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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Paper 1a: Fields of Change? Consumption, Production and Agricultural Landscape Organisation in Early Medieval England

Debby Banham (University of Cambridge)

It was argued in 2010 that a major transformation in the agricultural landscape of lowland England, the formation of open fields, was driven by an early medieval change from a cereal farming regime based on barley to one favouring bread wheat, and that this in turn was motivated by the preference of the landholding classes for light, white, wheat bread. Subsequent work has however undermined nearly all the assumptions on which this argument was based. The archaeobotanist Mark McKerracher has shown that the later cereal regime was not simply dominated by bread wheat, but characterised by greater diversity of crops. McKerracher and colleagues on the Oxford 'Feedsax' project have also demonstrated that change from intensive farming, with small enclosed fields, to a more extensive regime, such as open field agriculture, using a more complex plough, began earlier than previously supposed, in the eighth century, some hundred years before there is written evidence for open fields. In addition to this archaeological reappraisal, the historian Tom Lambert has recently shown that our main class of written evidence for elite dietary preferences in early medieval England, known as 'food rents', consists in fact of menus for feasts, rather than rents in kind.

This last discovery appears to uncouple these texts from the localities to which they are attached. If the recipients are promising not rent in kind but a fancy meal, is there any reason to suppose that the foods listed were produced on the land in question? If not, did the dietary preferences of the landholding classes really have a direct influence on what was grown on the land they held? And if the change in cereal regime was more subtle, can it really have driven the introduction of new agricultural technology? Do we need to revise our whole narrative of agricultural landscape change in this period? This paper will explore these issues.

Paper 1b: From Farm to Pharmacy: Human-Animal Environments in Early Medieval England

Christina Lee & Holly Miller (University of Nottingham)

Animals play a pivotal role in Early Medieval England, but their significance as contributors to health and wellbeing, aside from amulets, has not been discussed much (Meaney 1981). Many of the remedies in the surviving corpus of Old English medical texts, however, are dependent on animal produce: from butter to bacon they are as important in healing practices as plants. While some of these ingredients are generic items which can be obtained from the kitchen, in other cases there are complex requirements for a specific type of beast (free-roaming, neutered or even of a particular colour) which require physicians to rely on the knowledge and participation of a range of different people, including the farmer, the milkmaid and the butcher. They had to rely on a network of knowledge which was familiar with the environments in which the beasts were raised and kept.

Scholars have attempted to make links between animals and burials beyond their nutritional value (Lee 2007), but research has never expanded beyond case studies. It is now time to think about a holistic understanding of animals in wellbeing practices: while at the most basic level they are food and therefore a source of vital nutrition, they may not have been primarily seen as just food: they sustain political relations, relations with the supernatural – donations, sacrifice or symbolic artefact. These aspects, while studied elsewhere, are not discussed with wellbeing

practices in mind, where the type of animal may have already been associated with particular healing properties. It is worth remembering that people in Early Medieval England did not necessarily distinguish between pragmatic, medicinal or magic uses. Any discussion of animals should therefore consider the wider cultural contexts of animal-human relations.

On the example of a pig we will explore the chain of knowledge required to provide the required ingredients for a select group of remedies. Our paper brings together archaeological and textual evidence and interpretations to provide a holistic understanding of the role of animals in human health, identity and psychological wellbeing, during the formative centuries of Early Medieval England from paganism to Christianity.

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Paper 1c: Mediterranean Plants in the English Environment

Alexandra Zhirnova (University of Cambridge)

Fruits, flowers and trees have always served as symbols. The lily has been associated with beauty and purity since Biblical times, and grapes have been synonymous with bounty even longer. Particular plants, however, have maintained less symbolic continuity. George Brown notes that the pomegranate, considered now of little symbolic significance, features prominently in Biblical and patristic literature, and Hall and Meghani point out the importance of various plants' asexual procreation as a conceit in Latin and vernacular riddles.

Responding to these authors, this paper seeks to re-examine some prominent examples of botanical symbolism in early English literature and investigate how Britain's physical environment influenced the perception of Mediterranean fruits and trees. It begins by tracing the Scriptural and patristic background of Christian interpretation of plants and analyses the adaptations of these ideas across a variety of texts in Old English and Latin. To the theology and biblical exegesis of Aldhelm and Bede, this paper compares the representation of plants in popular riddles, which often "voiced" plants' "own" reflections on their nature.

Thus, the analysis aims to demonstrate how knowledge of certain plants was transmitted to English authors, what their awareness of these plants' physical properties can tell us about early practices of pilgrimage, and even how the use of certain fruits as symbols of chastity may be connected to the Medieval methods of their preservation.

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G. H. Brown, 'Patristic Pomegranates, from Ambrose and Apponius to Bede,' in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, vol. 1, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keeffe and A. Orchard, (Toronto, 2005), pp. 132—149.

A. Hall and S. A. Meghani, “I am a virgin woman and a virgin woman’s child”: Critical Plant Theory and the Maiden Mother Conceit in Early Medieval Riddles’, *Medieval Worlds* 14 (2021), 265—288.

Paper 2a: Building, Dwelling, Readyng; Or How the Woodsman’s Idyll Does Not Preface the Old English *Soliloquies*

Michael Treschow (The University of British Columbia, Okanagan Campus)

The Southwick Codex begins abruptly with a short idyll in the first-person voice a woodsman. He describes how he has gathered lumber to build himself a country home, in hopes of dwelling there comfortably, summer and winter, taking his ease amidst his tasks of hunting, fowling, and fishing. He appeals to divine guidance and divine pleasure in the woods that he would be enabled to achieve a quiet rural life. His intent is to work the lease land that he holds from his lord in hopes of earning it as Bookland, a permanent possession in the temporal world. He, nevertheless, understands his homesteading life to lead towards an everlasting home from the Bountiful Provider (*wilega gidfola*). He prays to be worthy in his efforts while here, and to come there.

Because this short text immediately precedes the Old English *Soliloquies*, the general assumption has been that it is a preface. To perform the role of leading into the *Soliloquies*, it has had to act as a metaphor. Apart from their contiguity in the manuscript, however, nothing directly connects the one to the other. In fact, there are codicological and literary reasons to take them separately. In this paper I will briefly review the idyll’s manuscript setting and propose that it is the fragmented conclusion to an unknown text. I will also review those literary features that contest its traditional status as a preface. From that perspective, its bucolic imagery comes to read straightforwardly, not metaphorically. The lumber remains lumber, the woods remain woods, the homestead remains earthy. The woodsman builds this homestead for his purposeful leisure in anticipation of the journey hence. He looks to the divine promise of an eternal home – a promise conveyed through Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, and many other holy fathers. He relies on their merits to support his hope that he might dwell more quietly (*softor eardian*) than he has before in this peaceful dwelling that is set on the path towards an everlasting home. The woodsman’s idyll illustrates an intersection between the temporal and the eternal. His undertakings while dwelling and working in the natural world glide toward the beyond. This fragmented text portrays some sweetness in the here and now amidst the readyng to move on. It is curiously cheerful and reticent about the troubles of the world.

Paper 2b: Fear as an Emotional Environment in Old English Wisdom Poetry

Rafal Borysławski (University of Silesia)

The concept of an emotional community proposed nearly two decades ago by Barbara Rosenwein has earned the right of place in both emotion studies in general and in the studies devoted to early medieval emotionalities understood as systems of shared feeling. In this paper, I intend to propose its expansion into the idea of an emotional environment, i.e., a textually imposed undercurrent of anticipated emotional reception in the form of attitudes and responses operating in and across specific literary genres and contexts. Among several such environments, which may include such instances as those of wonder and surprise, anger and indignation, and sadness and resignation, in the proposed paper, I intend to focus on fear and its confrontative and admonitory aspects as modes of intellectual communication present in Old English wisdom poetry. I shall argue for a degree of pre-eminence of this emotional environment in selected

Exeter Book gnomic poems and the gnomic aspects of chosen Exeter Book riddles not only in how they operate with eliciting fear and awe towards their subject matter but also in how they engage in the application of fear as a rhetorical device and a causative element focused on Christian wisdom and moral advancement.

As the point of departure, I will propose the existence of two approaches to this emotional environment of confrontation with wisdom: that characteristic of riddles where the threat of intellectual insufficiency is alleviated by the hope for the relief that is brought by arriving (or not) at a solution. I propose the other to be observable in the prescriptive and cautionary messages of the gnomic verse (such as *Maxims I and II*, *The Order of the World*) as a confrontative invitation to probe into the searoruna gespon “enticement of cunning mysteries” of the world (*The Order of the World*, l. 15), which is combined with a caution to be aware of one’s limits of insight and foresight. When juxtaposed, these two approaches create a complex set of attitudes operating within the specifically Old English environment of fear. They engage it, and they engage with it overtly and covertly, and they invite thinking beyond it as a humanizing opportunity rather than a sheer threat. In this respect, the environment of fear in Old English gnomic verse becomes a poetically creative, motivational, and wisdom- and experience-oriented way of interacting with its textual manifestations. As in the apophatic approach to God, which describes God through what God is not, the poetic environment of fear in the Exeter Book appears to indicate also what lies outside of it, that is, a Christian insight resulting from a confrontation with it.

Paper 2c: ‘No wall so solid’: Permeable Surfaces in Old English Poetry

Victoria Condie (University of Cambridge)

Walls by their very nature protect, exclude, and confine. They may guard a community or keep out external threats. Walls can also restrict when a greater freedom, either of movement or of understanding, may be desired. In Old English poetry walls are encountered in the built environment and in the natural world and can be read as environments where an understanding of the past, or of some future event to be decoded can be inscribed or displayed. In each case walls can be read as simultaneously porous and impermeable.

This paper will examine walls in *The Ruin*, *The Wanderer*, *Exodus*, *Daniel* and *Andreas*. The wall as the visible sign of the built environment in a state of progressive dilapidation provides an image of the multitemporal. Ruins becomes the means by which the process of history, fragmentary even when it has been inscribed, passes through time. However, it is the wall which initiates this meditation. In *The Ruin*, the broken walls allow the reader to enter the literary and meditative space of the text, but they also provide a necessary corrective to the idea that this space can be entered effortlessly. In *The Wanderer* the ruined walls signify the lost material past and familiar environment which has caused the Wanderer’s near-state of psychological fragmentation, but they are also the means of entry to a condition of rehabilitation.

The wave-walls of *Exodus* reflect the porous nature of walls as ostensible barriers. *Exodus* engages with Biblical history not as something fixed but as something that is reconceptualised into the present time of the poem and beyond. The barriers which fell for the Israelites have been commemorated and metaphorised by the Old English poet and their audience into something which speaks on the transhistorical level.

