Wulfstan's noble pagans

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ABSTRACT

Given his frequently expressed hostility to pagans, Wulfstan's apparent commendation of their devotion at the beginning of the *Sermo Lupi* has long been a source of scholarly frustration. While the passage is without parallel in Wulfstan's Old English writings, it is mirrored closely by several other texts in Wulfstanian manuscripts, including a previously unedited tract titled *De ueneratione sacerdotum*. These tracts provide the best analogues for the passage in the *Sermo Lupi*, explaining how it came to be written and giving a glimpse into how Wulfstan composed the sermon.

It may seem unnecessary to devote an entire essay to the subject of Wulfstan's attitudes towards heathenism; after all, the question 'what did Wulfstan think of paganism?' does not seem to admit of much discussion. Clearly, he was against it. This hostility is borne out by the overwhelming majority of his writings on paganism, which tend to conform to a certain type. To offer a brief summary: *Ælcne hæþendom aweorpan* is – in various permutations – one of Wulfstan's favoured formulaic expressions: it occurs in numerous tracts and laws, and in homilies 8c and 13.[1] The similar *ælcne hæþendom mid ealle adwæsce* occurs in his *Canons of Edgar*; here, the archbishop singles out the worship of trees, stones, fire and wells for particular condemnation.[2] Wulfstan also rewrote Ælfric's homily on the false gods, placing extra emphasis on the diabolic origins of heathen worship.[3] Ælfric was not, of course, any friend to paganism, but allowed for some conceptual distance between the devil and the heathen gods; as Pope observed, his 'description of the men who came to be worshipped as gods' was not 'completely unfavourable'.[4] Wulfstan, by contrast, allowed no

[1] Verified by a search of the Toronto *Dictionary of Old English* corpus on 9 June 2017. In addition to the homilies, variants on the phrase occur in V, VI, VIII, IX and X Atr; the so-called *Laws of Edward and Guthrum*; *The Institutes of Polity*; 'The Handbook for a Confessor'; and Napier L.

[2] See *Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar,* ed. R. Fowler, EETS 266 (London, 1972), a16.

[3] Ælfric, *De Falsis Diis*, *The Homilies of Ælfric: a Supplementary Collection*, ed. J. Pope, 2 vols. (London, 1967–8). Wulfstan's revision of the homily is found as homily XII in *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. D. Bethurum (Oxford, 1957).

[4] Pope, *Homilies*, p. 713, nn. 99–103.

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such flexibility. His homily begins, as Bethurum notes,[5] with a sentence with no parallel in Ælfric: 'Eala, gefyrn is þæt ðurh deofol fela þinga misfor, and þæt mancynn to swyðe Gode mishyrde, and þæt hæðenscype ealles to wide swyðe gederede and gyt dereð wide.'[6] Here Wulfstan parts from his source in two significant ways. In the first place, paganism is plainly and simply of the devil; in the second, it remains a very present danger. Richard Marsden notes that the themes established in this added line recur throughout the homily,[7] and indeed come to dominate it. Given Wulfstan's tendency towards intensification,[8] some of this vehemence may be merely incidental – but in the main, the homily leaves no doubt as to where he stood.

Wulfstan's legal writings reflect the suspicions manifested in the homilies: the attempt to suppress paganism is one of the major constants in Wulfstan's ever-evolving legislative career. Prohibitions on paganism occur in the *Laws of Edward and Guthrum* (the first code he wrote) and in II Cnut (the last) – and in every code in between.[9] Indeed, his concerns about pagan relapse continued to the very end of his public career: in one of the last homiletic acts of his life, he chose to include a specially made sermon on paganism in the York Gospels, presumably in the hope that it would be read by future generations.[10] Thus from beginning to end, Wulfstan's corpus is marked by denunciations of heathen practice: the case, it would seem, is closed.

[5] Bethurum, *Homilies*, p. 33.

[6] Bethurum XII.3–5. 'Alas, it is long ago that many things went wrong through the devil, and that mankind too greatly disobeyed God, and paganism caused harm everywhere, and still causes harm far and wide.'

[7] R. Marsden, *The Cambridge Old English Reader* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 204.

[8] Wulfstan's idiosyncratic prose style is well known, and discussed in Bethurum, *Homilies*, pp. 87–98; A. McIntosh, 'Wulfstan's Prose', *PBA* 35 (1949), 109-42; R. Dance, 'Sound, Fury, and Signifiers; or Wulfstan's Language', *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: the Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. M. Townend (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 29–61; J. Lionarons, *The Homiletic Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 10–11; and many others.

[9] In her notes to the *Homilies*, Bethurum (p. 319) offers a helpful summary of Wulfstan's legislative attempts to curb paganism: 'Wulfstan's feeling about pagan practices, resurgent under Danish influence, was strong. *All the law codes which he shaped speak against them* – Canons of Edgar XVI, Edgar 1, 34; VI Ethelred 1, 6; VIII Ethelred 44; IX Ethelred 1; X Ethelred 1; II Cn 5, 1; *NPL* 48. 54.' Emphasis mine.

[10] As S. Baxter notes, it was common practice to append material to Gospel-books in order to 'improve its chances of survival'. If this could be expected of land records, as Baxter argues, it could certainly be expected of a homily. See Baxter, 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Administration of God's Property', *Wufstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. M. Townend, pp. 161–205, at p. 187. The homily itself, edited as Napier 60, is one of ten articles appended to the expensively illuminated York Gospelbook. See Lionarons, *The Homiletic Writings*, pp. 17–18 for a brief discussion of the other articles and R. Heslop, 'Art and the Man', *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York,* ed. M. Townend, pp. 279–308, for Wulfstan's connection with the manuscript. The homily, predictably enough, links the practice of paganism to near-complete breakdown of the Christian commonwealth.

