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# ENLISTING THE TRUTH OF DAMNATION: THE RHETORIC OF WULFSTAN'S LIFELONG ENGAGEMENT WITH ESCHATOLOGY

Around the year 1000, England is in a state of crisis and demoralisation which most likely fosters apocalyptic anxieties. The preoccupation becomes prominent in the writings of contemporary vernacular homilists, and plays a key role in Archbishop Wulfstan's eschatological preaching. By focusing on his use of the list of sinners, this paper illustrates the evolution of Wulfstan's apocalypticism throughout his career, from ideological conviction to rhetorical tool. In particular, I intend to focus on how the alliterating catalogue, which first appears in *De Fide Catholica* (Bethurum sermon no. 7, p. 163 and ll. 128-134), is then reworked not only in the longest version of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (Bethurum sermon no. 20, p. 273 and ll. 161-166) but also in Wulfstan's legal writings and political tracts (in which case the list comes to describe earthly sinners, namely criminals proper). The way the catalogue is rephrased signals a change in Wulfstan's eschatological tone, which is ever-present but still loses its immediacy as the years, his career and the Viking invasions wear on.

## 1. *Historical background: England between the tenth and the eleventh centuries*

England was in a state of continuous and frequent upheaval between the years 900 and 1200, as the developments which prompted social transformations throughout Europe were here accelerated and complicated by repeated episodes of invasion, migration and changes of regime.[1]
In particular, the Scandinavian[2] occupation of northern, central and

[1] Crick, van Houts 2011; Runciman 1984.

[2] Throughout this paper, the term 'Scandinavian' is used to refer to Northern Germanic geographical and linguistic areas (current Norway, Sweden and Denmark), including the communities originating from Scandinavia and settled in Iceland, Great Britain and Ireland. The word 'Viking', on the other hand, does not point to an ethnic reality but rather to those individuals (being them

eastern Britain had been going on for decades since the dramatic sack of the abbey at Lindisfarne in 793. Nonetheless, the ongoing attacks prompted the Alfredian programme of reconquest, which created enabling conditions for a cultural and religious revival, eventually giving rise to the Monastic Reform.[3] The phenomenon of the Reform, particularly thriving during king Edgar's reign (959-975), laid the foundations for the long-standing partnership between *rex* and *ecclesia* which would serve as one of the main arguments supporting Archbishop Wulfstan of York's "vision of a holy society".[4]

The succession crisis on Edgar's death contributed to the weakening of the monastic revival and resulted in king Æthelred's somewhat controversial access to the throne.[5] His reign was marked by increasingly traumatic events which worsened the instability of the country. Although he acknowledged his youthful errors as the main cause of divine punishment and national

Scandinavian or not) involved in piracy and pillaging. Consequently, 'Viking raid' is a phrase here denoting attacks whose main goal is the attainment of movable goods, while 'Scandinavian invasion' is preferred when the groups at issue aim at expansion and territorial occupation. Indeed, Old English sources do not employ OE *wīcing* ('pirate') to define those Scandinavian entities which had settled down on the island, preferring OE *Dene* ('Danish') instead. Many Scandinavians were indeed Danish, but others (Norwegians and Swedish) were just labelled as such, given that 'Danish' or 'heathen' were amongst the commonest terms in England to describe the invaders (Brink 2008, 5-6). In this paper, 'Danish' features when talking about Cnut's reign because of his origins. Cnut was born and raised in what today is known as Denmark, and which comprised Jutland peninsula, Funen and Sjælland islands and Skåne. More about the terminology mentioned here can be found in Jesch 2015, 1-10.

[3] A comprehensive account of such events can be found, for example, in Higham and Ryan 2013, 232-334 and Stenton [1943] 2004, 239-363. For a focus on the Norse impact on England, see Hadley 2006 and Hadley, Richards 2000. The Monastic Reform has been fully surveyed by Dunn 2003, 59-151 and 191-208. See also Barrow 2009 and Cubitt 1997.

[4] The expression is coined by Patrick Wormald, who first uses it to reference Wulfstan's ideology in Wormald [1999] 2021, 244-245.

[5] Jayakumar 2009; Rabin 2013. Æthelred's reign has been thoroughly investigated by Lavelle 2002; Roach 2016 and Williams 2003.

decadence, Æthelred's programme of repentance failed to restore peace in the kingdom.[6] The Viking raids picked up pace again in the 980s and the English were forced to pay an annual tribute to the Danes beginning in 991. External invasion and heavy taxation fostered political corruption and internal warfare, exhausting the resources of the country. At the turn of the millennium, Æthelred ordered "all the Danish men who were among the English race to be killed" on St Brice's Day[7] and consequently had to face two major raids between 1006-1007 and 1009-12.[8]

Given the situation, the English immediately submitted to Sweyn I of Denmark and his son Cnut when they arrived in England in 1013.[9] Æthelred was forced into exile and, though he succeeded in resuming the throne after Sweyn's sudden death in 1014, neither him nor his son Edmund would be able to prevail over Cnut's forces. Cnut stirred unrest with his initial actions as king, but evidently tried to legitimise his presence in England as a just Christian ruler. He consolidated his control over the Scandinavian territories inherited by his father, creating an Anglo-Scandinavian empire which extended to Denmark, Norway and parts of Sweden, and establishing further connections with Poland, France, Scotland, and Germany. The diplomatic and military demands of such an empire forced him to rely on a number of

[6] Keynes 1980, 176-208; Roach 2014 and 2016, 133-166.

[7] The relevant *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (hereafter *ASC*) entry is in MSS CDEF and it reads *7 on ðam geare se cyng het ofslean ealle ða deniscan men þe on Angelcynne wæron on Bricius messedæg, forþon þam cynge wæs gecydd þæt hi woldon hine besyrewian æt his life 7 syððan ealle his witan 7 habban syþðan his rice* ("and in that year the king ordered all the Danish men who were among the English race to be killed on Brice's Day, because it was made known to the king that they wanted to ensnare his life – and afterwards all his councillors – and have his kingdom afterwards", cf. s.a. 1002 MS E; ed. Irvine 2004, 64 and trans. Swanton [1996] 2000, 134-135). On the nature of the event itself, see Wilcox 2000.

[8] Keynes 2007; Lavelle 2002, 91-102.

[9] Howard 2003, 107-110. On Cnut's accession, see Bolton 2017 and Lawson [1993] 2011. A companion has been published in 2022, edited by R. North, E. Goeres and A. Finlay.

English political figures and advisors, among whom Archbishop Wulfstan of York (946x966-1023) stood out as a leading figure in both the ecclesiastical and the secular sphere, working as a mediator between the English and their new Danish king.[10]

## 2. *Wulfstan of York's eschatological approach to the English 'tribulations'*

Wulfstan, who had already served as royal advisor under king Æthelred, started his career as bishop of London (996-1002) and was then moved to Worcester (1002-16) while holding York as archbishop as well (1002-23).[11] As the bishop of London was expected to operate both in secular politics and religious administration, Wulfstan's appointment was certainly intended since the beginning to meet specific socio-political needs rather than merely pastoral ones.[12] The subsequent promotion to Worcester and York in a period when both dioceses were encountering problems in territorial administration surely played a key role in the shaping of Wulfstan's dual responsibility as homilist and statesman, raising his awareness on the danger posed by ecclesiastical spoilation and loss of land.[13]

[10] Innes 2000, 76-77.

[11] A comprehensive survey of Wulfstan's life and corpus lies beyond the scope of this paper. The Archbishop began to attract scholarly attention in the sixteenth century, and the analysis of his literary corpus continues to this day. Among the many contributions, see at least Townend 2004. In March 2023 Worcester Cathedral has hosted a two-day conference commemorating the 1000th anniversary of Wulfstan's death, where internationally renowned experts have illustrated the results of their latest research on the Archbishop. A. Rabin has recently published a portion of such research in a very detailed and wide-ranging overview of Wulfstan's scholarship, life and works. Cf. Rabin 2023. Throughout this paper, reference editions are the following: for Wulfstan's homilies, Bethurum 1957 and Napier 1883; for his legal and political compilations, Rabin 2020a. Otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

[12] Rabin 2016, 188-192.

