Pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon Worship. A Semantic Study

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Doctoral Dissertation English Language and Literature

Declaration

I, Roland Kevin Dominic Brennan confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This thesis pursues two aims. First, to reconstruct the pre-Christian meanings of 18 Old English word-families that belong to the semantic field of worship in the Anglo-Saxon literary record. The ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons migrated to Britain in the fifth century; they began to adopt Christianity with the arrival of Roman missionaries at the end of the sixth century and the Christianisation process was politically completed by the end of the seventh century. This study's reconstructive task aims to describe the cultural facts of religious worship during this target period of two-and-a-half centuries, when these settlers in Britain practiced traditional heathen cults, through comparison of the Old English corpus data with the linguistic testimony of other early Germanic languages, further interpreted in light of relevant historical and archaeological testimony.

The second aim is to characterise how the Christianisation process affected vernacular terminology for religious worship at large, through considering the relative situation of the relevant word-families. It will be argued that Christianisation introduced new conceptual categories that practically re-centred the idea of 'worship' away from its pre-Christian basis in technical and communal procedure, together with an ideological binary that defined correct forms of worship against their opposites. It will further be argued that this process occurred in two distinct phases, each characterised by different priorities: the first phase was led by the missionaries, who had to present Christianity as a more effective new cult by the standard of pre-Christian religious norms; the second phase followed the establishing of a native clerical infrastructure, during which time vernacular terminology was more holistically renovated under the influence of the Christian text.

Impact Statement

Pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon religion received spare scholarly treatment in the second half of the twentieth century, which means that the subject is due a re-visitation. Furthermore, earlier scholarship on this subject typically focused on mythology and belief, while the present study focuses on the practical aspects of human-divine interrelations which might be termed 'cult' or 'worship'. In re-focusing the subject around religious practices, the present study will consider in depth certain Old English terminology that have not previously received close treatment, especially verbs of worship.

A re-visitation of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon worship is also timely in the light of developments in other disciplines, which have yielded new evidence and perspectives that are relevant to this kind of investigation. Pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon culture belongs to the fifth to seventh centuries, a period for which direct linguistic evidence is very sparse. Study of this subject has always, therefore, relied upon historical linguistic reconstruction. This is achieved through the comparative method, by which the Old English linguistic evidence from the later Christian literary sources is compared with cognate forms in other closely related early Germanic languages, and in some cases, wider cognates in other Indo-European languages, in order to reconstruct earlier stages of a word's semantic content. In the period since Anglo-Saxon religious terminology was last treated systematically, many significant advances have been achieved in the field of historical linguistics, including the production of new etymological dictionaries. The present study has availed as far as possible of these scholarly advances. In turn, the data which a close, corpus-wide analysis of certain Old English terminology yields may provide useful comparanda to historical linguists and syntacticians working with other closely related languages.

Furthermore, because archaeology provides the main source of evidence for insular Anglo-Saxon culture within the target period of the fifth to seventh centuries, linguistic conclusions drawn from comparative reconstruction should be interpreted in light of the material record. In turn, the present study's focus on practical worship may yield new data that is potentially useful to the current research interests of archaeologists and religious historians, because recent decades have seen increased appreciation within these disciplines for the significance of space and environment to religious activity.

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Pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon Worship

A Semantic Study
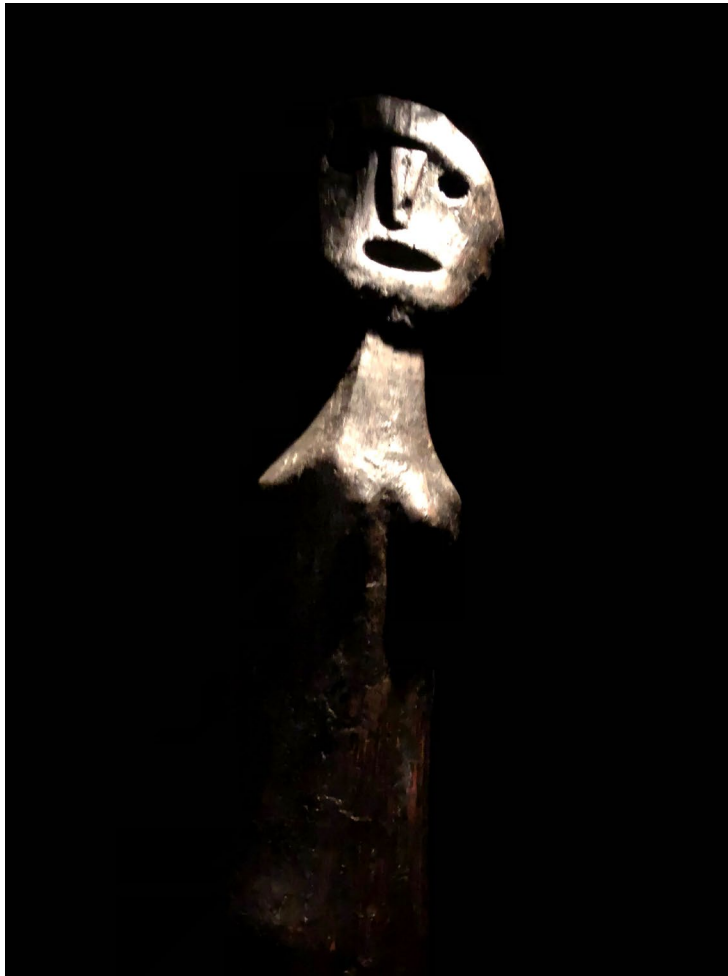
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Acknowledgements

To my Mother and Father.

Contents

Abbreviations

ÆCHom I	Ælfric, Catholic Homilies 1. Clemoes, ed. (1997)
ÆCHom II	Ælfric, Catholic Homilies 2. Godden, ed. (1979)
ÆColl	Ælfric, Colloquy. Garmonsway, ed. (1947), 18-49
ÆGl	Ælfric, Glossary. Zupitza, ed. (1880)
ÆGram	Ælfric, Grammar. Zupitza, ed. (1880)
ÆHex	Ælfric, Hexameron. Crawford, ed. (1921), 33-74
ÆHom	Ælfric, Homilies. Pope, ed. (1967-68)
ÆHomM 7 (Irv 2)	Ælfric, The Servant's Failure to Forgive. Irvine, ed. (1993), 37-45
ÆHomM 12 (Brot)	Ælfric, Dedication of a Church. Brotanek, ed. (1913), 3-15
ÆHomM 15 (Ass 9)	Ælfric, Judith. Assmann, ed. (1889), 102-16
ÆLet 4 (SigeweardB)	Ælfric, Letter to Sigeweard on the Old and New Testament. Crawford, ed. (1922), 39-51
ÆLet 1 (WulfsigeT)	Ælfric, Letter to Wulfsige, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Junius 121. Fehr, ed. (1914), 1-34
ÆLet 1 (Wulfsige X a)	Ælfric, Letter to Wulfsige, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 190. Fehr, ed. (1914), 1-34
ÆLet 2 (Wulfstan 1)	Ælfric, letter to Wulfstan 1. Fehr, ed. (1914), 68-145
ÆLet 3 (Wulfstan 2)	Ælfric, letter to Wulfstan 2. Fehr, ed. (1914), 146-221
ÆLS	Ælfric, Lives of Saints. Skeat, ed. (1881-1900)
Abrogans	*Abrogans* Glossary. Steinmeyer and Sievers, eds. (1879-1898)
AASS	Acta Sanctorum
Act.Eust.	*Acta sancti Eustathii*. AASS, Sept., vol. 6, 123-35
Agath. Hist.	Agathias, *Historiarum libri quinque*. Migne, ed. (1860), 1268-1610

AldÆ (Nap)	Aldhelm, *Ænigmata*. Napier, ed. (1900)
AldV 1 (Goossens)	Glosses to Aldhelm, *De laude virginitatis*. Goossens, ed. (1974)
AldV 3.3 (Page)	Glosses to Aldhelm, *De laude virginitatis* (prose). Page, ed. (1975), 483-89
AldV 7.3 (Meritt)	Glosses to Aldhelm, *De laude virginitatis*. Meritt, ed. (1945), no. 2
AldV (Nap)	Glosses to Aldhelm, *De laude virginitatis.* Napier, ed. (1900), nos. 1-13
Ale	Historisk Tidskrift för Skåneland
Alex	OE translation of Alexander's Letter to Aristotle. Orchard, ed. (2002), 224-52
Amm.	Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae.* Clark, ed. (1910-15)
Anon *Liðs*	Anonymous, *Liðsmannaflokkr.* Russell Poole, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 1014-28
Anon Lv (*Ragnars saga*)	Anonymous Lausavísur in *Ragnars saga loðbrókar.* Rory McTurk, ed. in Clunies Ross, ed. (2017), 701
AntGl (Kindschi)	Antwerp-London Glossaries. Kindschi, ed. (1955)
ApT	Apollonius of Tyre. Goolden, ed. (1958)
ArPrGl 1(Holt-Campb)	Prayers, London, British Library, MS. Arundel 155. Holthausen, ed. (1941), 231-54
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England*
Ásmk Lv (*Ásmundar saga*)	Lausavísur in *Ásmundr saga kappabana.* Peter Jorgensen, ed. in Clunies Ross, ed. (2017), 23
ASPR	Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records. Krapp and Dobbie, eds. (1931-53)
Auxentius	Auxentius of Durostorum, *Letter of Auxentius.* Kauffmann, ed. (1899)
Basil, *Epist.*	Basil of Caesarea, *Letters*. Deferrari, trans. (1928)
Bede	OE translation of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*. Miller, ed. (1890-98)
BenR	Rule of Benedict. Schröer, ed. (1885-88)
BenRGl	Glosses to the Rule of Benedict. Logeman, ed. (1888), 1-118.
BenRW	Rule of Benedict (Winteney). Schröer, ed. (1885-88)
BGDSL	*Beiträge zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Literatur (Halle)*

Bib. ags. prosa	Bibliothek der angelsächsische prosa
BNFAS	*Bulletin of the Northamptonshire Federation of Archaeological Societies*
Bo	Old English translation of Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Sedgefield, ed. (1899)
ByrM 1	Byrhtferth's Manual. Baker and Lapidge, eds. (1995)
Caes. Gall.	Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*. Edwards, trans. (1917)
ChrodR	Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang. Napier, ed. (1916)
ChronC	Chronicle Manuscript C. O'Brien O'Keefe, ed. (2001)
ChronD	Chronicle Manuscript D. Cubbin, ed. (1996)
ChronE	Chronicle Manuscript E. Irvine, ed. (2004)
ChronF (Baker)	Chronicle Manuscript F. Baker, ed. (2000)
ClGl 1 (Stryker)	Cleopatra Glossaries. Stryker, ed. (1951)
ClGl 2 (Quinn)	Cleopatra Glossaries. Quinn, ed. (1956), 15-69
ClGl 3 (Quinn)	Cleopatra Glossaries. Quinn, ed. (1956), 69-219
CollGl (Nap)	Latin-Old English Glossaries. Napier, ed. (1900), no.18B
Conf 5 (Mone)	Poenitentiale Theodori and Capitula d'Acheriana. Mone, ed. (1830), 515-27
Conf 1.1 (Spindler)	Confessionale pseudo-Egberti. Spindler, ed. (1934), 176-94
Conf 5.1 (Thorpe)	Poenitentiale Theodori. Thorpe, ed. (1840), 228-30
Conf 10.4 (Ker)	Formulas and Directions for the Use of Confessors. Ker, ed. (1959), 275-77
Cons.Phil.met.	Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiae*. Stewart et al., trans. (1973)
CorpGl 2 (Hessels)	Corpus Glossary. Hessels, ed. (1890), 9-122
CP	Old English translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*. Sweet, ed. (1871)
CP (Cotton)	Old English translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*, Cotton Manuscript. Sweet, ed. (1871), 214-28
CSASE	Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
De fid. cath.	OHG translation of Isidore, *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*. Eggers, ed. (1964)
De mag.	John Lydus, *De magistratibus reipublicae Romane*. Wünsch, ed. (1903)
De temp. rat.	Bede, *De temporum ratione*. Jones, ed. (1997)

Dial.	Gregory the Great, *Dialogi*. De Vogüé, ed. (1978-80)
DOE	Dictionary of Old English. Cameron et al., eds. [Online]
DOML	Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library
DR	Danish runic inscriptions. Jacobsen and Moltke, eds. (1941-42)
DurRitGl	The Durham Ritual. Thompson and Lindelöf, eds. (1927)
EETS	Early English Text Society
os	Original Series
ss	Supplementary Series
Egils saga	*Egils saga*. Einarsson, ed. (2003)
Eil *Þdr*	Eilífr Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa*. Edith Marold, ed. in Gade and Marold, eds. (2017), 75-124
ELN	*English Language Notes*
Epist.Alex.	Alexander's Letter to Aristotle. Orchard, ed. (2002), 224-52
ErfGl 1 (Pheifer)	Épinal-Erfurt Glossary. Pheifer, ed. (1974), 3-58
Eskál *Hákdr*	Einarr skálaglamm Helgason, *Hákonardrápa*. Edith Marold, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 279
Eskál *Vell*	Einarr skálaglamm Helgason, *Vellekla*. Edith Marold, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 283-329
Etym.	Isidore, *Etymologiae*. Lindsay, ed. (1911)
Eunap. Frag. 55	Eunapius, Fragment 55 of *Universal History*. Müller, ed. and trans. (1851), 28-29
Eyv *Hák*	Eyvindr skáldaspillir, *Hákonarmál*. R. D. Fulk, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 171-93
FMSt	*Frühmittelalterliche Studien*
FSGA	Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe
GD	Wærferth's translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*. Hecht, ed. (1900-07)
Gest.	Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*. Trillmich and Buchner, eds. (2000), 137-499; Tschan, trans. (1959)
GGP	Grundriss der germanischen Philologie
Glúmr Gráf	Glúmr Geirason, *Gráfeldardrápa*. Alison Finlay, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 248-65

Grettis saga	*Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*. Jónsson, ed. (1936), 11-290
Gyðinga saga	*Gyðinga saga*. Wolf, ed. (1995)
Hátt.	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal*. Kari Ellen Gade, ed. in Gade and Marold, eds. (2017), 1094-1209
Hávamál	*Hávamál*. Evans, ed. (1987)
HE	Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*. King, trans. (1930)
Heimskringla	Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*. Jónsson, ed. (1893-1900); Finlay and Faulkes, trans. (2011-15)
HER	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
Hervarar saga	*Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*. Helgason, ed. (1924), 1-58
HF	Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*. Krusch and Levison, eds. (1951)
Hfr *Óldr*	Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld Óttarsson, *Óláfsdrápa*. Diana Whaley, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 392-98
Hist.Apollon.	Apollonius of Tyre. Goolden, ed. (1958)
HL	Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*. Bethmann and Waitz, eds. (1878), 12-192
HlGl (Oliphant)	Harley Glossary. Oliphant, ed. (1966)
HomM 11 (ScraggVerc 14)	*Lārspell tō swylcere tīde swā man wile*. Scragg, ed. (1992), 239-46
HomM 13 (ScraggVerc 21)	*Men ðā lēofestan.* Scragg, ed. (1992), 351-62
HomS 16 (Ass 12)	Fifth Sunday in Lent. Assmann, ed. (1889), 144-50
HomS 18, 110	Palm Sunday. DOE Transcript, edited from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 340.
HomS 19 (Schaefer)	Palm Sunday. Schaefer, ed. (1972), 113-52
HomS 24.2 (Schaefer)	In Parasceve. Schaefer, ed. (1972), 285-314
HomS 24 (ScraggVerc 1)	In Parasceve. Scragg, ed. (1992), 116-42
HomS 24.1 (Scragg)	De Parasceve. Scragg, ed. (1992), 7-43
HomS 26 (BlHom 7)	Easter Day. Morris, ed. (1874-80), 83-97
HomS 28	Easter Day. Fadda, ed. (1972), 998-1011
HomS 33 (Först)	In Letania maiore. Förster, ed. (1913), 128-37
HomS 36 (ScraggVerc 11)	Monday in Rogationtide. Scragg, ed. (1992), 221-25
HomS 39 (ScraggVerc 12)	Tuesday in Rogationtide. Scragg, ed. (1992), 228-30

HomS 42 (Baz-Cr)	Wednesday in Rogationtide. Bazire and Cross, eds. (1982), 62-64
HomS 44 (Baz-Cr)	Wednesday in Rogationtide. Bazire and Cross, eds. (1982), 47-54
HomS 47 (BlHom 12)	Pentecost. Morris, ed. (174-80), 131-37
HomU (Nap)	Wulfstan's Homilies. Napier, ed. (1883)
HomU 1 (Irv 5)	The Temptation of Christ. Irvine, ed. (1993), 136-43
HomU 6 (ScraggVerc 15)	De Die Judicii (Apocalypse of Thomas). Scragg, ed. (1992), 253-61
Hom U 12.1 (Förster)	Fragment of the Apocalypse of Thomas. Förster, ed. (1955), 7-27
HyGl 2 (Milfull)	Durham Hymnal. Milfull, ed. (1996)
HyGl 3 (Gneuss)	Hymnal Glosses. Gneuss, ed. (1968), 265-413
IE	Indo-European
IF	*Indogermanische Forschungen*
IIJ	*Indo-Iranian Journal*
Il.	Homer, *Ilias*. Murray, trans. (1925)
In Verg. Aen.	Maurus Servius Honoratus, *In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii*. Thilo, ed. (1881)
Indiculus	*Indiculus superstitionum et paganiarum*. Clemen, ed. (1928), 42-43
JEGP	*Journal of English and Germanic Philology*
Jord. Get.	Jordanes, *Getica.* Mommsen, ed. (1882), 53-138
KJ	Elder Futhark inscriptions. Krause, ed. (1966)
Keth Lv (*Ketils saga*)	Ketill Hœngr, Lausavísur in *Ketils saga hœngs*. Beatrice La Farge, ed. in Clunies Ross (2017), 552-95
KormǪ *Sigr*	Kormákr Ǫgmundarson, *Sigurðardrápa*. Edith Marold, ed. in Gade and Marold, eds. (2017), 272-85
KZ	*Historische Sprachforschung*
Landnámabók	Haukr Erlendson, *Landnámabók*. Jónsson and Jónsson, eds. (1892-96), 10-13, 23-27
Lactant. Phoen.	Lactantius, *Carmen de ave phoenice*. Brandt and Laubmann, eds. (1893), 135-47
LawAf	Law of Alfred. Liebermann, ed. (1898), 46-88

LawICn	Law of Cnut 1. Liebermann, ed. (1898), 278-306
LawIICn	Law of Cnut 2. Liebermann, ed. (1898), 308-70
LawIne	Law of Ine. Liebermann, ed. (1898), 88-122
LawIudDei VI	Ordeal (Judicium Dei) VI. Libermann, ed. (1898), 412
LawIudDei VII	Ordeal (Judicium Dei) VII. Libermann, ed. (1898), 413-114
LawIudDei VIII	Ordeal (Judicium Dei) VIII. Libermann, ed. (1898), 415
LawWi	Law of Wihtred. Liebermann, ed. (1898), 12-14
Laxdæla saga	*Laxdæla saga*. Kålund, ed. (1889-91)
Lch I (HerbHead)	Pseudo-Apuleius, *Herbarium*. De Vriend, ed. (1984), 1-29
Lch II	Bald's Leechbook. Cockayne, ed. (1864), 304-58
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Leof	The Vision of Leofric. Napier, ed. (1908)
Lex Fris.	*Lex Frisionum*. Eckhardt and Eckhardt, eds. (1982).
Lex Rip.	*Lex Ripuaria*. Sohm, ed. (1883), 1-146
LiPraefEuseb	Epistle of Eusebius of Caesarea to Carpianus. Skeat, ed. (1871-87), 8-10
Li	Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels. Skeat, ed. (1871-87)
Libellus	Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu Istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie*. Rollason, ed. (2000)
LibSc	Defensor, *Liber scintillarum*. Text Getty, ed. (1969); lineation Rochais (1957)
Lit 4.2.10 (Thorpe)	Bidding prayer for a blessing. Thorpe, ed. (1844-46) II, 600
Lit 4.10.2.2 (Ker)	Rubrics and directions for the use of prayers. Ker, ed. (1957), 244
LS 1.1 (Andrew Bright)	Saint Andrew. Cassidy and Ringler, eds. (1971), 205-19
LS 3 (Chad)	Saint Chad. Vleeskruyer, ed. (1953), 162-84
LS 5 (InventCrossNap)	Invention of the Cross. Napier, ed. (1894), 2-34
LS 6 (InventCrossMor)	Invention of the Cross. Morris, ed. (1871), 3-17
LS 7 (Euphr)	Saint Euphrosyne. Skeat (1888-1900) II, 334-54
LS 8 (Eust)	Saint Eustace and his Companions. Skeat, ed. (1888-1900) II, 190-218
LS 10.1 (Guth)	Saint Guthlac. Gonser, ed. (1909), 100-173
LS 14 (MargaretCCCC 303)	Saint Margaret. Clayton and Magennis, eds. (1994), 152-70
LS 17.1 (MartinMor)	Saint Martin (Blickling). Morris, ed. (1874), 211-27

LS 17.2 (MartinVerc 18)	Saint Martin (Vercelli). Scragg, ed. (1992), 291-308
LS 18.1 (NatMaryAss 10N) MS.	Nativity of Saint Mary the Virgin (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343. Assmann, ed. (1889), 117-37
LS 18.2 (NatMaryAss 10J)	Nativity of Saint Mary the Virgin (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Hatton 114). Assmann, ed. (1889), 117-39
LS 25 (MichaelMor)	Saint Michael. Morris, ed. (1874-80), 197-211
LS 29 (Nicholas)	Saint Nicholas. Treharne, ed. (1997)
LS 34 (SevenSleepers)	Seven Sleepers. Magennis, ed. (1994), 33-57
LSJ	*A Greek-English Lexicon*. Liddell et al. (1996)
Mark *Eirdr*	Markús Skeggjason, *Eiríksdrápa*. Jayne Carroll, ed. in Gade, ed. (2009), 432-60
Mart 1 (Herzfeld-Kotzor)	Old English Martyrology, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 41. Herzfeld, ed. (1900), 2-10; corrections by Kotzor (1981)
Mart 5 (Kotzor)	Old English Martyrology, London, British Library, MS. Cotton Julius A.X. Kotzor, ed. (1981)
Maur. Strat.	Maurice, *Strategikon*. Dennis, ed. and trans. (1984)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
AA	Auctores Antiquissimi
Font. iur. Germ. ant.	Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui
LL. nat. Germ	Leges nationum Germanicarum
SS rer. Germ.	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum
SS rer. Merov.	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
MHG	Middle High German
MLA	Modern Language Association
MLQ	*Modern Language Quarterly*
MnE	Modern English
MnG	Modern German
MonCa	Durham Canticles, MS. B.III.32. Korhammer, ed. (1976), 254-350
MW	Middle Welsh
Nic (A)	Gospel of Nicodemus Homily. Cross, ed. (1996), 139-247
Nic (C)	Gospel of Nicodemus Homily. Hulme, ed. (1903-1904), 591-610
NIV	*The Holy Bible. New International Version*

Njáls saga	*Brennu-Njáls saga*. Sveinsson, ed. (1954)
NOWELE	*North-Western European Language Evolution*
NWGmc	North-West Germanic
OccGl 49 (Zupitza)	Glosses to Proverbs. Zupitza, ed. (1877)
OccGl 78.1 (Meritt)	Glosses to Isidore's *Synonyma*. Meritt, ed. (1961), 449
OCS	Old Church Slavonic
OE	Old English
OEN	Old East-Norse
OFris.	Old Frisian
Ög	East-Götland runic inscriptions. Brate, ed. (1911-18)
OHG	Old High German
OIr.	Old Irish
ON	Old Norse
Or	Old English Orosius. Bately, ed. (1980)
Oros. Hist.	Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*. Zangemeister, ed. (1889); Fear, trans. (2010)
OS	Old Saxon
Pact. Alamann.	*Pactus legis Alamannorum*. Lehmann, ed. (1966), 21-34
Pact. Sal.	*Pactus legis Salicae*. Eckhardt, ed. (1982)
Pass.Luci.	*Passio Sanctae Luciae Virginis et Martyris*. Mombritius, ed. (1910) II, 107-109
Pass.Sab.	*Passion of St. Saba the Goth*. Delehaye, ed. (1912), 216-21
PBB	*Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*
Paen.Columb.	*Paenitentiale Columbani*. Walker, ed. (1957), 168-81
PGmc	Proto-Germanic
Philostorgius	Philostorgius, *Church History*. Bleckmann and Stein, eds. (2015)
PIE	Proto-Indo-European
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
Poen.Theod.	*Poenitentiale Theodori*. Finsterwalder, ed. (1929), 285-334
Polyb.	Polybius, *The Histories*. Paton, trans. (2010)
PPs	Metrical Psalms of the Paris Psalter. O'Neill, ed. and trans. 2016.
PPs (prose)	Psalms 1-50. Bright and Ramsay, eds. (1907)