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As Wulfstan has led, the scholars have followed: the impression one gets from a brief survey of the literature is of overwhelming negativity. Richard Marsden notes that Wulfstan had, perhaps, exposure to paganism in the heavily Scandinavian diocese of York, and that this may in part explain his demonization of pagan gods in *De falsis deis*.[11] Judith Jesch claims that Wulfstan's writings thrive on a harsh and somewhat false dichotomy between 'Christian' and 'pagan';[12] and Audrey Meaney points out that Wulfstan's homily on the false gods is 'almost wholly negative.'[13] For Stephanie Hollis, the pagan Vikings in the *Sermo* are identifiable with the antichrist: 'to [Wulfstan] the equation of Viking rule with the reign of Antichrist would have been a logical inference. He asserts frequently in his work that heathenism is the worship of the devil, and the similarities between the reign of a heathen king and that of Antichrist would have been obvious to him.'[14]

Given this general picture of Wulfstan's attitudes towards paganism, some of his statements in the *Sermo Lupi* come as a shock. Near the beginning of the sermon, in all three versions, he writes:

On hæþenum þeodum ne dear man forhealdan lytel ne micel þæs þe gelagod is to gedwolgoda weorðunge, and we forhealdað æghwær Godes gerihta ealles to gelome. And ne dear man gewanian on hæþenum þeodum inne ne ute ænig þæra þinga þe gedwolgodan broht bið and to lacum betæht bið, and we habbað Godes hus inne and ute clæne berypte. And Godes þeowas syndan mæþe and munde gewelhwær bedælde; and gedwolgoda þenan ne dear man misbeodan on ænige wisan mid hæþenum leodum, swa swa man Godes þeowum nu deð to wide þær cristene sceoldan Godes lage healdan and Godes þeowas griðian.[15]

[11] Marsden, *Reader,* pp. 203–4.

[12] J. Jesch, 'Scandinavians and "Cultural Paganism" in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching,* ed. P. Cavill (Cambridge, 2004) pp. 55–68.

[13] A. Meaney, '"And we forbeodað eornostlice ælcne hæðenscipe": Wulfstan and Late Anglo-Saxon and Norse "Heathenism"', *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. M. Townend, pp. 461–500, at 467. In her notes to the *Homilies,* Bethurum, by contrast, calls the homily 'cool and unimpassioned compared with Wulfstan's frequent denunciations of Germanic pagan practices' (p. 334).

[14] S. Hollis, 'The Thematic Structure of the *Sermo Lupi*', *Old English Literature*, ed. R. M. Liuzza (New Haven, 2002), pp. 182–203, at 191.

[15] Bethurum XX (EI).27–37. See also XX (BH).22–32 and XX (C).28–38. 'Among the heathen people no one dares to withhold anything little or great that is assigned to the worship of the false gods and we withhold God's dues all too often. And no one among the pagans dares to curtail, inside or out, any of the things brought to the false gods and committed as a sacrifice and we have completely stripped God's house, inside and out. And God's servants are deprived of honour and protection everywhere; and no one dares to disobey a servant of the false gods in any way among the heathen people, as is done far too often to God's servants where Christians should keep God's law and give peace to God's servants.'

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The change in tone is striking. Everywhere else in Wulfstan's corpus, heathenism is something to be avoided at all costs, to be cast down and demolished. It is diabolical in origin and corrupt at the root – but here, Wulfstan seems to admire at least the *devotion* of the pagans, though of course he maintains a critical distance from the objects of that devotion. The prevailing tone is, if not exactly warm, at least somewhat measured; indeed, it is hard to deny some note of commendation in the passage. Given its radical break with the Wulfstanian norm, these lines have been a source of difficulty for scholars: Bethurum passed over the references to paganism almost entirely in the notes to her edition: given the abundance of annotation elsewhere, this can be read as a sure sign she had nothing to say.[16] Whitelock noted that the portions of the passage related to the spoliation of churches were probably drawn from the *Institutes of Polity*, but was silent on the comparison to the pagans.[17] Audrey Meaney offers what is probably the most frank and honest assessment, admitting 'I find these statements very puzzling . . . [t]here does not seem to be anything like them in contemporary writings.'[18]

These 'very puzzling' statements demand an explanation. Meaney suggests that the passage reflects Wulfstan's knowledge of actual pagan worship, either in his diocese of York or in the Scandinavian homeland: 'these statements . . . imply, as nowhere else in Wulfstan's writings, knowledge of a public and established heathen cult.'[19] This, she suggests, he could have learned in any number of ways: from his own experience as archbishop of the partially Danish diocese, from conversation with converted Danish soldiers, from reports of returning English missionaries.[20] This is an attractive and exciting hypothesis – it would, after all, give us one of our only contemporary glimpses into Viking-age paganism. Unfortunately, it does not explain much in the end. This fact becomes immediately obvious if we try to reconstruct the workings of an eleventh-century pagan religion based on Wulfstan's description in the *Sermo*. We would learn that the Vikings had priests and shrines and some kind of

[16] Bethurum is not, of course, entirely silent on the lines – but the closest she gets to a comment on the apparent praise of pagans is to note that the phrase 'gedwolgoda þenan' stands in analogy to Wulfstan's ordinary phrase 'Godes þenas'. See Bethurum, p. 357, n. 34.

[17] See Whitelock, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, 3rd ed. (London, 1963), p. 36. Whitelock suggests that *Polity*'s 'passage . . . on the spoliation of churches and lack of respect for the clergy' is the original source; as we will see, both *Polity* and the *Sermo* can be traced to a common source (below, pp. 334–42). A more detailed discussion of sources is found in Jost's *Wulfstanstudien,* Swiss Stud. in Eng. 23 (Bern, 1950), 146–8.

[18] Meaney, "'And we forbeodað eornostlice ælcne hæðenscipe'", p. 467.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.* Meaney's reading on this point contrasts sharply with Bethurum's interpretation of the homily. Bethurum, *Homilies*, says that the sermon 'seems rather more a piece of learning than a tract addressed to a current evil' (p. 334).

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sacrifice – but that is all. Nothing in the passage gives anything like detail, and nothing suggests that Wulfstan's account is anything more than a projection of Christian cultic practices onto an imaginary pagan population.