Walls as environments for text and image provide spaces for intellectual and emotional engagement through a form of ekphrasis. The surface of the wall which provides the ground for the likeness of the angel in *Andreas* or for the writing in *Daniel* emphasises the flatness of the image and appears impermeable, but the viewer and the ongoing process of their engagement

with text or image become more important than any static, physical representation. Walls, intact, breached or in the process of decaying into something else, possess a vital permeability which allows for a constant movement through time and understanding.

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Paper 3a: 'On Brytene': The Old English *Menologium* and Nation

David Callander (Cardiff University)

The Old English *Menologium*, a poem in many ways remarkable, stands out for its emphatic use of the term *Bryten* 'Britain'. Of all Old English poems, the *Menologium* is the only one which deploys this term more than once, and does so five times, providing almost half of its instances in the entire verse corpus.¹ This paper seeks to establish why this focus on Britain is so important to the text, examining the *Menologium* in the context of tenth- and eleventh-century English conceptions of (and claims to) Britain. In doing so, it provides an opportunity to assess the cultural and linguistic environment of early medieval England, taking into account competing claims to the island of Britain, as found in early Welsh verse.

With a number of important recent publications, most notably Kazutomo Karasawa's magisterial edition, the *Menologium* is now starting to receive the attention it deserves, in the context of metrical calendar tradition and in the poem's relationships with other Old English texts. As such, it is especially important that the work's strong focus on Britain, hitherto largely neglected or misunderstood, receives full treatment.

This paper argues that the poem presents Britain not simply as an island, but as *our* island, an island dominated far and wide by the English and the English language. Thus the *Menologium* provides new evidence for discussions of English *imperium* in the tenth and eleventh centuries, which have to this point been based primarily on other types of text, especially charters.

¹ *Bryten* also occurs in the following Old English poems, yielding a total of 12 occurrences in Old English poetry, although the instance in the Old English Boethius is uncertain: *The Battle of Brunanburh* (71b), *The Death of Edgar* (14a), *Guthlac A* (175a), *Guthlac B* (883b), *The Seasons for Fasting* (56b), *Aldhelm* (5a), *The Metres of Boethius: Metre 20* (99a): K. Karasawa, *The Old English Metrical Calendar* (*Menologium*) (Cambridge, 2015), p. 89; DOEC Web corpus s.n. *Bryten*, *Breten*. The *Menologium* also deploys the ambiguous term *Brytenricu* (230b).

Paper 3b: Superimposing Landscapes: Negotiating National Identity through Mist in the *Mabinogion*

Catrin Haberfield (Stanford University)

From medieval romances through to the present day, mist is a well-established signifier of the supernatural. It is often viewed as a superficial aesthetic trope, but this paper will demonstrate that mist has deeper structural and rhetorical functions within medieval literature, enabling the exploration of common romance themes such as community and identity.

As Corrine Saunders has shown, it is ‘through the journey to the margins [...] that identity is fashioned’ – and in many continental romances, mist signifies this horizontal, geographical movement from centre to periphery; society to wilderness; known to unknown.² In Welsh romances, however, protagonists do not physically move when encountering the marginal ormagical. Instead, mist descends on their static location and alters the landscape. The Otherworld overlays the known world, with both co-existing on a single plane of reality.

This paper argues that this ‘vertical’ use of mist is unique to Welsh narratives, and reflects a contemporary concern with navigating Welsh identity in the face of Anglo-Norman invasions and prolonged political and cultural tension. I will first explore preceding and contemporary associations with mist, to establish its supernatural and symbolic associations. I will then compare narratives from different regions to identify uniquely Welsh uses of the mist motif – in particular, contrasting the *Mabinogion*’s *Geraint ac Enid* with Chretien de Troyes’ *Ericet Enide*. Finally, I will demonstrate the ways in which mist in the *Mabinogion* is used to renegotiate the Welsh population’s relationship with the landscape and forge – or maintain – a sense of national identity in continuity with a pre-Norman past.

Paper 3c: Glocal Perspectives on Early Medieval England? Scales and Networks between the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the *Chronicle of Ireland*

Kauê J. Neckel (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS))

Since ISAS 2017, global perspectives on Early Medieval England suggested a wide and innovative role for our field. However, the notion of glocalization as an alternative to globalization has not yet received special attention. Glocalization, accordingly, can be defined as a category for understanding the particularities of local communities by connecting them through macro-scales commonly employed in Global History. In our case, we start from common registers shared by two chronicles produced in local learning centres: 1) the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which production began between 890 and 892 in the court of Alfred of Wessex (d. 899) in Winchester; 2) the *Chronicle of Ireland*, a document that can be read through a set of late Irish annals, which writing was continued until 911 in Armagh. Therefore, we ask: how Early Medieval England can be read with a glocal approach? From this perspective, we build links between Winchester and Armagh to explore these scales via an analysis of the register patterns from these learning centres. Considering the chronicles as contemporary exercises for registering the present and the past, we investigate the meaning of trans-local networks to understand how this theoretical category – glocalization – can be explored in Early Medieval England. Thus, the idea of scale is central to our method of analysis, the Connected Histories. How far the registering of events was shared? What aspects were in circulation? Why just certain events can be linked and what does it mean to build networks over a Glocal Early Medieval England? Such questions can help us to connect rising English and Irish communities

² Corinne Saunders, ‘Margins’ in *A Handbook of Middle English studies* ed. by Marion Turner (Blackwell’s, 2013) p. 335.

as entangled societies, decentralizing them, especially when visualized from the manners of registering time and its events.

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Paper 4a: The Gaelic Environment of Northumbrian Learning: King Oswiu's Contribution (642-670)

Colin A Ireland (Arcadia University)

In the crucial century from the foundation of Lindisfarne (635) to the death of Bede (735) Northumbria was ruled for more than 50 years by Gaelic educated, fluent Gaelic-speaking kings who accessed Gaelic learned culture. Anglo-Latin texts by Aldhelm, Bede, Stephen of Ripon, Felix of Crowland, and anonymous hagiographers and monastic chroniclers all cited the interactions of Gaels and Anglo-Saxons that those kings helped initiate. Few modern scholars, however, have pursued the implications of that textual evidence for Anglo-Saxon cultural development. King Oswald (634-642), around whom a saint's cult developed, introduced the mission from Iona led by Bishop Aidan. King Oswiu (642-670) oversaw the 'synod' of Whitby (664) that resulted in two seemingly contradictory outcomes: the foundation of the school at Canterbury (ca.669) and the establishment of Mayo of the Saxons (ca.673). Oswiu thought that "nothing was better than what the Gaels taught" (HE iii 25). Bede cited the bishoprics of Fínán and Colmán (651-664), the middle of Oswiu's reign, as a time when Anglo-Saxons of all social classes availed themselves of free Gaelic education in Ireland (HE iii 27). That access to Gaelic learning can only reflect Oswiu's purposeful, determined educational policy. His son, King Aldfrith, was called a *sapiens* in Gaelic records, a term used to designate noted scholars. Aldfrith's appreciation and dissemination of Aldhelm's *Epistola ad Acircium* and Adomnán's *De locis sanctis* reflect the depth of his learning. This talk will concentrate on the contributions of his father, King Oswiu, to those wide-ranging intercultural exchanges.

Paper 4b: Hisperic Cosmographies in Context: Adomnán's *De locis sanctis* and the *Cosmographia of Aethicus Ister*

Tiffany Beechy (University of Colorado Boulder)

This paper proposes to place together two early texts associated with Irish learning whose very different reception histories bely many similarities. Both use a supposed informant to convey apocryphal landscapes in an ornate and obscure style. Yet scholars have largely taken Abbot Adamnán at his word, while the *Cosmographia* has been a bizarre curiosity. This is perhaps due to Adamnán's more acceptable subject matter, being concerned with the holy lands as opposed to fantastical realms farther flung, and it is no doubt also due to Bede's approval of the work, even though he saw need to abridge and emend it. Can Adamnán's more accessible work of "ecclesiastical fiction" be used to understand that of the cosmographer? This paper will consider both the internal similarities between the two texts and their respective contexts.

Paper 4c: The Version of Isidore's *Etymologiae* Used for the *Caesurae uersuum*

Mar Gutiérrez-Ortiz (Universidad de Sevilla)

The *Caesurae uersuum* is a brief treatise on meter traditionally attributed to Saint Boniface (ca. 675–754). The first chapter of the *Caesurae uersuum* includes a classification of metrical feet which is drawn almost verbatim from Book I of Isidore's *Etymologiae* (17.22–28). However, Boniface's classification contains two passages not found in available editions of Isidore's text: "Long is the syllable which does not last more than two time spans, and short is the syllable which does not last less than one. The sign for long is –, and for short ∪" and "They make twenty-eight". To the best of my knowledge, these two additions are only included in the version of Isidore preserved in manuscript Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana, S.XXI.5 (9th century, Po valley).

In the stemma of Isidore's *Etymologiae* proposed by Marc Reydellet (437) and revised by Michael Gorman (543), codex S.XXI.5 is the only 9th century witness from northern of Italy in a predominantly French family of manuscripts. The other four witnesses that comprise the family do not contain the two extra passages. Considering that the three pseudo-Augustinian sermons also transmitted in the Cesena codex circulated in manuscripts with Insular characteristics and share contents with Irish and Anglo-Saxon sources, Anna Bellettini (18) concludes that the texts in codex S.XXI.5 may come from the Visigothic-Insular circles of pre-Carolingian Italy.

The *Etymologiae* reached Ireland barely three decades after Isidore's death, and Anglo-Saxon England shortly afterwards, in the late 7th century. Given the widespread popularity of Book I in the British Isles, Evina Steinová (317) suggests that some of its additions may have originated there. As a matter of fact, Irish scribes are responsible for insertions in other parts of the encyclopedia. While the possibility that Boniface's text was used to complete the Cesena version of the *Etymologiae* cannot be entirely ruled out, it is probable that both texts derive from a lost exemplar of Isidore's work revised in the British Isles. Thus, the additions transmitted in the *Caesurae uersuum* and the version of the *Etymologiae* preserved in codex S.XXI.5 can be traced back to an Insular source.

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Paper 5a: “It’s not all Greek to me”: The Role of Different Varieties of Greek in the Multilingual Environment of Seventh-Century Canterbury.