Procop. Goth.	Procopius, *History of the Wars*. Dewing, trans. (1919)
ProspGl	Glosses to Prosper's *Epigrammata and Versus ad coniugem*. Toth, ed. (1984), 23-36
PrudGl 1 (Meritt)	Glosses Prudentius's *Pyschomachia*. Meritt, ed. (1959)
PrudGl 4.2 (Page)	Glosses to Prudentius' *Pyschomachia*. Page, ed. (1979), 32-43
PrudT 1	Prudentius *Psychomachia* Titles, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 23. Zupitza, ed. (1876), 36-43
PsCaA 1 (Kuhn)	Canticles of the Vespasian Psalter. Kuhn, ed. (1965), 312-15
PsCaD (Roeder)	Canticles of the Regius Psalter. Roeder, ed. (1904), 275-302
PsCaE (Liles)	Canticles of the Canterbury Psalter. Liles, ed. (1967), 279-306
PsCaF (Rosier)	Canticles of the Stowe Psalter. Rosier, ed. (1964)
PsCaG (Rosier)	Canticles of the Vitellius Psalter. Rosier, ed. (1962)
PsFr	Fragments of Psalms. Dobbie, ed. (1942), 80-86
PsGlA (Kuhn)	Vespasian Psalter. Kuhn, ed. (1965)
PsGlB (Brenner)	Junius Psalter. Brenner, ed. (1908)
PsGlC (Wildhagen)	Cambridge Psalter. Wildhagen, ed. (1910)
PsGlD (Roeder)	Regius Psalter. Roeder, ed. (1904)
PsGlE (Harsley)	Eadwine's Canterbury Psalter. Harsley, ed. (1889)
PsGlF (Kimmens)	Stowe Psalter. Kimmens, ed. (1979)
PsGlG (Rosier)	Vitellius Psalter. Rosier, ed. (1962)
PsGlH (Campbell)	Tiberius Psalter. Campbell, ed. (1974)
PsGlI (Lindelöf)	Lambeth Psalter. Lindelöf, ed. (1909-14)
PsGlJ (Oess)	Arundel Psalter. Oess, ed. (1910)
PsGlK (Sisam)	Salisbury Psalter. Sisam, eds. (1959)
Quadr.	Quadripartitus. Liebermann, ed. (1898), *passim*
Rec	Malmesbury, Bull of Pope Sergius, no 106. Birch, ed. (1885-93)
Rec 6.5 (Whitelock)	Codex Aureus Inscription. Whitelock (1967), 205
Rec 10.8 (Först)	Exeter list of relics. Förster, ed. (1943), 63-80
RegCGl (Kornexl)	*Regularis concordia*. Kornexl, ed. (1993)
RegC 1 (Zup)	*Regularis concordia*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 201. Zupitza, ed. (1890), 2-16
Reg.	Benedict of Monte Cassino, *Regula*. Hanslik, ed. (1977)
Reg. past.	Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis*. Judic et al., eds. (1992)

RevMon (Whitelock)	Revival of monasticism. Whitelock, ed. (1981), 143-54
Ru	Glosses to the Rushworth Gospels. Skeat, ed. (1871-87), 25-245
RV	*Rig Veda*. Geldner, ed. and trans. (1951)
S	Sawyer Number. Sawyer (1968)
(Birch)	Boundaries. Birch, ed. (1885-99)
(Kem)	Boundaries. Kemble, ed. (1839-48)
(Rob)	Boundaries. Robertson, ed. and trans. (1956)
SAC	*Sussex Archaeological Collections*
Samanunga	*Samanunga uuorto* glossary. Steinmeyer and Sievers, eds. (1879-1898)
SedGl 2.1 (Meritt)	Sedulius, *Carmen paschale*. Meritt, ed. (1945), no. 28
SELIM	*Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature*
Sept.dorm.	*Passio sanctorum septem dormientium*. Magennis, ed. (1994), 74-91
Sid. Apoll. Epist.	Sidonius Apollinaris, *Letters*. Anderson, trans. (1965)
Sigv *Austv*	Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Austrfaravísur*. R. D. Fulk, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 578-613
Skeireins	*Skeireins* Fragment. Streitberg, ed. (2000), 456-71.
Skt	Sanskrit
Sozom.	Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica*. Hansen, ed. and trans. (2004)
StarkSt *Vík* (*Gautreks saga*)	Starkaðr gamli Stórvirksson, Víkarsbálkr in *Gautreks saga* 9-41. Margaret Clunies Ross, ed. in Clunies Ross, ed. (2017), 255-86
Strab.	Strabo, *Geographica*. Jones, trans. (1924)
StSG	*Die althochdeutschen Glossen*. Steinmeyer and Sievers, eds. (1879-98)
STUAGNL	Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur
Sturlubók	Sturla Þórðarson, *Sturlubók*. Jónsson, ed. (1900), 129-231
SUST	Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran Toimituksia
Tat.	Tatian, *Diatessaron*. Sievers, ed. (1892)
Tac. Ann.	Tacitus, *Annales*. Moore and Jackson, trans. (1931); Jackson trans. (1937)
Tac. Germ.	Tacitus, *Germania*. Rives, trans. (1999)

Tac. Hist.	Tacitus, *Historia*. Moore and Jackson, trans. (1931)
ThCap 1 (Sauer)	Theodulf of Orleans, *Capitula*. Sauer, ed. (1978)
Trans.Alex.	Rudolf of Fulda, *Translatio sancti Alexandri.* Pertz, ed. (1829), 673-83
Þjóð *Haustl*	Þjóðólfr ór Hvini, *Haustlǫng*. North, ed. (1997b)
Þjóð *Yt*	Þjóðólfr ór Hvini, *Ynglingatal*. Edith Marold, ed. in Whaley, ed. (2012), 3-58
ÚlfrU *Húsdr*	Úlfr Uggason, *Húsdrápa*. Edith Marold, ed. in Gade and Marold (2017), 405-25
Veg. Epit. mil.	Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*. Lang, ed. (1885)
Vit.Bonif.	Willibald, *Vita Sancti Bonifatii*. Levison, ed. (1905), 1-58.
Vit.Colum.	Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani abbatis discipulorumque eius libri II*. Krusch, ed. (1905), 1-294
Vit.Guth.	Felix, *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*. Colgrave, ed. and trans. (1956)
Vit.Iohan.	*Vita et actus beati Iohannis apostoli*. Mombritius, ed. (1910) II, 55-61
Vit.Lud.	Altfrid, *Vita Sancti Ludgeri*. Migne, ed. (1864), 769-96
Vit.Mart.	Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*. Migne, ed. (1845), 159-74
Vit.Ved.	Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Vedastis episcopi Atrebatensis*. Krusch, ed. (1905), 295-320
Vit.Will.	Alcuin, *Vita Sancti Willibrordi*. Dräger, ed. (2008)
Vit.Wulfr.	*Vita Wulframni episcopi Senonici*. Krusch and Levison, eds. (1890), 657-73
Vit.Wulfst.	William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*. Darlington, ed. (1928)
WCan (Fowler)	Canons of Edgar. Fowler, ed. (1972)
WGmc	West-Germanic
WHom	Wulfstan, Homilies. Betherum, ed. (1957)
wk.	weak
WPol (Jost)	Institutes of Polity. Jost, ed. (1959), 40-164
WS	West-Saxon
WSCp	West-Saxon Gospels. Skeat, ed. (1871-87)
WuS	*Wörter und Sachen*
ZfdA	*Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*
ZfdP	*Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*

List of Images

Introduction

i. Problem and Method

Anglo-Saxon Paganism and Christianisation

Paganism remains the term by which polytheistic worship and beliefs are identified from the perspective of Abrahamic monotheism.[1] Its identification as 'polytheism', however, would have been unremarkable to an actual 'pagan' (< *paganus* 'rustic') and likewise demonstrates that both labels are ideologically-driven constructs applied externally by monotheists.[2] Rather, the pagan would have known religion in terms of discrete, highly particular forms of speech and action that were recognised, according to custom, as efficacious for establishing a conduit to the divine realm, maintaining relationships with it, and harnessing its power in hope of a favourable outcome in the present; the material dimensions of cult derived their 'religious' existence or significance directly in connection with these discrete forms of speech and action, whether as arenas within which such activities took place or as touchstones for accessing the divine.

Moreover, recognition of these peculiar acts was a matter of communal inheritance. In sixth-century England, social and religious identity were inseparable, and the heathen (< OE *hǣðen*, a calque of *paganus*) would have understood himself as a traditionalist, practising cults and holding beliefs particular to his tribal or civic affiliation. For the present study, this formal focus on particular activities that were necessary for a community to perform in order to effectively manage human-divine relations, and their essential link to tribal identity are the

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[1] North (2015), 3
[2] O'Donnell (2015), 164

defining features of a pagan religion in terms that would have been understandable by its practitioners.

To take fifth-century BCE Athens as an example, Pericles was 'pagan', as an Athenian nobleman. So was Rædwald as an Anglian king in Britain, and not incidentally. In neither case was religion popularly regarded as a matter of personal choice, but as a birthright to practice cults in community with others to whom one was ancestrally kin. In the ancient world, the closest analogue to religion recognised as a set of personal convictions would have been adherence to a philosophical school for the elite, or membership of a mystery cult for other sections of society.[3] This formal definition of religion also shares with magic a focus on effective activity, though they differ in purpose: cult is more communal, obligatory and invested in securing human-divine relations in hope of a favourable outcome; magic is a more individualistic, purely instrumental pursuit directed to the expectation of manipulating matter in this world.

Although sharing many of the ritual forms of its neighboring cults, as well as ethnocultural particularity, ancient Judaism distinguished itself from these religions by innovating a radically universalistic concept of a singular deity. This God is sovereign over all peoples and providentially engaged in world history, directing it to His ultimate purpose of salvation for all humanity, despite their adherence to other gods.[4] Christianity developed from the specifically salvific aspects of this teleological and universalistic outlook. Early in its history, these precepts were detached from their ethnocultural basis in Judaism, creating a new religion which elevated a highly individualised sense of religious – specifically spiritual – personhood that was, in principle, almost entirely independent of social identity.[5] Moreover, not only was membership open to all regardless of class status or ethnic affiliation, but also predicated on radically different grounds of faith and belief, with an ethical outlook that stressed humility and chastity, all of which served the needs of spiritual personhood seeking salvation with God in heaven.

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[3] Russell (1994), 67-68
[4] Russell (1994), 74-78
[5] Galatians 3:28 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'. See also Colossians 3:11; 1 Corinthians 12:13.

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In relation to cult practice, the Hebrew Bible also advanced an ideological critique against some of the norms of ancient religion, through which new conceptualisations of religious activity were formulated out of the identification of their negative opposite. These included idol-worship, polytheism, and (to a lesser degree) sacrifice in opposition to the praise of a single, incorporeal, and irreducible God, with whom a relationship could be established inwardly through individualistic prayer, repentance for personal wrongdoing, and a moral attitude of mercy and humility towards others. The prophet Samuel harangued King Saul thus that 'to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed better than the fat of rams', while the psalmist declares 'my sacrifice O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise'.[6] Jesus could explicitly differentiate acceptable precation from its heathen counterpart in terms of inward contemplation, urging his followers 'when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen ... do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words'.[7] This attitude to prayer would find an ancient reflex, among other examples, in the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, who was remarked upon for praying silently 'in her heart'.[8] These concepts are the basis for the polarisation of righteous and forbidden forms of cult that is inherent to the Abrahamic monotheisms.

The term 'pagan' emerges from the encounter of this emergent universalistic religion with the traditional cults practiced across the Roman empire, always as a means of defining the Christian self, with its highly individualised sense of spiritual personhood, against a morally and spiritually inferior collective other. Christians first adopted *paganus* 'country dweller' in the third century from the military circles of the border regions where it was a disparaging term that soldiers used for civilians, and as such it was a colloquialism designed to flatter potential converts that they were upstanding and brave.[9] In the fourth century, following Christianity's establishing in the Empire, *paganus* reverted to its literal meaning (though with no less socially negative overtones) in the mouths of the newly Christianised, primarily urban (and urbane) Roman elite when referring to rural people, Roman or barbarian, whose identity was still defined by the practice of traditional, tribal and civic religion. However, despite the ultimate succession of Abrahamic monotheism over paganism and the ideological polarisation of

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[6] 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:17. See also Psalm 40:6; Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13.
[7] Matthew 6:6-7 μὴ βατταλογήσητε ὥσπερ οἱ ἐθνικοί 'do not stammer-speak like the Gentiles';
[8] 1 Samuel 1:14
[9] O'Donnell (2015), 160

religious identity that it maintained, in practice, a mutual porousness of cultural forms always marked their encounter, with pagan traditions relegated to the status of 'uncredited subcultures' within European Christianity.[10]

European paganism is historically understood as a family of traditions that appear to find a common well-spring in Neolithic agrarian cults and the practices of pastoral Indo-Europeans; originally, the individual traditions probably arose from local amalgams of these prehistoric cultures. This shared basis is perceivable in broad comparisons of divine functions (Norse Thor's with Roman Jupiter's, for example, as gods of storm and thunder), the centrality of sacrificial worship, and seasonal festivals marking key events in the farming year. But the particularist identities of the individual pagan traditions themselves were defined along the ethnolinguistic and cultural lines, by which they are recognised as Germanic, Celtic, Italic and so on. Common language and a sense of ancestral unity, therefore, define one or other pagan religion as a 'tradition'. Within Germanic tradition, Anglo-Saxon paganism is a form specific to time and place: those cults practised by Germanic settlers in Britain in c.450 – c.700 that were traditional to their ancestors and related peoples who lived on the Jutland Peninsula and along the North Sea coast.

With the arrival of the Gregorian mission in 597, these Germanic settlers began to adopt Nicene Christianity.[11] Roman and Irish missionaries had made early inroads in Kent and Northumbria by the 630s; the death in 655 of King Penda of Mercia, who hitherto had spearheaded serious political resistance, was a major turning point in the fortunes of the new religion. Following conversion of the South Saxons in 686, the Christianisation of the Germanic tribes in Britain was politically complete and an ecclesiastical infrastructure now in waiting. Writing a generation later, Bede's account presented these events in terms of providential ethnogenesis, through which disparate groups of Anglian, Saxon and Jutish settlers became the *gens Anglorum*. This account was cherished as England's founding myth for the next four centuries.

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[10] North (2015), 9

[11] See however Hirst and Scull (2019) *passim*. Recent carbon-dating of artefacts found in the high-status burial chamber at Prittlewell, Essex (discovered in 2004) now suggests that this tomb was built between c.575-605 and might have belonged to Sæxa, the brother of Sæberht. Two small, gold-foil crosses were laid over each eye of the body, although the precise context of their deposition is unclear: if the interned man adhered to Nicene Christianity, these findings might push the canonical date of its arrival among the Anglo-Saxons back by a decade or so; alternatively, the findings might represent adherence to Arianism or the presence of Christians, Arian or otherwise, within the East-Saxon royal circle.

Since the Roman Empire's legal adoption of it in the fourth century, Christianity had become acclimatised to incorporating forms from classical paganism while grafting itself onto existing political structures.[12] The holistic concept of imperial citizenship probably prepared the ground for this smooth seguing of *Romanitas* into *Christianitas* within which imperial cults syncretised with the local traditions of subject peoples. In this way, seventh-century missionary activity in Britain has normally been regarded in terms of the re-Romanisation of a lost province.[13] But the peculiar character of these efforts to convert the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms is best understood against the background of the sixth century, specifically the conditions of Germanic settlement in Britain and Roman experiences of barbarian ascendancy in western Europe.[14]

Following the political collapse of the Western Empire at barbarian hands in the fifth century, the Romans of Italy, Spain and Gaul retained an ideological base in the Trinitarian church. King Clovis of the Merovingians excepted, on the other hand, all the major barbarian polities of this period, the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and Burgundians, adhered to heretical, non-trinitarian Arianism. This not only put them outside organised Roman control in religious matters, but moreover threatened to entrench an ethnocultural divide that remained very real throughout the sixth century, with implications for persecution, legal discrimination and confiscation of property.[15]

Germanic Arianism maintained its own rites, ecclesiastical hierarchy and, at least in the Gothic kingdoms, vernacular scriptures in a derivative of the runic alphabet. There is also evidence to suggest that Arianism sat comfortably alongside Germanic paganism in such circles, with the two often highly syncretised.[16] As Cusack importantly observes, the barbarians never perceived Christianity as theory, but always in connection with observable power structures.[17] Trinitarianism would have required them to become Roman; in Arianism they had independent control over religious norms and could imitate the admired Gothic kingdoms.[18] Gregory of Tours presents Clovis as a staunch pagan. However, there is a hint that he too was exposed to Arianism, in that his sisters Lanthechild and Audofleda (wife of Theodoric the Great, the

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[12] Markus (1990) *passim*, esp. 139-50
[13] Fletcher (1997), 108-14; Mayr-Harting (1993), 60
[14] Fletcher (1997), 97-159
[15] Fletcher (1997), 99-100, 135; Riché (1976), 64
[16] Heather (1986), 314; North (1997a), 150-51. See also Gregory of Tours *HF* 6.40 implying this mutual tolerance in Arian circles.
[17] Cusack (1998), 19
[18] Heather (1991), 157-65; Thompson (1966), 109-17; North (1997a), 149-53; Russell (1994), 139

leading political Arian of the early sixth century) were certainly Arian in a creed which may have co-existed with paganism among the pre-Trinitarian Frankish elite.[19]

Syncretised Arian-pagan cults might even have travelled as far north as Scandinavia through the pan-barbarian networks of the fifth century,[20] and possibly to the settlers in Britain. Writing into the 580s, Gregory consistently reveals his fear of the heresy and its effects.[21] Gregory the Great, meanwhile, the architect of the first Roman mission to the Anglo-Saxons, lived his formative years, from 570 onwards, through Italy's invasion by the Lombards. Less Romanised than either the Franks or Goths, this tribe was closely allied to the Saxons and Arianism certainly prevailed alongside paganism after their settlement in Italy until the mid-seventh century.[22]

Until the Nicene conversion of the Visigoths in Spain 589, the threat of Arian dominance in the successor kingdoms was ever present for the *ultimi Romanorum*. Crucially, the Romans recognised that in replacing or merging with their traditional cults, Arianism gave those barbarians who had recently migrated into the former Roman provinces a sense of cultural security and control over their religion.[23] Furthermore, while Gregory of Tours' account of Clovis' baptism is probably contrived, it reveals belated Roman recognition of barbarian values: Clovis was finally convinced to convert after several attempts through his victory at Tolbiac over the Alamanni in 496 or 506, and he was baptised in the name of his ancestral dynasty 'Sicamber'.[24]

The Romans would have viewed the Germanic settlers of Britain through the lens of their experiences with the Franks, Goths and Lombards. To win the English over to Trinitarianism, therefore, the missionaries were prepared to concede the replacement of one tribal cult with another. Initially at least, this would have meant presenting Christianity as a new 'cult' on heathen terms, i.e. as a set of technical ritual actions that were demonstrably more effective than the old practices for maintaining human-divine relations. Replacement rituals would have been critical to enfeebling the potency of heathen cult at the initial stages of missionary activity.

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[19] *HF* 2.31; Fletcher (1997), 104-105; Wood (1985), 249-72; Cusack (1998), 73
[20] North (1997a), 152
[21] *HF* 2.25; 2.32; 6.40
[22] Fletcher (1997), 100; Mayr-Harting (1993), 55-57; *HL* 2.6
[23] Cusack (1998), 51
[24] *HF* 2.31-32; Fletcher (1997), 104-105; Cusack (1998), 71, 76

It would also have been urgent to supplant the divine personalities of the old cults. With replacement rituals, basic replacement myths about the Ruler of Victories and his heroic Son would be needed to persuade the barbarians that the Triune God was worth following. This form of religion would thus appeal to what the barbarian leaders valued in religion (effective ritual), society (military success and dynastic tradition), as well maintaining a sense of continuity with the tribal past in syncretised forms of cult. While officially Orthodox, English Christianity appears to have incorporated aspects of Anglo-Saxon traditions via negotiated re-alignment with the presentation of the ancient Israelites in the Old Testatment. Through this identification, traditional theonyms such as Woden might have been aligned with the biblical patriarchs and the early Anglo-Saxon saints and kings analogised with the prophets and political leaders of the ancient Israelites.[25]

The present study argues that because of their relatively recent history as a settler people, the Anglo-Saxons were especially receptive to a form of Christianity that both supported a strong sense of traditional tribal identity as well as enabled its reconfiguration under new circumstances. The migrants from northern Germany and southern Scandinavia – by tradition, the Angles, Saxons and Jutes – arrived in Britain in 'small, unconnected parties of adventurers, with warrior leaders surrounded by their companions', whose names survive in toponyms like Reading or Woking.[26] They rowed up the waterways and disembarked wherever there was good land to settle. A myriad of small polities established by these settlement groups began to coalesce into embryonic kingdoms probably from the mid-sixth century. Settler societies are characterised by a tension between traditionalism and innovation. Traditions are a cohesive force, but are always open to reconfigurations dictated by new circumstances, especially in relation to social groupings and power structures within pre-literate societies.[27] Among migrating Germanic peoples, the detachment of pan-tribal cults (and with them identity) from ancient spaces of worship conceivably weakened the integrity of these traditions.[28] Where Christianisation occurred by force in Frisia, Saxony and Scandinavia, which were original Germanic tribal territories whence migrations flowed, such sites appear to have presented a strong obstacle to conversion.[29]

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[25] North (1997a), 111-18; Bintley (2013), 223; *HE* 1.34, 3.18
[26] Mayr-Harting (1991), 15
[27] Semple (2007), 381-85; Dumville (1977), 85 cited in Cusack (1998), 92
[28] Thompson (1966), 101
[29] Helm (1953) II.2, 167

It seems reasonable to suppose that, as for other migratory barbarians, the Anglo-Saxons had a strong need for cohesion and traditionalism, having lost the tangible features of cult around which tribal identity would have been defined in their homelands. To serve this need, they would have been open to adopting a new cultic infrastructure rapidly, along formally familiar lines. The prevalence, for example, in Old English of the more warlike leadership terms *cyning* and *dryhten* over the more domestic (and perhaps sacral) *frēa* and *þēoden* arguably reflects these circumstances.[30] It might reasonably be supposed that, among disparate groups of ambitious men looking to acquire land, followers, and establish lineages, these more militaristic terms for the leader of a war-band or kindred grouping would gain greater currency over those describing the figurehead of an ancient tribal confederation. Likewise, while some of the kingdoms that emerged among the pagan Anglo-Saxons were identified according to traditional Germanic tribal identities – for example, the West Saxons, East Saxons, East Angles, Middle Angles and so on – these common identifiers never translated into political unity. In practice, sixth-century pre-Christian Germanic cult in Britain was probably more localised around ancestral cults within smaller communities,[31] although the emerging elites of these settler groups might have been open to adopting new forms of religion that could bind them together on a cultural plane which transcended local politics. Both in Britain and the Continent, the barbarian elites appear to have eagerly embraced ecclesiastical infrastructure as a means of establishing formal networks of political-religious patronage (*Adelskirche*).[32]

Despite the compelling factors, Mayr-Harting reminds us that it took almost a century for just the kings and their elite to accept Christianity, with at least one relapse in every polity.[33] In order to convince the barbarians in Britain that Christianity was culturally appropriate for them and had perhaps been in their traditional cults all along, the missionaries probably sought to inculturate Christian meaning into Germanic vernacular words during their negotiations with the leaders of a convert populace. Inculturation is a missionary strategy (still practiced), by which Christian teachings and cultural forms are presented to a non-Christian people in words traditional to their own language.[34] This process rapidly changes the semantic content of affected terminology, especially when operating in tandem with the ideological binaries of Christian-pagan, which conversion simultaneously injects into a cultural system. As Russell

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[30] Green (1998), 102-106, especially 105-106, 134-40
[31] Pearson (1970), 270
[32] Cusack (1998), 110; Fletcher (1997), 154-55
[33] Mayr-Harting (1991), 29
[34] Ó Carragáin (2005), 223-79; North (2015), 4

observes, however, the process runs both ways over the long term, with Christianity itself inculturated through contact with non-Christian words.[35]

The present study argues that these twin processes of inculturation and the injection of an ideological binary significantly fragmented and reconfigured the system of Anglo-Saxon cultural vocabulary that expressed fundamentals of pre-Christian cult practice. Where this system's terminology formerly would have held together in a meaningful way, it is broken up and re-distributed according to an imported value system, which begets substantive and qualitative semantic change. This study argues that this fragmentation motivated semantic change in three ways. Inculturated words were rehabilitated as Christian terms and renovated with new semantic content accordingly. Other words were marginalised from the Christian system and underwent semantic pejoration, by which their content was shrunk and they acquired negative status as signifiers of forbidden worship. A third group of words was neutralised; they were shorn of problematic connotations, but not radically renovated with new content.

It will further be argued that lexical distribution within this three-way split suggests Christianisation occurred in two broad phases that were characterised by quite different priorities. The first phase covers the conversion proper until its political completion in the 680s. The Gregorian missionaries early monopolised key, effective heathen rituals by thoroughly inculturating them with the important Christian sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, as well as the apostolic activity of healing. This served to enfeeble pagan cult of its power, while leaving outward forms of worship relatively undisturbed. This 'first generation' of Anglo-Saxon Christians would have known a highly syncretised form of cult, probably permitted on analogy with the ancient Israelites, and defined largely according to replacement rituals and mythical personalities (God, Christ, demons and the patriarchs), rather than new ideological precepts. Aside from key rituals and divine personalities, the native religious vocabulary would have largely maintained its traditional currency during this period of proto-Christian monotheism.

The second phase followed the conversion's political completion and in this period of Christianisation, vernacular terminology for religious activity underwent more ideologically

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[35] Russell (1990), 102-103

influenced semantic change. With the establishing of a nation-wide ecclesiastical infrastructure towards the end of the seventh century, it is proposed that a critical mass of now-learned Anglo-Saxon clergy began to strive after fidelity to the peculiarly Christian themes that they encountered in scripture and patristic literature. Under the influence of such ideas, this study argues that these 'second generation' Christians would have been anxious to curb what they perceived as the excesses of religious syncretism that had characterised the preceding generation(s) of the conversion period. Semantic pejoration resulted from the need to express negative ideological concepts such as idolatry and sacrificial worship, which the missionaries may not have emphasised too strongly, because they would have been bemusing and at worst alienating.[36] Negative critique of pagan cult at that stage was probably advanced more in terms of 'devil-worship', in order to address the first task of deposing the heathen gods and also because Germanic culture recognised the demonic, where the Abrahamic concept of 'idol-worship' was foreign.

Inculturation during this second phase also involved the adaptation of native terminology to expressing new ideas of 'prayer', 'worship' and 'praise' that were peculiarly religious activities within Judaeo-Christian tradition. This gradually re-centred religious terminology away from its traditional technical basis, and brought to the fore terms that were marginal within the pre-Christian system. Not only was semantic change more widespread at this stage, but the former interrelationships of the heathen system were fully disintegrated and reconfigured within the new system, which increased or diminished the original significance of affected words. The shift from practice-based cult, defined by replacement rituals, to a text-based religion defined by ideological renovation would have initiated a more thorough-going kind of Christianisation.

The present study pursues two aims: first, to reconstruct the pre-Christian meaning of 18 Old English word-families that show a relationship to worship in either or both the heathen and Christian systems, and to propose how they were interrelated practically for worshippers during the period of Anglo-Saxon heathenism; second, to describe categorically, through the evidence of language, how this pre-Christian heritage was affected by the Christianisation process, through which Germanic populations in Britain practising traditional cults became the Christian English kingdoms finding their place within providential history.