A second and more likely possibility is that Wulfstan was consciously imitating an established literary motif in his account of the pagans. After all, Tacitus had used noble Germans to shame the corruption of contemporary Romans, and St Paul used law-abiding gentiles to shame his audience on multiple occasions. Early Christian writers were quick to imitate both. Salvian, writing in the fifth century, compares the national chastity of the invading Goths and Vandals with the lasciviousness of the conquered Romans.[21] Closer to Wulfstan's own day, Rudolf of Fulda's *Translatio S. Alexandri* praised the native virtue of the pagans Germans: 'Legibus etiam ad vindictam malefactorum optimis utebantur. Et multa utilia atque secundum legem naturae honesta in morum probitate habere studuerunt, quae eis ad veram beatitudinem promerendam proficere potuissent, si ignorantiam creatoris sui non haberent, et a veritate culturae illius non essent alieni.'[22] For the Carolingian author, these good pagans keep the natural law of their own will. It is hard to miss the echo of St Paul's good gentiles, 'qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis' – and in this, we see a clear parallel to Wulfstan's writings. However, the closest parallel to Wulfstan's *Sermo* is found in the pastoral letters of St Boniface. In his letter to Æthelbald, Boniface reminds the king that not even pagans would commit the sorts of sexual sins he is guilty of: 'Non solum a christianus, sed etiam ab ipsis paganis in obprobrium et verecundiam deputatur. Quia ipsi pagani verum Deum ignorantes naturaliter, quae legis sunt et quod ab initio Deus constituit, custodiunt in hac re; quia, propriis uxores matrimonii foedera servantes, fornicatores et adulteros puniunt.'[23] Taking his cue from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Boniface goes on to note that even the Wends – 'fœdissimum et

[21] PL 53 cols. 134C–135A.

[22] MGH, SS II, 675.22–5. 'They employ the best laws to judge evildoers. They were eager to maintain many useful and decent customs according to the law of nature with uprightness of behaviour, which would have been able to prosper them to well-earned true beatitude, if they had not been ignorant of their Creator and alien to the truth of his worship.'

[23] PL 89 col. 759C. 'These things are considered disgraceful and shameful not only among Christians, but even by pagans. In this matter, those pagans, ignorant of the true God, naturally keep those things which are lawful and which God established in the beginning. For, guarding the bond of matrimony with their own wives, they punish fornicators and adulterers.' The similarities between Boniface's letter and Wulfstan's *Sermo* go even deeper: after making an unfavourable comparison between English and pagan sexual mores, Boniface goes on to discuss Æthelbald's despoliation of the church (PL 89, cols. 761C–762B). It is possible that Wulfstan knew the letter – he did know others of Boniface's collection – and that the critique of Æthelbald provided a conceptual framework for Wulfstan's critiques of the English of his own day.

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deterrimum genus hominum' – observe the laws of marriage better than the ostensibly Christian king.[24]

Obviously, this literary tradition offers suggestive parallels to Wulfstan's rhetoric in the *Sermo*. Both thrive on the unlikely comparison of virtuous pagans and corrupt Christians: the pagans naturally avoid the sins Christians commit openly. Viewed in this context, Wulfstan's praise of pagans in the *Sermo* appears – if not wholly explicable – at least less bizarre. As useful as this larger context is, however, it has limited explanatory power: there is no evidence that Wulfstan knew any of these texts. None of them are used in any of his known works, and none of them are contained in any of the manuscripts associated with him. But even if Wulfstan *did* know Salvian, Boniface, or Rudolph, this knowledge would not fully explain the material in the *Sermo Lupi*. The 'noble German pagan' motif usually highlights the Germans' fidelity to *natural* law – particularly on matters of sexual morality. In this, they follow Tacitus and the epistles of St Paul. But Wulfstan breaks from this tradition: nothing in these writings suggests Wulfstan's application of the 'noble Germans' motif to questions of religious devotion and sacrilege. Nor does it explain how Wulfstan – ever the strident opponent of paganism in all its forms – came to use a motif that seems so alien to his ordinary manner of work.

We find a possible solution to all these riddles in the sermon's most immediate context – the Wulfstanian manuscripts from which it emerged which, as Simon Keynes has noted, contain something like 'Wulfstan's working notes for the *Sermo Lupi* itself'.[25] Although the *Sermo Lupi*'s gentler treatment of paganism may be completely without parallel in Wulfstan's Old English corpus, it is strikingly similar to some of the Latin writings known and used by the archbishop. These writings are scattered throughout the manuscripts associated with Wulfstan and his school at Worcester, and they form the essential substratum to his more famous homilies and laws.[26] Two in particular are deserving of

[24] PL 89, col. 760B.

[25] S. Keynes, 'An Abbot, an Archbishop, and the Viking Raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12', *ASE* 36 (2007), 151–220, at 205.

[26] More has been published on this family of manuscripts – long, but misleadingly, called the 'Commonplace Book' – than can be noted here. The foundational study remains H. Sauer, 'Zur Überlieferung und Anlage von Erzbischof Wulfstans "Handbuch"', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 36 (1980), 341–84. Other important studies include D. Bethurum, 'Archbishop Wulfstan's Commonplace Book', *PMLA* 57 (1942), 916–29; J. E. Cross, 'A Newly Identified Manuscript of Wulfstan's "Commonplace Book", Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. 1382 (U. 109), fols. 173r–198v', *Jnl of Med. Latin* 2 (1992), pp. 63–83; N. R. Ker, 'The Handwriting of Archbishop Wulfstan', *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 315–31 and P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century,* I: *Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 1999). The introductions to the EEMF versions of Wulfstan manuscripts also remain of considerable value.

