accenso quidem foco in medio et calido effecto cenaculo, furentibus autem foris per omnia turbinihus hiemalium pluuiarum uel niuium, adueniens unus passerum domum citissime peruolauerit; qui cum per unum ostium ingrediens mox per aliud exierit. [...] Ita haec uita hominum ad modicum apparet; quid autem sequatur, quidue praecesserit, prorsus ignoramus.’” All references to the *Ecclesiastical History* are to this edition.

³ Martin Millett and Simon James, ‘Excavations at Cowdery’s Down, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 1978–81’, *Archaeological Journal*, 140 (1983), 151–279; Brian Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger: An Anglo-British Centre of Early Northumbria*, Department of the Environment Archaeological Reports, 7 (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1977).

⁴ Helena Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 25–26.

time in those parts of the house developing cosmological associations that, in turn, influenced the symbolic significance of the activities practiced there. In this way, the Kabyle house came to embody, and recursively generate, the Kabyle worldview, with opposite parts of the house representing dichotomous values such as high:low, light:dark, day:night, male:female, fertilizing:fertile, and so forth, in a mirror-image microcosm of the Kabyle universe.⁵

Inspired in part by Bourdieu's work, some archaeologists have suggested cosmological interpretations of the architecture of past buildings. Notably, Fitzpatrick, Parker Pearson, and others have proposed cosmological interpretations of Iron Age roundhouses, based in part upon the types of archaeological remains recovered from different parts of the buildings, reflecting either the nature of the activities that took place there, or placed deposition.⁶ Such interpretations have received mixed reviews.⁷ Cosmological interpretations have also been offered for Iron Age longhouses in Denmark and northern Germany, relating their predominantly east–west orientation to the passage of the sun, and viewing the fact that these long buildings incorporated dwelling space as well as byres for stabling animals as symbolic of a close cosmological relationship between humans and livestock.⁸ Ways in which ecclesiastical architecture embodies Christian cosmology are well known, and there is evidence that this applied to churches in Anglo-Saxon England;⁹ but such ideas have received limited attention in relation to Anglo-Saxon secular buildings, especially in archaeology.¹⁰ Kopár has employed lexical evidence, particularly comparing the temporal senses of Old English nouns *fyrst* ('span or (bounded) period of time; delay, postponement') and *fæc* ('(specified) length of time; interval; while') with their architectural/spatial senses ('ceiling; roof; roof beam; entrance' and 'space; area; gap', respectively), in arguing that the house or hall helped to measure and structure concepts of time in Anglo-Saxon England.¹¹ Meanwhile, Ware suggests that the orientation, layout, and fabric of the halls at the royal centre Yeavinger would have been rich

⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990) pp. 271–83 (first publ. *Le sens pratique*, 1980).

⁶ Andrew P. Fitzpatrick, 'Outside In: The Structure of an Early Iron Age House at Dunston Park, Thatcham, Berkshire', in *The Iron Age in Wessex: Recent Work*, ed. by Andrew P. Fitzpatrick and Elaine L. Morris (Salisbury: Association Française d'Etude de l'Age du Fer, 1994), pp. 68–72; Mike Parker Pearson, 'Food, Sex and Death: Cosmologies in the British Iron Age with Particular Reference to East Yorkshire', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 9 (1999), 43–69.

⁷ Rachel Pope, 'Ritual and the Roundhouse: A Critique of Recent Ideas on the Use of Domestic Space in Later British Prehistory', in *The Earlier Iron Age in Britain and the Near Continent*, ed. by Colin Haselgrove and Rachel Pope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), pp. 204–28.

⁸ Richard Hingley, 'Comments', in Parker Pearson, 'Food, Sex and Death', p. 63; Leo Webley, *Iron Age Households: Structure and Practice in Western Denmark, 500 BC–AD 200* (Hoejbjerg: Jutland Archaeological Society, 2008), p. 9. Compare Lotte Hedeager, 'Asgard Reconstructed? Gudme—A "Central Place" in the North', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuvs with Carine van Rhijn, *The Transformation of the Roman World*, 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 467–507. Hedeager argues that the third- to sixth-century 'central place' of Gudme on the island of Funen was built to resemble Asgard, the mythical home of the gods described centuries later in Old Norse sources (pp. 501–05). It could alternatively be argued that depictions of Asgard in Old Norse literature preserve a cultural memory of central places like Gudme, or that the physical Gudme and the mythical Asgard were constructed in their respective landscapes according to a shared grammar of power.

⁹ See, for example, the articles by Conor O'Brien and Meg Boulton above.

¹⁰ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 37.

¹¹ Lilla Kopár, 'Spatial Understanding of Time in Early Germanic Cultures: The Evidence of Old English Time Words and Norse Mythology', in *Interfaces between Language and Culture in Medieval England: A Festschrift for Matti Kilpiö*, ed. by Alaric Hall, Olga Timofeeva, Ágnes Kiricsi and Bethany Fox, *The Northern World*, 48 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 203–30 (esp. pp. 211–14, 217–19, 226).

in symbolism for those using them, but she does not go so far as to suggest that they overtly embodied cosmology.¹²

Ethnographic work shows that some present-day societies overtly identify buildings with bodies, and events in the ‘lives’ of buildings with human life events. Among indigenous groups in south-east Asia, houses variously have architectural elements named after body parts, including the heart, sensory organs, and genitalia; are born, breathe, die, and have a soul; and are thought of as buffalo.¹³ The Batammaliba of Togo and Benin ceremonially nourish newly built houses as if they were newborn babies; incise their outer walls with designs resembling the cicatrization marks on the bodies of Batammaliba women; and dress them up for funerals as the deceased would have dressed as a youth.¹⁴ Imagery identifying buildings with bodies, and vice versa, can be found in the literature of Anglo-Saxon England. In the poem *Beowulf*, buildings are described in terms that equate them to human and non-human bodies, while bodies are described metaphorically as buildings.¹⁵ Not only does Hrothgar’s great hall have a name, and thus a degree of personhood, but that name, Heorot, plays on words for an animal (the hart) and a bodily organ (the heart). During the famous fight between the hero Beowulf and his adversary Grendel the hall is repeatedly described in bodily terms. When Grendel gains entry to Heorot it is through ‘the mouth of the hall’ (*recedes muþan*, l. 724a).¹⁶ The building resembles an armored warrior in the ensuing battle (ll. 771–75a), and Heorot’s resulting devastation parallels the mauling and dismemberment suffered by Grendel’s first victim in the fight (ll. 739–45) and the grievous injuries that Grendel himself suffers (ll. 809–18a).¹⁷ Later on in the poem, the kenning *banhus* (‘bone-house’) is used twice to describe the fragile human body: first, in Beowulf’s telling of how he crushed the life out of the warrior Dæghrefn (ll. 2506b–08a), then in the portrayal of the cremation of Beowulf’s own body (ll. 3144b–48a).

It is not my intention to propose that Anglo-Saxon buildings represented cosmological concepts in an overt, symbolic way; nor do I intend to argue that buildings were endowed with personhood, even anthropomorphized, in Anglo-Saxon England — although both of these things are possible. At the very least, however, the literary examples mentioned show that buildings resonated metaphorically or symbolically with Anglo-Saxon worldviews. Even without understanding specific details about that resonance, it is possible to use it recursively to learn something, not about Anglo-Saxon buildings, but about Anglo-Saxon society. This paper proposes holding up the formalized or ritualized ways in which buildings were treated

¹² Carolyn Ware, ‘The Social Use of Space at *Gefrin*’, in *Yeavinger: People, Power & Place*, ed. by Paul Frodsham and Colm O’Brien (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), pp. 153–60 (p. 156).

¹³ Roxana Waterson, *The Living House: An Anthropology of Architecture in South-East Asia* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), pp. 115–37.

¹⁴ Suzanne Preston Blier, *The Anatomy of Architecture: Ontology and Metaphor in Batammaliba Architectural Expression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 27, 127–30. Brück has previously introduced these ethnographic analogies into an archaeological context in order to explore possible perceptions of houses and their lifespans in Bronze Age Britain: Joanna Brück, ‘Houses, Lifecycles and Deposition on Middle Bronze Age Settlements in Southern England’, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, 65 (1999), 145–66 (pp. 153, 159).

¹⁵ See further, M. D. Faber, ‘The Monster in the Bone-house: *Beowulf*’, *Psychoanalytic Review*, 76 (1989), 263–80 (pp. 266, 267); Lewis E. Nicholson, ‘The Art of Interlace in *Beowulf*’, *Studia Neophilologica*, 52 (1980), 237–49 (pp. 241–45). References to *Beowulf* are from *Klaeber’s Beowulf: Fourth Edition*, ed. by R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008). I am grateful to Daniel Thomas for contributing substantively to this discussion of hall–body imagery in *Beowulf*.

¹⁶ Glenn Davis, ‘The Exeter Book Riddles and the Place of Sexual Idiom in Old English Literature’, in *Medieval Obscenities*, ed. by Nicola McDonald (York: York Medieval Press, 2006), pp. 39–54 (p. 52).

¹⁷ Nicholson, ‘Art of Interlace’, p. 241.

as a kind of mirror, in which it is possible to see reflections of how individuals, families, and communities were defined and constructed. Formalized and ritualized activities are important mechanisms by which social identities are constructed and by which social groups are defined. If there were formal elements in the architecture of Anglo-Saxon buildings — as this paper will demonstrate — these may reflect mechanisms by which people constructed families, communities, and polities. If ritualized activities were practised at important times in the lives of buildings, then it is a reasonable question to ask whether they resembled practices associated with rites of passage in the human life course.

Building Houses and Families Using Symmetry (Late Fifth and Sixth Centuries)

At one level, the typical architecture of houses of the early Anglo-Saxon period offers primary evidence for the economy and social structure of England in the late fifth to sixth centuries. They were relatively small and simple rectangular structures, built of posts set into individual postholes, usually with doorways centred in the long walls and sometimes with internal partitions, especially at the eastern end (figure 1).¹⁸ In addition to these post-built structures, sunken-featured buildings, also called *Grubenhäuser*, were also common in this period. *Grubenhäuser* probably served as all-purpose ancillary structures for domestic craft working or storage.¹⁹ A lack of special-purpose buildings, such as barns, granaries, or workshops for specific crafts, indicates a non-specialized economy in which each household subsisted self-sufficiently. The artefactual evidence, faunal remains, and botanical remains recovered from settlements of this period agree, pointing to domestic textile work, ceramics, and metalworking, and small scale farming and rearing of livestock. Settlements ranged from a handful of structures (as at Puddlehill, Bedfordshire) to as many as dozens at any one time (as at Mucking, Essex, or West Stow, Suffolk).²⁰ None of the houses in a given settlement typically stand out as larger or more complex than the others; nor is it usually possible to identify one building or group of buildings that commanded larger areas of the settlement than others. This suggests a lack of hierarchy among households.

An element of formalization, however, is detectable in the architecture of early Anglo-Saxon post-built structures.²¹ The large majority were one-room rectangular structures with opposed doorways located in or near the centres of the longer walls. Ground plans were by no means standardized; indeed, many structures of this period featured irregular ground plans. Nevertheless, Hamerow notes that a small proportion of buildings of this period, especially the larger ones, featured remarkably regular and symmetrical ground plans (figure 1).²² In these structures the two doorways, symmetrically paired with each other across the long axis

¹⁸ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 22, 37–38.

¹⁹ Jess Tipper, *The Grubenhäuser in Anglo-Saxon England: An Analysis and Interpretation of the Evidence from a Most Distinctive Building Type*, Landscape Research Centre Archaeological Monograph Series, 2 (Yedingham: The Landscape Research Centre, 2004).

²⁰ C. L. Matthews and S. C. Hawkes, 'Early Saxon Settlements and Burials on Puddlehill, near Dunstable, Bedfordshire', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 4 (1985), 59–115; Helena Hamerow, *Excavations at Mucking, II: The Anglo-Saxon Settlement*, English Heritage Archaeological Reports, 21 (London: English Heritage, 1993); Stanley E. West, *West Stow, the Anglo-Saxon Village*, East Anglian Archaeology Reports, 24, 2 vols (Ipswich: Suffolk County Planning Department, 1985).

²¹ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 38, 40.

²² Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 25–26.

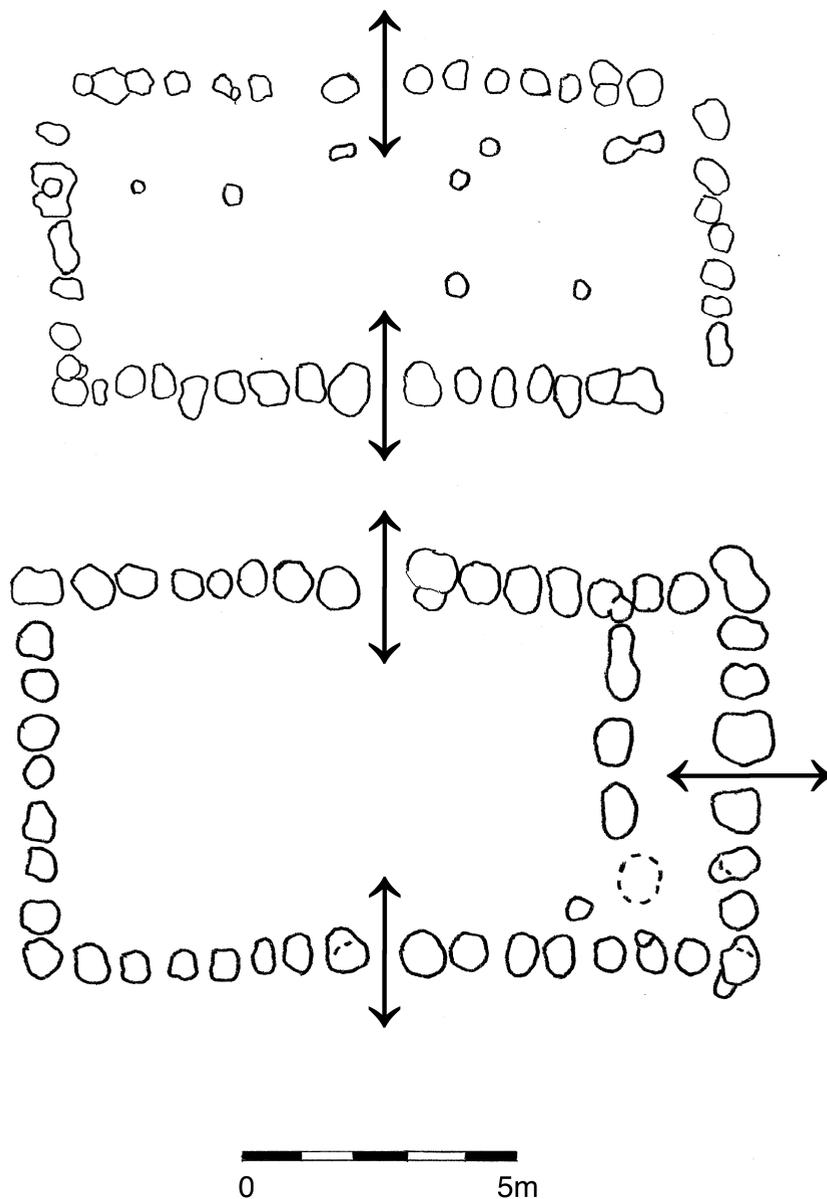


Figure 1. Early Anglo-Saxon post-built structures: (top) Building A11 at Chalton, Hampshire; (bottom) PHB 1 at Mucking, Essex. Arrows indicate doorways. After Addyman and Leigh, 'The Anglo-Saxon Village at Chalton', fig. 7, and Hamerow, *Excavations at Mucking*, fig. 54.

of the building, simultaneously form a second, short axis of symmetry. The wall posts of such buildings are placed symmetrically over both of these axes: each individual post in one long wall can be paired with one in the opposite long wall, as well as with another post in the first long wall, the same distance from the central door but on its far side. Although extreme regularity was exhibited by only a small proportion of buildings, the overall picture still manages to convey an impression of formality and symmetry.²³ Many buildings with irregular ground plans, perhaps necessitated by the use of irregular timbers,²⁴ could arguably be regarded as variations from this ideal form.

