QUAESTIO INSULARIS

Selected Proceedings of the Cambridge Colloquium in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic

Volume 9 · 2008
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ABBREVIATIONS

ANS  Anglo-Norman Studies
AntJ  Antiquaries Journal
ArchJ Archaeological Journal
ASE  Anglo-Saxon England
ASNSL Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen
BAR British Archaeological Reports (Oxford)
BNJ British Numismatic Journal
CML  Corpus Medicorum Latinorum
CSASE Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
EETS Early English Text Society
HBS Henry Bradshaw Society Publications
HZ  Historische Zeitschrift
JEGP Journal of English and Germanic Philology
MGH Monumenta Germaniae Historica
ME  Medium Aevum
NM  Neophilologische Mitteilungen
OMT Oxford Medieval Texts
OS  Original Series
RS  Rolls Series
SBVS Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research
SCBI Syloge of Coins of the British Isles
SN  Studia Neophilologica
SS  Supplementary Series

PREFACE

This volume of the annual journal, Quaestio Insularis, is the ninth in a successful series initiated a decade ago and established and continued since then by the vibrant postgraduate community of the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic. The Colloquium, the edited proceedings of which Quaestio represents, is now firmly established as one of the leading graduate conferences in the field; the 2008 event was the largest to date. This and back numbers of the respected associated journal can be ordered directly from the Department’s website (<www.asnc.cam.ac.uk>). The Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic continues to be proud of its long association with CCASNC and Quaestio Insularis; long may they flourish!

Dr Máire Ni Mhaonaigh
Head of the Department of ASNC
University of Cambridge
COLLOQUIUM REPORT

The 2008 Colloquium in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, held in Room G/R 06-7 of the English Faculty, was the biggest to date—a successful two-day event, Friday 16–Saturday 17 May.

**Day 1 – Friday 16 May**

**Session I (Chair: Conan Doyle)**
Denis Casey, ‘Metamorphosis: the Fall and Rise of Tigernán Ua Ruairec, 1151–9’
Edward Carlsson Browne, ‘Norwegian Laws of Succession from Haraldr hárfragi to Magnús Erlingsson’
Paul Gazzoli, ‘Knud the Holy and the Metamorphosis of Danish Kingship’

**Session II (Chair: Betsie A. M. Cleworth)**
Conan Doyle, ‘Metamorphosis and Mutability: from Supernatural to Natural Cause in Anglo-Saxon Disease Terminology’
Matthias Ammon, ‘Piercing the *rithbanseycyl* – a New Reading of Æthelberht 32’

**Session III (Chair: Natalia I. Petrovskaià)**
Angela Bennett Segler, ‘Christianising and Queering Philosophy: a Look at the Transformation of Lady Philosophy into *se Wisdom* in Ælfred’s Translation of Boethius’
Rosa Maria Fera, ‘Men, Animals and More: Metamorphoses of the Five Senses’

**Day 2 – Saturday 17 May**

**Session I (Chair: Rosa Maria Fera)**
Helen Imhoff, ‘A Change of Attitude: the Metamorphism of Conchobar’s Poem in Aided Conchobair’

Carolyn Twomey, ‘From Nave to Chancel: the Metamorphic Implications of Anglo-Saxon Altar Placement’

**Session II: Keynote Lecture (Chair: Natalia I. Petrovskaià)**
Daniel Huws, ‘From Song to Script in Late Medieval Wales’

**Session III (Chair: Helen Imhoff)**
Andy Woods, ‘Was There a Metamorphosis of the Economy of “Viking-age” Dublin? the Beginnings of Minting in the Late Tenth-century’

**Session IV (Chair: Debbie Potts)**
Helen Leslie, ‘Metamorphosis of Context: Generating Meaning in the Different Versions of *Völuspá*’
Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough, ‘Fractured Fairytales: Transforming the Trolls of *Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss’*

**Session V (Chair: Matthias Ammon)**
Robert Gallagher, ‘Textual Metamorphosis in De abbatibus’
Greg Williams, ‘The Role of Early Medieval York in the Northumbrian Kingdom and Church’

**Session VI (Chair: Betsie A. M. Cleworth)**
Carrie Roy, ‘Viewing and Re-viewing the Gripping Beast’

The members of the colloquium committee for 2007–8 were: Natalia I. Petrovskaià, Debbie Potts, Betsie A. M. Cleworth.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Quaestio Insularis* 9 was edited by Natalia I. Petrovskiaia, Debbie Potts and Betsie A. M. Cleworth. The editors also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough. Editorial design is by Alistair Vining and the *Quaestio Insularis* logo was drawn by Katharine Scarfe Beckett. The production of this volume and the successful running of the conference have been made possible through the generosity of the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic and the support of the Faculty of English.

From *Song to Script in Medieval Wales*

Daniel Huws

My title is a tribute to a book published in 1945 that I came across when it was reprinted in paperback in 1966, at about the time that I became interested in such matters: *From Script to Print: an Introduction to Medieval Vernacular Literature*, by H. J. Chaytor.¹ Once I had grown accustomed to what to one of my generation was a quaintly old-fashioned air (Whitman, for instance, still served to exemplify the formlessness of ‘modern’ poetry), Chaytor offered a splendid introduction not only to the transmission from script to print but also that from song to script.

The period under our consideration is chiefly that from 1400 to 1550. By 1550 much medieval vernacular literature in some of the major languages of western Europe had found its way not only from song to script but from script to print. But Welsh literature had another three centuries to wait. Only in the three decades after 1773 did a corresponding migration from script to print occur.

To appreciate the changes in the mode of transmission of Welsh poetry in the period 1400–1550 we need to set the scene in 1400. Almost all known Welsh poetry from the earliest period – the body of poetry already in the fourteenth century known as *bengerdd* (lit.) ‘ancient poetry’ – and almost all surviving poetry of the *Gogynfeirdd* (lit.) ‘quite early poets’, including the Poets of the Princes (c. 1100–1283) and the subsequent poetry in the same tradition, survives by virtue of texts preserved in five books. These five books, written

¹ Originally published in Cambridge (CUP); reprinted in London (Sidgwick and Jackson).
between the mid-thirteenth century and the late-fourteenth, are, in order: the Black Book of Carmarthen, the personal compilation of an unknown cleric; the Book of Aneirin, the antiquarian recovery by two scribes of an ancient, barely understood, iconic text; the Hendregadradd Manuscript, the product of an extraordinarily ambitious enterprise soon after 1282 to recover the court poetry of the Welsh princes; the Book of Taliesin, a fair copy of an antiquarian collection comparable to the Book of Aneirin; and the Red Book of Hergest, a huge book written by three scribes soon after 1382, evidently a compilation of Welsh literature reflecting the taste of its patron, Hopcyn ap Thomas of Ynysdawie. All five books are of parchment and well produced.²

Welsh poetry in 1400, such as is known to us, is represented by the contents of these five books. Strangely, perhaps, it is poetry whose written transmission more or less ceased between the year 1400 and its rediscovery by renaissance scholars in the years after 1550 and of which only a very few poems seem to have been retained in oral tradition. The living poetry around the year 1400, the poetry that would have been heard in court or tavern, the poetry that would hold the stage for two centuries to come, was of a very different nature. It was the poetry of the Cynydhyr, ‘composed in cynydd metre’.

Around the year 1330 came the most clear-cut change in the whole course of Welsh poetry (the only comparison might be the outburst of hymn writing that came with Methodism just four centuries later, William Williams, Pantycelyn, taking the place of Dafydd ap Gwilym). The change turned on a new poetic form, the cynydd denair hirion, in seven-syllable couplets, which soon came to be
called simply the cynydd (pl. cynydde), and its exponents Cynydhyr. The new form, more flexible and less demanding than the awdl (pl. awدل) or englyn (pl. englynion), became associated with new subject matter – love poetry became a large ingredient – and with a readiness to accept a more colloquial vocabulary, including English loan words, and a new lightness of tone, often ironic. One poet above all was associated with this innovation, even during his lifetime: Dafydd ap Gwilym. It became, in the picture presented in mocking words by Dafydd’s contemporary, Gruffudd Gryg, a craze. The venerable older forms of the awدل, always regarded as that of highest status, and englyn survived (and have done to this day), but for three hundred years the cynydd became the chief mode of Welsh poetry.³

Around the year 1400, hengedd and the poems of the Gogynfeirdd, known to a few from books, known to bards from their training, were in general probably revered but seldom heard. The poetry that would be in demand at festive time from the datgéinial, the ‘professional singers’, had seldom even reached script, even though the Cynydhyr of the first generation were mostly long dead. All that survives of this poetry in pre-1400 manuscripts is a small handful of poems occurring as added matter in two earlier manuscripts, the Hendregadradd Manuscript and the White Book of Rhydderch. Yet some 300 cynydde from the fourteenth century, by some 25 poets, have come down to us in post-1400 manuscripts. How were these texts transmitted? By other manuscripts now lost, or by word of mouth? This is a question we shall return to.

In 1400 Owain Glyndŵr rose. The war that followed was protracted and the destruction, by both sides, great. The devastation of war and the harsh legislation which followed resulted in a long and

² For a fuller account of the five books, see D. Huws, Medieval Welsh Manuscripts (Cardiff, 2000), ch. 5.

³ An excellent introduction to the cynydd and its context can be found in E. I. Rowlands, Poems of the Cynydhyr (Dublin, 1976).
profound depression. In the words of Sir John Wynn, the wars 'brought such desolation that green grass grew in the market-place of Llanrwst [...] and deer fed in the churchyard'. It is hard not to attribute to this depression, this long disruption of normal life, the absence of any collection of Welsh poetry that can be dated to the period 1400-1440 (see Appendix I). The contrast with the period after the defeat of 1282 is instructive. That defeat seems to have acted as a stimulus to the recording of Welsh literature. It led to a safeguarding of her history: witness the creation of Brut y Tywysogion 'the Chronicle of the Princes', the recording of the court poetry in the Hendregadredd Manuscript and the great vigour of vernacular manuscript production in the period between the Conquest and the Black Death.

There is a curious parallel. Richard Suggett, writing of Welsh timber-framed houses, has observed that 'the two most significant surviving expressions of material culture in late medieval Wales' are 'houses and the manuscript books which were kept in them'. The surviving houses, with their magnificent woodwork, from the typically three-bay aristocratic hall-house to the smaller, typically two-bay, gentry houses and one-bay 'peasant' houses have been the subject of much recent investigation, and by means of dendrochronology their dating has often been possible. One discovery has been that not one example survives from pre-Glyndŵr times; Wales had to rebuild. More surprising however is that no example survives from before 1430 while thereafter they come to

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6 Suggett, op. cit.
stream of Welsh poetry did however have a kind of continuity: *canu brud*, ‘songs of prophesy or vaticination’, associated above all with Myrddin, poetry which in relation to other poetry stands rather like science fiction in relation to other fiction. After 1282, this poetry acquired new relevance. Early poems (some probably from oral tradition) together with a mass of more recent ones turn up in fifteenth-century manuscripts. Then, after 1485, *canu brud* fell quiet. The arrival of Henry Tudor had, it was thought, fulfilled the prophecies. But *canu brud* had an unexpected revival when the English Civil War brought its own new load of anxieties.

Who were the scribes of the post-1440 manuscripts? There is a clear answer. Until 1527: every identifiable scribe is a bard (see the third column in Appendix 1). No doubt many if not most of the bards of earlier centuries had been able to write. Of the fourteenth-century *Cynwyddwyrr*, Dafydd ap Gwilym and Gruffudd Gryg were undoubtedly literate and had Latin: there are possibly autograph poems by each of them in the Hendregadredd Manuscript. But we have no evidence to suggest that either of them compiled collections of poetry, either of the work of others or of their own poems. Now, in the middle of the fifteenth century, there was a remarkable and sudden flowering of autograph poetry. Not only were collections of contemporary poetry being made, some poets were making collections of their own work. Lewys Glyn Cothi is the outstanding example; Hywel Dafl and Ieuan Brechfa are others whose collections survive. One conclusion that might be drawn is that professional scribes competent to write in Welsh were rare. There is probably truth in this, but that there were a few good scribes is shown by other contemporary manuscripts, notably some of the Welsh law texts. The law could always provide employment for scriveners.

The poet’s personal collection of his work is one type of book; the household book, what in Irish is called a dnuairt, a book to be added to at the wish of a patron, is another. The third stratum in the Hendregadredd Manuscript offers a rudimentary early Welsh example. The additions to Peniarth MS 10, with their poems to a late fifteenth-century patron, Dafydd Llywod ap Gruffudd Fychan Deudwr, provide a later one. Of exceptional interest as books reflecting one patron’s taste (without reflecting any vainglory: his very name is uncertain) are three manuscripts, Peniarth 54 (written about 1480), Peniarth 55 (c. 1500) and Peniarth 60 (c. 1510–15), which came together from Breconshire into Robert Vaughan’s library at Hengwrt by common descent. Each of the three manuscripts shows a large number of hands. What links them is a primitive cramped hand which crops up at intervals in all three, writing short stints, a hand which offers interesting variety: copies of poems, attempts at composing poetry, prayers, comment, and the earliest surviving lists of Welsh musical measures. It can hardly be other than the hand of the patron, one who, like Charlemagne, came late to the skill and pleasures of writing. The three manuscripts offer a range of poetry besides contemporary *cynwyddau*, their main contents. Peniarth 54 includes a collection of 25 of Dafydd ap Gwilym’s *cynwyddau*, the largest known group up to that date, written in the hand of the bard Gwilym Tew, a few items of *hengrodd* and ample vaticination. A remarkable feature of the contemporary poetry is that a large proportion of it is autograph. There are in Peniarth 54 autograph poems by eight poets: Huw Cae Llywod, Rhys Dyfinwal, Hywel Swrdwal, Dafydd Epynt, Gwilym Tew, Hywel Dafi, Rhys Fardd and Dafydd y Nant. Autograph poems by the first four named also occur in Peniarth 55, with others by Rhys

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8 Peniarth 54 includes several poems, including *marwried* (elegies) to Ieuan ap Gwilym Fychan of Peutun, near Brecon, and his father. Ieuan died sometime after 1475. The cramped hand was probably of one close to this family.
Brychan, while Peniarth 60 contains autograph poems by Dafydd Epynt and Rhys Brychan. Poems by ten further poets in these three manuscripts have the appearance of autographs but we lack examples with which to compare them.

The sudden appearance of a mass of autograph poetry is a phenomenon. Croft in his Autograph Poetry in the English Language writes that there are ‘only four identified authors of the medieval period for whom any significant quantity of verse has come down to us in their own handwriting’. The four are William Herbert, John Shirley, Thomas Hoccleve and John Capgrave. Wales, in the fifteenth century alone, can offer at least twelve, along with a similar number of candidates for whom a prima facie case can be made.

A question which must arise is: were these post-1440 collections of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century poetry written by scribes copying from earlier manuscripts which have failed to survive? There is no evidence that this was so. Before the sixteenth century there are no pointers to lost common sources. There is no evidence that the work of any individual poet of the Gwydddywur was collected, other than by the poet himself, before the sixteenth century, with the single exception of Dafydd ap Gwilym. Our conclusion has to be that the transmission up to this point had primarily been oral. What we witness in these disorderly poetry manuscripts of the fifteenth century is a process of random crystallisation from oral tradition.

Welsh praise poetry was skilfully woven, but in pattern, in the characteristics that called forth praise, and in much of the imagery, it is conventional. A man would commonly be praised for his breeding, courtesy, valour, generosity, probity, for his learning. Learning might simply be the Latin-based learning of a cleric or a lawyer. Sometimes however, a patron is praised for devotion to native learning, for knowledge of chronicles, of ystorya, ‘story’, ‘history’ (a word which denoted written as opposed to oral narrative), of hengeddd, ‘old poetry’, of bardic art, of genealogy, all of them associated with books. While a patron might be praised for his appreciation of gwydddyw, never, before the latter part of the fifteenth century, are these poems associated with books. Lewys Glyn Cothi is the first to make the link, to imply that his poem will endure as a text. When he writes:

Y geiriaw a rof mewn ysgrifên
tra fo gwir a thir a llythyren,
lyd y trwy obry wybren - dros fyniau,
lyd y bo geiriaw mewn iifrau llen.

Lewys is placing his poems in the stream of literature that offered the patron (or lover) immortality through the written word, the stream that Shakespeare’s sonnets were to join.

All Welsh poetry until after 1600, even awliaid, was composed to be sung (or perhaps chanted), to the accompaniment of the harp, or sometimes the cruth. Some bards might sing their own poems, even to their own accompaniment. Generally, however, the singing was by a datgenniad. Sadly, the manner of singing is lost. We have one substantial collection of late medieval harp music, much of it purely instrumental, but nothing to help relate its music to words. Penillion singing, that peculiarly Welsh art form, probably has some tenuous

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11 Gwilym Lewys Glyn Cothi, ed. D. Johnston (Cardiff, 1995), p. 222. ‘The words I put in writing / while truth and land and letters may last, / so long as the sky moves above hills, / so long as there are words in the books of literature.’

12 The Robert ap Hwv manuscript, BL. Add. 14905, copied in 1613. For recent essays on the manuscript and its contents, see Welsh Music History, vols. 3 (1999) and 6 (2004).
link to the singing of medieval poetry: but all is speculation. The datgeinid would need to know his repertoire by heart and his reputation would in part depend on the extent of his repertoire. The datgeinid would be the main channel of oral transmission of cywyddau. Recent editors of cywyddau have paid much more attention than those of earlier generations to the traits of oral transmission, none more than the editors of the new edition of Dafydd ap Gwilym, a poet whose work enjoyed extended transmission by word of mouth and a complex one in manuscripts.\textsuperscript{13} Obvious traits are variation of line- or couplet-order and omissions of couplets in cywyddau or of englynion, for instance, in awliau. Others are variation which can be explained as mishearing and verbal variation of words not structural with regard to sense or to cynghaneodd (the rules of consonance and alliteration). It can be said that variation such as can be explained by oral transmission is, predictably, least common in praise poetry and most common in poetry of broader interest, in love poetry, in memorable satire, in canu braid.

The oral transmission of the poetry of the Ceirioi and the Cywyddwyrr cannot be regarded as a process of re-creation. In has to be viewed in different light from the transmission of poetry by the ‘Singer of Tales’, or in a British context, by the flux of the ballads. About 90\% of Welsh poems from 1100 to 1500 are attributed in manuscript to an author (whether correctly so or not). Bards were of high standing and their names mattered; the poem could be expected to stand inviolate. But there was recognition that transmission could be faulty and the datgeinid were expected to rectify what were perceived as errors of cynghaneodd. There might be a tinkering, for better or worse, but no substantial re-creation. This tinkering, even so, poses problems for editors. The progression of cynghaneodd from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century was in the direction of a tightening of rules. What a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century datgeinid might regard as faulty cynghaneodd could have been acceptable in the fourteenth century.

The early high status of the Welsh bards is comparable with that of the troubadours over 85\% of whose work is attributed.\textsuperscript{14} In contrast, in the Sisam Oxford Book of Medieval English Verse (an anthology not altogether representative, dominated of course by short poems), little over 20\% of the poems, from the period 1150-1500, are attributed, to 21 poets.\textsuperscript{15}

So from about 1450, the writing down of poetry became widespread in the bardic community and among patrons. The sources, first, by necessity (as I see it), mainly oral, but, increasingly, as copying became common practice, written ones also. By about 1550, written transmission had become the norm. Such transmission begins to become evident from the textual history of some poetry; a stemma may point to common ancestry. It is strongly implied by sporadic comments which make explicit reference to copying from oral rendering (some are collected in Appendix II). These show that by the end of the sixteenth century to take a text taken from oral rendering was considered to be something exceptional.

There are sufficient surviving manuscripts from the period 1400-1550 to allow for some general observations. We have already noticed the lacuna from 1400 to 1440 and the subsequent productivity, the


\textsuperscript{14} A figure based on A. Pillet & H. Carstens, \textit{Bibliographie der Troubadours} (Halle, 1933).

switch from parchment to paper, and the preponderance of bards among the identifiable scribes. A glance at the fourth column in Appendix I, showing from which quarter of Wales the manuscripts appear to have come, reveals something else: that the transfer of contemporary poetry from song to script first became an established practice in the most anglicised part of Wales, the south-east; later in the north-east, and latest in the south-west and north-west. In the north-west, always a bastion of traditional Welsh culture, the oral tradition was no doubt so strong until around 1550 that written record still appeared to be superfluous. By 1600 however it had become, with north-east Wales, the chief area of manuscript production.

The period of transition from oral to written transmission of the poetry of the Cynwyddwg was from 1450 to 1550. The manuscripts from this period are listed below. The great proliferation of copying poetry into manuscripts (generally, by now, from script to script rather than song to script) came in the period 1550–1700. Some 450 poetry manuscripts survive from this century and a half. The year 1700 is a convenient one to mark the end of the bardic tradition. Siôn Dafydd Las, who can be regarded as the last of the professional bards, a brilliant, careless, wayward poet, and a drunkard, died aged about 30 in 1695. By then, Wales had, in many respects, already moved into a new era.