[13] Such an awareness resulted in the compilation of his first legal and political tracts, such as *The Laws of Edward and Guthrum* (ca. 1002), *Episcopus*

This conflation of roles evidently affected Wulfstan's literary production, as a sermonising and religious rhetoric governed his legal writings, while his homilies[14] became more and more 'legal' in tone and content over time. This approach did not imply Wulfstan's refusal or inability to differentiate between the two genres, or even between secular and ecclesiastical justice.[15] What he strived for was the fusion of two separate instruments pursuing the same goal, that is the realisation of a divinely ordered society under the instructions of both the *rex* and the *ecclesia*. As all crimes were ultimately rooted in sin, phrasing moral obligations in a legal form helped Wulfstan to build a kingdom where Christian principles became part of national governance.[16]

Concerned as he was with preserving the proper ordering of social structures, Wulfstan was deeply affected by the events occurring in the first decade of the millennium and he used similar motives and themes across his laws and homilies, one of them being the attention devoted to eschatology.

The contemporary urgency of eschatological concerns in England primarily resulted from the circumstances faced by the nation at the turn of the millennium. The political crisis and the growing threat posed by the Viking raids allegedly fostered apocalyptic anxieties.[17] Moreover, the millennium itself played a significant role in Christian understanding of the end of time, as the troubled

(1002x1008), the 'Compilation on Status' (1002x1008) and the *Canons of Edgar* in its initial version (1004x1006). Note that the division between his role as *homilist* and *statesman* has been borrowed from Whitelock 1942.

[14] Although the author is aware of the difference between homilies and sermons, the words will be used interchangeably here to indicate forms of pastoral address. On this problem see, for example, Tristram 1995, 3.

[15] Marafioti 2019, 779 and 801; Orchard 2007, 316-320; Wormald [1999] 2001, 339-345.

[16] Although sin and crime were different categories in Wulfstan's legal philosophy, he did envision a close connection between them. Crime was a symptom of spiritual corruption, whence the need for secular punishments to redeem the offenders' sin. See Gates 2015; Marafioti 2019, 803 and Wilcox 1992, 201.

[17] Cubitt 2015 and 2017, 202-207; Godden 1994 and 2003; Szittya 1992.

period impacting life and politics in England could well reflect the time of tribulation described in the New Testament, a time which preceded both the coming of the Antichrist and the Last Judgement.[18] Gatch further noted that the pervasiveness of eschatological themes in Old English literature, and specifically in sermons, was the result of the great influence exerted by the Latin Fathers, specifically Augustine of Hippo and Gregory the Great, who emphasised the Last Days in their writings.[19]

Although the apocalypse infused much Old English prose and poetry, people in England were not in the grip of millennial anxiety, but rather read the current crisis as a sign of the approaching Endtime regardless of the coming of the year 1000.[20] The urgency to repent before Doomsday and the rejection of speculative predictions concerning the exact timing of the End both resulted in what McGinn defined as 'non-predictive imminence'.[21] Instead of trying to predict when the world would collapse, the early medieval society rather prepared for the Endtime, prompting moral teachings on how to live a perfect Christian life. This preoccupation resonated with Wulfstan's eschatological urgency and call for national redemption, especially in the years of social disorder and Viking attacks, whereas it admittedly waned over

[18] The three stages of events at the end of the world are described in Mt 24, Mk 13 and Lk 21. The period of tribulation is followed by the reign of the Antichrist, which will last until Christ's second coming and the Last Judgement. St Paul's second letter to bishop Timothy (II Tim 3:1-5) signals the first stage as a time marked by the intensification of wickedness, which according to Gregory the Great grows stronger as the world ages. This idea was complemented by Augustine's view of biblical history as being divided into six eras and Bede's belief that each era ended in corruption and descent into sin. The end of the sixth age will bring about the coming of the Antichrist. On eschatology, see Rowland 1982, and on apocalyptic concerns in the Early Middle Ages (especially at the turn of the millennium) see Palmer 2014, 189-226 and the essays in Emmerson, McGinn 1992 and Landes *et al.* 2003. The six ages of the world are reviewed in Darby 2012, 21-24 and 27-29.

[19] Gatch 1977, 61.

[20] Cubitt 2015, 29.

[21] McGinn 1995, 60-63.

time after Cnut's conquest.[22]

The so-called eschatological homilies (numbered I-V in Bethurum's edition) represented the earliest stage in Wulfstan's engagement with the Endtime, dating to a period between his tenure of London and 1002x1008.[23] Bethurum Ia and b (respectively a Latin sermon and its Old English translation, both rubricated *De Anticristo*) are intended as an exhortation for priests to warn their flock against the dangers posed by the Antichrist,[24] while the time of tribulations preceding his coming is detailed in Bethurum II (*Secundam Matheum*), a paraphrasis of Mt 24:1-14, 42. In Bethurum III (*Secundum Lucam*) Wulfstan mentions the Viking invasions for the first time in his homiletic corpus through the Gospel reference to strife between nations.[25] Drawing a parallel between the scriptural time and his own, the Archbishop describes the national decadence as a consequence of the sins of the English. The need for repentance and the theme of deceit are central in Wulfstan's reworking of Adso's short treatise on Antichrist (viz. *De Ortu et Tempore Antichristi*) in Bethurum IV (*De*

[22] Cubitt 2015; Gatch 1977, 105-127; Godden 1994; Lionarons 2010, 43-74.

[23] Bethurum Ia/b, II and III are traditionally dated to Wulfstan's tenure as bishop of London. Bethurum 1957, 101-102 and Wormald 2004, 26 also assign Bethurum IV and V to this period, while Pons-Sanz 2007, 18-25 believes them to have been produced between 1002 and 1008.

[24] Wulfstan ultimately drew on Dan 7:25 for the duration of Antichrist's rule and on Rev 11:2-13 for the need for preachers to instruct people against his persecutions. Amongst his secondary sources were Augustine's third homily on John, Gregory's *Moralia in Job* (esp. book 28 in cap. 38 B. Job and book 32 in cap. 41 B. Job; PL 76, pp. 484 and 713), and possibly Adso's *De Ortu et Tempore Anticristi*. See Bethurum 1957, 282-283; Hall 2004, 95; Lionarons 2010, 55-56.

[25] Bethurum III, 24/20-3: *And ðy us deriað 7 ðearle dyrfað fela ungelimpa 7 ælþeodige men 7 utancumene swyðe us swencað, ealswa Crist on his godspelle swutollice sæde þæt scolde geweorðan. He cwæð:* Surget gens contra gentem "And therefore many evil events injure and afflict us harshly, and foreigners and strangers severely oppress us, just as Christ clearly said must happen in his Gospel. He said, *Nation will rise up against nation*". Translation of Wulfstan's apocalyptic sermons can be found on Lionarons' website: http://webpages.ursinus.edu/jlionarons/wulfstan/wulfstan.html.

*Temporibus Antichristi*), where he also relied on Ælfric's ideas on the importance of a *god lar* ('good doctrine'; cf. Preface to the *Catholic Homilies*, ed. Clemoes 1997, 174) to resist the deceptions of the Antichrist. Bethurum V (*Secundam Marcum*) expands some of the material from Bethurum IV and it is the only homily in Wulfstan's corpus to feature a specific temporal reference as far as millennial expectations are concerned, as the Archbishop commented that *[þ]usend geara 7 eac ma is nu agan syððan Crist wæs mid mannum on menniscan hiwe, 7 nu syndon Satanases bendas swyðe toslopene*, *7 Antecristes tima is wel gehende* ("[a] thousand years and also more have now passed since Christ was among people in human form, and now Satan's bonds are very loose, and Antichrist's time is well at hand"; Bethurum V, 136-137/44-47).