The two-fold symmetry described above probably served practical architectural purposes or resulted from constructional methods. Wall posts paired across the long axis of the building probably supported tie beams, and symmetry across the short axis (formed by the central doorways) could indicate that the central doorways were the starting points for setting out the building.²⁵ It is likely that structural integrity of the entire building depended, or was thought to depend, upon the two central doorways, as evidenced by massive doorposts, and the frequent repair or replacement of doorposts, in some fifth- and sixth-century buildings.²⁶ By contrast, the corner posts of Anglo-Saxon buildings were not usually substantive.²⁷

Practical activities that are formalized, however, often become ritualized.²⁸ Although the symmetry of Anglo-Saxon buildings may have served a practical purpose, it is plausible that it developed social or symbolic resonances, for example, with the ways households structured themselves. The practice of establishing symmetry may have been as fundamental to constructing a household as it was to constructing a house. If this was the case, then it is a valuable insight, since the archaeological record offers little evidence out of which to build a picture of the social structure of living households in the fifth and sixth centuries. At present, the best evidence comes from burial grounds of the period. It has already been mentioned that settlements provide little evidence for social hierarchy; in cemeteries, by contrast, there is ample evidence of social stratification. Grave goods, which frequently accompany

²³ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 40.

²⁴ Philip Dixon, 'The Reconstruction of Buildings', in *Catholme: An Anglo-Saxon Settlement on the Trent Gravels in Staffordshire*, ed. by Stuart Losco-Bradley and Gavin Kingsley, Nottingham Studies in Archaeology, 3 (Nottingham: Department of Archaeology, University of Nottingham, 2002), pp. 89–99 (p. 93); Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 26.

²⁵ Compare the evidence for setting-out posts in the central doorways of some later structures: Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 30.

²⁶ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 43. The excavated foundations of some seventh-century buildings show signs that they were assembled from prefabricated sections of walls, and in structure C8 at Cowdery's Down and building 0734 at Staunch Meadow, Brandon, there is further evidence that the lengths of wall either side of the central doorways were prefabricated separately: Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 28–29; Andrew Tester, Sue Anderson, Ian Riddler, and Robert Carr, *Staunch Meadow, Brandon, Suffolk: A High Status Middle Saxon Settlement on the Fen Edge*, East Anglian Archaeology Reports, 151 (Bury St Edmunds: Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service, 2014), p. 367. In these structures, each central doorway would have bound together the lengths of wall either side of it, with the lintels performing a role not unlike that of the keystone of an arch. Compare this to building 7098 at Staunch Meadow, where the doorways themselves appear to have been prefabricated and inserted into the walls of the partly raised building to complete its frame: Tester et al., *Staunch Meadow*, p. 48. Although these seventh-century examples cannot be taken as evidence for constructional techniques in the fifth and early sixth centuries, they may preserve an earlier understanding of the architectural importance of the opposing doorways.

²⁷ Tester et al., *Staunch Meadow*, p. 366.

²⁸ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Richard Bradley, 'A Life Less Ordinary: The Ritualization of the Domestic Sphere in Later Prehistoric Europe', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 13 (2003), 5–23.

inhumations and cremation burials of this period, are unevenly distributed: some burials are more lavishly equipped than others, while still others are completely unaccompanied. Considering the lack of evidence in settlements for higher or lower status households, it is reasonable to infer that the uneven distribution of grave goods in cemeteries reflects stratification within, rather than between, households.²⁹ In other words, individuals buried with greater wealth of grave goods held important status or authority within their own households. Apparently corroborating this interpretation is evidence from some cemeteries of well-defined burial clusters or groups, each thought to correspond to a household, and each showing a range of social statuses as measured by burial wealth.³⁰

Although the burial evidence indicates the presence of hierarchy within households, it gives little indication as to the shape of that social structure. It is here that the formalization and symmetry detectable in fifth- and sixth-century architecture may be able to provide some insight. If the ways buildings were structured developed social or symbolic resonances with the ways households were structured, as has been suggested, then a household's social structure might not have rested upon one individual (e.g. a 'master of the household' or 'clan chief'), as used to be assumed, nor even upon a unitary 'nuclear family' (with their dependent relations and the unfree forming the rest of the household).³¹ Instead, multiple individuals of comparably high status within the household might have anchored its social structure, just as symmetrically opposed doorways anchored the architecture of a house. We can only speculate on the precise shape of this hypothetical 'symmetry' in the social structure of households. It is tempting to imagine two individuals, a man and a woman, symmetrically mirroring each other like opposed doorways at the core of the social structure. Indeed, the individuals who enjoyed high social status within households, judging by burial wealth, included both men and women. Moreover, the clear distinction between masculine and feminine grave-good assemblages indicates a fundamental difference in the nature of the social influence men and women exercised, suggesting that as co-anchors of a household a man and a woman would have played complementary roles. As tempting as it is to indulge in such speculation, however, it is probable that the precise shape of the social structure varied from household to household, and that within any given household it fluctuated over time.

Constructing 'Royal' Architecture and Authority (Late Sixth to Early Seventh Century)

In the late sixth and early seventh centuries, architecture exhibiting even greater levels of formalization became a feature of higher-status settlements, specifically so-called 'royal vill's', of which we have excavated examples, such as Cowdery's Down, Hampshire, and Yeavinger, Northumberland, and others that are known through aerial photographs and geophysics, such

²⁹ Chris Scull, 'Archaeology, Early Anglo-Saxon Society and the Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 6 (1993), 65–82 (pp. 72–73); Chris Scull, 'The Human Burials', in *The Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk*, by Sam Lucy, Jess Tipper, and Alison Dickens, East Anglian Archaeology Reports, 131 (Cambridge: Cambridge Archaeological Unit, 2009), pp. 385–426 (pp. 424–25).

³⁰ Heinrich Härke, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Social Structure', in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. by John Hines (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 125–60 (pp. 138–39).

³¹ Cf. Scull, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Society', p. 73; Härke, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Social Structure', p. 140; Scull, 'The Human Burials', p. 425.

as Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire (formerly Berkshire), and Foxley, Wiltshire.³² Chronologically, the appearance of these settlements coincides with the rise of the earliest Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Yeavinger is identified with *Ad Gefrin*, Edwin of Northumbria's royal vill where (according to Bede) Paulinus spent thirty-six days catechizing and baptizing the Northumbrian people.³³ As they survive archaeologically, the royal vills typically feature one larger structure (a 'great hall'), associated smaller buildings, and a fenced enclosure, which together constitute a 'great hall complex'. The layouts of these great hall complexes, which often went through several different phases, were clearly formalized. Linear alignments of buildings were present, for example, at Yeavinger, Sutton Courtenay, and Cowdery's Down, with other buildings laid out at right angles (figure 2). At Yeavinger, an area between the great hall and an axially aligned building was fenced off. At Cowdery's Down, Foxley, and Chalton, Hampshire — which has not been interpreted as a royal vill — there were also cruciform arrangements of buildings, consisting of a great hall and three smaller buildings, with the smaller buildings contained inside a fenced area (figure 3).³⁴

Reynolds has observed that in these cruciform arrangements the doorways of the buildings were aligned in ways that would have facilitated formal or ritualized procession.³⁵ This observation applies to axially aligned groups of buildings as well. The idea that a level of formality was involved in moving through space in these buildings complexes is supported by a few discoveries of deliberately 'placed' burials located in doorways at high status sites.³⁶ A grave containing an adult (of unknown sex) buried with a bronze-tipped wooden staff and the head of what was probably a goat lay immediately outside one of the axially aligned doorways of the great hall at Yeavinger (figure 2).³⁷ A burial of a skinned, unbutchered cow was laid on a surface of cobbles in a pit just outside a door of one of the buildings at Cowdery's Down, likewise on the aligned axis of the building (figure 2).³⁸ A horse skull and associated horse bones were found in the foundation pit of the doorway leading from the 'nave' into the 'chancel' of a proposed church at Staunch Meadow, Brandon.³⁹ These burials emphasize the significance of crossing into and out of certain spaces at these sites.

The fenced enclosures associated with great hall complexes represent exclusive spaces, access to which appears to have been controlled by the great hall. Some phases of the complexes at Yeavinger and Chalton incorporated fenced yards that could only be accessed through the great hall. In the first two phases at Cowdery's Down, a fenced yard was attached

³² Millett and James, 'Excavations at Cowdery's Down'; Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger*; Helena Hamerow, Chris Hayden, and Gill Hey, 'Anglo-Saxon and Earlier Settlement near Drayton Road, Sutton Courtenay, Berkshire', *Archaeological Journal*, 164 (2007), 109–96; John Hinchliffe, 'An Early Medieval Settlement at Cowage Farm, Foxley, near Malmesbury', *Archaeological Journal*, 143 (1986), 240–59.

³³ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, pp. 188–89 (ii.XIV); Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger*, p. 1.

³⁴ On the status of the site at Chalton, see P. V. Addyman and D. Leigh, 'The Anglo-Saxon Village at Chalton, Hampshire: Second Interim Report', *Medieval Archaeology*, 17 (1973), 1–25.

³⁵ Andrew Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements in Later Sixth to Eleventh-century England', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 12 (2003), 98–136 (pp. 104–06).

³⁶ Helena Hamerow, "'Special deposits'" in Anglo-Saxon Settlements', *Medieval Archaeology*, 50 (2006), 1–30; C. M. Sofield, 'Thresholds in the Lives of Settlements: Anglo-Saxon Placed Deposits made at Entrances and "Liminal" Times', in *Life on the Edge: Social, Religious and Political Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. by S. Semple, C. Orsini, and S. Mui, *Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung*, 6 (Braunschweig: Braunschweiges Landesmuseum with the Internationales Sachsensymposium, 2017), pp. 195–208.

³⁷ Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger*, pp. 67–69, fig. 25.

³⁸ Millett and James, 'Excavations at Cowdery's Down', p. 221, figs 49, 50; M. Maltby, 'The Animal Bone', in Millett and James, 'Excavations at Cowdery's Down', pp. 258–59.

³⁹ Tester et al., *Staunch Meadow*, p. 48.

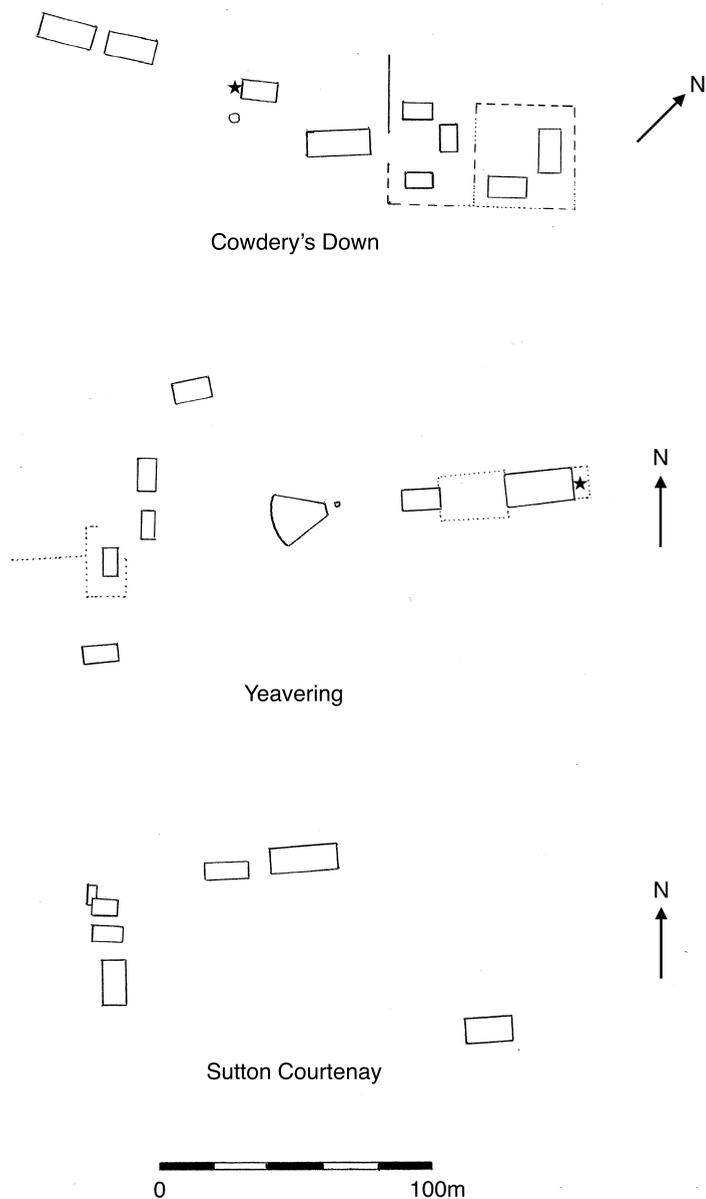


Figure 2. Alignments of buildings at Cowdery's Down, Yeavinging, and Sutton Courtenay. Stars mark the locations of the cow burial in pit 6 at Cowdery's Down and grave AX at Yeavinging. After Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, fig. 3.20.