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[36] Russell (1994), 121

The scholarly heritage

A dearth of source material is the fundamental problem for reconstructing Anglo-Saxon paganism, for virtually no extant written evidence can be reliably attributed either to a practitioner of heathen worship or to a contemporary eyewitness.[37] All examples of relevant vocabulary in the literary sources post-date the conversion and therefore show the effects of Christianisation at varying stages, conditioned by the needs of contemporary Christian authors. The critical legacy presents a secondary dimension to the problem of Anglo-Saxon paganism, which largely concerns the assumptions and focus of the inquiry. The 'search for Anglo-Saxon paganism' began with the 'critical attitude' to early Germanic literature of nineteenth-century philologists who isolated those features deemed 'pagan' and elevated them as authentic at the expense of Christian or cosmopolitan features.[38] Romanticism nourished these ideological assumptions in its equation of the 'primitive' pagan with cultural authenticity and provided prime political capital to a German-speaking world undergoing national unification in its affirmation of the German 'Volk', in its widest sense, against interpolations of alien Latinity. While thorough, much of this early scholarship was produced under these auspices of competition aimed at proving cultural worth. Anglo-Saxon and other Germanic literatures were thus trawled mechanically, and often naively, to recover 'Teutonic antiquities' and isolate Christian interpolations of assumed inferior value.[39]

This assumption of cultural authenticity also directed the focus of Anglo-Saxon scholarship to reconstructing the common stock of Germanic heathenism, with Old English and Old Norse sometimes claimed openly as part of German cultural inheritance.[40] Most significantly for the discipline, this preference for holistic perspectives on the individual daughter languages and their interrelationships resulted in a tradition of totalising reference works that aspired to describe Germanic heathendom comprehensively, encompassing myth, legend, cult and magic. Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (1844, 2 vols.) provided the template for such ambitions.

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[37] Jente (1921), iii-iv; Philippson (1929), 11; Chaney (1970), 4; Wilson (1992), 2; North (1991), 1-13
[38] Stanley (1975), 1-4
[39] Stanley (1975), 40-82; Brincker (1898), 5 'in den liedern unserer Altvordern Fundgruben für die deutsche Kulturgeschichte zu sehen'. Other works of this kind include Rau (1889); Ferrell (1893); Kent (1887); Price (1896); Dale (1906).
[40] See the title of H. Leo's (1839) *Bëówulf, dasz älteste deutsche, in angelsächsischer mundart erhaltene, heldengedicht.*

Grimm's premise was that continuity obtained between pre-Christian cultural forms and the relics of local folklore from later centuries with which he illuminated discussions.[41]

This tradition in terms of schematic outline continued well into the twentieth century, with modifications of approach and evidential treatment, in Karl Helm's *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (1913, 1937, 1957, 3 vols.) and works of the same title by Jan de Vries (1956-7, 2 vols.) and Richard M. Meyer (1910). Central to their focus were myth and the conceptual content of heathen religion as a belief system, reflecting the widely agreed, and ultimately Romantic, notion that culture was circumscribed by, and its expressive forms explicable through the mythopoetic. Despite the early twentieth century 'ritualist' shift towards cult practices as source of mythopoesis and religious conceptions, myth and belief have primacy in these works. For this reason, the evidential weight is largely Scandinavian, with OE, Old High German (OHG), Old Saxon (OS), Old Frisian (OFris.), and Gothic playing an ancillary role due to their scantier direct testimony for myth and belief. In this way, the basic problem of Anglo-Saxon paganism – a dearth of direct evidence – is interrelated with issues surrounding the use of ON analogues as a basis of scholarly inquiry. The OE linguistic record preserves very few substantial traces of myth, the evidential bulk consisting of discrete and Christianised words or phrases.[42] With Old Norse (ON) at the heart of the operation, independent, close systematic investigation of local OE contexts was avoided in favour of adducing such examples summarily in support of claims based on ON.

Nonetheless, two important Anglo-Saxon studies were produced in the twenties that followed Grimm's model: Richard Jente's *Die mythologischen Ausdrücke im altenglischen Wortschatz* (1921) and Ernst Philippson's *Germanische Heidentum bei den Angelsachsen* (1929). Jente's project attempted to consolidate the relevant literary evidence for heathen religious terminology that was already scattered through scholarly studies and editions of the preceding century. Its title signals continuity with the *Deutsche Mythologie* tradition in terms of attention to belief systems, with as much stated in the preface that the work offers 'eine kulturgeschichtlich-etymologische Untersuchung der Reste der mythologischen Elemente des angelsächsischen Wortschatzes'.[43] The debt to Grimm is also openly acknowledged, while sounding a note of caution over the pioneer philologist's readiness to establish automatic

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[41] Shippey (2005), 1-28
[42] Philippson (1929), 93-98
[43] Jente (1921), v

relationships between the mythologies of individual Germanic branches.[44] Jente's stated intent was to produce a complete 'Aufzeichung sämtlicher sonstiger angelsächsischer Zeugnisse'. In his time, Jente fulfilled the need for a reference work for Anglo-Saxon paganism without having a complete concordance of the OE corpus. Such a need is today largely fulfilled by the Toronto *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* and *Dictionary of Old English*.[45] However, Jente's selection policy regarding relevant examples, however, was determined by the relative importance he attributed to one or other term. He deemed a detailed account unnecessary for thoroughly inculturated terms (like *hūsel*) or those with less obvious cultic significance (like *bēam*).[46]

Philippson's stated premise was similar to Jente's: 'diese Arbeit will den Glauben der Angeln und Sachsen vor und nach der Eroberung Britanniens darstellen', giving preference to sources attesting the 'höhere Mythologie' of national cult and the pan-Germanic pantheon.[47] Viewed together, the chapter schemes of these classic philological works clearly show their common focus on myth and belief. Out of the 38 chapters in the fourth edition of *Deutsche Mythologie*, just four deal with worship, not including magic or prophecy. Helm, Philippson and De Vries likewise devote single chapters to 'Kult'. Jente alone places 'der heidnische Kult' first, devoting roughly equal length to the following chapter on the gods, and to the fifth and sixth combined on magic and prophecy. As with Jente's critique of Grimm, Philippson's thesis statement shows increased sensitivity to the need for locally historicising Germanic 'paganisms' according to time, tribe and place, which for the Anglo-Saxons means those beliefs held by Germanic settlers in Britain before the eighth century that were traditional among the peoples of Jutland and the North Sea coast.

Karl Helm pioneered this historicism from his first volume (1913) onwards, gradually refining Grimm's thesis of continuity, which justified the immediate comparison of cognates with less attention to provenance. For Helm, 'Religionsgeschichte' aimed at a totalising image of religious development from its beginnings, through 'highest manifestations' to 'last survivals', for which it was essential to interpret the cultural facts of Germanic heathenism with sensitivity to their historical change.[48] Helm thus pioneered a cross-disciplinary approach that handled the

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[44] Jente (1921), iii-v
[45] Jente (1921), v
[46] Jente (1921), v
[47] Philippson (1929), 11
[48] Helm (1913) I, 4, 8; (1953) II.2, 9

relics of language concurrently with those of archaeology, historical analogues, and comparative religious history, in order more accurately to critique the linguistic sources and also to supplement them where they were scanty or incomprehensible.[49] Moreover, and importantly for the present study, Helm acknowledged that 'heilige Handlung oder Kultus' was not only of equal status to myth and belief, but indeed, as a tangible form of religious expression, 'more stable and therefore more reliable' for reconstructive purposes; and since religion finds its completion as a matrix of discrete expressive modes, performative, linguistic, conceptual and material, the consideration of both cult and myth became essential.[50]

Before World War II, scepticism within Germanic philology typically sought to refine evidential handling rather than to question outright the inherent worth of cultural reconstruction. Subsequently, however, Anglo-Saxonists re-orientated their assumptions around a new appreciation for the integrity of OE texts as the literary products of the learned, cosmopolitan environment that followed conversion, in which Old Irish, Christian or classical cultural sources would be no less important than Germanic. Scholarship has in any case gained a more mature understanding of the composition of OE literature, even though the search for scriptural and classical analogues cannot readily rely on the methodological advantage of linguistic cognacy, which directly aids the reconstruction of common Germanic cultural sources. In tandem with this critical turn, however, sceptical opinion began to question the worth of even investigating Anglo-Saxon paganism. In *The Search for Anglo-Saxon Paganism* (1975), Eric Stanley confronted what he saw as the process by which the fallacious Romantic assumptions of great scholars became heavy-handed axioms in the hands of such lesser successors as devoted themselves to finding paganism at the expense of all else.[51] This resulted in the illusion of an authoritative understanding of Germanic heathen religion that was 'largely the result of inference and surmise'.[52] Stanley's statement that Anglo-Saxon heathenism is an 'unknowable unknown' encapsulates the additional effect this scepticism had on the mainstream of the discipline: because pagan culture is 'unknowable', it is unworthy of serious investigation.[53]

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[49] Helm (1913) I, 5
[50] Helm (1913) I, 3, 6
[51] Stanley (1975), 122, 32-36
[52] Stanley (1975), 109
[53] Stanley (1975), 122

Against this increased scepticism, Chaney maintained (as Helm before him) that scant linguistic testimony for paganism appears 'far richer than is generally realised' when interpreted concurrently with toponymy, archaeology, folklore, and comparative religion.[54] In this spirit, the subject began to be revisited again in the 1990s, profiting from great advances in archaeology, especially of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and the discovery of the palace complex at Yeavering.[55] A more complete and reliable understanding of the relevant toponymy had also been achieved by this stage by scholars affiliated with the English Place Name Society.[56] The archaeologist David M. Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Paganism* (1992) applied these two major advances in the knowledge of early Anglo-Saxon culture to the question.[57] Richard North, meanwhile, addressed the more contentious task of the literary sources in *Pagan Words and Christian Meanings* (1991) and *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature* (1997), which revisited aspects of heathen belief through a comparative method fortified by more sensitive handling of Old Norse (ON) comparanda, OE and Anglo-Latin literature.

Renewed interest has also continued to grow among other archaeologists more willing than their predecessors to entertain questions of cultural reconstruction. The editors of the collection *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited* (2010) justify the importance of archaeology for reconstructing heathenism on the basis that material culture is the foremost expressive mode of a religion, for which landscape, sites and objects are the 'signals of belief' and departure point for understanding what was believed.[58] They also emphasise the role of local agency in the establishing of Germanic traditions in Britain and their subsequent inculturation by Christianity. On a practical rather than ideological plane, both paganism and its Christian successor were manifested through highly localised world-views organised around ritual forms; at this popular level, the two modes of cult were probably not ordinarily in confrontation, but rather presented readily available cultural sources that were negotiated by a critical mass of lay people.[59] This observation importantly underscores the idea that the inculturation of OE vocabulary was a two-way process that quite probably occurred with special intensity during the first phase of Christianisation in the conversion period, proceeding by a prohibition here, a concession there; new syncretised religious forms would

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[54] Chaney (1970), 4
[55] Hope-Taylor (1977); Wilson (1992), 53-66
[56] Gelling (1978), (1984)
[57] Wilson (1992), 27-43
[58] Carver, Sanmark and Semple (2010), ix
[59] Carver, Sanmark and Semple (2010), ix

have been eagerly implemented through popular demand, at which level the traditional forms of worship were affected.

The focus has thus shifted to cult and worship, which are now regarded as the primary means of accessing heathenism. In *Gods and Worshippers in the Viking and Germanic World* (2008), Thor Ewing explicitly addresses the profitability of this re-centered scholarly interest around diurnal practices that were familiar to the broad mass of people engaged in the urgent priorities of farming, house and hearth. Ewing characterises myth as one ideological constituent within a cultural complex that was predominantly expressed through practices which deserve independent analysis, in an approach which recalls Helm's systemic view of religion. The 'complex mosaic of overlapping world-views' which the material and conceptual evidence presents, in Ewing's view, strongly challenges the assumption that pre-Christian belief as a unity can be discovered through myth.[60] In order to understand how heathenism actually worked, it is safer to start with the practices themselves, where the character of religion concerns 'individual worshippers, family traditions and regional cults within a broadly consistent framework.'[61]

From the side of comparative religion, the idea that 'culture and cult are related' has long been commonplace,[62] but the recent 'spatial turn' in the humanities has increased its contemporary influence, by which is meant the recognition that cultural space is socially produced through ongoing, complex interactions between habits, communal relationships and the localisation of traditional forms.[63] Concerning theories of the 'sacred', this marks a decisive shift away from the binary opposition sacred-profane that was essential for Durkheim and Eliade, which defined sacrality as an essential separated-ness, towards the idea that space, sacred objects and cult-foci accrue their sacrality through human actions enacted, and seen to be enacted, therein or upon.[64] Supporting this essential role of human agency, Jonathan Smith observes that while Durkheim innovated an essentialist, nominal concept of sacrality, the language of religious traditions tend to evidence underlying verbal expressions.[65] These ideas have important implications for the present study, firstly for understanding the attribution of social agency to

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[60] Ewing (2008), 8
[61] Ewing (2008), 9
[62] Chaney (1970), 6
[63] Kugele (2016), 24
[64] Grimes (1999), 266; Kugele (2016), 24. See also Sopher (1967); Smith (1987).
[65] Smith (1987), 105-106

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sacred objects and idols, as well as the status of consecration rituals.[66] Secondly, the idea that 'sacred' and 'secular' enjoy a transitive fluidity dependent upon human agency is certainly relevant to understanding the inculturation of non-cultic words as well as semantic neutralisation, whereby words lost their religious connotations with the collapse of a relevant heathen ritual context.

To sum up the scholarly heritage on this question, Anglo-Saxon paganism played an ancillary role within Germanic philology from Grimm's time into the first half of the twentieth century, largely because myth and belief were the central focus of this intellectual tradition, for which substantive OE testimony is certainly scarce. Combined with the fact that scholars largely abandoned serious attempts to investigate pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon culture in the first few decades after World War II, there has been little systematic treatment of the OE nouns and adjectives of worship and cult, and none at all of the verbs; there is still much left to say here. Nonetheless, long ahead of his time, Karl Helm adumbrated the idea that cult probably presents the most stable access point to heathen religion. Consequently, a contemporary re-orientation of archaeology and religious studies around the material life of worship may allow some meaningful conclusions about Anglo-Saxon paganism to be drawn with this approach. It is no longer applicable to treat the 'unknown' as 'unknowable'; as Chaney noted 'the case for Anglo-Saxon continuity with the Germanic North deserves to be presented in full', because the short shrift paid to the cultural legacy of paganism leaves only 'insoluble problems'.[67] A new search for Anglo-Saxon paganism is justifiable on these terms, approaching the subject through the language of worship and within the context of the local circumstances of Germanic settlement in Britain during the migration period, which precipitated a complex interplay between traditionalism and openness to rapid syncretism.

The focus on worship, i.e. on the practical and material dimensions of religious life, defines the bi-partite structure of this work. Each discussion will proceed through a full descriptive analysis of the relevant terminology, from poetry to prose, glossaries, administrative documents, and wider linguistic comparanda (see ii Sources), in order to accurately describe the regular patterns and their exceptions.[68] Inferences will then be drawn as to a word's pre-Christian meaning, how Christianisation affected its internal semantics and interrelationship

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[66] Kiernan (2020), 1-23
[67] Chaney (1970), 6
[68] Carlton (1970), 23

with other terminology, and what its condition implies for interpretation of the Christianisation process.

The first two chapters treat actions of worship. Chapter One on 'Sacrifice' discusses the word families of *tīber* 'victim', *blōtan* 'to sacrifice', *gield* 'sacrificial worship', *lāc* 'offering', *hūsel* 'Eucharist; sacrificial feast' and *bletsian* 'to bless; to consecrate a sacrifice'. Chapter Two deals with four verbs that were inculturated to develop a technical religious vocabulary of 'prayer' and 'veneration': *biddan* 'to pray', *hālsian* 'to entreat; to procure a portent', *begangan* 'to worship; to curate' and *weorðian* 'to worship; to honour'. The latter two chapters deal with material aspects of worship. Chapter Three 'Objects of Worship' treats discrete cult-foci *wēoh* 'idol', *cumbol* 'sacred object', *þūf* 'sacred object' and *bēam* 'tree'. Chapter Four 'Structures and Spaces of Worship' offers a discussion of *wēofod* 'altar; turf-altar', *hearg* 'stone-altar', *ealh* 'cult-hall' and *bearu* 'grove'.

Comparative method and semantic reconstruction

Although the corpus on which the above studies are based attests to OE semantics from the late seventh century onwards, the dearth of direct pre-Christian evidence may be overcome by correlating the available linguistic data with comparanda, in order to access the preceding two centuries. Foremost, these are the formal cognates of other early Germanic languages, and thereafter, where necessary, cognates from other Indo-European (IE) languages. Comparative linguistic method relies upon formal cognacy established through observation of the regular phonological correspondences between words in related languages. These comparisons may be formulated as a sound law to describe diachronic linguistic change, thus providing a falsifiable basis for reconstructing an unattested proto-form, for example OE *fæder*, Latin *pater* < PIE *$ph_2tēr$*.[69] Since the relationship of most intra-Germanic cognates is transparent, such issues are basically uncontroversial for the present study and discussed only where formal cognacy is obscure, in practice, typically for extra-Germanic comparanda.

Semantic reconstruction, however, differs from the reconstruction of phonology or morphology due to the absence of a principle analogous to the sound law by which the regular development of meaning through time can be traced. Such changes are a relative matter,

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[69] Fox (1995), 57; Fulk (1992), 6-24

motivated by diverse cultural and societal factors that operate in different ways.[70] The concern here is with rapid ideological change that attended Christianisation and which motivated three kinds of semantic development – inculturation, marginalisation and neutralisation. All three processes altered the content and interrelationships of the relevant OE vocabulary. Nevertheless, the comparative method remains essential, because the formal relationship between OE, ON and Gothic justifies the assumption that some meaning conveyed by cognates in these languages ought to derive, through chains of independent development, from a common cultural origin that, most importantly, pre-dates Christianisation.[71] Although the surviving OS and Gothic evidence, like OE, is Christian and has undergone similar rapid, culturally motivated changes, the balance of probability weighs in favour of their common semantic ground reflecting a pre-Christian meaning. The etymological meaning attained through comparison with formal cognates is thus a point of departure for reconstructing the ordinary course of semantic development.

The internal changes of semantic development invite a number of methodological presumptions. Ordinarily, a concrete meaning attained through formal comparative method may be treated as the etymological basis for new meanings, especially cultural semantics, which accrue over time like sediment, typically by way of connotations related to habitual activity. Once a word has accumulated several diverse meanings, concrete, abstract or figurative, one or other meaning may be shed according to the persistence of the context in which the new meanings were first accrued connotatively (see *cumbol*). In other cases, an action or object will accrue new meanings in connection with a highly specialised context (religion being one such example). Over time these meanings become entrenched as primary, while the word's original functional or concrete semantics become more unstable and liable to change (see *hearg*).

Semantic expansion by synecdoche (a part coming to stand for the whole: 'all hands on deck', i.e. 'all persons on the ship must help') or metonymy (an affiliate coming to stand for what it relates to: 'the pen is mightier than the sword', i.e. 'written words are more effective than violence') is another natural process. Because this change mainly concerns a word's relationship to its etymon, the methodological presumption that semantic development expands

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[70] Fox (1995), 64
[71] North (1992), 11; Abram (2011), 54

from smaller feature to larger directly affects substantive conclusions at the comparative level of investigation. But it is also relevant for reconstructing the interrelation of words during the period of Anglo-Saxon paganism, because any natural expansion or contraction of one term can shift the semantic scope of others within the same semantic field in a chain reaction.

Episodes of far-reaching cultural transformation such as Christianisation typically motivate highly peculiar developments. Two methodological presumptions are specifically relevant for interpreting these changes and for reconstructing the pre-Christian semantic and systemic situation. First, it is presumed that inculturated terms were adapted on the basis of an available analogy in heathen culture, whether formal, functional or conceptual. Such equations are normal in acts of cultural translation and, assuming the parties are on equal terms, the degree of leeway permitted will depend on their openness to exchange. A formal analogy is broadest and equates the outward resemblance of cultural features, but not their function or significance in either culture. Functional and conceptual analogies preserve something of a word's inherent signified, but transposition almost always distorts, mutates, or obscures its relative status within a system.

For example, Christian 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are individually comparable with Judaic *Gan Eden* and *Gehenna*, but translation of one term by its correspondent inevitably distorts the full meaning of either, because it obscures the relative status that these concepts of the afterlife possess within the systems of Christianity and Judaism at large, respectively. In this way, it will be argued, Christianisation re-defined religious activity around words, the meanings of which were primarily social and only incidentally cultic, by giving them new significance within the system. The *locus classicus* is *biddan*, which acquired new status denoting the technical Christian religious activity of prayer (see Chapter 2 i).

A second methodological presumption concerns terms that were marginalised and neutralised, by which is meant those words that were excluded from rehabilitation as positive Christian terms and semantically pejorated to express ideologically forbidden aspects of 'pagan' worship within Christian discourse, and those that were simply shorn of traditional cultic connotations that were now regarded as problematic. These words have been diminished in terms of their full semantic and connotative range and sometimes appear pressed into synonymy with each other in written sources to express Christian ideological concepts. It is presumed, therefore,

that none of the terms under consideration in this study were originally synonymous, but rather had discrete functions within the heathen system.

Together with the formal comparison that permits access to a word's etymological basis, phraseology provides another essential control. Phraseology is especially useful for reconstructing semantic development under more severe conditions such as Christianisation, for word association and collocation occur in restricted patterns, which not only attest to the synchronic meanings of the words involved, but also, potentially, to their earlier semantic content. Linguists acknowledge that phraseology tends towards conservatism, with collocational patterns proving more durable than the semantic content of individual signifiers, which are liable to change under environmental pressure.[72] For example, the affiliation of the signifier *hūsel* 'eucharist' with *þicgan* 'receive' (a verb traditionally related to feasting) at the expense of semantically unmarked *onfōn* 'receive' appears to have survived inculturation better than *hūsel*'s traditional semantic content, which a new Christian signified has entirely displaced.

Another, extra-Germanic example perfectly illustrates the inherent conservatism of phraseology and its potential for cultural reconstruction, when interpreted within a matrix of etymological and historical analogues. The Latin expression *equo vehi* 'to be moved by a horse' synchronically means 'to go on horseback', even though *vehere* means 'transport a vehicle' both synchronically in Latin and historically (Germanic **wegan-* 'convey, move'). The expression must, therefore, have originated in a time when horses were yoked to chariots rather than ridden and it persisted in the language despite the new practice of horse-riding.[73] The present study, therefore, pays especially close attention to the consistencies and deviations of local phraseology in order to reconstruct semantic stratigraphy, recognising that the company a word keeps is essential to understanding its historical identity.

Edith Marold has successfully applied this method of phraseological ('Satzkontext') analysis to reconstructing the pre-Christian semantics of certain nouns in skaldic verse through close attention to their governing verbs and case accidence.[74] The nouns' semantics are further classified according to 'Situationskontext', which for religious terminology implies the planes

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[72] Xiao (2015), 106-124
[73] Benveniste (2016), 233
[74] Marold (1992), 704-13

of myth, human-divine relations, or practical cult, respectively. For example, *bǫnd* 'divine beings' is frequently governed by *reka* 'drive out' and, in expressing the affinity of the Jarls of Hlaðir to Þórr as defender of their land during the last heathen generation of Trøndelag, the expression refers to the gods on the plane of human-divine relations.[75] Likewise, Marold argues that *rǫgn* was developed from *rǫgnum*, the dative plural of *regin* '(collective) gods', as a new noun for 'divine beings' in terms of the human-divine relationship and practical cult, where *regin* apparently denotes 'divine beings' on the mythological plane.[76] Because worship typically involves a divine beneficiary, it is reasonable to infer that a dative plural form that worshippers might have used in prayer would have motivated this development of *rǫgn* on the plane of practical cult.

Inferences about cultural facts drawn primarily from language, through combined phraseological and etymological analyses, may also be illuminated secondarily by historical analogues of written testimony, archaeology, toponymy and topography. This investigative stage orientates the perspective within which linguistic conclusions should be interpreted. However, it remains subsidiary to the philological task, because its main concern is to historicise rather than establish a primary conclusion. Language yields evidential clusters that are often suggestive of material forms of cultural expression. The dimensions of these forms and their interrelatedness within a system can be confirmed, specified, or better perceived in the light of historical analogues. In this way, the diverse sources, discussed below, pertain to both linguistic and historical stages of the inquiry. The OE corpus provides a panoramic account of phrasal and syntactic 'Satzkontexte' through which this study's target words may be traced. Germanic comparanda may further corroborate these conclusions; crucially, they may help establish the etymological foundations whereupon the chain of semantic development proceeds in a certain direction, while the secondary analogues together illuminate this direction and its the proper dimensions.

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[75] Marold (1992), 706
[76] Marold (1992), 708

ii. Sources

Old English Vocabulary

Since the present reconstructive task relies upon documentary evidence for linguistic change, the OE dataset is all-inclusive with respect to genre and period. Examples of the OE terminology under discussion have been extracted mainly from the Toronto corpus and DOE. Accordingly, their system of abbreviations has been adopted for prose and glossary evidence. The main groups of sources that yield relevant examples are briefly surveyed here. Although uncertainty surrounds the dating of much OE literature, sources datable, on a balance of reasonable probability, to the early eighth, and possibly late seventh, centuries are of highest value for reconstructing pre-Christian meaning. These examples are to be interpreted against more extensive later evidence that shows the gradual effect of culturally-motivated change.