### Appendix I: Welsh Poetry MSS 1400-1550

**Key:** ( ) = additions only; [ ] = *cân brad*, italic type = lost MS; * = parchment MS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 57i</td>
<td>c. 1440</td>
<td>SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Peniarth 50*]</td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Peniarth 26*]</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llyfr Gwyn Hogen*</td>
<td>&gt;1461</td>
<td>Lewys Glyn Cothi S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 70*</td>
<td>1470s</td>
<td>Lewys Glyn Cothi SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 109*</td>
<td>1470s</td>
<td>Lewys Glyn Cothi S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peniarth 40)*</td>
<td>1470s</td>
<td>Lewys Glyn Cothi SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Llanstephan 7</td>
<td>1480s</td>
<td>[Lewys Glyn Cothi] S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Jesus 111*: addns)</td>
<td>1480s</td>
<td>Lewys Glyn Cothi SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 48*</td>
<td>s.xv</td>
<td>Dafydd Nanmor et al. NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 52*</td>
<td>s.xv</td>
<td>Gwilym Tew SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[BL Add. 19710*]</td>
<td>?1460×80</td>
<td>Hywel Dafy SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peniarth 51)</td>
<td>&gt;1483</td>
<td>Huw Cae Llwyd et mult. SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 67</td>
<td>c. 1480</td>
<td>Huw Cae Llwyd et mult. SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 54</td>
<td>c. 1500</td>
<td>Huw Cae Llwyd SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 55</td>
<td>?1460×80</td>
<td>Dafydd Epynt et mult. SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 189 (pp. 85-108)</td>
<td>?1510–15</td>
<td>[Gutun Owain] NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 60</td>
<td>s.xvi</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of BL Add. 14967</td>
<td>c. 1485×1510</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Peniarth 53]</td>
<td>s.xv/sxv</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Add. 14997</td>
<td>s.xvi</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 59ii</td>
<td>s.xvi</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peniarth 10*: addns)</td>
<td>s.xvi</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llanstephan 7</td>
<td>1505–30</td>
<td>Ieuon Brechfa et al. SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peniarth 182)</td>
<td>c.1514</td>
<td>Huw Pennant NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Peniarth 110</td>
<td>s.xvi</td>
<td>[Tudur Aled] SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llanstephan 6</td>
<td>c. 1505×30</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peniarth 57ii</td>
<td>s.xvi (&lt;1536)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see Pen.49)</td>
<td>1526</td>
<td>Eilis Gruffydd NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff 3.4</td>
<td>1527</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Add. 14967</td>
<td>&gt;1526</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hynn a vedrais i ei gael o gowydd penny b ac o waith Iolo Goch . . .
ac ar dafod leferydd fy ewythur Wiliam Tomas o Bant y Llongdu y kefa i hynn

'This is as much of the boar's head cywydd by Iolo Goch as I was
was able to obtain and it was from the oral rendering of my uncle
Wiliam Tomas of Pant y Llongdy that I got this'

BL Add. 31058, fol. 96 (written mid-seventeenth century): 'kywydd
yw hwn ysgrifenad ar dafod 'lyferydd'
'this is a cywydd written from oral rendering'

BL Add. 14898 (=RMWL 46), fol. 87 (written by Henry Hughes, c.
1660): 'Sion Brwynog ai kant ei wyr ai doedd ai orwyr ai
sryfenodd'
'Sion Brwynog sang [composed] it, his grandson recited it and his
great-grandson wrote it down'

EARLY AWARENESS OF TEXTUAL PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ORAL
TRANSMISSION

BL Add. 14866, fol. 194" (written by David Johns, 1587): 'Dafydd ap
Gwilym medd llawer copi. Gruffydd Lloyd ap Dafydd ap Einion
medd errill. Ef a allei i bob un o honyst ganu ir un destyn a bod yna
ra i benillion o ddau gowydd. Hwy ddiw no chwyddau Dafydd,
on ir oedd ef yn i gwneythyr yn hwy nag ydynt. Achos am i mel-
lyssed, fo dysgir ar dafod ag a goppiwyd llawer oddiwrth un ni fedrei
mor cwbl weithiau.'
'Dafydd ap Gwilym according to many copies. Gruffydd Llywd ap
Dafydd ap Einion according to others. It may be that they both
sing on the same subject and that there are some verses from each
cywydd. It is longer than Dafydd's cywyddau, unless he made this one longer

APPENDIX II: EARLY REFERENCES TO TRANSCRIPTION FROM ORAL
TRADITION

Explicit references in manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth
centuries to the copying of poems directly from oral tradition. Note
the term Ar dafodlyferydd (dafodleferydd), 'tongue-speech' = 'by word of
mouth', 'by heart', 'from oral rendering'.

Cardiff 3.4 (=RMWL 5), p. 262 (written by Elis Gruffyth in 1527):
'Ni chlowais ganu o Dudur Aled ond y ddau hyn'
'only these two have I heard Tudur Aled sing'

Peniarth 72, p. 360 (written late sixteenth century): 'gwaith bry
oddiar dafod lyferydd'
'hurried work from oral rendering'

BL Add. 14866 (=RMWL 29), fol. 262" (written by David Johns,
1587): 'Nis gywddai'r dyn ai dyfod i mi ar dafod leferydd pwy ai cant'
'he man who recited it to me by heart did not know who had sung
[composed] it'

Cardiff 2.83 (=RMWL 6), p. 131 (written c. 1600): 'Hyn o wawd yr
hen brydydd . . . a dyscais i ar y mynydd ar fynhafodlyferydd'
'This satire by the old poet . . . I learnt by heart on the mountain'

Peniarth 111, p. 77 (written by John Jones, c. 1600), repeated in
Peniarth 98B, p. 51 (written by John Davies, early 17th cent.): 'Llyma
Knud the Holy and the Metamorphosis of Danish Kingship

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Knud 'the Holy' (r. 1080–6) has sometimes been billed as the last 'viking' king of Denmark, due to his youthful activity on expeditions to England for his father, Svend Estridsen, and for his designs on the English Crown in his own reign. On the other hand, he has also been seen as a great moderniser who helped pave the way for the later strong kingship of Valdemar I and his successors from the mid-twelfth century. ¹ In this paper I intend to critically examine the evidence for Knud's policies in the earliest sources, and assess to what extent Knud can genuinely have been said to have marked a metamorphosis of kingship in Denmark.

After the death of Cnut the Great in 1035, the Danish crown passed to his son Hardeknud, who in 1040 made good his ancestral claim to the English throne as well. On Hardeknud's death without issue in 1042, the control of England reverted to the line of Æthelred with Edward the Confessor, while Denmark fell to Magnus the Good of Norway. In 1047 Svend, the son of Cnut the Great's sister Estrid, managed to establish himself and reigned until his death in 1076. In 1069–70 and 1075 Svend launched expeditions aimed at taking advantage of the post-Norman Conquest rebellions to press his claim to the throne of England.

On Svend's death a dispute over the succession arose between his sons. Svend had left behind somewhere in the region of fourteen

sons and at this time there were no legally established principles for the regulation of the succession. The candidates were Harald ‘Hen’ (‘Whetstone’, r. 1076–80) and Knud; Harald was elected because he promised a mild reign under which the Danes could choose for themselves which laws they wanted. Knud seems to have gone into exile, and some sources indicate that he, and some of his brothers, attempted to force Harald to divide the kingdom with them. Harald died in 1080, and Knud succeeded him to the throne. In 1085 he prepared a massive fleet with the purpose of conquering England. It was ready to embark from Limfjord, but Knud was detained at Hedeby by a threat from the German Emperor Heinrich IV, whose rival (Gegenkönig) Hermann von Salm had found refuge in Denmark, along with Archbishop Hartwig of Magdeburg and Bishop Burchard of Halberstadt. The men of the fleet grew impatient as the summer drew on, and Knud was forced to allow them to disband. In the

2 See E. Hoffmann, Königserhebung und Thronfolgeordnung in Dänemark bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 5 (Berlin, 1976), 17–34.
3 Ælnoth, Gesta Suenomagni regis et filiarum eius et passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martiris (hereafter G5) iv, in Vitae sanctorum Danorum (hereafter VSD), ed. M. C. Gertz (Copenhagen, 1908–12), pp. 90–1.
4 A letter from Pope Gregory VII urges the Norwegian King Olav Kyrre not to offer any help to Harald’s brothers who are attempting to enforce a division of the kingdom (Diplomatarium Danicum, I. Røkke, 2. Bind: 1053–1169 (hereafter DD), ed. L. Weibull and N. Skyum-Nielsen (Copenhagen, 1963) I,2, no. 18, 37–9). An anonymous skaldic verse reports that Harald had to fight eleven of his brothers after their father’s death (Finnrur Jönsson, ed., Den norsk-islandske skaldedigtning, 4 vols. (Copenhagen, 1912–5), AI 427, BI 397).

following spring, a revolt resulted in his death at the hands of an angry mob inside St. Alban’s Church in Odense. By 1095, reports of miracles worked by him led to his becoming Denmark’s first royal saint.

Although our sources for this period are scant, we are fortunate in that it is the first time we have contemporary and near-contemporary written sources from within Denmark itself. In addition to the first preserved charter from Scandinavia, Knud’s grant to Lund cathedral of 1085 (although the original is lost, we have several copies from the early twelfth century onwards), we also have a wealth of hagiographic material produced by the monks who served Knud’s cult at Odense. The monastery at Odense was established by Erik ‘Ejegod’ (‘ever-good’, r. 1095–1103, the second of Knud’s brothers to succeed him) with monks from the English house of Evesham. The corpus consists of four works: first the Tabula Othmanensis, a copper tablet with a short inscription composed for Knud’s elevation in 1095 and originally placed in his sarcophagus, where it was discovered on its opening in 1592; although the tablets soon disappeared, the text was preserved in seventeenth-century Danish collections. Second is the anonymous Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martiris, probably composed sometime between 1095 and 1101,

7 The founding is discussed in a charter from Evesham, given in DD I,2, no. 24, 55–6.
again by an English monk. It is preserved in its entirety only in a single late manuscript from Cologne, which contains material from breviaries from Odense and Lund, although fragments can be found elsewhere, mainly in Scandinavian breviaries. Third is the Epitaphium, consisting of nine hexameters originally inscribed on a metal tablet, like the Tabula Othiniensis found in Knud’s shrine upon its opening in 1592, and similarly vanished but preserved in the same sources. The last and by far most extensive work, however, is Ælnoth’s Geata Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius et passio glorissimi Canuti regis et martyris, which contains a foreword to king Niels (r. 1103–34), a description of Scandinavia and its peoples, and a brief account of the reigns of Knud’s predecessors Svend and Harald before its discussion of Knud’s life, martyrdom, and elevation to sainthood. In the epilogue and the preface the author declares himself to be the priest Ælnoth, from Canterbury, who has lived in Denmark for twenty-four years. Ælnoth might have come to Denmark at the time of the establishment of the monastery at Odense around 1095, or perhaps earlier, possibly at the time of Knud’s translation of the relics of saints Alban and Oswald to Denmark. Conjectures as to when he completed his work range from 1109 to 1122. His work is preserved primarily in two Flemish manuscripts from the early thirteenth century, the Codex Audomariensis from St. Omer, and the Codex Brugensis from Bruges; both are believed to be derived from a lost exemplar from Ter Doest. Their presence in Flanders is explained by the fact that Knud married Adèle, daughter of Count Robert I ‘The Frisian’ of Flanders (r. 1071–93), and that the son born of this union was himself later count of Flanders as Charles I ‘The Good’ (r. 1119–27); Charles’ life is also included in the Codex Audomariensis. Ælnoth’s work and the entirety of the Odense corpus were most recently edited by the great scholar M. C. Gertz from 1908 to 1912 as Vitae sanctorum Danorum.

The problem that has faced those who would use these sources for history, as pointed out by Gertz himself in the early years of the twentieth century, is the seemingly obvious one, namely that they are hagiography, and thus the events recorded may be distorted, or even fabricated, to reflect theological ideas. Curt Weibull specifically argued that Ælnoth’s text was influenced by the Augustinian notions of the recta insta and the conflict of the civitas dei with the civitas diaboli; in other words, that it reflected what was considered necessary for a royal saint rather than any realities of Knud’s reign. Following on from this, his brother Lauritz Weibull developed a framework in which the Odense literature functioned as twelfth-century political...
propaganda in a struggle between an anti-Gregorian party (represented by the Odense literature and Saxo), which viewed Knud as a model king, and a party that was not only critical of Knud but sceptical of his sanctity (represented by the Roskilde Chronicle and Køytunga saga). More recently, Carsten Breengaard has attacked the views of both Weibulls, arguing that they were based on inaccurate assumptions about hagiography, namely a desire to separate the sacred and the secular in a modern way that was foreign to the medieval mind; and furthermore, that Lauritz Weibull’s political interpretation of the earlier sources was entirely dependent on his reading of Saxo’s (later) work. Yet even if this means that the Odense literature may not be as unreliable as the Weibulls thought, it is still very difficult to separate the fact from the embellishment: if we wish to use this literature as a historical source, we have to tread carefully, and see if we can find independent evidence to support its claims.

Even before Breengaard, however, others had defended the Odense literature’s reliability, arguing that while its portrayal reflects Christian ideals, these ideals dominated not only the literary, but also the political models of kingship. This suggestion draws some support from the papal letters to the Danish kings preserved in Rome: although none of these letters were addressed to Knud, he

would have been the recipient of the last one sent to his brother Harald, which is dated 19 April 1080, two days after Harald’s death as recorded in the Lund Necrology. Wolfgang Seegrün argued that Gregory’s letter’s exhortation to the defensio ecclesiarum, sacerdotis ordinis reverentia, iustitia et misericordia ‘müssen … auf Knud einen nahezu programmatischen Eindruck gemacht haben, denn sein Leben und Werk … ist in mehr als einer Hinsicht Abglanz davon’. Knud’s objectives as recorded by Ælnoth do seem to reflect those of Gregory’s letters. Ælnoth states:

...religious princeps uelui hactenus pietatis studis inhereb: diuin cultus reuerentiam extollere, cleti iura pro chorehe, dierum precipuorum legitimorum ieiuniorum observantias uindicta proposita regali edicto, quemadmodum per univm reverentiam orbum habentur, statuere, et omnia admodum deo contraria pro posse suae cohercere studere. This would cover defensio ecclesiarum and sacerdotis ordinis reverentia, and Ælnoth elsewhere records Knud’s concern for iustitia et misericordia by supporting the poor, widows and orphans, guaranteeing the rights of freed slaves, and ensuring that foreigners were treated with the same

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24 For example, J. Steensstrup, ‘Det danske Folk 1042–1241’, in Det danske Folke Historie II, ed. A. Friis, A. Linvald and M. Mackeprang (Copenhagen, 1927), pp. 1–222, at 35ff. For a review of scholarship on the Odense literature’s worth as historical sources, see Breengaard, Maren om Israel’s hus, pp. 122–28, and his own views in the pages that follow.

25 Necrologium Lundense: Lunds domkyrkors nekrologium, ed. L. Weibull (Lund, 1923), p. 46 n. 3. and p. 67; DD 1,2, no. 20, 41–3; W. Seegrün, Das Papsttum und Skandinavien bis zur Vollendung der nordischen Kirchenorganisation (1164), Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins 51 (Neumünster, 1967), 98. Ælnoth elsewhere records Knud’s concern for iustitia et misericordia by supporting the poor, widows and orphans, guaranteeing the rights of freed slaves, and ensuring that foreigners were treated with the same
rights as natives. Faced with this rosy picture, however, we might wonder just what made Knud so unpopular with his people if it is accurate. The answer may lie precisely in these reforms.

Niels Skyum-Nielsen believed that Knud’s reforms in favour of foreigners and freedmen were perceived as a threat by the free farmers (bonder) who formed the most influential group in society. The traditional view of Knud, following Lauritz Weibull’s work, had been one of a tyrant and oppressor of the people, but Skyum-Nielsen stood this on its head by arguing that Knud’s reforms benefited the masses of the lower social orders to the detriment of the elites (who are represented to the exclusion of the poor in the sources, and consequently were identified as ‘the people’ by earlier scholars such as the Weibulls). Breengaard has claimed that the anonymous Passio also reflects a social conflict between Knud, the clergy and the poor on one hand, and the nobles (maiores) on the other hand, whom the author explicitly states Knud strove to weaken alongside his work for the good of the clergy, foreigners and the poor. Similarly, the Tabula Othiniensis states that Knud was killed not only ‘pro zelo christianæ religionis’ but also ‘iustitiæ operibus’, yet this statement is generic in the extreme. More consequentially, the statement that Knud sought to weaken the maiores is not linked with his protection of the poor in the text, but only with foreigners, particularly foreign clergy: rather it states that Knud punished the maiores because he found them lacking in enthusiasm for his agenda.

It is worth remembering that Ælnoth himself was an immigrant to Denmark, as was the author of the anonymous Passio, and thus this area touched on their first-hand experiences: the anonymous author describes Knud’s measures as aiming to put an end to the Danes’ practice of looking down on believing Christians as foreigners rather than embracing them as fellow-citizens of the city of God, and Ælnoth remarks that, ‘quod, licet Danis inuisum et incommodum, deo, ut arbitramur, haud admodum contrarium’. This seems to represent first-hand knowledge: the English clergymen who wrote the texts undoubtedly had to deal with hostile attitudes among the locals, and may well have heard of edicts made by Knud on the subject. But the persistence of the problem indicates that if Knud did take any such stance, it did not eliminate the problem completely, and whatever measures Knud took may not have outlived his reign.

In return, the English monks who produced the Odense literature did not make much effort to conceal their distaste at the state of Christianity among the Danes: the anonymous Passio of Knud states that ‘stirpe igitur regali et ultra istius gentis [i.e. Danorum] naturam uel consuetudinem in christianam religionem’. Knud was very attracted to English spirituality, as evidenced by his devotion to the English ‘national’ saints Alban and Oswald, whose relics the Tabula

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26 Ibid.
28 Breengaard, Maren om Israels hus, pp. 134–6; Tabula Othiniensis, V/SD, p. 60, ‘for zeal for the Christian religion’ and ‘works of justice’.
29 Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martyris iv, V/SD, p. 66.
30 GS xiv, p. 101: ‘as hateful and bothersome as this [i.e. Knud’s edict] was to the Danes, we believe, rather, that it could hardly be at all contrary to God’; Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martyris iv, V/SD, p. 66: ‘ut [...] nullos fideles christianos quasi adenas et peregrinos despicerent, sed tamquam eues sanctorum et domesticos dei, ut pote in Christo frates, habercent: ‘that they should not despise faithful Christians as strangers, but rather recognise them as fellow-citizens of the city of the saints and servants of god, even as brothers in Christ’.
31 Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martyris ii, V/SD, p. 63: ‘the royal house is well beyond that people’s [i.e. Danes’] nature and custom as regards the Christian religion.’
Othinensis records he translated himself to Odense.\textsuperscript{32} Erik Ejegod, in addition to his arranging the importation of monks from Evesham, is commemorated with his wife Bodil in the Liber vitae of Durham,\textsuperscript{33} reflecting an attachment to the English church on the part of the Danish royalty that stretched back at least to the days of Svend Forkbeard. By contrast, Ælnoth’s assessment of the Danes’ reaction to Knud’s Christian reforms is hardly complementary:

multa siquidem antiquitas tradita in presens observata saeculi industria perspiciebat, quae magis pro divina essent iustitiae corrigenda quam ob uulgis fauorem exequenda. quae sempiterni arbitris insigne gratia cohaerere disponebat; sed indomita gentis feritas et innata duritia voluntatis eius effectum in dies differebat.\textsuperscript{34}

Intriguingly, Ælnoth earlier specifies the same traits (feritas et innata duritia) to explain why it took so long for Christianity to gain any footing among the other Scandinavian peoples, compared to the Danes who adopted the faith several decades earlier; in using it again here, he implies that the Danes share in this intractability that makes them almost by nature ill-disposed to Christianity.\textsuperscript{35}

For a different view, we can turn to the Roskilde Chronicle, the next-earliest narrative source to be written in Denmark sometime shortly after 1138,\textsuperscript{36} and also the first to be written by a native Dane, which does not share the Odense literature’s positive assessment of Knud’s kingship:

hic cum populum quadem noua lege et audacia ad tributum, quod nostrates ‘nefjald’ vocavit, coegit, a lucia in Finniam fugatus Othinse in ecclesia sancti Albani martiris ante altare magna confessione cordis martyriizatus est... cuius corpus magnis miraculis illustratus, Christus in martyre glorificatur.\textsuperscript{37}

Although not disputing his sainthood, it seems that the chronicler interpreted Knud’s earthly rule as one of oppressive taxation, rather than of Christian reform. The precise nature of the nefjald is not elaborated on in the sources and no entirely satisfactory explanation has ever been produced.\textsuperscript{38} Some have identified it with the tithe, which we know was not paid in Denmark in Adam of Bremen’s time,\textsuperscript{39} but was introduced sometime before 1135, when it is first mentioned in a charter.\textsuperscript{40} The anonymous Passio records that Knud

\textsuperscript{32} Tabula Othinensis, VSD, p. 60. The medieval cathedral was dedicated to St. Alban, and the location retains the name of St. Alban’s Square (Albani Tor) to this day.

\textsuperscript{33} London, British Library, Cotton Domitian A VII f. 51b.

\textsuperscript{34} GS viii, pp. 93–4: ‘Furthermore, he examined with sagacious zeal many things handed down from ancient times still observed in the present, which are rather to be corrected for divine justice than to be practised for the favour of the masses. He determined to check these practices through the inspiring grace of the eternal judge; but the wildness of the savage people and their inborn hardness delayed the execution of his will in his days.’

\textsuperscript{35} GS i, p. 82.


\textsuperscript{37} Chronicon Roskildense (DK, Scriptores minoris historiae Danicae mediae aevi, 2 vols., ed. M. C. Gertz (Copenhagen, 1917–18) 1, 23–4: [Knud] coerced the people to paying tax with a new and unheard-of law, which our ancestors called nefjald (‘the nose-tax’), and having fled from Jutland to Fyn, with a great confession of his heart was martyred in Odense before the altar in the church of St. Alban the martyr... his body is made famous by great miracles, and he is glorified as a martyr of Christ.’

\textsuperscript{38} Although the term appears elsewhere in the Nordic world, with various, and often similarly unclear meanings: H. Bjørkvik, P. Nyquist Grevsted and B. Oden, ‘Nefjald’, in Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder XII (Oslo, 1967), 278–82.

\textsuperscript{39} Magistri Adam Bremensis gesta Hannamargensis ecclesiae pontificum, III.lxxiv, IV.xxxi, ed. B. Schmiedler, 3rd ed., MGH SS rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi (Hanover, 1917) pp. 221, 264.

\textsuperscript{40} DD L2, no. 64, 124–8.
desired to introduce the tithe, but this is the only evidence we have explicitly associating it with Knud before Saxo.\textsuperscript{41} Furthermore, it would be quite odd for the clergyman who produced the *Chronicle* to be opposed to tithing.

Niels Lund linked *nefgíld* to the *Leding*, the mandatory naval service which flourished in the time of Valdemar I and his successors: its origins are lost in the mist of time, and although some have argued for it being a very old institution, he suggests that it originated in the time of Knud.\textsuperscript{42} The Lund charter gives three exceptions to the immunity granted to the church:

\begin{quote}
quod autem ad regiam pertinet iusticiam ex quasiunque causa fiat de
prenominata terra, in postestate sit prepositi et ceterorum fratrum in
hoc loco Deo servientium. tribus culpis exceptis. si extra pacem
positus fuerit. emat pacem a rege. subsaniam illius tollat prepositus et
fratres. si expeditionem neglexerit. erga regem emendet. reddarios
equos non dent. nisi cum rex ipse uenerit.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{41} Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martyris ii, V3D, p. 65; Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta
Brenggaard believes that Ælnoth omitted Knud’s attempt to introduce the tithe
because it was still a controversial issue in the time when he was writing, and
thus could have cast an unfavourable light on the king (*Maren om Israel’s hus*, p.
136).

\textsuperscript{42} N. Lund, ‘Knuts des Heiligen beabsichtigter Zug nach England im Jahre
1085’, in *Mare Balticum: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Ostseeraums in Mittelalter und
Neuzeit* Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Erich Hoffmann, Kieler historische
Studien 36 (Sigmaringen, 1992), 101–10, at 108.