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special attention. The first of these is rubricated *De ueneratione sacerdotum*, and occurs in London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. i, a manuscript Wulfstan seems to have carried with him throughout his long career and the earliest manuscript witness to the *Sermo Lupi*.[27] It reads:

Antiquitus quoque pagáni in républica principes fuerunt .' qui uerum deum nescientes . deos ligneos et lapideos colebant et tamen eorum sacerdotibus honorem maximum tribuebant ; Quid mirum si christianus populus ueri dei sacerdotes dignetur honorare .' dum pagani ut predixi principes honorem inpendere sacerdotibus nouerunt .' qui diis ligneis et lapideis seruiebant ; Deum spernit ut supra scriptum est .' qui sacerdotem dei contemnit ;[28]

These pagans, it should be noted, do *exactly* the same sorts of things excoriated by Wulfstan in the homilies and his canons – ignorant of the true God, they worship gods of wood and stone. But here the tone is measured, in precisely the same manner as in the *Sermo Lupi*. An even stronger parallel to the *Sermo Lupi* is found in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190 – the manuscript that Bethurum argued provides us with the best version of Wulfstan's 'Handbook.'[29] Lacking a rubric in manuscript, this tract was dubbed *Ecclesia sponsa* by its modern editor.[30] As an extended meditation on the despoliation of churches and the sin of sacrilege, the entire tract has thematic parallels to the *Sermo Lupi* and several other Wulfstanian writings. A handful of lines, however, deserve special attention:

Legitur itaque quod Pharao rex Egypti cum omnem terram suę redegisset ditioni, terram sacerdotalem excepit et i\n/tactam permisit. Item Pompeius itaque, uir gentilis, cum Hierusalem expugnasset, infinitam thesauri copiam in templo domini uidit, et, multum admirans, nil pęnitus ex inde conti\n/gere presumpsit. Item, Alericus, uir

[27] For the complicated development of Nero A. i, see H. Loyn's introduction to *A Wulfstan Manuscript*, *EEMF* 17 (Copenhagen, 1971) and Wormald, *Making*, pp. 198–99. For up-to-date bibliography on the manuscript, see H. Gneuss and M. Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: a Biographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Toronto, 2014), 341 (pp. 264-7).

[28] London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. i (Worcester or York, 1003 × 1023), 123r23–123v11. 'Long ago there were pagan princes in the Republic, who, ignorant of the true God, worshipped gods of wood and stone – and nevertheless gave the greatest honour to their priests. What wonder if the Christian people honour the priests of the true God, when the pagan princes (as I said) were accustomed to devote honour to priests, who served gods of wood and stone. He rejects God, as it is written above, who despises the priest of God.' The entirety of *De ueneratione sacerdotum* is edited in the appendix below.

[29] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190, pp. iii–xiii, 1-294 (s. xi[1], Worcester?, provenance Exeter); see Gneuss–Lapidge, *ASMss* 59 (pp. 71-3). For Bethurum's argument, see her 'Commonplace Book', 928.

[30] J. E. Cross, 'Atto of Vercelli, *De Pressuris Ecclesiasticis*, Archbishop Wulfstan, and Wulfstan's "Commonplace Book"', *Traditio* 48 (1993), 238–46.

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barbarus cum bello Romam cępisset, omnia quę ad ęcclesiam confugerant salua esse permisit. Quid nunc de Christianis dicendum est qui Christi lacerant ęcclesiam?[31]

It is in these texts, I suggest, that we find the inspiration for the puzzling passage in the *Sermo*. Both texts were clearly known to Wulfstan – he made use of *Ecclesia sponsa* in several homilies and in the *Institutes of Polity*,[32] and he personally annotated *De ueneratione sacerdotum*. Both texts exemplify the general rhetorical principle evident in the *Sermo Lupi*: first, they give us a historical 'other' as a foil to the corrupt Christians of Wulfstan's day. In *Ecclesia sponsa*, we have Egyptians, gentiles, and the *vir barbarus* Alaric; in *De ueneratione*, we have the *pagani principes . . . uerum deum nescientes*. Most importantly of all, they apply the principle to the same specific *point*. These men – pagans and barbarians though they were – knew to respect the shrines and priests of their religion, while the Christian Anglo-Saxon audience did not. *De ueneratione* establishes the sacrosanctity of priests themselves, against Christians who would disobey or dishonour them. In *Ecclesia sponsa*, the focus is on the material possessions and sanctity of the church: Pharaoh would not tax it, and Pompey and Alaric would not violate its sanctuary. Together, the texts use examples from pagan antiquity to argue powerfully against the alienation of church property, the desecration of the church, and the abuse of priests: exactly as the *Sermo Lupi* does.

Indeed, nearly every clause of the puzzling passage in the *Sermo* can be paralleled to one or the other Latin tract: what the pagans refused to do, the Christians do all too often. So Wulfstan's complaint about the withholding of tithes and church-rights can be read in light of Pharaoh's refusal to submit the sacerdotal lands to the tribute. Similarly, his laments about churches 'inne and ute clæne berypte' resonates with Pompey's refusal to touch any of the treasures of the temple, and contrasts with the Christians 'qui christi lacerant ęcclesiam.' Finally, there is Wulfstan's comparison of the dishonoured servants of God (those 'mæþe and munde gewelhwær bedælde') with the pagans of *De ueneratione* who knew to honour their priests, despite worshiping gods of wood and stone.

Despite these similarities, it would be a mistake to proceed as if the passage in the *Sermo* were nothing more than a re-presentation of the Latin tracts: its probable rhetorical effect is much greater than that of its source texts. In the

[31] *Ibid.* p. 245. 'It is read that when Pharaoh the king of Egypt subdued all the land to his authority, he excluded the land of the priests and left it untouched. Next: thus Pompey, the gentile, when he had conquered Jerusalem, saw an infinite abundance of treasure in the temple of the Lord. He greatly admired it, but did not presume to take anything from it. Next: When Alaric, the barbarian, had captured Rome with war, he allowed all those who fled to a church to be spared. What now should we say of Christians who lay waste to the church of Christ?'

[32] See Bethurum Xb.33–44 and Xc.45–54; see also *Die 'Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical'*, ed. K. Jost, Swiss Stud. in Eng. 47 (Bern, 1959), II Pol.213–19.

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first place, we should consider briefly the intended audience of the sermon. If, as Jonathan Wilcox has suggested, the *Sermo* was first preached before a gathering of the *witan*,[33] the audience would have been familiar – *very* familiar – with Wulfstan's standard legal and homiletic denunciations of *hæþendom*. Their surprise at hearing something like *praise* of heathens coming from the archbishop's lips can hardly be imagined: it might even outweigh that of modern critics.