Over the last three decades, some scholars have proposed a relative chronology for poetry upon the independent tests of metrical analysis and lexical archaism. According to these standards, it has been proposed that *Beowulf*, *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, *Daniel*, and *Maxims I* represent the earliest surviving Anglo-Saxon poetic works, which in terms of absolute chronology might be dated to the early eighth century.[77] Extrinsic factors permit early dating of *The Dream of the Rood* due to its partial inscription upon the late seventh-century Ruthwell Cross, while *Cædmon's Hymn* was known to Bede and the poet of *Guthlac A* (metrically conservative in places) claims living memory of the titular saint who died in 714.[78] If indeed early, these poems represent the first attempts to negotiate novel Christian ideas in vernacular terms which would have resonated immediately for audiences within living memory of Anglo-Saxon heathenism and whose cultural outlook was defined by its forms.[79] The overt traces of inculturation in these poems also bespeak the concern to assuage anxieties over Christianity's cultural compatibility with Anglo-Saxon tradition. The Junius poems provide extended contexts for determining a translational response to foreign cultural terminology for heathen practices such as sacrifice

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[77] Metrical archaism see Fulk (1992): absence of contraction (99-121, 126), absence of parasite vowels (66-91, 348-51), regular observance of Kaluza's Law in *Beowulf* (390-92); Doane (2013), 51-55; Cable (1981), 77-82. Lexical archaism see Neidorf (2013a), 7-48; Cronan (2004), 23-50; Menner (1951), 285-94; Doane (2013), 51-52. Evidence of palaeography see Doane (2013), 37-39; Lapidge (2002), 5-41; Neidorf (2013b), 249-69. See also Neidorf (2016a), 137-53 for the argument that *Genesis A, Maxims I, Daniel* and *Beowulf* may be dated as early as c.670 on lexical grounds.

[78] Fulk (1992), 399-400; Roberts (1979), 70, 116

[79] Anlezark (2011), xiii; (2006), 176-79; McBrine (2017)*,* 6-7

and idolatory through the observation of lexical consistencies and variations against Vulgate, Old Latin or Septuagint sources.

Semantic renovation is certainly discernible in Cynewulf and affiliated verse that may be dated broadly between c.750-890, the period of Mercian political ascendancy and its translation to the West Saxons.[80] *Elene*, *Juliana, Guthlac B* and *Andreas* are thematically preoccupied with the ascetic, precative priorities of saintly life and contain frequent examples of the dramatised, ideological confrontations that are typical to hagiography. Throughout these poems, the adaptation of traditional terminology to conveying these new ideas arguably shows an increased maturity of vernacular Christian vocabulary. The occasion of 'Cynewulfian' verse can be contrasted with earlier texts in terms of their priorities and audience, which were probably more narrowly monastic and thoroughly learned.[81] At several generations' distance from the conversion, new priorities succeeded the inculturating task of Cædmon's age; the shared attitude of these poems towards the heroic life, for example, bespeaks a more secure ideological environment, wherein these traditional values were being re-cast in spiritual terms and their human limitations critiqued.

Glosses are also crucial for semantic reconstruction, because such entries typically record the literal meaning of a foreign term in the manner of a dictionary definition as an aid to religious instruction.[82] The Leiden family of *glossae collectae* are the earliest representatives of a tradition probably begun at Canterbury under Theodore and Hadrian from c.650 onwards.[83] The Leiden manuscript (c.800) contains around 250 scriptural and patristic glosses. Related to this text, the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary (surviving in two manuscripts, respectively of the early eighth and ninth centuries) was probably compiled later in the seventh century for Aldhelm at Malmesbury,[84] while the early eighth-century Mercian Corpus Glossary was based on the same archetype as Épinal-Erfurt. It too shares parts of Leiden, together with further material from other seventh-century sources.[85] Material from these early collections was also reproduced in the glossaries of later centuries. The tenth-century Cleopatra collections 1 and 3 reproduce content from Épinal-Erfurt and, with the eleventh-century Antwerp-London collection, have

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[80] Fulk (1992), 368
[81] Fulk and Cain (2003), 97
[82] Stanton (2002), 35; Gneuss (1993), 144-48
[83] Stanton (2002), 23-24, 34
[84] Gretsch (2013), 278
[85] Hessels (2011), xl-xli; Lindsay (1921), 5; Kuhn (1939), 1-19

Isidore's *Etymologiae* as their core.[86] The eleventh-century Harley Glossary shows affinities with Corpus in places.[87]

The majority of glosses are interlinear, dating largely from the tenth century, and were probably produced for private study.[88] These texts include several of Prudentius' works, including the *Psychomachia*, the Rule of Benedict, the *Regularis concordia*, several copies of Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*, the *Durham Ritual*, the Lindisfarne Gospels, and eleven psalters, and collections of hymns and prayers. While these texts contain a great deal of relevant examples of cultic vocabulary, due regard should be paid to their pedagogical purpose before assuming they represent contemporary OE, still less archaism. As Stanton observes, unlike glossary collections, interlinear entries were 'not exclusively concerned with semantic equivalence' and sometimes represent loan-adaptations intended to clarify morphology or word-composition (for example, consistent matching of *-io* abstracts with OE *-ung*).[89] Word couplets are probably more useful, since they typically served to explicate lexical definition by reference to synonyms.[90]

The earliest surviving prose texts (early WS) are those produced by Alfred's circle in the late ninth century. Scholars have generally agreed that the OE versions of psalms 1-50, Gregory the Great's *Cura (Regula) Pastoralis*, and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and *Soliloquies* are the West-Saxon king's own translations.[91] Most references to worship in the *Cura* occur in part two, typically within either devotional directives or extracted biblical quotations, consistent with the text's intent as practical guide for the English episcopacy in re-establishing an organised church.[92] Alfred's translational style is generally literalistic with a preference for coordinating Gregory's complex sentences, in this way favouring comprehensibility by an un-Latinised English readership over accuracy;[93] although the style can be 'very free at times', a close, sentence-by-sentence engagement with the original is often apparent.[94] The adaptive approach is apparent too in the prose psalms, which frequently expand the Roman Psalter text

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[86] Porter (2011)
[87] Cooke (1997), 441-48; Pulsiano (2001), 218; Lapidge (1993), 47
[88] Stanton (2002), 36; Kornexl (1995), 117
[89] Stanton (2002), 46
[90] Kornexl (1993), 122; Stanton (2002), 47
[91] Wormald (2004), 718-23; Bately (2003), 107-120. But see Godden (2007), 1-23 for a revisitation of the evidence for Alfred's authorship.
[92] Fulk and Cain (2003), 52
[93] Davis (2000), 149
[94] Godden (2007), 2

for clarificatory purposes,[95] and most starkly in the *Consolation*, which has undergone significant structural transformation and departures of content in places.

A large amount of cultic vocabulary is attested in the three historical works attributed to Alfred's circle, typically in the context of Christian-pagan confrontation, which would have resonated with late ninth-century audiences pursuing a cultural revival in the face of similar conflicts with the Scandinavian invaders. The OE translation of Bede's *History* is reduced in scope, with inclusions of detail tending to emphasise local Anglo-Saxon history over complex doctrinal issues.[96] Although the surviving translation was produced in the late ninth century, some of the text is certainly older, with important implications for the value of its lexicon to the present study.[97] Indeed, certain translational peculiarities shared with Mercian interlinear glosses, such as the dative absolute and liberal use of couplets for a single Latin term, are suggestive of origins as a glossary produced in the schools of the eighth century.[98]

The Old English Orosius reproduces the Hispano-Roman author's polemic *History Against the Pagans*, which represented pre-Christian history as irredeemably violent in order to prove to the last generations of heathen Romans in the early fifth century that Christianity was not to blame for the Western Empire's political decline. Within this topic, sacrifice and idolatory are naturally recurrent themes, but although Orosius provides an extended literary context for tracing the translational policy for these ideas, like the *Consolation*, the work has undergone structural and substantive modifications in the manner of adaptation rather than translation.[99] More straightforwardly a translation is the OE rendering of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, which mostly comprises miracle stories of sixth-century Italy. The text follows Gregory's Latin very closely, but sometimes erroneously, and is traditionally attributed to Wærferth, bishop of Worcester.[100] A more careful revision (BL, Cotton Otho C.1) was produced c.950-1050 and frequently evidences some of the innovative features of tenth-century prose.[101] The fact that both texts can be situated chronologically provides some control on assumptions as to the diachronic significance of any syntactic, semantic and lexical differences in their rendering of a common translational epitome.

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[95] Fulk and Cain (2003), 63
[96] Scragg (1997), 47
[97] Bately (1988), 98
[98] Kuhn (1947), 168-76; Stanton (2002), 58
[99] Kretzschmar (1987), 127-45
[100] Bately (1988), 93-138
[101] Yerkes (1982) *passim*

Most OE prose belongs to the late tenth century (late WS), its production connected with the Benedictine monastic reforms initiated by Dunstan and Æthelwold in the 940s and its readership largely lay and aristocratic. From the 970s, Ælfric brought the spirit of this movement to translation and text production, intending to refine the potential of the English language as a legitimate register of Christian learning to rank beside Latin.[102] Ælfric's innovations are marked by a 'sustained striving after grammatical regularity, lexical precision, and stylistic elegance' that discards hermeneutic excesses in favour of clarity, seeking to establish a consistent, learned terminology.[103] Likewise, while grounded in patristic authority, he prefers comprehensibility and 'useful catechesis' to pedantry.[104] These features characterise not only the hagiographies and *Catholic Homilies* Ælfric produced in the 990s, but also the translations of the Old Testament that he initiated around the turn of the eleventh century.[105] These collaborative works (the 'Heptateuch') survive in seven manuscripts and include 'essentially faithful' renderings of the Mosaic books, an abridgment of Joshua and, in one manuscript, part of Judges.[106]

Together with this impetus for linguistic renewal, the fact that the Anglo-Saxons had been Christian for over three centuries increases the likelihood of discovering innovations rather than archaism in late WS prose, although this evidence is important for reconstructing the direction of semantic change. There is also a smaller body of prose that is neither Ælfrician nor Alfredian and is harder to date and locate precisely.[107] The presence of archaic Anglian features and their reliance on sources that Ælfric would have regarded unorthodox plausibly situates the Blickling Homilies before the reforms.[108] The Vercelli Homilies show similar stylistic and dialectal diversity. With around 80 miscellaneous homilies scattered across other manuscripts, these collections together share enough substantive and phraseological overlap to evidence the existence of a fluid, early tenth-century homiletic tradition focused on eschatological and penitential themes. Most anonymous hagiography probably also pre-dates Ælfric.[109]

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[102] Stanton (2002), 161-62
[103] Gretsch (1999), 119
[104] Fulk and Cain (2003), 78-79;
[105] Marsden (1995), 405; Gretsch. (1999), 131
[106] Marsden (1995), 406. All citations from the Heptateuch are to Crawford, ed. (1922).
[107] Bately (1991), 72
[108] Menner (1949), 56-64
[109] Fulk and Cain (2003), 95

The laws of Æthelberht (c.602) and Wihtræd of Kent (c.695), and Ine of Wessex (c.694), are extremely important for their situation within the conversion period and, along with traditional registers of wergild, evidence the implementation of Christianity by decree. The proscriptions against heathen practice in Wihtræd's and Ine's codes lexically witness a society in which Anglo-Saxon heathenism was not only still culturally familiar, but a live political issue, and because of their certain date they provide some control on putatively early poetic testimony. In the later West-Saxon law codes, which were instruments of national reconstruction reflecting an increasingly centralised kingship, proscriptions against heathenism are concerned with increasing Danish presence in England, although this confrontation was not internal to Anglo-Saxon culture, but between a now firmly Christian nation and an external threat. Accordingly, the phraseology has almost certainly been influenced by long-established ecclesiastical commonplaces and must be handled cautiously.

Toponymy and charter boundaries not only complete the linguistic dataset, but importantly register the material life of Anglo-Saxon heathen worship in ways that are mostly independent of the literary record's ideological parameters. The charter tradition begun with the founding of monasteries as a means of recording grants to the church, becoming a distinctive, vernacular form of land documentation.[110] Over 1000 survive, almost all relating to land in the south, the earliest drafted c.679 under Hlothere of Kent and the majority concentrated c.940-60 in Wessex.[111] The boundary clause describes, in highly conventional OE, the perimeters of an estate by reference to natural or man-made landmarks, typically proceeding clockwise from a southern corner. Importantly, these descriptions not only register what stood out to the surveyors and how a particular feature might have been encountered, but, as Jenkyns observes, the tradition is fundamentally conservative, strengthening the chance of proximity to the heathen period, especially if the estate was established early.[112] The frequent presence of archaic forms and dialect features in charters further supports this presumption.[113] Despite the potential for encountering actual pre-Christian space and structure in traditional boundaries, they must be treated cautiously, for they were practical documents and so underwent a long history of transmission into which later boundaries were frequently interpolated. Only around

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[110] Thompson (2006), 3-5
[111] Keynes (2014), 102; Jenkyns (2014), 99
[112] Jenkyns (2014), 101
[113] Fulk and Cain (2013), 212

200 contemporary copies, preserved on a single sheet, can be considered reliable, 35 of which pre-date 900.[114]

Toponymic evidence includes surviving place-names, those attested in historical records, field-names, and traditional parish and hundred names. Over 60 explicitly heathen place-names have been proposed, although this number was refined in the 1960s to around 45.[115] The consistent situation of these sites either centrally or on the boundaries of ancient estates is striking, for example Thurstable, Esx. and *Þunreslēah*, Hants., respectively, which especially for parish and hundred names evidences the continuity of community identification with cultural spaces and features in the landscape.[116] Most importantly, these core examples composed from theonyms or unequivocally heathen terms such as *wēoh* and *hearg* certainly pre-date the mid-seventh century and provide the only unmediated linguistic testimony for Anglo-Saxon heathenism. Many more potentially relevant examples may be considered when terms with obfuscated or coincidental heathen significance, such as *bēam*, *bearu*, *lēah* and *stapol*, are also included. The present study handles only those place-names that have been securely reconstructed with one or other target term, the main scholarly sources being the publications of the English Place-name Society in combination with the *Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-names* (2004), as well as Förstermann's *Die Deutsche Ortsnamen* where English sites can be compared with continental German toponyms.

Vocabulary in cognate Germanic languages

Of the early Germanic languages, ON provides the most comprehensive and, in places, only substantive unmediated testimony for Germanic heathen practice and belief.[117] Those fragments of skaldic verse securely attributed to named heathen poets of the late ninth and mid to late tenth centuries, surviving as eulogies and loose stanzas in prose, provide authentic pre-Christian comparanda and are thus of primary value as an evidential control on all other forms of Germanic vocabulary post-dating Christianisation.[118] Later Icelandic authors preserved a fuller impression of Germanic mythic and heroic tradition in poems preserved in anonymous balladic form with shared metrical characteristics that are collectively termed the poetic *Edda*,

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[114] Jenkyns (2014), 99; Franzen (1996), 42-70
[115] Stenton (1941), 1-24; Gelling (1961), 7-25
[116] Gelling (1978), 161; Hooke (1985), 173
[117] Chaney (1970), 4
[118] De Vries (1956) I, 34

parts of which are also probably authentic pre-Christian works.[119] Iceland was Christianised (officially) in 1000, with Denmark earlier in the mid-tenth century, Norway effectively from 1015 under Óláfr (later the saint) Haraldsson, and most of Sweden by the end of the eleventh century. While not identical circumstances to the Anglo-Saxon conversion, the fact that most Icelandic texts post-date 1000 and are preserved in manuscripts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries raises a similar issue to that affecting the OE record, namely the ideological distortions attending the use of heathen words by Christian authors.

Most eddic verse is preserved in the Codex Regius (c.1270); these poems are, foremost, discrete, highly diverse literary works that must be individually contextualised before potentially relevant cultic vocabulary is extracted and applied to the semantic reconstruction of a direct cognate in OE.[120] Nevertheless, eddic poetry clearly continues a 'massive, old-rooted poetic tradition' that is discernible primarily in metre and phraseology, which together secures its value as linguistic comparanda.[121] The fluency, allusiveness and structure of poetic idiom is broadly akin, and in places directly, to OE formulaic convention, and the *fornyrðislag* 'old lore measure' continues the Germanic alliterative long-line, with derived forms *ljóðaháttr* 'song metre' and *málaháttr* 'conversational metre' also available as hypermetrical lines were in Anglo-Saxon tradition.[122] Additionally, an implied performative context in some of the mythological works probably also favours non-Christian authorship, especially where ritual or liturgical phraseology occurs.[123] Stanza numbers are provisional and in parentheses where cited.

Confident dating of *Hávamál* depends upon an accurate understanding of its structure, which appears to unify several earlier poems around the dramatic voice of Óðinn. It possibly began as a performative work in mid-tenth-century Norway, accruing new written forms into the thirteenth century in Iceland.[124] Stanzas 138-45 (*Rúnatal*) quite possibly reflect this original performative core and have 'particular value because they seem to take us into the heart of pagan ritual activity', providing 'faint insight' into how sacrifice and runic ritual might have

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[119] Gunnell (2007), 82; North (1997b), xii. All citations of eddic poetry are from Von See et al. (1997-2019), except *Vǫluspá*: Dronke, ed. (1997); *Hávamál*: Evans, ed. (1986); *Atlamál in grœnlenzku*: Dronke, ed. (1969).
[120] Dronke (1992), 657
[121] Helm (1913), 117; Dronke (1992), 656; Gunnell (2007), 93
[122] Hollander (1945), 4
[123] Gunnell (2007), 94
[124] North (1991), 122-44, esp. 125

been conducted, even if in fragmented form.[125] *Vǫluspá* is a literary exposition of grand mythological themes in the idealised voice of a heathen *vǫlva* that was probably composed in Iceland around 1000 during the closing decades of Scandinavian heathenism.[126] The poem appears conceived as a learned response to the challenge posed by Christian theology and eschatology, integrating this material with native traditions that were still familiar, for which reason Ursula Dronke deemed it 'the intellectual climax of Germanic religion'.[127] *Grímnismál* and *Vafþrúðnismál* retain similar catalogues of traditional knowledge and also likely originate in the tenth-century, especially since *Vǫluspá* appears to have derived material from the former.[128] The catalogue structure recurs again in *Hyndluljóð*, which appears to combine two *fornyrðislag* poems.[129] Despite this poem's late (fourteenth-century) attestation in *Flateyjarbók*, it also shares with *Grímnismál* and *Vafþrúðnismál* certain valuable references to *hǫrgr* as a structure of worship that are suggestive of actual cult practice.

Around 5,000 skaldic verses survive, mostly in the form of *dróttkvætt* stanzas of eight half-lines scattered through later Icelandic prose texts. The earliest known skalds of the late ninth century are Norwegian, with the tradition maintained in Iceland until the fourteenth century.[130] *Haustlǫng* and *Ynglingatal*, widely attributed to Þjóðólfr of Hvinir, are both substantially complete poems that probably belong to the late ninth century on the basis of frequent semantic difficulties distinguishing them from overtly Christian works.[131] Verses which can be securely dated pre-1000 – typically where a patron is identifiable – are most useful, with the dating of *lausavísur* (loose verses) in the sagas more problematic.[132] Verses of Christian date are still potentially useful, however, because the metrical strictures of *dróttkvætt* frequently obliged the skalds to reach for archaic vocabulary to satisfy the demands of a line, thus providing an additional, independent source of heathen terminology, as well as a reliable evidential control.[133]

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[125] Gunnell (2007), 85, 96. See also Evans (1986), 29-35; Haugen (1983), 21. But Von See (1975), 91-118 sceptical.
[126] Nordal (1978), 114-30; Schach (1983), 89; Pálsson (1996), 27; McKinnell (1994), 107; Dronke (1997), 62, 98
[127] Dronke (1992), 665; (1997), 93-104
[128] Dronke (1997), 25-61
[129] Gunnell (2007), 92
[130] Whaley (2007), 489
[131] North (1997b), xxxiii; Marold (1992), 689. See also Marold (1983), 153-210.
[132] Marold (1992), 686
[133] Whaley (2007), 481

Nevertheless, because skaldic verse was traditionally employed for praise and satire, authentic references to heathen cult and belief are often highly politicised and should not be taken as holistically representative of Germanic, or even Scandinavian paganism, but rather conditioned by the contemporary concerns of a patron.[134] Following Hákon the Good's attempted conversion of Norway , the cultural confrontation of Christianity with heathenism played itself out politically in the later tenth century through the exertion of pressure by Erik Bloodaxe's successors and their Danish supporters against the heathen Norwegian earls of Hlaðir around Trondheim.[135] The result was a heathenism that is highly self-conscious and attempting to match its rival, apparent in the strong emphasis on Þórr, the equation of his hammer and the crucifix, and the overt use of *heiðinn* as an identity marker.[136]

These considerations aside, heathen concepts, whether mythological or cultic, are accessible through close analysis of a word's collocational tendencies, whereby the content of a particular term can be construed from its association with, or preclusion from, other parts of speech.[137] Furthermore, traditional phraseology possesses a certain durability that ensures the survival in company of forms that might otherwise have become lexically or semantically obsolete ('kith and kin', for example). For this reason, the use of later skaldic evidence is justifiable where a phrasal context is directly comparable with other Germanic data, for example, Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál*, which quotes many verses from eddic and skaldic poetry. Although it is the work of a learned Christian seeking to systematise and clarify inherited cultural material, and not all of it is authentic, some of his *heiti* (kennings and appellations) are doubtless traditional.[138]

These observations apply also to the *Íslendingasǫgur* (family sagas) and *fornaldarsǫgur* (legendary sagas), the former of which especially provided a 'medium of cultural memory' for thirteenth-century Icelanders to re-negotiate their unique historical traditions as an independent settler society with their increasing political subordination to Norway.[139] While substantive accounts of heathen culture in the sagas are dubious (the description of the temple in *Eyrbyggja saga*, for example), authentic details are preserved here and there in conservative phraseology

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[134] Marold (1992), 689-90; Hollander (1945), 19
[135] De Vries (1956) I, 37
[136] Marold (1992), 688. See Eyv *Hák* 21^1/5, for example.
[137] Marold (1992), 704
[138] Helm (1913) I, 144; North (1997b), xii; Clunies Ross (1992), 633, 654
[139] Glauser (2000), 211; Ólason (2007), 111

(*vega víg í véum* in *Egils saga* , for example), even if such expressions were inaccurately understood by authors and scribes.[140]

Also belonging to this period is Snorri's *Heimskringla* (king's sagas), with their interest in how kingship is won and maintained.[141] Extended references to heathen practice abound in the first section which treats the legendary Ynglingar of Sweden and the heathen kings of Norway. *Hákonar saga góða* memorably dramatises the cultural encounter with Christianity, demonstrating Snorri's sympathies for a baptised king who achieves national unity through moderate treatment of his heathen agrarian gentry.[142] Central to this drama is Snorri's lengthy description of a sacrificial feast at which boiled horse-meat was consumed and toasts to gods and ancestors proposed over the cauldron. While the authenticity of these details is uncertain, archaeology and linguistic comparanda partly corroborate its historical basis. Snorri's account is generally regarded as a more reliable testimony of conversion than the family sagas, and his use of skaldic verse indicates he was serious in producing a faithful account.[143]

WGmc evidence is linguistically closer to OE than ON and contemporary with the earlier Anglo-Saxon record of the eighth and ninth centuries. The *Heliand* is an OS verse-rendering of the life of Christ and provides the bulk of OS comparanda within an extended, literary context of some 5983 alliterative lines through which the consistencies of religious phraseology can be determined against a known translational prototype.[144] The poem was probably composed in c.830 at Fulda, Werden or Corvey a generation after Charlemagne's forced conversion of Saxony in 777. The style of the poem is highly inculturated and presents the gospel narrative in traditional OS words – as Vilmar put it 'Christentum in deutschen Gewände'.[145] It is comparable in this way to earlier specimens of OE verse, such as *The Dream of the Rood*. The *Heliand*'s versification throughout shows close affinities to OE verse. While there are some key differences in terms of form and content, the poet has undoubtedly integrated a wealth of common Germanic terminology.[146] As well as shared tradition of Continental and Insular Saxons, the poet might have been exposed to OE verse at an Anglo-

[140] De Vries (1956) I, 45; *Egils saga* 49, 75.19
[141] Whaley (1991), 98-99; Jakobsson (2007), 388-89
[142] Jakobsson (2007), 397; Ciklamini (1978), 81
[143] Helm (1913) I, 118-19; Whaley (1991), 123
[144] All citations of the *Heliand* are from Behaghel, ed. (1984).
[145] Vilmar (1862), 1; Cathey (2002), 16-18; Gantert (1993), 91ff; Bostock (1976), 168-86
[146] Murphy (1989), 7-8; Lehmann (1953), 7-38; Göhler (1935), 1-52

Saxon monastic foundation in northern Germany.[147] His source was probably a version of Tatian's Gospel Harmony (*Diatessaron*), a text translated straightforwardly into East Franconian (an OHG dialect) prose at Fulda around the same time.[148]

The OS record also includes three surviving fragments (336 lines) of a Genesis poem, a passage of which is directly related to *Genesis B*, which was likely composed at Fulda or Werden later in the ninth century.[149] The Saxon Baptismal Vow was probably developed from a Latin-Upper German formula as an official catechism for use following Widukind's baptism in 785.[150] Unlike this vow, the Frankish Baptismal Vow was intended for already Christianised populations and omits mention of pagan theonyms, although both Vows refer to heathen worship and are important vernacular witness to practices proscribed during the Carolingian conversion.[151]

The earliest specimens of Upper German glossary evidence dating to the late eighth century are extremely valuable comparanda, since they are less likely to reflect the later heavy influence of Anglo-Saxon or Carolingian scriptoria.[152] Three surviving copies of the alphabetical glossary *Abrogans* produced in Murbach, Reichenau, and St. Gall evidence westward transmission, through Alemannic and Frankish scribes around the early ninth century, of a south-eastern Bavarian original that was likely composed around 765 and which shows traces of Lombard orthography and lexicon.[153] Arbeo of Freising (764-84) is one candidate for authorship. He was born in the South Tyrol under Lombard rule, educated in Italy and probably spoke a Bavarian-Lombardic dialect.[154] The text's vocabulary is unusual and early enough to reflect a southern dialect uninfluenced by northern Anglo-Saxon or Frankish forms. A shorter, revised version known as *Samanunga uuorto* was also produced around 790 in Bavaria.[155]

Several important early collections of biblical glosses have also survived. Sporadic interlinear glosses to Vulgate Luke 1:64-2:51 (*St. Pauler Lukas-Glossen*) were recorded in the late eighth

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[147] Baesecke (1973), 87-92; Doane (1991), 89-92; Hofmann (1959), 173-90; Cathey (2002), 20
[148] Rathofer (1962), 7-10; Henß (1954), 2
[149] Doane (1991), 46-47; Cathey (2002), 23
[150] Lasch (1935), 92-133; Bostock (1976), 109
[151] Bostock (1976), 110
[152] Green (1998), 341-56
[153] Bostock (1976), 92-95 Lombardic traces include *sc* for *ss* in Latin forms; *herimanno* (StSG I, 87.25) for *hariman*, a type of soldier settlement; Bischoff et al. (1977) I, 297; Baesecke (1931b), 321-76
[154] Baesecke (1931a), 78-102
[155] Baesecke (1931a), 41

century, probably at Reichenau. Another collection from Reichenau (Karlsruhe Landesbibliothek Cod. Aug. IC) contains five glossaries arranged by biblical book; the earliest is probably the original and of early ninth-century date.[156] Citation of all OHG glosses is based on the standard edition of Steinmeyer and Sievers (StSG), with additional references to more recent evidence in Schützeichel's *Althochdeutscher und altsächsischer Glossenwortschatz* (2004, 12 vols.).