Although Wulfstan never again wrote an entire homily on the figure of the Antichrist and on the Day of Judgement, he obviously invoked eschatological motives elsewhere in his corpus. Between 1002 and 1016, he took on the composition of a series of sermons devoted to lay and clerical instruction in the rudiments of the faith. The first sermon of the series, Bethurum VI, conveys an outline of Christian history from the creation to Judgement Day which serves as a chronicle of humanity's "recurrent cycles of sin and punishment".[26] Describing the Israelites as *swa wið God forworht þæt he let faran hæþenne here 7 forhergian eall þæt land* ("such criminals against God that He let a heathen army destroy all that land"; Bethurum VI, 149-150/116-117), Wulfstan presented the English with an Old Testament antecedent and reminded them of the Danish invasions as divine punishment of their moral corruption. As such, Bethurum VI became a transitional text marking the passage from Wulfstan's eschatological focus at the beginning of his career to the catechetic emphasis of his mature years.

[26] Godden 2004, 374.

Another transitional text which somewhat functioned as a bridge between Wulfstan's homiletic pieces and the legal texts is the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (1014, see below).[27] The *Sermo*, which survives in three versions of different length preserved in five manuscripts, was perfectly integrated in its apocalyptic context. It describes the intensification of evil before the coming of the Antichrist as represented by examples of English depravity. In addition, Wulfstan addresses the violence and suffering inflicted to the English by the Viking attacks, suggesting once again that they were a manifestation of *Godes yrre ofer þas þeode* (God's anger over this people; EI 128, C 126). Nonetheless, the question remains open whether the Danish invasions functioned as premises to the end of the world or as a punishment for local wrongdoings, and whether the English were called to repent in the face of the Last Judgement or to stop the ravaging of the Vikings.[28]

Concerning this salvific amendment, the transformation into a holy society could only happen when the country would be morally reformed through laws aiming for a society ordered according to God's will. As a consequence, it is not rare to find references to the need for repentance in the face of the upcoming Judgement in Wulfstan's political and juridical tracts. The *Institutes of Polity*, drawing on Bethurum VI (150/120-128), features one of Wulfstan's most visually dramatic descriptions of damnation. The Archbishop addresses the unrepentant sinners and describes the *ece wite* ('eternal punishment'; chap. 19, pp. 82-83) awaiting

[27] The *Sermo* is edited in Napier 1883, 156-167, based on MS E (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113); Bethurum 1957, in three separate editions based on different manuscripts, namely MSS BH (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 419 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343), C (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201), EI (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113 and London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.i); and Whitelock [1939] 1976, based on MS I (London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.i), to which I refer. The bibliography on the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* is extensive. Among the most recent contributions, see Cubitt 2017; Keynes 2007, 203-213 and Lionarons 2010, 149-60.

[28] Lionarons, 2010, 147-163; Wilcox 2004, 375-396 or Cowen 2004, 396-411.

them, but also offers a chance of salvation. Even in the seemingly ameliorated conditions of Cnut's reign, Wulfstan voiced his concern with lawlessness, treachery, and corruption by introducing references to the eternal punishment in hell in the laws drafted for the Danish king (I Cn 6.1, 7.3, 18, 25).[29] At the close of his career, in a highly legalistic homily possibly preached before Cnut and the *witan* (i.e. Napier L), Wulfstan combines passages and ideas from his earlier writings to give a warning about the inevitable coming of the Last Days. Although he no longer believed the end to be as imminent as he did during his tenure at London, Wulfstan feared that the English were once again committing those sins which brought about the Danish invasions and the political crisis of 1014. Thus, he used his rhetorical force to convince them to stop and repent before condemning their souls to the flames of hell.[30]

## 3. *The list of sinners*

Amidst the devices signalling Wulfstan's engagement with eschatology, the list of sinners stands out as one of the most recurrent and effective.[31] The present discussion will focus on such enumerations so as to show how they transform from elements perfectly integrated within the apocalyptic narrative content-wise into rhetorical tools aimed at impressing an audience still in need of salvation. Consequently, Wulfstan's use of the list at different stages of his career will be overviewed, from the earliest homilies embedded into the national crisis of 1014 (Bethurum VII and the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*) to the works written during the last years of his career (Napier L and Cnut's legislation).

[29] Wulfstan's socialising eschatology in *Polity* and I-II Cnut has been analysed in Di Giuseppe 2022.

[30] Lionarons 2010, 71-74 and 170-175.

[31] Cubitt 2017, 223-224.

### 3.1. *Lists and list-making: an overview*

There is no univocal and indisputable definition of 'list', as we can only ever approximate its structure as an abstraction functioning on the basis of enumeration and accumulation, which can be longer or shorter, consisting of items that comprise one word or a whole set of words, ordered or chaotic.[32]

The versatility of both the form and the function of the list has led scholars to postulate different descriptions of its role, although everyone seems to agree that enumerating serves as one of the most enduring means of processing knowledge and organising data relevant to human functioning in the world.[33] Accordingly, the list is an extremely archaic pattern, as early a written literary genre as we have, probably useful in circumstances where a more permanent record was preferable to individual or collective memory, from financial transactions to knowledge of one's own possessions.[34]

When lists are included in literary texts, the everyday device is creatively transformed from a pragmatic instrument fulfilling

[32] For an overview of list-making within different means of communication, see Belknap 2000 and 2004 (esp. pp. 1-35); Eco 2009; Goody 1977, 74-111; and Spufford 1989. Lists, traditionally neglected by narrative study, have recently undergone increased critical scrutiny. The journal *Style* published an issue in 2015 devoted entirely to them. More recently, the projects POLIMA («Le Pouvoir des Listes au Moyen Âge») and «Lists in Literature and Culture: Towards a Listology» have both contributed extensively to the study of the list, analysing the manifold functions of enumeration in literature and art. Among their contributions, see, for example, the comprehensive monographs *Le Pouvoir des Listes au Moyen Âge* (three volumes) and *Forms of List-Making: Epistemic, Literary, and Visual Enumeration*. A vast array of refinements and specifications concerning the definition of the list have been proposed, not least to differentiate catalogues from lists and other forms of enumeration (thus, e.g., Minchin 2001, 74-75 and Mainberger 2003, 4-6). In this paper 'list' and 'catalogue' are not firmly separated as the terms are conceptually interrelated and both could entail variation in the practice of enumeration.

[33] Barton *et al*. 2022, 5.

[34] The role of the list in Antiquity has been outlined in Belknap 2004, 8-10; Laemmle *et al.* 2021 and Scolnic 1995, 3-7.

a practical role to an aesthetic, narrative, and rhetorical device.[35] As such, the list survives in different literary traditions. It evidently enjoyed wide popularity in the Middle Ages, especially in pre-Conquest England, where it was attested in various forms such as glossaries, royal lists, episcopal lists, martyrologies, lapidaries, laws, genealogies, herbaria, and leechdoms, mostly grouped within the same manuscript context.[36] The pervasiveness of the pattern in Old English literature indicated that the authors acknowledged and accepted the list as structural principle, using it frequently in the attempt to make a given text memorable for the audience as well as for the compiler.[37]

### 3.2. *The rhetorical power of the list*

The list formed part of a set of devices, including alliteration, rhythm and rhyme, which featured noticeably in writings that suggested a traditional, perhaps oral origin within the context of an aural fruition, such as charms, laws, or homiletic literature.[38] The sermons, which were composed by a learned or semi-learned preacher, were intended for oral delivery, and the same devices that would have made legal or ritual practices memorable to a preliterate society would presumably have been useful for making church doctrine memorable to an unlettered populace within a semi-literate society.[39]

The complex relationship between orality and literacy in early England, as well as the very definition of traditional oral style,

[35] Barton *et al*. 2022, 3 and 5-10.

[36] Robinson 1980, 27.

[37] Mainbenger 2003, 6, 164-175; Carruthers 2008, 99-152. The specific English case has been surveyed by Barney 1982; Howe 1985; and Callander 2019, 151-184. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for suggesting further useful reference on the subject, that is Hill 1993. The paper offers a comparative overview of Old English preaching styles and sermons used as exhortative material.