Even more importantly, the level of correspondence between sources and texts is rather loose: while they probably supplied Wulfstan with the *idea* of comparing pagans and Christians, the specifics of the comparison are entirely his own. Even more importantly, Wulfstan's audience would not have known his sources – and, as such, would not have been aware that the original comparisons were to the Roman Republic, Ancient Egypt and Alaric the Goth. Instead, all contextual information suggests that the heathens in the *Sermo* are the hated Vikings: and this, I suggest, is precisely the point. It is one thing to suffer in comparison with the shadowy noble pagans of ancient history: they are comfortably distant, and the stuff of legend. It is quite another to be compared negatively to the barbarians who drove out the king and killed the archbishop of Canterbury, who brought 'here and hunger, bryne and blodgyte' and all manner of evils upon the English people. It would be difficult to imagine a less favourable comparison. Thus learned Latin texts become the grounds for a scathing indictment of the English people, and the improbability of it all only adds to its rhetorical force.

This leads us to a final point. In addition to providing the best analogues for *Sermo Lupi*'s treatment of paganism, the consideration of the manuscripts has the added benefit of fitting what we know of Wulfstan's other sources in the text. Though, as Whitelock noted, the sermon 'owes little to other men's work',[34] scholars have been able to identify a handful of sources in the background: a letter of Alcuin, an anonymous eleventh-century tract, and Abbo of St Germain's *Ad milites*. The most famous of the sources is Alcuin's *Letter to Æthelheard*: this supplies the reference to Gildas and the history of the Britons, who lost their land for their sins. Whitelock noted a probable connection to an eleventh-century pseudo-Alcuin text 'on the theme that the calamities and invasions inflicting the English are God's punishment for sin'.[35] Finally, J. E. Cross suggested that Abbo's exhortation to Christian warfare could have pro-

[33] J. Wilcox, 'Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi* as Political Performance: 16 February 1014 and Beyond', *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. M. Townend, pp. 375–96, especially 380–3. The same claim is advanced, in somewhat less detail, in J. Wilcox, 'The Wolf on the Shepherds: Wulfstan, Bishops, and the Context of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*', *Old English Prose: Basic Readings*, ed. P. Szarmach (New York, 2000), pp. 395–418.

[34] Whitelock, *Sermo*, 35.

[35] *Ibid.*

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Table 8: Latin works used in the *Sermo Lupi*.

	CCCC 190	Nero A. i	Vesp. A. xiv	Cop. 1595
De uen. sac.		122v–125r		
Ecc. sponsa	96			
De tribul.	142–3			
Æthelheard	140 (abbr)		142v–148v	
Ad milites	138–41 (abbr)			35r–37r

vided the 'literary impetus' for the *Sermo Lupi*.[36] With the exception of the two texts mentioned above, this rounds out the identified non-Wulfstanian sources for the *Sermo*.

As different as these texts are, all are united by a shared history: all five are contained in known Wulfstan manuscripts. Alcuin's letter is preserved in London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. xiv – Wulfstan's personal letter book, where it exists alongside entries copied in the archbishop's own hand.[37] Portions of Abbo's homily are found in Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, G.K.S. 1595 – the manuscript Wulfstan commissioned as an ordination gift for Gerbrand[38] – and again in CCCC 190, the same manuscript that contains *Ecclesia sponsa. De tribulationibus*, too, is contained in CCCC 190. A summary of the manuscript contents can be found in the table above.

This connection of the *Sermo*'s analogues to the manuscripts of Wulfstan's 'handbook' may help shed light on the origins of the text. Whitelock viewed the sermon as a more or less spontaneous response to crisis: in her words, 'No work smells less of the study.'[39] Over and against this, Simon Keynes argued 'Although the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* might seem on first reading to have been composed in the heat of the moment . . . it is now recognized that even a sermon of this nature has identifiable literary sources and models.'[40] Despite the apparent contradiction, I submit that both these statements are true – and

[36] J. E. Cross and A. Brown, 'The Literary Impetus for Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi*', *Leeds Stud. in Eng.* 20 (1989) 271–87.

[37] See G. Mann, 'The Development of Wulfstan's Alcuin Manuscript', *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. M. Townend, pp. 235–78. See also Whitelock, *Sermo*, p. 65, nn. 184-99; and C. Chase, *Two Alcuin Letter-Books* (Toronto, 1975). For full bibliography, see Gneuss-Lapidge, *ASSMss* 383 (pp. 310–12).

[38] Gneuss–Lapidge, *ASMss* 814 (pp. 581–3). For Wulfstan's connection with the manuscript, see J. Gerritsen, 'The Copenhagen Wulfstan Manuscript: a Codicological Study', *ES* 79 (1998), 501–11. For more on the history of the manuscript, see J. Cross and J. Tunberg's introduction to their *Copenhagen Wulfstan Collection,* EEMF 25 (Turnhout, 1993).

[39] Whitelock, *Sermo*, p. 37.

[40] Keynes, 'Abbot', p. 205

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the tension between them may shed light on the method by which the *Sermo Lupi* was composed. It is true, as Keynes claims, that the *Sermo* draws on a wide variety of the sources. But the manner in which sources are used matters every bit as much as the number of sources used, and with one or two notable exceptions, *none* of the sources is actually quoted in the text. This is, I suggest, highly significant. Virtually every other Wulfstanian homily is closely based on one or more sources: not so here. None of the sources for the sermon provides significant content to the text; none is cited to lend it an external authority. Instead, they supply a conceptual framework for the sermon. Following the suggestion of Cross, we are better off thinking in terms of 'literary impetus' than 'source'.

It is possible to draw another tentative argument from this pattern of source use and, perhaps, to contribute to the highly contested question of the relationship of the various versions of the *Sermo Lupi*. The great bulk of the Latin analogues/sources for the sermon are found in CCCC 190. These analogues are, moreover, texts with which Wulfstan was highly familiar: the extracts from Atto, for instance, were used in *Polity*, homilies Xb and Xc, and the *Sermo Lupi*. Wulfstan's familiarity with these texts – with, again, one exception – allowed him to treat them in a strikingly similar manner: put simply, he pillages their motifs and themes. In this, his treatment of the 'Commonplace Book' texts mirrors the manner in which he recycled his own works. The source, whether Latin or Old English, recedes into the background, its influence is adduced through the vestiges of structure and content: all of this fits with the model of composition suggested above. The only source for which this is manifestly *not* the case is Alcuin's letter to Æthelheard: here, we see much clearer verbal echoes combined with – rarest of rare finds in the Wulfstanian corpus – an actual citation of a source. The letter was more carefully selected than the other pieces; it was certainly incorporated into the homily with more care and greater deliberation.