\textsuperscript{43} DD 1.2. no. 21, 51:
1) If someone is outside of the peace, he must buy peace from the king; his
property (substantia) shall go to the dean (prepositus) and the brothers.
2) If he has neglected the *Leding* (expeditio), he must make compensation to
the king.
3) They are not required to provide post-horses (reddarios equos), unless the king
himself comes’.\textsuperscript{42}

Niels Lund identifies the *nefgíld* with the payment to be made in lieu of military service: if, as the name suggests, it was a universal tax on each person (‘nose-tax’, ‘head-tax’) it could be tied to the mass fine Knud allegedly imposed on the *Leding* for disbanding without his permission.\textsuperscript{44} Ælnoth, however, states that the fleet disbanded with Knud’s permission on promising to assemble for the invasion in the spring.\textsuperscript{45} Consequently, the ‘fine’ was more likely to be identified with payments which could be made in lieu of military service without any connotation of criminality, such as the Frankish *herebadens* or the English *firdwice*, rather than the penalty for desertion, which appears as *heresiet* in the Frankish sources and is punishable by death and confiscation of property.\textsuperscript{46}

Lund notes that by 1140 the king could grant income from the *expeditio* to monasteries in charters,\textsuperscript{47} and thus the institution was already in transition to the form it took in the thirteenth century, when fees in lieu of service entirely replaced the service itself.\textsuperscript{48} Thus, he ties the revolt to the introduction of mandatory service in the *Leding* and the accompanying taxes which were imposed with such universality throughout Denmark that they could be derided as a tax on having a nose. For Lund, therefore, Knud was a king who attempted to modernise the taxation and public obligations in Denmark to raise the privileges of the Danish kingship to the level enjoyed in other European states.

\textsuperscript{44} The earliest sources for this, however, are Svend Aggesen, *Brevis historia regum
\textsuperscript{45} GS xiii. pp. 100–1.
\textsuperscript{46} Lund, ‘Knuts des Heiligen beabsichtigter Zug’, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.; DD 1.2, no. 78, 150–3.
\textsuperscript{48} N. Lund, ‘The Armies of Swein forkbeard and Cnut: *leding* or *lið*’, *ASE* 15
The obvious problem that arises from Lund’s argument is that even though the charter provides us with evidence that institutions such as the Lading/espeditio were in existence in Knud’s time, they do not tell us that they arose in Knud’s time; the institutions are hardly treated as anything new or in need of explanation. Given the lack of documentary evidence for the reigns of previous kings, it is impossible to say how far back the institution went, although Skyum-Nielsen suggested an origin in the time of Svend Estridsen, on the basis of a later diploma’s (of Erik Emune) claim that Svend granted immunity to Lund for the lands he had given them. Moreover, we cannot escape the fact that this diploma is from 1135, thus over half a century after Svend’s death, and that, unlike the charter of 1085, it gives no details about the nature of these immunities. An origin in Knud’s earlier reign, before the Lund charter was issued, is just as possible — and although we cannot say that Knud created these institutions, they do make clear that he had an interest in using them, especially as a means of gathering money.

Another aspect where Knud has been seen as a would-be moderniser is in the sphere of succession. Erich Hoffmann attributed to Knud an attempt to establish a succession system based on primogeniture to replace the older, so-called ‘Germanic’ style of succession where the throne was open to any member of the royal family who could press his claim successfully, either in assembly or by arms. Hoffmann believed that Knud attempted to restrict the succession to his own offspring, causing alarm to his numerous brothers who would thereby lose their own right to the throne. Hoffmann based this assertion on the name given by Knud to his first-born son: Karl. Not only had this name never been used in the Danish family before, but Knud’s wife Adela, daughter of count Robert the Frisian of Flanders, was a descendant of Charlemagne, and thus Knud was attempting to tie his own progeny to the already quasi-mythic emperor. One may well opt to remain sceptical about this claim of Hoffmann, especially given that Knud himself had brothers, such as Nicolaus (or Niels) and Benedict (who died at his side) whose names were not of the traditional naming-pool of the line of Harald Bluetooth (although admittedly Svend had so many sons he quite possibly ran out names, and his eldest children seem to have had more traditional names). It does however raise the point that if Knud was keen on bringing Danish government into line with other states in Europe, the succession rules were another thing that would need changing; and if nothing else, the choice of the name Karl rather than a typical Danish royal name may still show European cultural sympathies on Knud’s part.

Even if a change in the rules of succession was Knud’s objective, he failed to achieve it. From 1086 to 1095, his brother Oluf Hunger, who seems to have drawn support from free farmers who opposed Knud, reigned for a period of which we know very little except that it was plagued by famine and bad harvests. This earned him his name, and gave rise to the myth that the hunger was divine retribution for the murder of Knud, who was proclaimed to be a saint shortly before Oluf’s death. Ironically this may have tapped into a lingering pre-Christian belief in the connection between royalty and harvests, and the author of the Roskilde Chronicle chastised those who claimed that

50 Hoffmann, Königshebung, p. 58.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 Skyum-Nielsen, Krønike og Slav, pp. 11–2.
Oluf was responsible for the famine and his successor, Erik Ejegod (or 'Ever-good') for its end:

Vtrum autem hec opulencia causa Herici et hec fames Olaii inciderit, cum neuter horum hoc meruit, penes illum est, qui omnia, antequam fiat, scit et, quando uult et quomodo uult, disponit.\(^5\)

In this passage, the author clearly views this popular understanding as un-Christian.

Thus Knud seems to have failed in his objective to eliminate all practices and beliefs handed down from antiquity and correct them with Christian teaching.\(^5\) Likewise, if he attempted to change the succession rules, he also failed, given that he was succeeded by three of his brothers (his wife fled with young Karl to Flanders). He also seemed to have little success, given the complaints of the Odense writers, in changing the Danes’ attitudes to foreign clergy.

In fiscal matters, where we have firmer evidence, there are also problems with seeing Knud as a turning-point. Although we can see that he was interested in collecting fines, we lack the evidence to say that he introduced the institutions – the \textit{Leding}, etc. – that gave rise to these fines. Some indication of a greedy nature may be drawn from his drastic debasement of Jutish coins,\(^5\) to such an extent that \textit{Ælnoth} recorded that the popular saying was that ‘\textit{a solidus was scarcely worth a few unciae’}.\(^5\) Naturally, the exchange into and taxes assessed in these coins meant a hefty gain for Knud’s treasury.\(^5\) Given that the weight of coins stayed much more stable in the rest of Denmark, it is hardly surprising that the revolt began in Jutland.\(^5\)

These two pieces of evidence indicate that Knud was very probably more keen to tax, fine, and generally exert royal power to maximise his resources than previous kings had been, or at least less restrained in doing so; but again, these practices, especially if they had led to the revolt, would have stopped or been curbed in the reign of Oluf (and indeed the coins returned to their normal weight).

In the end, Knud may have attempted to introduce important changes in Danish kingship, especially in his efforts at Christianising and Europeanising elements of Danish society. But although the policies attributed to him may have been revolutionary, they were discontinued in the reigns of his immediate successors. Erik Ejegod, did, however, succeed in capitalising on Knud’s memory to strengthen the Danish church: on his visits to Rome he secured the Pope’s approval for the Danish archbishopric in Lund and the canonisation of Knud, finally fulfilling two objectives – an archbishopric and a royal saint – that had eluded the Danish kings since at least the time of Cnut the Great. Much of his lasting significance may have been as a symbol and a model of kingship for later rulers and writers.

\(^5\) \textit{Chronicon Raskildense} xi, ed. Gertz, p. 25: ‘The prosperity is attributed to Erik and the hunger to Olaf, while neither merits this, but rather the responsibility is with him [i.e. God] who knows all before it happens, and arranges it when and how he desires’.

\(^5\) See above, n. 34.

\(^5\) J. S. Jensen, \textit{Tusindålets Danske Mønter fra Den kongelige Mønt- og Medaillesamling} (Copenhagen, 1995), p. 120.

\(^5\) \textit{G\textdegree} xvi, p. 102: ‘ut uulgarieti edisseram, unciarum uliantiam uix solidi precio admittere’.

\(^5\) M. Venge, \textit{Danmarks skatter i middelalderen indtil 1340}, Dansk Skatthistorie 1 (Copenhagen, 2002), p. 32.

\(^5\) \textit{Ælnoth}, \textit{G\textdegree} xvii, V\textdegree D, pp. 104ff.
Piercing the *ribhamsyld* – a New Reading of Æthelberht 32

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The law-code of Æthelberht of Kent was in all likelihood the first official legal publication in textual form in Anglo-Saxon England, probably dating from the early seventh century. It is preserved in a manuscript from the 1120s known as the *Textus Roffensis.* While the law-code stands to a certain extent in the traditions of Continental Germanic laws such as those of the Burgundians or the Salian Franks, what sets it apart from these is the fact that it was written in the vernacular. Bede tells us that Æthelberht decreed those laws *inocle

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5 The first few clauses that deal with restitution after theft from the church and ecclesiastics may be a slightly later addition to the original code: see L. Oliver, *The Beginnings of English Law* (Toronto, ON, 2002), pp. 15–6.
constituted an attempt — influenced by the Christian missionaries — to introduce a less violent, more ‘Christian’ alternative. Other commentators have essentially denied any kind of Christian influence on Æthelberht’s laws, requiring them to posit, amongst other things, pre-Christian literacy in Kent. Patrizia Lendina argues that all Kentish law-codes might have had Latin models, though her evidence for this appears rather slim and no actual possible original model has been proposed. She has also tried to show that it is reasonable to suppose changes to the lexicon of the laws in their transmission from a supposed original, dating to the time of Æthelberht, to the Tectus Roffensis. The exact dating of the laws is not particularly relevant for the present argument, so for the purposes of this article I accept the received assumptions that the law-code dates from after Æthelberht’s conversion to Christianity, and that the transmission of law-codes left the laws largely unchanged, particularly in terms of vocabulary. Æthelberht’s code is noteworthy for the various hapax legomena it contains — which may itself attest to the archaic nature of its language.

10 Ibid., pp. 217–9.

— and it is one of these words that is the concern of the present article. The word in question occurs in clause 32: Gif man ribbanscylf parh stind, mid waere forseglde. Syntactically, this construction appears very straightforward: ‘If a person pierces through the ribbanscylf, let him pay with [its] worth.’ The difficulty, though, lies in the meaning of the word ribbanscylf. The most recent editor and translator of Æthelberht’s laws, Lisi Oliver, leaves this word untranslated (it is her translation of the clause which I have used above). It is from her brief commentary on this word in her edition that the paper from which this article derived took its cue.

Examining the word in its components, it is a compound made up of three very common Old English words: ribb, ‘right’ (normally taken as an adjective), ham, ‘home’ and scylf, ‘shield’. Individually, none of these elements are problematic; in this compound form, however, the word becomes something of a mystery. Obviously the sparse context of the legal clause here does not provide us with much to go on, but I will argue in this article that the overall context and the placing of this clause within the law-code as a whole may give us an indication towards the meaning of the word.

12 For a brief discussion of archaic traces in the language of Æthelberht’s laws in general, see Oliver, The Beginnings, pp. 25–52.
13 For ease of reference, particularly as regards earlier secondary literature, the numbering of the clauses of Æthelberht’s law-code follows that of F. Liebermann, ed., Geist der Anglistik, 3 vols., (Halle 1903–16; repr. Aalen, 1960), though citations are from the more recent edition of Oliver, The Beginnings.
14 Oliver, The Beginnings, p. 71.
15 Ibid., pp. 97–99, and notes on p. 222.
Theodor Siebs who explains *hem as derived from a Germanic root *hanjo, corresponding to Old English hemm and meaning ‘enclosure’ (related to Modern German hemmen, ‘to impede, block, obstruct’). Siebs, as cited by Liebermann, also rejects the relation of skeld to ‘shield’ but connects the word to Frisian skul, meaning ‘cover’.  

Liebermann does not commit himself to accepting these etymologies and leaves open the question of whether the last two elements of the compound are, as commonly accepted, ham and syld or hennm and *syld (which is otherwise unattested), as suggested by Siebs. The first part of the word he takes as the intensifying adjective rih, which serves to highlight the legal nature of the barrier and its breaking. Yet the most recent editors see nothing of the sort in the Frisian law: ‘All the crimes that happen within the churchyard, in the ring [of the judicial duel], or under the shield [on a military expedition] shall be compensated threefold.’ At any rate, Liebermann appears certain that, whatever its etymology, the hamisyld is a wooden part of the entrance door to a homestead. The piercing or injuring of this is commonly punished with a fine (which may correspond to mid weorde in Æthelberht’s clause), for which Liebermann cites some parallels from other Germanic laws.

In the commentary on Æthelberht’s laws in the Gesetze, Liebermann rejects his earlier translation of ‘door, gate’ and now prefers gesetzliche Hofsiegung (‘legal enclosure of the homestead’), apparently also discarding his earlier explanation based on this

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18 There is a modern edition by W. J. Buma and W. Ebel, Das Brokmer Recht, Alfrisische Rechtsquellen 2 (Göttingen, 1965); the quotation is at p. 44 (emphasis mine). See below for a translation.

20 The translation is mine, from the German translation of Buma and Ebel, Brokmer Recht, p. 45.
particular Frisian parallel. He does however reiterate parallels to other
Germanic laws, though mostly taken from earlier secondary sources. 22

But this pan-Germanic outlook is precisely what leaves his
explanation on shaky ground: we know that Æthelberht’s law-code is
at least six centuries older than the Brokmer Letter originally adduced
by Liebermann, and similarly removed from at least some of the other
Germanic parallels he uses as evidence. Although Liebermann
is right to point out that the manuscript in which Æthelberht’s law
survives dates from the twelfth century (and would thus be a lot
closer in time to the younger Germanic laws), Mary Richards and
indeed Patrick Wormald have argued for consistency in legal
vocabulary and faithful transmission of legal texts, so if we accept
the date of the composition of the law as the date of the use of
ribthamscyld, it may be useful to look for parallels closer to home. 23

It has been necessary to deal with Liebermann’s translation of
ribthamscyld in some detail, as his interpretation has proven to be the
most influential: though later translators were uneasy with his
rendering, they were generally unable to improve on it. In his
supplement to Bosworth’s Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, T. Northcote Toller
emends the clause to read Gif man on unrht ham obbe scyl [burhstinda]. 24
This would translate as ‘If a person unjustly stabs through a garment
or shield...’ However, this, as pointed out by Oliver, would be a rather
severe emendation of the manuscript reading, something not
warranted by any other clause in the code. 25 Attenborough follows
Liebermann and translates: ‘If anyone damages the enclosure of a
dwelling...’ He does, however, note his lack of ‘any confidence as to
the translation of this passage’. 26 Dorothy Whitelock’s translation ‘If
anyone thrusts through a true hamscyld...’ hardly betrays more
confidence: she, too, remarks that the meaning is ‘obscure’. 27

As already mentioned above, the most recent editor and
translator of the laws, Oliver, finds herself understandably dissatisfied
with the state of the explanation of ribthamscyld. She puts forward a
connection to the term ribthemed, ‘legitimate matrimony’. 28 The first
and obvious advantage of this suggestion is that the word ribthemed
actually exists; or to be more precise, it is attested elsewhere in the
corpus of Old English. If we take the word ribthamscyld, neither of the
two possible compounds which the tripartite construction could be
split up into is found anywhere else: thus there is no ribham, and no
hamscyld (even though the latter is used as the headword in Bosworth’s
Anglo-Saxon Dictionary), so the derivation and meaning of the
compound as we have it is quite hard to explain. 29

22 Liebermann, Gesetze III, p. 10. See for example W. E. Wilda, Das Strafrecht der
Germannen (Halle, 1842), in particular pp. 241–50 and 953. Wilda’s examples
range over the whole period of Germanic law, from Tacitus to the much later
Scandinavian laws.
23 See above, n. 11.
24 An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Based on the Manuscript Collections of the Late
25 Oliver, The Beginnings, p. 98.
26 The Laws of the Earliest English Kings, ed. and trans. F. L. Attenborough
(Cambridge, 1922), pp. 8–9 and 177, n. 32.2.
28 Oliver, The Beginnings, p. 98 and 222, n. 70.
29 An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Based on the Manuscript Collections of the Late
Joseph Bosworth, ed. T. N. Toller (Oxford, 1898), s.v. hamscyld. Note also that the
existence of a word ham ‘dwelling, enclosure’, as posited by J. M. Kenlake: ibid.,
s.v. ham; but see J. M. Dodgson, ‘Place-names from ham, distinguished from
hamm names, in relation to the settlement of Kent, Surrey and Sussex’, AJE 2
(1973), 1–50. A compound ribhamm which appears in the (mainly Latin)
Instituta Caesii of the twelfth century (III, 49, ed. Liebermann, Gesetze I, p. 614) is
mentioned by Liebermann who assumes the existence of a noun ribham (Gesetze
ETYMLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND CONNECTION WITH HÆMED

It may also be necessary to point out that rihthamæd is not chosen at random by Oliver. There is an etymological connection between ham and hæmed, as evidenced, for example, by the Old English verb haman and its Old Norse counterpart heima ‘to take into one’s home’. The presumed origin is a Germanic verb *scainjanan, with the -j in the ending responsible for the i-mutation found in hæmed. Semantically, Andreas Fischer has argued that haman derives from ham via the meaning ‘to take the bride home on the wedding day’. The existence of other periphrastic expressions with a similar meaning, such as forgjaran to hama (‘to give away to the home of’), further strengthens this argument.

In general, hamed seems to refer to something that has mostly and somewhat euphemistically been described as ‘matrimony’ or ‘cohabitation’, when it is most likely to mean ‘sexual intercourse’. Fischer has pointed out that the verb haman means ‘to marry’ in less than ten per cent of cases, the far more frequent meaning being ‘to have intercourse’. Presumably this arises from the fact that there were a number of competing synonyms with the sense ‘to marry’ and it may thus have filled a gap in the lexicon as a neutral term referring to intercourse. Fischer also shows a similar distribution for hamed (which, to complete the confusion, can sometimes also mean ‘marriage’). Hamed is indeed a neutral term in itself, but it is frequently qualified with the prefix unwirht. This is in fact a lot more common than the prefix rih, but there are related compounds in terms such as rihamæd ‘legal marriage’. And there are a couple of instances of rihthamæd, one in a penitential and one in the Alfredian translation of Gregory the Great’s Pastoral Care. Unrihthamæd is a lot

34 Fischer, Engagement, p. 67.
36 Ibid., p. 87.
37 ‘Gyf amik wer ohds wip gefaht be medenbuid gehelbaid wilde, and after don were in rihthamæd gehebbayd, no forlote heora norther be he ne faste dwe winter.’ If any man or woman vows that they wish to keep his [or her] virginity, and afterwards they are joined in lawful marriage, do not permit either of them to not fast for three years. Accessed through the online edition of the Dictionary of Old English Online at <http://www.quod.lib.umich.edu/o/oec/> (viewed March 6, 2009), from the Confessioane Pseudo-Egberti, ed. R. Spindler, Das altenglische Buckbuch (ed. Confessioane Pseudo-Egberti): ein Beitrag zu den kirchlichen Gesetzen der Angelachsen. Kritische Textausgabe nebst Nachweis der mittelalterlichen Quellen, sprachlicher Untersuchung und Glossar (Leipzig, 1934), pp. 176–94, lines. 115–6 (translation my own); ‘Hæbbe ælc mon his wip, and ælc wip hiere everel, 7 do hæt wip hám were hæt hi his mid riht se don scowæ, 7 be hie swe sone, dylæs hie on unriht hám. And hawnæ after be cuht. Ne ontræwæge ge ne cow betwæcen, butun barnæ dat ge cow gehelbben same inside, ærænumpe ge eowæ gehelæ 7 eowæ ofrængea don willæ, 7 eft sone sincæ to eornæn ryhtamæd[æld].’ ‘Let each man have his wife, and each woman her husband; and let the woman do with the man what is lawful, and he with her in the same way, lest they commit fornication.’ And shortly afterward he [Paul] said: “Defraud not one another, unless ye abstain for some time before the day of
more common: it is one of those terms that occurs in the lists of sins so frequently employed by Anglo-Saxon homilists. Two examples may stand for many here; the first is from a homily by Wulfstan:

And utan don, swa us mycel þearf ys, forbigan geonlice þa synleahtras, þe us forbodene synd, þæt is unrihtihæmed and ærætas and ofedrudunenessa and iedl gylp and stala and reafac and leasunga and mene aþas and lyblac and calle þa uμpeawas, þe deoflu on mancynn gebringa. 38

The second example is taken from a homily in the Vercelli Book:

Ac utoon beon gemynygde utra swaþa þeal þasælæþa, 7 utoon wyræcan god on þam þe we þurhtean magan, 7 uto forþtean mórðan 7 man 7 oferhigdo 7 æræta 7 idene gylp 7 unrihtwisnessa 7 unrihthæmedo, ærætas 7 eahuglenessa, disignessa 7 gifernessa, gyrsunga 7 leasunga, licettunga 7 talnessa, nīðas 7 nearþancas 7 gedwollcræftas 7 twywspreachnessa 7 ealle þa þeawas þe deoflu on him astealdon. 39

the prayers and sacrifices, and return forthwith to your lawful intercourse.' Ed. and trans. H. Sweet, King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care, 2 vols., EETS 45, 50 (London, 1871, repr. 1958) [with some modifications by the author of the article]. The penitential also uses the expression riht hæmed with a declined article: 'Da ðe in rihtum hæmede boð, ðær nihtum ær ðam feorwærige nihtas fæeste þe ne gesanum boð, and swa þæt feorwæt nihtas ealle ðæ ðægðan riht in Eastrón.' ‘Those who are in a lawful marriage should not be together for three nights before the forty nights fasting, and so for all of forty nights until the ninth night in Easter.’ Ed. Spindler, loc. cit., lines 138–9 (translation my own). 38 Ed. A. Napier, Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien nebst Untersuchungen über ihr Echtheit, Sammlung englischer Denkmäler in kritischen Ausgaben 4 (Berlin, 1883), pp. 134–5. ‘And let us do as there is great need for us to, refrain eagerly from those stains of sins that are forbidden to us, that is unlawful intercourse and untimely eating and drunkenness and idle boasting and theft and robbery and lying and false oaths and all those vices that the devils bring to mankind.’ (Translation my own).

39 Homily XXI, ed. D. G. Scragg, The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts, EETS OS 300 (Oxford, 1992), pp. 351–62, lines 219–224. ‘And let us be mindful of the needs of our souls, and let us do good where we will be able to fulfil it, and let us avoid murder and crime and pride and envy and idle boasts and iniquities and adultery, eating too early and drunkenness, foolishness and greed, avarice and deception, deceit and slander, enmities and wickednesses and magical arts and hypocrisy and all those sins the devils exemplify to them.’ (Translation my own).


41. ‘Men in an unlawful union shall take up a just life with repentance of sins, or be separated from the community of the church. Foreign men, if they will not set their union to right, must depart from the land with their possessions
The main argument to make here is that at least part of our compound, *rīthamæscyl*, can be paralleled in an etymologically related construction, in which the word is used to refer to legal or illegal marriage, cohabitation and intercourse. It needs to be stated, however, that *haned* was common Old English and there is no philological reason why the word should be *han* in this case.