Theodora Paraskevopoulou (Universidad del País Vasco)

The written multilingualism of early medieval England, as evidenced by the coexistence of Latin, Old English, Greek and other languages in several manuscripts, influenced many important aspects of the early English society, such as religion, education and literary production (Lapidge, 2002). The presence of the Greek language and culture in seventh-century England had its origins in the establishment of the so called “school of Canterbury” by Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury, and the north-African Hadrian, abbot of the monastery of St Peter and St Paul in Canterbury. The school of Canterbury is seen by modern scholars as one of the greatest achievements of the seventh century as it was “the first school of Christianity and Latin literacy in Anglo-Saxon England: first in time, and in importance second only to Wearmouth-Jarrow.” (Stevenson, 1995, p. 204). The Byzantine Greek heritage of the two teachers, once incorporated in the curriculum of the school of Canterbury, became an integral part of early medieval English culture. Nevertheless, the presence of Greek in seventh-century England should not be attributed to Byzantine influence alone. Bodden (1988) has determined that the remarkable number of Greek words (about five thousand core vocabulary) found in texts from England are associated with various areas and disciplines such as liturgy, grammar, medicine, rhetoric and philosophy, and belong both to Classical Greek and Byzantine Greek. Even so, the generic term “Greek” is used all too often by scholars to refer to different varieties and periods of development of the Greek language, without appreciating the significance of those differences. This communication will deal with the different varieties of Greek (Classical Attic Greek, Byzantine Constantinopolitan Greek, Byzantine Greek of the Eastern provinces) attested in surviving texts related to the literary activities of seventh-century Canterbury, identifying sources and providing a discussion of the role of Greek words and passages. Special attention will be paid to the Biblical commentaries attributed to Theodore and Hadrian, who used Greek not only as a means of teaching Latin and explaining the Bible but also as a way to introduce their students to other disciplines, and to Aldhelm’s *Carmina Rhythmica* to illustrate the distinct purposes for which the most famous seventh-century Canterbury student employed different varieties of Greek words.

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Paper 5b: A Canterbury School of Literary Theory

Erica Weaver (University of California)

As one of the most widely read—and obsessively annotated—works of the period, Aldhelm of Malmesbury's *De virginitate* transmitted not only the redoubtable bishop's thinking on the sexual rewards of chastity but also his conflicting approaches to reading and interpretation. Indeed, in this paper, I argue that the *De virginitate*'s broader usefulness as a guide to early medieval English reading practices comes into focus when the text is read through the slightly unusual interpretive lens of a contemporary philosophical project: the *Liber monstrorum* or 'book of monsters', which survives in five full or partial copies as well as two inclusions (now lost) in a putatively ninth-century book-list that further attests to its popularity. Sometimes attributed to Aldhelm himself, the *Liber* likely stems from another, now unknown, scholar close to him at Malmesbury or the famous Canterbury school established ca. 670 by Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Hadrian. Scholars have traced several intriguing correspondences between the two texts, triangulating between their points of overlap with each other and with *Beowulf*. By putting *Beowulf* aside, however, we can ask what these two seemingly very different Anglo-Latin works offer us in themselves—particularly for the art of reading well (or badly) in early medieval England. That is, when read as a strange eighth-century dyad without *Beowulf* shifting their centers of gravity, what reading methods do they calibrate? Moreover, what might their hermeneutic modes suggest about the cultural and intellectual environments at Theodore and Hadrian's Canterbury or Aldhelm's Malmesbury or all of the later schoolrooms in England and on the Continent, where Aldhelm reigned supreme as a curriculum author? Together, this odd couple usefully illuminates some of the central tensions of early medieval exegesis—and of reading broadly conceived. The *De virginitate* and the *Liber monstrorum* undertake parallel projects even if their virgins and monsters at first seem to have very little in common. In this paper, I will tease out the literary-theoretical modes inculcated by Aldhelm's work and the work of his now-anonymous contemporary as well as the hermeneutic rubrics embedded in the influential interpretive guides that survive from Theodore and Hadrian's Canterbury school, where Aldhelm spent two years studying rhetoric and exegesis. Each of these texts helps to constellate what I have playfully termed "a Canterbury school of literary theory," a network of shared reading methods. As a set, they underscore that in early medieval England, reading well relied on the ability to parse what is reliable and what is doubtful—and to thereby separate zeal from virtue, history from fable, and scripture from apocrypha.

Paper 6a: The Bibliographic Legacy of Kemp Malone

James H. Morey (Emory University)

All scholars of Old English will recognize the name Kemp Malone. His parents must have been prescient in naming their son *cempa*. In the Greenfield & Robinson bibliography (1980) he registers more entries--131, exclusive of reviews--than any other scholar, eclipsing the likes of Albert Cook, Max Förster, Ferdinand Holthausen, Frederick Klaeber, and Felix Lieberman. His editions of the Thorkelin Transcripts and of the Nowell Codex for EEMF remain essential monuments in the field. Few know, however, that Malone was born in the American deep South, in Mississippi, and attended university in Georgia, at Emory College. One of the prompts for the ISSEME conference has to do with environments of reception, and I wish to make the case that among Malone's many contributions perhaps his greatest was trying to create a unified world view of the European north. His *Literary History of Hamlet* (1923) was a

sustained, if often misguided, effort to unite Germanic, Nordic, and English literary histories. This impulse of world building and for the search for ur-texts and origins laid the foundation for understandings of the European Middle Ages that in recent years have been, quite rightly, questioned and dismantled. Malone left substantial parts of his personal library and papers to his undergraduate alma mater here at my home institution, and to my knowledge it has never been examined with an eye to the intersection of his work on the European Middle Ages and his upbringing and education in the American south. After a brief review of Malone's biography and scholarship this paper will correlate his scholarly publications with the books he was collecting and reading, and with the correspondence he was having with other scholars.

Paper 6b: We Can Be Heroes – Just for this Pandemic. Igniting Students' Resilience During Covid with *Beowulf's* Help

Alessandra Molinari (Università degli Studi "Carlo Bo") & Marco Ius (University of Trieste)

The present submission proposes a report on a course on heroic literature in Medieval England and Scandinavia that I taught at a university in Central Italy during the second Covid-lockdown in Spring 2021. The course was given in a digital environment. Since students were enduring a time of great distress and uncertainty about their future, I made the attempt to create a dialogical setting where they might connect with each other while analysing Medieval heroic literature so to become aware of their own 'heroic resources'. We focused on Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* (especially on the Olafs saga) and, for the Old English schedule section, on the *Beowulf* poem.

As a theoretical framework to address the heroic matter in *Beowulf*, we drew on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousands Faces*. Campbell's essentially Jungian approach allowed me to develop a learning pathway where students might recognize the archetypal connections between medieval and present-day representations of the hero, including their own mental images of it. As a concluding activity, a colleague and I organized a visual art workshop where students might express their experience and perception of the hero with the technique of 'oneiric drawing' (disegno onirico: s. Bermolen, Dal Porto, & Moretto 2001; Ius & Moretto 2018). This technique was developed in Argentina; it combines surrealist art with Jung's archetype theory and Levi Moreno's psychodrama. In Italy, disegno onirico is being used both in therapeutic and educational contexts.

This paper describes the didactic and theoretical rationale of the course as well as our data gathering methods; the main focus is on the workshop, which was meant as the climax and main outcome of the learning process. Students' feedback is presented and discussed both as concerns their perspective on the sense of engaging with *Beowulf* during pandemics, and their increased self-confidence as young adults that may rely both on themselves and on each other's support through challenging times.

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Paper 7a: Who and What Did Law-Writers in the Seventh Century Know?

Ingrid Ivarsen (University of Cambridge)

A lot happened in the final three decades of the seventh century in the English kingdoms. Archbishop Theodore arrived from Rome, bringing church reform and world-class education. Wilfrid, abbot and bishop, roamed Northumbria, Wessex, Mercia, Kent, and the continent, navigating allegiances and quarrels with kings. Aldhelm balanced life as a scholar, abbot, and political player from his base in Malmesbury. Kentish and West Saxon kings were fighting to expand and consolidate their territories, while also lavishing monasteries with land and privileges. This is the main cast in an important story in English law. The late seventh century represent an exceptional moment in the history of law and writing in England: the 670s to 690s produced no less than five surviving pieces of legislation, a higher number than almost any other equivalent period before the Norman conquest. Kings Hlothhere, Eadric, Wihtræd and Ine produced royal laws, while Theodore was behind the decrees of two church councils. Some of these people were also involved in the production of the earliest (certainly authentic) royal diplomas in the same decades.

The late seventh-century royal laws of Wessex and Kent have hardly been neglected by historians. They have attracted attention because they are so conspicuously different in form, language, and textual expression from the earliest written laws in England, those attributed to King Æthelberht of Kent. The traditional view takes these textual developments to be a result and expression of changes internal to the Kentish and West Saxon legal, judicial, and political system over the course of the seventh century. However, this misses out on an important dimension, namely the wider legal intellectual context and networks of the period – who and what law-writers knew. Our people read and wrote different kinds of law and hobnobbed with other law-writers in England, Francia, Rome and Ireland. Instead of seeing the royal laws in isolation, and their changes as endogenous, we should look at the whole picture of legal activity in these decades. This makes more sense of the changes we see in law-texts, and it can account for some of the experimentation and innovation that led to three effectively new genres of legal text being introduced in the final decades of the seventh century.

My main argument in this paper is that the textual form of the late seventh-century royal laws was directly inspired by the genre of church council decrees, the earliest English examples of which date to the 670s at Theodore's councils. I will also propose that the late seventh century was a period of experimentation in the form, genre, and languages of law and that innovation and experimentation can be explained by the movement of people, ideas, and texts between England, Francia, Rome, and Ireland. This is thus a story of the start of the legislative tradition in early medieval England but told through the stories of the people involved and the intellectual milieu of this unusually cosmopolitan period.

Paper 7b: Honour and Feuding Ethics: Continuity and Change in Anglo-Norman Legal Environments

Julian Calcagno (Flinders University)

Following the introduction of trial by combat, the Normans inadvertently reshaped the phenomenon of honour which was central to lay feuding ethics in medieval England. By the twelfth century, the rights of freemen could no longer be protected by oath if they were found culpable of a heinous crime. Instead, their actions were subject to the laws of their Norman counterparts. As such, trial by combat appears to have been an alternative medium to satisfy

any perceived loss of honour. There is no clear indication to demonstrate whether the Normans placed a higher value on honour than their Anglo-Saxon subordinates. However, the need to satisfy honour through combative violence, rather than compensation or alternative modes of feuding violence, appears to have been a significantly important aspect for the Norman elite as exemplified in the early corpus of Anglo-Norman law. The proposed paper will examine conceptualisations of honour, and situations in which the phenomenon of honour is present in both Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman law, whilst drawing attention to aspects of continuity and change.

Paper 7c: The Politics of Leasing Land in Early Medieval England

Stuart Pracy (University of Exeter)

Through a re-examination of the generational limits evident in the one-hundred-and-forty-seven leases which survive from pre-Conquest England, I argue that distinct, institution-centred patterns emerge. Each lease issued between the beginning of the eighth and end of the eleventh centuries was granted with a stipulation that it must be returned after a specified number of generations to the party which loaned the land. This focus upon the length of the leases—distinct from approaches taken by previous scholarly studies, such as those of Vanessa King (1996), Stephen Baxter (2004), and Francesca Tinti (2018)—reveals that the community at Worcester followed a specific and unique leasing policy. Until the middle of the tenth century, Worcester issued leases for a span varying anywhere between one and five generations. Under the oversight of Bishop Oswald, leases were issued almost exclusively for the span of three generations. This apparent regularization of the leasing process aligns well with analyses of the formulae of the Worcester leases (Gallagher and Tinti 2019), leaving one with the impression that the community at Worcester was collaboratively experimenting to find the most effective and practical ways to manage their leases. This stands quite in contrast to other religious institutions from across southern England, including those at Winchester, London, and Canterbury.