The material drawn from Alcuin's letter is also one of the main differences between the BH and the EI versions: the longer versions contain it, and the shorter do not. The question of which version of the *Sermo* is earliest is a contentious one, and unlikely to ever be fully resolved;[41] moreover, the evidence supplied by the letter to Æthelheard is far from conclusive. Nevertheless, it

[41] For the standard view – that the original version was shorter, and supplemented later by Wulfstan – see Whitelock, *Sermo,* 1–5. For the revisionist view, see S. Dien, '*Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*: the Order and Date of the Three Versions', *NM* 64 (1975), 561–70; S. Hollis, 'The Thematic Structure of the *Sermo Lupi*', *Old English Literature*, ed. R. M. Liuzza (New Haven, 2002), pp. 182–203; and Wilcox, 'The *Sermo Lupi* as Political Performance'. A thoroughgoing defence of Whitelock's position is found in M. Godden, 'Apocalypse and Invasion in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *From Anglo-Saxon to Early Middle English: Studies presented to E. G. Stanley*, ed. M. Godden, D. Gray and T. Hoad (Oxford, 1994), pp. 130-62, at 143-6.

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seems on balance unlikely that such a carefully developed passage would be targeted for excision: it is more probable that it was a later addition. We have evidence of Wulfstan composing in a manner very much like this.[42] If this argument holds, it would support the traditional chronology of the *Sermo*'s various versions.

All of this is, however, a distraction from the larger question. Was the *Sermo* the impassioned product of a moment, or the fruit of long and careful study? The answer, I submit, is *both*. Wulfstan seems to have pressed whatever sources he knew best into service in the face of a serious moral and political crisis. In this, he followed the suggestions of the rhetorical tradition he had been raised in. In his influential guidebook of Christian rhetoric, *De Doctrina Christiana*, St Augustine remarked that

> The grand manner of speaking . . . is as far removed as can be from the moderate kind, being not so much a matter of elegantly stylish language as of the impetuous expression of very deep feelings. For it seizes on almost all those elegant embellishments, but if it doesn't have them to hand it doesn't look for them. It is in fact carried along by its own vehemence, and if it stumbles on some beauty of expression, it carries it along.[43]

– just as a man, in the middle of a battle, will turn any object on hand into a ready weapon. With the necessary changes, this is the very process we see in the *Sermo Lupi*. And in the heat of a moment, even pagans can be pressed to serve.

APPENDIX

DE UENERATIONE SACERDOTUM

Bonus itaque pastor super gregem christi sollicitus esse debet ne inimicus uastet ne potentioris cupiditas uitam pauperum inquietet ; Mercenarius enim est qui fugit ·˘ cum lupum uenientem uiderit ; Tunc enim fugiunt mercenarii ·˘ quando potentibus tacent ·˘ et malis resistere metuunt[i] ; O infelicitas . o magna miseria . plus homines quam deum timere ;[ii] ad hieremiam enim prophetam dominus locutus est dicens ; *accinge lumbos . surge loquere ·˘ ne formides a facie eorum* (Jer. 1: 7) ; Ita et boni pastores facere debent ·˘ id est sacerdotes domini ; Et si quis est qui despicit preconem ·˘ timeat iudicem[iii] ; Deum spernit ·˘ qui sacerdotem dei contemnit ;[iv] In diuinis enim eloquiis sacerdotes aliquando dií ·˘ aliquando angeli uocantur ; Et per moysen de eo qui ad iuramentum deducendus est dicitur . *applica illum ad deos* (Ex.

[42] Bethurum, 'Commonplace Book', 921, points out that Wulfstan incorporated material from CCC 190 into his translation of Ælfric's *De initio creature*.

[43] Augustine, *Teaching Christianity (De Doctrina Christiana)*, trans. E. Hill (Hyde Park, NY, 1996), iv. 42.

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22:8) .˘ uidelicet ad sacerdotes ; Et propheta ait ; *Labia /123r/ sacerdotis custodient*[44] *sapientiam .˘ et legem requirent ex ore eius .˘ quia angelus domini exercituum est* (Mal. 2: 7) ; Quid ergo mirum si illos eos hominum pietas dignetur honorare .˘ quibus in suo eloquio honorem tribuens . eos aut angelos . aut deos . ipse etiam apellat deus ? Aecclesiastica quoque historia testatur . quia cum pie memorie constantino principi scripte accusationes contra episcopos fuissent oblate .˘ libellos quidem accusationis accepit .˘ et eosdem qui accusati fuerant episcopos conuocans .˘ in eorum conspectu libellos quos acceperat incendit dicens ; Uos di\i/ estis . a uero deo constituti .˘ Ite et inter uos causas uestras disponite .˘ quia dignum non est ut nos iudicemus deos ; In qua sententia sibi magis ex humilitate .˘ quam illis aliquid prestitit ex reuerenti\a/ ínpensa ; Antiquitus quoque pagáni in républica principes fuerunt .˘ qui uerum deum nescientes . /123v/ deos ligneos et lapideos colebant et tamen eorum sacerdotibus honorem maximum tribuebant ; Quid mirum si christianus populus ueri dei sacerdotes dignetur honorare .˘ dum pagani ut predixi principes honorem inpendere sacerdotibus nouerunt .˘ qui diis ligneis et lapideis seruiebant[v] ; Deum spernit ut supra scriptum est .˘ qui sacerdotem dei contemnit ; Paulus quoque apostolus dicit ; *Non est potestas nisi a deo ; Qui resistit potestati .˘ dei ordinationi resistit* (Rom. 13: 1-2); Isidorus dicit ; Dei ergo ordinationem accusant a quo instítuuntur .˘ qui episcopos contemnunt[vi] ; Item paulus ait ; *Diuitibus huius seculi .˘ precipe non sublime sapere* (1 Tim. 6: 17) ; Et isidorus dicit ; Omnis mundialis sapiens si sapiens[45] sit . non iudicet iudicia ecclesie[vii] ; Alexander quoque .˘ ad demetrium regem ait ; Numquam auditum uel \ab/ aliquo factum sit ut presentibus /124r/ episcopis laici disputent[viii] de canonicis . uel aliis ecclesiasticis causis .˘ sed omnium ecclesiasticarum rerum curam episcopi habeant .˘ et ea uelut deo contemplante dispensent[ix] ; Episcopi etiam et sacerdotes domini semper curam animarum maxime habeant[x] .˘ et incessanter populo utilia predicent .˘ ut paulus dicit ; *Predica uerbum . insta oportune inportune ; Argue obsecra* et reliqua (II Tim. 4: 2) ; Et unusquisque sacerdos inquantum gratiam superne aspirationis accepit si a prauitate proximum reuocat. .˘ si exortari ad bene agendum curat .˘ si et\e/rnum regnum uel supplicium nuntiat .˘ cum uerba sancte adnuntiationis inpendit .˘ profecto angelus existit ; E\t/ nemo dicat admonére non súfficio .˘ exortari idoneus non sum ; Quantum potes éxibe .˘ ne male seruatum quod acceperas in tormentis exigáris .˘ neque enim plusquam unum talentum acceperat /124v/ qui hoc abscondere magis studuit .˘ quam erogare[xi] ; Mentibus \igitur/ proximorum uestrorum uerba domini intimate in quantum uires suppetunt .˘ ut merito uocari ualearis angelo .˘ si adnuntiare diuina mysteria humanis auribus non neglegitis ; Et si quod absit aliquis uobis per blasphemiam contradixerit uel uestris monitis aurem