[38] The charms were explicitly meant to be sung or recited, while the laws were meant to be read in public, sometimes even from the pulpit.

[39] Chapman 2002, 3-5; Orchard 1992, 244 and 248.

must be considered in light of the interactions of composition, transmission, and performance of a given text.[40] Besides the orality of a preliterate society that would make extensive use of memorised phrases to transmit important knowledge, we may indeed acknowledge the existence of a further type of orality, that of a literate society that still relied on oral performances, even though the material had been written down. As a consequence, the inventiveness of Old English verse and prose was allegedly rooted into native poetic tradition inherited from an oral Germanic past and appealing to auditory imagination, as well as into the new literary Latin culture, mostly Christian and bookish.[41] In addition, individual creativity and the authors' own linguistic awareness surely played a key role in literary compilation.

Among the Old English preachers, Wulfstan stood out as an author who decided to compose in the traditional oral style of vernacular verse, although he evidently inherited an awareness of the use of rhyme, rhythm, and parallel structure from the learned culture entrenched in grammar.[42] In particular, he showed great skill with the combination of such devices and with acoustic figures, which proved particularly effective for orally delivered homilies and sermons.[43]

As one of the many structural devices common to both versification and preaching, the list became perfectly consistent with Wulfstan's repetitive rhetoric as a means of appealing to English congregations. The Archbishop employed his metrical catalogues

[40] See at least O'Brien O'Keeffe 1990; Orchard 1997, 2003 and 2009.

[41] Steen 2008, 3.

[42] While rhetorical instruction in the classical sense cannot be claimed for England, the *grammatici* were involved in teaching the figures and tropes in the tradition of grammatical rhetoric. See for example Knappe 1996 and 1998; and Steen 2008, 7-20.

[43] Knappe 1998, 24. Among the mnemonic techniques used to present religious material, the enumerative style surely stands out as one of the most pervasive ones. Wulfstan himself relied on enumerations in his works (e.g. the eight columns that support the kingdom, the three orders of society). On the subject, see Wright 1989 and 1993, 49-105.

repeatedly in his corpus and, in order to highlight their effects on the audience, he construed them relying on what one might call characteristic formulae, such as the echoic compounds, alliterative doublets or chiming phrases.[44] Wulfstan rephrased the constitutive elements of his enumerative passages, reworking familiar themes to suit different occasions and, in doing that, he addressed one of the time-honoured homiletic preoccupations in Old English religious writing, that is the description of the torments of hell and the joy of heaven.

### 3.3. *Wulfstan's lists of sinners: sources, uses, and echoes*

Wulfstan's familiarity with the structure of the list was the result of his rhetorical artistry as well as of his knowledge of both the biblical and the patristic tradition. In particular, the list of sinners and the list of wrongdoings were common enough in the Scripture, occurring for example in Rev 22:15 or Gal 5:19. Pauline themes from I Cor 6:9-10 and I Tim 1:9-10 have also been detected not only in Wulfstan's fulminations against sinners but also in Old English poetry, namely in the Exeter Book poem *Christ C* (*ASPR* III, ll. 1609-12) which describes the fate of *þeofas* 'thieves', *þeodsceaþan* 'enemies of the people', *lease* 'liars', *forlegene* 'fornicators' and *mansworan* 'perjurers' at Doomsday.[45]

Elsewhere in his corpus, Wulfstan made use of a different enumerative tradition, that is the Cassianic order of the eight chief sins. Although Cassian's sources are virtually unknown, his eightfold scheme resembles that of Nilus (d. *ca.* 430) and Evagrius of Pontus (d. *ca.* 400), who was the first orthodox Christian writer to employ the list of the cardinal sins. A century and a half later than Cassian, Gregory the Great discussed his sevenfold sequence.[46] Early England inherited both the Cassianic and the

[44] Orchard 1992, 257-258.

[45] The parallel between the Wulfstanian catalogue and the *Christ C* one probably stems from common reliance on a pre-existing sermon tradition that employed the same trope. Cf. Morey 2012, 453 and Orchard 2007, 332-334.

[46] The so-called Cassianic order of vices is as follows: gluttony, fornication,

Gregorian catalogue, which remained very present and competed effectively throughout the early Middle Ages until the thirteenth century, when the sevenfold list of Gregory predominated. Many such lists, with numerous minor variants attested in early English texts, can be traced back to either Cassian or Gregory through Alcuin's *Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis*, which proved very influential, especially on homilists.

Wulfstan himself took inspiration from Alcuin and wrote two short tracts in Old English on the doctrine of the eight principal vices and virtues. As in Alcuin's treatise, Wulfstan described pride as the first sin, immediately followed by *g[ī/ȳ]fernes* ('greediness, gluttony, ed. Wilcox 1991, 9-10). Elsewhere, Wulfstan stuck to the Cassianic order and grouped *gītsung* 'avarice' and *g[ī/ȳ]-fernes* in the first position (e.g. Bethurum Xc, 203/63-64), just as Ælfric did in his tract on the eight vices and the twelve abuses (*De Octo Uitiis et de Duodecim Abusiuis Gradus*, ed. Clayton 2013, 144/12-17). Bethurum XI features a further variation, which differs in content and number (nine items) from both the Cassianic and Gregorian order as it includes vices that are often found in penitentials and secular law. Nonetheless, the contrast between *idel renco* 'vainglory' and *ofertruwa* 'arrogance, pride' seems to be Cassianic, as Cassian maintained the Evagrian distinction between vainglory, the seventh struggle, and pride, the eighth and final struggle.

A further example of Wulfstan's engagement with the pattern of the list, somewhat related to the enumeration of sins and evildoers, is the catalogue of calamities, of which the Archbishop made use several times. The ultimate source of this catalogue is Lev 26:3-12, which features a warning against the desperate consequences

avarice, anger, sadness, sloth, vainglory and pride (each of books 5 through 12 of *De Institutis Coenobiorum* deals with one sin). Gregory, on the other hand, lists pride as being the root of all evil, the 'beginning of all sin', from which spring vainglory, envy, anger, sadness, avarice, gluttony and lust (cf. *Moralia in Job*, xxxi.45, PL 76, pp. 620-621). See Bloomfield 1952: 45, 59-61 and 69-75.

of disobedience to the Lord.[47] Wulfstan condensed the narrative to obtain generalised exhortations and consequently recast the catalogue in a highly rhetorical and verse-like passage based on alliteration and rhyme, e.g. in Bethurum V, 140-141/102-108. Variations of this list also appear in the Latin section of *Be godcundre warnung* (Bethurum XIX, 251/8-26). In the Old English section, Wulfstan moved away from *verbatim* reproduction of the Biblical text and translated selectively so that the calamities would remind the English of the problems they were facing at the beginning of the eleventh century, namely the famine and the foreign invasions. The *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* contains a further elaboration of the list of calamities at ll. 55-62, perfectly interposed in a sermon devoted to the failing years of Æthelred's reign.

## 4. *The evolution of Wulfstan's lists of sinners*

No two of the lists of sinners created by Wulfstan are exactly identical. The variability of such catalogues is evident in the varying length and number of items, but also in their rearrangement and reworking, which may be traced back to the fluidity and variation typical of Old English sermons in general, and of Wulfstanian homilies in particular, where the degree of textual *mouvance* and *variance* surpassed that of most known genres in early England.[48] Such textual fluidity might be the result of Wulfstan's techniques of composition, first among many the reliance on memory. The mnemonic transmission of homiletic motifs drawn from the repertoire of devotional and eschatological commonplaces inhabiting the mind of Old English preachers functioned as a trigger and was possibly responsible for various sorts of contaminations.[49] Nonetheless, in Wulfstan's case, deviations from both the ulti-

[47] Bethurum 1957, 36 and 48; Lionarons 2010, 149.

[48] For the concepts of textual *mouvance* and *variance*, see respectively Zumthor 1972, 71-72 and *passim* and Cerquiglini 1989. The fluidity of Old English homilies has been acknowledged, among others, by Godden 1975 and Scragg 1977.