The remainder of the paper explores potential macro- and micro-level explanations for this sudden change in the leasing policy of Worcester and why such a divide in leasing trends existed. Situating Worcester within the wider European context, the practice of a three-generation leasing policy in contemporaneous Lombardy is suggestive that such ideas may have been imported along with the Benedictine reform. On a local level, the apparent failure of lease holders to return land indicates that pressure for longer leases came not from landlords but from those renting the land (Baxter 2004). Land tenure and people's relationship with the environment in early medieval England is often explored through the redistribution and participation within a market centred upon bookland. By understanding the drivers of institutional policy making across southern England, this paper recentres a sizeable proportion of the population whose experience and interaction with the land was marked by instability and short-term investment.

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Paper 8a: Scribal Environments: an Unrecognised Fragment of Wearmouth-Jarrow Uncial and its Implications

Samuel Cardwell (University of Toronto)

Bound as the fly-leaves of a twelfth-century manuscript housed at Hereford (Cathedral Library, P. II. 10) are two pages of an Irish commentary on Matthew's Gospel written in an uncial script. This fragment has long been recognised as eighth-century and most likely of Northumbrian origin, in a script which E. A. Lowe described as a 'somewhat diluted uncial of the Amiatine text type'. However, the fragment, which has never attracted any scholarly attention outside of catalogues, is not listed as an example of Wearmouth-Jarrow uncial in discussions of this script by (among others) Lowe, Malcolm Parkes and Richard Gameson. In this paper, I will use a close palaeographical analysis to suggest that the Hereford fragment *was* produced at Wearmouth-Jarrow and represents a hitherto unrecognised 'lower grade' uncial. This was a version of the Amiatine text script executed more hastily, with extensive use of characteristically insular abbreviations, to produce a manuscript of lower prestige than the 'canonical' examples of Wearmouth-Jarrow uncial such as the Codex Amiatinus and its two sister-manuscripts.

This has significant implications for our understanding of the scribal environment at Bede's monastery in the early eighth century. Firstly, it raises further questions about the transition between uncial and insular minuscule at this scriptorium. Was a lower grade uncial the standard 'everyday' script of Wearmouth-Jarrow in the first part of the eighth century before the adoption of minuscule in the years following 735 (due, according to Parkes, to the pressure caused by the need to 'mass-produce' manuscripts of Bede's writings)? Or does the Hereford fragment represent a failed experiment? Secondly, the fact that this script was being used to copy an Irish commentary further complicates the image of Wearmouth-Jarrow as a 'Romanising' minster (and of uncial as a 'Romanising' script).

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Paper 8b: The Paleographical Environment of Ælfric's Latin-Old English Grammar

Paul Vinhage (Cornell University)

Ælfric's Old English-Latin Grammar is rightly famous for its ambitious attempt to explain Latin and Old English grammar side by side in a systematic fashion. The text survives in more manuscripts than any other Old English text and was edited by Julius Zupitza in 1880. Since then no new edition of the Grammar has appeared and a fresh examination of the manuscripts has not taken place. In this study, I investigate the ways that scribes encoded linguistic difference or indifference in the manuscripts of Ælfric's Grammar. The Benedictine Reform movement of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries introduced Caroline minuscule to English monasteries and scribes. In reformed houses, a distinctive script, English Caroline minuscule, was cultivated and used to write Latin texts, while English Vernacular minuscule was reserved for texts in Old English. In many bilingual manuscripts, the linguistic difference between Old English and Latin is reified by a rigid adherence to both scripts. In his edition, Zupitza also used a panoply of typographical interventions to distinguish Old English from Latin and grammatical terms and examples from explanatory text. The manuscripts of Ælfric's Grammar, however, exhibit varying scribal attitudes to the differentiation of language by script. In one exceptional case, Oxford, St John's College, MS 154, the scribe writes both Latin and Old English in English Vernacular minuscule. Ælfric himself adopted a similar practice, from what we can tell of a small autograph sample in British Library, Royal 7.C.xii. Whether Ælfric intended for his Grammar to be written in a single script is ultimately unknowable, but through an examination of the manuscripts of the Grammar we gain glimpse into the linguistic attitudes of scribes and scholars in Early Medieval England. In later manuscripts of the Grammar, the relationship between Old English and Latin is negotiated differently. Some manuscripts relegate the Old English portions of the Grammar to interlinear space so that the vernacular functions as a gloss rather than an integrated part of the text. In others the Old English portions are removed entirely and the Latin grammar is abbreviated, such as British Library, Royal 15 B.xxii and Cambridge, Trinity College MS R.9.17. Thus, the manuscripts of Ælfric's Grammar illustrate the interaction of scribal practice, book technology, and linguistic and grammatical thought during the course of the eleventh century in England. During this turbulent century Ælfric's Grammar was copied repeatedly in many different centers of learning. The variety and diversity of scribal and linguistic attitudes in these manuscripts, therefore, provide a touchstone to measure the changing scribal approaches to the linguistic diversity of Early Medieval England.

Paper 8c: Form and Reform: Cultural, Textual and Material Environments in the Boulogne Gospels and Riddle 60

Avantika Kumar (Harvard University)

The Boulogne Gospels (Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 11), a Gospel-book illuminated by an English artist around the millennium, presents an extended visual meditation on Christ's identity as divine Word made flesh. The illuminated page-openings of the Gospels intersperse the text with scenes from the life of Christ, interweaving the eternal Word of the

Gospels with the image of Christ's human body. Furthermore, images of books and scrolls are prominent throughout the manuscript, making the sacred text present to the reader not only as an abstract sign, but as a visible and tangible thing. Yet even as the Boulogne Gospels' visual strategies make the Word concrete, they also render it enigmatic, for the imagistic presentation of the sacred text makes it far more difficult to read.

I argue that the Boulogne Gospels' visual program deliberately foregrounds both the materiality and mystery of the sacred Word in ways particularly resonant to its cultural environment. The Boulogne Gospels were produced within the context of English Benedictine reform, a movement to reshape monastic life through "salvific reading, active interpretation, and textual self-fashioning."³ As Adam Cohen has argued, the image of the book became a potent visual symbol for the reform movement, signifying both the salvific authority of the Benedictine Rule and the ideological authority of the reformers who reinstated its practice.⁴ Yet the enigmatic visual portrayals of text in works such as the Boulogne Gospels destabilize this authority, for they compel the reader to confront the limits of their own comprehension—and, in turn, the limits of word and image to capture divine truth.

The portrayal of word and book in the Boulogne Gospels is of a piece with larger trends that defined its textual environment. Integral to the reform movement's literary output were works, such as riddles and enigmas, that complicate the familiar and knowable.⁵ A significant subset of these riddles focus on the material histories of books and the stories of their creation: they play with the relationship between the book as a collection of texts and the book as a material thing, formed out of the stuff of its ecological landscape. In relation to the Boulogne Gospels, my paper will consider Exeter Book Riddle 60 ("reed-pen"), a riddle that both concretizes and defamiliarizes the material processes of book production. In ways reminiscent of the Boulogne Gospels' artistic program, the riddle invites the reader to visualize the Word as concrete and palpable, yet also underscores the mystery intrinsic to it. I argue that this move to both concretize and complicate the sacred Word was representative of the art and literature of the Benedictine reform movement, potentially shedding new light upon the movement and its self-definition.

Paper 9a: Helpful Gnomes in the Old English Corpus, or *sculan*, a Gnomic Auxiliary

Megan Renz Perry (Yale University)

'Shall be', a phrase that evokes the hieratic English of the King James Bible, has become at once familiar and unfamiliar. 'Shall' is taken as a future auxiliary, and its coupling with 'to be' unsurprising when it occurs in Old English. This pairing may have been, however, rather more unusual than we have assumed. Consider that in most OE poetry and especially in wisdom literature, *sceal* most often takes infinitive complements, or the *wesan* form of the copula; *sceal beon* is rare in such texts. By contrast, Old English prose writers from the late tenth century - Ælfric preeminently - use *sceal* with *beon* much more often than *wesan*. I propose that *sceal*, like *beon*, was a marker of eternity or persistent quality, or of common knowledge.

The first part of the paper describes the results of a corpus study on environments in which the auxiliary *sculan* took various verbal complements. These environments might be generic, stylistic, poetic, or multilingual, geographic, or even, most excitingly, temporal: my research will evaluate the various patterns of usage to determine the 'environments' that exerted

³ Erica Weaver, "Premodern and Postcritical: Medieval Enigmata and the Hermeneutic Style," *New Literary History* 50 (2019), 43-64.

⁴ Adam Cohen, "The Book and Monastic Reform," in *Imago libri: representations carolingiennes du livre* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 180-182.

⁵ Erica Weaver, "Premodern and Postcritical," 43-64.

the greatest pressure on *sculan*'s syntactic behavior, and what constituted 'normative' usage within them.

The second part proposes a possible motivation for syntactic behavior in certain environments: that the modal *sculan* was a gnomic form, something akin to the gnomic forms (gnomic present, gnomic future, and gnomic aorist) of Ancient Greek. Such forms signal generic facts, habitual truths, or habitual actions. *Beon* is already well-known to signal eternity or persistent quality. I argue that *sculan* and *beon* could work in parallel as gnomic forms, with *beon* as a gnomic copula and *sculan* as a gnomic auxiliary: the first could mark habitual qualities with a predicate nominative or adjective, and the second could accommodate habitual actions.

Sculan in concert with an active verb complement thus signaled the same conditions of essentiality and timelessness that *beon* accompanied by an adjective did. This helps explain their distribution patterns: the two were rarely used together in active constructions before the 'long' tenth century, beginning with Alfredian prose. Concretely, this means that we would translate '*forst sceal freosan*' from Maxims I as 'frost [as a function of its essential quality] freezes.' Or we might render '*Swylc scolde eorl wesian, æþeling ærgod, swylc æschere wæs*,' from *Beowulf* 1328 with 'Just as a warrior *was* [as a function of his essential quality or habitual behavior], a long-excellent prince, so *Æschere was*.' Scholars have identified stylistic parallels between *beon* and *sculan* in the generic environment of wisdom literature; I will delimit the discourses (environments) in which *sculan* paralleled *beon* in semantics as well as style, capable of conveying habitual or typical action.

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Paper 9b: The Linguistic Landscape of Lust: Examining Occurrence Patterns for Language of Sexual Desire and Moral Impurity in Old English Texts.