A few specimens of poetry in the alliterative style survive that were composed before the ninth century in Upper-German dialects and are valuable comparanda, because they preserve reflexes in OHG of a common, inherited lexicon and phraseology shared with the poetic traditions of OE, OS and ON. *Hildebrandslied* is a fragmentary heroic lay about legendary figures associated with Theodoric the Great that shows obvious affinities to OE battle poetry. Its orthography and lexicon evidence a peculiar, mixed dialect, with northern German and Anglo-Saxon influences likely introduced during the final stage of transmission in the early ninth century to a southern original,[157] either Bavarian or Lombardic, that was produced during the period of intercultural exchange between these realms following the marriage of Authari, the Lombard king, to the Bavarian princess Theodolinda in 589.[158]

The Gothic record pre-dates WGmc by almost three centuries and therefore provides a certain degree of control on establishing the common ground from which semantic development in the other Germanic languages proceeded at the beginning of the migration period in the fourth century. Furthermore, this corpus consists almost entirely of Wulfila's translation of the New Testament (with one fragment of Nehemiah), which again, as with the *Heliand* and the OE biblical translations, is an extended, well understood translational context for evaluating semantic usage.[159] Wulfila's text was probably begun in Dacia after 341, when he was made bishop of the Goths by Eusebius of Nicomedia, and completed in Moesia during the 350s, a few decades before the Tervings (Visigoths) crossed the Danube in 376.[160] Most of it is preserved in the Codex Argenteus, which is dated to the early sixth century under Theodoric the Ostrogothic Prefect of Italy, and the slight influence of Old Latin readings in places

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[156] StSG IV, 399ff.
[157] For example OS *ik*, 1a; OE *chūd* (*cūð*) 13b, 28a.
[158] Bostock (1976), 78-82; Van der Kolk (1967), 38; Norman (1973), 47; Pretzel (1973), 272-88
[159] All citations of the Gothic Bible are from Streitberg, ed. (2000) I.
[160] Heather and Matthews (1991), 145-62; Falluomini (2009), 311; Auxentius 75.27; Philostorgius 2.5; Jord. Get. 51 (267); Sozom. 6.37

suggests that its fifth-century transmission occurred via Arian Visigothic hands through northern Italy to southern Gaul.[161]

It is important to keep in mind the nature of Wulfila's translation and the circumstances of Gothic conversion in the fourth century. The Goths did not receive Christianity *en masse*, whether by conquest or from the top down, but gradually from c.230 through slaves captured in the eastern provinces who began to convert their masters, and also through the subject peoples of Dacia that were conquered in the 270s.[162] Missionary activity was thus piecemeal, and although sizeable in number, Christians were still a minority during the persecutions of the 340s.[163] The adoption of Arianism among the Visigoths seems to have been complete by the end of the fourth century, probably hastened by the decline of tribal society following their entry into Moesia and closer exposure to Roman society.[164] Wulfila was of the lower Christian sections of Gothic society and produced his translation in the midst of a heathenism that was still flourishing and dominant among the elite, circumstances differing considerably from WGmc literature, all of which post-dates Christianisation.

Wulfila's style is characterised overall by word-for-word fidelity to the Greek, with vernacular idiom apparent in occasional differences of concordance, accidence, parts of speech and syntax.[165] Sometimes he prefers loan-translations. For example, instead of the traditional Germanic noun *wlits* 'face', Wulfila sometimes prefers *andaugi*, which seems to reproduce the two elements of πρόσωπον – πρός with the adverbial prefix *and-* 'against, facing' and ὤψ with *augo* 'eye'. Scholars have argued that such forms betray an already established Gothic familiarity with Hellenisms – *gajuko* 'parable', for example, makes little sense without knowledge of rhetorical Greek συζυγία 'yoking together' instead of New Testament παραβολή.[166] In many cases, the centrality of distinctly Christian concepts such as 'belief' or 'faith' have clearly affected the semantics of native words such as *triggws*, implying that the Gothic was, for the most part, consciously selected and adjusted to a dominant Greek standard.[167]

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[161] Scardigli (1973), 136-39, 147; Falluomini (2009), 312
[162] Thompson (1966), 78, 81; Scardigli (1973), 97-98; Philostorgius 2.5; Sozom. 2.6.2
[163] *Pass.Sab.* 216.30
[164] Thompson (1966), 89-93, 107
[165] Friedrichsen (1926), 15-23
[166] Scardigli (1973), 103-105
[167] Scardigli (1973), 114; Deissmann (1910), 43-44

Cultic terminology should be interpreted with this selective policy in mind, which results in a certain literary artificiality, useful in its consistency, but naturally favouring one term over another according to an external standard. A clear example is Wulfila's use of *frauja* 'lord', traditionally a peace-time ruler, as opposed to **drauhtins* the leader of a war-band, the latter's cognate *dryhten* adapted in OE under circumstances more accepting of Germanic militaristic ethic.[168] With Wulfila's Bible, fragments of a commentary on John's Gospel known as *Skeireins* also survive that probably used a third-century Greek source.[169] Its style suggests the educated Visigothic circles of the fifth century in northern Italy and Gaul, within which exposure to Latin and Greek ecclesiastical learning appears to have further rarefied the Wulfilian model away from contemporary, spoken Gothic.[170]

The Latin laws promulgated in the successor kingdoms from the fifth century (*Leges Barbarorum*) also contain a certain amount of relevant vernacular terminology that was presumably recorded due to the absence of suitable Roman analogues. While the extent to which these terms retained heathen semantic content is debated, the fact of their recording attests the continued significance of peculiar cultural meanings among the barbarian elite.[171] Customary legal phraseology frequently preserves a long heritage of communal value, and so the existence in Germanic laws of a direct cognate with an Anglo-Saxon term under discussion supports the view that the OE word occupied an important place within the heathen cultural system.

The West-Frankish Malberg Glosses are also of high importance for understanding of continental Germanic legal terminology. These glosses are attested across ten manuscripts of the *Lex Salica*, which are of eighth-century date, although the first recensions of this law, including the *Pactus*, were issued by Clovis in the early sixth century.[172] Deriving from the same body of Frankish custom is the *Lex Ripuaria* of the early seventh century, while the *Lex Saxonum* and *Lex Frisionum* are products of the Carolingian conquests that codify tribal content. The Frisian code is especially important, because several provisions are overtly of pre-conversion date, which suggest the text might have been a draft under redaction.[173] The great

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[168] Green (1965), 501, 265-66 n.1. **Drauhtins* is reconstructable for Gothic from the Portuguese-Visigothic name *Tructino* attested in 960. See also Green (1998), 118.
[169] Schäferdiek (1981), 175-93
[170] Scardigli (1973), 168-69; Helm (1958), 207
[171] Schmidt-Wiegand (1992), 576
[172] Van Doorn (2018), 1-5; Kerkhof (2018), 33; Schmidt-Wiegand (1967), 21ff.
[173] Schmidt-Wiegand (1992), 381

corpus of vernacular Old Frisian law, produced between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, presents many phraseological similarities to Anglo-Saxon law. For the linguistic proximity of OE and OFris., it may be presumed that some of their content reflect a common basis in north-sea tribal custom.

Historical and other sources for Germanic paganism

Conclusions established from linguistic data may be secondly interpreted in light of the great body of historical analogues for Germanic heathenism, which comprises the written testimony and archaeological record of a very broad time-span from the Nordic Iron Age (c.500 BCE) to the end of the Viking Age (c.1060). Virtually all written testimony is an external observation of heathenism that should be situated according to the author's purpose, period, locale and degree of cultural distance. These analogues constitute two broad classes: the commentary of ancient pagan authors, who observed foreign habits that they regarded as culturally alien and, sometimes, inferior; subsequently, the writings of Christians from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages, who noted practices which they deemed ideologically abhorent and intended to eradicate.

While sharing assumptions of cultural superiority, these types of commentary differ markedly in terms of cultural distance and purpose. The classical authors were typically conditioned by specific geopolitical interests, all of them, nonetheless, evincing the attitudes of the educated, powerful, and culturally homogeneous elite of the ancient world. Christian authors, meanwhile, though in scripturally-grounded, ideological agreement and intent regarding heathenism, typically wrote within more localised cultural and political environments – for example, classicizing historians such as Orosius and Sozomen belong to the Mediterranean worlds of Rome and Byzantium, respectively, while Bede and Adam of Bremen are as much of the northern Germanic as of the Christian world.

Classical sources extend from Posidonius on the Cimbri (c.100 BCE) to Ammianus Marcellinus witnessing the beginnings of the migration period at the end of the fourth century.[174] Caesar's comments on the Germani have long been agreed as an unreliable ideological contrivance, intended to distinguish them sharply from the Gauls in order to justify

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[174] Polomé (1992), 383

establishing the Rhine as an imperial border.[175] Strabo countervails Caesar's representation with more reliable, circumstantial evidence,[176] although in this period knowledge of peoples across the Rhine was limited to the information relayed by scouts, captives, allied tribes, and soldiers who had been in barbarian captivity.[177]

Written a century later, Tacitus' ethnographical treatise *Germania* (c.98 CE) is the most detailed and structured surviving account of early Germanic culture and essential to any comparative study of heathen religion for its amplitude.[178] Relevant observations are also scattered through his *Annals* and *Histories*, although often conditioned by contemporary political aims.[179] Tacitus must be handled carefully, however. Scholars have divided hotly over the value of *Germania* for interpreting or reconstructing cultural data from the migration period onwards. Eve Picard, for example, has identified as especially fallacious attempts to prove the pan-Germanic status of cultural facts attested in later traditions through their isolation and back-projection into *Germania* with little regard for chronological distance or even the reliability of the Roman author's work.[180] Wilson likewise advises 'extreme caution' in using Tacitus to reconstruct positive facts of Anglo-Saxon paganism.[181]

Tacitean data is certainly permissible comparanda where a linguistic equation obtains in later Germanic vernacular – for example, between *Nerthus* and *Njǫrðr* – that clearly demonstrates cultural continuity.[182] More problematic is the accuracy of his claims, some of which doubtless reproduce classical ethnographic commonplaces. In Picard's view, not only does this immediately undermine Tacitus' factual credibility, but earlier scholars have underappreciated it and other issues concerning the nature of his sources and purpose, whether merely rhetorical or a *bona fide* attempt to systematise knowledge.[183]

This estimation seems unduly severe, for scholars have long agreed that the cultural facts of *Germania* are impaired by *intepretatio romana*, the Roman practice of supplementing classical

[175] Caes. Gall. 4.16. 4; Rives (1999), 24-27; Helm (1913) I, 256, 292
[176] Helm (1913) I, 70
[177] De Vries (1956) I, 29; Polomé (1992), 404
[178] Abram (2011), 54
[179] Helm (1913) I, 72
[180] Picard (1991), 14
[181] Wilson (1992), 27
[182] North (1997a), 11
[183] Picard (1991), 41, 44

concepts where they perceived a direct analogue in barbarian culture.[184] *Interpretatio romana* certainly presents distortions similar to those attending the Christianisation of heathen words, where isolated features are translated from one culture into another without sensitivity to their relative position within either system. Tacitus' impression of cult is also fragmentary, because he selected aspects that were remarkable to the outsider. He also probably generalises the Germani according to tribes along the Rhine and Amber Road, reporting less about peoples along the Danube.[185]

Nevertheless, Tacitus' source in Pliny the Elder's lost *Bella Germaniae* of the Augustan period would have been thorough and perhaps described cult-forms less permeated with Roman elements.[186] His situation of the tribes was also probably accurate, because the Empire's geopolitical interests relied upon such knowledge. For the present study, which is concerned with forms of religious action and material culture, *Germania* remains a profitable source for the earlier stages of pre-Christian tradition, provided its data are evaluated against the later linguistic record with appreciation for their status within a cultural system.

Late antique and early medieval perspectives were defined ideologically by the establishing of Orthodox Christianity and politically by the huge demographic pressures of barbarian migration. Sources from the fourth to sixth century provide valuable information about the East Germanic tribes (Goths, Vandals, Burgundians), with whom classical authors were less familiar and who, at the vanguard of settlement within Roman limits, dominated politically among the barbarians for the next two centuries.[187] Ammianus Marcellinus' treatment of the Visigothic migration of 376 in *Res Gestae*, perhaps the last major historical work in classical tradition, is generally regarded as basically accurate.[188] The Byzantine historian Procopius, likewise in Thucydidean tradition, provides further information in his account of Justinian's wars against the Ostrogoths in 535-54. More fragmentary, late classical testimonies include Eunapius, the military author Vegetius, and the Gallo-Roman aristocrat Sidonius Apollinaris.

Hagiography and ecclesiastical history gradually came to prevail as predominant Christian literary forms from the end of the fourth century. They adapted the providential model of

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[184] Helm (1913) I, 69; Norden (1923), 59-142; Polomé (1992), 402; Rives (1999), 306-307
[185] Timpe (1992), 435, 483; Helm (1913) I, 74; Rives (1999), 61
[186] De Vries (1956) I, 29; Much (1967), 171-72; Thompson (1965), 23-24
[187] Helm (1913) I, 75
[188] Ghosh (2015), 32-33

history from the Old Testament, wherein God's sovereign hand in contemporary circumstances is continually demonstrated through miraculous events. Certain details about the Goths and Alamanni are recorded in the histories of Sozomen (early fifth century) and Agathias (early sixth century), while the *Passion of St. Sabbas* (a Gothic martyr contemporary with Wulfila) records 'invaluable' minutae of Gothic social life, highlighting the fact that hagiography, in its openness to treating lower social echelons, sometimes yields more domestic perspectives which the classical tradition excluded.[189]

Later hagiographies of the sixth to ninth centuries concern the missionaries who evangelised Germany and the peoples they converted, for example the *Life of Vedast* on the Franks of the late fifth century; the *Life of Columba* and *Gallus* on the Alamanni around Bodensee in the late sixth century; Alcuin's *Life of Willibrord* and Altfrid's *Life of Liudger* on the Frisians and Saxons of the eighth century; the ninth-century *Life of Barbatus* on the heathen-Arian Lombards around Benevento in the seventh-century. Local details occur in these texts that, when collectively interpreted, attest to west Germanic cultures.[190]

Specific references to heathen cult in ecclesiastical literature must always be evaluated according to their proper narrative context, however, because they typically serve as prompts for the saint-missionary to demonstrate God's power, often in confrontational scenes construed around the familiar *topoi* of idolatory, iconoclasm, and 'devil-worship' from scripture, homiletic and patristic writing.[191] Details scattered in the correspondences of Boniface and Alcuin are freer of these literary tropes and therefore more reliable as evidence of how the church adapted missionary policy to real concerns in the field.

Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is of high value as a source, because it provides the only substantive, yet local, testimony for Anglo-Saxon culture between the fifth to seventh centuries. His account of the invasion was derived from Gildas, who is widely agreed to be unreliable.[192] He had access to a 'formidable array' of sources for the conversion, including eyewitness accounts.[193] Sometimes they are uneven, being localised in particular

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[189] Thompson (1966), 64
[190] Helm (1913) I, 77
[191] Hen (2002), 236-36; Goffart (1991), 10; De Vries (1956) I, 30-31
[192] Cusack (1998), 90
[193] Cusack (1998), 94-95

courts or religious institutions with differing interests.[194] Generically speaking, the *History* combines Eusebian church history with hagiography and ecclesiastical correspondence. References to Anglo-Saxon heathenism, accordingly, belong within these narratives demonstrating God's providence and sovereignty over national history, the miraculous role of holy men in unfolding His purpose, as well as practical missionary policy.

The *History* is unique among ecclesiastical sources for the proximity of author to subject. For in writing national history as an Anglian about his people (*gens Anglorum*), Bede established the dominant tradition of Anglo-Saxon ethnogenesis: through God's providence, three disparate groups of Germanic settlers in Britain – the Angles, Saxons and Jutes – coalesced into a Christian English nation, receiving a new, intertwined national and religious identity. Bede's work is thus suffused with the sympathy of a cultural insider that frequently manifests itself in the accommodation of Anglo-Saxon cultural minutae where possible.[195] He admits this attitude in recording the heathen names of months in *De temporum ratione* 'it did not seem fitting to me that I should speak of other nations' observance of the year and yet be silent about my own nation's.'[196]

Other early medieval 'national histories' such as Jordanes sixth-century history of the Goths and Paul the Deacon's eighth-century account of the Lombards contain relevant comparanda. Like Bede, these authors were both committed Christians and members of the ethnic groups about whom they wrote, seeking to convey their 'sense of an independent identity', an approach distinct from classical and ecclesiastical historiography.[197] Jordanes probably wrote between 552[198] and 554[199] after the decline of Ostrogothic power, so his purpose is somewhat unclear.[200] While details of heathen culture might have some grounding in oral traditions lying behind this and its source in Cassiodorus' lost history, the Goths had been Arian for well over a century.

Paul the Deacon probably wrote for a Lombard audience of the mid-eighth century in Benevento; the first two books strongly evidence oral tradition.[201] More reliable on

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[194] Mayr-Harting (1991), 45-46
[195] Page (1995), 99-129
[196] *De temp. rat.* 15
[197] Ghosh (2015), 4; Goffart (1991), 8
[198] Heather (1991), 47-49
[199] Goffart (1988), 98
[200] Ghosh (2015), 61
[201] Ghosh (2015), 119

contemporary Lombard practice is the *Life of Barbatus*.[202] Adam of Bremen's *Deeds of the Bishops of Hamburg* (1073-76) records certain details of late Swedish heathenism, although the work is strongly informed by hagiographical tradition.[203] Adam's descriptions are also perhaps exaggerated by antipathy towards Scandinavia and his principal source for the temple at Uppsala was probably King Sweyn II of Denmark (1047-76), Sweden's principal rival and ruler of a nation that had been Christian for over a century.

Ecclesiastical decrees, conciliar resolutions and penitential indexes constitute a final documentary category. Their value mainly depends on compositional circumstances.[204] The Carolingian *Indiculus superstitionem et paganiarum* contains scattered references to feasts, processions and games along with sacred places, trees, wells and stones. These details require individual critical assessment, however, because the penitential form (more than missionary correspondence) often reflects ideological policy, much of which derives from Caesarius of Arles' (5th C.) homiletic injunctions against rural survivals of Gallo-Roman paganism.[205]

Archaeological evidence

Archaeological analogues are discussed in Chapters One, Three and Four. They are especially relevant as the only form of contemporary testimony to Anglo-Saxon paganism alongside place-names.[206] While the material record usefully complements and controls inferences drawn from vocabulary for the 'unmediated access' to a past material culture, it is always frustratingly silent as to cultural meaning.[207] Where a culture remains well-understood (as for Christianity), these interpretative issues are less urgent. For heathenism, however, the more authentic an artefact, the greater the difficulty in determining its conceptual significance.[208] For this reason, those aiming to describe a belief system (such as Helm and De Vries) tend to rank the archaeological evidence firmly beneath written testimony.[209] Archaeology is more directly valuable to the present study, however, because the main concern is with outward forms of cult and material dimensions in which it occurred.

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[202] Helm (1913) I, 81
[203] Tschan (1959), xvii. Introduction to *Gest.*
[204] Helm (1913) I, 91
[205] Schmidt-Wiegand (1992), 577, 585; De Vries (1956) I, 30-31
[206] Wilson (1992), 44
[207] Abram (2011), 4
[208] Abram (2011), 10
[209] Helm (1913) I, 66; De Vries (1956) I, 28

For the insular record of Anglo-Saxon society between the fifth and seventh centuries, the palace complex at Yeavering, Northumberland is of chief import. This site yields the only solid example of an Anglo-Saxon cultic building.[210] Further evidence at this site for the association of burial with cult-foci find extensive analogues in the early cemeteries in Sussex, Hampshire, Kent and East Anglia, which date from the mid-fifth to early seventh centuries. In combination with place-name studies, topography and settlement patterns open a holistic perspective of the presence of Anglo-Saxon heathenism in the landscape.[211]

The continental record for Germanic cult is extensive. Of chief value are those sites showing a long period of continuous use up to the migration period. Such sites include large-scale weapon deposits in the wetlands of southern Scandinavia. The earliest is at Hjortspring c.400 BCE, with peak activity occurring between the third-fifth centuries CE in Jutland (Thorsberg, Hjortspring, Nydam, Ejsbøl, Illerup), Funen (Vimose, Kragehul, Illemose), Zealand (Sørup, Sømose), southern Sweden (Hassle-Bösarp), ending around 400 CE.[212] Of these sites, Thorsberg Moor in Schleswig-Holstein is especially important for its situation in Angeln. The Angles deposited votive offerings and weapon-hoards in the lake for over seven centuries; the record ceases around the time of the migrations to Britain.

A very important cult-site was excavated in the early 1960s at Oberdorla, Thüringen, around a sink-hole lake, the water levels of which periodically varied due to the leaching of layer water. An extensive series of wicker enclosures and cultic structures were erected around this lake by communities from the Hallstatt period until the early fifth century CE.[213] It remained an important religious site for the *longue durée* of its use, spanning the transition from Gaulish to Germanic curation with the arrival of the Hermunduri in this area during the first century BCE. Anglian settlers may also have worshipped here during the final stages of its existence. The site provides a wealth of evidence for the material habits of Germanic worship, including the nature of sacrificial offerings and their relationship to cult-space, different kinds of wooden idols, and the only fulsome examples of a traditional type of turf-altar. These are all invaluable comparanda to linguistic and historical analogues.

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[210] Hope-Taylor (1977)
[211] Semple (2010), 21-48
[212] Simek (2005), 30
[213] Dušek (2002), 466-71; Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 22-69

Two other important Scandinavian sites were contemporary to the Anglo-Saxon settlement in Britain. The cult-hall at Uppåkra in southern Sweden underwent several re-buildings from the Migration Period into the Viking Age; its adjacent weapon-deposit is older, dating to the Roman Iron Age. The hall at Borg on Vestavagøy is datable to the early seventh century and shows similarities to its contemporaries at Uppåkra and Yeavering as both a cult-building and centre of local power.[214] It is perhaps best to have the ox-bones discovered at the western end of Yeavering in mind moving into Chapter One on the OE words for 'sacrifice'.

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[214] Munch (2003), 253-63; Herschend and Mikkelsen (2003), 41-76; Walker (2010), 94-95

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Sacrifice

Old English sacrificial vocabulary is diverse, which probably bespeaks innocence among practitioners of heathen cult of a unitary conceptualisation of sacrifice that Judaeo-Christianity developed in its critique of the norms of ancient religion. On the basis of linguistically-grounded conclusions concerning the semantic interrelationship of the six word-families of *tīber*, *blōtan*, *gield*, *lāc*, *hūsel* and *bletsian*, it will be argued in this chapter that a practising Anglo-Saxon heathen may plausibly have understood these fundamental ancient cult practices, that are conveniently labelled 'sacrifice', in terms of a discrete, ritualised transformation that made animate and inanimate objects effective for subsequent legal transfer to the divine realm, either as a voluntary gift or mandatory tribute; in this sense, a 'sacrifice' may have been described by reference to these elements that were necessary to perfect the action. It may also have been understood that, while these transfers were obligatory for establishing and maintaining friendly relations with the divine, they might also have provided an occasion for festivity and communal celebration.

The sacrificial terms are a fitting place to begin this study, because they present a dataset of words that were closely related semantically, yet show diversity with respect to their treatment (positive, negative, or other) in the Christian literary sources, and so probably afford the most systematic means of testing the hypothesis that the Christianisation of OE vocabulary occurred in a consistent way within two broad phases characterised by differing religious priorities. From the linguistic evidence discussed in this chapter, it appears that the interrelationships of these terms were disintegrated at both putative stages – during the conversion period and subsequently under the influence of an increasingly learned, native clergy. With this proposition and the direction of argument in mind, the missionary attitude to sacrifice that Gregory the Great expressed in his letter to Mellitus may be recalled, here quoted in full:

And because they are in the habit of slaughtering much cattle as sacrifices to devils, some solemnity ought to be given them in exchange for this. So on the day of the dedication or the festivals of the holy martyrs, whose relics are deposited there, let them make themselves huts from the branches of trees around the churches which have been converted out of shrines, and let them celebrate the solemnity with religious feasts. Do not let them sacrifice animals to the devil, but let them slaughter animals for their own food to the praise of God, and let them give thanks to the Giver of all things for His bountiful provision. Thus while some outward rejoicings are preserved, they will be able more easily to share in inward rejoicings. It is doubtless impossible to cut out everything at once from their stubborn minds: just as the man who is attempting to climb to the highest place, rises by steps and degrees and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the Israelites in Egypt; yet he preserved in his own worship the forms of sacrifice which they were accustomed to offer to the devil and commanded them to kill animals when sacrificing to him. So with changed hearts, they were to put away one part of the sacrifice and retain the other, even though they were the same animals as they were in the habit of offering, yet since the people were offering them to the true God and not to idols, they were not the same sacrifices.[1]

This passage transparently suggests that a wide margin of syncretism was granted during the earliest stages of the Gregorian mission, a concession here for a prohibition there, in order to achieve the urgent initial task of enfeebling the pagan cults and identifying their foci – the heathen gods – with the devil. For this reason, communal animal sacrifices are primarily characterised as tributes to demons to be immediately de-sacralised, but their ritual form (*exterius gaudia* 'outward comforts') allowed to continue for a time in praise and thanksgiving to God. Furthermore, clergy are permitted to find scriptural justification for this syncretism in the situation of the ancient Israelites, who retained animal sacrifice, Gregory reasons, as a concession from God for their rejection of devils.