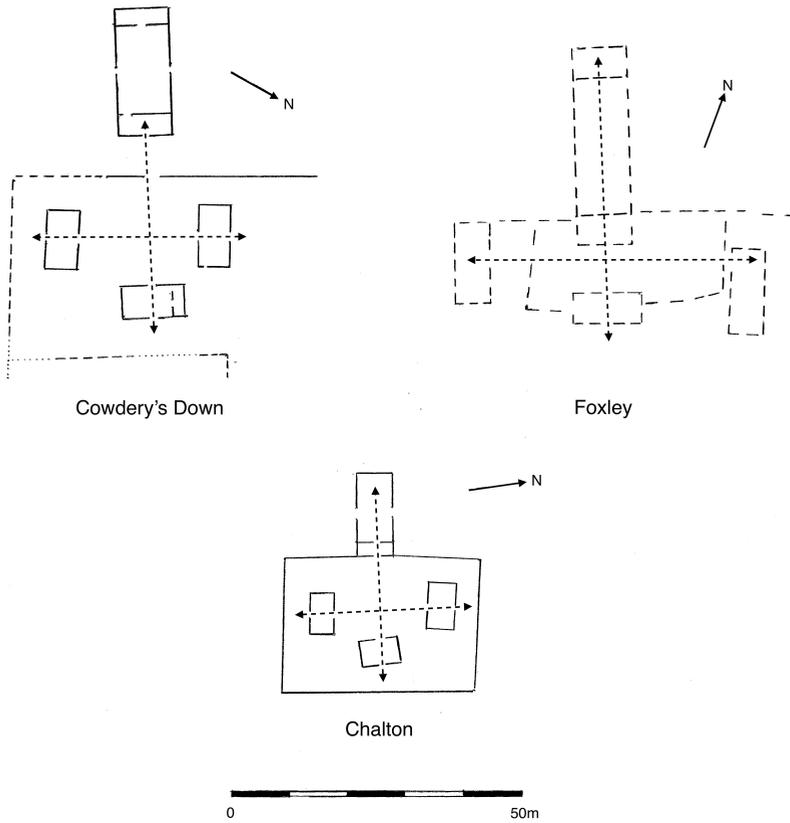


Figure 3. Cruciform arrangements of buildings at Cowdery's Down, Foxley, and Chalton. Arrows indicate alignments of doorways. After Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements', fig. 2.

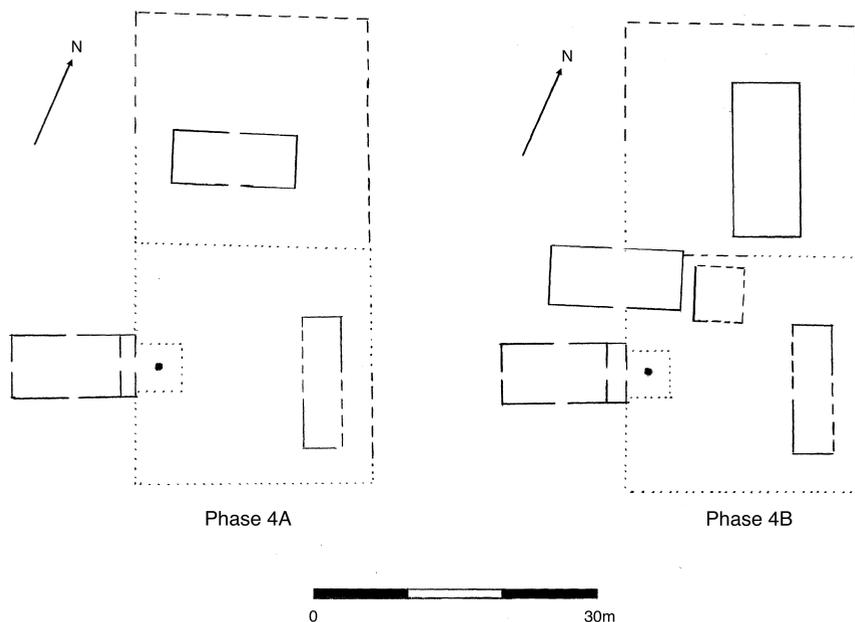


Figure 4. Great hall complexes of phases 4A and 4B at Cowdery's Down. After Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements', fig. 1.

to the great hall that could not be accessed from that building, but within the yard was a smaller square enclosure, annexed to the great hall, that could *only* be entered from within the great hall (figure 4). Inside the smaller square enclosure was a single posthole. Blair has interpreted this and similar square enclosures as possible Anglo-Saxon shrines, centred around a *beam* or *stapol*.⁴⁰ The presence of one of these enclosures in an exclusive space within a great hall complex contributes to an impression of formal or ritualized use of space.

The formal arrangement of buildings and the presence of exclusive spaces were clearly important architectural features of great hall complexes and some other high status sites. The ability to exert this kind of control over space demonstrated the power of emerging kings and other elites. Early kings exercised this power frequently. At both Cowdery's Down and Yeavinger, several successive phases of great hall complexes were built over a period of decades, and some show evidence of deliberate destruction, chiefly by fire.⁴¹ Although there

⁴⁰ John Blair, 'Anglo-Saxon Pagan Shrines and their Prototypes', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 8 (2005), 1–28, and 'Holy Beams: Anglo-Saxon Cult Sites and the Place-name Element *Bēam*', in *Trees and Timber in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. by M. D. J. Bintley and M. G. Shapland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 186–210.

⁴¹ Millett and James, 'Excavations at Cowdery's Down'; Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger*; Christopher Scull, 'Post-Roman Phase I at Yeavinger: A Re-consideration', *Medieval Archaeology*, 35 (1991), 51–63.



Figure 5. Building 1 at Flixborough, with associated graves shaded black. After Loveluck and Atkinson, *Early Medieval Settlement Remains*, fig. 4.2.

have been suggestions that attacking enemies could have wreaked this destruction,⁴² it seems at least as likely that the building complexes were razed by the occupants, before their useful life had ended, in order to make way for fresh rebuilding. It is possible that one way kings demonstrated their authority was by destroying the great hall complex of the previous ruler and constructing a new, greater one.

Besides being a demonstration of power or authority, I would argue that the formal architecture and exclusive enclosures at great hall complexes were physical manifestations of social processes that helped to establish royal authority. For an emerging king, the ability to distinguish himself and his associates from the rest of society, and to impose a layer of formality on interaction across that division, must have been critical to constructing royal identity. It has long been known that the emerging royal elite used mortuary rites to distinguish itself from the rest of society. In the so-called 'princely' burials of the decades surrounding AD 600 and the high-status female burials that flourished in the middle of the seventh century, emerging royal elites were frequently set apart from their contemporaries not just in terms of burial wealth, but physically as well. The boat burials and other elite graves at Sutton Hoo were located in a cemetery separate and distinct from the ancestral burial ground.⁴³ At the 'royal' cemetery at Street House Farm in Cleveland a female bed burial was set in the centre of a space surrounded by over a hundred graves laid out in the form of a large square enclosure.⁴⁴ The formal arrangement of buildings and the construction of exclusive enclosures at high-status sites in the late sixth and early seventh centuries show that emerging kings also distinguished themselves from the rest of society in life. The formalization and exclusivity embodied in these sites indicate that this distinction was established and maintained by controlling access to the 'royal person' both physically and through layers of formal ceremony and ritual.

Shaping Homesteads, Households, and New Communities (Seventh to Ninth Centuries)

The rise of kingship and an aristocratic elite in the late sixth and seventh centuries signaled an overall socioeconomic shift in England, characterized by more intensive agriculture and increased economic specialization as the ability to extract surplus from the land became the primary basis of wealth and power. Associated with this change, a more varied settlement 'hierarchy' emerged in which certain settlements began to engage in specific social and economic activities.⁴⁵ There were burgeoning religious communities or 'minsters' featuring churches and specialized craftwork; so-called *wics* or 'emporia' showing evidence of overseas trade, intensive craftwork, and a greater density of occupation; and rural settlements apparently focused on particular aspects of food or craft production. These rural settlements contained a greater range of building types than those of the fifth and sixth centuries, a few of which can be identified archaeologically with specific functions, such as kitchens,

⁴² Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger*, pp. 163, 277.

⁴³ Martin Carver, *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and its Context* (London: British Museum Press, 2005).

⁴⁴ Steven J. Sherlock, *A Royal Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Street House, Loftus, North-East Yorkshire*, Tees Archaeology Monograph Series, 6 (Hartlepool: Tees Archaeology, 2012).

⁴⁵ K. Ulmschneider, 'Settlement hierarchy', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. by Helena Hamerow, David A. Hinton, and Sally Crawford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 156–71; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 163–68.

barns, and granaries.⁴⁶ They also exhibited evidence of more complex and longer-lasting spatial organization, with individual farmsteads comprising multiple buildings defined by ditched boundaries maintained over generations, as well as droveways for the management of livestock, and ditches defining boundaries of whole settlements.⁴⁷

It is possible to see formalized or ritualized elements in the construction of living space in England in the seventh to ninth centuries, especially in rural settlements. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, there was a marked increase in the small number of human burials made not in burial grounds but in or alongside buildings, settlement ditches, and other domestic features.⁴⁸ About half of these were so-called ‘deviant’ burials: individuals buried prone, with their legs tied, or with other characteristics more typical of ‘execution’ cemeteries than normal burial grounds.⁴⁹ In contrast, a similar number of burials made in domestic contexts resembled ordinary burials from burial grounds. Most of these more ‘normative’ burials were found next to building walls and farmstead boundaries; none were found at the outer boundaries of settlements. A striking example comes from Flixborough, where three children, a woman in her twenties, and an infant were buried next to the walls of an eighth-century building, which was subsequently rebuilt on the same footprint (figure 5).⁵⁰ The excavators suggest this building was ‘renovated without any reference to the graves’.⁵¹ Considering these five graves together with other burials made next to buildings during this period, however, I have argued that the building at Flixborough was rebuilt on the same footprint in a conscious effort to maintain a direct connection to the burials.⁵²

At Flixborough and elsewhere, a small number of deceased individuals were selected for burial alongside buildings and farmstead boundaries. This practice can be understood in the context of a broader contemporary development of the seventh to ninth centuries whereby some burial grounds were becoming more closely integrated with living spaces.⁵³ The overall picture is one of households seeking to establish physically closer links with their ancestors, sometimes even incorporating burials into the ‘architecture’ of farmsteads. This practice may have helped families forge a shared sense of identity based on shared ancestry. If claims to settlement space and agricultural land had any ancestral basis, it may have been a way of staking or reasserting those claims.⁵⁴

⁴⁶ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 45–53.

⁴⁷ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 34–35, 72–83; Reynolds, ‘Boundaries and Settlements’.

⁴⁸ C. M. Sofield, ‘Living with the Dead: Human Burials in Anglo-Saxon Settlement Contexts’, *Archaeological Journal*, 172 (2015), 351–88. The rest of this section relies substantially on this work.

⁴⁹ Helen Geake, ‘Burial Practice in Seventh- and Eighth-Century England’, in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: The Seventh Century in North-western Europe*, ed. by Martin Carver (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1992), pp. 83–94 (pp. 87–89); Andrew Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ Christopher Loveluck and David Atkinson, *The Early Medieval Settlement Remains from Flixborough, Lincolnshire: The Occupation Sequence, c. AD 600–1000*, Excavations at Flixborough, 1 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), pp. 49–50, 53.

⁵¹ Loveluck and Atkinson, *Early Medieval Settlement Remains*, p. 53.

⁵² Sofield, ‘Living with the Dead’, p. 380.

⁵³ Helena Hamerow, ‘Communities of the Living and the Dead: The Relationship between Anglo-Saxon Settlements and Cemeteries, c. 450–c. 850’, in *Intersections: The Archaeology and History of Christianity in England, 400–1200: Papers in Honour of Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbjæ-Biddle*, ed. by Martin Henig and Nigel Ramsay (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), pp. 71–76; see also Grenville Astill, ‘Anglo-Saxon Attitudes: How Should Post-AD 700 Burials be Interpreted?’ in *Mortuary Practices and Social Identities in the Middle Ages: Essays in Burial Archaeology in Honour of Heinrich Härke*, ed. by Duncan Sayer and Howard M. R. Williams (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2009), pp. 222–35.

⁵⁴ Hamerow, ‘Communities of the Living and the Dead’, p. 76; Sofield, ‘Living with the Dead’, pp. 376, 379–80.

There are indications that the ‘young dead’ were instrumental in this process (whether or not children were themselves regarded as ‘ancestors’).⁵⁵ Six of the eight ‘normative’ burials located next to buildings and farmstead boundaries belonged to children, adolescents, or young adults. Most of these young burials were discovered at Flixborough and Yarnton, where nearby burial grounds contained only adults.⁵⁶

The role played by the ‘young dead’ in farmstead architecture may resonate with a similar role played by living children in certain social interactions, especially ones relating to the construction of kinship, family identity, and lineage. If burials of children next to some houses in the seventh to ninth centuries are any indication of the role living children played in those households, then their importance in binding together families and cementing kinship may have been widespread. This is an important insight, considering that children and their role in Anglo-Saxon society are difficult to detect, both archaeologically and in documentary sources. Nevertheless, Sally Crawford has found glimpses of the crucial role played by children in constructing families and kinship in documentary evidence. In particular she has noted the importance placed on procreation in the law codes and medical texts, and on raising children in poetic sources and accounts of the lives of saints.⁵⁷ For example, the late sixth-century Law 81 of Æthelbert of Kent requires that in the case of a childless marriage, a wife’s property should revert to her kin after her death.⁵⁸ According to this law, at least, children were what made a marriage socially and economically binding. Crawford argues from later documentary sources that the nuclear family, consisting of father, mother, and children, was the core unit of Anglo-Saxon society. Within law codes, for example, a man’s *hired* or household refers to his wife and children, while a ‘kinless’ man lacks immediate family, not a wider kin group.⁵⁹

Demolishing Buildings and the Close of Life (Fifth to Seventh Centuries)

I would like to conclude this paper with a discussion of formalized or ritualized practices associated with the destruction of certain buildings, specifically *Grubenhäuser*, and whether they (like Bede’s sparrow analogy) can inform our understanding of how the human lifespan was conceived. As excavated, *Grubenhäuser* consisted of a subrectangular pit, on average c. 4m by 3m in plan and 0.30–0.50m deep, with two or more postholes.⁶⁰ They are typically reconstructed with a tent-like, steeply sloping thatched roof raised on posts, wattle-and-daub walls, and either a suspended wooden floor or a compacted floor on the base of the pit.⁶¹ Evidence has been found to support both interpretations of the floor, and it is possible that *Grubenhäuser* with both types of floors were constructed. *Grubenhäuser*, which primarily date to the fifth to seventh centuries, were once interpreted as dwellings, but following the

⁵⁵ James Whitley, ‘Too many ancestors’, *Antiquity*, 76 (2002), 119–26.