Claire Poynton-Smith (Trinity College Dublin)

This paper would use corpus linguistics software (AntConc) to examine Old English words in the Historical Thesaurus hierarchies of 01.09.03.01 **Sexual desire** and 03.06.05.07 **Licentiousness** across the Dictionary of Old English Corpus. It would present overall trends and patterns, analyse key characteristics of the occurrences, and examine these through close-readings of four key case studies (each anchored in one word-family). For many words in these categories, existing dictionaries and thesauruses vary in definition and categorisation. The proposed focal word families would be *galnes*, *wrænnas*, *unclænnas*, and *lust*. My approach—simultaneously quantitative and qualitative—unites corpus-based analysis with close-reading. This paper would touch upon concepts of environment(s) in multiple manners: in referencing ideas of the spiritual environment promised to the chaste and virginal and the Christian context of morality around sexuality, and in addressing the linguistic environment through considering how certain texts use the focal terms when adapting Latin texts — for example, how *galnes* is used to translate or gloss Latin licentiousness and lust terms such as *fornicatio*, *lascivia*, *libido*, *luxuria*, and *petulantia* — and precisely what changes are made as the text is rendered in Old English.

Analysis of key patterns would be supported with close-readings, which illuminate our understanding of word meaning and metaphorical connections and can perhaps take us beyond the existing lexicographical material concerning the semantic field of lust. A synopsis of what we might *expect* to find would then be tested against two passages for each focal word-family: attending to examples which may subvert our preconceptions makes room to consider ambiguity, context, genre, and cultural richness.⁶

The paper will draw on digital resources such as the *Dictionary of Old English (A-I)* and its metadata, *The Historical Thesaurus of English* (HT) and connected Mapping Metaphor project, and the *Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE). This latter project involved comprehensive dissection of/cross-referencing with existing OE dictionaries, creating a thorough, fascinating resource.⁷

The paper would also seek to briefly highlight the changes these resources anticipate in post-Conquest and Early Middle English texts, and which vocabulary items we see maintained or replaced, respectively. A brief discussion of the benefits of a more diachronic approach spanning the transitional phase of English would be included, as this would facilitate analysis with how these vocabularies operate in a post-Conquest environment.⁸

Paper 9c: The Environments of Disappearing Old English Vocabulary in the Early Middle English Period

Johanna Vogelsanger (University of Zurich)

After the Norman Conquest, a large amount of lexical material from the Old English (OE) period falls out of use. For example, Dekeyser and Pauwels (1990: 4) report that by 1225, only about a quarter of the English lexicon was material that had originated in OE, the other three-quarters consisting of Middle English (ME) new formations or loanwords, mostly from French and Latin. This process has often been characterised as a “competition” or “rivalry” between the native lexis and the new French and Latin loanwords, a view that has recently been criticised by Sylvester et al. (2021: 1–2).

The aim of this paper is to shift the focus away from the supposed competition, the loanwords that seem to push out OE words, or those terms that seem to have survived due to sheer frequency (cf. Timofeeva 2018) and instead direct it towards the material that is disappearing. This paper will investigate the environments in which we find the last attestations of OE vocabulary in the early ME period, both in the literal sense of geographical or dialectal area, but also in a more abstract sense such as genre or subject matter, prose or verse, rhyming position, and older (i.e., copies of pre-Conquest exemplars) versus newer texts.

The focus will be on nouns whose last dates of attestation are recorded after 1066 and up to around 1225, as identified by the *Historical Thesaurus of English* (HTE). I will use a random sample of nouns that appear in the *Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English* (LAEME), which contains a variety of texts from the early ME period and is tagged extensively, and thus

⁶ Izdebska, D. W. (2015). Semantic field of anger in old English.

⁷ A Thesaurus of Old English. The Source Dictionaries. <https://oldenglishthesaurus.arts.gla.ac.uk/source-dictionaries/>.

⁸ This will reference the recent work of Mark Faulkner — such as those discussed in *A New Literary History of the Long Twelfth Century: Language and Literature between Old and Middle English* (2022) and ‘Corpus Philology, Big Dating and Bottom-Up Periodization’, in Stephen Pink and Anthony Lappin (eds.), *Dark Archives: the Medieval Unread and Unreadable* (forthcoming) — Elaine Treharne’s chapter ‘English in the Post-Conquest Period’, in Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne (eds.), *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature* (2001), and Jane Roberts’ 2009 lecture ‘On the Disappearance of Old English’, in Alice Jorgensen, Helen Conrad O’Briain, John Scattergood and Jane Roberts (eds.), *The Kemble Lectures on Anglo-Saxon Studies*.

enables me to collect information on the different environments mentioned above. An initial survey of the material has already shown that some words classified by the HTE as appearing only in OE actually survive well past the Conquest, and not only in copies of pre-Conquest material.

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Paper 10a: ‘Cyning sceal cwene gebicgan’: An Economic Environment for Purchase, Ownership, and Personhood in *Maxims I*

Stephanie Clark (University of Oregon)

The proposed paper uses a line from the poem *Maxims I* as a starting point to situate the Old English vocabulary of purchase and mercantile exchange within a larger context of cultural ideas of ownership, agency, and personhood. The poem states, “a king must buy a queen with goods, with cups and rings” (“cyning sceal mid ceape cwene gebicgan, / bunum ond beagum,” ll. 81-82b), seeming to imply that women were seen as property bought by their husbands. In fact, *The Dictionary of Old English* uses this passage to illustrate *gebicgan*’s sense A.3.c.i: “to buy (someone *acc.* with (a means of exchange *dat.*); *mid ceape gebicgan* ‘to purchase (someone) at a price.’” But were kings – or husbands in general – really understood to purchase wives in early England? Were women property? While scholars have not ignored this poem, none seem to have considered it with this question in mind. In my reading of *Maxims I*, I argue that people in early medieval England understood purchase differently from the way that people in a modern capitalist economy do.

I begin my analysis by showing that the poem itself portrays a more complicated relationship between women’s agency and the exchange of goods: the same passage goes on to say that both king and queen must give gifts liberally. The poem later associates the goods given to “buy” the queen with women – queens have cups, brides have rings – thereby implying that the king perhaps “buys” a queen by giving the goods specified to *her*, not (as the term “buy” naturally leads us to assume) a third party, her father.

I further show that there are other instances where writers of Old English use mercantile terminology in a way inconsistent with what modern people would mean by buying or purchase. Namely, a modern concept of “buying” raises a number of problematic assumptions of what it means to “buy” someone: that, because she is “bought,” the wife becomes the husband’s property; that “ownership” is an absolute concept, where the owner can do whatever he likes with his property; and that, in a transaction, *someone* buys *something*: things (cups and rings) are exchanged for things (a woman). Therefore, the wife is classed as a “thing,” less of a person than her husband because she is exchanged.

Finally, I situate English marriage contracts in the larger context of anthropological studies on bridewealth and early English ideas about ownership, and I use economic theory to show the way that different type of exchanges carry different assumptions of personhood,

agency, and the relationships created between persons and things to demonstrate that, in early England, wives were not, in fact imagined as being “bought” or “owned” in the ways we might understand these concepts.

This paper thus contextualizes the Old English vocabulary of purchase and mercantile exchange within cultural ideas of ownership, agency, and personhood, moving us toward a better understanding of the economic environment of early medieval England.

Paper 10b: Speaking into the Void? Women and Exile in Old English Poetry

Emma Knowles (The University of Sydney)

Scholars have identified a close association between gender and the experience of exile in Old English poetry. While the narrators of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* travel the paths of exile, the female speakers of *The Wife's Lament* and *Wulf and Eadwacer* are trapped in their respective locations.⁹ This implies that the landscapes of exile for female characters in Old English poetry are restrictive, compared to the wanderings of male characters. Yet, these environments also provide female characters with opportunities to speak and to question and potentially disrupt the societies from which they have been exiled. This is a characteristic present not just in the secular female-voiced ‘elegies’, but also in examples of Old English religious poetry. Though the landscapes these women occupy vary — they speak from islands, deserts, and even hell — they are connected because they provide female characters with an opportunity to speak for themselves and to explore their own individual (often emotional) reactions to their exile. In this paper I will examine how geographies of exile for female characters are connected in the poems *The Wife's Lament*, *Wulf and Eadwacer*, *Christ and Satan* and *Genesis A*.¹⁰ I will argue that the female speakers in these texts, though each speaking in vastly different circumstances, are closely associated because of the roles that landscapes play in facilitating their speech. Marginalised locations, beyond the male-dominated centres of these texts, provide these characters the chance to experience personal growth and, potentially, to disrupt the spaces from which they have been exiled. I argue that though all of these poems are not explicitly religious, this approach to landscapes is associated with the biblical perspective on exile, in which journeying to the wilderness enables characters (such as Hagar in *Genesis A*) to encounter God. This reading highlights the significance of female speech across a series of poems which are not often linked, being from different ‘genres’ of Old English poetry. In doing so, as well as emphasising the important connections between geography and speech in these poems, it questions the significance of genre as a tool for shaping Old English literary criticism and suggests an alternative means for scholars to make connections between texts.

Paper 10c: Early Medieval English Queens from Southern Humber (8th-10th Centuries) and the Exercise of Power in Court

⁹ See Helen T. Bennett, ‘Exile and the Semiosis of Gender in Old English Elegies’, in *Class and Gender in Early English Literature: Intersections*, ed. Britton J. Harwood and Gillian R. Overing (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 43-58; Pat Belanoff, ‘*Ides... geomrode giddum*’: The Old English Female Lament’, in *Medieval Women's Song: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, ed. Anne L. Klinck and Ann Marie Rasmussen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 29-46.

¹⁰ This paper will build on Francisco Rozano-Garcia's recent linking of *The Wife's Lament* with *Christ and Satan*, ‘The Heart of Darkness: Descent, Landscape, and Mental Projection in *Christ and Satan* and *The Wife's Lament*’, in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Ruth Wehlau (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), pp. 277-298.

Isabela Albuquerque (University of Pernambuco)

The objective of this proposal is to investigate, from some cases of studies, how the Early Medieval English queens exercised their power and authority not only in their own courts, but throughout other places they moved around. Considering that this is an extensive period, which spans between the 6th and 11th centuries and a variety of kingdoms, the southern part of the Humber will be the emphasis of this proposal, specifically Mercia and Wessex, from the 8th-10th Centuries. Regarding the role of these women in court as queens, queens' consort, regents and dowager, it will focus on how these women try to benefit from their power and authority and in some cases have been considered even as threats by the chroniclers.

From a frame of gender studies and being aware of its importance for understanding the attributions of male and female roles in human societies, the concept of queenship will be used in this study, because of its crucial analysis of multiple dynamics of power, which involve mediaeval rulership in a more broad perspective. In order to understand how those queens could take part as rulers and were able to dispose of their goods, it must be traced each case as a unique path, reviewed through its one singularity.

Despite the difficulties in researching Early Medieval English queens, due to the lack of documentary sources addressing them, we can still provide an overview on the English female ruler through a comparative perspective, analysing charters and royal diplomas, narratives, and hagiographic sources.