It will be argued that the evidence of OE sacrificial terminology broadly corroborates this scenario, that the nascent English church quickly monopolised the effective ritual core of sacrifice for thorough inculturation of the Eucharist, while allowing de-sacralised forms of sacrifice (and possibly idolatry too) to continue for some time, if re-conceived in terms of

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[1] *HE* 2.30. See Appendix A (i).

ancient Israelite monotheistic cult. It is further claimed that *Genesis A* bespeaks living memory of the period of missionary activity, during which a wide margin of syncretism prevailed. Subsequently, under the stricter ideological conditions that followed the establishing of ecclesiastical infrastructure at the post-conversion stage of the Christianisation process, clerical authorities may have decisively resolved to marginalise all vernacular terms associated with animal sacrifice and promote more neutral and unitary conceptualisations of the practice with loan-form *offrung* and neologism *onsægedness*.[2] This chapter will first treat terms with transparent sacrificial semantics in the Christian sources, *tīber* 'victim', *blōtan* 'perform a blood sacrifice', *gield* 'sacrificial worship', *lāc* 'votive offering', before turning to *hūsel* 'Eucharist; sacrificial feast' and *bletsian* 'bless; consecrate a sacrificial offering'. It will be argued that the sacrificial meaning of these latter terms may be reconstructed through comparative method and in correlation with the internal semantics and interrelationships of the first four terms on the basis of reasonable probability.

i. *tīber*

Tīber (n, *a*-stem) occurs only in poetry (×10), mainly in works which are likely to be early according to relative criteria, and usually within formulaic contexts that suggest its status as an archaism. A few compounds are attested (×4) and the derivative *tīberness* (×1). *Genesis A* has the highest concentration of examples (×6), with both specific and generic meanings of 'victim' and 'sacrifice' attested. Further examples in the other Junius 11 poems and the wider corpus, together with linguistic comparanda in OHG and ON indicate that *tīber* traditionally denoted a sacrificial victim. Ultimately the noun was marginalised, although less decisively than for *blōtan* and *gield*.

Genesis A is a suitable point of departure for the present discussion, both due to the high concentration of *tīber* examples, but also because it is the only OE text in which the four transparently sacrificial terms *tīber*, *blōtan*, *gield* and *lāc* occur together across an extended context.[3] Furthermore, the likelihood of the poem's early composition is in line not only with

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[2] The author has produced research on the *onsecgan* and *offrian* word-families that will be included in an expanded version of the present study.

[3] All citations of OE poetry are to the ASPR, except *Genesis A*: Doane, ed. (2013); *Beowulf*: Fulk et al., ed. (2008); *Andreas*: North and Bintley, ed. (2016); *Guthlac A* and *B*: Roberts, ed. (1979).

a lesser degree of later ideological admixture from Christianity, but moreover, the collective and positive usage of these terms within a work largely focused on the biblical patriarchs may be related to the interim period of syncretism, where the Anglo-Saxons were strongly encouraged to identify themselves and their old forms of worship with the ancient Israelites. While it is clear that the poet and his audience still recognise the discrete import of these terms, early traces of Christianisation are apparent in the occasional pressing of the three nouns into synonymy, sometimes due to metrical demands; in such instances, collocational peculiarities and comparison with the better-understood terminology of biblical sources, both Vulgate and Old Latin, provides a degree of control for interpreting the relative content of the individual terms.[4]

The Genesis stories presumably presented an acceptable context for positive depiction of animal sacrifice, since dispatch of a burnt-offering in the open air was a fundamental demonstration of faith in action for the patriarchs, who were justified by works under the Law.[5] The poet is evidently concerned with maintaining the delicate balance, characteristic of a first encounter with new cultural material, between fidelity to the scriptural source and presenting the new cult's central 'myths' in familiar terms. His emphasis on literal narrative within a highly traditional, Germanic style reasonably coheres with the instincts of a less theologically orientated audience,[6] whether in Mercia or Northumbria c. 700, who quite possibly had living memory of the syncretic forms of worship that might have prevailed in the previous century, or even heathenism itself.

In Genesis 4, God accepts Abel's sacrifice of livestock (*de primogenitis gregis*) and rejects Cain's offering of crops (*de fructibus terrae*),[7] whereupon Cain kills his brother.

> .... Hīe þā drihtne **lāc**
> bēgen brōhton.   Brego engla beseah
> on Ābeles **gield**   ēagum sīnum.

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[4] Doane (2013), 75-78 'a mixed Vulgate/Old Latin bible' related to a heterogeneous southern Italian model; Remley (1996),143-49 for the argument that Old Latin readings in *Genesis A* were probably drawn from liturgy; Marsden (1995), 76-106; Lapidge (2006), 28 and McBrine (2017), 277 on possible influence of late-antique biblical epic.

[5] James 2:21-26

[6] Anlezark (2010), 105-106; Doane (2013), 61, 88; Evans (1968), 144-45

[7] Genesis. 4:3-5. All references to the Vulgate are to Weber and Gryson, eds. (2007).

> Cyning eallwihta   Cāines ne wolde
> **tīber** scēawian.   Þæt wæs torn were
> (975b-79)

[They then both brought **offerings** to the Lord. The prince of angels looked upon Abel's **sacrifice** with his own eyes, the king of all beings, he did not wish to look upon Cain's **sacrifice**. That was a grievance to the man]

The poet deploys three vernacular nouns for *munus* governed by *offere* in the Vulgate. Old Latin influence on the distribution of *gield* and *tīber* is possible: two traditions of Genesis 4:4 (Abel) present *oblationes* and *hostias* against two with *munera* and *muneribus*;[8] for Genesis 4:5 (Cain), meanwhile, one group of *munera* stands against two traditions of *hostias* and *victimas*, both of which mean 'victim'.[9]

Assuming a Vulgate reading, the poet's deployment of *lāc* to translate *munera* 'gifts, offerings' in Genesis 4:3 is probably precise for several reasons: this noun exclusively glosses *munus* throughout the corpus (see iv *lāc*); it occupies the non-alliterating lift of l.975b, for which *gield* and possibly *tīber* (if with short initial vowel, by resolution) would have also been metrically permissible; *bringan* also typically governs *lāc* throughout the corpus, but never *gield*. Potential Old Latin variants *hostia* and *sacrificium* can also be dispensed with in favour of *munus*, since *lāc* very rarely translates either in the corpus.[10]

The poet does not specify, as in Genesis 4, that the brothers offer animal and vegetable sacrifices, respectively. The *prima facie* conclusion that *gield* and *tīber* convey this biblical distinction would be hasty, however, for two reasons. Firstly, it is reasonable to suppose that the two nouns have been distributed to satisfy the passage's poetic demands. *On Ābeles gield* (977a) seems a convenient verse formula, because the poet also uses it twice to refer to Seth 'as a recompense for Abel',[11] with neither its sacrificial nor payment (see iii *gield*) meaning diminished by metrical convenience. *Torn*, meanwhile, is probably the operative word on l.979b, because Cain's anger is the emotive crux of l.975b-79.[12] This noun is ideal for the

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[8] Fischer (1951-54), 80-81
[9] Fischer (1951-54), 81
[10] Fischer (1951-54), 80
[11] *on Ābeles gyld* (1104b); *wæs Ābeles gield* (1109b)
[12] Brockman (1974), 121

context, because it denotes private rage arising from grievance; *gram* or *irre* are both metrically possible, but relate more to external rage. *Tīber scēawian* also suggests *tīber* to be metrically conditioned, not only for the non-availability of an alliterating verb of seeing, but also because nominals traditionally take precedence over verbs as the alliterating lift of a verse.[13] Secondly, further examples of *tīber* and its linguistic cognates indicate that the OE noun meant 'victim' more precisely than 'sacrificial offering' (see below in this discussion). *Gield* and *tīber* in these lines, therefore, should be regarded as generalised synonyms for sacrificial performance, while *lāc* specifies the objects themselves as 'offerings' or 'gifts' to God.

Alighting from the ark, Noah 'offered sacrifices' (*obtulit holocausta*) 'of all cattle and fowl that were clean' (*de cunctis pecoribus et volucribus mundis*),[14] the scent of which God accepts favourably before establishing the Noahide Covenant.[15] The poet expands Genesis 8:20-21:

> Þā Nōe ongan   nergende **lāc**,
> rǣdfæst, rēðran   and recene genam
> on eallum dǣl   ǣhtum sīnum,
> ðām ðe him tō dugeðum   drihten sealde,
> glēaw **tō þām gielde**   and þā gode selfum
> torhtmōd hæle   **tīber onsægde**,
> cyninge engla.   Hūru cūð dyde
> nergend ūsser   þā hē Nōe
> gebletsade   and his bearn somed
> þæt hē þæt **gyld** on þanc   āgifen hæfde
>   (1497-1506)

[Then Noah, the wise one, began to ready an **offering** to the Saviour, and immediately took a part of all his property, from that which the Lord had given him for his benefit, with care and attention **to the sacrifice**, and then the illustrious-hearted man **dedicated a sacrifice** to God himself, the king of angels. Indeed, our Saviour made it known, when he blessed Noah together with his children, that he had given that **sacrifice** to the Lord's liking.]

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[13] Terasawa (2011), 21
[14] Genesis 8:20-21
[15] Genesis 8:21-9:1-17

Again, three vernacular terms vary one Latin noun *holocaustum*, denoting consumption of the whole victim by fire. Potential Old Latin variants, however, are diverse, including *hostiam*, *hostias*, *victimas*, *holocausta*, and *sacrificium*.[16] Since the Flood narrative in *Genesis A* shows the influence of liturgical Old Latin readings in places, it is possible the poet encountered any one of these nouns for Genesis 8:20.[17] *Lāc* occupying the non-alliterating lift of l.1497b introduces the sacrificial theme. It is probably plural (as for l.975b), but the poet avoids the details of Genesis 8:21 concerning the animals, stating simply *on eallum dǣl ǣhtum sīnum* (1499). The adverbial phrase *tō þām gielde* (1501a) with a determiner suggests allative motion towards a single structure, location, or occasion; of the three sacrificial nouns, only *gield* forms such constructions elsewhere in the corpus. *Gield* recurs again with a demonstrative on l.1506a, seemingly with perfective force to express the completion of a ritual performance.

Right worship is the thematic core of this scene, consistent with the idea that the patriarchs were made right before God through works of faith and piety. *Glēaw tō þām gielde* (1499a) 'with care and attention to the sacrifice' belongs to the complex sentence governed by *genam* (1498b) and affirms the relationship between Noah's sacrifice and his moral standing. Normally, OE *glēaw* and OS *glau* convey intellectual clear-sightedness, but other Germanic cognates point more clearly to meticulousness. Gothic adverbs *glaggwo* and *glaggwuba* translate ἀκριβῶς 'precisely' and ἐπιμελῶς 'carefully, attentively',[18] while OHG *glau* includes 'cautious' and ON *gløggr* 'stingy' among more general meanings.[19]

The poet's conception of Noah's virtue in terms of careful attention to ritual detail, perceiving exactly that God requires an acceptable offering, correctly prepared and dispatched, is significant on two levels.[20] Not only is it consistent with the procedures that God later expected of the Israelites (prescribed in the Mosaic Law),[21] but fastidiousness with respect to technical ritual is a fundamental characteristic of heathen cult, for which religion essentially concerned forms of speech and action that were only effective in their purpose of securing communion with the divine when performed correctly. It is suggested that this characterisation of Noah's

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[16] Fischer (1951-54), 123
[17] Remley (1996), 148
[18] 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Luke 1:3, 15:8
[19] Kroonen (2013), 180
[20] Doane (2013), 341; Anlezark (2006), 178
[21] Exodus 24:5-6, 25:2, 29, 35:5; Leviticus 1-7, 17; Deuteronomy 12:11-14, 15:19-23; 27:6-7

piety in such terms bespeaks the living memory of the syncretised cults of the seventh-century that would have been practically familiar to the poem's audience.

The poet deploys *tīber* (1502b) at the ritual heart of the sacrificial performance, governed by *onsecgan* 'dedicate'. Although not restricted to any one sacrificial noun, *onsecgan* governs *tīber* most frequently in poetry, which might indicate, *prima facie*, that their pairing traditionally expressed the consecration of a sacrificial offering.[22] Indeed, the corpus evidence for *onsecgan* indicates that later Christian authors and translators primarily understood this verb to mean 'consecrate' and used it to express both the consecration of a pagan sacrifice and figuratively for the Eucharist; development of abstract *onsǣgedness*, certainly a non-traditional noun, further evidences the versatility of Christianised *onsecgan*. A small number of non-religious usages meaning 'abjure' or 'renounce', however, demonstrate that *onsecgan* was not exclusively cultic, but probably grounded traditionally in the semantic field of legal transfer.[23] The verb's morphology supports this view, because the ablative semantics of the prefix in the verb's etymon **anda-sagjan-* convey the alienation of property between persons with words. This also coheres with the present study's broader conclusions that essentially cultic terminology was highly particular and technically directed to the effective imparting or manipulation of sacrality (see *blōtan*, *hūsel*, *bletsian*, *hǣlsian*), to which model *onsecgan* uneasily conforms.

In light of Gregory's letter to Mellitus, the poet's consistent usage of *onsecgan* as a verb of consecration is highly significant, because it may plausibly reflect a linguistic outcome of the subtle, yet doctrinally crucial shift that the missionaries were required to execute in de-sacralising pagan sacrifice and re-conceptualising the ritual as a dedicatory act of thanksgiving: *nec diabolo iam animalia immolent et ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant* 'that they no more sacrifice animals to the devil, but kill them to the refreshing of themselves, to the praise of God, and render thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance'. Noah's actions in l.1497-1506 strikingly conform to the dedicatory mode of sacrificial performance that the letter intimates, wherein the peculiarly Christian conceptualisation of 'praise' (*ad laudem Dei*) and 'thanksgiving' (*gratias*) as

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[22] See also PPs 41b, 46-47 (Psalm 65:13, 15).
[23] Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 758

independently religious activities should practically succeed the effective ritual sacralisation of tangible tributes that had now been exclusively reserved to the Eucharist.

A final observation may be made concerning *tīber* in this passage. Because Noah's virtue is the thematic focus, *torhtmōd* is more probably the operative word on l.1502 with which *tīber* conveniently alliterates despite its deployment in third position. This further strengthens the view that, as for Cain's sacrifice, *tīber* is a general synonym for sacrifice in these lines.

The four sacrificial scenes at key junctures of Abraham's migrations can be identified as type-scenes by their similarity of design and phraseology. Importantly, their sources in Genesis do not explicitly mention sacrifice.[24] The first two follow God's initial promise of the land of Canaan, and subsequently when Abraham sees the land for the first time.[25] Each time, Abraham builds an altar (*aedificavit ibi altare Domino*) and calls on God's name (*invocavit nomen eius*). Both scenes reproduce the first action with an on-verse expression *wībed worhte* (1791a, 1806a), supplemented by *lāc onsægde* (1792b) and *tīber onsægde* (1807b) in the off-verses of the following line, the formulaic, dedicatory sacrificial action familiar from Noah's sacrifice (1502b). The invocation in the biblical source occurs only in the second scene *hē þǣr wordum God/torhtum cīgde* (1806b-1807a) 'he invoked there with clear words', continuing the alliterative binding of *torht* and *tīber*.

Two further scenes occur when Abraham returns from Egypt and, much later, when concluding peace with Abimelech at the well of Beersheba. Invocation (*invocavit ibi nomen Domini*) is the extent of ritual for these scenes in Genesis, but Abraham also plants a grove at Beersheba (*plantavit vero nemus in Bersabee*).[26] Nevertheless, the poet continues his established type of altar-building with sacrifice. Returning from Egypt, the patriarch's household *wībed setton* (1882b) 'set up an altar' upon which *tilmōdig eorl tīber onsægde* (1887) 'the good-hearted nobleman dedicated a sacrifice'. The poet expands the grove at Beersheba to include an altar together with a hall and fortified enclosure.

> Ðǣr se hālga   hēah stēaprēced,
> burh timbrede   and bearo sette,

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[24] Fischer (1951-54), 154-55, 159, 230
[25] Genesis 12:7-8
[26] Genesis 13:4; 21:33

wēobedd worhte   and his waldende

on þām glǣdstede   **gild onsægde**,

lāc geneahe,   þām þe līf forgeaf

gesǣliglic   swegle under.

(2840-45)

[There the holy man built a lofty hall, a fortress, and laid a grove, he built an altar, and dedicated a **sacrifice** to his Ruler in the fire-place, a sufficient **offering**, to the one who gave life, blessedly under the sky.]

Each of these four scenes commences with altar-building, followed by a sacrifice expressed with the familiar half-line formula *[sacrifice noun] onsægde*, with adjectives *til*, *gumcyst* (1810b), *tilmōdig* (1887a) sometimes expressing the patriarch's virtue. While *tīber* is preferred, all three sacrificial nouns are attested with highly general meaning in these scenes, because they are motifs for developing a poetic theme, together with the altar and fire-place (*on þām glēdstede* 1810a, 2843a). The poet's frequent development of formulaic type-scenes as principal vehicle for expressing a recurrent biblical activity or 'theme' has been recognised as a 'genuine spontaneous' response within vernacular tradition rather than direct translation.[27] Having established his theme 'worship' with *wībed worhte* and *[sacrifice noun] onsægde* across three examples, the poet's response to *plantavit vero nemus in Bersabee* is to expand *bearo sette* with *hēah stēaprēced,/burh timbrede* and combine them with sacrifice and altar-building to signal the theme clearly.

While these examples of *tīber*, *gield* and *lāc* are generalised synonyms, serving purposes other than semantic precision, they do indicate that the poet instinctively saw sacrifice at the heart of 'worship', when called upon to communicate this theme. Furthermore, the poet's appositive usage of two sacrificial nouns in the fourth scene within the clause *gild onsægde,/lāc geneahe* (2843b-44a) may also be significant in light of the principle of 'specifying variation'. According to this traditional convention of poetic synonymy, a noun, usually in the off-verse, should be varied by a more semantically precise synonym in the on-verse of the following

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[27] Doane (2013), 106-107. Doane identifies a very similar set of examples where the poet establishes a formulaic means for expressing the theme 'migration' on l.1730-33a, 1746-48a, 1767-69, 1844-45, 2621-23. See also Schwab (1981), 467

line.[28] In relation to these lines, this probably demonstrates that *lāc* more properly denoted a concrete offering than *gield*, a respective status confirmed by the Cain and Abel episode, wider evidence for both nouns in the corpus, as well as the fact that l.2843b presents the sole example of *gield* governed by *onsecgan*.

The Binding of Isaac on Mount Moriah is the narrative climax of *Genesis A*, paramount for its prefiguration of Christ's death on Calvary.[29] Because the details concerning Isaac's near-sacrifice are integral to the story's unfolding, it would have been harder for the poet to either re-invent or reduce this episode with the strategic generalities of the earlier type-scenes. The narrative, rather, compels a direct translational reckoning with the cultural interface between Germanic and ancient Israelite practices, and for this reason, it may provide a more certain measure by which to diagnose the semantic value of Anglo-Saxon sacrificial terminology than other episodes in the poem.

The operative details include: God's initial command to Abraham *offer eum holocaustum* 'offer him as a burnt offering', which contains the main Vulgate sacrificial noun of this passage,[30] varied twice with *victima holocausti*.[31] *Immolare* occurs at the moment of Isaac's near-slaughter, while the actual slaughter and completed holocaust of the ram finds *obtulit holocaustum* 'he offered for a holocaust'.[32] Old Latin variants include *hostia* and *sacrificium*,[33] with *iugulare* 'slit the throat' and *occidere* 'kill' varying *immolare* for the killing blow.[34] All sources refer to *ligna holocausti* 'wood for the burnt offering' and read *aedificavit altare* 'he built an altar'.[35] Isaac is placed *in altare super struem lignorum* 'on the altar on top of the heap of wood'.[36]

Ancient biblical sacrifice (*holocaustum offere*) comprises the whole consumption of an animal (*victima*), slain with ritual stroke (*immolare*) upon an altar heaped with wood. *Holocaustum*, from semantically unambiguous ὁλοκαυτέω 'to make a whole burnt offering' (ὅλος 'whole',

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[28] Orchard (2009), 232
[29] Genesis. 22:1-22; Schwab (1981), 472; Anlezark (2010), xiii
[30] Genesis 22:2, 22:3, 22:6, 22:13
[31] Genesis 22:7, 22:10
[32] Genesis 22:10, 22:13
[33] Genesis 22:2, 22:3, 22:8; Fischer (1951-54), 231-34
[34] Genesis 22:10, 22:13; Fischer (1951-54), 236-37
[35] Genesis 22:6, 22:9; Fischer (1951-54), 233
[36] Genesis 22:9

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καυτός 'burnt'), was typical of ancient Israelite, Near Eastern and Mediterranean cult.[37] While this sacrificial procedure is implied holistically in God's initial command *offer eum holocaustum* 'offer him (Isaac) as a burnt-offering', the *Genesis A* poet seems to spell out the ritual by reference to its components. First, God's command is translated with focus on the victim element: *þū scealt Īsaac mē/onsecgan, sunu ðīnne, sylf tō tībre* (2852b-53) 'you shall yourself dedicate Isaac, your son to me as a victim'. The poet's preferred association of *tiber* and *onsecgan* recurs, but unlike previous examples, *tiber* stands outside the alliterative scheme in an adverbial phrase (*tō tībre*) that, in relative terms, is far more typical for *lāc* in the corpus, and which would have been metrically possible with *lāc* occupying the fourth lift of l.2853. *Tīber* has, therefore, probably been deployed precisely in these lines, and, with Isaac as its referent, implies blood-sacrifice and the specific meaning 'victim'; likewise, governance of the noun by *onsecgan* specifically denotes the transfer of tangible possession.

While the poet does accurately render the syntax of *offer eum holocaustum*, retaining Isaac as direct object of a sacrificial verb (*onsecgan sunu ðīnne*) and the sacrificial noun within an adverbial phrase of manner (*tō tībre*), this OE noun's semantic scope is confined to 'victim' rather than the mode of sacrifice.

God then commands Abraham to go into the mountains, and the poet now introduces the other components of *holocaustum*:

> 'þǣr þū scealt **ād** gegærwan
> **bǣlfȳr** bearne þīnum   and **blōtan** sylf
> sunu mid sweordes ecge   and þonne sweartan līge
> lēofes līc forbærnan   and mē **lāc** bebēodan.'
>   (2856-59)

['there you must prepare a **pyre**, a **funerary fire** for your child and yourself **sacrifice** the son with sword's edge and then with black fire burn up the body of the dear one and commend an **offering** to me.']

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[37] Oesterley (1937), 81-82; De Vaux (1964), 29-50

The command in Genesis 22:2 does not mention wood, fire, or pyre, because *holocaustum* inherently includes these elements. The poet, however, introduces *ād* and *bǣlfȳr*, traditionally associated with funerary customs and never (outside this scene) with sacrifice.[38] These OE nouns pre-empt the wood and fire of which Isaac must innocently ask in 22:7 in terms that are readily comprehensible, but somewhat incongruous contextually, which again suggests the absence of a direct analogue to the *holocaustum* ritual.

Three verbs perfect this sacrifice in stages: dispatch by ritual slaughter (*blōtan ... mid sweordes ecge*), consumption by fire (*and þonne sweartan līge/lēofes līc forbærnan*), and transfer to divinity (*lāc bebēodan*). *Blōtan* probably reflects *immolare* in Genesis 22:10, because, as will be argued subsequently in (ii), this OE verb seems to have denoted the specialised manner of slaughter that would have made a victim effective for transfer to the divine.[39] The coordinated clause *and þonne ... forbærnan* explicitly introduces consumption as a secondary stage, which would have been redundant had *blōtan* also traditionally encapsulated this idea.

Bebēodan is usually a verb of commanding within relationships characterised by status disparity, as between lord and vassal, but it is attested very occasionally in sacrificial contexts meaning 'commend'.[40] As the concluding stage of the sacrifice, *mē lāc bebēodan* focuses conceptually on transferal to the divinity. The situation of *lāc* supports this interpretation. As third lift, *lāc* probably determines the alliterative scheme of l.2859, having been selected to precisely express the final stage of transferal. While there is strong evidence that *lāc* traditionally pertained to inanimate votive offerings, the precise nature or extent of its relationship with animal sacrifice is less certain than for *gield* (see iii and iv). The *Genesis A* poet clearly felt free to use *lāc* in such contexts, but emphasis in each case seems to fall on the dimension of transferal. The noun's probable etymological basis in the semantics of 'exchange' corroborates this situation (see iv *lāc*).