⁵⁶ Loveluck and Atkinson, *Early Medieval Settlement Remains*; Gill Hey, *Yarnton: Saxon and Medieval Settlement and Landscape. Results of Excavations 1990–96*, Thames Valley Landscapes Monographs, 20 (Oxford: Oxford Archaeology, 2004).

⁵⁷ Sally Crawford, *Childhood in Anglo-Saxon England* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), p. 57 and *Daily Life in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2009), p. 67.

⁵⁸ Carole A. Hough, ‘The Early Kentish “Divorce Laws”’: A Reconsideration of Æthelberht, Chs. 79 and 80’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 23 (1994), 19–34 (p. 20 n. 5).

⁵⁹ Crawford, *Daily Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 66.

⁶⁰ Tipper, *The Grubenhäuser in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 1.

⁶¹ Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, p. 55.

discovery of post-built structures, they are now chiefly interpreted as ancillary structures used for storage or domestic activities such as weaving.⁶²

Many deposits of deliberately 'placed' material have been found in *Grubenhäuser*. In my doctoral research on placed deposits in rural settlements of the fifth to ninth centuries, eighty-seven out of 151 placed deposits came from *Grubenhäuser*.⁶³ These typically comprised lines or clusters of loomweights, complete or largely complete pots smashed in situ, and skulls of animals, especially cattle and horse. Where detailed records of the deposits exist, most show that the deposits were found on or near the base of the pit. Tipper has shown that most *Grubenhäuser* pits remained empty during the use of the building, and were deliberately backfilled shortly after abandonment, perhaps in part with material from the superstructure.⁶⁴ Based on this model, I have argued elsewhere that placed deposits of loomweights, pottery vessels, animal skulls, and other materials lying on or near the base of the pit represent termination deposits associated with the abandonment and demolition of the building.⁶⁵ This appears to have been a component of a formalized or ritualized practice undertaken at the end of the useful life of some *Grubenhäuser*. One possible interpretation is that these deposits were analogous to grave goods in human burials.

A separate body of evidence points to another formalized or ritualized practice associated with the destruction of *Grubenhäuser*. About a dozen *Grubenhäuser* have been excavated which appear to have burned down, some of which contained lines or clusters of loomweights.⁶⁶ These loomweight deposits have been interpreted as the in situ remains of weighted looms, or of stores of weights, that were destroyed in the fire. While this interpretation is probably correct, it may not represent the whole story, as there is reason to believe that at least some *Grubenhäuser* destroyed by fire were deliberately burned down.⁶⁷ Experimental attempts to burn other types of timber-framed buildings with thatched roofs and walls covered in daub has shown that, although the roof goes up quickly, the walls do not burn easily.⁶⁸ A large amount of fuel is required for the structure to burn down completely, as well as a way to keep the heat from escaping after the roof is gone. An experimental *Grubenhäuser* at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village, a reconstructed settlement and open-air museum in Suffolk, was destroyed by arson in 2005. This particular structure was a maximally heavily timbered reconstruction with a planked floor suspended over a fully timber-lined subterranean chamber. This substantial amount of fuel, plus the presence of an enclosed timber-lined subterranean chamber, provided the preconditions for an extremely hot and long-lasting blaze.⁶⁹ It is unlikely that anything approaching these conditions would have existed in the fires that destroyed actual *Grubenhäuser*.

⁶² Tipper, *The Grubenhäuser in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 160–77; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society*, pp. 60–64.

⁶³ C. M. Sofield, 'Placed Deposits in Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon Rural Settlements' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2012), pp. 117–34, fig. 5.8.

⁶⁴ Tipper, *The Grubenhäuser in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 99–107.

⁶⁵ Sofield, 'Thresholds in the Lives of Settlements'.

⁶⁶ Jess Tipper, *Experimental Archaeology and Fire: The Investigation of a Burnt Reconstruction at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village*, East Anglian Archaeology Reports, 146 (Bury St Edmunds: Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 2012), pp. 144–51.

⁶⁷ The remainder of this paragraph summarizes a more detailed analysis in preparation by the author.

⁶⁸ Hans-Ole Hansen, *I Built a Stone Age House*, trans. by Maurice Michael (London: Phoenix House, 1962); A. Bankoff and F. Winter, 'A House-Burning in Serbia', *Archaeology*, 32 (1979), 8–14.

⁶⁹ Tipper, *Experimental Archaeology and Fire*.

It seems probable that at least some of the *Grubenhäuser* destroyed by fire were, like the reconstruction at West Stow Village, deliberately burned down, perhaps with weighted looms or stores of weights left in them, or even especially placed in them, to be destroyed in the blaze. The likelihood that some phases of the great hall complexes at Cowdery's Down and Yeavinger were deliberately destroyed by fire has already been mentioned. These blazes would have been spectacular events to mark the end of a building's life, characterized by intense heat, light, and sound. In many ways, they would have resembled the spectacle, and the conspicuous consumption, of cremation.⁷⁰

The deliberate burning of *Grubenhäuser* and halls, and the placement of loomweights, smashing of pots, laying of animal heads, and other forms of deliberate deposition at the bases of others, represent formalized or ritualized activities relating to the abandonment and demolition of buildings. By contrast, relatively few deposits clearly relating to the construction of buildings have been identified.⁷¹ The deposit of a horse skull and associated bones in a door-pit at Staunch Meadow, Brandon, discussed above, represents one of the few placed deposits clearly associated with a building's construction. Other placed deposits associated with doors and walls were probably placed while the building was already standing. Destruction appears to have been a more significant event than construction in the life histories of buildings.

Likewise, human burials provide most of our archaeological evidence for ritual practices surrounding a person's lifecycle. Mortuary rites could be elaborate in the early Anglo-Saxon period: cremation was widely practised in parts of England during the fifth and early sixth centuries, and furnished inhumation was common throughout England until the end of the sixth century, and only disappeared in the latter part of the seventh century.⁷² Most elaborate of all, the princely burials of the late sixth and early seventh centuries and the flourish of richly furnished female burials in the middle of the seventh century have already been mentioned.

Admittedly, the fact that these mortuary rites concluded with burying human remains in the ground makes them particularly visible to archaeologists. Other important transitions in a person's lifecycle may have been attended by rites of passage that archaeologists have not been able to detect. For example, large-scale analyses of fifth- to seventh-century burials have shown that the types and quantities of grave goods afforded to children changed at around two years and eighteen years old, suggesting that transitions from infancy to childhood, and from childhood to adulthood, were both recognized thresholds in a person's lifecycle.⁷³ Nevertheless, we have no direct archaeological evidence for rites of passage associated with these transitions. Is this because the practices in question left no archaeological trace, or were

⁷⁰ Howard Williams, 'Death Warmed Up: The Agency of Bodies and Bones in Early Anglo-Saxon Cremation Rites', *Journal of Material Culture*, 9 (2004), 263–91 (p. 271). Literary evidence for a conceptual link between house burning and human cremation can be found in *Beowulf*. The poet's repeated allusions to the great hall's future destruction by fire (ll. 81b–85; 778–82a) foreshadow the final scene, in which Beowulf's dead body is itself consumed on the cremation pyre (ll. 3137–55). I am grateful to Hannah McKendrick Bailey for suggesting this parallel.

⁷¹ Sofield, 'Placed Deposits in Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon Rural Settlements', p. 148.

⁷² Catherine Hills and Sam Lucy, *Spong Hill, ix: Chronology and Synthesis* (Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2013), pp. 320–28; *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave-goods of the 6th and 7th Centuries AD: A Chronological Framework*, ed. by John Hines and Alex Bayliss, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 33 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2013).

⁷³ H. Härke, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Social Structure', in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. by John Hines (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 125–60; Nick Stoodley, 'From the Cradle to the Grave: Age Organization and the Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Rite', *World Archaeology*, 31 (2000), 456–72.

they actually less lavishly ritualized than funerals? If the life histories of buildings were in any way modelled on the human lifecycle, then perhaps the funeral was indeed the most important rite of passage in a person's life in fifth- to seventh-century in England.

Conclusion

The remains of buildings provide fundamental archaeological evidence for daily life and community structure — arguably the best evidence in periods where we have no or little access to written records, such as England in the early Anglo-Saxon period. Buildings were also the locus of formalized and ritualized practices relating to domestic life. This article has argued that by analysing formalized architecture of buildings and ritualized practices relating to their use, it is possible to better understand the 'architecture' of society itself.

Whether building architecture merely resonated metaphorically with Anglo-Saxon world-views or whether buildings were endowed with personhood, this paper has argued that formalized or ritualized treatment of buildings offers a reflection of how individuals, households, and communities were constructed. From the internal symmetry that formed a defining element of house architecture in the late fifth to seventh centuries, it has been suggested that the social structure of contemporary households was shaped more or less symmetrically around two or more individuals, rather than a single 'head of the household'. In the late sixth and early seventh centuries, the remarkably formalized layouts of royal villas, which emphasized procession and exclusivity, suggest that controlling and formalizing social access to the king was equally pivotal in constructing emerging royal identities. Human burials were used to define space in farmsteads of the seventh to ninth centuries, perhaps in order to establish or reaffirm claims to what was becoming ancestral land. The especial use of children's burials in this practice may indicate that living children played an instrumental role in shaping household and ancestral identity. Finally, ritualized practices relating primarily to the destruction of buildings in the fifth to seventh centuries, rather than to their construction, suggests that death was perceived as the most important threshold in the human lifecycle.

This article has proposed a new level of interpretation for the archaeological remains of buildings, so it is inevitable that many of its conclusions take the form of suggestions. This article is intended to be a starting point, and it has hopefully demonstrated that future research into the ways people shaped buildings has the potential to reveal a great deal about the ways they shaped themselves.

Architecture as Authoritative Reader: Splitting Stones in *Andreas* and *Christ III*

Hannah Bailey

A patristic trope which appears in a number of texts that were known in Anglo-Saxon England contrasts the hard-heartedness of man to the perceptiveness and responsiveness of insensate created things. For example, a story related in the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great concerns a flood that affected the lands belonging to a church: the bishop, Sabinus, orders his deacon to instruct the flood to recede in his name, but the deacon just laughs; Sabinus then writes the command and sends his servant to cast the written message into the flood waters, which immediately obey and recede. Gregory concludes the story by asking (in the words of the Old English translation):

In þære wisan, Petrus, hwæt oðres magon we ongytan, buton þæt þær wæs onscynded manna heortena heardnes & heora unhyrsumnes, þa þæt unandgytfulle gesceaft þæs wætres wæs hyrende þam halgan were in his mægne?¹

In that manner, Peter, what else may we understand, except that there was put to shame the hardness of the hearts of men and their disobedience, when that unintelligent creation, the water, was obedient to the holy man in his power?

The Old English poems *Andreas* and *Christ III* both make use of a specific subset of this trope, contrasting the blindness of the Jews who failed to acknowledge Christ with the perceptiveness of created things that miraculously display their understanding of Christ's divinity. Both poems include architectural features among the natural 'unintelligent creation' that miraculously responds to Christ, and both poems invest these miracles with an eschatological subtext beyond anything present in their source material. In their treatment of architectural features, both poems engage with patristic discourses on the (First and Second) Temple to a far greater extent than their sources or analogues, particularly with symbolism relating to the extension of God's covenant to Gentile peoples and to apostleship and teaching. This may be understood as part of the legacy of Bede's fascination with the Temple and Tabernacle, which has been discussed by Conor O'Brien:

¹ Book 3 Chapter 10 of *Bischof Waerferths von Worcester Uebersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen*, ed. by Hans Hecht, *Bibliothek Angelsächsischen Prosa*, 5, 2 vols (Leipzig: Wigand, 1900–07), 1, 194, ll. 5–8. The Old English is faithful to the Latin here (Book III Chapter 10 of *Grégoire le Grand: Dialogues*, ed. by Adalbert de Vogüé, trans. by Paul Antin, *Sources Chrétiennes* 251, 260, 265, 3 vols (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978–80), sc. 289–90). Translations of Old English texts are my own unless otherwise specified. Diacritics and typographical

Architecture as Authoritative Reader: Splitting Stones in 'Andreas' and 'Christ III'

No previous Christian author devoted the same degree of sustained focus to the image as Bede did; unsurprisingly, his works on the topic were to prove influential in England and throughout Europe long after his own time.²

Where the poems differ from one another in their treatment of this trope is that whereas *Christ III* simply folds architecture into the same category as natural features such as rocks and seas on the basis that it is similarly inanimate and insensate, *Andreas* uses the ambiguity of architectural features being simultaneously the creation of God and the creation of man to comment on the danger of exclusively literalist approaches to textual interpretation and to demonstrate how the creative works of man can be animated by God's will to a deeper meaning than their human authors intended.

Christ III, a Doomsday poem which draws directly or indirectly on a wide range of biblical and patristic sources, is the last in the series of three poems about Christ which appear at the beginning of the Exeter Book. *Andreas*, which tells the story of the Apostle Andrew's mission to rescue Matthew and convert the Mermedonian cannibals, is recorded in the Vercelli Book.³ The immediate source for *Andreas* is unknown, but certain prose narratives of the Acts of Andrew in Greek, Latin, and Old English are close analogues to the poem.⁴ The most significant way in which *Andreas* differs from its analogues is in the degree to which it emphasizes narrative parallels — both across different sections of the poem and between the poem and other texts. The *Andreas* poet develops and signals typological readings that are only passing or implicit in the analogues, as well as adding new scriptural references.⁵

As is the case with most Old English poetry, we have no absolute date of composition for either *Andreas* or *Christ III*, though Richard North and Michael Bintley have recently made a case that *Andreas* was composed between 888 and 893, under the patronage of King Alfred.⁶ Even in the absence of exact verifiable dates it is possible to suggest a relative

markers of emendation are silently omitted.