[44] Partially illegible in manuscript; *custodient* has been supplied from St Gregory the Great's letter to Emperor Maurice, edited in *Registrum Epistularum Libri I-VII* V.36.47 (CCSL 140, ed. D. Norberg), from which the larger passage has been drawn. While two of the manuscripts of the *Registrum* preserve the reading *custodiunt* (see *Registrum Epistularum*, ed. Norberg, p. 305), and while this reading is not unknown in medieval canons, *custodient* has the advantage of agreeing with the dominant witness to the *Registrum* as well as the Vulgate.

[45] *si sapiens* added in Wulfstan's hand.

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non accomodauerit .˙ non solum uos sed et deum contemnit ; Ipse enim dicit ; *Qui uos audit me audit* .˙ *et qui uos spernit me spernit* (Luke 10: 16); Qua propter predicatoribus tacendum non est . sed clamandum . Ut est illud propheticum ; *Clama ne cesses · quasi tuba exalta uocem* (Isaiah 58: 1) . et reliqua ; Predicatoribus enim si tacuerint dampnum est .˙ et populo si non oboedierit pernicies est ; Gregorius \itaque/ dicit ; Cum enim malorum peruersitas crescit . non solum frangi predicatio non debet .˙ sed etiam augeri[xii] ; Summo quoque studio procurandum est pastoribus gregis christi .˙ Ne in illam \pro illorum neglegentia[46]/ íncidant damnationem quam heli sacer/125r/ dos propter neglegentiam et stultam indulgentiam promeruit . qui pro eo quod filios suos neglegenter castigauit et eos nec cedere nec excommunicare uoluerat . ipsi filii uno die occisi sunt . et xxxa. milia de populo interfecti sunt .˙ et arca testamenti capta est .˙ et ipse retro cadens . fractis ceruicibus mortuus est[xiii] ; et nomen ipsius de libro uite deletum est .[47]

Notes

i pastor super gregem.. . . . malis resistere metuunt: from Isidore of Seville, *Liber Sentiarum* III.xlv.5 (CCSL 111, ed. Peter Cazier). The beginning of the Isidorean quotation also occurs in the report of the legatine synod of 787. See A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1869–78) III, 449–50.

ii An inversion of Acts 5: 29: 'respondens autem Petrus et apostoli dixerunt oboedire oportet Deo magis quam hominibus.'

iii Pseudo-Augustine, *Sermo* CLXXIII *De Letania*, I (PL 39, col. 2077).

iv Possible echo of Benedict of Anian, *Concordia Regularum* 6.9 (PL 103, col 796A): 'Ille vero qui praepositus est, Dei judicium et ordinationem sacerdotis in omnibus timere, diligere et obaudire secundum veritatem debet. Quia si quis illum putat [se] spernere, Deum spernit, sicut scriptum est: Qui vos audit, me audit; qui vos spernit, me spernit.'

v In divinis eloquiis . . . lapideis seruiebant: From St Gregory the Great's letter to Emperor Maurice, v. 36.42–64; for an annotated translation, see *The Letters of Gregory the Great*, vol. 2, trans. J. R. C. Martyn (Toronto, 2004). The letter is repeated, with some changes, in John the Deacon, *Sancti Gregorii Magni Vita*, iv. 16 (PL 75, 181–2). The borrowing is fairly faithful, though the passage is adapted to its new context. Gregory's second-person address disappears, and certain key terms are also changed: where Gregory had noted that it was not at all strange for a Christian *imperator* to honour bishops, the extract focuses (for obvious reasons) on the *populus*.

vi Dei ergo ordinationem . . . contemnunt: originally from Isidore's *Liber Sententiarum* III.xxxix.2; included later in the false decretals of Isidore Mercator, where the quote is drawn from the (alleged) letter of Pope Eusebius to the Egyptians. See *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae et Capitula Angilramni* , ed. P. Hinschius (repr. Aalen, 1963), pp. 234–5.

vii *Isidorus dicit . . . iudicia ecclesie*: originally from the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis* XXXI.26.b, where the quote is attributed to Patricius. The immediate source, which likewise attributes the quote to Isidore, is *Wulfstan's Canon Law Collection* A.57. See *Wulfstan's Canon Law Collection*, ed. J. E. Cross and A. Hamer, A-S Texts 1 (Cambridge 1999), 90.

viii Alexander. . . disputant: ultimately derived from Eusebius/Rufinus *Historia ecclesiastica* vi. 19.18, presented in *Die Kirchengeschichte*, ed. E. Schwartz and T. Mommsen (Leipzig, 1903–9; repr. Berlin, 1999).

ix Omnium ecclesiasticarum . . . dispensent: the passage is repeated in *De Medicamenta Animarum* in Nero A. i, printed in B. Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics in altenglischer und lateinische Fassung* (Hamburg, 1914), pp. 251–3. The latter part of the quote (omnium ecclesiasticarum . . . dispensent) is also

[46] This insertion in the Wulfstan hand.