[49] Di Sciacca 2008, 135; O'Brien O'Keeffe 1990, 41. See also Teresi 2000.

mate sources and his own recasting of scriptural themes were not only due to the mechanics of mnemonic composition or manuscript transmission, but to the literate technique of intentionally piecing passages together to form a new sermon in order to serve the specific needs of the occasion.[50]

Wulfstan's lists of sinners were built through rhythmically rich variations of alliterative binomials and echoic compounds.[51] These devices made the spoken word easy to memorise, supported Wulfstan's fondness for sound parallelism and repetition and were fundamental in the grouping of sinners in clusters according to the crime they committed. As he recast the lists at different stages of his career and for different purposes, distinctions in tone and number across Wulfstan's enumeration of sinners might also result from the evolution of his own theological and political ideology in response to the events of his time. For the purpose of this paper, the focus will be on how the alliterating catalogue, which first appears in *De Fide Catholica* (Bethurum sermon no. 7, p. 163 and ll. 128-134), is then reworked not only in the longest version of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (Bethurum sermon no. 20, p. 273 and ll. 161-166) but also in Wulfstan's legal writings and political tracts (in which case the list comes to describe earthly sinners, namely criminals proper).

### 4.1. *Bethurum VII and the* Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*: the 'apocalyptic' context of the list*

Bethurum VII formed part of Wulfstan's educational programme and stressed the importance for all Christians to understand their faith by learning the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, whose knowledge (either in Latin or in the vernacular) was decreed by canon law and regarded as fundamental by Bede, Ælfric, and Wulfstan himself.[52] Wulfstan probably translated the two prayers (edited

[50] Tristram 1995, 4.

[51] See Chapman 2002 and 2017; Davis-Secord 2008 and 2016, 140-166.

[52] In his letter to Ecgbert (ed. Plummer 1896, 405-423, esp. 409), Bede instructed that bishops had the duty to teach the Lord's Prayer and the Creed

as Bethurum VIIa/Napier XXVI) in preparation for their interpretation in VII. In particular, the Creed gave him the chance to expand on the description of the Day of Judgement (Bethurum VII, 161-164/93-158), a passage whose popularity is evidenced by the number of times its phrasings and imagery were borrowed and reworked in future compositions. Wulfstan also added innovative elements in this apocalyptic vision and, indeed, Bethurum VII (163/128-134) features the first elaborated version of his alliterating list of sinners. The list follows a passage which agrees verbally with Bethurum III, 126-127/65-80.

As mentioned above, Bethurum III was a highly rhetorical homily where the current calamities of Wulfstan's time were equated with the intensification of wickedness preceding the Day of Judgement. Drawing on Mt 24:10 and 24, the section from III paralleled in VII dealt with the defection of Christians as a consequence of the deception performed by false prophets, and the expressiveness of the passage is heightened by the enumerative catalogue of sinners. Wulfstan possibly reworked the list from his own translation of chapter 45 of Amalarius of Metz's *De Regula Canonicorum* (Bethurum Xa, 192/11-18), where Amalarius relied on a combination of parts of the Decalogue and Mt 7:12 to enumerate evildoers. This translation predated VII, but it already showed Wulfstan's attempt to put the commandments into memorable form through alliteration. The list in VII would result not only from the contamination of further biblical cata-

in Latin or English so that the community knew how to be faithful and defend themselves against evil. Similarly, Ælfric included the prayers among the texts and topics presented as fundamental to the faith (Gatch 2000, 93-99; Upchurch 2009, 226). In line with Bede, Ælfric and Frankish sources, Wulfstan expected his audience to learn the Creed and the Lord's Prayer as a minimum requirement for initiation and participation in communal worship. He addressed the question repeatedly in his corpus (Bethurum VIIIc/142-143, p. 182; Bethurum Xc/170-171, p. 209; *Canons* 17 and 22; Napier 59/20-23, p. 307; I Cn 22), drawing mainly on chapter 22 of Thedulf's *Capitula* (ed. Sauer 1978, 333). For the centrality of the two prayers, see Dumitrescu 2018, 38-42; Foxhall Forbes 2013, 41-43; Gatch 2000, 78-108.

logues (e.g. Gal 5:19 and I Tim 1:9-10), but also from Wulfstan's fondness of sound-repetition, perfectly suited to a homily meant to impress upon the audience the urgency of his message.

The list of sinners in Bethurum VII was then further expanded in the longest version of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*. The longest text (202 lines) is attested in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113 and London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.i, where the rubrics provide information concerning the year of composition and respectively read *in dies Æþelredi regis* (with an early modern hand supplying *Anno Christi 1009* in the margin), and *millesimo xiiii* written over an erasure supposedly changing the date from 1009 (the year of the invasion guided by Thorkell the Tall) to 1014, the year following Sweyn and Cnut's invasion.[53] In such a context, Wulfstan's addition of a further eschatological element such as the list of sinners seems consistent with the apocalyptic context of the longest version of the *Sermo*, which dates back to a time when the English needed to repent more than ever before and thus established a link between the Scriptural multiplication of wickedness and Æthelred's misgovernment. Once again, the enumerative passage offered Wulfstan the opportunity to convince the people that national calamities were caused by their sins and would not stop unless they repented.[54] The *Sermo* was explicit in addressing the topic, as the metrical catalogue itself possibly reminded the audience of Wulfstan's own past indictments rooted in eschatological thought at the beginning of his career.

[53] In fact, Wilcox argues for 1014 as date of composition, stating that the version in Hatton 113/Nero A.i is the closest one to the first oral delivery during a meeting of the *witan* in York on 16 February. The council had been summoned to acknowledge and perhaps crown Sweyn as king, although the agenda radically changed after the latter's sudden death. See Wilcox 2004, 381 and 391.

[54] As for the moral and exhortative nature of the *Sermo Lupi*, a valuable contribution is Jurovics 1978.

### 4.2. *Napier L and Cnut's legislation: the list as a rhetorical tool*

Napier L was possibly intended to be preached in Oxford at the 1018 meeting of king and *witan*.[55] The sermon combined passages and ideas from Wulfstan's earlier writings to give a warning about the inevitable coming of the Last Days.[56] In doing that, Wulfstan addressed the evil times as if they were in the past and far from Cnut's apparently peaceful kingdom (note the repeated use of *ær þysan* 'hitherto' and *ær þysum* 'id.' throughout the homily), but still he hinted at his eschatological expectations and anxieties. Apart from explicit references to the apocalypse (Napier L, 268/10-11; 269/19-20; 270/25-27), Wulfstan mentioned themes that are usually associated with the Last Judgement and with Antichrist, namely the sins of the flesh and those of deception, hypocrisy and violations of chastity. To do that, he used the most-recycled catalogue of sinners, albeit in a different vein. While Bethurum VII and the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* listed inhabitants of hell and unrepentant sinners within the scriptural teaching on the Last Days, Napier L recast the list as a catalogue of earthly criminals instead, interposed in a passage about the duties of a just Christian king, who had to expel evil from his country. Thus, the list did not form part of an apocalyptic narrative, but rather became an instrument of social reformation and a means to understand which members of the society were to be condemned and corrected.

Wulfstan's legal tracts drafted under Cnut featured a similar approach to the lists of sinners, which occurred in Cnut 1018 7-10, Cnut 1020 5 and II Cn 4, 6 and 7. While Cnut 1018 most likely represented the enactments of the meeting held at Oxford

[55] See Lionarons 2010, 34 and 173; Pons-Sanz 2007, 25; Wormald [1999] 2001, 335 and 356-360. Bethurum (1957, 39-40) and DeLeeuw (1972, 41) date the homily ca. 1020 instead.