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Paper 11a: 'Sensing Creation in Old English Medical Writings'

William Brockbank (University of Bern)

Despite considerable advances made in the scientific study of perception and the faculties of sense, the abiding modern conception of the senses is indebted to the same understanding which was inherited in early medieval Christendom, namely, that there are five senses, which typically were ranked hierarchically: sight in pole position, followed by hearing, smell, taste, and touch, as indicated, for example, on the Fuller Brooch (Bruce-Mitford 1952). Recent studies concerning the senses in early medieval England have simultaneously borne out and challenged the idea that this sensory framework prevailed during the period (as discussed variously in Kern-Stähler et al. 2016 and Clegg Hyer & Owen-Crocker 2020). But in an age when the perception of sensory inputs can be empirically measured, for instance, through functional neuroimaging, what evidence might we admit in appraising how early medieval people made sense of the senses?

This paper will take the corpus of surviving Old English medical writings to illustrate some of the ways in which learned people writing in English understood the faculties of sense and the sense data that they could perceive. Texts such as the Old English Herbarium, Bald's Leechbook and Leecbook III, and the Lacnunga attest to a wide variety of afflictions of the body, including, and sometimes especially, the sensory organs. Although many morbidities were understood to come from within the body itself, many more were held to afflict the body from without, that is to say from the external, non-human world. Whilst we may conveniently call this external world 'nature' or 'the environment' today, early medieval authors and users of medical texts viewed this world as the larger part of God's Creation, not least since early English medicine was firmly engrained in learned Christian culture (Kesling 2020). As such, this paper will argue that one of the principal ways in which the external 'environment'—or, more properly, Creation—was understood was through the interface between external sensory inputs and the faculties of sense themselves, as is neatly exemplified in the Old English medical corpus.

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Paper 11b: “Sinuous Histories: What is a Wyrn?”

Jacqueline Fay (The University of Texas at Arlington)

In early medieval England, worms wind their way through the corpus, through manuscript pages, through the soil, and through living and dead bodies. The word *wyrn* could refer to many entities: intestinal worms, earthworms, maggots, snakes in general and the serpent in the Garden of Eden in particular, and dragons, a creaturely swathe far wider than that encompassed by its modern English equivalent. Worms could be read and thought about—and some, like dragons and most snakes, could only be encountered in this way by the early medieval English—but most were also an ever-present part of daily experience. A massive prevalence of intestinal worms due to lack of sanitation and poor diet is indicated by the sheer number of remedies for them in early medieval medical texts, and by the surviving physical evidence of skeletons, cess-pits, and coprolites or preserved faeces. Early medieval worms are not united as a group—a

species, to use a modern term—by size, habitat, or behavior in Old English; it's not even clear whether they are animals, spontaneously generated animals, or something else. Real and imagined, homely and exotic, making their homes both inside and outside of the human body, this paper will consider what characteristics hold the many referents of the Old English word *wyrm* together by investigating its use, meaning, and relationship to cognates and Latin terms.

A particular focus will be how *wyrm* differs from ModE *worm* and whether, and to what degree, the term can be used during the period metaphorically in descriptions of human beings. Based on this linguistic review, the paper will argue that *wyrmas* in early medieval England traversed and complicated all kinds of boundaries and modes of understanding about what constituted humankind. From an environmental studies point of view, the paper will conclude that the particularities of what I call early medieval English *vermiculture* make evident, by contrast, some highly troubling aspects of our contemporary relationship with and attitude towards worms. The paper confronts the interesting paradox that, despite the essential and positive role of worms in human survival and health, worms in contemporary culture tend to elicit negative affects like repugnance, fear, and a sense that worms are both totally different from and entirely insignificant in comparison to humans. In now seeing ourselves as entirely unlike worms and in seeing worms as disgusting and fearful, humans have allowed for an environment where actions that disturb the equilibrium between humans and worms are ever more permissible.

Paper 12a: The Cultural, Intellectual, and Linguistic Environment for Peaceweaving: Multilingual Textile Metaphors

Maren Clegg Hyer (Snow College)

I have remarked in my past writings that the cultural, intellectual, and linguistic environment for textile metaphors is far more rich than we sometimes realize. A good case in point is word-weaving as a metaphor for the writing of poetry and prose; the early medieval English writer Cynewulf clearly draws from (and indeed interweaves) different cultural (classical, patristic, and early medieval), intellectual (Latin and native Insular poetic), and linguistic (Latin and Old English) traditions as he describes and then demonstrates word-weaving through his own work. In what appears to be a previously unrecognized parallel, the correspondence of Alcuin and his Insular and Continental colleagues includes a beautiful Latin metaphor involving the weaving of peace. Discussions of peaceweavers and peaceweaving metaphors in Old English studies are many and varied. My paper would add this significant, relevant example to the conversation, another instance of how multilingual scholars from the early Middle Ages operated in diverse cultural, intellectual, and linguistic environments in ways we are wise to explore and to understand.

Paper 12b: An Embroidered Environment: Textiles in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries

Millie Horton-Insch (University College London)

My paper will begin with the premise that the continued importance of textiles and their makers throughout the eleventh century in Britain has been obscured by the historic distinctions drawn between the 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Romanesque' art historical styles, and the consistent marginalisation of works assumed to have been made by women from the art historical canon.

In this paper I will therefore compare extant early medieval textiles to works of other media and explore the extent to which such comparisons reveal a continuity in visual culture of this period, which has thus far been overlooked. Such continuity significantly disrupts some of the entrenched taxonomies most frequently applied to early medieval Insular art – ‘Anglo-Saxon’, ‘Romanesque’, ‘Winchester’, ‘English’ etc. I intend to frame this analysis within contemporary art historical theories concerning gender, race, and materiality, to best understand the position of textiles and their makers, often described in contemporaneous literary sources as ‘English women’. In doing so I hope that this paper will further reveal the complex and tangled nature of ‘Englishness’ around the period of the Norman Conquest, in a manner which situates textiles at its centre to better understand the embroidered environment of eleventh and twelfth century England.

Paper 13a: *Mæw* or *meg* (‘seagull’)? Mercian Dialect Features in an Old English Glossary from the Continent

Annina Seiler (University of Zurich)

This paper provides a linguistic analysis of the vernacular material in a small Latin-Old English glossary on birds and animals from Leviticus 11. The text is transmitted in St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 913, a manuscript famous among Old High German scholars, as it includes the so-called *Vocabularius Sancti Galli*, a Latin-German glossary dating to the late eighth century (McGowan 2012: 119-132). Much ink has been spilt discussing different aspects of this tiny manuscript (e.g. Baesecke 1933, Klein 2012, Dekker 2019). The Latin-Old English glossary has received its share of attention as a work transmitting material that can be traced back to the school of Theodore and Hadrian in Canterbury in the seventh century (Lapidge 1986, Bischoff & Lapidge 1994). Yet, to the best of my knowledge, no one has analysed the Old English material from a linguistic point of view. It was copied on the Continent; many of the lexical items transmitted in it show up in later Old High German glossaries (Bulitta 2011), which may have led scholars to discount it as a genuine source of Old English – even though it was identified as such early on (Steinmeyer & Sievers 1879-1922: IV, 459-460; Schlutter 1912: 389-394, Meritt 1945: 44). Yet, my analysis shows that the orthography of the Old English material, using <d> instead of <ð> or <þ>, and <u> instead of <þ>, is in line with other early written Old English and not due to any influence from Old High German spelling practice. Moreover, the dialect of the vernacular items can be identified as Mercian. Given that the linguistic features are consistent across the entire glossary, the paper concludes that the scribe of the glossary was most likely a native speaker of Old English. These findings confirm Klein’s conclusion that the Old High German translations in the *Vocabularius Sancti Galli* were produced by an Anglo-Saxon (Klein 2012).

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Paper 13b: Correspondence Course: Teaching and Learning in the Letters of Saint Boniface

Shannon Godlove (Columbus State University)

The letters of the 8th century West Saxon missionary to the Continent known as Boniface provide exceptional examples of the work of instruction and the cultivation of a distinctive Anglo-Latin intellectual and literary culture across the Channel. Long before he was famous for Christianizing Germanic peoples, corresponding with popes and rulers, or becoming a martyred saint, Boniface (then Wynfrið) was known in the early medieval English church as a teacher of Latin grammar, poetic composition, and Scriptural exegesis, who even wrote his own textbooks. When he left his position as head of the abbey school at Nursling to pursue a missionary career overseas at the age of 40, he left behind a number of devoted students – both men and women – who continued to correspond with him and seek his instruction and correction of their work from afar. The earliest letter we have from Boniface was written to his former student Nithard, encouraging him to continue in his studies. Yet this is only the first of many letters between students and teachers in the collection. The letters exchanged between Boniface and his female students are particularly valuable for the insights they can give us into the educational attainments of nuns in this early period. Women such as Abbess Eangyth of Thanet and her daughter Bugga, or the nuns Egberg or Berhtgyth utilized the epistolary genre to continue to seek instruction and maintain the mentorship of their former teacher. Boniface never lost sight of his role as a teacher: even as he continued to instruct his students in Latin and Scriptural study from overseas, he also sought to impart moral teaching in his letters of religious and moral instruction, addressing them to kings and other powerful political and religious figures who could hardly be called his “students”. It is perhaps fitting, then, that the Letters of Boniface were collected and preserved not only as documents for posterity, but also as models to instruct future students in the intricacies of Latin epistolary style. Viewing these letters in the context of Boniface’s pedagogical texts, this paper will explore what the Boniface correspondence can reveal about the nature of teaching and learning activities both within and far outside of the early medieval monastic schoolroom.