[47] Nero A. i has lost a line to erasure at this point; 'et nomen . . . est' has been supplied from a closely related text ('Incipit Ammonitio Spiritalis Doctrine') contained in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 265, pp. 3-4.

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contained in Wulfstan's *Canon Law Collection* – see *Wulfstan's Canon Law Collection*, ed. Cross and Hamer, A.27. This final line is echoed in any number of canon collections from the sixth century onward, including those of Pope John VIII, Rather of Verona and Burchard of Worms, and was ultimately incorporated into the Fourth Lateran Council. However, given his reliance on the collection elsewhere, it is possible that the quote came to Wulfstan and his circle through Isidore Mercator's *Collectio Decretalium*, where it is erroneously attributed to Clement I. See PLD 130, col. 18b–c.

[x] Episcopi etiam . . . habeant: from *Canon Law Collection* A.30. The line is also quoted in *De Medicamento Animarum* (Fehr, *Hirtenbriefe,* 252.)

[xi] Inquantum gratiam superne . . . erogare: an abbreviated but otherwise faithful version of St Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Euangelia* VI.6.105-13 (CCSL 141, ed. Raymond Étaix). In this passage, we see a clear allusion to the parable of the talents, cf. Matt. 25: 14–30.

[xii] Cum uero malorum . . . augeri. From St Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Euangelia*, xviii. 2.61–3.

[xiii] stultam indulgentiam . . . mortuus est: this passage – which, in the original, contrasted Eli's damning laxity with Phineas's salutary zeal – can be found in several early medieval sources, none of which is otherwise known to Wulfstan. It is found first in Pope Hormisdas, *Epistola per Universas Provincias* (PL 63, col. 529c). Perhaps a more likely source, given Wulfstan's canonical interests, is the collection of canons attributed to Pope John II (PL 66, col. 31c).

ON THE REVERENCE DUE TO PRIESTS:

A good pastor over the flock of Christ ought to be watchful, lest an enemy lay waste or the greed of the more powerful people disturb the life of the poor. For he is a hireling who flees when he sees the wolf coming. Then indeed the hirelings flee, when they keep silent before the powerful, and are afraid to resist the evil ones. Oh unhappiness! Oh great misery! To fear men more than God! The Lord spoke unto Jeremiah the Prophet, saying, 'Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak . . . Be not afraid at their presence.' So good pastors – that is, the priests of the Lord – ought to do. And if anyone should despise the messenger, let him fear the judge. He who despises the priest of God rejects God. In the divine word priests are sometimes called gods; at other times, angels. And through Moses, it is said of one who must be led to an oath, 'Bring him before the gods', evidently, before the priests. Again the prophet says, 'The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of Hosts.' What wonder, then, if human piety deigns to honour those whom God in his own speech grants such honour, himself calling them either angels or gods? The ecclesiastical history bears witness that when written accusations against the bishops were presented to the Prince Constantine of pious memory, he received the books of accusation and called the accused bishops together. In their presence, he burned the books which he had received, saying, 'You are gods, established by the true God. Go, and settle these cases amongst yourselves, for it is not fitting for us to judge gods.' This statement he said more out of humility for himself than out of excessive reverence for others. In the republic of old, there were pagan princes, who, not knowing the true God, worshiped gods of wood and stone. Nevertheless, they gave to their priests the highest honour. Why is it strange, then, if a Christian people deigns to honour the priests of the true God, when the pagan princes – as I said – knew to devote honour to priests who served gods of wood and stone? He spurns God, as it is written above, who despises the priest of God. Indeed, Paul the

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Apostle says, 'There is no power but from God. He that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.' Isidore says, 'Those who despise bishops impugn the ordination of God by which they were put in place.' Again Paul says: 'Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded.' And Isidore says, 'Let not any worldly-wise person, if he be truly wise, judge the judgment of the Church.' Alexander also says to Demetrius the King: 'Let it never be heard or done by anyone, that lay people dispute about the canons or other ecclesiastical matters when bishops are present.' But let the bishops have care over all ecclesiastical affairs and manage them as though God is watching. Let bishops and also priests of the Lord always have the greatest care for souls and without ceasing preach what is good for the people. As Paul says, 'Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat' and the rest. And every priest receives the grace of heavenly assistance in as much as he calls his neighbour back from wickedness. If he takes care to exhort to good conduct, if he announces the eternal kingdom or eternal punishment, and devoted to words of holy preaching, he certainly exists as an angel. And let no one say, 'I am not able to preach, I am not qualified to exhort.' Show forth as much as you can, lest that which you have received and wickedly stored up should be exacted from you in torments. For it was the man who had received only one talent that sought to hide it rather than increase it. Announce the words of the Lord to the minds of your neighbours, as much as strength allows, that you may merit to be called an angel – if you do not neglect to preach the divine mysteries to human ears. And if, God forbid, someone should speak against you through slander or not apply his ears to your warnings, he despises not only you, but God. For he himself says, 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.' Therefore the preacher must not be silent, but cry out. As it says in the prophet: 'Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice as a trumpet', and the rest. Damnation awaits the preachers who keep silent, and ruin for the people who do not obey. Therefore Gregory says, 'When the perversity of evil grows, preaching should not only not break, but even grow.' The pastors of the flock of Christ must attend to it with the highest zeal, lest they incur through their negligence the condemnation which Eli the priest earned through his negligence and foolish leniency. Because he was negligent in punishing his sons and did not want to strike or excommunicate them, those sons were slaughtered in the same day, and 30,000 of the people were killed, and the Ark of the Covenant was captured. And he, falling backwards, died with a broken neck, and his name was removed from the Book of Life.

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