² Conor O'Brien, *Bede's Temple: An Image and its Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 3. See also his article above.

³ In the poem, the form of the name 'Andrew' used is 'Andreas'. I use 'Andreas' in all subsequent references to the character in the Old English poem, but 'Andrew' when discussing other texts.

⁴ These are translated in *The Acts of Andrew in the Country of the Cannibals: Translations from the Greek, Latin, and Old English*, trans. by Robert Boenig (London: Garland, 1991).

⁵ Scholarship on this subject includes: Thomas D. Hill, 'Figural Narrative in Andreas: The Conversion of the Mermedonians', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 70 (1969), 261–72; Joseph Trahern, 'Joshua and Tobias in the Old English Andreas', *Studia Neophilologica*, 42 (1970), 330–32; Penn R. Szittyta, 'The Living Stone and the Patriarchs: Typological Imagery in Andreas, lines 706–810', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 72 (1973), 167–74; John Casteen, 'Andreas: Mermedonian Cannibalism and Figural Narration', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 75 (1974), 74–78; Constance B. Heatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia: Typological Patterns in the Old English "Andreas"', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 77 (1976), 49–62; Marie Michelle Walsh, 'The Baptismal Flood in the OE "Andreas": Liturgical and Typological Depths', *Traditio*, 33 (1977), 137–58; James W. Earl, 'The Typological Structure of Andreas', in *Old English Literature in Context*, ed. by John D. Niles (Cambridge: Brewer, 1980), pp. 66–89; Lisa J. Kiser, 'Andreas and the Lifes Weg: Convention and Innovation in Old English Metaphor', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 85 (1984), 65–75; Frederick M. Biggs, 'The Passion of Andreas: Andreas 1398–1491', *Studies in Philology*, 85 (1988), 413–27; Robert Boenig, *Saint and Hero: Andreas and Medieval Doctrine* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991); Daniel Anlezark, *Water and Fire: The Myth of the Flood in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 210–40, 346–67; Shannon Godlove, 'Bodies as Borders: Cannibalism and Conversion in the Old English Andreas', *Studies in Philology*, 106 (2009), 137–60; Alexandra Bolinteanu, 'The Land of Mermedonia in the Old English Andreas', *Neophilologus*, 93 (2009), 149–64.

⁶ *Andreas: An Edition*, ed. by Richard North and Michael D. J. Bintley (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), pp. 97–115.

chronology of the two poems. Colin Chase has argued that Cynewulf wrote *Christ II* as a bridge linking the poems *Christ I* and *Christ III*; if this is correct, *Christ III* must have been written before or during Cynewulf's lifetime.⁷ *Andreas*, on the other hand, must have been written during or after Cynewulf's lifetime. Andy Orchard has argued that *Andreas* borrows language from the poems of Cynewulf, including *Christ II*;⁸ North and Bintley propose additional allusions to the works of Cynewulf, and also discuss the metrical evidence that supports this chronology.⁹ Even allowing for the slim possibility that all three poets were more or less exactly contemporaneous, the balance of probabilities is that *Christ III* was written before *Andreas*.

Whether the *Andreas* poet had knowledge of *Christ III* cannot be determined on the current evidence, but there are a handful of compounds and half-lines that appear either uniquely in these two poems or in these two poems and one other: the compounds *hellfus* and *þeodbealu* are unique to these two poems, *æpelcynning* and *modblind* to these two poems and *Elene* (which is by Cynewulf), *swegeldream* to these two poems and *Guthlac B* (which may be by Cynewulf), and *heafodgim* to these two poems and *Maxims I*.¹⁰ Kenneth R. Brooks notes a handful of similarities of lexis or phrasing between *Andreas* and *Christ III*, of which the most striking is the resemblance between *Andreas*, ll. 33–34, and *Christ III*, ll. 1437–38:

Syððan him geblendan bitere tosomne
dryas þurh gedwolcraeft drync unheorne¹¹

Afterwards magicians bitterly mixed together a horrible drink for them through sorcery.

Swylce hi me geblendan bittre tosomne
unswetne drync ecedes ond geallan.¹²

So they bitterly mixed together an unsweet drink for me of vinegar and gall.

Bitere does double duty in these passages — strictly speaking, it qualifies the intentions of the mixers, but it may also suggest a quality of the mixture. While anything that causes harm can be described as ‘bitter’ in Old English verse (as Paul Battles has pointed out), the primary literal meaning of the word nevertheless is the quality of taste.¹³ Edward B. Irving identifies

⁷ Colin Chase, ‘God’s Presence through Grace as the Theme of Cynewulf’s *Christ II* and the Relation of this Theme to *Christ I* and *Christ III*’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3 (1974), 87–101. R. D. Fulk puts the composition of *Christ III* at ‘a relatively early date, perhaps in the same period as the “Caedmonian” poems’ on metrical grounds. R. D. Fulk, *A History of Old English Meter* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 399.

⁸ See Andy Orchard, ‘Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf’, in *Anglo-Saxon Style*, ed. by Catherine E. Karkov and George Hardin Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 271–305 and ‘*The Dream of the Rood*: Cross-References’, in *New Readings in the Vercelli Book*, ed. by Samantha Zacher and Andy Orchard (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 225–53.

⁹ *Andreas*, ed. by North and Bintley, pp. 58–62, 98.

¹⁰ *Hellfus* (‘bound for hell’): *Andreas* 50a, *Christ III* 1123a; *þeodbealu* (‘grievous ill’): *Andreas* 1136a, *Christ III* 1267a; *æpelcynning* (‘noble king’): *Andreas* 1679a, *Christ III* 906a, *Elene* 219a; *modblind* (‘spiritually blind’): *Andreas* 814a; *Christ III* 1187a, *Elene* 306a; *swegeldream* (‘heavenly joy’): *Andreas* 720a, *Christ III* 1348a, *Guthlac B* 1125a; *heafodgim* (‘jewels of the head’): *Andreas* 31b, *Christ III* 1330a, *Maxims I* 44a. I am grateful to Andy Orchard for drawing my attention to these compounds.

¹¹ Quotations of *Andreas* are from *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles*, ed. by Kenneth R. Brooks (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961). On comparisons to *Christ III* see Brooks’ notes on ll. 33, 43, 552, 616, 661, 792, 810, 968–69, 1145, 1169, 1171, 1380, 1436.

¹² Quotations of *Christ III* are from *The Christ of Cynewulf*, ed. by Albert S. Cook (Boston: The Athenæum Press, 1909).

¹³ Paul Battles, ‘Dying for a Drink: “Sleeping after the Feast” Scenes in *Beowulf*, *Andreas*, and the Old English Poetic Tradition’, *Modern Philology*, 112 (2015), 435–57.

a Latin sermon attributed to Caesarius of Arles as the immediate source of both *Christ III* ll. 1379–1523 and a portion of Vercelli Homily XIII.¹⁴ The words spoken by Christ in both the poem and the sermon allude to Matthew 27.34, where Christ is offered vinegar and gall while dying on the cross. In *Andreas*, the bitterly mixed drink is the potion the Mermedonians give to their captives to make them behave like cattle. Neither the Latin or Greek analogues to *Andreas* mentions mixing or blending in relation to the potion, and more importantly, none of the analogues (including the Old English prose) uses lexis of bitterness. If the *Andreas* poet's description of the magicians mixing a bitter drink does borrow language from *Christ III*'s description of Christ's suffering, the implication is that Matthew's suffering is like Christ's, and the Mermedonians are like the people who crucified Him; this would be entirely in keeping with the typological programme of the poem. If the parallels between the poems do not constitute sufficient evidence in themselves to argue for direct borrowing, they at least suggest that *Christ III* and *Andreas* belong to closely related literary traditions.

***Christ III*: Mute Creation**

The section of *Christ III* which has the most in common with *Andreas* is Fitt XIII, which runs from l. 1081 to l. 1198. This section contrasts the blindness of sinful men with the perceptiveness of mute created things, which mourned Christ at the Crucifixion. In Fitt XIII, a temporal shift from the Crucifixion to end times is facilitated by a metaphor that conflates the Jews who crucified Christ with sinful men who denied Christ in their thoughts and so (figuratively) placed the crown of thorns on his head. The Fitt describes how at the end of time these sinful men will be able to see 'open, orgete' ('openly, clearly', l. 1116a) that Christ suffered for mankind. Albert Cook draws attention to the appearance of an identical half-line at l. 759a in *Andreas*, in a scene (discussed in more detail below) where a statue in the Jewish temple that Christ calls to life addresses the priests and tells them that they *should* be able to 'open, orgete' ('openly, clearly') see the divinity of Christ (though in fact they will not perceive it until Judgement Day).¹⁵ The Jews are referred to in this section of *Christ III* as 'modblinde menn' ('spiritually blind men', l. 1187a); the same phrase is applied to the Jews in *Andreas* (l. 814a). (The compound *modblind* is also applied to the Jews in its only other appearance in the corpus: Cynewulf's *Elene*, l. 306.)

The label that *Christ III* applies to the things that respond to Christ when the Jews do not is 'dumban gesceaft' ('mute creation', l. 1127b). The items grouped into this category are nearly all things we might categorize as 'nature' today — the list includes the sun, the earth, the sea, stars, stones, and trees. However, there are also architectural features included under the heading 'dumban gesceaft': walls, and the veil of the Temple. They are inanimate and mute, so they are counted in the same category as earth and stones and trees, regardless of human moulding of them. The veil is described in more detail than the walls; it is referred to as 'godwebba cyst' ('best of costly fabrics' l. 1134b), but also by the unique metaphor 'temples segl' ('sail of the Temple', l. 1138).¹⁶ Between the veil and the walls, *Christ III* spends nine and

¹⁴ Edward B. Irving, Jr., 'Latin Prose Sources for Old English Verse', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 56 (1957), 588–95 (p. 594).

¹⁵ *The Christ of Cynewulf*, ed. by Cook, p. 195.

¹⁶ See Megan Cavell, 'Sails, Veils, and Tents: The *Segl* and Tabernacle of Old English *Christ III* and *Exodus*', in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles 12*, ed. by Robin Netherton and Gail R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2016), pp. 27–39.

a half sequential lines discussing architectural features under the heading ‘dumban gesceaft’ (ll. 1133b–42a):

Pa sio þeod geseah
in Hierusalem godwebba cyst,
þæt ær ðam halgan huse sceolde
to weorþunga weorud sceawian,
ufan eall forbærst, þæt hit on eorþan læg
on twam styccum. Pæs temples segl,
wundorbleom geworht to wlite þæs huses,
sylf slat on tu, swylce hit seaxes ecg
scearp þurhwode. Scire burstan
muras ond stanas, monige æfter foldan.¹⁷

Then in Jerusalem the people saw the best of precious cloths, which previously the troop had to examine reverently in the holy house, burst all apart from above so that it lay on the earth in two pieces. The sail of the temple, wrought with wondrous colour to the beauty of that house, itself slit in two, as though the sharp edge of a knife sliced through it. Brightly burst walls and stones, many throughout the earth.

The primary source-text behind Fitt XIII of *Christ III* has long been known to be Pope Gregory’s *Homilia X in Evangelia*. In this homily, Gregory catalogues various ways that nature showed its understanding of Christ’s divinity through miracles that occurred throughout Christ’s life and at the Crucifixion:

Deum hunc caeli esse cognoverunt, quia protinus stellam miserunt. Mare cognouit, quia sub plantis eius se calcabile praebuit. Terra cognouit, quia eo moriente contremuit. Sol cognovit, quia lucis suae radios abscondit. Saxa et parietes cognoverunt, quia tempore mortis eius scissa sunt. Infernus agnouit, quia hos quos tenebat mortuos reddidit.¹⁸

The heavens knew He was God, for they sent a star immediately; the sea knew, for it offered itself for His feet to tread on; the earth knew, for it trembled when He died; the sun knew, for it hid the rays of its light; the walls and stones knew, for they were rent at the time of His death; and hell knew, for it surrendered the dead in its possession.¹⁹

The *Christ III* poet borrows Gregory’s list but shifts the temporal focus firmly onto the Crucifixion, while also emphasizing miracles from that time that prefigure the signs of Judgement Day. For example, the poet takes Gregory’s allusion to the Star of Bethlehem and embeds the reference within a description of the dimming of the stars at the Crucifixion, which prefigures the fall of the stars at end times (ll. 1147–52a):

Ge on stede scynum steorran forleton
hyra swæsne wlite. On þa sylfan tid
heofon hluttre ongeat hwa hine healice
torhtne getremede tungolgimmum;

¹⁷ Here I follow Mary Clayton’s punctuation of this passage rather than Cook’s. *Old English Poems of Christ and His Saints*, ed. and trans. by Mary Clayton, *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 51–52 (ll. 267–76 by her numbering).

¹⁸ Gregory, *Homilia X: Lectio Sancti Euangelii Secundum Matthaeum*, in *Gregorius Magnus. Homiliae in Evangelia*, ed. by Raymond Étaix, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 141 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 65–72 (ll. 25–30).

¹⁹ Translation from *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry: The Major Latin Texts in Translation*, trans. by

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forþon he his bodan sende þa wæs geboren ærest
gesceafta scir Cyning.

And shining in their place, the stars gave up their sweet beauty. At that same time, heaven clearly recognized who trimmed it on high, bright with star-gems, for it sent his messenger, when the bright king of creation was first born.

The poet also adds to the list three further items that were not in the homily: the rending of the veil of the (Second) Temple, bodily resurrection, and bleeding trees. The rending of the veil of the Temple is derived from Matthew's account of the Crucifixion (Matthew 27.51), while the bleeding trees may derive ultimately from the apocryphal Apocalypse of Ezra (2 Esdras), where they are a sign of end times.²⁰ Bodily resurrection is the link between the two images. Like the bleeding trees, the rising of the dead features in the Apocalypse of Ezra, but in the context in which the poet employs the image it works simultaneously as an allusion to the resurrection of holy people at the Crucifixion as described in Matthew 27.51–53:

⁵¹ et ecce velum templi scissum est in duas partes a summo usque deorsum Et terra mota est et petrae scissae sunt ⁵² et monumenta aperta sunt et multa corpora sanctorum qui dormierant surrexerunt ⁵³ et exeuntes de monumentis post resurrectionem eius venerunt in sanctam civitatem et apparuerunt multis.