Paper 13c: The Flood Cast Up the Fish: Sea Crossings and Sea Changes in the Old English *Apollonius of Tyre*

Emily Sun (Harvard University)

When the eponymous hero of the Old English *Apollonius of Tyre* washes ashore on Pentapolis, naked and alone, he is resuscitated into something akin to a riddle-object. The princess marvels at the newcomer's identity in language reminiscent of an Exeter riddle's challenge to "saga hwæt ic hatte" (say what I am called). She inquires,

... sege me þinne naman. 7 þin gelymp arece me
(say to me your name, and recount your misfortune to me).¹¹

And, as any good enigmatic object, the exiled Apollonius resists an easy reading, responding:

Gif ðu for neode axst æfter minum naman. ic secge þe. ic hine forleas on sæ. gif ðu wilt mine æðelborennesse witan. wite ðu þæt ic hig forlet on tharsum (If you ask after my name out of necessity, I will tell you: I lost it at sea. If you wish to know the nobleness of my birth, know that I abandoned it in Tharsus).¹²

The enigmatic undertones of this scene are perhaps to be expected for a text bookended by riddle contests. It is nevertheless intriguing to note that Apollonius has experienced a sea change of sorts in order to emerge from the waves so riddle-like. Literally stripped of his trappings and figuratively stripped of his identity, he is wrought into some othered and incoherent version of himself after he crosses the border of the sea, to be received by strangers on distant shores. Apollonius' transformation into an enigmatic object is not unlike that undergone by another sea-borne body associated with the Old English riddle tradition: the whale's body that is both the surface for and the solution to the Franks Casket riddle ("hranes bān"), which was literally turned enigmatic after the flood cast it ashore. Beginning with the above readings, this paper will place various moments of encounter with foreign, exiled, and displaced bodies in the OE *Apollonius* into dialogue with the OE riddle tradition. Even beyond the literal riddles posed within the OE *Apollonius*, the text can be read as a series of riddle-solvings—from Apollonius' apprehension of the heads placed at Antiochus' gates, to the numerous rediscoveries of lost identity that populate the narrative. By equating the reception of foreign bodies with the interpretation of riddles, the OE *Apollonius* suggests that the interpretive demands of cross-cultural encounters and enigmatic texts are strikingly similar. If the nature of the enigmatic subject is withheld up until the point when the riddle is successfully interpreted (and thus solved), then what are the implications of "misreading" a foreign subject? In this light, the failure to properly receive an unfamiliar body borne from across the waters becomes a dangerous thing—the failure to correctly apprehend such a person becomes a failure to understand their identity, and perhaps even their personhood, at an extremely fundamental level.

Paper 14a: The Early Insular Prayerbooks and the *Dream of the Rood* Tradition

Emily Kesling (Oxford University)

This paper will consider the stone monument known as the Ruthwell Cross and the related Old English poem 'The Dream of the Rood' in the context of early Insular female monasticism, as exemplified in the early Insular prayerbook tradition. While important parallels have been drawn between the images and inscriptions on the Ruthwell Cross and the liturgy (Ó Carragáin, 2005), little emphasis has been placed on the relationship between these pieces and the

¹¹ Thorpe, Benjamin, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Story of Apollonius of Tyre*. London: J. And A. Arch, 1834, p.15. All translations my own.

¹² *Ibid.*.

devotional traditions found within the Insular prayerbooks. This oversight may partly reflect the association of the early Insular prayerbooks with Western England and a Mercian intellectual tradition, whereas the Ruthwell monument's location in Northumbria has encouraged connections with the age of Bede. Nevertheless, these collections reflect an environment influenced by Northumbrian texts and participating in a vernacular literary tradition (as is indicated by the survival of the earliest Old English prose text as a preface to the *Book of Cerne*), and proposed dates for the prayerbooks suggest their earliest members were copied within fifty years or less of the creation of the Ruthwell Cross.

While it has been long suggested that the prayerbooks have been organized to reflect on individual and separate themes (Brown, 1996; Morrish 1988), this paper will argue that key ideas bring together the early Insular prayerbook tradition. These ideas include an emphasis on Christ's passion, the commissioning of the apostles, and the fellowship of all believers, all of which are visible in the gospel extracts prefacing the *Book of Cerne*, the *Book of Nunnaminster*, and the *Royal Prayerbook*. I will suggest that these gospel extracts and the prayers following can be valuably read alongside both and illustrated panels of the Ruthwell Cross and the later Vercelli-Book poem, likely reflecting the influence of similar milieux.

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Paper 14b: Charting an Ideological Topography: A Comparison of Linguistic and Spiritual Perspectives Performed across the Vercelli Book

Jacob W. Runner (Kanazawa University)

In contrast to academic treatments of the other major Old English poetic codices, the Vercelli Book is less frequently approached as a cohesive textual entity by modern readers. Copied “entirely mechanically” by a scribe “who shows no understanding of such brief quotations in Latin as appear,” the Vercelli Book contains both vernacular poetic works and homiletic prose items, with many of the latter showing signs of inelegant translation from Latin (Scragg 2014, “Vercelli Book,” p. 478). The individual texts are habitually studied in isolation from one another and edited separately, under the rationale that the manuscript anthologizes both poetic and prose religious material from a variety of sources in a way that has seemed somewhat haphazard to many modern scholars. Amity Reading, however, has made a compelling case that “the performance of selfhood” provides a unifying theme and organizational logic to the compilation (2018, *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Self Through the Vercelli Book*). Extending that line of reasoning, it becomes possible for comparative evaluation of the anthology's different texts to shed light on shared characteristics and underlying features of early English spirituality and identity management. This paper will both test and add nuance to Reading's idea of a unifying premise by undertaking a comparative assessment of metalinguistic and spiritual perspectives literarily performed across different genre texts of the Vercelli Book.

In the Early Medieval English context, symbolic values were attributed to the Latin language, to writing, and to literacy through association with Christian religious practices. Edward Roberts and Francesca Tinti have highlighted poignant “instances of linguistic

consciousness” in charters (2020, “Signalling Language Choice in Anglo-Saxon and Frankish Charters,” p. 190), and with respect specifically to the Vercelli homilies, Winfried Rudolf writes that their inclusion of elliptic Latin clauses “may have acted as triggers for the delivery of the complete memorized Latin sentence,” or alternatively, simply added *gravitas* “as plain authoritative fillers” (2015, “Quoting and translating Latin in the Old English Homilies of the Vercelli Book,” p. 282). Indeed, Christopher Cain has identified in a broader homiletic survey how “the relationship between English and Latin is not declared but performed; Latin is the ‘authentic’ voice from the Bible, and English is the substitutive medium” (2016, “‘*pæt is on englisc*’: Performing Multilingualism in Anglo-Saxon England,” pp. 90–1). Juxtaposing the language perspectives observed in the Vercelli Book’s prose items with those presented in its poetic texts (in this preliminary case study, primarily the two Cynewulf poems: *The Fates of the Apostles* and *Elene*), this paper will collate and interpret instances of emblematic language use (e.g., code-switching/transplantation, apparent solecism in translation), alongside textual references to multilingualism, literate production, and scriptural authority. In doing so, it will etch out underlying conceptual, thematic, and associative patterns that are related to literacy and language awareness. Ultimately, it will be argued that these ideological constructs can, in turn, be seen across the Vercelli Book to function with manipulable or performative associative values that tie in with sociolinguistic conceptions of scripture and spirituality.

Paper 14c: The Action of God and the Answer of Man: The Spiritual Environment of *Christ and Satan*

Jasmine Jones (Oxford University)

The Old English poem *Christ and Satan* has long been relegated to the scholarly peripheries, receiving little critical attention beyond codicology and source study. The poem is largely perceived as stylistically inferior to the other texts which accompany it in MS Junius 11.

This paper, by contrast, argues for the unique historical and theological importance as well as the literary beauty of *Christ and Satan* in elucidating the spiritual environment of English faith c. 800, the probable time of the poem’s composition. The poem meditates upon the synergetic relationship between God and man in their interaction across Heaven, Middle- Earth and Hell during the past, present and future. The poem also contributes to ongoing theological debates on the role of free will and grace in the spiritual life.

My close reading of this poem firstly analyses the text’s understanding of God and his work; secondly it considers the responsibility of man in responding to divine action through both faith and works. I will argue that *Christ and Satan* provides insight to a highly distinctive early English theology, which is emphatically aphiosophical — concrete and tangible rather than metaphysical like later scholasticism — and biblical — cultivating the mind’s attention to the story-ness of Scripture similarly to the rabbinic tradition as well as voicing man’s real, universal longing for God in a psalmic tone.

Critics have noted the influence of the Psalter’s *enargeia* on Middle English literature; this paper argues that Old English poetry conveys the same palpable, immediate and affective vividness of salvation history literally through narrative. Clues within the poem’s content point to an advanced Christian audience, and the vernacularity of the text suggests its purpose of edifying a lay audience or a novice monk unfamiliar with Latin. Catechesis is a primary concern of the poem: it aids the audience in their daily environment of temptation to sin by prompting deeper meditation upon the conflict of good and evil and the cooperation with God which is necessary in man’s ongoing fight with the Devil, a leitmotif of Old English religious poetry.

Paper 15a: The Homilist and the Giant: Ælfric's Response to the Cerne Abbas Chalk Figure

Jonathan Wilcox (University of Iowa)

Ælfric the homilist, the Christian intellectual and prolific Old English writer, composed most of his works when he was monk and mass-priest at the monastery of Cerne Abbas, Dorset, from c. 987 to 1005. That village is most famous today for the giant chalk outline on the hillside of a 180-foot tall male figure carrying a club, naked, with ribs and erect phallus showing. While there have been many theories about the figure's origin, many scholars probably assumed it only somewhat pre-dated the first written reference from the mid-eighteenth century, perhaps created as some kind of military emblem or satirical comment from the time of the English Civil Wars. It was therefore a surprise when recent archaeological investigation led by Martin Papworth, drawing on evidence from Optically Stimulated Luminescence, placed the cutting of the figure to a date range from the beginning of the eighth to the beginning of the twelfth century, with a probable date of the early tenth century. If this is right, the giant was likely installed on the hillside above the monastery throughout Ælfric's tenure at Cerne. The present paper reconsiders Ælfric's writings with a view to uncovering his attitude to this giant display of rampant masculinity that dominated his immediate environment.

The naked giant holding a club in one hand, possibly once with a cloak or lion's skin in his extended other arm, looks most obviously like a representation of Hercules, a figure known in many early medieval English accounts and an occasional point of reference for Ælfric, who does not approve of this classical representation of force. The erect phallus makes the figure an obvious representation of masculine sexuality run amok, a topic on which Ælfric also had strong opinions. While the popular idea that the figure represents a Celtic pagan god is highly unlikely, such an aggressive and rampantly masculine classical figure fits into Ælfric's condemnations of the worship of false gods, seen most clearly in his homily *De Falsis Diis*. Bringing together ithyphallic giant and careful Christian exegete proves a fruitful way of opening up strands in the latter's writings and of understanding better the effect of this feature in the environment of the early medieval milieu in which he was likely created.

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Paper 15b: Botwulf: The Monsters and the Clerics

Joseph Grossi (University of Victoria)

By 1066 demons and their wildernesses had long been tamed by the conventions of hagiography, Guthlac's *Lives* in Latin and Old English being the classic English examples.¹³ After William the Conqueror put Folcard of Saint-Bertin in charge of Thorney Abbey, stylised devils returned, haunting the *Vita sancti Botolphi* written by Folcard in dedication to Walchelin, bishop of Winchester.¹⁴ The atmosphere of a medieval monastery, like that of any other human institution, could frequently be charged with social or political tensions; for this reason, monstrous enemies made convenient lightning rods.