**STRUCTURE OF ÆTHELBERHT’S CODE**

Next I wish to turn to the clause’s placing within the code and the overall structure of the work. Wormald produces the following structure, ordered by clause numbers:

1. Compensation of church property in grades
2-12. Compensation of king’s property and dependents
13-14. Compensation of *eorl*
15-25. Compensation of *eorl*
26. Compensation for killing *læt*
27-29. Enclosures
33-72. Injury list
73-84. Women

and with [their] sins. Our own men among the people [i.e., native] shall suffer loss of the community of the church without forfeiture of goods.’

4. ‘If after this assembly [something] of this [nature] befalls to a *geap*-born man, that he should take up an unlawful union against the king’s command and the bishop’s and the decrees of the books, he should make restitution for that to his lord with 100 shillings, according to established right.’ Ed. and trans. Oliver, *The Beginnings*, pp. 154–5.

42 Adapted in abridged form from Wormald, *Making*, pp. 98–9, whose table compares the structure of Æthelbert’s law-code to several continental ones.

Thus the model demonstrates that overall Æthelberht’s code shows a rather orderly structure – which only breaks down precisely in the part we are investigating. Wormald follows Liebermann in assigning a meaning of ‘breaking in’ to the clause concerning the *rīthamæscyl*, and connects it with clauses 28 and 29. The two intervening clauses he calls ‘intrusive enough to be judgements included in the main body of codified custom’.

43 Yet let us take a closer look at the order of the law-code at this point:

28. Gif man inne feoh genimep, se man þrigelde gebete.
29. Gif friman edor geþangeþ, III IIII scillingum gebete.
30. Gif man manna ofsla, agene sceatte 7 unfaete feo gehwilce gelde.
31. Gif friman wið fries mannes wið geligeþ, his wergelde abigeþ 7 øder wið his agenum sceatte begete 7 ðæm odhrum æt ðam gebrenge.
32. Gif man rīthamæscyl þurh stínþ, mid weorðe forgelgeþ.
33. Gif feaxfang geweord, L sceatta to bote.

44 Thus we can see that while clause 30 may indeed be difficult – though it could be related to a killing during the course of the robbery – 31 does not look entirely out of place if we keep in mind the

46 ‘28. If a person takes property therein [the enclosure mentioned in the previous clause], let that man pay 3-fold as compensation. 29. If a freeman enters an enclosure [with intention to rob], let him pay with 4 shillings. 30. If a person should kill someone, let him pay with [his] own money or unblemished property, whichever. 31. If a freeman lies with a free man’s wife, let him buy [him/her] off [with] his/her *wergil* and obtain another wife [for the husband] [with] his own money and bring her to the other man at home. 32. If a person pierces through the *rīthamæscyl*, let him pay with [its] worth. 33. If seizing of hair occurs, 50 sceattas as restitution.’ Ed. and trans. Oliver, *The Beginnings*, pp. 68–71.
proposed connection of *ribthamcylfd* to marriage. Of course, the fact that divorce laws then occur later in the law-code would again seem to suggest a lack of logic in the structure. However, this need not be the case. Anglo-Saxon law-codes were not always fully logical in structure (at least to modern minds), yet there is usually a connection of some sort between the individual clauses. This may be what is happening here: if it was possible to argue that the piercing of the *ribthamcylfd* was a physical injury that was connected with marriage, the structure would to my mind make more sense, in that a law regulating the recompense for a very specific injury leads the author or compiler to include the detailed injury tariff at this point in the code, before he returns to stipulations dealing with women and divorces again later on. The fact that the list of compensation for various injuries is organised from head to toe seems to imply that it was pre-planned and thus inserted as a block.

In this context it may be worth examining the verb *purhsingan* more closely. Its meaning is quite transparently ‘to pierce through’. It is in fact not very common in Old English: it occurs only in a handful of other instances. Interestingly enough, it occurs another three times in Æthelberht’s law-code, all of these appear in the list of injuries referred to above:

53. Se þe ecarn þurhsinð, VI scillingum gebete.

64.1 If he stabs through [it] {the genital organ – *geytheldlice hit* – referred to in the previous clause}, let him pay [with] 6 shillings.
67. If a person stabs through a thigh, for each thrust 6 shillings.’ Ed. and trans. Oliver, *ibid.*, pp. 72–3 and 76–7. The similarity to clause 32 has been noted by C. B. Pasternack, ‘Negotiating Gender in Anglo-Saxon England’ in *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, ed. S. Farmer and C. B. Pasternack (Minneapolis, 2003), pp. 107–42, esp. 119 and 137, n. 51, who follows the interpretation of *ribthamcylfd* as relating to ‘entering the home proper’ and calls it ‘provocatively termed’ in reference to the damage of a man’s property, as *purhsingan* is the same verb used for piercing through the penis.

Cp. *purhsforan*, *purhsfin* etc. For examples, see the respective entries in *Bosworth-Toller*. This restricted usage was presumably one of the reasons why Liebermann (*Geatze* III, p. 10) argued for an interpretation of *ribthamcylfd* as a physical object, but the meaning of *purhsingan* is usually even more specific than that. The general simplicity of syntax in Æthelberht’s code has been noted above, p. 35.

51. Wormald, *Making*, p. 278, cautions his readers ‘to be wary of appeals to logic when studying early medieval legislation.’
CONCLUSION

In summary, then, we have found some evidence that would support Oliver’s connection of the word *ribhamsyld* to *hamed* and related concepts. The argument put forward in this article points to a physical injury connected with legal marriage or intercourse, so a *ribhamsyld* might refer to a concept related to virginity. Thus, I originally proposed the translation ‘hymen’, but such an assumption is difficult to uphold as there is very little about physical virginity in the Anglo-Saxon laws, or indeed in Anglo-Saxon literature in general, so it is practically impossible to determine if the Anglo-Saxons were familiar with the hymen as a concept. Ango-Saxon writers mainly concerned themselves with ‘spiritual’ virginity, and this is reflected in the scholarship on the subject. Words for female virginity are usually formed on *fæmn-* and *mæg-*, (such as *fæmnhad* or *maglenhad* ‘maidenhood’), and refer to the state of being a virgin, yet again without any explicitly physical connotations. There is one hint in the laws of Alfred that physical virginity had some special value before the law: the fine for forcibly having intercourse with a virgin is twice as high as for the same crime against a non-virgin (though it is not clear if and how the virginal state is to be determined). Interestingly


53 On aspects of sexuality, including (mostly spiritual) virginity, see more recently the essays in Sex and Sexuality, ed. Pasternack and Weston; also C. Cubitt, ‘Virginity and Misogyny in tenth- and eleventh-century England’, Gender and History 12 (2000), 1–32.


55 '11. If a man touches the breast of a free virgin, let him pay 5 shillings compensation.
11.1 If he throws her down and does not have intercourse with her, let him pay 10 shillings.
11.2 If he has intercourse with her, let him pay 60 shillings.' (Translation my own).


Transforming the Trolls: the Metamorphosis of the Troll-Woman in Bárðar saga Snaefellsáss

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Bárðar saga is an intriguing yet puzzling text, which chronicles the life of the blendingr (half-troll, half-giant) Bárðr Dumbsson and his family, from an exposition of his ancestry to the death of his son Gestr on the night of his conversion to Christianity. Beginning with the reign of Dumbr (Bárðr’s troll-king father) in Norway, the saga tracks Bárðr’s settlement at Snaefellsness in Iceland and his self-imposed exile following the disappearance of his daughter Helga. As he retreats into the mountains, Bárðr is cast in a new supernatural mould, embracing his giant heritage in order to become the guardian spirit of the district. Finally, the story returns to his son Gestr and his adventures at the court of King Olaf Tryggvason. He converts to Christianity at the request of the king, but on the night of his baptism Bárðr appears, accusing Gestr of betraying his pagan ancestors before killing him.¹

¹ For an extended version of this article see: ‘Following the Trollish Baton Sinister: Ludic Design in Bárðar saga Snaefellsáss’, Viking and Medieval Scandinavia 4 (2008), 15–43.
² For details see Bárðar saga, ed. and trans. Jón Skaptason and P. Pulviano, Garland Library of Medieval Literature 8 (New York, 1984), bix–cix. Quotes will be taken from Bárðar saga, in Harthar saga, ed. Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, Íslensk forntími 13 (Reykjavík, 1991), 99–172. In the footnotes this will be represented as ‘BS (1991)’, followed by the relevant page number. Unless otherwise indicated, the footnoted translations of Bárðar saga Snaefellsáss will be taken from the aforementioned Bárðar saga, ed. and trans. Jón Skaptason and P. Pulviano (1984). In the footnotes this will be indicated by the

Bárðar saga follows many features of structure and plot typical to the Íslendingasögur (family sagas), the genre to which it is assigned, including the protagonists’ settlement of Iceland, district feuds and conversions to Christianity. However, the conventions of this socially realistic genre are fundamentally subverted when a pagan clan of monstrous descent takes centre stage as a set of unlikely protagonists. Consequently, Bárðar saga presents us with numerous difficulties in terms of its generic classification, thematic preoccupations and unusual characterisations. However, its rich manuscript transmission suggests continuing popularity almost to the present day, both in literary circles and in popular culture. Nevertheless, the saga’s unconventional design has baffled modern scholars, who have found it particularly difficult to reconstruct a ‘horizon of expectations’ upon which to base an understanding of the piece.²

The present paper is concerned primarily with the characterisation of Helga Bárdardóttir, the enigmatic daughter of

relevant page number in parenthesis, following ‘BS (1991)’ and the page number from Íslensk forntími 13. When other scholarship from this edition is used, the text will be indicated by the abbreviation ‘BS (1984)’.
⁴ The term ‘horizon of expectations’ was coined by H. Jauss, Toward an Aesthetic of Reception, trans. T. Bahti, (Minneapolis, 1982), p. 28. In a recent round-table discussion on the problem of genre in Old Norse literature, R. O’Connor stressed the necessity of exploring ‘the expectations which a given text satisfies or frustrates’ (J. Quinn, ‘Interrogating Genre in the Fornaldarsögur: Round-table Discussion’, Viking and Medieval Scandinavia 2 (2006), 275–96, at 292), while C. Phelps employed the term vonventions to describe ‘a set of preconceptions about what kind of text it is, how it will resemble other texts with which we are familiar, and consequently what kinds of meanings we may expect from [it]’ (Quinn ‘Interrogating Genre’, 278).
Bárðr Dumbsson. It will concentrate on the metamorphosis of the conventional figure of the troll-woman, particularly focusing on the saga motif of the love affair between a mortal hero and a giantess. In sagas that feature characters such as trolls in a more conventional form, the figures tend to be presented somewhat two-dimensionally, fulfilling the function of a narrative vehicle for the heroic protagonist in his early rites of passage. Thus, a troll-woman such as Helga would usually be a peripheral and underdeveloped figure in the saga, appearing briefly in the course of the hero’s adventures before disappearing when he continues on to further expeditions or returns to human society. Yet in Bárðar saga, Helga is the focal point of this particular narrative set piece. This seems to be an intentional part of the saga’s wider literary design, in which the shadowy figures who typically act along the dim edges of the saga stage are pushed into the spotlight, forcing more-orthodox protagonists out into the wings of the narrative. In her analysis of the relationships between heroes and giants, Riti Kroesen states, “Whether [the hero] goes out to meet the giants in order to serve the community or to serve his own ends […] the sympathies of the original audience must always have been on [his side].” Yet Bárðar saga entirely overthrows the accepted convention that such stories are written to enhance the glory of the heroic protagonist.

Consequently, the following analysis of the role of Helga Bárðardóttir is based on the broader hypothesis that Bárðar saga was constructed as an intentional parody, which pastiches and subverts literary conventions for the purpose of its unusual design. The theory is speculative, and stands only as long as we accept the initial premise that saga compilers were conscious of generic categories divided along lines similar to our own, choosing to “compose their narratives within generic hybrids not because they did not know what genres were, but because they knew all too well.” It is unlikely that modern scholars can ever come to a secure conclusion regarding the position that such a saga occupied for its original medieval compiler and audience, since analysing the generic complexities of the literature produced by a dead culture involves some degree of circularity and artificial categorisation. Consequently, despite the methodology’s benefits, a motif-based analysis is limited by the artificial taxonomies that restrict most structuralist methodologies. While it is probable that thematic set pieces were recognised and manipulated by the original saga compilers, it is nevertheless unlikely that all modern distinctions reflect the precise literary preoccupations and groupings recognised by medieval Icelanders. On the other hand, the possibility that a literary form may stimulate such essentially playful reactions to

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7 The literary design of Bárðar saga has a surprising amount in common with the genre of ‘fractured fairy tales’ of popular modern culture, in which stereotypical, minor characters are transformed into the central protagonists of the tale. Interestingly, the saga shares particular similarities with the recent film Shrek, which parodies and subverts literary conventions by placing an ogre at the heart of its unorthodox fairytale. For a more extensive survey of Bárðar saga and further discussion of the role of parody in Bárðar saga Snegillais, see my article: ‘Following the Trollish Barton Simister’, 15–43.
its thematic and stylistic conventions is not such a remote one. Interpreting the peculiarities of a text's literary design in terms of such a ludic function has much in common with the work of the cultural theorist John Huizinga, whose classic theory of *Homo Ludens* ('Man the Player') emphasises the 'supreme importance to civilisation of the play factor'. His belief that 'culture arises in the form of play' resonates with Fowler's observation that prescriptive literary taxonomies can actively stimulate literary creativity, since genre 'offers a challenge by provoking a free spirit to transcend the limitations of previous examples'.

Before turning to the example of Helga, it is worth noting that there are other examples of subverted literary motifs within *Bárðar saga* that might have been taken in order to support this hypothesis. These include the figure of the foster-father giant who acts as instructor to the young protagonist of the saga, as instantiates in the actions of Bárðr himself. Initially, Bárðr fulfills the role of youthful pupil under the tutelage of the giant Dofri (ch. 1). However, once Bárðr has retreated into the mountains, the configuration is turned on its head and, in a highly unorthodox narrative shift, the ostensibly human pupil takes upon himself the role of giant educator as Bárðr is cast in a new, supernatural mould. Of similar significance is the conversion-hero motif as it is presented in the ambiguous figure of Gestr, who not only straddles the worlds of giants and men, but is caught between the pagan and Christian spheres. Initially, his story resembles the conventional *fáttir* trope in which the relationship between a young Icelandic protagonist and the Norwegian sovereign is key, with the Icelanders' conversion to Christianity at the

Norwegian court at the heart of their affiliation. Yet despite his outwardly human appearance and heroic career path, Gestr's supernatural heritage dictates that he must diminish within the human, increasingly Christianised sphere. Consequently, although he does convert, on the night of his baptism an enraged Bárðr appears in his chamber and causes his eyes to burst fatally out of his head (ch. 21).

We shall now turn to focus on the giantess-hero love affair as typified by the relationship between Helga and her lover Míðjárrar-Skeggi. Such love affairs often manifest themselves either in the form of a liaison that develops between the giant-educated hero and his foster-sister, or in the figure of a giantess who suckles, seduces, and assists the human in her care. In a wider survey of the encounters with the female 'other' that occur in Old Norse literature, John McKinnell undertakes a structural and thematic analysis of the sexual relationships formed between giantesses and 'Odicic' heroes (typically devotees, opponents or literary transformations of the god Óðinn). This is part of a wider theory in Old Norse scholarship that counts such otherworldly figures—often gendered as female—among beings

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13 J. Harris, 'Genre and Narrative Structure in some *Íslendinga þáttr*', *Scandinavian Studies* 44 (1972), 1–27, at 3. Harris postulates a common narrative structure comprising of an introduction, a journey into Norway, alienation, reconciliation, a journey out to Iceland and a conclusion.
15 J. McKinnell, *Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend* (Cambridge, 2005).
affiliated with the chthonic sphere. They dwell inertly beyond society in passive possession of otherworldly wisdom or goods, which are sought out by an active male adventurer. 16 Significantly, McKinnell identifies instances in which the theme of the hero-giantess love affair is adapted or parodied to produce genre hybrids or literary burlesques. 17 The possibility that such ‘reversals show that the seductions of giantesses were still a recognised Odinic story type when the saga was composed’ have important implications for the treatment of the set piece in Bárðar saga, suggesting contemporary recognition of a literary pattern capable of deliberate modification. 18

Within his analysis, McKinnell identifies the affair between Bárðr and Þórdís (the liaison that produces Gestr) as an example of this Odinic pattern. 19 However, despite structural similarities, the episode is marked out from his other examples by role reversals typical of Bárðar saga. McKinnell ignores the fact that Bárðr takes the supernatural role while Þórdís is a human girl; within the scope of this current investigation, such a crucial fact must be acknowledged before the example can be allowed to stand alongside the others. A more appropriate manifestation of the giantess-hero love motif lies back a generation in the liaison between Skeggi (Þórdís’s father) and Helga (chs. 5–8). Compared to the peripheral figure of Þórdís, Helga is also a more appropriate character to base this analysis on. As the chief catalyst in Bárðr’s decision to exile himself from human society, Helga is, as Jón Skaptason and Phillip Pulsiano note, a ‘key factor in the development of the saga’. 20

Following an unfortunate encounter with an ice floe, Helga drifts to Greenland with ambiguous hints of her ‘otherness’ upon her: ‘hon þóttir ok með undarligu móti þar hafa komit, ok fyrrir þat var hon tröll kölluð af sumum mönnum’. 21 In addition to her sexual relationship with Skeggi, she fulfills a recurring role that often appears throughout the saga corpus as a formidable protectress. The saga states that when ‘kómu tröll ok övvettr […] ok gerðu mönnum it mestu mein’, 22 Skeggi is only able to defeat them ‘með því, at Helga hjálpaði honum til ok gaf honum nálga lif’. 23 Thus, as the darker aspects of her father’s heritage begin to emerge, Helga is growing simultaneously into her role as a ‘giantess lover’. This image contrasts starkly with her initial presentation as a youngster at play among human children: ‘Borkelssynir ok Bárðardætr lögðu saman leika sina’. 24 In comparison, throughout her adulthood Helga’s interaction with male humans is couched primarily in terms of her sexuality. For instance, whilst wintering at Hjall, Helga is spied upon by a man named Hrafni: ‘honum syndist konan frið mjök. Vildi hann upp í sengina ok undir kloðin hjá henni’. 25

In his discussion of the hero-giantess narrative set piece, McKinnell reiterates the theory that giantesses are equated with the wilderness, arguing that because they represent the inert and the irrational they cannot function actively without the hero:

21 BFS (1991), p. 115 (p. 25): ‘the manner of her arrival was thought strange, and so by some she was called a troll’.

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Because the giant’s daughter needs the initiative and sexuality of the protagonist, it is not surprising that she continues to love him even after he has abandoned her. But he must abandon her: using the powers of irrational nature is acceptable, but being controlled by them is not.26

This description of giantesses as embodiments of the ‘powers of irrational nature’ encapsulates the typically underdeveloped nature of their characterizations; they function primarily as narrative tools through which the hero may achieve heroic maturity. In conventional manifestations of the trope, the giant’s daughter may be treated with some sympathy, but ‘moral considerations do not arise’.27

In common with other manifestations of this motif, Skeggi does indeed leave Helga and marry another, and Helga continues to love him even after their separation: ‘mornaði hon ok þormaði æ síðan’.28 Where the pattern appears elsewhere, the aftermath of such a break-up is concerned entirely with the male protagonist and his career; sympathy for the giantess is brief at best. Yet the love affair as it appears in Báðar saga involves structural subversions comparable to those found in its use of the wisdom-giver or the conversion-hero motifs. Once again the narrative throws in its lot with the baton sinister (the heraldic badge of illegitimacy), abandoning the hero to follow Helga into the wilderness.

The saga’s interest in Helga is not only structural; such an upturning of narrative conventions results once again in the comprehensive delineation of a character whose typical saga function would be brief and perfunctory. Indeed, Helga’s personal tragedy is conveyed with a degree of psychological complexity unusual in the

29 As H. O’Donoghue states, ‘in saga narrative, focalisation […] is typically wholly externalised, that is, events are seen from the perspective of a narrator who stands outside the world of the narrative’ (Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Short Introduction (Oxford, 2002), p. 35).
30 ‘To be content, to enjoy’.
31 BS (1991), p. 122 (p 35): ‘She had no joy after she left Skeggi’.
32 BS (1991), p. 122 (p 35): ‘Helga did not want to be near her father’ (own trans.).
33 H. O’Donoghue, Skaldic Verse and the Poetics of Saga Narrative (Oxford, 2005), p. 9. This follows her earlier assertion that ‘the expression of personal and deeply felt emotion in a […] strophe may provide a dimension to the men and women in a saga narrative which the saga prose, typically functioning as externally focalized narrative, does not’ (p. 6).
34 BS (1991), p. 122 (p 35): ‘Soon I shall seek to leave. / My passion abates not at all / for the spender of treasure. / I shall die pitifully. / For I loved the

Portrayal of any saga character.29 The repeated verb ‘una’30 provides access to her internalized emotions: ‘engu undi hon sér, síðan er hon skildi við Skeggi’, and ‘eigi undi Helga hljó fóður sínum’.31 Helga also speaks two of the six verses of the saga; this is significant in a literary medium in which poetry may be used ‘to create psychological special effects within a narrative’.35 The elegiac tone of these utterances highlights Helga’s isolation and the hopelessness of her love:

Braut vil ek bráðla leita;
brestr eigi strið í flestu
mér fyrir menja rýri,
mun ek dálga kálast,
því at ek austspenni unnak
aðeinum sfa heitum;
þorg má ek sótt því byggja,
sit ek ein; trega greinum.34

26 McKinnell, Meeting the Other, p. 179–80.
27 McKinnell, Meeting the Other, p. 180.

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Like a giantess she dwells ‘i hreysum eða hólum’, but her lifestyle is solitary, far removed from the brutal but companionable circles of troll society that Bárðr moves in. In contrast to her father, Helga wanders alone – ‘för viða um Ísland ok festi hvergi yndi’ – and she fades in and out of the narrative, compounding the impression of her aimlessness and abandonment.

Thus, the saga uses the motif of the giantess-hero love affair to set up inversions of characterisation and structure similar to those discernable in the text’s other narrative veils. Skeggis is relegated to a minor position within the plot: the reader is furnished with little more than a brief genealogy, and the information that he spends time in Norway and marries a woman named Hallbera (ch. 11). There is no question of a burgeoning *Skeggja þáttr developing in order to flesh out these bare bones, while in contrast, Helga is drawn with a complex inner life. Bárðar saga’s metamorphosis of the troll-woman motif is part of the text’s larger literary design. It functions as a conscious parody in which deliberately cultivated paradoxes and tensions undercut precisely those audience expectations that modern scholars have struggled to identify. Time and again, Bárðar saga turns aside from the expected narrative path in order to trace the careers of less conventional characters such as Helga Bárðardóttir. With the motif upturned, the conventional protagonist is pushed to the tale’s outermost peripheries, while new life is breathed into the transformed and animated narrative vehicle.