⁵¹ and, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom; and the earth quaked and the rocks were rent. ⁵² And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, ⁵³ And, coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city and appeared to many.

The poet's addition of the rending of the veil to Gregory's list is probably inspired in part by the proximity of the image to the splitting of stones and the waking of the dead in Matthew 27, but also in part by Gregory's statement that the Jews do not wish to 'scindi' ('be rent apart') for the sake of repentance. The introduction of the rending of the veil within a section of the poem that uses the Jews to illustrate the difficulty and necessity of perceiving spiritual truths also suggests that the poet is familiar with the commentary tradition which interprets the rending of the veil as signifying the passing from the Old Law to the New: because the Jews have failed to understand the prophetic and spiritual truths in their secret and sacred texts, those texts are now opened up and made available to anyone who can read them spiritually. Jerome discusses this in his commentary on Matthew: 'Velum templi scissum est et omnia legis sacramenta quae prius tegebantur prodita sunt atque ad gentilium populum transierunt' ('The curtain of the Temple was torn, and all the mysteries of the Law that were previously woven together were made known and passed to the Gentile people').²¹

This is a reading that was known in Anglo-Saxon England; it was taken up by Bede in his commentary on Luke.²² Michael Lapidge counts three surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts

Michael J. B. Allen and Daniel G. Calder (Cambridge: Brewer, 1976), p. 99.

²⁰ Frederick M. Biggs, 'The Sources of *Christ III*: A Revision of Cook's Notes', *Old English Newsletter Subsidia*, 12 (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1986), p. 24.

²¹ Jerome, *Commentariorum in Matheum Libri IV*, IV, in *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri opera. Pars I: opera exegetica*, 7, ed. by D. Hurst and M. Adriaen, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 77 (Turnholt: Brepols, 1969), p. 275. Translation from *Commentary on Matthew*, trans. by Thomas P. Scheck (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), p. 320.

²² Bede, *In Lucae Evangelium Expositio*, VI, in *Beda Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 3, ed. by D. Hurst, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 120 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1960), pp. 1–425 (pp. 406–07). I am grateful to Conor O'Brien for bringing Bede's use of Jerome to my attention.

that contain Jerome's commentary on Matthew, plus one surviving manuscript likely to be connected to the Anglo-Saxon missions on the Continent, and notes clear allusions to the commentary on Matthew in the writing of Theodore/Hadrian, Aldhelm, Bede, Ælfric, and Byrhtferth.²³

Christ III takes this notion — that the rending of the veil signifies that the Jews were poor 'readers' of Christ's divinity, and so also of scripture — and builds upon it by characterising the veil as a good reader. This not only expressed through the inclusion of the veil among the 'dumban gesceaft' that responded to Christ when 'modblinde men' did not, but by the reversal of agency in the Old English text: whereas the Vulgate says that the veil 'scissum est' ('was torn'), the Old English says that the veil 'sylf slat on tu' ('itself slit in two', l. 1140a). The shift from a passive construction to an active construction transforms the miracle of the rending of the veil from an effect of Christ's death to the veil's active response to it.

Gregory mentions walls incidentally, in the expression 'saxa et parietes' ('stones and walls'), and says nothing about them that does not apply just as well to raw stone; when Ælfric borrows the passage from Gregory, he uses only the word 'stanas' ('stones') and omits any reference to walls.²⁴ The fact that *Christ III* retains the reference to walls when translating 'saxa et parietes' isn't significant in itself, but the poet gives the word new connotations through its context and position. The placement of the description of the rending of the veil immediately before the line about splitting stones suggests that the poet has interpreted Gregory's 'saxa et parietes' as an allusion to Matthew 27.51 (as Cook notes).²⁵ However, there is more going on than the reference to Matthew in ll. 1141b–43a. The manner in which the poet alters the context and order of Gregory's 'saxa et parietes' transforms the function of the walls in this passage from a near-synonym for 'stones' to an allusion to the destruction of the Temple. There is no equivalent to the word 'scire' in the Gregory or Matthew. Cook suggests that in this context 'scire', which normally means 'clear, bright', or 'clearly, brightly', could be read as 'entirely', but there is no need for an alternative definition here; brightness is a common poetic shorthand for themes of sanctity and covenant.²⁶ If 'scire' is the adverb, the phrase conveys that the walls and rocks are breaking in a holy manner; if it is the adjective, 'scire burstan muras' can be read connotatively as 'holy walls burst'. The impact of these words is amplified by the poet's inversion of Gregory's 'stones and walls' to 'walls and stones': when seven and a half lines on the rending of the Temple veil are followed (with no punctuation or extra spacing in the MS that might signal a change in subject matter or even a new sentence) by the words 'scire burstan muras', the initial impression is that the walls in question are the walls of the Temple. Even if a reader or listener adjusts and widens their interpretation of the walls as they encounter the phrase 'monige æfter foldan', this does not negate the initial impact.²⁷ This could be taken as a (slightly anachronistic) reference to the later destruction of the Temple (predicted, for example, in Matthew 24.1–2). However, given the Fitt's themes of the access and responses the Jews and Gentiles have to Christ, it may be that this is intended as an allusion to Ephesians 2.14, in which the overthrow of the Old Law and the Gentiles' new access to God through

²³ Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 314.

²⁴ 'VII Idvs Ianuarii Epiphania Domini', in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series*, ed. by Peter Clemoes, Early English Text Society, s. s., 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 235, ll. 92–104.

²⁵ *Christ of Cynewulf*, ed. by Cook, p. 197.

²⁶ *Christ of Cynewulf*, ed. by Cook, p. 275.

²⁷ For an example of wordplay which causes a similar reorientation, see Susan Irvine, 'Adam or Christ? A Pronominal Pun in *The Dream of the Rood*', *Review of English Studies*, 48 (1997), 433–47.

Christ is expressed as Christ's tearing down the 'medium parietem maceriae' ('middle wall of partition') which is understood (as O'Brien notes) as a reference to 'the barrier separating the court of the gentiles from the rest of the Temple complex'.²⁸

The references to the Temple in this Fitt develop the poet's themes through complex scriptural allusion, but the premise on which they are included is simple: architecture is nature. It is insensate creation that nevertheless demonstrates perception and agency. Architectural lexis is employed once more towards the end of Fitt XIII. The poet is no longer following Gregory closely at this point, but underscores the irony of the homily's central trope by contrasting the 'frod gewit' ('wise understanding') that humankind possesses with the 'ferðgewit' ('spiritual understanding') that 'deade gesceaft' ('lifeless creation') lacks (ll. 1176b–86a):

Ðæt asecgan ne magun
foldbuende þurh frod gewit,
hu fela þa onfundun þa gefelan ne magun
Dryhtnes þrowinga, deade gesceafte.
Þa þe æþelast sind eorðan gecynda,
ond heofones eac heahgetimbro, —
eall fore þam anum unrot gewearð,
forht afongen. Ðeah hi ferðgewit
of hyra æþelum ænig ne cuþen,
wendon swa-þeah wundrum, þa hyra Waldend for
of lichoman.

Earth-dwellers cannot say, through wise understanding, how much lifeless creation, which cannot feel, then experienced the Lord's suffering. Those of earth who are of the noblest kind, and the high-structures of heaven also, all became sorrowful, gripped by fear, before that one alone. Though they did not know any spiritual understanding by their nature, nevertheless they miraculously perceived when their ruler left his body.

The compound *heahgetimbru* literally means 'high buildings' or 'the high-built things', but as I have argued elsewhere, its referent is always the heavens.²⁹ The term figures heaven as a physical, created space, that is literally up. It refers to an architecture of celestial bodies, not the community of the saved, and it is used in l. 1181b to underscore that this reference to heaven is not a metonym for saints or angels — these lines are about the noblest *things* in heaven (i.e., the sun and stars), not the noblest *beings* in heaven. The application of architectural lexis to designate something that is self-evidently not made by human hands also underscores the poet's indifference to the artificiality of architecture. The Temple is 'dumban gesceaft', and heavenly architecture is 'deade gesceafte' ('lifeless creation', l. 1179). They are both the creation of God, each as much as the other.

²⁸ O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, p. 35. The architectural imagery of Ephesians 2.14 is developed further a few verses on (Ephesians 2.20), in the metaphor of Christ as the cornerstone and the apostles and prophets as the foundation of a new temple.

²⁹ Hannah M. Bailey, 'Heahgetimbru: A Reassessment of *Christ III* ll. 972–976', *Notes and Queries*, n. s., 63 (2016), 346–51.

Andreas and the Temple

Like *Christ III*, *Andreas* engages with discourses of the Temple in its development of scriptural allusions. Where *Andreas* differs from *Christ III* is in its self-conscious commentary on the process of revising source texts so as to draw out such allusions and typological meaning. The *Andreas* poet uses the architectural features in the narrative to comment on textual production.

While *Andreas* and his followers are travelling by boat to Mermedonia to rescue Matthew from the cannibals' prison, *Andreas* tells the Ship's Captain (who the reader knows is Christ in disguise, though *Andreas* is prevented from perceiving this) stories about Christ's miracles. More particularly — and ironically, given *Andreas*' failure to recognize his interlocutor — *Andreas* tells him about the Jews' failure to recognize Christ's divinity despite witnessing these miracles. This episode forms the core of a series of parallels that equate the cannibalistic Mermedonians, with their excessive literalism and strict dietary rules, with the unbelieving Jews.³⁰

Human beings repeatedly fail as 'readers' of Christ in this poem — the Jews fail to recognize Christ's divinity, the Mermedonians fail to recognize that *Andreas* is the servant of Christ, and *Andreas* fails to recognize Christ while engaged in a prolonged conversation with him. Nature, by contrast, repeatedly demonstrates that it understands that *Andreas* is the servant of Christ: the blood *Andreas* sheds while being tortured by the Mermedonians becomes blooming trees (ll. 1448–49), and the stormy seas grow calm because they recognize that *Andreas* is the servant of Christ (ll. 534b–35a).

Architectural features also respond positively to *Andreas* and to Christ. The poem contrasts the disbelief of the Jews with the swift obedience of a statue of a seraph in the Jewish temple, and later contrasts the disbelief of the Mermedonians with the swift obedience of a stone pillar in the Mermedonians prison. In both episodes, a stone architectural feature which should not be able to see, hear, or speak, demonstrates that it has superior understanding to men who have eyes and ears but do not believe.

The story of the statue is related by *Andreas*, who tells the Ship's Captain that the Jewish priests did not believe that Christ was the son of God, but insisted on interpreting his lineage literally — to them, he was the son of Mary and Joseph, and nothing more (ll. 676–91). *Andreas* says that Christ returned to the temple, where he commanded a statue of a seraph to come to life in order to preach to the assembled priests and then fetch the resurrected patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to corroborate its message (ll. 706–810). References to the blindness of the priests who fail to believe form an envelope pattern enclosing most of the episode. When he begins his narrative, *Andreas* says that the sinful men did not accept Christ's teaching 'þeah he soðra swa feala | tacna gecyðde þær hie to segon' ('though he revealed so many true signs in their sight' ll. 710b–11), and at the end he reiterates the same idea (ll. 811–15a):

Nu ðu miht gehyran,	hyse leofesta,
hu he wundra worn	wordum cyðde,
swa þeah ne gelyfdon	larum sinum
modblinde menn.	

³⁰ Many of these parallels were first catalogued by Heiatt in 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia'. See also Earl, 'Typological Structure', p. 73, and David Hamilton, 'The Diet and Digestion of Allegory in *Andreas*', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 1 (1972), 147–58 (p. 149).

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Now you may hear, dearest of men, how he revealed a multitude of wonders with words,
although spiritually-blind men did not believe his teachings.

The inanimacy of the statue before it springs to life is emphasized by repeated references to the human craftsmanship that brought it into being: it is a 'wraetlice wundor agræfene' ('marvelously carved wonder', l. 712), an 'anlicnesse' ('likeness', l. 713a), 'torhte gefrætwed' ('brightly adorned', l. 715b), 'wlitige geworhte' ('beautifully wrought', 716a), a 'hiw' ('form' or 'shape', l. 725a) that is 'amearcod [...] þurh hand-mægen' ('marked' or 'depicted' [...] 'by hand-power', ll. 724b, 725b), and 'awriten' ('written', l. 726a). Penn R. Szittyá observes that once the seraph statue comes to life, it is no longer referred to as a seraph or angel or statue, but only as 'stan' ('stone'), and argues that this creates new typological resonances by engaging with the motif of the Church as 'living stone'.³¹ It also introduces the motif of splitting stone. When the statue comes to life, it 'of wealle ahleop' ('leapt off the wall', l. 736b), 'stan fram stane' ('stone from stone', l. 738a). This should not be taken as the graceful leaping down from a pedestal of a free-standing form. The stone sculpture an Anglo-Saxon poet or reader is likely to have been familiar with would primarily be relief carving; until that moment, wall and statue would have been one and the same stone.³² This is a violent rending apart like the rocks splitting at the Crucifixion.

In the analogues, the statue that leaps down from the wall of the temple is not a seraph but a sphynx. Technically, the seraphim are an anachronism — the temple in the narrative would have to be the Second Temple, not the First Temple of Solomon, which featured carvings of seraphim. The conflation of the temples may be accidental or deliberate, but the effect is the same; the poet's replacement of the sphynx with a seraph multiplies the potential for typological reading, as Szittyá has explained:

The poet's change of the traditional sphinxes to Christian angels transforms an otherwise merely fantastic description into a typologically significant allusion to Solomon's temple, the Temple of the Old Law. [...] The Temple of the Old Law [is] a figure for the Church of the New Law, which in turn is a figure for the Celestial Church.³³

In fact, the seraph in itself invokes these relationships between the Old Law and the New in ways that have not previously been acknowledged. The poet does not specify how many seraph statues there are, though the phrase 'on twa healfe' ('on either side', l. 715a) certainly makes it clear that there is more than one. It is likely that the poet and the poem's original audience would have understood implicitly that seraphim come in sets of two. Thomas Ohlgren identifies the six-winged angels in six illuminations and one jewelled binding of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts as seraphim; in every instance they appear in pairs.³⁴ It can be difficult to distinguish seraphim from other orders of angels, particularly cherubim, so these identifications are not certain; Richard Sowerby interprets the six-winged angels on p. 2 of Junius 11 as one cherub and one seraph and it may be that other pairs of angels Ohlgren reads

³¹ Szittyá, 'Living Stone', p. 172.