As Tolkien discerned, the monsters of *Beowulf* embody 'the powers of evil, even while they remain . . . mortal denizens of the material world'.¹⁵ By contrast, Botwulf's demonic foes, like Guthlac's, are wholly 'other' and are expelled from the material world the saint means to colonise.¹⁶ Concerning their ejection from *Ikanhoe* (Iken, Suffolk) Folcard writes: 'with the potent force of his words, he [Botwulf] denies to them the district granted to him by Heaven' ('potenti verborum virtute interdicat illis regionem sibi divinitus concessam').¹⁷ Such a victory will have resonated with Folcard, who asked Walchelin to exert a fatherly authority to protect his modest work from envious persons intent on dogging his labours.¹⁸ In Botwulf he found a kindred soul; in addition to the cogent reasons Rosalind Love has adduced for the penning of the *Vita sancti Botolphi*,¹⁹ one surmises that the trope of a monastic environment purged of monsters furnished Folcard with a means to think through his own struggle against persecution.

Paper 15c: "Monsters New and Old: AI-Generated Art and Medieval Representation"

Patrick Naeve (Cornell University)

In the past year, major updates to platforms such as DALL-E 2, Midjourney, and Stable Diffusion has drastically increased the performance and accessibility of AI image generation. The murky legal status of such images, often generated from large databases which include copyrighted material, has raised concern about its effects on the careers of professional artists. Whereas discussion of "deepfakes," media created or manipulated using AI-driven deep-learning algorithms, has primarily focused on the issues such technologies pose in relationship to the present, I argue that it is also worth considering what impact these images will have on

¹³ See e.g. Bertram Colgrave, ed. and trans., *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956); Jane Roberts and Alan Thacker, eds., *Guthlac: Crowland's Saint* (Stamford, 2020).

¹⁴ For the dedication, see Rosalind Love, 'The Anglo-Saxon Saints of Thorney Abbey and Their Hagiographer', in *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England: Adopting and Adapting Saints' Lives into Old English Prose (c. 950-1150)*, ed. Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara, and Claudia Di Sciacca (Barcelona, 2014), 498-534, at 503-04. Love provides a full discussion of Folcard's background and troubled appointment at Thorney in the aforementioned chapter and in *eadem*, 'Folcard of Saint-Bertin and the Anglo-Saxon Saints at Thorney', in *The Long Twelfth-Century View of the Anglo-Saxon Past*, ed. Martin Brett and David A. Woodman (Farnham, 2015), 27-45.

¹⁵ 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics', repr. in *Classic Readings on Monster Theory*, ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Marcus Hansel (Amsterdam, 2018), 12-29, at 20.

¹⁶ Nevertheless, there are differences between Guthlac's and Botwulf's demonic encounters: Love, 'Folcard', 43; 'Anglo-Saxon Saints', 531-32. Sam Newton emphasizes commonalities in 'The Forgotten History of St Botwulf', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 43 (2016): 521-50, at 529-30.

¹⁷ *Vita sancti Botolphi*, in the Bollandists' *Acta sanctorum*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1734), p. 4 (Google Books). Translation mine, but see too Love, 'Anglo-Saxon Saints', 530-31 (text and translation). On *Ikanhoe* as Iken: Richard Hoggett, *The Archaeology of the East Anglian Conversion* (Woodbridge, 2010), 47-51 and studies cited therein.

¹⁸ '[U]t si quis aemulus caninas erexerit cristas labori nostro humilitatis nostre opusculum tue auctoritatis paterna contegat defensio' (Prologue to the *Vita*, quoted in Love, 'Anglo-Saxon Saints', 504). My translation is loose; for a rendering of the clause 'si...nostro' as 'if some rival should raise his doggy bristles at my labours', see Love, 'Anglo-Saxon Saints', 504-05.

¹⁹ 'Anglo-Saxon Saints', 505-07, 532-34; 'Folcard', *in toto*.

popular perceptions of the past. Such programs can not only create media depicting public figures and mimicking the styles of contemporary artists but can also generate images that resemble paintings or photographs of “medieval” persons and places.

I offer a brief introduction for scholars to some of the underlying methodologies of AI-generated images, providing analysis of this technology’s potential effects upon cultural perceptions of the “Middle Ages” writ-large and Early English history in particular. As scholars such as Adam Miyashiro and Andrew Elliot have noted, the internet has been a major locus for the proliferation of Racist and White Nationalist interpretations of the Middle Ages. AI image generation can be used to circulate new forgeries of purported historical objects and documents, the proliferation of such images can also have effects upon perceptions of medieval history beyond explicit acts of bad faith. Even when users recognize the artificial nature of such images, the immediacy and memorability of these pictures threatens a further crystallization of a stereotypical depictions of the medieval world.

I will conclude with suggestions of how to address AI-generated art in pedagogy and in public engagement. In my teaching, I have used simple prompts such as “Beowulf,” “Grendel,” and “Grendel’s Mother” to explore how the AI program creates “typical” depictions of the characters out of early English epic. Such images display assumptions about the physical attributes of each character and the material culture of the poem’s world. These AI constructions further highlight different media commonly associated with visualizations of the poem: film and comic-books. While such images are in some respects “new” and “nonhuman”, they contain identifiable visual referents to historically distinct periods of art and media that indicate the extent to which collective perception of “medieval” narratives, figures, and events is by a succession of historical re-envisioning and reassessments.

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Paper 16a: Multilingualism in the North?: A Case Study on the Mutual Intelligibility of Old English and Old Norse and Its Onomastic Impact in Lancashire

Emma Horne (University of Oxford)

In 1921 Leach argued for the almost perfect mutual intelligibility between Old Norse and Old English in that a Danish farmer from West Jutland would have ‘no trouble’ (20) in conversing with a Yorkshireman. While this has been since debunked as a vast overstatement, through this paper I intend to build on Townend’s (2002) work to explore the vast similarities between the two languages, evaluate to what extent could speakers of Old English and Old Norse understand

each other's languages, and explore the impact of sister languages' contact on language development and place-naming in the northwest of England. Previous scholarship has already examined similarities between the literary cultures of Old English and Old Norse, most notably similar didactic tradition in the wisdom catalogues of *The Wanderer* and *Hávamál* and potential common origin theories for *Beowulf* and *Grettis Saga*, however, there generally appears to be less consideration of place-names as evidence for mutual intelligibility. Primarily, this paper explores if any similarities or mutual understanding between Old English and Old Norse could account for the large number of hybrid Anglo-Nordic place-names and Scandinavian originating names in the North of England, under the assumption that place-names provide accurate and helpful evidence of migration and area of settlement (Carroll 2020; Coates 2006). Secondly, this paper compares this relative abundance of Scandinavian naming elements to the lack of Anglo-Norman influence, consequently presenting the question; why would a later invasion which ended Scandinavian power in England not result in higher naming influence? I suggest the similarity between Old English and Old Norse allowed both peoples and languages to coexist beside each other and influence each other, whereas the social distance and lack of intelligibility between Old English and Norman French resulted in an overhaul of place-names being unattainable, allowing medieval French to remain solely as the language of the nobility rather than understood by the masses. By viewing place-names as evidence of multilingual environments, or at very least some level of mutual understanding, examining what type(s) of language remains and what is lost provides valuable insight into the cultural history and development of English as a language and (eventual) identity.

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Paper 16b: Dead Space: Votive Environments and the Northumbrian Name-Stones

Jill Clements (University of Alabama at Birmingham)

This paper comes from my current research on the Northumbrian "name-stones," a group of approximately three dozen small inscribed stones, dating from the 7th to 9th centuries, found mainly at Lindisfarne and Hartlepool. Because they feature a carved cross and one or more personal names, these stones have often been considered grave markers, which is how they have long been classified in the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. My research, however, has pointed to new schemata for their display and use, particularly their portability as votive objects that were not used to mark the body. Focusing on issues of portability, I have recently weighed all of the name-stones from the Hartlepool and Lindisfarne collections (save for the most recent pieces excavated by DigVentures) and am considering methods of holding, moving, and displaying them. The stones' mobility—perhaps being moved for particular services for the dead—has significant implications for the role of memorial writing in these communities. It also indicates not only a visual encounter with the inscription, but a physical one, as the stones' book-like size and shape lend themselves to interaction with the hands and

bodies of the living. Even in the case of the Hartlepool name-stones, some of which appear from nineteenth-century excavation reports to have been buried with a body, the potential for the stones' processional use from church to graveyard remains a significant space in which to consider their use and handling. This paper explores some of these possibilities with a particular attention to the stones' multiple environments, from their potential display in pre-mortem contexts to their being briefly carried across the landscape as part of a community's commemorativepraxis. By considering how the name-stones' physical size and weight affect how they could be transported, displayed, and read, this project seeks to better understand the dynamic interactions of smaller stone objects with the eyes and hands of living readers.

Paper 16c: Food, Saintly Natures, and Environmental Consequences in *Ælfric's Life of St. Cuthbert*

Lauren Colwell (Ohio State University)

Amongst the many material aspects of the environment studied in early English literature, food and food production are understudied and unrepresented in critical readings of texts written in Old English. In historical studies of the period, scholars have long understood how food shaped and informed the early English peoples' relationship with their local environments economically, socially, and culturally. However, the same level of inquiry has yet to inform literary studies, mainly because many assume that the absence of references to food in Old English literature, particularly in poetic writings, indicates that food and food production were not as central or important to early English writers. Ultimately, this is not the case. Texts such as *Ælfric's Life of St. Cuthbert* contain several references to food and food production, which reveals to us how hagiography is exceptionally positioned to provide an intimate understanding of how early medieval audiences engaged with the natural world.

In this presentation, I will first look at how Cuthbert interacted with a variety of foodstuffs in *Ælfric's Life of St. Cuthbert*, both those foods that are obscured (such as a spread named only as *syflinge*) and those foods that are divinely gifted (such as a fish in the beaks of an eagle). These foods and the ways that Cuthbert interacts with them add a new layer to how we think about the saint's placement in the local environment. Saints are not just figures who mend humanity's relationship with a hostile environment or emulate harmony with the natural world. Cuthbert's interactions with food showcase how pleasure and enjoyment can be found in a sustainable environment.

Within my discussion of Cuthbert's interaction with food in the *Life*, I will also look at early English food production and history, particularly within monastic settings. By understanding the religious and cultural significance of various foodstuffs (such as fish or bread) for the early English, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of how and why *Ælfric* references certain foods in his *Life*, adding new layers to how scholars understand *Ælfric's* concerns about fasting and ascetic life. Moreover, reading *Ælfric's Life* through the lens of food history reveals how monastic and lay peoples understood food and its production as deeply connected with their local environments as both a physical and spiritual life-giving force.

Finally, I will posit the question of whether food and its production, as reflected in literary texts, allow us to refute Timothy Morton's assumption that premodern peoples lacked an awareness of the relationship between their actions and the consequences of their actions on the natural environments. For the early English, food, agricultural practices, fasting, monastic diets, etc., were all bound to how one enacted with their local environments for better or worse. As a saint to be imitated, Cuthbert's life might also reveal how the early English understood the consequence of a right and, adversely, a bad relationship with the environment.