1 The coins tend to be minted with the regal signature of SIHTRIC REX or derivatives thereof. Examples can be found in Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles, 8: Hiberno-Norse coins in the British Museum, ed. M. Dolley (British Museum, London, 1966), plate I–II, nos. 1–43.
considered chronologically. A general paucity of silver in an early period is replaced by an increasing number of hoards and finds of non-numismatic silver in the late ninth century; the beginnings of a ‘bullion economy’. This ‘bullion economy’, where silver was valued according to its intrinsic metal or weight value, comes more sharply into focus in the tenth century. In the first half of the tenth century mixed hoards make up a significant percentage of the total which, when combined with the proportion of non-numismatic hoards that have been stylistically dated to this period, suggest a weight-value economy. The importance of coins increases incrementally during the tenth century as mixed hoards form a lesser proportion of the whole, and the number of coin-only hoards increases. Something more akin to a ‘monetary economy’, where silver was sometimes exchanged in terms of its face-value rather than intrinsic worth, evolved. At the end of this process, as the final stage of a monetary economy, was the beginning of minting in Dublin.

It is tempting to view the decision to mint coinage as the culmination of over a century’s ‘development’ towards a coin economy. Indeed, considering the longue durée view of the economy this can appear logical. However, this paper will seek to challenge metamorphic narratives and will posit an alternative model. It will argue that the economy of the late tenth century must be understood in its immediate chronological context. It will suggest that minting can be viewed as a pragmatic decision, based upon economic problems and political expediency, rather than a metamorphic certainty.

**COIN HOARDS**

Historical knowledge of coinage and the related economy comes almost entirely from archaeological sources: the coins themselves. When working with archaeology of this type it is necessary to begin with several cautionary notes. The first of these is the question of why hoards – the historian’s primary access to coinage – ended up buried in the ground. This is not a simple issue, as hoarding has been seen as a response to violence, an attempt to build-up wealth for exchange purposes, an offering to deities or accidental loss. In the Irish context of this piece, due to a paucity of reliable written material, it is impossible to trace exactly why hoards were buried.

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5 Sheehan, ‘Viking-Age Silver Hoards’. Hoards that include mixed forms of silver include Dysart Island 4, Millockstown, Magheralaghan, Leggagh and Dunmore Cave. 7 of 18 hoards with coins are mixed hoards in the first half of the tenth century.

6 From 32 coin hoards of the second half of the tenth-century contain non-numismatic silver. Proportionately this is far less than the preceding 50 years. cf above, n. 5.


Furthermore, due to Ireland’s strict metal-detecting laws, single-finds and productive sites are rare. The effect of this is that it is difficult to be entirely accurate when describing Ireland’s early medieval economy. Any attempt to discover the potential use of coins before they were buried is greatly aided by a detailed record of their find context. Unfortunately, the antiquarian nature of many of the excavations constrains this analysis. Many of the hoards that have been uncovered in Ireland were found pre-1900 and are poorly recorded, and often dispersed.

In addition to these general points several more must be added on dealing with the metrology of coinage. Rediscovered coins will not weigh the same amount as they did before their burial. They may have been eroded or oxidised, altering their weight. While attempts have been made to avoid using coins that are described as damaged, it is inevitable that the results will be influenced by this to a degree. This is best overcome by a large analysis so every attempt to include as many coins as possible has been made.

With these cautions in mind it must be remembered that coins are a crucial resource for understanding the early medieval economy of Ireland. While they may not make up a large amount of the total bullion value of Ireland they provide more diagnostic elements than the earlier bullion hoards. Coins, as James Graham-Campbell has noted, must be an important part of the history of late tenth century Ireland. Even with their failings they still offer a huge amount to the careful historian.

If the initial assumption of coin production as the end of a ‘development’ narrative is rejected, then reasons must be sought in the contemporary monetary context. The historian is fortunate, as there have been 35 coin hoards recovered from Ireland that have been dated to the fifty years before the first millennium. Figure 1 illustrates this graphically and is based upon dates estimated by numismatists and archaeologists. The dates given are not the terminus post quem of the coins within the hoard but are estimates of actual deposition dates, based upon numismatic and archaeological criteria. Many of the dates ascribed rest upon the assumption that each coin hoard can be dated to a period shortly after the latest coin is found. This is an interpretation that will be challenged below.

15 See Appendix A.
16 This period between the last coin and the date of deposition is generally viewed as a quite short period in Anglo-Saxon England, with a managed economy, whereas Viking-Age Scotland is often seen as an area where hoards could be deposited some time after their strict terminus post quem. One specific example of this is the Skaill hoard which has a terminus post quem of 945 but is generally dated 950–70. J. Graham-Campbell, The Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland (AD 850-1100) (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 34.
If the minting of coinage is the final stage in a gradual alteration of the Irish economy, then it would be expected that coins would be increasingly prevalent in the period immediately preceding this. By considering Figure 1, it becomes clear that this was not the case; a large peak in the 970s is followed by a trough in the 980s. While this may be a coincidence of recovery, it is worth considering more fully.

A traditional explanation is that the 970s peak in hoarding represents violence in Irish society, with internecine conflict providing the impetus to hoard, but the possibility remains that there is more of an economic explanation. Such a view is reinforced through a consideration of the Irish Sea context. The hoards per decade for the Irish Sea Region as a whole, as illustrated in Figure 2, display a similar pattern to Ireland. Although this is less pronounced, the similarity perhaps suggests that factors other than violence in Ireland should be sought to explain why there was a pronounced peak in hoarding around 970. This is not to suggest that violence amongst internal Irish elements had no role in this pattern of hoards, but that it seems unlikely to have affected the hoarding patterns across the entirety of the Irish Sea Region.

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17 J. Graham-Campbell, ‘The Viking-Age Silver Hoards of Ireland’, Proceedings of the Seventh Viking Congress, Dublin, 15-21 August 1973, ed. B. Almqvist and D. Greene (London, 1974), p. 47. Graham-Campbell’s graphical display of the number of hoards illustrates this point. There are 12 hoards from Ireland with a traditional deposition date of 970 and five that are dated to 965. See Appendix A.


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Both figures also reveal that there appears to be a major downturn in coin hoarding from the 970s until the 990s. There are sixteen Irish hoards that end with the pre-reform issues of Edgar. This compares with only five hoards containing coins issued between 973 and the beginnings of minting in Dublin circa 997. This pattern of hoarding is one that appears to argue against the idea of coinage becoming ever more prevalent until Dublin creates its own in the 990s. It suggests that to understand the economy of the late tenth century, a model must be adopted that contains periods of growth, contraction and shifting exchange patterns.

A potential explanation for this drop-off in the number of post-970 coins could be the reform of the coinage during the reign of Edgar. This would explain both the timing and also the geographical spread of the change, as Anglo-Saxon coinage was common throughout the Irish Sea region. The idea of a reform of coinage, originally proposed by Dolley and Metcalf, has achieved general acceptance in numismatic circles. The reform was described by the later chronicler Roger of Wendover as occurring in 975. Although he was writing in the thirteenth-century, he was potentially working from an earlier text. He describes the achievements of Edgar and amongst these he gives a brief description of a reform of the coinage:

Deinde per totam Angliam novam fieri praeceptum monetam, quia vetus vivio tonsorum adeo erat corrupta, ut vis nummus obolum appendisset in statum.

Historians have accepted the concept of reform, including the reminting of the coinage described by Roger, but prefer to date it to the year 972 or 973. The reform had several effects upon coinage in England. It probably marked the beginning of a more systematic system of re-minting in England with enforced maximum periods for each type of coinage. This enforced re-coinage resulted in a diversification of minting as many new mints opened up to allow for local re-minting. The reform of coinage had wide-ranging effects upon England and its coin economy. However its effects upon Ireland have been largely neglected despite the fact that Dublin was an Anglo-Saxon coin-using community until the late tenth-century.

None of the effects listed above would have had a direct impact upon Ireland as Dublin was beyond the authority of Edgar and his successors. They could not impose their coinage in these areas. The main way in which the reform could have affected the Dublin

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20 See Appendix B. The term 'pre-reform coinage' refers to the coins issued before c. 973.
21 See Appendix A. The hoards that date from this period are Kildare, Mullingar, Werburgh Street, and the two Castle Street hoards. The last three of these have all been found within Dublin itself.
25 Roger de Wendover, p. 415. Throughout the whole of England he ordered new money to be made because the old had been ruined to such a degree by the damage of cutting that a penny scarcely weighed a halfpenny on scales'. [Author's translation].
27 Dolley and Metcalf, Reform of the Coinage, p. 152.
economy was that it was also accompanied by the issue of a new coin, the *reform small cross* type. This coin is very rare from finds in Ireland; one coin has been found at Disert, Co. Westmeath but none in hoards. This contrasts with the pre-reform issues of Edgar which are found in many hoards. Why there is such a disparity is an issue that has not really been considered in the past. I will argue that there is the possibility that it based upon the metrological change that accompanied the reform.

**METROLOGICAL MODELS**

Before this discussion it is worth briefly outlining the method that will be used here. The process of re-minting has been described in mathematical form by Petersson, based upon the work of Bolin. He laid out a formula that can be used to conceptualise coin returns based upon the weights of issues and the total mint charges as follows:

\[
N_i = N \times W \times (1 - A)
\]

\[
N = \text{Initial Number of Coins} \\
W = \text{Initial Weight standard} \\
N_i = \text{New Number of Coins} \\
W_i = \text{New Weight Standard} \\
A = \text{Minting Charge}
\]

In the above model, the interactions between silver user, minter and minting authority are all visible. The ‘initial weight standard’ was the weight of the non-contemporary coins that were being re-minted into current form. These current issues were minted to the ‘new weight standard’ which was arguably centrally policed. Fluctuations in these relative weights would have affected the number of coins returned, as will be discussed below. In addition, the transaction also incurred a minting charge which was a cost claimed by the minting authority, generally the king. The precise size and nature of this charge has been a matter of some debate. Estimates vary greatly from Petersson’s estimate of one third with some historians doubting the validity of viewing it as a fixed amount, preferring a view in which it varies from one issue to the next. While accepting the possibility that there was some variation in the minting charge it is unlikely that this figure fluctuated widely. A constant is thus probably the most acceptable value to model this.

This formula is perhaps best understood through an example. The Killyon Manor hoard, discovered 1876, is a good test case. It

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30. Pre-reform issues of Edgar are the last issue in 15 hoards. See Appendix B.
35. This constant has been estimated as one tenth in eighth-century Frankia. The Anglo-Saxon figure is perhaps somewhere between this and Petersson’s figure of one third. S. Coupland, ‘Frankish Tribute Payments to the Vikings and their Consequences’, *Francia* 26:1 (1999), p. 62.
includes 88 coins, 85 Anglo-Saxon and 3 Viking coins of York. For simplicity, if the Anglo-Saxon coins of the post-Athelstan period are considered there are 68. These coins are broken down according to reign and weight standard in Figure 3.37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Killyon Manor Hoard, 1876</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athelstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: The Anglo-Saxon coins (post-Athelstan) from Killyon Manor hoard with weight standards

These coins, when considered in Bolin’s formula can be rendered as such:

$$N_i = \frac{(26 \times 23.8) + (21 \times 23) + (21 \times 21.5) \times (1-A)}{W_i}$$

If a minting charge of 25% is assumed and the subsequent weight standard of Edgar, 19.5 grains, is applied then the formula becomes:

$$N_i = \frac{(26 \times 23.8) + (21 \times 23) + (21 \times 21.5) \times (1-0.25)}{19.5}$$

= 58 coins

This gives an example of how the formula might be applied to actual hoards. It also shows potential losses involved, 58 ‘new’ coins as opposed to 68 ‘old’ coins, an issue that will be discussed in greater detail below.

This example highlights several cautionary points. Firstly, the reasons for excluding the Viking coins of York are that it seems doubtful whether these would have been treated the same way as old Anglo-Saxon coins. This presents a problem as the varying media of silver (Anglo-Saxon coin, Viking coin and non-numismatic silver) would perhaps have all been treated differently and subject to a variety of mint charges. Secondly, in comparing the number of coins, 68 to 58, an assumption is being made that the reduced weight coins would have had the same value, the same potential purchasing power, as the previous issue. While this is very difficult to conclude decisively it appears likely that this was broadly the case as the complaint of Roger of Wendover was of coins weighing significantly less than was acceptable.38 If value was a fluid concept then it would be expected that these complaints would have been invalidated by a corresponding decrease in value alongside weight losses. Furthermore, in the Viking-Age, coins of differing issues and weights did circulate together suggesting that they were valued similarly.39

With these cautions in mind it is still possible to gain an insight into the costs associated with operating in the contemporary currency by analysing the metrology of the coins. Below is set out a graph of the average weight of coins under the various reigns of kings until the reform of 973 (Figure 4).

36 See Appendix A  
37 For weight standards, see Appendix D.  
38 See above, p. 71.  
39 Of the numerous Viking-Age hoards from Ireland only 4 are exclusively composed of coins of the same weight standard.
From this graph it becomes clear that there was a gradual decline in the weight standard of Anglo-Saxon coins in the pre-reform period. The effect of this in terms of re-minting of coinage was that it softened the effect of the minting charge. A decrease in weight standard meant that if a trader exchanged a number of coins they would, without a minting charge, have expected to receive a larger number of reduced weight coins in return. In the example of Killyon Manor above without the minting charge there would have been 72 new, lighter-weight coins produced from 68 older heavier coins. Presuming that the minting charge was extracted from this larger number of coins its effect was somewhat disguised. In the abstract, if the minting charge was one quarter and there was no weight change then a trader would have expected to receive 75 coins back from every 100 coins melted down. If the weight reduced from 23 to 21.5 grams (as for Edmund to Edred) then the trader would have expected to receive 80 lighter-weight coins, a positive 5% difference in areas where coins were valued according to number not weight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of Coinage</th>
<th>Potential Loss (various values of mint charge)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward to Athelstan</td>
<td>30.8 22.2 17.0 13.5 6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athelstan to Edmund</td>
<td>31.0 22.4 17.2 13.8 6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund to Eadred</td>
<td>28.7 19.8 14.4 10.9 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadred to Eadwig</td>
<td>33.3 25.0 20.0 16.7 10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadwig to Eadgar</td>
<td>26.5 17.3 11.8 8.1 0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadgar to Small Cross</td>
<td>41.4 34.1 29.7 26.8 20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Cross to Hand</td>
<td>33.3 25.0 20.0 16.7 10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand to Cnec</td>
<td>35.4 27.3 22.4 19.2 12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cnec to Long Cross</td>
<td>37.2 29.3 24.6 21.5 15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Cross to Helmet</td>
<td>22.9 13.2 7.4 3.6 -4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helmet to Last Small Cross</td>
<td>31.4 22.8 17.6 14.2 7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While a reduction in weight reduced the re-minting cost upon the silver user it could also work the other way. A weight increase could amplify the cost of having coinage re-minted into the acceptable contemporary form. This can be illustrated by a table (Figure 5) where the number of coins that might be lost in the re-minting transaction is described. This models, in absolute mathematical terms, what is a far more human and analogue process and thus the figures are indicative rather than absolute. Various values of the minting charge are given and figures returned are the number of coins lost per 100 handed over for re-coinage.

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40 These figures are general and, it should be noted, disguise considerable regional variation.
What this table shows is how expensive operating in coinage was for those involved. It could be suggested that up to 40% of transitory silver wealth could be lost in a single transaction. While it is unlikely that wealth was entirely stored in silver form, loses on this scale nonetheless seem large. What is more important in the context of this argument is the variation in the costs of re-minting coinage. Changing the coinage of Eadwig to the pre-reform coinage of Edgar, his successor, may have cost a maximum of 26.5%, probably not more than 20%. This can be contrasted to a probable minimum of 20% cost, and possibly as much as double this, to re-mint coins from the pre-reform coins of Edgar to the new Small Cross type. This figure is based upon a weight value of 22.2 grains for the Small Cross types.\textsuperscript{41} Petersson divides the Small Cross issues into Reform, Normal and First ‘small cross’ types.\textsuperscript{42} The first of these, the Reform Small Cross type, was introduced directly after the reform of 973 and had a weight standard of 23.5 grains.\textsuperscript{43} If this was the case then the result for Edgar (pre-reform) to Reform Small Cross is even more of a contrast to those that went before (Figure 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of coinage</th>
<th>% Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edgar (pre-reform) to Small Cross</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Figure 6}: potential loss between Pre-reform coinages of Edgar and his Reform Small Cross type

A probable loss of over 35% and a possible loss of nearly 45% of coins in the re-minting process is a considerable financial burden.

This is the cost that would have faced all those using Edgar’s old currency in the aftermath of the reform. In Anglo-Saxon England, laws survive that insist upon the contemporary coinage, guarantee size and fineness of coinage and outlaw the counterfeiting of coinage.\textsuperscript{44} These were effective throughout the country; those who wished to trade in the king’s ports under a royal reeve would have needed to use the king’s coinage. The ability to force the traders to use the newer coinage was how the king was able to pass on significant minting costs to traders. Essentially, they had no choice.

The ability to force a currency change upon the people of England was a substantial power of an Anglo-Saxon king. However, there was no such compulsion upon traders beyond the boundaries of England. If they wanted to trade in English ports then they would have needed contemporary English coins but not if they were operating beyond English political influence. To make Dublin traders re-mint their coins there would probably have needed to be an overwhelming economic reason to do so. Faced with a substantial charge to exchange their coinage it is possible to argue that there was a strong economic disincentive. Profit would have had to exceed this charge or the trader would have made a loss overall. In addition, the potential charge was probably double what it had been in the previous exchange of coinage between the reign of Eadwig and Edgar. This represented a sudden and exorbitant price increase for currency, a situation that would not have eased with the consistently high weight standard of Aethelred’s reign. In this situation it is possible to explain why there are so few finds of post-reform coinage

\textsuperscript{41} Petersson, \textit{Anglo-Saxon Currency}, p. 195.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid}, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid}, p. 195.

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in Ireland. With no political compulsion to change coins to the contemporary issue, and with a strong economic reason not to, the older issues of Edgar probably continued for a much longer period in Ireland than they did in England. In this situation the hoards that appear to be clustered around the year 970 may in fact belong to a slightly later period.

While this is only one potential model for coin hoards and re-minting – two processes that are difficult to conceptualise – it suggests that Anglo-Saxon minting policy might have had an effect in the Irish Sea. Consistent weight reductions would certainly have aided the silver user in the re-minting process. The reverse would also be possible with the high weight standard of the post-reform coinages of Edgar and Aethelred possibly providing a disincentive for Irish traders to use contemporary Anglo-Saxon silver.

EXCHANGE AND TRADE

Given the paucity of evidence that can be definitively dated to the period between 973 and the late 990s it is necessary to consider other sources. If the coinage reflects wider economic and exchange patterns then it would be expected that these would also appear to change in the period under question. Essentially if there was less willingness to re-mint silver then it would be expected that there would be a decline in traceable trade with Anglo-Saxon areas. This is because of the need to conduct trade in the contemporary coinage in Anglo-Saxon ports. Such a decline is something that appears to occur in relation to Chester, the major Anglo-Saxon trading centre for the Irish Sea Region. This is illustrated by the decline in the number of moneyers...

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47 Thacker, 'Early Medieval Chester', p. 20.

48 Ibid, p. 20.

49 Ibid, p. 22.

50 See Appendix C.

products from the Shetlands.\textsuperscript{52} In addition the first coins of Dublin can be found in hoards all round the north of Europe suggesting eleventh-century trade with these areas.\textsuperscript{53} These connections probably existed earlier. Unfortunately, in the tenth-century this trade is largely untraceable as silver found in Scandinavia or other areas is impossible to place in an Irish context if it does not contain diagnostic non-numismatic material. The Anglo-Saxon coin-using areas of Ireland were largely exclusive of non-numismatic material making it difficult to trace magnitude or precise patterns of trade between Ireland and non-Anglo-Saxon areas.\textsuperscript{54} In addition, other forms of exchange will probably not have survived in any form of historical record. Thus a short-term shift (growth, reduction or change) in exchange patterns will be beyond surviving historical record to discern. It is only possible to trace changes when there are surviving records in the form of durable silver. The effect of this in the current context is that Dublin’s trade pattern may have shifted with greater emphasis on other areas without leaving an obvious record. However, it is unlikely that Scandinavia or other British areas could have matched the trade with Anglo-Saxon England, particularly Chester, as it was the most developed economically of all of these areas. From what is available to historians it seems possible, if unfortunately not provable, that there was less trade in Dublin after the mid-970s.

If coin reform in England did make exchange of coinage less viable and cause an economic downturn in Irish Sea trade then the effects of this would have been felt within Ireland. Precious metals were an important part of life in Dublin as they were used in exchange relationships.\textsuperscript{55} These relationships saw Dublin potentially provide many of the goods that were used in the relationships between Irish ‘over-kings’ and their dependents. This can be glimpsed in the \textit{Lebor na Cert}, an eleventh-century collection that appears to include earlier elements.\textsuperscript{56} It probably reflects, even if it doesn’t directly record, exchange and tributary relationships of the earlier period. The text is a poem listing stipends and dues for many groups in relation to the king of Cashel, the occasional ‘high-king’ according


\textsuperscript{54} Sheehan, ‘Form and Structure’, pp. 159–60.


to the poem. The king of Cashel was expected to give high prestige gifts, including swords, silver or horses in exchange for more mundane items such as sheep, cows and cloaks.\textsuperscript{57} Dublin would appear the most likely point of entry for many of these high-status items. Indeed many of the items are listed as coming from 'overseas' or as 'foreign'.\textsuperscript{58} Dublin was the foremost port in Ireland suggesting the possibility that many passed through there. The question of how they passed from Dublin to the Irish interior is beyond the scope of this enquiry. However, there is the potential for a relationship between Dublin and Irish over-kings where they provided high-status items for redistribution amongst followers, in exchange for the foodstuffs and raw materials required for Dublin's population of around 5000.\textsuperscript{59} Thus any change to Dublin's status as a trading town with ready access to certain overseas goods and silver may well have had repercussions in its relationship with inland neighbours.