³² For the depiction of angels in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, see Richard Sowerby, *Angels in Early Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 50–61 and Warwick Rowdell et al., 'The Lichfield Angel: A Spectacular Anglo-Saxon Painted Sculpture', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 88 (2008), 48–108.

³³ Szittyá, 'Living Stone', p. 169.

³⁴ London, British Library, MS Harley 603, fol. 9^r; New York, Pierpont Morgan, MS M. 869, fol. 13^v; New York, Pierpont Morgan, MS M. 708, jewelled binding; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11, frontispiece, pp. 2, 17, 66. Thomas H. Olgen, *Anglo-Saxon Textual Illustration* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992).

as two seraphim are also one seraph and one cherub.³⁵ However, the fact remains that six-winged angels tend to appear in pairs in visual culture, and the distinction between a cherub and a seraph doesn't appear to be important to the *Andreas* poet — the ambiguous slipping between the singular and plural in ll. 717–20 suggests that the poet thinks of them as essentially the same thing:

Dis is anlicnes engelcynna
 þæs breместan þe mid þam burgwarum
 in þære ceastre is; Cheruphim et Seraphim
 þa on swegeldreamum syndon nemned.

This is a likeness of the most illustrious class of angels that is among the inhabitants of that city; there in heavenly joys they are named Cherubim and Seraphim.

In Scripture, seraphim are mentioned by name only in Isaiah. Given Helen Appleton's recent demonstration of the poem's extensive use of imagery from Isaiah (discussed further below),³⁶ it is highly likely that the poet had Isaiah's vision of two seraphim in mind (Isaiah 6.2): 'Seraphin stabant super illud sex alae uni et sex alae alteri duabus velabant faciem eius et duabus velabant pedes eius et duabus volabant.' ('Upon it stood the seraphims: the one had six wings, and the other had six wings: with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew'). Jerome interprets the two seraphim in Isaiah's vision as embodiments of 'vetus et novum Instrumentum' ('the Old and New Testaments').³⁷ In *De Templo* Book I, Chapter 13, Bede reads the two carved cherubim in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6.23–28) in the same terms; he says that they stand for the Jews and the Gentiles, and for the Old and New Testaments, and says that although there are two, they 'opus unum erat' ('formed one work'), thus signifying the typological relationship between the two Testaments.³⁸ These are precisely the truths that the statue in *Andreas* is tasked with attempting to demonstrate to the Jewish priests who can't see what the son of Mary and Joseph has to do with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Bede also explains the access the Jews and Gentiles have to the truth of the relationship between the Old Testament and the New in terms that encompass several of the major themes of *Andreas*, including the salvation of Israel at the end of time, the present displacement of the Jews by gentile peoples, and seeing and reading spiritually:

Omnis Israhel circa finem saeculi saluandus esse credatur, plurimi tamen fidelium huius temporis de gentibus congregantur ad evangelii suscipienda sacramenta quibus hoc etiam diuinitus donatum est ut reuelatis oculis sui cordis manifeste cognoscant litteram ueteris testamenti euangelicae gratiae plenam esse mysteriis.

One may believe that all Israel is to be saved near the end of the world, nevertheless the majority of believers of this age are drawn from the gentiles to receive the mysteries of the Gospel, and to them God has also given this gift, namely, that the eyes of the heart

³⁵ Sowerby, *Angels in Early Medieval England*, pp. 17–20.

³⁶ Helen Appleton, 'The Book of Isaiah as an Influence on *Andreas*', *Notes & Queries*, n. s., 62 (2015), 1–6.

³⁷ Jerome, *S. Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis Presbyteri Commentariorum in Isaiam Prophetam Libri Duodeviginti*, in *PL*, xxiv, col. 95a.

³⁸ Bede, *De templo*, I, in *Beda's Venerabilis opera. Pars II: opera exegetica*, 2A, ed. by D. Hurst, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), pp. 141–234 (esp. pp. 178–83, quotation from p. 182). Translations of *De Templo* are from *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Seán Connolly (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), p. 51.

have been unveiled so that they can recognize clearly that the letter of the Old Testament is full of the mysteries of the grace of the Gospel.³⁹

Constance B. Hieatt first identified a series of lexical and narrative links between the section of the poem where Andreas tells stories from the life of Christ and the section dealing with Andreas' actions in Mermedonia, and demonstrated that these links signal that that Andreas is enacting the role of Christ.⁴⁰ Among these is the strong parallel between the scene where Christ addresses the statue and the later scene where Andreas asks a stone pillar in the prison where he is held to pour forth water to flood the city (ll. 1492–1526a). In releasing the flood, the pillar demonstrates its 'ondgitan' ('understanding', l. 1521a) of God. The use of this term also links this watery miracle to another earlier one — the cognate verb, 'ongitan' ('to understand'), appeared earlier in the explanation the Ship's Captain gave Andreas for the quietening of the waves: 'hie ongeton þæt ðe God hæfde | wære bewunden' ('they understood that God had wound protection around you', ll. 534–35a). This understanding displayed by nature and architecture stands in implicit contrast with the blindness of the Mermedonians, who not only fail to acknowledge Andreas' message but are at first literally blind to his presence ('hine nænig gumena ongitan ne mihte, | synfulra geseon'; 'none of the men could perceive him, (none of the) sinful ones (could) see him', ll. 986–87a).

As in the earlier episode with the speaking statue, the poet has made significant changes to details of the scene. In the analogues, St Andrew calls forth a flood from the mouth of a statue, not from a pillar. The alteration allows the poet to draw upon the conventional symbolism of pillars as Christian leaders, including, possibly, the specific symbolism of the pillars of the Temple; Bede says (in Book II, Chapter 18) that the two pillars in the Temple 'apostolos [...] et doctores cunctos spiritaes significant' ('signify the apostles and all spiritual teachers').⁴¹

The shift from statue to pillar also emphasises material, rather than form. This not only recalls the patristic motif of insensate creation's responsiveness to Christ, but also facilitates typological connections that are predicated on the poem's emphasis on the pillar's nature as stone: Andreas' words in lines 1509a–19 draw an explicit parallel between the pillar and the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, and Marie Walsh has argued that the scene also creates a typological link with the rock of Horeb, which released water for the Israelites to drink (Exodus 17.6).⁴² Both these Old Testament scenes also specifically feature the *splitting* of stone — Moses splits open the rock of Horeb with his staff and smashes the stone tablets.

³⁹ Bede, *De Templo*, I, p. 183; *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Connolly, p. 52.

⁴⁰ Hieatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia'.

⁴¹ Bede, *De Templo*, II, p. 198; *Bede: On the Temple*, trans. by Connolly, p. 74. On pillars as symbols of spiritual leaders, see O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, p. 35, and Laura Varnam's discussion of later use of this symbolism in her article above. Given that narrative and lexical parallels encourage the equation of the seraph in the temple and the pillar in the prison (as Hieatt has demonstrated), and given that the poet's introduction of references to Joshua and Tobias in this scene seem to signal an 'Old Law/New Law contrast' (as Hieatt has argued), we might also read the ambiguously plural pillars of the Mermedonian prison (ll. 1492–95a) in the light of Bede's reading of the two brazen pillars in the (First) Temple as alluding to the dual mission of preaching to the Jews and to the Gentiles. Hieatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia', p. 50.

⁴² Walsh, 'Baptismal Flood', p. 141. Daniel Anlezark has taken this even further, demonstrating that the columns both 'evoke a series of Old Testament types', and contribute to the resonances between this scene and the one leading up to the dragon fight in *Beowulf*. Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 215, 352.

***Andreas*: They have eyes, but they see not**

Like the veil and walls in *Christ III*, the seraph and pillar in *Andreas* work simultaneously within the discourse of the Temple and within the discourse of nature's responses to Christ. But unlike the walls and Temple veil in *Christ III*, the statue and pillar in *Andreas* are not 'mute creation'; they speak. The statue literally preaches, and Waugh has written persuasively about the stone pillar in Mermedonia as a speaker. Drawing on the common analogy of bodies and buildings in Old English texts, she interprets the flood that emanates from the pillar as analogous to speech, and sees the flood not only as an enactment of Old Testament justice but as a speaking aloud of that text.⁴³ However, the pillar is not only reading in the sense of 'giving voice to a text' but in the sense of 'interpreting'. *Andreas* asks the stone pillar to remember that it was a stone on which God 'ryhte æ | getacnode on tyn wordum' ('betokened his righteous law in ten statements', ll. 1511b–12). The verb (*ge*)*tacnian* is used here in the relatively uncommon sense of 'make a mark on a material object'.⁴⁴ There are only a handful of occurrences of any sense of this verb in poetry (this is the only time it occurs in *Andreas*), but it is often employed in prose in discussions of figural — especially typological — signification. The poet may be deliberately drawing upon the lexis of typological reading because *Andreas*' address to the stone effectively asks the stone itself to think in typological terms. In this, the poem is distinct from its analogues. In the Latin *Casanatensis*, *Andreas* simply makes the sign of the cross and the statue obeys. The Greek *Praxeis* version does allude to the Ten Commandments as an example proving that a stone is not unworthy to praise God, but there Andrew does not ask the statue to demonstrate memory, recognition, or understanding — only to obey, out of fear of the Cross.⁴⁵ The pillar in *Andreas* is not vaguely fearful, sorrowful, or perceptive of Christ's suffering of God like the 'dumban gesceaft' of *Christ III*, but specifically presented as a capable typological reader. It is tasked with recognizing precisely the connections between *Andreas* and Moses that the poet is guiding the reader towards.

These scenes that contrast the blindness of unbelieving humans with the perceptiveness of nature and architecture are components of the poem's larger exploration of the paradoxes of sighted people being blind and blind people seeing. (*Andreas* has nothing wrong with his eyes, but he fails to recognize Christ; Matthew is physically blinded by the Mermedonians, but spiritually the most clear-sighted character in the poem.) The theme of blindness in *Andreas* has frequently been remarked upon, often to relate the Mermedonians' physical blinding of their enemies to their own spiritual blindness, or in relation to the parallels the poet constructs between the Mermedonians and the Jews.⁴⁶

However, it has not been noted previously that the poet's treatment of the Mermedonians and their Jewish counterparts is governed to a considerable extent by engagement with a specific motif drawn from Scripture: 'oculos habent et non videbunt' ('they have eyes, but they see not', Psalm 134.16). This motif appears several times in Scripture: twice in the Psalms, four times in three books of the Latter Prophets, and twice in the Gospels. In Psalms 113 and

⁴³ Waugh, 'City as Speaker', esp. pp. 260 and 264.

⁴⁴ See T. Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary: Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), s.v. *ge-tacnian* 1.1.

⁴⁵ *Acts of Andrew*, trans. by Boenig, pp. 51 and 20.

⁴⁶ Most recently by Godlove, 'Bodies as Borders'. Some other approaches to blindness include Heiatt's commentary on the purpose of the allusion to Tobias in l. 1516b ('Harrowing of Mermedonia', p. 51), and Kiser's commentary on the connections between *Andreas*' concealed approach along the road to Mermedonia, Isaiah 42.16, and Jerome's commentary on Isaiah ('Lifes Weg', pp. 69–70).

134 it is the idols of the Gentiles, and by extension, the Gentiles themselves, who have eyes but see not. Psalm 113 reads:

¹² simulacra gentium argentum et aurum, opera manuum hominum ¹³ os habent et non loquentur oculos habent et non videbunt ¹⁴ aures habent et non audient nares habent et non odorabuntur ¹⁵ manus habent et non palpabunt pedes habent et non ambulabunt non clamabunt in guttore suo ¹⁶ similes illis fiant qui faciunt ea et omnes qui confidunt in eis.

¹² The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men. ¹³ They have mouths and speak not: they have eyes and see not. ¹⁴ They have ears and hear not; they have noses and smell not. ¹⁵ They have hands and feel not: they have feet and walk not: neither shall they cry out through their throat. ¹⁶ Let them that make them become like unto them: and all such as trust in them.⁴⁷

In Isaiah 6.10 and 42.20, Jeremiah 5.21, and Ezekiel 12.2 the motif is repurposed as criticism of the Israelites, who are implicitly compared to the Gentiles and their idols. Jeremiah 5, for example, reads: ²⁰ *adnuntiate hoc domui Iacob et auditum facite in Iuda, dicentes* ²¹ *audi, populus stulte, qui non habes cor qui habentes oculos non videtis et aures et non auditis* (²⁰ Declare ye this to the house of Jacob and publish it in Juda, saying: ²¹ Hear, O foolish people, and without understanding: who have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not'). In Mark 8, the motif is again repurposed as a criticism of the apostles. Mark 8.1–9 recounts the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The verses that follow relate how the disciples found they had only one loaf in their boat during a journey they took shortly afterwards. Jesus rebukes the disciples for becoming anxious over the shortage of bread:

¹⁷ *Quo cognito Iesus ait illis quid cogitatis quia panes non habetis nondum cognoscitis nec intellegitis adhuc caecatum habetis cor vestrum* ¹⁸ *oculos habentes non videtis et aures habentes non auditis, nec recordamini* ¹⁹ *quando quinque panes fregi in quinque milia et quot cofinos fragmentorum plenos sustulistis dicunt ei Duodecim* ²⁰ *quando et septem panes in quattuor milia, quot sportas fragmentorum tulistis et dicunt ei septem.*

¹⁷ Which Jesus knowing saith to them: Why do you reason, because you have no bread? Do you not yet know nor understand? Have you still your heart blinded? ¹⁸ Having eyes, see you not? And having ears, hear you not? Neither do you remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took you up? They say to him: Twelve. ²⁰ When also the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took you up?" And they say to him: Seven.

In both the poem and the analogues, Andreas similarly takes no provisions for his journey, but is fed by the Ship's Captain. Later, when the captain asks about the miracles of Christ, Andreas says that Christ made the deaf hear and the dumb speak (cf. Mark 7.37), and the blind in the cities see (cf. Mark 8.22–26). He then relates the story of the loaves and the fishes. In the context of Andreas' failure to recognize that the captain is Christ, this seems calculated to bring to mind Christ's rebuke to his disciples in the Gospel of Mark.⁴⁸

However, for an educated Anglo-Saxon reader, the most familiar iteration of the scriptural motif '*oculos habent et non videbunt*' may have been Psalm 134. Susan Gillingham identifies this as one of a group of sixteen psalms which 'became more prominent than others through

⁴⁷ Some editions of the Douay-Rheims number this psalm differently, restarting at 1 after verse 8. I have followed the numbering of the Vulgate for clarity.