Having first expanded *holocaustum* by reference to its parts, the poet then seems to attempt a direct translation with the compound *brynegield*. Isaac asks his father *hwǣr is þæt tīber þæt þū torht Gode/tō þām brynegielde bringan þencest*? (2891-92) 'where is the clean victim, that you

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[38] *Beowulf* 1110, 3138, 3143; *Juliana* 579-80 innovatively describing a form of torture.
[39] *Iugulare* or *occidere* are more general, analogous to *cwellan* or *slēan*, which do indeed occur at the moment of Isaac's near-slaughter (2906b, 2914b).
[40] *Bebēodan* finds a semantic cognate with another verb of commanding in Upper German *bifel(a)han*, which glosses *immolare* (StSGl I, 180.27) and *sacrificare* (StSGl I, 200.34, 37) concurrently with *ploazzan* in *Abrogans*.

intend to bring to the burnt-offering?'. The poet's choice of nouns more likely reflects Vulgate Genesis 22:7 *ubi est victima holocausti* than Old Latin *ovis ad holocaustum*.[41] Definitely determined and governed by *bringan*, *þæt tīber* can only mean a concrete object – the 'victim' itself, rather than 'sacrifice' in terms of procedure or occasion – sharing the objectivity of *lāc* in the Cain and Abel episode (975b). *Tīber* is again arguably bound with *torht* across the caesura. Whereas in Noah's (1502) and Abraham's (1807) sacrifices, *torht* refers to the worshipper's virtue, the adjective here modifies *tīber* in the sense of a 'pure' or 'clean' victim. This detail, absent from Genesis 22, could very well have been included on the basis of later specifications in the Mosaic Law regarding sacrificial victims.[42]

The question should remain open, however, whether Germanic practice knew a direct analogue to the restriction of sacrificial victims to 'clean' animals, especially in light of archaeological evidence (see vii Analogues), for which *torht* might have been a traditional descriptor.[43] A Christological inculturation of this idea is developed in *Christ and Satan*, where Judas is identified *se ðe ǣr on tīfre torhtne gesalde* (573) 'he who once gave over the Pure One as a sacrificial victim'. It is also apparent from Gothic *saljan* that *sellan* was a probably another traditional sacrificial verb which, as with *bebēodan*, denoted the legal transfer of possession (see v *hūsel*).[44]

The relationship between sacrificial activity and the syntax of this complex sentence also recalls Noah, who 'took' (*genam* 1498b) the relevant sacrificial objects from his property *tō þām gielde* (1501a). The identical allative phraseology *tō þām brynegielde* provides further support for interpreting this noun as sacrificial location and event. If *brynegield* aims to equate *holocaustum*, it may reasonably be asked, why did the poet not deploy it when translating God's initial command *offer eum holocaustum*? One explanation would be that the poet had to describe an unfamiliar practice first before labelling it with an original coinage. *Brynegield* is attested nowhere outside this episode in *Genesis A*, which, together with the situation of *ād* and *bǣlfȳr*, suggests the poet required novel ways of expressing sacrificial incineration. Syntactic restrictions may also have influenced this distribution, if *gield* was incapable of directly

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[41] Fischer (1951-54), 233-34
[42] Leviticus 11:3-8; Deuteronomy 14:4-8
[43] Schwab (1981), 488
[44] Kroonen (2013), 424-25

translating *holocaustum* within an adverbial phrase of manner, as it occurs in Genesis 22:2 and 22:7; unlike for *tīber* and *lāc*, the wider corpus shows no such examples for *gield*.

Abraham's actual sacrifice of the ram comprises the final stage of this sacrificial scene and concludes *Genesis A*.

> Ābrægd þā mid þȳ bille,　**brynegield** onhrēad,
> reccendne weg　rommes blōde,
> **onblēot** þæt **lāc** Gode,　sægde lēana þanc
> > (2932-34)

[He then drew the blade, reddened (moistened?) the **burnt offering**, the smoking idol (altar-piece?) with ram's blood, **dispatched** that **offering** to God, said thanks for his rewards.]

Genesis 22:13 reads *obtulit holocaustum*, identically (excepting tense) with God's initial command. Having established an analogue in *brynegield*, the poet repeats it again, governed by *onhrēad* in apposition with *reccendne weg*. Each of these terms present unresolved philological ambiguities.[45] The manuscript reading *onhrēad* could represent the first preterite of **onhrēodan*, an otherwise undocumented and differently prefixed form of *gehrēodan* 'adorn', of which only the past-participle *gehroden* 'adorned' is attested and confined to poetry.[46] Alternatively, some scholars have argued that the manuscript reading should be emended with *onrēad*, the preterite form of a scarcely attested verb *onrēodan* that means either 'redden', 'stain', or perhaps 'moisten (with blood?)' on the basis of *onrēad* glossing *imbuit* 'he moistened' in the Corpus Glossary.[47] The clause's adverbial phrase *rommes blōde* would makes this interpretation, particularly 'redden', contextually attractive, especially in view of other poetic usages of *rēodan* 'redden, stain with blood', for example in *Andreas*, where it is said of the Mermedonians: *drēore druncne dēaðwang rudon* (1003b) 'drunken with blood, they reddened the death-plain'.[48]

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[45] See discussions in Doane (2013), 398 and Krapp (1931), 197.

[46] Grein and Köhler (1912), 358; Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 402 s.v. *gehrēoðan*. Krapp (1931), 86 and Doane (2013), 283 reproduce the manuscript reading. See also Fulk et al. (2008), 400 s.v. *hroden*.

[47] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 9.401 emended from *onrēod*; Dietrich (1856), 337-38; Cosijn (1894), 457; Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 756 s.v. *onrēadan* and *onrēodan*.

[48] Bosworth and Toller (1882-98), 791

On its face, the orthography *reccendne weg* straightforwardly represents the accusative present participle of *reccan* 'direct' with *weg* 'way', which Doane reads typologically in terms of Christ's sacrifice as the 'guiding path' to salvation.[49] But this figurative sense seems uncharacteristic of a poem which largely refrains from labouring typology. More coherently with the local context and overall acceptability of traditional cultic terminology in *Genesis A*, it seems better to suppose that this phrase instead represents **rēcendne wēh*, which are conceivable Anglian reflexes of West-Saxon *rēocan* 'to smoke' and *wēoh* 'idol'.[50] The present study argues that the attested reading *weg* was probably introduced by a later copyist, for whom the presence of *wēoh*, and by extension idolatry, in this scene would have been unacceptable. The fact that *brynegield* varies with another noun denoting material dimensions of ritual as structure of worship further supports interpretation of the value of allative *tō þām gielde*. As second, more specific variant, *rēccendne weg* narrows the focus from the location of the ritual to the cult-focus – a sacred structure, smeared with the victim's blood. As with the 'clean' victim, while this detail finds Levitical analogues in the pouring of sacrificial blood around the altar outside the Tabernacle, the detail is absent from Genesis 22, nor does it concern interaction with a cult-focus analogous to a *wēoh*.[51]

On l.2934, the clause *onblēot þæt lāc Gode* expresses the completion of sacrificial procedure through the perfecting act of transferal to a dative beneficiary. It will be argued further in (iv) that *lāc* was proper to expressing this aspect of sacrifice in terms of the legal transfer of a concrete offering, and the ablative prefix of *onblōtan < *anda-* 'off, away from' in the present context tends to support this conclusion. As final stage of the sacrificial sequence, l.2934a is comparable to *mē lāc bebēodan* (2859b) earlier in this passage, as well as the *lāc*-clauses of the Cain-Abel and Noah episodes, which read *drihtne* (975b) and *nergende* (1497b) as dative beneficiaries, respectively. It is interesting to note that, despite *aedificavit altare* at 22.9, the poet does not include *wībed worhte*.

This final sacrifice demonstrates the poet's measured response to the task of maintaining scriptural fidelity and cultural familiarity for an audience that may still have remembered or

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[49] Doane (2013), 448, 398. Krapp (1931), 87 also reproduces the manuscript reading. Cassidy and Ringler (1971) reject this reading and the typological interpretation.
[50] Grein (1857), 76 *rêcendne veg*; Grein and Köhler (1912), 793 s.v. *wīg, wēoh (wēg)* 'idolum, fanum, sacrum, ara'; Holthausen (1914), 88 *rēcendne wēg*, 128 s.v. *wēg* 'Altar'
[51] Leviticus 1:5, 3:2 and other examples.

even practiced their own traditional forms of de-sacralised sacrificial worship, but would have found biblical descriptions of similar customs among the ancient Israelites more unfamiliar. In response to the novelty of *holocaustum*, the poet emphasises apparently recognisable features such as a clean victim, the notion of legal transfer, and a ritual involving a traditional cult-focus that may plausibly have been unacceptable to later Christian scribes. The poet's clear embrace of these details speaks against the view that Old Testament sacrifices presented 'painful reminders' of their pagan customs.[52]

Most remarkable, moreover, is the positive usage of traditional cultic terms *gield*, *blōtan* and *wēoh* that are everywhere else in the corpus semantically pejorated. Together with the poet's presentation of Noah and Abraham as proto-Christian monotheists in noble Anglo-Saxon garb, whose cult-practices resemble the description in Gregory's communication to Mellitus, these factors strongly evince the poem's original reception within a culture that permitted a wide margin of religious syncretism.

The relative semantics of traditional sacrificial terminology in *Genesis A* can be summarised: *tīber* denotes 'clean' victim, *blōtan* ritualised slaughter, *lāc* the concrete offering as a transferal, and *gield* the sacrificial ceremonies and occasion at large. The three nouns are capable of generalised synonymy. *Onsecgan* could also govern all three, although preferably *tīber* and *lāc*. The restriction of *bringan* 'bring' and *rēðran* 'prepare' to these two nouns in *Genesis A* is suggestive (although not conclusive) of a more precise status for both as concrete objects of sacrifice. *Lāc* alone, meanwhile, here shows a peculiar relationship with the verbs of dispatch *bebēodan* and *onblōtan*, and apparently shares with *gield* a relationship to the perfective aspects of sacrificial procedure (*āgiefan*); for *gield* in *Genesis A*, this seems secondary to its role in adverbial phrases expressing the sacrificial occasion itself. The smearing of blood on a cult-focus might also have been a traditional feature of sacrificial ritual as a practical means of effecting transfer of victim to deity, following sacralised dispatch, just as the ancient Israelites acknowledged the smoke of a burnt-offering for a similar purpose. The poet's supplementary relationship of sacrifice with altar-building also suggests that sacrifice was central to his notion of 'worship'.

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[52] Doane (2013), 88-89

The Binding of Isaac is recalled in *Exodus* (351b-446) within a genealogical excursus on the heroic deeds of the Patriarchs, recounted while the Israelite tribal battle-groups march through the Red Sea. Isaac is once termed *hālig tīber* (416a), and the poet earlier describes the near-sacrifice:

> Wolde þone lāstweard   līge **gesyllan**,
>
> in bǣlblyse   beorna sēlost,
>
> his swǣsne sunu   tō **sigetībre**
>
> > (*Exodus*, 400-402)

[He wanted to **give over** the heir to the flame, the best of men to the pyre-blaze, his own son **as a victory-sacrifice**]

Line 402 is comparable with *onsecgan sunu ðīnne, sylf tō tībre* (2853) in *Genesis A*, not only for the same narrative idea, but also because *tīber* is situated within an adverbial phrase of manner in the off-verse, albeit incorporated into the alliteration by composition. The question is whether *sigetīber* represents a traditional compound or an original coinage. Unlike *Genesis A*, which largely avoids complex typology, the *Exodus* poet submits patristic learning to the ingenuity of traditional style. Lexical originality and semantic nuance throughout maintain a condensed, allusive plane, characterised especially by compounds deployed in service of these aims.[53] *Exodus* contains the highest proportion of poetic compounds, many of which are thought to be neologisms with an ambiguous semantic relationship between the two members.[54] The genealogical excursus served the doctrinal purpose of reiterating the Abrahamic Covenant and the importance of salvation through faith. The most obvious sense of *sigetīber*, therefore, concerns the typological relationship of Isaac and Christ – the victory of God's promise of the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed forever, and Christ's victory over death.[55]

This doctrinal *sigetīber* can be compared with other *sige*-compounds. The same idea underlies *sigerīce* (27a, 563a) denoting heaven and the Promised Land. Following Moses' promise of this kingdom, *sungon sigebȳmen* (566a) 'victory-trumpets sang'. *Sigor* (×3), always genitive

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[53] Lucas (1979), 43-48
[54] Lucas (1979), 49
[55] Genesis 22:17-18; Lucas (1979), 59-61

plural, is also inculturated with salvific and covenantal themes. As *sigora waldend* (16b) 'ruler of victories', God grants (*gesealde* 16a) the Promised Land to Abraham's descendants, and He is *sōðfæst sigora* (434a) 'truthfast in victories' when reiterating the Covenant. Moses prays for *sigora gesynto* (272a) 'success of victories' and *sigorworca hrēð* (316b) 'glory of victory-deeds' are granted (*gesælde* 316a) to the tribes crossing the sea.

Sigor occurs frequently in *Genesis A* (×14), often governed by *syllan* or formulaically in the genitive plural, for example *se ðe sigor seleð* (2809a) 'he who grants victories' and *sigora waldend* (1112b) 'ruler of victories'. *Sigorlēan* (×6) is also important, always denoting the reward or favour granted by God. The angel who intervenes Isaac's near-slaughter promises Abraham *sōðum sigorlēanum* (2919a) 'true victory-rewards' for the patriarch's fidelity (*sibb and hyldo*, 2922a) to God. The amount and variety of such examples across two putatively early poems weighs in favour of the idea that *sige*-phraseology was highly traditional to the OE poetic lexicon, and furthermore that Christian poets adapted it to (or inculturated it with) biblical concepts of grace and covenant, rather than coining neologisms for such doctrines. It may plausibly be argued, therefore, that *sigetīber* was a traditional compound and complement to *sigorlēan* as transferal of divine favour, especially since the wider evidence for *lāc* indicates that some forms of Anglo-Saxon sacrifice were indeed conceived in terms of a bi-lateral exchange, analogous to the principle of *do ut des* (see iv *lāc*). Furthermore, *sige*- implies warfare to have been the proper occasion for this sacrifice, for which the stories in Genesis and Exodus would have provided unproblematic analogues.[56]

Later poets developed the idea of 'victory-reward' as recompense of spiritual warfare; for example, the *Christ C* poet states *sōðfæst syleð tō sigorlēanum* (1589) 'the truth-fast one grants as a victory-reward'.[57] In *Juliana*, the demon tempter urges *þæt þū lāc hraþe/onsecge sigortīfre ǣr þec swylt nime* (254b-55) 'that you should dedicate an offering with a victory-victim before death take you'. As in *Genesis A*, *onsecgan* is the preferred sacrificial verb in *Juliana* (×5). Corpus evidence at large for this verb demonstrates that it was traditionally ditransitive, governing a direct object of offering and indirect object of beneficiary. In the example above, *lāc* is the direct object, recapitulating *him ... lāc onsecge* (198b-99b) some lines earlier. Dative singular *sigortīfre* should sensibly be analysed as instrumental, meaning 'with a victory-

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[56] Schwab (1981), 485
[57] See also *Elene* 623a; *Guthlac B* 878b, 1370a; *Judith* 344a

victim'. Unambiguous evidence of a 'victim' noun modifying a sacrificial verb instrumentally finds a parallel in some attested uses of ON *blóta* (see ii *blōtan*). It also has implications for the syntactic analysis of *gield* on l.174 of the same poem, *gif þū onsecgan nelt sōþum gieldum* 'if you will not sacrifice with true rites/to the true idols', as instrumental within an adverbial noun-phrase of manner, rather than as beneficial dative of *onsecgan*, hence meaning 'rites, worship' rather than 'idols' (see iii *gield*).

Tīber twice translates *holocaustum* in metrical Psalm 65, with phraseology resembling the vernacular idiom of earlier OE works rather than the biblical source. Line 41 *and þǣr tīdum þē tīfer onsecge* 'and there regularly dedicate victims to you' translates 65:13 *introibo in domum tuam in holocaustis* 'I will enter your house with burnt-offerings', conveying a sense of *holocaustum* closer to 'victim' as portable offering rather than performance. The expected off-verse collocation of *tīber* with ditransitive *onsecgan* recurs, as in *Genesis A*, plausibly as an idiomatic response to the sacrificial theme in the source, absent the presence of a sacrificial verb.

The syntax, prosody and semantics of *þæt ic ðē on tīfrum teala forgulde/ealle þā gehāt* (46-47a) 'so that I properly repay you in sacrifices all the vows' resembles *se ðe ǣr on tīfre torhtne gesalde* in *Christ and Satan* (574) more than its probable source in psalm 65:15 *holocausta medullata offeram tibi* 'I will offer up to you holocausts of marrow'. Both have A3 on-verses with one alliterating lift in second position, preceded by pronouns and function words that comprise anacrusis and a suppressed first lift.[58] An adverbial *tīber* (*on tīfre[-um]*) modifies verbs of conveyance with root assonance *gesalde* and *forgulde*. On the basis of these phraseological parallels between l.41, 46-47a of metrical Psalm 65 and certain lines in *Genesis A* and *Christ and Satan*,[59] it may be argued that *tīber* was a poetic archaism by the early tenth century, which poets deployed only within syntactic patterns that they observed in older works.

If positive uses of *tīber* were archaic by the eWS period, the derivative *tīberness* suggests the noun remained negatively productive. It refers to the carnage of the Trojan War in Orosius *hwelce tībernessa hīe drēogende wǣron* 'what massacres they were perpetrating'.[60] As with

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[58] Neidorf (2016b), 56. This type of 'light' verse was traditionally a metrical license restricted to the start of a new clause.

[59] See Fulk (1992), 394-95 for issues of the dating of *Christ and Satan*. This poem shows strong Mercian features, but is harder to situate within the relative chronology than the other Junius poems.

[60] Or 1, 11.32.3

blōtan, the Alfredian translator responds to the *History*'s polemic spirit by deploying, with lurid intent, vernacular sacrificial terms which had retained strong connotations of slaughter into the late ninth-century.

Two glosses probably derive from early collections. *Wīntīfer* translates *libatio* in Antwerp-London, which probably reflects an attempt to adapt *tīber* as the concrete heart of sacrificial worship to classical customs.[61] *Fyrdtīber* translates *hostia propriae* in Cleopatra 1.[62] The Latin could mean 'extraordinary, special victim', but *fyrd* finds no correlate. Were a term for 'army' present, it could be concluded that the glossator produced a calque. 'Special victim' is semantically general, but implies some reason or occasion for peculiarity which *fyrdtīber* unambiguously specifies as warfare. This seems an instinctive response by a glossator who had knowledge of traditional distinctions between one sacrifice and another according to their proper ritual occasion. Wider historical analogues for warfare as an especially distinguished sacrificial occasion in Germanic culture also support (and are mutually supported by) this interpretation (see vii).

Comparanda are scarce. Upper German *zebar* glosses *sacrificium*[63] and *holocautomatus*[64] in *Abrogans*, perhaps with general meaning. In the *St. Pauler Lukas-Glossen*, however, *zebar* glosses *hostia* in Luke 2:24, which clearly denotes 'victim' in referring to the pair of doves or pigeons which Joseph and Mary were required to sacrifice at Jesus's presentation in the Temple.[65] There are further examples of *hostia* in *Abrogans*.[66] Adjective *ceburhaftiu* also translates *holocaustomatus* 'sacrificial(?)'.[67] MnG *Ungeziefer* 'vermin' (mainly 'bugs') implies a non-privative etymon meaning the opposite, 'clean' animals without disease and/or fit for consumption. According to Grimm, such meanings were preserved in dialectal Franconian and Thuringian *ziefer* and *geziefer*, applying to poultry, goats and swine.[68]

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[61] AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 939
[62] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3029
[63] StSG I, 66.35, 67.35, 201.19, 241.35 (*Abrogans*)
[64] StSG IV, 10.39 (*Abrogans*)
[65] StSG I, 733.35 (Luke 2:24)
[66] StSG I, 170.29, 170.33, 171.29 (*Abrogans*)
[67] StSG I, 674.17 (Mark 12:32)
[68] Grimm (1875) I, 33

Gothic *aibr* (×1) has been viewed as a scribal error for **tibr* in Matthew 5:23 *jabai nu bairais aibr þein du hunslastada*[69] 'if you bring your gift to the altar'.[70] While δῶρον 'gift' is semantically general, *aibr* might have been motivated by the presence of *hunslastaþs* 'sacrifice-place' (probably a calque to θυσιαστήριον 'altar'), which contextualises the action around the bringing of objects to a proper place of sacrifice. Gothic *saljan* also provides important comparanda for the traditional sacrificial semantics of *syllan*. It normally translates θύω 'to offer, sacrifice', governing both an accusative direct object or beneficial dative, for example *paska salidedun* 'they killed the Passover victim' and *skohslam saljand* 'they sacrifice to devils'.[71] It also translates θυμιάω, intransitively denoting the burning of incense by a priest.[72] The prefixed form *andsaljan sweriþa* 'dedicate honour' is comparable with the ablative force of *onblēot < *anda-blōtan-* in *Genesis A* and *onsecgan < *anda-sagjan-*.[73]

ON *tívurr* (*tívorr*) is a *hapax* with a stem vowel-grade that better compares with *zeburhaftiu* than with *tīber* or *zebar*.[74] In *Vǫluspá* 31, it refers to the death of Baldr, where the seeress declares *ek sá Baldri, blóðgum tívor/Óðins barni, ørlǫg fólgin* 'I saw for Baldr – for the blood-stained sacrifice, for Odin's child – the fates set hidden'. A traditional idea of Baldr as sacrificial victim finds another analogue in the skaldic epithet *heilagt tafn* 'holy victim',[75] which may be compared with *hālig tīber* in *Exodus*. Both phrases might preserve the structure of an underlying, traditional epithet for an innocent god given over to death, with the possibility of a further genetic link to the theme and phraseology of l.574 in *Christ and Satan*.

The etymology of *tīber* is uncertain. Scholars have disagreed over the length of the root vowel. Although the metre of *hālig tīber* in *Exodus* (416a) clearly shows that it is long in OE, in agreement with ON *tívurr*, Gothic **tibr* and OHG *zebar* suggest an etymon with a short root vowel.[76] These differences might be resolved by supposing that they reflect, respectively, the full-grade of a root **deip-* (see also δεῖπνον 'meal') and its zero-grade **dip-*.[77] The Frankish

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[69] Matthew 5:23 ἐὰν οὖν προσφέρῃς τὸ δῶρόν σου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον
[70] Lehmann (1986), 13; Kroonen (2013), 516; Streitberg (1910), 3
[71] Mark 14:12 τὸ πάσχα ἔθυον; 1 Corinthians 10:20 ἀλλ' ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις
[72] Luke 1:9 *hlauts imma urrann du saljan*: ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμιᾶσαι
[73] *Skeireins* V.21
[74] Dronke (1997), 139. But Kroonen (2013), 516 sceptical.
[75] ÚlfrU *Húsdr* 10[III]/3
[76] Preferring *tīber*: Doane (2013); Dronke (1997), 139; De Vries (1962), 590; Philippson (1929), 195; Jente (1921), 42-44. Preferring *tiber*: Kroonen (2013), 516; Orel (2003), 406; Pokorny (1959) I, 222; Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 981; Grimm (1875) I, 33
[77] Jente (1921), 43; Kroonen (2013), 516

loanword underlying Old French *atoivre* 'draft animal' and the early Germanic form underlying Finnish *teuras* 'animal for slaughter' both seem to reflect zero-grade **tibra-*, which together with a distant cognate in Armenian *tvar* 'herd of cattle, ram' point to an IE etymon (**dip-ró-*?) that denoted the animals themselves, especially livestock.[78] These nouns imply an ancient, inherited association of *tīber* to animal sacrifice. Domestic animals would naturally have made worthy sacrifices, not only because they were fit for consumption, but also as the main source of wealth in many pre-state societies.

To summarise, the evidence shows that *tīber* denoted a sacrificial victim, which in practice probably meant animals that were valuable and 'clean' or fit for consumption (see vii Analogues). There are further intimations that human victims were sacrificed under special circumstances, quite possibly within the ritual of warfare. The largely confined, conditioned and formulaic examples of *tīber* throughout the corpus suggest that it was an archaism by the later ninth century. Although there is one example of productive negative use in *Orosius*, the noun appears to have been marginalised into irrelevance, rather than having undergone thoroughgoing semantic pejoration, as occurred for *blōtan* and *gield*, which (it will be argued) embodied the practice of animal sacrifice itself rather than its object.

Genesis A and *Exodus* preserve traces of a more positive inculturation that probably prevailed during the early phases of Christianisation, wherein the noun would have remained acceptable and current through analogy with ancient Israelite worship in the Old Testament. This study argues that the adoption of a stricter ideological stance against idolatry and animal sacrifice among educated clerics during the later stages of Christianisation probably prevented any continued, positive semantic development of *tīber*. Requiring a negative lexicon to express these forms of forbidden worship, *tīber* would have been condemned by association for its inherent affinity with animal sacrifice, and also because other more neutral terms for the concrete object of sacrifice, such as *lāc* and neologism *onsægedness*, were readily available for continued inculturation in more abstract directions.

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[78] Sayers (2002), 103-108; Orel (2003), 406; Green (1998), 23; De Vries (1962), 590; Grimm (1875) I, 33

ii. *blōtan*

Blōtan (VII, ×11) is semantically confined to sacrifice in OE, with strong specific connotations of ritualised slaughter. Comparative evidence indicates that the *blōtan* word-family was exclusively cultic and highly traditional in Germanic culture. While etymological considerations suggest a prehistoric meaning of verbal consecration for PGmc **blōtana-*, the sparse, but consistent, examples of *blōtan* in OE indicate that heathen Anglo-Saxons understood this verb to mean the slaughter of a sacrificial victim. It was observed in the previous discussion (i) that the *Genesis A* poet uses *blōtan* only where blood-sacrifice is explicitly described in the Binding of Isaac. Elsewhere, most examples occur in Orosius, where the verb also consistently refers to blood-sacrifice, frequently human, and always with strong negative overtones. Nominal derivatives are also sparsely attested: *blōt* (×4) 'a sacrifice' is probably traditional, on the strength of comparative evidence, while *geblōt* (×6) and *blōtung* 'sacrificing' (×1) are confined to Orosius and arguably neologisms. While the verb's value in *Genesis A* is ambiguous, it seems clear that the *blōtan* word-family had overtly negative value by the ninth century, having been almost certainly marginalised due to its inherent relationship to blood-sacrifice.

Blōtan was capable of governing a direct object of sacrificial victim (accusative) and an indirect object of beneficiary (dative), for example *þæt hīe sceolden men hiera godum blōtan* 'that they should sacrifice people to their gods'.[79] Adverbial phrases with *blōt* sometimes modify another verb of slaughter, for example *hē his āgenne sunu his godum tō blōte ācwealde* 'he killed his own son as a sacrifice to his gods'.[80] Connotations of manslaughter seem to be especially pronounced. The translator of Psalm 105:37 responds periphrastically to *immolaverunt* 'they sacrificed' (referring to worship of Baal-Peor by some of the Israelites in the wilderness) with *ongunnan heora bearn blōtan fēondum,/sceuccum onsæcgean suna and dohter* (104-105) 'they began to sacrifice their children to enemies, to dedicate (their) sons and daughters to demons.[81] *Onsecgan* is the unmarked WS term for sacrifice, so *blōtan* on l.104 has probably been included to amplify the sense of manslaughter. Likewise, where *blōtan* translates *victimare* concerning

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[79] Or 4, 4.88.21
[80] Or 1, 8.27.31
[81] PPs 105:27 *et immolaverunt filios suos et filias suas daemonibus* 'and they sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons'

a parent's sacrificing of a child.[82] In the Laws of Cnut, a provision against *morðweorc* 'slaughter' is qualified *oððon on blōte oððon fyrhte*[83] 'whether in sacrifice or divination'.