It must also be considered that precious metal was used as a tribute item. Here the \textit{Lebor na Ceith} gives an insight into the sort of goods that would have been exchanged even if it may not accurately reflect precise amounts. Dublin is listed as owing, 'a scrépell of gold for each man'.\textsuperscript{60} In exchange for this tribute Dublin is promised protection and security,

\textsuperscript{57} Doherty, 'Exchange and Trade', pp. 73–4. See also 'Appendix B' in \textit{Lebor na Ceith}, pp. 179–89.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Lebor na Ceith}, trans. M. Dillon, line 1729. The stanza in full is 'Ar sin adnagat dó in sleg, scrépell each fir, unga d'ór, unga cacha sróna ar sin, is scréball d'or each énfir'. A Scrépell was a unit of weight measurement. The material is gold but silver may have been used at a ratio of between 10:1 and 20:1. Grierson & Blackburn, \textit{MEC} I, p. 327. Hudson, \textit{Viking pirates}, pp. 82–3.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Lebor na Ceith}, trans. M. Dillon, lines 1737–1744. If this tax is paid me every year by you from Líamain, the men of the whole world will not be able to despoil your fortress. The fortress you occupy in force I shall deliver from the black demon: it will be one of the three last surviving hearths in Ireland.
Altered economic circumstances can perhaps be glimpsed through the political written record that survives. With the accession of Mael Sechlainn to the kingship of the Clann Cholmáin in 975 positive interactions between Dublin and Meath dwindled. During this period there was the battle of Tara, where precious metal was extracted as a tribute, as well as two raids upon Dublin itself. This contrasts with the previous twenty years where there was little in the way of recorded conflict between Dublin and its neighbours. While these events can be largely explained in relation to political and dynastic struggles, their coincidence with alterations in economic patterns suggests that these may also be a factor. A changing system of exchange may have contributed to a growth in violence.

What other sources can provide is a suggestion that the political economy of the late tenth century Irish Sea Region was altering. Dublin found itself in conflict with the interior in contrast to a previous period of peace while Chester had a dramatically altered role. While it is impossible to directly link these events to economic patterns they do allow the suggestion of the importance of economic dislocation as a factor.

**DUBLIN'S COINAGE**

It has been suggested above that rather than viewing the period immediately preceding the 990s, when Dublin first mints coinage, as

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65 Kenny, 'Geographical Distribution', p. 515.

standard that was similar to that of England. The attempt to mimic the contemporary issues of England seems too coordinated to be coincidental. The aim was perhaps to improve trade with England through the issuing of coins of a similar weight and style. If this was so, it would have improved Sitric’s potential profits and access to overseas material. Thus the imposition of coinage was perhaps a response, by the political authority, to an economic problem rather than as a culmination of a grand fiscal narrative.

In addition to a desire to restart trade Sitric was probably also aware that whoever minted coins, and was able to ensure they were used, was able to take a share of the profit via the mint charge. He would have been able to collect a large amount of silver by forcing the citizens of Dublin to conduct their business in his coinage. This would have been an attractive possibility at any point but placed in a context of declining trade and increased hostility with the Irish interior then it grows in value. Silver was a powerful resource that could be used to enter relationships with Irish kings or to finance conflict. The coinage can thus be seen as the imposition of an economic policy for the benefit of Sitric. The role of Sitric Silkenbeard in the minting of coins must be emphasized as he probably imposed the coinage for various economic reasons as well as for his own personal gain.

It must also be recognised that coinage was more than an economic expression. In the early medieval period, it was closely connected with royal authority. In the British Isles all coinage, apart from the coins with the inscription *Sihtric Comes* and a few early

Archiepiscopal issues were minted with a king’s name. In the ninth-century the Scandinavian leader Guthrum minted coinage using the name of Aethelstan, his adopted Christian name. It seems he was making an attempt to legitimise his authority in East Anglia, where the coins were minted. Similarly, early coinage in Denmark was minted in areas where the king wanted to project an image of authority rather than in areas with an economic need.

The coins of Dublin were also a political expression. They were minted with the unambiguous message ‘SIHTRIC REX’. This was a powerful symbol of the authority of Sitric, projecting an image of himself as king. The coins would have circulated in Dublin, where he would have wanted to establish authority in the face of general political instability. The coinage also reached a wider variety of places and it may also represent an attempt to present Sitric in a similar way to contemporary European and Anglo-Saxon rulers. Its wide dispersal and stylistic similarity to Anglo-Saxon issues certainly points toward this. The first coinage of Dublin must be seen as a symbolic political piece as well as an economic token.

The political potential of the earliest Irish coinage can be emphasized by examining the near contemporary events. Sitric had gained control over Dublin following the death of Glúhthain in 989.

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73 Ibid., p. 180.


75 See above, n. 53.

76 *Annals of Ulster*, annal for 989.
For the following years he was opposed by Ivarr of Waterford. Ivarr was able to gain control over Dublin on two separate occasions in the 990s before being expelled for the last time in 995. To Sitric in the late 990s it would have seemed his position was far from secure. He had gained control over Dublin only a few years previously and his hold was tenuous enough to be briefly removed in 999-1000. In this context the coinage must be viewed as an attempt to assert a powerful claim to political control of Dublin in addition to providing immediate funds. In the uncertain politics of 990s Dublin a symbol of royal authority would have been very welcome to Sitric. He must be seen to have a central role in the beginning of minting in Dublin. Sitric probably imposed the coinage for his own profit but also as a symbol of his own authority at a time when this was far from certain.

CONCLUSIONS
What has been argued above is that a traditional analysis of coinage and what it reveals about the economy of early medieval Ireland is open to reinterpretation. Rejecting the longue durée approach that simplifies the economy of Ireland into a linear progression towards coin production, the above has instead suggested the possibility that short-term factors, economic dislocation or problems, can also be interpreted as important in the decision to begin minting in 990s Dublin. More specifically, it has been argued that Dublin's mint must be seen in its context as a part of an Anglo-Saxon coin-using community. The role of Anglo-Saxon coin reform and metrology, beyond the political authority of the issuing king, are important elements that are frequently overlooked. Their effect on Ireland was possibly to make exchange in coinage unprofitable in the short-term, which then probably led to a dislocation of trade with England where coins were a necessary part of mercantile life. What was then suggested was that this dislocation of trade would have had effects within Ireland itself leading to an alteration of exchange and tributary relationships. This may have contributed to the growth in conflict in Ireland in the run up to the millennium. These are the long-term issues that would have influenced the decision to begin minting coinage in Dublin. In the shorter-term the coins were also perhaps an overt political manoeuvre designed to legitimise the rule of Sitric, and give him the currency to back up this claim.

While acknowledging that this is only one potential model for the economy of Viking Age Ireland it has highlighted the fact that there can be other approaches taken to its study. The beginnings of minting in Ireland can be seen as a reaction to an economic problem and a calculated political decision more than as the final point in a metamorphic progression towards coin use. Minting is perhaps better considered as a desire to maintain the status quo, in terms of trade relationships with England and dynastic control of Dublin, rather than as the final point of a metamorphic historical narrative.

ADDENDUM
This paper was written before the publication of Mark Blackburn's 2007 Presidential Address in the British Numismatic Journal. This has published details of three Dublin excavation hoards, dated to the 990s; Castle Street (no. 1), Castle Street (no. 2) and Werburgh Street.

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77 Downham, Viking Kings, p. 57.

These hoards provide further evidence for the period between the peak of hoarding in the 970s and the beginning of minting in the late 990s. They show that there continued to be contact between Irish areas and Anglo-Saxon coin-using areas up to the mid 990s. This does not fit readily with the possibility of economic dislocation presented above. However, the position of the hoards within Dublin itself is an important element. It would be highly unlikely that a downturn in trade would have halted all contact and central areas of Dublin is where it would be expected to occur. The chronological and geographical displacement of the hoards examined – central Dublin as opposed to Hinterland areas and 970s to 990s – mirrors the displacement of coins suggesting further analysis is needed to compare these datasets.

These hoards remind the historian and archaeologist of the benefit of further evidence and it is hoped that with further research into this area apparent contradictions can be examined and new light shed on old problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hoard Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Discovered</th>
<th>Deposited</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Non-Numismatic</th>
<th>Anglo-Saxon?</th>
<th>Danish?</th>
<th>Hiberno-Scandinavian?</th>
<th>Other?</th>
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<td>Durrow</td>
<td>Offaly</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>940</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Tipperary</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Wicklow</td>
<td>Pre-1822</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>0–119</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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81 This is based upon the Checklist of Coin Hoards from the British Isles, c. 450–1180, <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins/projects/boards/index.list.html> and references therein.
APPENDIX B: ANGLO-SAXON COINS IN IRISH HOARDS

This Appendix details the Anglo-Saxon coins contained within Irish hoards. Those with none listed are unidentifiable or lost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hoard Name</th>
<th>Deposited</th>
<th>Mercian</th>
<th>Athelstan</th>
<th>Edmund</th>
<th>Edred</th>
<th>Edwig</th>
<th>Eadgar</th>
<th>First Small Cross</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Hand</th>
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### APPENDIX C: ORIGIN MINTS FOR IRISH HOARDS

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<th>Decade</th>
<th>Total number of coins</th>
<th>Unknown Mint</th>
<th>Known Mint</th>
<th>Minted at Chester known from Chester</th>
<th>% not from Chester</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>930s</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>940s</td>
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<td>302</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>950s</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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![Bar chart showing minting percentages](image-url)
Andy Woods

APPENDIX D: METROLOGY

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<th>Next Issue/Issuer</th>
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<td>24.7</td>
<td>Athelstan</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>23.8</td>
<td>Edmund</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Edred</td>
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<td>Edred</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>Edwig</td>
<td>21.5</td>
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<td>21.5</td>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>19.5</td>
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<td>22.2</td>
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<td>22.2</td>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>Crux</td>
<td>22.9</td>
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<td>24.3</td>
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<td>21</td>
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Potential Losses (various values for A)

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<td>16.97</td>
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<td>20.00</td>
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<td>11.79</td>
<td>8.12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
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<td>34.12</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>26.80</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Small Cross</td>
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<td>25.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>35.37</td>
<td>27.29</td>
<td>22.45</td>
<td>19.21</td>
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<td>Crux</td>
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<td>29.32</td>
<td>24.61</td>
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<td>Long Cross</td>
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<td>13.21</td>
<td>7.43</td>
<td>3.57</td>
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<td>31.37</td>
<td>22.79</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>14.22</td>
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*Duwróci* in Old English: Aspects of Disease Terminology

Conan Doyle
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

In the following paper I will examine a single Old English disease term, *duwerp*1 as an example of a word which would appear to have undergone a significant change of meaning in relation to its Germanic cognates, ON *dvær*g, MLG *dwerh* and OHG *twerg*, all meaning 'dwarf' according to Orel.2 While the Germanic cognates, including OE *duwerp* stemming from the PGmc *dwerzo* are all said to mean 'dwarf' by Orel, Old English lexical evidence shows the word to indicate some sort of pathogenic condition or ailment, rather than a supernatural entity. On the other hand, Old English glossary evidence would suggest that the word does retain the meaning of a manlike creature of small stature, thus presenting an intriguing polyvalence, wherein the word appears to stand both for a pathology and a supernatural agent which may be somehow related to that pathology.

Although the recent Dictionary of Old English divides the word into two senses, *duwerp*(1) meaning 'dwarf' or 'pygmy,' and *duwerp* (2) meaning 'fever, perhaps high fever with delirium or convulsions' much of the literature on Old English medical texts containing *duwerp* make little or no distinction between these two senses. The grounds for this conflation of senses shall be examined in the following essay.

Given the apparent link between the disease pathology intended by the word *duwerp* (2) in medical texts and the more straightforward

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1 I have adopted the citation form used by the Dictionary of Old English Online, ed. A. Cameron et al., <http://www.doc.utoronto.ca> (viewed 9 February 2009).
meaning of *dwæorg*(1) in glossaries, it would be tempting to read into the disease term ‘*dwæorg*’ the survival of belief in supernatural forces in disease pathology in Anglo-Saxon medicine, yet this would be an inductive fallacy, as names for diseases can often be etymologically linked to long outdated ideas of causation that have no currency in the semantic field of the word as it survives. An example from modern medical parlance is *influenza*, or *flu*, the cause of which the majority of modern readers would associate with a microscopic organism known as a virus. Yet the word derives from the Italian word for ‘influence,’ denoting the perceived astrological cause for large scale rheumatic pestilences in sixteenth-century Italy. Similarly, *hysteria* is no longer thought to be the result of a wandering or obstructed uterus, and in fact has ceased to have any clinical meaning at all, though it remains in common parlance with a transferred psychological meaning. As noted by Traugott and Dasher, the referents of concepts of disease have changed considerably over time, ‘hence the meanings attached to the words referring to them have changed in ways not subject to linguistic generalization [sic].’ Thus the meanings of medical terminology are especially prone to change in accordance to changes in the conceptualisation of disease causation.

It is the aim of this paper to suggest that the meaning of the Old English word *dwæorg* underwent such a change, having once denoted a pathogenic cause of disease, to denoting the disease itself.

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4 See ‘hysteric’ in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
6 *Dictionary of Old English Online*.
The Plantin-Moretus gloss is more complex, listing three Latin equivalents for dworh: pygmaeus (pigmy), being a member of a small African people described by Pliny; and manus (nano) and pamilo (dwarf) being mythical anthropomorphic creatures of small stature. The main text of Plantin-Moretus Manuscript is the Excerptio de Prisciano, in which the Latin-Old English glossaries have been added as marginalia. The Excerptio de Prisciano is noted to be a work related in some way to Ælfric’s Grammar by Ker. The glosses in question are on the headword Pygmaeus, to which the two Latin and one Old English interpretationa have been added.

Given the limits of what can be inferred from glossary evidence it is thus fair to say that the word dworh had the meaning of a small manlike creature. It may have had mythological status and have been attributed supernatural powers, but this is by no means certain.  

2. The Lacununga Remedies
The word appears three times in the Lacununga, a miscellany containing medical recipes, protective charms and liturgical formulae which also contains the Old English Herbal and Medicina de quadrupedibus. The Lacununga collection has been edited as a whole several times, the editio princeps by Cockayne, having been superseded relatively early by Grattan and Singer’s Anglo-Saxon Magic, employed by the DOE, while the metrical sections of the compendium were edited separately by Dobbie. The texts used here come from the most recent critical edition by Edward Pettit.

The word occurs twice in two versions of the same written charm with dworh, numbered lxxxi a–b by Pettit. The word also appears once in the longer narrative charm lxxvi as numbered by Pettit. A further emendation of dores to dworns in line 5 of the charm is given by some editors but rejected here for reasons outlined below.

In both versions of the written charm, Lacununga lxxxi a–b (below) the written text includes a number of characters with symbolic, rather than lexical significance, consisting of a number of crosses and letters in Greek and Latin script. The cross symbol is represented here by

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12 London, British Library Harley 585, Ker no. 231, s. x/xi.

13 Medicina de quadrupedibus (medicines from quadrupeds) is the title given by Cockayne to the Old English translation of Sextus Placitus’ Liber medicinae ex animalibus (Book of medicine from animals).


18 The charms are numbered lxxvii–lxxxviii by Grattan and Singer and 51 by Cockayne.

19 The item is numbered 56 by Cockayne, designated Metrical Charm 3 by Dobbie.
the mathematical addition sign (+), while the letters are as close as possible to the manuscript forms as interpreted by Pettit.

Lanunngas exxii: (B21.3)
a) Writ dis ondlang da earmas wip dwerczth:
+T +aA. & gnd cyledenigene on ealad; Sanctus Macutus, Sancze
Uictorici.

b) Writ bis ondlang da earmas wip dwerczth:
+T+p+T+N+ wA+T+U1+M+ wA. & gnd cyledenigene on ealad;
Sanctus Macutus, Sancze Uictorici.21

Lanunngas bocen, or Metrical Charm 3 (A43.3)
Wið dwerczth: man scéal niman vii lytle oflætan swylce man mid ofræð, & wrihtan þas namnan on ælcre oflætan: Maximianæ, Malchus, Johannes,
Martimianus, Dionisius, Constantinus, Serafion. Þenne eft þat galdor
þat hereafter cweð man scéal singan, ærest on þat wynstre care, þenne
on þat swiðere care, þenne hufan þas mannes moldan; & ga þenne an
medenman to & ho hit on his sweoran, & do man swa þry dagas; him
bið sona sel.

Her com ingangan inspidenwiht.
Hælyde him his haman on handa, cweð þat þu his

Laegde þe his teage an sweoran. Ongunnan him of þern
lande lipan.

Sona swa hy of þern lande coman þa ongunnan him þa
liþu colan.

Þæ com ingangan deores sweostar.
Ðæ geendade heo, & æðas swor
ðet næfre þisæ adlægan derian ne moste,
ne þæm þe his galdor beginan môhte,
œðde þe þisæ galdor ongalan cúte.

Amen. Fiað. 22

21 Write this along the arms against dwerczth: (a series of Greek and Latin characters separated by crosses) and grind celandine in ale. St. Macutus, St. Victorici, ed. Pettit, Lanunngas, p. 71. All translations my own unless otherwise noted.

22 "Against dwerczth: one shall take seven small wafers such as one makes offerings with (i.e. sacramental wafers), and write these names on each wafer: Maximianus, Malchus, Johannes, Martimianus, Dionisius, Constantinus, Serafion. Then after that one shall sing the charm that it says hereafter, first in the left ear, then in the right ear, then above the crown of the person’s head, and then let a virgin go to him and hang it upon his neck, and do so for three days, it will soon be better for him: An inspiden creature came walking in. / It had its bridle in its hands, said you were its horse. / Bridled you with its reigns upon your neck. Then they began to ride him from the land. / As soon as they came from the land then his limbs began to cool. / Then the creature’s sister came walking in. / Then she interceded, and swore oaths / that this would never harm the sick, / nor one who might obtain this charm, / nor one who knew how to chant this charm, / Amen. Let it be."

Ibid., p. 72.

which appears in the manuscript of Ælfric’s Lives of Sains. Bonser suggests that ‘an appeal to the Seven Sleepers is... appropriate for those suffering from insomnia or any disease in which sleep would be especially beneficial. In Cockayne’s edition of the text, he interprets the charms in a firmly medical context. His editorial intervention is intended to be both transparent and minimal, with interpretation of the texts being offered in the form of a parallel translation rather than textual notes. In the set of charms to be written along the arms (B21.3) he supplies an interpretive ‘convulsions’ parenthetically within his translation. In the second instance, being the prose preface to ‘Metrical Charm 3’ he silently omits the ‘d’ from dworb, possibly as the result of a misreading, producing sworb, which he translates as ‘a warty eruption.’ This makes very little sense in the context of the invocation of the Seven Sleepers, who, as mentioned above, were normally invoked in cases of sleeplessness or fever. Cockayne’s reading is however consistent with other texts in the same volume in which he published the Lamenta, the first part of which included the Medicina de Quadrupedibus, in which wið dworb translates ad verrucas tollendas. All subsequent editions read the opening of the Metrical Charm as ‘wið dworb,’ while Dobbie and others also emend deores (wild beast’s) in line 5 to dwores (dwarf’s).

As rightly pointed out by Philip Shaw, the remedy in fact comprises two separate recipes which became assimilated at some point in their transmission history. The first element is a prose recipe against dworb, requiring the writing of the names of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus on Eucharistic wafers. The second element is the metrical narrative charm seeking to alleviate the harmful symptom by drawing parallels with a vocalised narrative. Somehow the prose rubric for the narrative charm became integrated into the Seven Sleepers remedy at some point in the transmission history of the text. Shaw suggests that the recipes were linked in the mind of their initial redactor by the existence of a reference to dworb in the second charm element. Shaw consequently suggests that deores sweester (beast’s sister) in line 5 should be emended to dwores sweester, (dwarf’s sister) stating that it would be surprising for the prose and verse sections to have been combined unless the verse contained a reference to the dworb which the seven sleepers are invoked to relieve. While Shaw is right in suggesting that there must have been something to link the two charms in the mind of their initial redactor, it is not necessarily the case that this word is retained in the text as we have it now. Deores sweester makes perfect sense without any emendation. Furthermore, if we assume, as Shaw does, that dworb means fever as a ‘well established part of Anglo-Saxon disease terminology,’ the emendation


25 Bonser, ‘Seven Sleepers’, p. 256.

26 Cockayne, Lecithones, III., 39.

27 Ibid., III.42–3.
of dores to dwores makes less sense, for a fever does not normally have a sister, while any wild beast may.\textsuperscript{30}

The crux of the verse section is of course inspidenwib\textsuperscript{31} in line 1. Shaw’s treatment of this crux cannot be improved upon in the current paper, but one of the most salient points he makes is that the most frequent emendation of this form is to inspiderwib, to give the meaning ‘spider-creature.’ This is a highly problematic reading for a variety of reasons, not least the fact that, to quote Shaw himself, ‘Old English has a number of other words for spiders, and the form spider is in any case unlikely to have been the form of the word in Old English if it did exist.’\textsuperscript{32}

The problems with the emendation to inspiderwib is that it further introduces a false association of the concept of spider with the notion of dwarves and that it is a reading that cannot be gleaned from the manuscript text itself, but only from the editorial tinkering of Cockayne and Grattan and Singer.

The charm does, however, invoke a narrative of being ridden by the inspidenwib and here intersects with some certain themes from the folklore surrounding nightmares and mystical creatures. Is the inspidenwib thus a fantastical succubus-like creature which ‘presses’ one in the night? It is all too easy, however, to take this kind of analysis too far. In reading this passage we bring all of our pre-existing preconceptions or knowledge of folklore to the table, perhaps envisaging Queen Mab as described by Mercutio in Romeo and

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 108.

\textsuperscript{31} While wib certainly means ‘creature,’ inspiden is difficult to translate, and Pettit leaves it untranslated in his edition, as I have above: see Pettit, Lacumina, p. 1.73. Pettit considers the word corrupt and does not attempt to construe it as a translatable sense unit in his analysis either: see Ibid, II, 174–5.

\textsuperscript{32} Shaw, ‘The Manuscript Texts of Against a Dwarf’, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{33} ‘Romeo and Juliet’, The RSC Shakespeare Complete Works, ed. J. Bate and E. Rasmussen (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 1675—743, at 1690–1, lineation according to edition.

\textsuperscript{34} Fuseli’s Nightmare (1781) was exhibited in the Tate Britain Gallery between the 15th of February and 1st of May 2006. A catalogue of the images of this exhibition is available: M. Monroe, ed., Gothic Nightmares: Fuseli, Blake and the Romantic Imagination (London, 2006). A partial image of the painting in question, detailing a ‘dwarf’ sitting atop a sleeping maiden may be seen on the exhibitions home page: <http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/gothicnightmares/> (viewed 23 April 2009).

\textsuperscript{35} ‘Against elf-kin and night-goers and those people with whom the devil has sexual intercourse.’ Cockayne, Leechdoms, II, 344.
reading that *duerog* is either disturbed sleep or fever.\[^{36}\] It is here that that we must draw the line and assume no more about the text than the text itself says.

It is tempting to agree unreservedly with Shaw's conclusions that 'the use of *duerog* to refer to fever was a well-established element of the disease terminology of Anglo-Saxon England,' yet we have so far only looked at a small portion of the evidence.\[^{37}\] To address the topic more thoroughly, the other instances of the word, all of which are medical, must also be examined.