[56] Even though he rejects Wulfstan's authorship of this homily, Jost 1950, 249-261 identifies its sources: *Polity*, VI Æthelred, I Cnut, Ælfric's Old English letters to Wulfstan, the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* and three eschatological homilies. It is likely that Wulfstan did not interweave consciously these texts but rather quoted himself from memory. Cf. Lionarons 2010, 172.

between the English and the Danes as described in the *ASC* entry for the same year, Cnut 1020 was a letter first composed during Cnut's return to Denmark and subsequently revised by the Archbishop for further circulation, oral delivery or inclusion in the York Gospels.[57] Both texts saw the king promising to rule justly, safeguarding the rights of the Church and just secular law while also acknowledging his subordination to the greatest authority of all, that is God, who could deprive him of power unless he governed wisely.[58] The list of sinners signalled here one of the ways the king could use to attain such goals, that is the expulsion of wrongdoers. When the list appeared in Cnut's secular code (viz. II Cnut), the clauses did not prescribe any earthly punishments for the sinners, as the catalogue itself served uniquely as a rhetorical tool in a sermonising passage intended to reach a specific dramatic effect.

From the discussion above, it is evident that Wulfstan's grievances for the pain and sorrow afflicting the world at the end of time underwent a major change in tone and emphasis over the years. Bethurum VII and the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, which drew heavily on Wulfstan's earliest eschatological sermons, included the list of sinners as an element perfectly consistent with the apocalyptic narrative of the tribulations preceding the coming of the Antichrist. Conversely, the list featured in Napier L and in Wulfstan's codes drafted for Cnut evoked a feeling quite different from that produced by his emphasis on the terror and persecutions that would come with the Antichrist and by his thundering condemnation of the sins and crimes of the present day. At this stage of his career, Wulfstan's awareness of the end of the Danish invasions as well as his own advancing age and, maybe, frailty contributed to the shift in his eschatological expectations, which did not lessen but rather transformed into a tool to warn the

[57] Bolton 2009, 83-84; Lawson 1992, 584-585 and [1993] 2011, 63-64; Treharne 2012, 21-27.

[58] Bethurum Loomis 1971, 137-138; Stafford 1971, 188-189; Trilling 2007, 66-78.

people against the dangers of false messiahs. Consequently, the list of sinners became a rhetorical *figura* itself, which reminded the audience of Wulfstan's earliest eschatological condemnations, but was used at this stage to convey his political concerns as well.

### 4.3. *What's in a list? A survey of Wulfstan's sinners*[59]

The homilists focused their efforts to provide a guide for proper Christian behaviour and on making available to the parish clergy in English the materials which were essential to their pastoral functions. The lists analysed above were clearly indebted to Scriptural material and, while some references to Christian behaviour were common in all medieval homiletic literature (e.g. the deadly sins or the Ten Commandments), others pointed to Wulfstan's current concerns with specific sins and crimes which were considered particularly heinous in England.

The catalogues included references to the so-called *botleas* crimes (cf. II Cn 64), that is theft and robbery, murder and treachery against one's lord. Such crimes were generally unredeemable and thus only punishable by death.[60]

*Gitseras* ('avaricious ones, misers') were grouped with *ryperas* 'robbers, plunderers, spoilers', *reaferas* 'id.' and *woruldstruderas* 'spoilers, plunderers of this world's goods', as the vice of *gitsung* 'avarice', starting in the early Christian era, became one of the leading signs of the imminent end of the world, transmitted

[59] The present paragraph is a summarised overview of the lexical and semantic analysis which will appear in my final PhD thesis, in which I deal with the role of the list within Wulfstan's corpus and in which I specifically focus on the members of his alliterative catalogues so as to explore the ideological and rhetorical reason(s) behind the Archbishop's lexical choices.

[60] Contradictory as it might seem, Wulfstan seemed concerned with the persecution of criminals and the imposition of the death penalty *for alles to litlum* ('for too trivial offences', V Atr 3), so much that mutilation and exile were also an option for some crimes (e.g. mutilation, II Cn 30.4-5; exile of thieves – including priests aiding in the act, VIII Atr 27, I Cn 5.3 and II Cn 30.9).

as such in Patristic thought and in the Middle Ages.[61] Notably, avarice was even described as the cause of thieving and robbery (e.g. Ælfric's *Dominica in Media Quadragesime*, CH II.12.2, 124/507-10). The cluster on theft included the binomial *þeofas 7 ðeodscaðan* 'thieves and destroyers', thus insisting on the atrocity of the crime. Theft, frequently addressed from the earliest laws (e.g. Wi 26 and 28), was regarded as a violation of the oath sworn to the king not to engage in criminal activities (e.g. II Cn 21) and as a form of defiance of national peace (e.g. Ine 10).

*Mannslagan* 'manslayers' and *morđwyrhtan* 'murderers' were both used to denote murderers, although *morđ* signalled that the killing happened in secrecy and was thus deemed as particularly heinous.[62] *Mægslagan* 'kin-slayers' was added to the group in the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, Napier L and Cnut 1020 5. Kin-slaying seems to have held a great importance in the value system of the different Germanic peoples, who shared tales characterised by fratricide and other forms of breaching of the familial ties. One such tale even resulted in the beginning of the apocalypse in Norse mythology.[63] The English, who lived in a highly segmented society based on the basic bonds to lords and kin, had every interest in restraining violence within the community and thus regarded the killing of relatives as a particularly despicable act.

Given the importance of oath-giving in pre-Conquest England (attested by the presence of the alliterative pair *wēdlogan and*

[61] According to the Bible, avarice was the root of all evil (I Tim 6:10). Moreover, both Gregory and Cassian, whose discussion and lists of sins were most influential in the Old English period (see above), condemned avarice as one of the oldest vices, even revealed in Adam's fall (cf. the threefold temptation of Adam *mid gyfernesse, and mid idelum wuldre and mid gitsunge* in *Dominica Prima in Quadragesima*, CH I.11, 271/155, where Ælfric drew on Gregory's *Homilia XVI* in *Evangelia* 2-3, PL 76, 1136).

[62] O'Brien 1996; Saltzman 2019, 30-32.

[63] The slaying of a brother at the hands of another found its most renowned expression in the episode of Baldr's death caused by his brother Hǫđr. For further examples of kin-slaying as a form of defiance of the communal bonds, see Lambert 2009, 61-62; Lambert 2017; Mitchell 2012, 7-8 and 14.

*wærlogan*[64] in Napier L), it comes as no surprise that Wulfstan included *hlafordswican* 'traitors of one's own lord', *manswican* 'traitors' and *mansworan* 'perjurers' in his list, especially because the *ASC* itself recorded several episodes of treason even against the king.[65] Moreover, of the nineteen extant references to perjury in the laws, twelve occur in codes associated with Wulfstan. Among the reasons behind such growing anxiety over oath-swearing, the Reformist and post-Reaction emphasis on false testimony surely played an important role.[66]

Wulfstan dealt extensively with condemnations of paganism which, by virtue of his traditional mode of writing, often stood couched in the most general of terms.[67] In the lists under discussion, the heathen threat was represented by *wiccan* 'witches',[68] *wigleras* 'diviners, sooth-sayers' and *wælcyrian*.[69] Sorcery must

[64] The words conveyed the meaning of 'oath-breaker'. They can both be traced back to the wider homiletic theme of lying and deceit, which was particularly relevant in eleventh-century homilies (cf. the occurrence of *leogeras* 'liars' and *lic(c)eteras* 'hypocrites' in the catalogues under discussion) and inherent to other sins, such as treason and perjury. Cf. Greenfield 1981, 90-91.

[65] The Æthelredian annals were pervaded with such episodes (e.g. the treason of Ælfric, s.a. 992 and 1003), but also with examples of punishments for traitors (s.a. 1006, where blinding, confiscation of land and death were prescribed) and with army leaders running away from battle (s.a. 993, 998, 999, 1009, 1010; cf also V Atr 28 and 28.1 where death or payment were prescribed as a punishment for deserting).

[66] Ammon 2013; Rabin 2013, 249-251 and 2020b, 36-37.

[67] When Wulfstan used the words *hæþen*, *hæþenscipe*, *hæþendom*, Wulfstan never meant to address uniquely pagans but referred to sins and shortcomings resulting in criminal and anti-social behaviour. See Meaney 2004.