⁴⁸ Fred Biggs has discussed some of the ways that the *Andreas* poet engaged with Gospel narratives (including some specific turns of phrase). Biggs, 'Passion of Andreas'; see also Gayle Henrotte, 'Jesus Asleep in the Boat:

liturgical use'.⁴⁹ Psalm 134 begins by enjoining praise of the Lord (verses 1–3) for the reason that he has chosen Jacob (verse 4). The psalmist then enumerates several examples of the Lord's greatness: his command over heaven, earth, sea, and weather, his slaying the firstborn in Egypt and sending signs to Pharaoh, and his smiting nations and giving their land to Israel (verses 5–12). The psalmist addresses the Lord ('Domine nomen tuum in aeternum': 'Thy name, O Lord, is for ever') then states that the Lord will judge his people (verses 13–14). The following verses are almost identical to Psalm 113's verses on the idols of the Gentiles:

¹⁵ simulacra gentium argentum et aurum opera manuum hominum ¹⁶ os habent et non loquentur oculos habent et non videbunt ¹⁷ aures habent et non audient neque enim est spiritus in ore eorum ¹⁸ similes illis fiant qui faciunt ea et omnes qui confidunt in eis.

¹⁵ The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of men's hands. ¹⁶ They have a mouth, but they speak not: they have eyes, but they see not. ¹⁷ They have ears, but they hear not: neither is there any breath in their mouths. ¹⁸ Let them that make them be like to them: and every one that trusteth in them.

The psalm concludes with three verses enjoining blessings on the Lord (19–21).

The psalm shares many thematic links with *Andreas* (particularly with section of the poem in which Andreas speaks with the Ship's Captain) and these connections are more compelling in light of Cassiodorus' commentary, which could well have been known to an educated Anglo-Saxon like the *Andreas* poet.⁵⁰ For example, Cassiodorus states that the psalm's reference to wind is an allusion to the apostles, whose preaching he equates to lightning and rain (with baptismal connotations), which resonates with the poem's depiction of an apostle's preaching bringing about a fiery flood.⁵¹ This strengthens the connection between the psalm's reference to God's power over sea and weather and the explorations of this motif in *Andreas*.⁵²

Cassiodorus sees the reference to Jacob in verse 4 as an allusion to the replacement of the Jews by Gentile nations incorporated into the Church (he says that the name means 'supplanter').⁵³ He also reads the verses on the displacement of the Gentile nations by Israel as alluding to the later displacement of the Old Law by the New, and 'quia iudicabit Dominus populum suum' ('for the Lord will judge his people') in verse 14 as an allusion to the 'detestabili obstinatione' ('accursed obstinancy') of the unbelieving Jewish people who witnessed Christ's

A Thrice-told Tale', in *De Gustibus: Essays for Alain Renoir*, ed. by John Miles Foley, J. Chris Womack and Whitney A. Womack, Albert Bates Lord Studies in Oral Tradition, 11 (London: Garland, 1992), pp. 250–65.

⁴⁹ Susan Gillingham, *Psalms Through the Centuries: Volume One* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 53. See also George Brown, 'The Psalms as the Foundation of Anglo-Saxon Learning', in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Nancy Van Deusen (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 1–24.

⁵⁰ The presence of Cassiodorus' *Expositio psalorum* in Anglo-Saxon England is attested by its appearance in two inventories, four manuscripts, and citations by seven different authors. Bede's use of the *Expositio psalorum* is particularly extensive. Among psalm commentaries that circulated in Anglo-Saxon England, there is more evidence for Cassiodorus' than for any other apart from Augustine's. See Lapidige, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*, pp. 288 and 296. For a history of Cassiodorus' influence on Western Churches, see Gillingham, *Psalms Through the Centuries*, pp. 57–58.

⁵¹ Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum CXXXIV.7*, in *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori. Expositio Psalmorum*, ed. by M. Adriaen, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 97–98, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1958), II, 1216–17.

⁵² Boenig points out that 'the storm is absent in both the Greek romance and the Old English homily'. There is a storm in the Latin analogue, though it is not described with such relish as the storm in *Andreas*. Boenig, *Saint and Hero*, pp. 50, 33.

⁵³ Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum CXXXIV.4*, p. 1215.

miracles.⁵⁴ These are the concerns of *Andreas*: how a new, inclusive covenant supplants an old, exclusive one, and how an unbelieving Gentile people are eventually incorporated into the assembly of the Church and so supplant the Jews as members of the elect.

Both the psalm and the poem emphasize paradoxes of seeing: the superiority of spiritual sight to literal sight, and the blindness of people who only see carnally. Cassiodorus sees this theme throughout the psalm and explains that the psalmist's knowledge of the greatness of God comes from spiritual sight, 'non aliqua uisione carnali' ('not through any vision of the flesh').⁵⁵ This theme is most readily apparent in the four verses — almost a fifth of the psalm — that describe the insensate idols of the Gentiles and the blindness of those who worship them. However, it is also implicit in verses 8 and 9, which allude to Pharaoh's persistent hard heartedness (as the slaughter of the first-born was a direct result of Pharaoh's failure to respond to prior signs). Cassiodorus relates the signs in Egypt to those that appeared at the Crucifixion and discusses the role that signs play in conversion.⁵⁶ Compared to its analogues, *Andreas* expands the storm imagery and strengthens the analogy between the Jews and Mermedonians, so it has a slightly tighter fit with the psalm, especially in light of Cassiodorus' identification of themes of apostleship and displacement. However, like the allusion to Mark 8, the basic framework of the analogy to Psalm 134 is also present in the narrative of the analogues. Where it is most clear that the *Andreas* poet is making a new connection is in the transformation of the sphynx into a seraph. Nancy Porter has argued that the specific half-line 'Cheruphim et Seraphim' (l. 719b) is of liturgical origin,⁵⁷ but the function of the seraph in the poem must now also be understood in light of Appleton's recent findings on the extensive use of the Book of Isaiah as a major source of the imagery in *Andreas*, including her assessment of the parallel functions of the seraph in each text:

The seraph of Isaiah brings a hot coal to cleanse the prophets' lips to allow him to preach to the people, but they will neither heed him nor believe the vision (Isaiah 6:5–10). The stone seraph of *Andreas* takes a similar role, berating the priests of the temple who refuse to recognize the miracle.⁵⁸

It now seems clear that the seraph in the poem is inspired by the seraph in Isaiah 6. This chapter relates Isaiah's vision of the Lord enthroned in the temple, flanked by seraphim. Isaiah laments his unclean lips; one of the seraphim flies down to him and touches his lips with a burning coal, cleansing him and rendering him a fit messenger. The Lord asks 'quem mittam et quis ibit nobis' (Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?) and Isaiah answers 'ecce ego sum mitte me' (Lo, here am I. Send me') (Isaiah 6.8). The motif 'oculos habent et non videbunt' appears in the following verses:

⁹ et dixit vade et dices populo huic audite audientes et nolite intellegere et videte visionem et nolite cognoscere ¹⁰ excaeca cor populi huius et aures eius adgrava et oculos eius claude ne forte videat oculis suis et auribus suis audiat et corde suo intellegat et convertatur et sanem eum.

⁵⁴ See Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum CXXXIV*.14, pp. 1219–20; translation from *Cassiodorus: Explanation of the Psalms Vol. III. Psalms 101–150*, trans. by P. G. Walsh, Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation, 53 (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1991), p. 348.

⁵⁵ Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum CXXXIV*.5, p. 1215; *Cassiodorus*, trans. by Walsh, p. 344.

⁵⁶ Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalmum CXXXIV*.8–9, pp. 1217–18; *Cassiodorus*, trans. by Walsh, pp. 345–46.

⁵⁷ Nancy A. Porter, 'Wrestling with Loan-words: Poetic Use of "engel", "seraphim" and "cherubim" in *Andreas* and *Elene'*, *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 89 (1988), 155–70 (pp. 159–60).

⁵⁸ Appleton, 'The Book of Isaiah', p. 2.

⁹ And he said: Go, and thou shalt say to this people: Hearing, hear and understand not: and see the vision, and know it not. ¹⁰ Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.

Isaiah asks: ‘*usquequo Domine?*’ (‘How long, O Lord?’) and God answers, ‘*donec desolentur civitates absque habitatore*’ (‘Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant’) (Isaiah 6.11). As well as the analogy between Isaiah and the statue as disregarded prophets that Appleton identifies, there is a more immediate analogy of movement in the two texts: the downward movement of the seraph which leaps from the wall to approach Christ mirrors the downward movement of the seraph who approaches Isaiah, who not only prophesied but prefigured Christ. There are also further general thematic parallels between *Andreas* and Isaiah chapter 6. Like Isaiah, Andreas is a messenger to an ‘unclean’ people, and as Isaiah must be purified with the burning coal to become God’s messenger to the Jews, so Andreas becomes a messenger to the Mermedonians through physical torment. The state of the blinded Jews of Isaiah 6, who are prevented from seeing their errors and seeking salvation until after their cities have been wasted, has an analogue in the Mermedonians, who remain blind to the mounting evidence of the miracles performed in their city, and therefore unable to convert and seek salvation, until their city is wasted. The Jews’ blindness in Isaiah is part of God’s plan; similarly in *Andreas* the blindness of the Mermedonians is necessary to create the conditions for Andreas to undergo suffering in the manner of Christ and to call up the fiery flood which enacts the mysteries of baptism.

The last half-century of scholarship on *Andreas* has established that the poem is dense with scriptural allusion, so in itself, the fact that the poet alludes to Isaiah 6 (or the Psalms, or the Gospels) is not especially significant or surprising. What is significant is the way that Isaiah 6 functions as the bridge that connects use of the motif ‘*oculos habent et non videbunt*’ in the Psalms to its use in the Gospels. The use of this motif as a criticism of the Jews by latter prophets such as Isaiah is the intermediate step between the Psalms’ criticism of the Gentiles and Mark’s criticism of the Apostles. By introducing allusions to Isaiah 6, the poet connects the allusions to Mark and affinities to Psalm 134 that were most likely already present in the source material. What is more, the function of the seraph in the poem is not just an allusion to Isaiah, but to Isaiah as read through Matthew. In Matthew 13.13–14 Jesus answers the disciples’ question about why he speaks in parables with an allusion to Isaiah 6.9–10:

¹³ Ideo in parabolis loquor eis quia videntes non vident et audientes non audiunt neque intellegunt ¹⁴ et adimpletur eis propheta Esaiiae dicens auditu audietis et non intellegitis et videntes videbitis et non videbitis

¹³ Therefore do I speak to them in parables; because seeing they see not and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. ¹⁴ And the prophecy of Isaia is fulfilled in them, who saith: By hearing you shall hear and shall not understand: and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive.

When the seraph leaps down from the wall it not only recalls Isaiah’s vision but typologically fulfils it, since Isaiah has been replaced by Christ. When the same seraph preaches and is not believed, it enacts the very points of Matthew 13.13–14 and so becomes parable embodied.

Scripture’s own interpretation of Scripture through these chains of quotation and reinterpretation, in which Isaiah and then Mark and Matthew *discover new meaning within* the Psalmist’s words rather than adding new meaning to them, model and authorize the very rhetorical devices and interpretive techniques the *Andreas* poet employs. It validates the

legitimacy and profitability of textual adaptation and typological reading and offers a model for the *Andreas* poet's own methods of meaning-making.

The *Andreas* poet uses the fact that the statue is an architectural feature shaped by human hands to comment on these processes of reading and composition. In coming to life, the seraph statue signifies in a way its sculptor could never have predicted. In describing the statues on the temple walls, the poet specifies that they are made by human 'handmægen' ('hand-power', l. 725b), and describes their creation through the lexis of writing: they are 'amearcod' ('marked', l. 724b) — a verb commonly used in the context of writing, though it is also used with reference to a marble sculpture in *The Phoenix* (l. 333a) — and 'awriten on wealle' ('written on the wall', l. 726a).⁵⁹ The poet's casting the statues as 'written' things alludes to the way that texts can reveal spiritual truths beyond the author's knowledge or intention.

This is a comment on the reading of Scripture, but it is also a comment on the composition of the poem. The writing of *Andreas* will necessarily have been a process of adaptation of one or more source texts. This went beyond the conversion of Latin to Old English and prose to verse; scenes were transformed through adjustments made to narrative details, to the identity of speakers, even to the words spoken by Christ. Those alterations are not intended to 'correct' the source text but to probe its parables. The new text is the old text freshly animated, like the seraph leaping down from the wall to preach.

Conclusions

Old English poets often develop and expand upon potential typological and eschatological significance latent in their source texts; to this end, *Andreas* and Fitt XIII of *Christ III* each employ a similar technique of using stones that split under their own agency to combine a patristic trope of creation as authoritative reader with imagery of the Temple. The manner in which the two poems engage with ideas about the Temple is, if not directly influenced by Bede, at least indirectly indebted to his 'sustained' interest in the image.⁶⁰

It is possible, though not certain, that the *Andreas* poet knew *Christ III*; if not, the number of unique or near-unique phrases and compounds they share at least suggests that the poems draw upon a common literary tradition, so a comparison of how each poem uses this same patristic trope can help elucidate what is distinctive about each poet's engagement with it. In the patristic motif of creation responding to Christ's divinity where human beings fail to acknowledge it, 'creation' includes the insensate things in the lowest categories of the Chain of Being: things that are not living (e.g., water) and living things that do not move independently (e.g., trees). In combining this motif with Temple imagery, both poets are compelled to consider how artificial objects, shaped by human hands, relate to examples of creation that are drawn from the natural world. The *Christ III* poet emphasizes the muteness and lifelessness of architecture, and makes no distinction between walls and stones as examples of 'creation'. The *Andreas* poet takes a different approach, using the ambiguity of architecture's being sub-creation — it is made by human beings, but both maker and material are made by God. In depicting architectural features which read in themselves symbolic values and spiritual truths

⁵⁹ *Dictionary of Old English: A–H online*, ed. Angus Cameron, Ashley Crandell Amos, Antonina diPaolo Healey, and others (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project, 2016), <http://www.doe.utoronto.ca> [accessed February 2017], s.v. *ā-mearcian*.

⁶⁰ See footnote 2.

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which their makers and custodians could not have foreseen, the *Andreas* poet comments upon human creativity and the process of adapting authoritative textual sources.

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