3. *Dwerog in the Medicina de quadrupedibus*

Two other medical compilations independently contain the word *duerog*, the *Medicina de quadrupedibus*, dealt with here, and the *Peri didaxeom*, discussed in section 4 below. In both instances it is translated from an identifiable Latin source, and both recipes lack contextual evidence of specific supernatural connotations of the term, such as liturgical elements or exorcism formulae in the cures offered.

*Medicina de quadrupedibus* (B21.1.1.3)

Chapter X.17 (De cane/ De lupus)

**Dwerog** onweg to donne, hwites horus post genucadne to duste & gemengen wið meolowe & to cicle abacen syle etan þam untreman men æ þer tide hyhs tocymes, swa on doge swa on nihte sweþer hyt sy, his togan bið þearle strang; & æfter þam he hyrdæ & onweg gewiteþ.\[^{38}\]

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\[^{36}\] Pettit notes that 'the name of the putative dwarfish disease-demon had [possibly] come to denote the affliction itself [sc. fever]', Pettit, *Lununga*, II., 183.


\[^{38}\] 'To do away with *duerog*, dung of a white dog ground to dust and mingled with flour and baked into a cake. Give to the sick man to eat before the time of *its* arrival, in the day just as in the night whichever it be. Its attack will be

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Lucky as indicated above, this recipe is identifiable as a direct translation from a Latin text, namely the *Liber medicinæ Secuti Placiti Patyrienciæ et animalibus psorumibi et bestiis vel aubius.*\[^{39}\] Unfortunately it is a recipe that survives only in one recension of the text, the *α*-recension, as §27 of Chapter IX (De cane) and the disease term, *verrea*, meaning a small wart or blemish of the skin, seems to make little sense in context:

> Ad verrucas tollendas.

> Stercus canis albi tunsum cum farina, turtulam factam ante horam accessionis dato aegro, manducet et sanatur. Si autem nocte ad eum accedunt, similis ratione dato ante accessionem, vehementem fit accesso, deinde minuitor et recedet.\[^{40}\]

The early recension from which the Old English text stems seems to contain some confusion of the chapters regarding the wolf and the dog, as this chapter X is rubricated 'De lupo' in the English tradition, and in *De Vriend's* Latin text, but most of the recipes are in actuality from the domestic dog (*De cane*), which is how Sigerist and Howald designate the same chapter of the *α*-recension of Chapter X of the

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\[^{40}\] 'For doing away with *verrea*, dung of a white dog pounded with flour, made into a cake, given to the sick person before the hour of attack, let him chew it and it may be healed; if it is incident upon him at night, however, given similar measure before the attack, the attack is made vigorous, afterwards it diminishes and recedes.' Sigerist and Howald, eds. *Antonii Musae De herba*, p. 265.
Liber medicinae ex animalibus. One can see that this translation is quite close, except insofar as 'Dwerg omweg to donne' does not seem to neatly translate 'ad vernicas tollendas' at all.

There are two possible resolutions. One is that the Latin recipe is indeed a recipe for warts or vernica, and that the translation dwerg is either a mistake, or an unusual sense for dwerg. It must be remembered, however, that skin lesions denoted by the Latin word vernica tend to be small chronic prominences, growths, or irregularities, not something that can come and go suddenly as the wording of the recipe suggests. The other possibility is that dwerg means fever or some other such acute symptom, and that the Latin tradition of the a-recension as edited by Sigerist and Howald is in fact corrupt. While it seems to me that the wording of the recipe is intended for a temporary acute condition, rather than a mild chronic one, it is beyond the scope of this paper to attempt an emendation of the Latin text.

4. Dwerg in the Peri didaceon
The Peri didaceon is a very late text; the single manuscript witness dates from the mid-twelfth century. It is based on a known Latin medical compilation commonly referred to, albeit misleadingly, as the Practica Petrocelli Salernitani; Max Löweneck’s edition of the Peri didaceon provides parallel readings from the Practica Petrocelli as found in the edition of de Renzi.

Peri didaceon (B21.6)
Chapter 51, Ad strictum pectus, sine ad astaticos
bisne lacedon do þan manne, þa hym beo on hyra brosten nearuwe, þat Grecas harðe astaticos, þer ys nearunys; and unealpe meg bane poorest to do and ut abringan and harðe harst and byd innen mid micle nearynnys; and hwilan he blod hærðe and hwylum mid blode gemenged, and hwile he rīþ, swylce he on dwegrige šy; and micel spated on ceola wyþep and byhþ adun on þara lúngan.

The syntax of this passage simply does not allow us to read the dwarf as agent. It cannot mean ‘as if dwarf were on him,’ due to the nominative he and dative dwegrige, rather it must mean ‘as if he were in dwegrige,’ where dwerg is a state of being. The use of dwerg here is very different from its deployment in the other medical texts, being abstracted from a simple unexplained condition for which no explanatory nosology is deemed necessary, to a descriptive medical state used in the nosological and aetiological description of another

late Antique medical compilations as they are, it is nonetheless a salient fact that these recipes were widely copied into different places, such as the recipe for the expulsion of a still-born found also in Leechbook III.xxxvii. In all, the plant is named in 21 medical recipes in the Old English Herbal, Leechbook of Bald and Laconyng. It is prescribed mostly for pain in the stomach or intestines and for nausea, both on its own and in decoctions of multiple herbs. It is prescribed once for tertian fever, ‘pam fefore þe þryddan dæge on man bycymþ’48 being a form of malaria, but it should be noted that this recipe (Herbal xciv.5) is one of the few recipes that do not involve the ingestion of an infusion of the plant, but rather a fumigant of its twigs wrapped in wool, a recipe deriving ultimately from the Medicina Plinii.49 In sum, the majority of medical recipes involving the plant treat headache and pains or spasms of the stomach, and the use of the herb in cases of fever is limited to one prototypical recipe.

De Vriend sees the plant name in terms of the disease it is intended to treat, stating 'the first element of the OE plant name dworgedwoste is probably used in the sense ‘(intermittent) fever’;40 There is perhaps room to doubt this reading of the plant name, given that the plant's extant textual uses against fever all stem from one source, namely the Medicina Plinii.41 More convincingly, Bierbaumer suggests that the dworge- element merely means 'small', while the -

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47 Cockayne, Leechdoms, II, 330.
48 ‘For a fever that one suffers every third day’.
49 [Ad] tertianis: pulei ramos in luna insolvente arist accesionem olficiendos dari aut stratis substiritur ‘For tertian fever: he is given a sprig of pennyroyal wrapped in wool as a fumigant placed under the bed before the onset,’ Medica Plinii III, 16.2 A. Onnerfors, ed., Plinií Secondí Inquiríoríisque quae furent de medicinalí libri tres, CML 3 (Berlin, 1964), p. 79.
50 De Vriend, Herbrium, p. 310.
51 Onnerfors, Medicina Plinii, p. 79.
dwistle element is cognate with OHG Tost (German Dost), meaning marjoram.\textsuperscript{52}

Ultimately the plant name evidence, though vast, adds little weight to any of the posited interpretations of dworb. In using it to support the notion that dworb actually denotes a fever far too much weight is given to what is in fact a single Ur-recipe from the Medicina Plinii which has been copied into various medical compendia in Old English and Latin more because of the authority afforded to the names of Pliny and Dioscorides than for the perceived efficacy of the recipe.

CONCLUSION
As is always the problem when attempting to conduct linguistic research on dead languages, there is no possible way to verify the precise meaning that dworb possessed within any given Anglo-Saxon speech community. It is nevertheless apparent that the word dworb seems to have had a specific medical meaning probably associated with disturbed sleep and fever. We can deduce this from the use of the Seven Sleepers in charms against dworb, and from the other medical contexts in which it occurs, especially the Peri didacon. We may even posit that this medical meaning arose out of association of such conditions with an anthropomorphic supernatural creature, and that the meaning of the word then underwent a metamorphosis from cause to effect. Yet did the asmatisa patient in the Peri didacon write because he was being ridden by a dwarf? It is syntactically unlikely, and hermeneutically unknowable.

Ultimately we must remember that the OE word dworb survives only in glosses for creatures from classical mythology and medical texts with origins dating back to the fourth-century AD at the earliest.

\textsuperscript{52} Bierbaumer, Der botanische Wortschatz des Altenglischen, I., 49.

Texts such as the Lacunaga are not repositories of Anglo-Saxon folklore, but rather points of linguistic and intellectual contact between Old English speakers and the tradition of pre-Salernitan medical literature that itself makes frequent use of charms and liturgical elements. When we attempt to find meaning in these charms, we must be ever cautious not to neglect the fact that they were recorded as functional medical recipes, not fairy tales. Of course the beliefs that these texts infer may be explored, but such endeavours have far too often lacked the necessary awareness of the context of the charms.

There is nonetheless a perceptible shift in the meaning of the Old English term dworg, from a supernatural or magical creature that could cause disease, as fossilised in the narrative charms of the Lacunaga, to a term denoting the disease itself, with a wholly physical aetiology, as seen in the Peri didacon and the Medicina de quadrupedibus. It is not necessarily a temporal factor that denotes the shift in semantic sense, but rather a factor of the register of the text in which it occurs. As Pettit notes, ‘the possibility that dworg [in Lacunaga lxxxv] denotes a disease-demon cannot be ruled out.’\textsuperscript{53}

On the other hand, the translation of L. februm by dworg in the Medicina de quadrupedibus and Peri didacon would certainly indicate that the word denoted solely a medical condition, and not a supernatural pathogen. It is important to note however, that the Medicina de quadrupedibus predates the Lacunaga by at least a century, which is why we cannot assume a chronological shift in meaning within the historical Anglo-Saxon period, but must consider the semantic shift from demonic agent of disease, to disease itself, to be a factor of the register of the text in which the word occurs.

\textsuperscript{53} Pettit, Lacunaga, II., 183.
From Nave to Chancel: the Metamorphic Implications of Anglo-Saxon Altar Placement

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The altar in Anglo-Saxon England was the focal point for the ecclesiastical and lay participants of the Mass as both the physical and metaphorical centre of the church. The placement of this important site of worship changed dramatically throughout its history. In this study, the notable transition from a single altar position in the seventh-century nave to the later chancel is examined along with the development of multiple altars around the tenth century. This gradual metamorphosis in architecture reflects a metamorphosis in practice during the celebration of divine services. As the altar moved, so did the participants, and the physical and spiritual relationship of the congregation to the Mass changed. I will consider the material and literary evidence for this altar transition as well as suggest its implications for the direction in which the clergy faced during the Eucharist.

The existence of only a few textual sources which mention altar placement hampers any detailed study of the Mass in England before the tenth century. Outside the realm of textual evidence, however, there is considerable architectural material extant from this period, the analysis of which may help to illuminate liturgical activities. Physical evidence for the placement of the altar in the nave is found in a number of early churches such as the Old Minster at Winchester, St. Mary's at Reculver, and St. Paul-in-the-Bail at Lincoln. A substantial stone foundation at the east end of the seventh-century nave of the Old Minster at Winchester suggests the presence of a large altar near the chancel arch. Four postholes located around the find are consistent with an interpretation of an accompanying canopy, or ciborium, over the altar. Martin Biddle concluded in the excavation that such prominent foundation stones placed along the main east-west axis of the building indicated the location of the principal altar of the early church. The physical placement of a finished rectangular stone slab in the east end of the seventh-century nave at St. Mary's, a Reculver in Kent, centrally located in front of the triple arcade leading into the eastern apse, suggests use as an altar. An altar may have existed at the seventh-century church of St. Paul-in-the-Bail, Lincoln, as indicated by the discovery of postholes and a grave site. The postholes belonging to a screen between the nave and chancel favour the presence of a nave altar, as the alignment of the middle column of the screen would have blocked any chancel altar from view. The grave found west of the chancel arch supports the presence of an altar in the nave as the deceased were often laid purposefully near the sanctity of the altar.

2 Biddle, 'Excavation at Winchester', p. 315.
Another feature corroborating early Anglo-Saxon altar placement in the nave is the location of clergy seats in the chancel. The stone foundations of a long bench have been found in the chancel of St. Mary's, where officiating clergy would have sat for services. The additional discoveries of likely seventh- and eighth-century stone clergy seats against the eastern walls of other churches like Hexham and Monkwearmouth also support the placement of the altar in the nave, as there would not have been space enough for both clergy seats and an altar in the chancel.

The examples from the early Anglo-Saxon archaeological fabric mentioned above suggest the presence of an altar in the nave with clergy space in the eastern chancel; this architectural plan also appears in passages from early textual sources. Æthelwulf's early ninth-century poem De abbatibus mentions the presence of a single central altar dedicated to St. Peter medius sub aggere of the church building. Though a ninth-century poem, De abbatibus describes in this passage an older

likely eighth-century church built by Eamund not unlike the plan of remaining Anglo-Saxon churches. A possible nave altar is again mentioned later in the poem during a vision of an ideal heavenly church in which, though alongside the presence of many altars, there is a prominent central altar: *as paupimenta domus medi *sub culmine tempel/ aurea mirifice portabant munera mente.* The early eighth-century Life of Caedmon also indicates a certain degree of space between the altar and the eastern sanctuary as it describes Benedict Biscop's resting place *ad orientem altaris* at Monkwearmouth. It would be fitting for this altar to be in the nave, providing plenty of space in the eastern chancel for a burial.

The placement of an altar in the nave suggests a particular position for the clergy and the direction in which they face around the altar. The material and textual evidence suggests that in early Anglo-Saxon churches divine services were celebrated with the celebrant facing the congregation west into the nave rather than east. In this manner of celebration, as hypothesised by David Parsons and Martin Biddle, there is indeed a division of space between the officiating clergy and their congregation, and the altar is reached by the celebrant simply walking forward from the seats in the east. At
churches such as the Old Minster, Winchester, and St. Mary's at Reculver, the altar and likely altar canopy occupy a great deal of space at the east end of the nave.\textsuperscript{13} Indeed, at Winchester the location of possible subsidiary altars or standing memorial crosses in the nave would also have limited movement west of the altar.\textsuperscript{14} Assuming the presence of a clergy bench located in the chancel of both churches, there would have been little space for the celebrant to manoeuvre his way westward around the chancel arch, altar, and altar canopy in order to then turn and face east for the service.\textsuperscript{15} The likely presence of altar screens or rails would also have obstructed movement to the west, as would have other liturgical furnishings such as candles or crosses.\textsuperscript{16} The only literary evidence for the west-facing celebration of the Mass is found in Eadmer's eleventh-century description of the altar in the west end of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral at Canterbury: \textit{ad hoc altare cum sacerdos ageret divina mysteria, faciun ad populum qui deorsum stabat ad orientum versam babebat.}\textsuperscript{17} Though in this later source the celebrant himself is still facing east and not celebrating at a nave altar, it is nevertheless significant that he is facing the congregation.

Toward the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, the number of altars increased and the high altar shifted to the chancel; this metamorphosis was to have an effect on the direction in which the clergy celebrated divine services. The Old Minster at Winchester expanded in all directions in the tenth and eleventh centuries and contained many altars, most notably in the eastern chancel dedicated to St. Mary.\textsuperscript{18} Additionally, St. Oswald's Minster in Gloucester had a western apse and eastern chancel, both possibly containing altars in the early tenth century.\textsuperscript{19} Later additions to the original fabric of the eighth-century church at Deerhurst saw the complete rebuilding of the eastern chancel in a new style as well as the creation of a cross-wall in the nave that would have fittingly formed a new presbytery for the clergy relocated with the movement of the altar to the chancel.\textsuperscript{20} St. Mary's at Reculver also expanded with the addition of surrounding porticoes, and the location of the Anglo-Saxon nave altar was, by the thirteenth century, displaced by a large, decorated stone cross.\textsuperscript{21}

The increasing number of Anglo-Saxon porticoes as well as the location of crypts and their respective relics can be used to suggest chancel altar locations in addition to evidence in the archaeological fabric. Tenth-century developments at Deerhurst and Brixworth saw the creation of porticoes alongside the nave and indeed in upper floors of the church which were likely the locations for subsidiary altars.\textsuperscript{22} Though nave or chancel altar placement cannot be determined by looking at the altar archaeology of the seventh-century church at Brixworth, the development of a small crypt and

\textsuperscript{15} Parsons, \textit{"Sacriarium"}, pp. 105–6.
\textsuperscript{14} Biddle, \textit{Excavation at Winchester}, p. 315.
\textsuperscript{15} Parsons, \textit{"Sacriarium"}, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{17} 'When the priest performed the divine mysteries at this altar he had his face turned towards the east, towards the people who stood below.' H. M. Taylor, \textit{The Anglo-Saxon Cathedral Church at Canterbury}, \textit{Archd} 126 (1969), 101–30, at 129. I have cited Taylor's Latin text and English translation as Robert Willis' Latin text was unavailable.

\textsuperscript{19} Heighway and Bryant, \textit{The Golden Minster: The Anglo-Saxon Minster and Later Medieval Priory of St. Oswald at Gloucester}, BAR 117 (1999), at 57.
\textsuperscript{21} Parsons, \textit{Liturgy and Architecture}, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{22} Taylor and Taylor, \textit{Anglo-Saxon Architecture}, I, 108–9, 200 and 204; W. H. Knowles, \textit{Deerhurst Priory Church: Including the Result of the Excavations Conducted During 1926}, \textit{Archaeologia} 77 (1928), 141–64, at 160.
ambulatory in the late eighth or early ninth century might suggest a corresponding altar above in the chancel. The altar at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, located directly above the relics of St. Peter, provided a likely precedent for the location of altars above crypts in Anglo-Saxon England. Tenth-century alterations to the earlier seventh-century confessio of the crypt at Wing created a central chamber further to the east, which might suggest the presence of an associated altar further east in the chancel.

Though the movement of altars was gradual and hardly linear in the Anglo-Saxon period, there is less ambiguity about its placement in later centuries. The evidence provided by liturgical furnishings and fittings in and around the chancel all point to at least one placement in the east, often flush to the wall, by the end of the High Middle Ages. Textual evidence for chancel altars, however, exists only in a few passages from Anglo-Saxon England. As mentioned above, Æthelwulf’s heavenly vision from De abbatibus and the history of Canterbury Cathedral by Eadmer both describe multiple altars with, notably, an altar in the east end of both churches. Alcuin provides evidence for the early development of multiple altars in his Versus de patribus regibus et sanctis eboriensis ecclesiæ as the poet counts thirty altars in the late eighth-century Alma Sophia at York.

Placement within the chancel and the related movement of clerical seating to the west into a divided portion of the nave suggest a gradual change to eastward facing church services at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. With the altar in the chancel, oftentimes elevated above the nave, the celebrant was able to walk eastward directly from his seat and celebrate facing east. It is evident at churches like the cathedral at Canterbury that the emphasis was in fact on east-facing worship: services at the west end altar were celebrated facing east and the memorial to St. Dunstan was too close to the matutinal altar for unimpeded westward celebration. Also at Canterbury, the easternmost altar was right against the wall, eliminating the possibility of the celebrant facing west around it. Though the tenth-century Regularis concordia makes no mention of altar placement, its call for more private Masses—such as those for the soul of a departed brother—in the secretis oratoris locis may suggest an eastward facing liturgy in a solitary context.

The change in altar placement and related direction of the clergy in early medieval England has far-reaching implications for how participants would have experienced the order of the Mass. The dramatic and visual power of the position of the celebrant at moments such as the consecration has tremendous dramatic and visual power. A change in the position of the clergy during such services at the altar would have affected the way in which the

25 Taylor and Taylor, Anglo-Saxon Architecture, II, 668–9. Indeed, some Anglo-Saxon crypts such as those at Repton and Wing were not originally accessible from the interior of the church; later developments such as possibly the increase in veneration of saints’ relics in the community caused the crypts to be linked to the structure above. Ibid.
congregation physically and symbolically witnessed the event of the Eucharist.\textsuperscript{31} Debate over liturgical orientation in the Roman Catholic Church of the 1960s perhaps can provide a way of thinking about this metamorphosis of architecture and liturgy of the Early Middle Ages.

The issues raised surrounding the Second Vatican Council addressed the relationship of the congregation to the celebrant and celebration, a consideration that may offer cautious insight for the Anglo-Saxon participant. The Anglo-Saxon nave altar model with the celebrant facing west provides similarities with the \textit{versus populum} model of the new Roman Catholic Missal which in 1969 began to replace the earlier Tridentine liturgy which featured the presiding priest turned east away from the congregation.\textsuperscript{32} The change to facing the congregation developed as part of a debate regarding the participation of the congregation in the events of the Mass. Promulgators of west facing worship believed that the priest, face-to-face with the people, encouraged the dialogue and active participation of the congregation and acts as ‘a conductor of a chorus or orchestra’\textsuperscript{33} rather than a solitary performer. Opponents of Vatican II initiatives argued that when the celebrant faced east along with the congregation and physical church, the community celebrated the Mass as a united body directed toward God rather than a closed circle centered around the priest himself.\textsuperscript{34} The theological and architectural importance of the East also featured in the discussion: eastward facing liturgy directs prayer to Christ, the rising sun at the Second

\textsuperscript{31} The effect of this change would remain even for those lay persons who infrequently attended Mass as well as for participating clergy.
\textsuperscript{34} Lang, \textit{Turning Towards the Lord}, pp. 32, 102 and 208.

Coming, and for centuries Christian places of worship had been built around that alignment.\textsuperscript{35}

The modern debate over liturgical orientation offers an interesting opportunity to hypothesise the motivations behind the shift in Anglo-Saxon altar placement. The question of active participation in the liturgy discussed by the Second Vatican Council could be seen in the inclusive and participatory nature of ritual in the Anglo-Saxon Church, as explored by M. Bedingfield.\textsuperscript{36} Bedingfield suggests that the dramatic element of west-facing services encourages the full, conscious involvement of those participating. In turning east, both celebrant and participant become one united body turned to Christ and any potential sense of drama in the person of the celebrant is subverted by the turning of his back.\textsuperscript{37} The modern sense of communal participation, the importance of the eastern orientation, and the role of the celebrant are all factors that might have affected the medieval shift in altar placement. Ecclesiastical change associated with the proliferation of private Masses and the Benedictine Reform is also a possible means of influence. The increasing importance of local saints and their association with particular altars for relic worship played a role in the multiplication of the number of altars in individual churches.\textsuperscript{38} In this way the association between the cult of saints, holy relics, and their dedicated altars might have been a factor in the growing importance of the chancel and eastward movement of the altar.

\textsuperscript{35} Lang, \textit{Turning Towards the Lord}, pp. 97 and 100.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{38} Hahn, ‘Seeing and Believing’, pp. 1080–1. The Cult of Saints is also discussed in Biddle, ‘Archaeology, Architecture, and the Cult of Saints’, pp. 3 and 5.
During the transition discussed in this paper, there is always variation; yet it is apparent that a change, however gradual, in the placement of the altar from nave to chancel was occurring in the Anglo-Saxon period and into the High Middle Ages with potentially wide-ranging implications for the congregation's experience of the Mass. The debate on liturgical orientation in the modern Church provides a means of examining that metamorphosis and putting such architectural change into a more recent liturgical context. The shift in altar placement indeed suggests how the Anglo-Saxon community perceived and participated in the vital ceremony of the Eucharist.