[68] The word survives as a feminine (OE *wicce*) and a masculine (OE *wicca*). Unless its gender is proven by contextual evidence, *wicc[a/e]* cannot simply be regarded as masculine or feminine because it often appeared in the plural, and the weak feminine and weak masculine nouns are distinguished only in the nominative singular. In this case, the meaning 'witch' can be assumed as the masculine sense is conveyed by *wigleras*.

[69] Although the word has often been interpreted in relation to its better-known Norse cognate, *wælcyrge* was used in Old English especially in glossaries to point to Graeco-Roman deities (the Furies, Venus and Bellona) or

have been a real threat in early medieval England, as injunctions against it occurred in homilies, penitentials (cf. *Old English Penitential*, respectively Y44.12.01, Y44.14.01 and Y44.16.01)[70] and law codes (e.g. AfEl 30 or II As 6), where both beneficial and injurious magical rituals came to be discredited within the eyes of the Church and the community. *Wiccan* and *wælcyrian*, in particular, suggested Wulfstan's concern with the feminine as something linked to sexual deviance and perverse magic. Although magic was not exclusively feminine, in the case of *wælcyrge* Wulfstan was rejecting a symbol of both idolatry and female empowerment, the latter implied by a word such as *valkyrie* which clearly had very ancient connections with strong women deciding upon the destiny of men.[71]

Unsanctioned sexual activity featured as *æwbrecan* 'breakers of the (marriage) law, adulterers', *hōrcwenan* 'adulteresses', *horingas* 'adulterers' and *myltestran* 'prostitutes'. OE *hōrcwene* and *hōring*, which are only recorded in Wulfstan's corpus, may well be intended respectively as 'fornicatress, adulteress' and 'fornicator, adulterer' because, in line with Augustine's concern for the detrimental social consequences of the expulsion of harlots (cf. *De Ordine*, ed. Green 1970, 114), Wulfstan would have been less keen on shunning prostitution rather than adultery.[72] Although there is no evidence at all for organised prostitution in England, one of its most deplorable characteristics was not so much the commercial aspect of the act (that prostitutes had sex for money), as that they often practiced infanticide or contraception.[73] Conse-

to the Gorgons (*The Wonders of the East*, cf. 4.2 and 9.1). Wulfstan intended *wælcyrge* to denote a human being rather than a supernatural one, and more specifically he might have wanted to condemn some kind of female diviner or necromancer.

[70] Cf. Frantzen's digital edition, *Anglo-Saxon Penitentials: A Cultural Database*, at http://www.anglo-saxon.net/penance/index.php.

[71] Lacey 2021, 203-209; Meaney 2004, 495-498; and Simek 1993, 349-350.

[72] Coleman 2001; and Pons-Sanz 2011.

[73] Ælfric addressed prostitution in a list of sinners condemned in hell with the devil, in which he qualified the *fracodan myltestran* with *ðe acwellað*

quently, *myltestran* was paired with *bearnmyrđran* 'infanticides' in the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*. Although the sin *per se* was not singled out as specifically prevalent or evil in Wulfstan's lists, it must certainly have been one of the archbishop's immediate concerns due to the high deathrate in England around the year 1000, and more specifically to the phenomenon of widespread infant mortality.

The addition of *mæsserbanan* 'slayers of a priest' and *mynsterhatan* 'persecutors of a monastery' to the enumerative passage in the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, and of *cyrichatan* 'church-persecutors', *sacerdbanan* 'slayers of a priest' and *hādbrecan* 'the ones who injure a person in holy orders' in Napier L is consistent with the precarious state of church estates from the late ninth century onwards, and especially in the eleventh century when churches were not only victims of Viking depredations but also ended up being controlled by lay patrons or lords who held the land on which they were built and could potentially buy or sell them according to their need and desire.[74] As Wulfstan himself supposedly faced such problems when he was promoted to the dioceses of Worcester and York, he often addressed the topic of Church protection in his homiletic and legal corpus.

Although the catalogues were produced at different stages of Wulfstan's career, echoes across their items indicated that certain crimes must have continued to threaten the English community, both socially and morally.

## 5. *Concluding remarks*

Scholars have long addressed the ambiguity of Wulfstan's personal belief concerning the Endtime, as the evolution of his eschatological thought continued to the end of his life. The references to the Antichrist, to the Day of Judgement and to the passing of

*heora cild* ('who kill their children', cf. SH.11, 440/382). Cf. Caie 1998 and Rudolf 2018.

[74] Baxter 2004; Bethurum 1957, 326-327 and Lionarons 2010, 98-100.

the millennium have led to question whether the Archbishop truly thought that the world would collapse in the year 1000. Interestingly, Wulfstan's eschatology undergoes a change in tone throughout his career, which can be detected by the way he employed some of his apocalyptic tropes, such as the list of sinners. As Wulfstan "arranged his sentences for the ear, not for the eyes",[75] the lists were perfectly integrated into his repetitive rhetoric but their role in narrative shifted over time. Bethurum VII and the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, which reflected the time of tribulations preceding the coming of the Antichrist, included the list of sinners in a Biblical description of the English national decadence. Conversely, as the years, his career and the Viking invasions wore on, the list became more of a stylistic device, useful to reform the English society by organising its members, even visually and rhetorically in a text. The continued engagement with eschatological themes in Wulfstan's corpus thus signals that he did not believe the apocalypse to be an imminent event but rather came to see it as a metaphor for the decline of the unrepentant English society.[76]

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[75] Bethurum 1966, 230.

[76] Lionarons 2010, 47-49; Rabin 2015, 40-43.

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# APPENDIX

## 1.1. De Fide Catholica *(Bethurum VII, ll. 128-34/Napier 3, p. 26 ll. 14-8 and p. 27 ll. 1-3)*

***B*** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 419 (s. XI[1], possibly Christ Church, Canterbury; Ker 68 (along with CCCC 421), Gneuss 108), pp. 161-82; **C** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 201 (s. XI[in] vol. I – s. XI[med] vol. II and III, possibly New Minster, Winchester; Ker 49, Gneuss 65/65.5), pp. 15-19; ***E*** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113 (s. XI[3/4], Worcester; Ker 331a, Gneuss 637), fols. 10[v]-16[r]. Text based on ***E***.

*Ðyder sculan*
***mannslagan****, and ðider sculan* ***manswican****; ðider sculan* ***æwbrecan***
130 *and ða* ***fulan forlegenan****; ðider sculan* ***mānsworan*** *and*
***morðwyrhtan****;*
*ðider sculan* ***gitseras, ryperas*** *and* ***reaferas*** *and* ***woruldstruderas****;*
*ðider sculon* ***þeofas*** *and* ***ðeodscaðan****; ðyder sculon* ***wiccan*** *and*
***wigleras*** *and, hrædest to secganne, ealle þa manfullan, þe ār yfel worhton and noldan geswican ne wið God þingjan.*[1]

**128** đider *B*; scylan *B* cumeđ (from cymđ) *C* **129** manslagan *B* mānslagan *C*; þider *BC*; scylan *B* cumađ *C*; þider C; scylan B; æwbrecan *C* (æwbrecan:) <u>adulteri</u> *E* **130** þa *BC*; fūlan *C* fule *E*; forlēgenan *C*; þider *BC*; scylan *B* sculon *C*; (mansworan:) <u>periurii</u> *E* (morðwyrhtan:) uenefici **131** þider *B* đyder *C*; scylan *B* gītseras and *C*; rȳperas *C*; worldstruteras *C* þas woruldstruderas *B* **132** þider *B* þyder *C*; scylan *B*; þēofas *C*; þeodsceaðan *B* þēodscaþan *C* (ðeodscaðan:) <u>utlawas</u> *E*; đider *B*; scylan *B* **133** wigeleras *B* wīg-

[1] "There shall go / man-slayers and there shall go traitors; there shall go adulterers / and foul fornicators; there shall go perjurers and murderers; / and foul fornicators; there shall go perjurers and murderers; / there shall go misers, robbers and plunderers and spoilers of this world's goods; / there shall go thieves and enemies of the people; there shall go witches and / wizards, and, to put it simply, all the wicked who previously worked evil / and did not want to cease nor to pray to God." Translation is my own.

leras *C*; rādost *C* (hrædest:) cicius; [is] to *E*; mānfullan *C* (manfullan:) iniqui *E*; đe *C*; ær *BC* **134** noldon *C*; (þingjan:) bidden *E*.

1.2. Sermo Lupi ad Anglos *(long version, MSS EI; Whitelock 1976, pp. 64-5 ll. 167-73)*

***E*** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113 (s. XI$^{3/4}$, Worcester; Ker 331a, Gneuss 637), fols. 84$^{v}$-90$^{v}$; ***I*** London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.i (s. XI$^{ex}$ vol. I – X$^{in}$ vol. II, Worcester or York; Ker 163-4, Gneuss 340-1), fols. 110$^{r}$-115$^{r}$. Text based on ***I***.

[…] *Her syndan* ***mannslagan***
*and* ***mægslagan*** *and* ***mæsserbanan*** *and* ***mynsterhatan****, and her syndan* ***mānsworan*** *and* ***morþorwyrhtan****, and her syndan*
170 ***myltestran*** *and* ***bearnmyrđran*** *and* ***fule forlegene horingas***
*manege, and her syndan* ***wiccan*** *and* ***wælcyrian****, and her syndan* ***ryperas*** *and* ***reaferas*** *and* ***worolstruderas,*** *and, hrædest is to cweþenne, māna and misdæda ūngerim ealra.*[2]

**167** (mannslagan:) homicide *E*; swa we ær sædon added after her in *E* **168** (mægslagan:) parricide *E*; sacerdbanan instead of mæsserbanan in *E*; (mynsterhatan:) hadio *E*; hlafordswican and æbere (: abroþene) apostatan added after mynsterhatan in *E* **169** (morþorwyrhtan:) uenefici *E*; and her syndan hādbrecan and æwbrecan (: adulteri) and đurh siblegeru and đurh mistlice forligeru (: libidine) forsyngode swyđe added after morþorwyrhtan in *E* **170** *r* of myltestran added above in *I*; (myltestran:) meretrices *E* **171** *e* erased after c in wælcyrian; wælcerian *E* **172** and þeofas

[2] "Here there are manslayers / and slayers of their kinsmen, and slayers of priests and persecutors of monasteries, (MS E and traitors and open apostates) and here / there are perjurers and murderers, (MS E and here there are injurers of men in orders and adulterers and people greatly corrupt through incest and various fornications) and here there are / harlots and infanticides and many foul adulterous fornicators, / and here there are wizards and sorceresses, and here there are / plunderers and robbers and spoliators, (MS E and thieves and injurers of the people and breakers of pledges and treaties) and, in short, / a countless number of all crimes and misdeeds." Trans. by Whitelock 1979, 1001.

and þeodscaðan and wedlogan and wærlogan added after worolstruderas *E*; woruldstruderas *E*; (hrædest:) sonest *E* **173** (māna:) scelus *E*; ungerim *E*; (ungerim:) innumerabile *E*.

### 1.3. Larspell *(Napier 50, p. 266 ll. 24-9 ad p. 267 l. 1)*

***A*** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 421 (s. XI[1], possibly Christ Church, Canterbury; Ker 68 (along with CCCC 419); Gneuss 109), pp. 209-21.

*He sceal māndæde men þreagean þearle mid*
**25** *woroldlicre steore, and he sceal* ***morđwyrhtan***, ***hlaford-swican*** *and* ***mānswaran***, ***mannslagan*** *and* ***mægslagan***, ***cyrichatan*** *and* ***sacerdbanan***, ***hādbrecan*** *and* ***æwbrecan***, ***þeofas*** *and* ***þeodsceaþan***, ***ryperas*** *and* ***reaferas***, ***leogeras*** *and* ***liceteras***, ***wēdlogan*** *and* ***wærlogan*** *hatjan and hynan*
1 *and eallum godes feondum styrnlice wiđstandan.*[3]

**24** *y* from i in wyllan

### 1.4. *Cnut's legislation*

#### 1.4.1. Cnut 1018 7-10 *(Rabin 2020, 214-5)*

***C*** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 201 (s. XI[in] vol. I – s. XI[med] vol. II and III, possibly New Minster, Winchester; Ker 49, Gneuss 65/65.5), pp. 126-30.

7. *[…] and gif* ***wiccan*** *ođđe* ***wigleras***, ***morđwirhtan*** *ođđe*

[3] "He must punish evil men severely with / secular discipline, and he must detest and destroy murderers, / traitors and perjurers, homicides and parricides, / enemies of the Church and slayers of priests, those who *injure people in the holy orders* and those who violate their marriage vows / thieves and *enemies of the people*, robbers and plunderers, liars / and hypocrites, those who break their oaths and those who deny their faith, / and he is to harshly repent all of the enemies of God." Trans. based on Rabin 2015, 146 except for italicised phrases, whose translation is my own.

***hōrcwenan**, ahwar on lande wurđan agitene, fise hi man georne ut of þisan eared, ođđe on eared forfare hi mid ealle, buton hi geswican and þe deoppor gebetan.*
*8. And witena gerædnes is þæt **wiđersacan** and **utlagan Godes** and manna of eared gewitan, buton hi gebugon and þe geornor gebetan.*
*8.1. And **þeofan** and **þeodscađan** to timan forwurđan, buton hig geswican.*
*9. **Manslagan** and **manswaran**, **hadbrican** and **æwbrican**, gebugan and gebetan, ođđe of cyđđe mid synne gewitan.*
*10. **Liceteras** and **leogeras**, **riperas** and **reaferas**, Godes graman habban, buton hig geswican.*[4]

**6** gebeten.

1.4.2. Cnut 1020 *(Rabin 2020, 230-1)*

***Y*** York, Minster Library, Additional 1 (s. XI$^2$, Christ Church, Canterbury; Ker 402, Gneuss 774), fols. 160$^{r-v}$.

*6. […] and ælc unriht ascunian, đæt synd **mægslagan** and **morđslagan** and **mansworan** and **wiccean** and **wælcyrian** and **æwbrecan** and **syblegeru**.*[5]

1.4.3. II Cnut 4, 6, 7 *(Rabin 2020, 256-7)*

[4] "7. […] and if *magicians and wizards*, murderers or / *adulteress* be found anywhere in this land, they are to be / zealously expelled from the realm or be entirely abolished / from the earth, unless they cease and most sincerely repent. / 8. And the council's decree is that apostates and those in / defiance of the laws of God and the realm are to leave this / land unless they submit and most sincerely repent. / 8.1. And thieves and *enemies of the people* will henceforth be destroyed / unless they cease their crimes. / 9. Murderers and perjurers, *those who injure one in holy orders* and those who violate their marriage vows / shall submit and do penance or leave their native land with their sins. / 10. Hypocrites and liars, *robbers and plunderers* will suffer / God's wrath unless they cease." Trans. from Rabin 2020, 214-5 except for italicised phrases, whose translation is my own.

[5] "6. […] and reject all forms of wrongdoing, / especially those of parricides, murderers and perjurers, / witches, enchantresses, adulterers and the incestuous." Trans. from Rabin 2020, 230-1.

***A*** London, British Library, Harley 55 (s. XII$^{med}$, medieval provenance unknown; Ker 226, Gneuss 412), fols. 7$^{v}$-13$^{v}$; ***B(R)*** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 383 (s. XI/XII, probably London, St. Paul's; Ker 65, Gneuss 102), fols. 39$^{v}$-52$^{r}$; ***I*** London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.i (s. XI$^{ex}$ vol. I – X$^{in}$ vol. II, Worcester or York; Ker 163-4, Gneuss 340-1), fols. 16$^{r}$-41$^{r}$.

The lists are identical to those found in Cnut 1018 7-10 (see above).