Aedilulf's *De abbatibus*: a Soteriological Reading

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*De abbatibus* is an early ninth-century poem written by the Northumbrian monk Aedilulf. It is an account of the history of the poet's monastery, focusing predominantly on the abbots who governed the monastery, but also relating the spiritual achievements of other prominent members of the community. The poem has been frequently cited by scholars, often due to its detailed description of a monastery's physical layout and decoration.¹ There have, however, been few attempts to examine *De abbatibus* as a literary artefact. In this paper I will demonstrate one specific aspect of this poem's literary potential: its soteriological message, that is, its concern with salvation, which is expounded through recounting the good examples of the monastery's ancestors, and through what might be called a 'textual metamorphosis', in which the changing nature of the narrative embodies the very manner in which salvation may be achieved. This reading centres around a reinterpretation of the poem's longest and most cited chapter, chapter twenty-two, which has been dubbed 'Aedilulf's dream'. It has previously been proposed that this dream is a vision of heaven;² I will propose, through an examination of the vision's content, language and context within the wider narrative, that it is instead better understood as a vision of an idealised monastery.

In doing so, I will demonstrate the central importance that this chapter holds in understanding the poem's function and meaning.

First, I will give a brief summary of *De abbatibus*' content, structure and literary sources. The poem is 819 lines long and is split into twenty-three chapters. It begins with a short prologue address to an unnamed ecclesiast. Chapters one and twenty-three are in elegiac verse, while all other chapters are in hexameters. Structurally, it has often been considered a miniature version of Alcuin's *Versus de patribus regibus et sanctis Enboriciensis ecclesiae* ('Verse concerning the fathers, kings and saints of the church of York' — otherwise known as his York poem), as both begin by describing the founders of their respective institutions, then the succession of abbots, and both end with a heaven-like scene. David Howlett has demonstrated that the poem also adheres to a chiastic structure centring on the death of Eannmund (the monastery's founder), and to what has been dubbed the 'Golden Section', a term traditionally associated with Virgil, and one that divides a text into two unequal parts. The division here is at the end of chapter fifteen, just as Aediluulf's own life in the monastery begins.

There are very few works with which to compare *De abbatibus*. However, Alistair Campbell, Michael Lapidge and Andy Orchard have all demonstrated that Aediluulf drew on the works of Alcuin, Aldhelm, Bede, Cyprianus Gallus (specifically his *Heptateuch*), Virgil and the anonymous metrical *Miracula Nynie episcopi* ('The Miracles of Bishop Ninian'). Aediluulf's poem has a particularly close metrical and stylistic relationship with Alcuin's York poem and the late eighth-century *Miracula Nynie episcopi*, which celebrates the life of the sixth-century Saint Ninian. Such are the similarities between these three Northumbrian poems that it is likely that they were influenced by the same school of teaching, namely the school of York, as has already been suggested by Michael Lapidge. Arguably more influential on *De abbatibus* was the poetry of Aldhelm, in particular a third of his *Carmina ecclesiastica* (a titulus on Bugga's church), the phraseology of which, as demonstrated by Andy Orchard, is possibly echoed in as many as 150 of Aediluulf's 819 lines. Therefore, it is perhaps

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5 D. Howlett, 'The Provenance, Date, and Structure of *De Abbatibus*', *Archaologia* 121 (1975), 1–30, at 126.

6 D. Howlett, 'The Structure of *Echasis Captiva*', *SN* 47 (1975), 3–6, at 6; Howlett, 'The Provenance', 29. The 'Golden Section' is a literary model in which the minor part of the text relates to the major part as the major part relates to the whole of the text, namely to the ratio 0.618 — the inverse of the 'golden ratio' of 1.618.

7 *DA*, p. 41. The division is between lines 506 and 507.


10 Orchard, 'After Aldhelm', 117. Aldhelm's *Carmina ecclesiastica* can be found in *Aldhelm Opera Omnia*, ed. R. Ehwald, MGH *Auctores antiquissimi* 15 (Berlin,
appropriate to consider *De abbatibus* – a poem which celebrates the history of the poet’s monastery – to be an elongated titulus of sorts, where Aediluluf desires to reaffirm the importance of his monastery and to commemorate it within the language of the scriptures. Indeed, the poet says in chapter one that these verses are *rustica dona* (‘rustic gifts’) which point out illustrious men so that one can admire how they are climbing the way of light.\(^{11}\) Parallels with Aldhelm’s work, however, are less apparent in chapter twenty-two, which lacks any detail concerning the monastery’s history.

Chapter twenty-two is the longest chapter in *De abbatibus* and is entirely concerned with a vision experienced by Aediluluf.\(^{12}\) This chapter begins as Aediluluf is resting at night. A shining being, described simply as a *dòctor* (‘leader’), suddenly appears before him.\(^{13}\) He leads Aediluluf towards a shining city with lofty walls, within which there is a church that, like the walls of the city and the *dòctor* beforehand, shines with a great light.\(^{14}\) For Aediluluf, these scenes appear to have been overwhelming, as he describes himself as breaking down in fear, begging Christ to help him.\(^{15}\) His plea is seemingly answered with the appearance of a venerable old man sitting before a flower-covered saint’s tomb.\(^{16}\) Aediluluf asks where his former teacher Hyglac is, to which the old man answers in direct speech:

> haec domus est meritis animarum condita sanctis,  
> quas deus omnipotens istic piaeate locabat.  
> esuriem poenasque sitim per secula nullus  
> sentiet, in domino sumunt sed gaudia longa,  
> laudantes dominum caeli per secula cuncta,  
> qui requiem lectis tribuet sine fine beatam.\(^{21}\)

Aediluluf then wakes and begins to write what he has just witnessed.\(^{22}\)

Thus turning northwards, the poet sees firstly another former teacher Eadfrith praying, and then behind him Hyglac, who is dressed in white robes.\(^{18}\) Eadfrith then guides the poet into the church. Another altar appears by which a chair stands, where Wulfsg, the sixth abbot of the monastery and the last to be documented in this poem, is enthroned.\(^{19}\) Eadfrith guides Aediluluf further, this time to a table decked with food and drink, where the guide offers the poet a glass of wine, which he had blessed with pious prayers.\(^{20}\) With this last act, Eadfrith speaks the following words in direct speech:

> sedibus e summis oculos conferre memento,  
> intereaque uidens Plautrum quo labitur axem.\(^{17}\)

The focus of the poem thus moves from the realm of the past into the realm of the imagined with chapter twenty-two. In this

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\(^{17}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, lines 745–46, p. 59: ‘Turn thine eyes from these lofty stations, and for the time being look at the north, where the Wain glides’.

\(^{18}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, lines 747–57, p. 59.

\(^{19}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, lines 769–71, p. 61.

\(^{20}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, lines 775–85, p. 61.

\(^{21}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, lines 789–94, p. 63: ‘This home has been established because of the merits of blessed souls, which almighty God has placed here in their piety. Through the ages, not one of them shall feel hunger, pain, or thirst, but they have prolonged joy in the Lord, always praising the Lord of heaven, who will give blessed rest for ever to his elect’.

\(^{22}\) *D.A.*, ch. 22, line 795, p. 63.
respect, the inclusion of this vision is somewhat surprising and appears disjointed from the preceding chapters. It is, however, considerably longer than any other chapter, suggesting that this vision should not simply be recognised as being different in tone, but that this vision is meaningful and significant; indeed, Aedilulf implies that this vision is the very reason for writing this poem, as he begins writing as soon as he awakens. This vision is, as this paper argues, the key to understanding the purpose of this poem.

Chapter twenty-two has previously been interpreted as a dream of heaven on account of its ethereal atmosphere, the use of superlatives, and the references to meritus ('merit') and visus ('vision') which are typical notions of the heavenly city—the New Jerusalem—that is inhabited after the resurrection. However, Aedilulf’s vision does not fulfill the idea of heaven entirely. The expected appearances of Christ, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Holy Spirit, Adam and Eve, the saints, angels, and Aedilulf’s parents and ancestors are all missing; all we have is a venerable old man, Eadfrith, Hyglac and Wulfsig. Conversely, the presence of a tomb in heaven would be puzzling.

Rather, Aedilulf’s vision possesses closer parallels with visions that depict the ‘interim paradise’—the place in which good souls reside before Judgement Day. In particular, Aedilulf’s vision shares a number of striking similarities with Bede’s account of the vision of Drythelm. Within his Historia Ecclesiastica, Bede describes how the Northumbrian layman Drythelm came back to life, having been led through an afterlife by a white-gowned dux or. This afterlife is divided into four parts, two regions for the souls of the good and two regions for the souls of the bad. Beyond the shared presence of a shining dux, it is when Drythelm recalls his approach to the first of the two regions of the good that parallels between this and Aedilulf’s vision become markedly apparent. According to Bede, Drythelm recalled that:

cumque me in luce aperta duceret, uidi ante nos murum permaximum, cuius neque longitudinii hinc uel inde, neque altitudinii ullus esse terminus uideretur...Cum ergo peruenissemus ad murum, statim nescio quo ordine fuitus in summitate eius. Et ecce ibi campus erat latissimus ac laetissimus, tantaque flagranta uermantum flosculorum plenus, ut omnem max florem tenebrosi fornacis, qui me persuaserat, effugaret admirandis eius uisuis uidentibus. Tanta autem lux cuncta ea loca perfuderat, ut omni splendore dici uisus meridiani radiis uideretur esse praecellator.

Within both this and Aedilulf’s vision, the subject is led to a wall of incredible proportions and to a field full of flowers. Furthermore, Bede and Aedilulf both emphasise that these visions were multi-

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27 HE, ch. 12, p. 307: ‘As he led me on in open light, I saw a very great wall in front of us which seemed to be endlessly long and endlessly high everywhere... When we had reached the wall we suddenly found ourselves on top of it, by what means I know not. There was a very broad and pleasant plain, full of such a fragrance of growing flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scent quickly dispelled the foul stench of the gloomy furnace which had hung around me. So great was the light that flooded all this place that it seemed to be clearer than the brightness of daylight or the rays of the noontide sun.’ The translation is that of M. Colgrave and C. Mynors, reprinted with minor emendations in Bede: The Ecclesiastical History of the English People, The Greater Chronicle, Bede’s Letter to Egbert, ed. J. McClure and R. Collins (Oxford, 1994), pp. 253–58.
sensory experiences: both place great emphasis on the dazzling appearance of these ethereal landscapes, as well as on the sweet fragrances of the flowers.28 Undoubtedly Aediluulf would have been familiar with Bede’s account of the vision of Drythelm.29 The similarities between these visions suggest that Aediluulf may well have drawn inspiration from such a notion of an idealised space where good souls would wait for the arrival of the salvational Judgement Day.

Unlike Bede’s vision, however, Aediluulf maintains a strong sense of the familiar in his account – a familiarity that suggests that the ethereal place the poet visits is a monastic space. The three named individuals that Aediluulf meets, all previously praised for their obedience to the monastic life, appear to be continuing with such a lifestyle: two are seated, presumably in contemplation, while the third, Eadfrith, is on his knees praying.30 Meanwhile, the physical surroundings of the vision embody much of what characterises the monastic life. A great sense of solitude is established with the emphasis placed on the loftiness of the walls of the city.31 Furthermore, Aediluulf states:

sed domus exterius magnis minimisque per omne porticus spatium muri subhuita manebat,

29 Lapidge argues convincingly that Aediluulf either directly or indirectly had knowledge of the library at York, which would have held a copy of Bede’s HE: Lapidge, ‘Aediluulf and the School of York’, p. 398. Campbell previously demonstrated Aediluulf’s knowledge of Bede’s work through his verbal borrowings from Bede’s metrical Vita s. Cuthberti (Life of St Cuthbert); Campbell, Aediluulf: De Abbasibus, p. xiv.
31 D.A, ch. 22, line 707, p. 57.

There Aediluulf employs aspiere (‘to look at’) in both literal and metaphorical terms; not only does aspiere describe the physical layout of the structure, it also refers to the notion that the building (and thus the people that inhabit it) looks out onto and contemplates the world. Moreover, the poet states that between these walls was an ordina cellae (‘row of cells’). Cellae is the most frequent word that Aediluulf uses to refer to his monastery,33 its appearance in this chapter suggests that within this vision we should see a monastery. This is reinforced even further by the use of the words urbs (‘city’) and domus (‘home’) to describe this ethereal place, words the poet had used on previous occasions to describe his monastery.34

That we are within the confines of a monastery is additionally suggested by the words spoken by Eadfrith at the climax of this vision.35 As Eadfrith passes Aediluulf a glass of wine and speaks his final words, a multitude of phrases and actions that the poet has recalled earlier in the poem are invoked. The action of Aediluulf

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32 D.A, ch. 22, lines 714–18, p. 57: ‘Outside, the building was supported all the way round the wall by large and small porticoes. Of these, twice two looked towards the four corners of the world, and above touched the top of the wall. Between them in a row small cells were interspersed.’
33 Aediluulf previously uses cellae to describe his monastery at ch. 4, line 78, p. 9; ch. 6, line 123, p. 13; ch. 8, line 216, p. 19; ch. 11, line 321, p. 27; ch. 12, line 395, p. 33; ch. 14, line 432, p. 35; ch. 14, line 497, p. 39; ch. 15, line 473, p. 39; ch. 17, line 529, p. 43; ch. 18, line 548, p. 45; ch. 20, line 597, p. 49; ch. 20, line 606, p. 49; ch. 20, line 609, p. 49; ch. 20, line 618, p. 49; ch. 20, line 654, p. 53.
34 Aediluulf previously uses urbs to describe his monastery at ch. 15, line 505, p. 41, and at ch. 20, line 609, p. 49; the poet similarly uses domus at ch. 18, line 550, p. 45, and at ch. 20, line 620, p. 51.
drinking Eadfrith’s wine echoes Eanmund drinking the pious words of Eadfrith in chapter five;\textsuperscript{36} that this monastery was established by the merits of blessed souls echoes the establishment of the monastery by the work of \textit{rvmerandus} (‘venerable’) Eanmund chapter four;\textsuperscript{37} that God sent people to the monastery echoes the description of Ullan as \textit{deo electus} (elected by God) in chapter eight;\textsuperscript{38} and that no one ever felt hunger echoes the statement:

\begin{quote}
segetes per limina celte
quam laetie surgunt superi dulcedine roris.\textsuperscript{39}
\end{quote}

Such parallels suggest that Eadfrith is speaking about a place comparable with Aedilulf’s own monastery. The heavenly sense of the vision should therefore not be seen as a sign that this is heaven itself, but should be interpreted as an idealisation of the poet’s own monastery – a monastery not of the present, but an idealised blueprint that seeks to follow the examples of the community’s ancestors.

But why would Aedilulf include such a vision of an idealised monastery within what appears previously to be a historical account? The answer, I believe, is that this idealised monastery provides significance for remembering the monastery’s past and serves to promote the monastic life. It is a metaphor for salvation and acts as a destination for what is a textual and spiritual metamorphosis, from the outward contemplation of the monastery’s history to an internalised narrative, from the past to the idealised, from damnation to salvation. The message is ultimately that the monastic life is the way to salvation and is, as Aedilulf says himself in chapter eight, the \textit{perfecta vita} (‘the perfect life’).\textsuperscript{40}

It is with the appearance of Eadfrith that the message of this vision and of the wider narrative emerges most clearly. As we have seen, Eadfrith states that in the ethereal place that Aedilulf is visiting everyone is in prolonged joy and lacks hunger, thirst or pain.\textsuperscript{41} It is therefore a place of refuge and contentment – the perfect place in which to await Judgement Day. Eadfrith’s speech is brief and succinct; its importance, however, should not be doubted. As Aedilulf approaches the table of food with Eadfrith, there is a significantly heightened use of literary devices. Alliteration is used to almost excess. This is accompanied by an adherence to the symmetrical golden rule in lines 763, 764 and 777:

\begin{quote}
cerea flammigeris uenerans altaria donis
porticus cunctis ardebat lumina clara\textsuperscript{42}
plurima qua miris micuerunt uscula gemmis\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Furthermore, Aedilulf uses an envelope pattern in lines 736 and 768:

\begin{quote}
ara dicata deo mittebat munera summo\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 5, line 104, p. 11; the poet reinforces the parallel between his drinking in the vision and Eanmund’s drinking in chapter five with the exclusive use of \textit{haurim} (‘to drink in’) at these two points in the poem.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 12, line 399, p. 33.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 8, line 223, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 20, lines 606–7, p. 49: ‘crops sprang up within the confines of the monastery right gladly in the sweetness of the dew of heaven’.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 8, line 206, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 22, lines 789–94, p.63.

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 22, lines 763–4, p. 61: ‘In all the porticoes bright waken lights were burning, honouring the altars with flaming donations’.

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 22, line 777, p. 61: ‘There many vessels gleamed with wondrous gems’.

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{D.A.}, ch. 22, line 736, p. 59: ‘An altar[…]sent dedicated gifts to God, the highest one’.
The use of a singular third person present form instead of the singular third person imperfect form, and the presence of *qua*, which creates a subordinate clause, distinguish line 768 from line 736. Otherwise, these two lines are identical. The intensity of these literary flourishes creates a crescendo in the narrative, suggesting that the climax is approaching. A grand stylistic fanfare therefore heralds Eadfrith’s words.

The importance of Eadfrith’s words is further emphasised by the fact that they are spoken directly; both Aediluulf and the audience are addressed. This interaction with the audience is, however, not new: it was initiated earlier on within the vision with the use of first person plural forms of the verbs *carpere* (‘to advance’), *conspicere* (‘to see’), and *preparare* (‘to hasten’). The poet creates a sense that the audience is on this visionary journey with him, and that, just as Aediluulf is led by his *dactor*, he in turn becomes the *dactor* for the audience. The audience is therefore encouraged to drink in Eadfrith’s words, just as Aediluulf drank the wine. The words of Eadfrith are a direct message to the audience of the potential of the monastic life, spoken by a member of the monastery’s past.

This praise for the monastic life is set within visually intense surroundings: the objects on the altars, the walls of the church, and even the people themselves, shine and dazzle. It is a sign of moral purity, an allegory for salvation. In particular, the use of the word *candor* (‘light’) to describe the church within this dream is entirely apt, as this is a word that can represent both physical brightness and moral purity. In reference to the abbots and teachers of the monastery, this metaphor also implies that they have been heaven-sent. For example, the venerable old man, Hyglac and Eadfrith appear after Aediluulf calls out to Christ for help. Their brightness within the vision also specifically invokes a notion promoted in the *Miracula Nynie episcopi* that the saints were sent from God as stars; Ninian is described as *lampas fulgescet* (‘shining like a light’), and his mind is a *sideris ad speciem perfec...tia* (‘a perfect splendour like a star’). It is when Aediluulf turns to the northern stars in his vision that he sees Eadfrith. Hence light imagery attains a specifically celestial context; the notion of salvation is located within certain corporeal bodies. The ancestral teachers, therefore, are idealised in a monastic setting draped in allegorical imagery, implying that we must look to their past examples as guidance for salvation. Aediluulf’s dream reminds the audience of the ideal of the monastic life, and is calling upon the audience to follow the examples of the community’s ancestors. The vision therefore provides an explanation for why and how we should consider the monastery’s past.

In such a way, chapter twenty-two should be seen as the destination for what has been a journey through the monastery’s history. Indeed, not only has the poet been led, and has led us, on a physical journey within this dream, but he has also led us on a temporal and textual journey through the monastery’s history.

There is, however, a further way in which this sense of movement, this textual change, can be seen within *De abbatis*. From

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45 DÆ, ch. 22, line 768, p. 61: ‘A consecrated altar, which sent gifts to God, the highest one’.
46 DÆ, ch. 22, line 705, p. 57.
47 DÆ, ch. 22, line 706, p. 57.
48 DÆ, ch. 22, line 765, p. 61.
49 DÆ, ch. 22, line 712, p. 57.
52 *Miracula Nynie episcopi*, ch. 4, line 87, p. 948.
chapter sixteen onwards, the narrative becomes increasingly introspective in its style and content. There is an increased use of first person verbs and personal contemplative comments, while the content derives more and more from the poet's own personal observations and experiences. For example, Aedilululf adds in chapter seventeen that he believes that he will receive the gift of salvation through the prayers of the men he is discussing.\textsuperscript{54} With these added personal comments, there is a sense that the poet is already beginning to contemplate the significance of the monastery's past. Furthermore, such is this shift in focus that by chapter twenty we are presented with a chapter that contains no events as such, but a description of the monastery's buildings;\textsuperscript{55} this historical account now appears to be contemplating the present and the poet's surroundings. The narrative from chapter sixteen onwards therefore becomes more personalised, moving from retrospection to introspection. To an extent, these changes reflect the fact that the events now described have occurred within the poet's lifetime; he thus can give personal insight into what he narrates. However, that this process begins at chapter sixteen, respecting the division imposed by the 'Golden Section', suggests that the poet was aware of the dynamism of the narrative.

With this progression into introspection, chapter twenty-two once again acts as the climax. All events in this chapter occur within the mind of the poet; the narrative has thus arrived at a moment of complete introspection. This development further backs the poet's message that the monastic life is the way to salvation; the very narrative embodies how one may achieve salvation - through introspective thought and spiritual solitude. It is only when the poet is completely introspective that we arrive at the salvational moment.

\textsuperscript{54} D.A, ch. 17, lines 533–34, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{55} D.A, ch. 20, lines 597–655, pp. 49–53.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that Aedilululf is true to his words: as stated at the beginning of the poem, he wants people to admire the monastic life.\textsuperscript{56} This intention, however, is driven by a much stronger, soteriological message: the monastic way of life is the way to salvation. In such a context, the poet uses his vision in chapter twenty-two as a way of illustrating how he wants his audience to understand and use the monastery's past. Indeed, Aedilululf implies that this vision was the very reason why he wrote this poem, in that he began writing as soon as he awoke.\textsuperscript{57} It is a climax to what is a textual journey, a metamorphosis from retrospection to introspection, with salvation as the destination. With such a sense of journeying towards salvation, De abbatis is comparable to an allegorical reading of Exodus.\textsuperscript{58} Aedilululf's possible use of Cyprianus Gallus' Heptateuch is thus particularly intriguing. This poem stands almost alone as an example of early ninth-century Anglo-Latin literature, yet it has much to say about at least one monk's view of the past and the world around him. I hope that this paper has revealed some of this potential, and demonstrated that these verses are far from what Aedilululf modestly claims, mere rustica dona.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} D.A, ch. 1, lines 23–4, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{57} D.A, ch. 22, line 795, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{58} M. Roberts, Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity (Liverpool, 1985), p. 124.
\textsuperscript{59} My thanks to Gabriella Corona, Mary Garrison and the editors of Quaestio Insularis for their comments and suggestions during varying stages of the development of this paper.