In part of the *Martyrology* on the Anglo-Saxon calendar (derived from Bede), it is recorded that in November *hīg āblēoton* 'they sacrificed', with a subsequent explanatory clause mentioning the dedication and slaughter of cattle to idols.[84] The translator renders Bede's initial nominal phrase *mensis immolationum* 'the month of (animal) sacrifices' with an intransitive verbal meaning. This probably explains use of the *ā*-prefix, because its resultative force would encompass the diverse activities mentioned in the subsequent clause. Importantly, this also strongly suggests that un-prefixed *blōtan* was an inherently transitive, accusative action that always governed the semantic idea of a victim as direct object. *Āblōtan* would, therefore, have provided a vernacular means to express 'sacrificing' with conceptual focus on the activity rather than a singular action in respect to a grammatical patient. Two glosses to Prudentius' *Peristephanon* are attested. *Blōteras* 'sacrificers' enigmatically glosses *plutones* 'gods of the underworld',[85] but this appears to be a variant reading for *carnifices* 'butchers'.[86] *Blōtorc* 'sacrifice vessel' glosses *simpuvium*, a ladle or bowl used by the Roman priesthood for pouring libations over a victim's head.[87]

The *blōtan* word-family is attested in every Germanic branch, but with differences of semantic scope. It is more holistic in Gothic and ON, approximating 'worship' or cult practice at large, whereas the focus is more narrowly sacrificial in WGmc. *Bluozzan* seems to be an archaism in the OHG record, because it is attested only in glossaries which scholars regard as the earliest continental German texts and have dated to the second half of the eighth and very early ninth centuries; the verb glosses a range of sacrificial terms: *sacrificare* and *immolare* in *Abrogans*,[88] with *immolare*, *delibare* 'consume a libation', and *victimare* in *Samanunga*.[89] Early ninth-

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[82] CP 45.343.8; *Reg. past.* 3.21.88
[83] LawIICn, 5.1
[84] Mart 5 (C) No, A.2; Mart 5 (Kotzor), No. 0, A.2 this manuscript reads *blēoton*. See also *Menologium* 195; Bede, *De temp. rat.* 15
[85] PrudGl 1 (Meritt), 700
[86] Meritt (1959), 73
[87] PrudGl 1 (Meritt), 673 *simpiuuium*
[88] StSG I, 37.34, 181.27 (*Abrogans*) and other examples.
[89] StSG I, 47.33; StSG I, 99.3; StSG I, 181.31 (*Samanunga*) and other examples.

century biblical glosses include *immolare*, *libare* 'make a libation', and *adolere* 'burn an offering'.[90]

Derivative *bluostar* (n) is of later date and is semantically broader, encompassing not only *sacrificium* and *libamen*,[91] but also heathen worship generally with *caerimonia* in *Samanunga* and *idolatriae* in a papal decree of the early ninth century.[92] Of similar date, *ápkuto blŏstar* glosses *idolothitum* 'idolatory' in Jerome's commentary to Matthew, where the genitive plural *apkuto* 'of idols' strongly suggests that the glossator understood *bluostar* as 'worship' rather than 'sacrifice', because otherwise he might have used a dative plural.[93] In Tatian, *bluostar* translates both *victima*[94] and also the phrase *holocaustomatibus et sacrificiis*, rendered *bluostarun inti zebarun*.[95] Compound *bluozhus*, matched in ON *blóthús*, encompasses both structure and object of worship in *Abrogans*, translating *fanum*, *idolium* 'idol-temple' and *idolum* (only genitive plural *plozhuso*).[96] It also indicates that a direct cognate of *blōt* was known to continental German. The early attestation of this compound, together with its match in ON, might further evidence traditional status for a roofed structure wherein ritual slaughter occurred.

The *blóta* word-family is well-attested throughout the Icelandic corpus and is semantically wider, including 'sacrifice', 'curse' and 'worship'.[97] This semantic overlap between 'sacrifice' and 'worship' is perhaps reflected by the syntactic tendency to express the beneficiary of sacrifice in the accusative, for example *gørða aldrigi blóta Óðin* 'have never sacrificed to Odin',[98] or as subject in a passive construction such as *var ek blótinn til bana* 'I was worshipped to the death'.[99] There is some evidence too that a dative with instrumental semantics could express the victim, for example *blótt, sem vill, bǫrnum* 'sacrifice, as you will, (with) your own children'.[100] *Blót* (n) is also semantically broad, including 'sacrificial location' and 'idol', although 'sacrifice' prevails in early skaldic verse. In *Vellekla*, for example, *hverfa til blóta*

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[90] StSG I, 312.68 (Genesis 22:10); StSG I, 336.65-66 (Exodus 29:40); StSG I, 409.18 (1 Samuel 2:15), 469.29 (2 Chronicles 26:18)
[91] StSG I, 57.17 (*Abrogans*), 281.59 (Numbers 28:6); StSG I, 373.29 (Deuteronomy 32:38)
[92] StSG I, 67.33 (*Samanunga*); StSG II, 147.41
[93] StSG II, 333.33
[94] Tat. 95.5 (Mark 9:48)
[95] Tat. 128.4 (Mark 12:33)
[96] StSG I, 144.22; 101.3; 100.3 (*Abrogans*)
[97] De Vries (1962), 45
[98] Keth Lv 19[VIII] (*Ketils saga* 33)/1
[99] Anon Lv 9[VIII] (*Ragnars saga* 39)/5
[100] *Atlamál* 78

'they (the gods) turn to the sacrifices' appears to express the return of divine favour, consequent upon Hákon Jarl's restoration of sanctuaries and heathen cult.[101] This attestation is very important as authentic (late) heathen testimony for a conception of sacrifice as a means of securing communication and favour with divinity.

Hávamál 144-45 refers to an assemblage of cryptic and overtly heathen practices. The first stanza comprises eight, identically structured rhetorical questions, the last four of which concern sacrifice.[102]

> Veiztu, hvé **biðja** skal?
> Veiztu hvé **blóta** skal?
> Veiztu hvé **senda** skal?
> Veiztu hvé **sóa** skal?
>
> (144.5-8)

[Do you know how **to pray**, do you known how **to sacrifice**? Do you know how **to dispatch**? Do you know how **to slaughter**?]

Stanza 145 opens by way of answer to these questions, repeating the four key verbs. Assuming these lines derive accurately from ritual lore, they might evidence how a Germanic sacrifice was customarily conceived, with the four verbs together comprising the essential actions completing the ritual. The inclusion of precative *biðja* importantly provides a comparative basis for contextualising OE *biddan* incidentally in relation to sacrificial procedure within pre-Christian cult (see Chapter 2 i). Similarly to what was observed regarding the *Genesis A* poet's use of sacrificial terms (see i), the combination of *blóta* in *Hávamál* 144-145 with *senda* and *sóa* (OE *swōgan* 'move with violence' or perhaps originally 'strangle') suggests distribution of each to a discrete part of the ritual, with potentially very precise meaning.[103] It is possible that **sendan-* was also traditionally used in sacrificial contexts, with the etymons of *syllan* and *onsecgan*, to express the formal dispatch of an offering following consecration and slaughter. In *Beowulf,* for example, Grendel *swefeð ond sendeþ* (600a) 'slays and dispatches' his

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[101] Eskál *Vell* 15
[102] Evans (1987), 136-37
[103] De Vries (1962), 528; Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 108

victims.[104] Verbal distribution is also apparent in *Genesis A* at Isaac's binding, where *bebēodan* and *onblōtan* express the ablative sense of 'dispatch', while *cwellan* and *slēan* denote the death-dealing stroke.

If *biðja* covers formal petition, *senda* and *sóa* dispatch and slaughter, then *blóta* could reasonably express the specialised procedure that made the victim effective for transfer and would be analogous to the function of pre-Christian *bletsian*, according to the arguments advanced in the discussion in (vi). Practical cultic connection of *bidja* with *blóta* recurs in *Hyndluljóð* 4: *þórr mun hon blóta, þess mun hon bidja* 'she must sacrifice to Thor, she must ask for this'. Again, unlike OE, *blóta* governs an accusative of sacrificial beneficiary, whereas *bidja* governs a genitive of desired object, as in all early Germanic languages (see Chapter 2 i).

Unlike OE, Gothic *blotan* (×3) and its derivatives were positively inculturated with a Christian concept of 'worship'; that this was possible suggests that the pre-Christian Gothic verb (like ON *blóta*) already had a broader meaning 'perform ritual, worship' that was less narrowly defined by blood-sacrifice. References to actual sacrifice in the Gospels are negative, for which Wulfila uses *saljan*, while *blotan* always governs an accusative of beneficiary, for example *mik blotand* 'they worship me'.[105] Scholars have argued that Wulfila innovated this accusative construction in the process of Christianising *blotan* from 'sacrifice' to 'worship',[106] but since un-Christianised *blóta* governs an identical construction, it is plausible that Gothic reflects a shared, traditional arrangement. The phrase *guþ blotan* 'worship God' literally renders θεοσέβεια 'God-worship', while *gudblostreis* likewise calques θεοσεβής 'worshipper'.[107] The instrumental datives of victim in *fastubnjam jah bidom blotande fraujan* 'worshipping the Lord with fasting and with prayers' match the Greek source,[108] but, as observed for *bidjan* in Chapter 2 (i), Wulfila usually respects vernacular norms of case-marking for verb complements and adverbial phrases, which means that the syntax of this example could as plausibly be Gothic as it could be Greek.

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[104] Fulk et al., eds. (2008) *swefeð, ondsendeþ*; Liberman (1978), 473-88; Evans (1986), 136
[105] Mark 7:7 σέβονταί με
[106] Green (1998), 22
[107] 1 Timothy 2:10; John 9:31
[108] Luke 2:37 νηστείαις καὶ δεήσεσιν λατρεύουσα

Blotinassus (m) translates three Greek nouns of worship λατρεία 'service',[109] θρησκεία 'cult',[110] and σέβασμα 'object of awe, what is worshipped'.[111] *Usbloteins* (f) is used once adverbially as a noun of prayer: *miþ managai usbloteinai bidjandans* 'praying with many entreaties'.[112] Importantly, its derivation from **usblotan* is comparable with *āblōtan*. It will be observed in Chapter 2 (i) that the results of prayer are exclusive to *ābiddan*. In the *Martyrology,* *āblōtan* is intransitive, expressing the completion of certain ceremonies (vows and slaughter). It is possible to analyse *usbloteins* likewise, with a dispatched entreaty resulting from a completed ritual performance. The inculturation of *usbloteins* with Christian prayer suggests that the pre-Christian noun would not have entirely excluded precative connotations, doubtless connected to the resultative force of the **uz*-prefix. With *Hávamál* 144-45, this Gothic example also provides some comparative basis for situating a form of prayer together with sacrifice in heathen Germanic cult, according to a *do ut des* principle.

The discrepancy between the wider application to 'worship' in Gothic and ON, and the constricted focus on 'sacrifice' in WGmc leaves open the question of whether the narrower semantics are original or resulted from Christian influence. It may be relevant that the sacrificial semantics of *gieldan* appear to have been peculiar to WGmc, and encompass the broader meanings 'ceremony' and 'worship'. It is possible that **blōtan-* ceded some of its semantic range to **geldan-* in WGmc dialects prior to the Anglo-Saxon migrations.

Etymological considerations, however, weigh in favour of the ON and Gothic meanings having expanded from 'ritual slaughter', which was itself an intermediate stage of semantic development preserved in OE. While the etymology of *blōtan* remains disputed, one formal possibility is a late IE preform **bʰlóh₂d-e-* meaning 'speak ritual words' on the basis of Lithuanian *blódėti* 'babble', Latvian *blãdêt* 'ramble' < **bʰleh₂d-eh₁-*, and, importantly, Finnish *luote* 'enchantment, magic song', which scholars agree represents an early Germanic loanword **blōtes-*.[113] It will be argued in (vi) that this lost neuter *s*-stem noun presents the most convincing etymological basis for pre-Christian *bletsian* meaning 'verbally consecrate a sacrificial offering'.[114] As far as *blōtan* is concerned, the north-eastern European comparanda

[109] Romans 12:1
[110] Colossians 2:18
[111] 2 Thessalonians 2:4
[112] 2 Corinthians 8:4 μετὰ πολλῆς παρακλήσεως δεόμενοι
[113] Kroonen (2013), 70-71; De Vries (1962), 45; Lehmann (1986), 76; Orel (2003), 51
[114] Sahlgren (1915), 148; Karsten (1915); Hallander (1966), 110-112

cohere neatly with the semantic field of sacrifice, supporting the idea that the etymon of this verb would have denoted a form of ritual speech that was particular in mode and purpose.[115]

Assuming this prehistoric meaning, of which a trace is perhaps observable in the interrelation of *blóta* with *senda* and *sóa* in *Hávamál* 144, the present study argues that the verb expanded metonymically in the Germanic daughter languages: first, it would have become holistically identified with sacrificial slaughter as the most visible component of this habitual performance, before further expanding in Gothic and ON to encompass the idea of 'ceremony' at large.[116] *Gieldan* appears to have covered these wider semantics in WGmc. Additionally, as will be argued in (vi), this prehistoric shift from ritual speech to slaughter might also have motivated the creation of a new verb **blōtisōjan-* > *bletsian* from **blōtes-* to encompass the verbal aspects of the ritual.

To summarise, pre-Christian *blōtan* seems to have denoted the ritualised slaughter of a sacrificial victim, having arguably developed from an ancient meaning 'to verbally consecrate'. This study argues that the word-family was decisively marginalised through the overt association with blood-sacrifice. One effect of semantic pejoration might have been the development of connotations of manslaughter, with inculturation near-impossible because of the absence of an available analogy for ritual slaughter in Christian practice, unlike for sacrificial consumption (*hūsel*), personal donations (*lāc*) or verbal consecration (*bletsian*). Even if not wholly negative, *blōtan*'s confined usage in *Genesis A* suggests that its practice was regarded as a concession during the conversion period. At a later stage of Christianisation, the verb would have provided a straightforward vernacular means of expressing the forbidden forms of worship against which Christianity defined itself ideologically, and in lurid terms for strengthened effect.

iii. *gield* and *gieldan*

Gield (n, *a*-stem ×103) and its parent verb *gieldan* (III ×464) are each well attested, together with further composite and prefixed forms. All early Germanic languages attest this word-

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[115] Kroonen (2013), 70-71
[116] Grimm (1875) I, 30 note 4. Dialectal *blotz* 'ein altes messer, schwert'.

family with its core, ancient meaning of 'payment', while application to worship was apparently confined to WGmc.[117] In OE, these two semantic fields are distributed evenly for *gield*,[118] but the religious meaning provided the basis for additional, widespread Christianised compounds *hǣþengield* (×69) and *dēofolgield* (×296) 'idol'. The split is considerably more uneven for *gieldan*, however, with around just 5% of examples relating to worship.[119] With religious meaning, *gield* and *gieldan* exclusively denote pagan worship, and it will be argued that the pejoration of this word-family's religious meanings provided the necessary basis for the semantic development from action to object of worship which underlies *hǣþengield* and *dēofolgield*.

The present study's grouping of the *gieldan* word-family under 'sacrifice' is justified according extended usages of *gield* in *Genesis A*, which imply sacrificial rite was essential to its pre-Christian significance denoting 'worship'. Furthermore, it will be argued that the precise sacrificial dimensions of this word-family proceed from its core semantics of 'payment'. In this sense, *gieldan* arguably denoted payments mandated at customary law, whether as compensation for wrongdoing or regularly in the form of a tribute or tax; in the latter case, communal sacrifice may well have been regarded in terms of a regular, customary tribute to the higher powers.

Preliminary to the main discussion of religious examples, the tendencies of the *gieldan* word-family's 'payment' semantics are summarily reviewed. *Gield* normally denotes taxes, tributes and fines due to kingly authority, meanings which Gothic *kaisara gild*'s translating of φόρος 'tribute' and κῆνσος 'census' suggests were common Germanic.[120] The meaning 'compensation' was apparently traditional to customary law, with the adverbial phrase *on gield* shading semantically into 'exchange', for example *on Ābeles gield* 'as compensation for Abel', 'in exchange for Abel' describes Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve.[121] *Gieldan*, meanwhile, typically governs a direct object of the thing denoting payment, although where the recipient is emphasised, the noun of payment occurs within an adverbial phrase, for example *gyld mē mid hyldo* 'requite me with loyalty'.[122] In translation, this verb normally renders *reddere* 'pay',

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[117] Kroonen (2013), 173-74
[118] 'payment' ×52; 'worship' ×51
[119] 'payment' ×440; 'worship' ×24
[120] Luke 20:22; Mark 12:14
[121] *Genesis A* 1104b
[122] *Genesis A* 2824a

but also *retribuere* 'recompense' and *solvere* 'resolve'. It also seems to have been embedded in the traditional lexicon of lord-retainer relations, expressing the reward of valuable goods due to warriors for services rendered in battle, for example *heaþorǣsas geald/mēarum ond mādmum* '[he] rewarded for the battle-rush with horses and treasure'.[123] Likewise OS *geldan* (×11) normally refers to payment of taxes, but occasionally to God's bestowal of heavenly reward.

The prefixed forms of *gieldan* supplement its core meaning with additional semantic ideas. *Forgieldan* (×250) is basically synonymous, although its prefix emphasises a relational reciprocity that is apparent in its additional translation of *rependere* 'pay in return'. Within lord-retainer relationships, *forgieldan* probably conversely expressed the provision of services to *gieldan*'s payment due to warriors, for example *nē nēfre swānas hwītne medo sēl forgyldan* 'nor ever did young men repay shining mead better'.[124] *Āgieldan* (×450) also has its own aspectual and syntactic particularities related to the perfective prefix *ā- < *uz-* 'out, out of', for which reason it is the only *gieldan*-verb to translate *persolvere* 'pay up, settle accounts' in opposition to the continuous aspect of *gieldan* and *forgieldan*. Likewise, *ryht āgieldan* and the related modal clause of obligation *sceal gescēad āgieldan* meaning 'reckon an account' occur frequently in relation to Judgment Day.[125]

Ongieldan (×19) is normally restricted to **sculan*-clauses denoting payment of a penalty with harsh expiation for a crime, which reflects the adversarial/ablative adverbial force of its prefix **anda-*. Germanic cognates of these prefixed verbs show that they were traditional, though their semantic distribution is less clear: OS *antgeldan* (×5) and *ageldan* (×1) both express criminal expiation; OS *forgeldan* (×7) and OFris. *forielda* denote the material transfer of wages and purchase premium as well as tax, and Wulfila conflates the perfective and reciprocal semantics of *usgildan* (×7) and *fragildan* (×4), with both rendering ἀποδίδωμι 'give up' and ἀνταποδίδωμι 'repay'.

Turning to the religious examples, it was shown in (i) that the *Genesis A* poet deploys *gield* synonymously with *lāc* and *tīber* under general conditions, but the particular allative phraseology *tō þām gielde* suggests that it properly denoted a sacrificial occasion at large. The

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[123] *Beowulf* 1046b-47a. See also 2991-93
[124] *Finnsburg Fragment* 39
[125] Ch 333 (Rob 11), 26; HomU 34 (Nap 42), 270

application of *gield* to action or object of worship in Cynewulfian verse, however, is more equivocal. In *Juliana*, Africanus warns his recusant daughter that torment shall follow *gif þū onsecgan nelt sōþum gieldum* (174), which may be translated two ways 'if you will not sacrifice with true rites/to the true idols'. *Onsecgan* appears to have been di-transitive, governing an accusative of sacrificial object and dative of beneficiary as a traditional verb of legal transfer. Accordingly, *sōþum gieldum* could read as a beneficiary 'to the true idols' or adverbially 'with true rites'. Although *Juliana* also presents an isolated example of an instrumental dative of sacrificial victim (*sigortīfre* 255a) that modifies *onsecgan* adverbially, 'with true rites' or 'to the true idols' are both preferable to reading *gield* as a sacrificial object (synonymous with *lāc* or *tīber*) in light of a second example, where Africanus declares earlier in the same interchange *þā þū goda ūssa gield forhogdest* (146) 'when you spurned the rites/idols of our gods'. As direct object of *forhycgan* 'reject, spurn', *gield* again sensibly implies either actions or objects of worship rather than a sacrificial offering.

The fact that *onsecgan* frequently governs a beneficial dative with no accusative object also weighs in favour of *sōþum gieldum* meaning 'to the true idols'. Two further examples support this view. Later in the poem, the demon recapitulates these threats while tempting Juliana *gif þū onsecgan nelt/glēawhycgende, ond his godum cwēman* (251b-52) 'if you will not sacrifice with due care and attention, and propitiate his gods'. Although *onsecgan* is effectively intransitive with no explicit object, *godum cwēman* in the coordinate clause implies a relevant beneficial idea to the verbal action. Finally, in *Andreas*, the demon's berating of Andrew in the prison *þā ðū goda ūssa <gild > gehnǣgdest* (1319) 'when you brought low the worship/idols of our gods' directly echoes *Juliana* l.146, but 'idol' is more obviously preferable here, because *gehnǣgan* finds a sensible precedent in iconoclastic scriptural tropes.

Gield unambiguously means 'idol' in *Daniel*, referring to the golden statue which Nebuchadnezzar erects on the plain of Deira. This idol is first introduced as a *wēoh* (170b), with *gield* deployed synonymously a few lines later: *gyld of golde, gumum ārǣrde* (175) 'he raised an idol of gold among men'.[126] A little further on, the coterminous significance of both nouns as object of worship is made explicit by their yoking in composition: *hǣðne þēode/wurðedon wīhgyld* (181b-82a) 'the heathen nation worshipped the idol'. In these lines

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[126] Daniel 3:1 *fecit statuam auream* (Vulgate); ἐποίησεν εἰκόνα χρυσῆν (Septuagint). All references to the Septuagint are to Ziegler et al., eds. (1931-).

180-82, the poet also varies *wīhgyld* with *cumbol* (180a) and *hearg* (181a) (see chapters 3 and 4). The lexical distributions in this excerpt present a *locus classicus* for observing the practical effects of semantic pejoration and marginalisation, with four discrete, traditional cultic nouns pressed into synonymy as negative signals of heathen worship. Reduced in this way, the alliterative properties of *gield* would have been more obviously attractive for describing the golden statue, for the poet recapitulates the stressed nominals of l.175 in *þæt hīe þider hweorfan wolden/guman tō þām gyldnan gylde* (203b-204a) 'that they thither would turn, men to the gilded idol'. These lines also suggest that the allative phraseology *tō þām gielde*, observed in *Genesis A*, might too have provided some basis for *gield*'s accrual of new, concrete meaning as object of worship, following the shrinkage of its pre-Christian significance as action of worship to the status of a negative token.

Glossary examples of *gield*, mostly attested in early collections, corroborate 'ritual occasion' to have been the noun's traditional meaning. *Gield* glosses *sacra* 'rituals, sacrifice and prayers' and *cultum* 'cult, tradition of worship' in Cleopatra 3, both of which collectively denote the components of practical worship.[127] In Harley, *geld* glosses a wider range of terminology of which the idea of 'ceremony' included: *cerimonię .i. hostię. ritus sacrificandi. religiones. obseruationes. sacrificia* 'ceremonies, that is victims, sacrificial rites, religious customs, habits, sacrificial objects'. These glosses not only confirm the collective application of *gield* to ritual performance, but identifies sacrifice at the heart of such religious activity.[128] Moreover, the inclusion of sacrificial actions and objects together in this definition independently corroborates the *Genesis A* poet's synonymous deployment of *gield* alongside *lāc* and *tīber* in terms of fidelity to a traditional semantic range that included both elements, rather than as resulting from the kind of semantic pejoration that is more clearly observable in *Daniel*.

Other glossators have applied *gield* to feast days, which also supports the idea that the noun's traditional meaning collectively denoted the performance of religious rituals centred around sacrifice. In Antwerp-London, *gelddagas þæt sind hālige* 'ritual days that are holy [days]' glosses *ceremonia & orgia* from Isidore, who has aligned traditional rites performed by the Roman priestly colleges with the ecstatic Dionysian cults of Arcadia.[129] Probably in response to *orgia*, the glossator intended to distinguish festivity from private worship. With greater

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[127] ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1529; 1549
[128] HlGl (Oliphant), (C640)
[129] AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 109; *Etym.*, 6.19.36

specificity, *et suouetaurili* finds *oððā þā þe æt þǣm geldum þǣr wæs swīn & scēap & fear* 'or those who were at the festivities, where there was a pig and a sheep and a bull'. This gloss attempts to convey the literal sense of *Suovetaurilia* (*sus-ovis-taurus*), which was a triple-sacrifice of swine, sheep and bulls for purification.[130] The same locative phrase *æt ðām gilde* elsewhere translates *Lupercalia*, another purification festival,[131] while *hȳdgylda* (< *hȳð-*) glosses *portunalia*, a festival honouring the god of harbours.[132]

A variant reading of the OE translation of Bede's *History* (B manuscript, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41) provides the sole example in prose of *gield* as an action noun denoting heathen worship. For *paganis adhuc erroribus essent inplicati* 'they were yet entangled in pagan errors', the translator has produced *hī þā gyt on hǣðenra gildum lifdon* 'they lived still in the rites of heathens'.[133] Other texts are closer to the Latin: *hī on hǣðennesse gedwolan lifden* 'they lived in the errors of heathendom'.[134] Anglian *gild* suggests that the B reading was retained from a Mercian interlinear glossary tradition that arguably underlies the early WS translations. If so, the predominance of *gedwolan* may imply that the older semantics of *gield* as an action noun were obscure to West-Saxon speakers of the late ninth century, presumably because it had developed semantically to 'idol'. This is the consistent meaning elsewhere in West-Saxon prose, specifically in the Blickling and Vercelli lives of St. Martin and five Ælfrician homilies (×14) in predictable contexts of idol-worship and iconoclasm. A pejorative adjective modifies some instances: *īdel* twice in both hagiographies,[135] with *hǣþen* in four of Ælfric's homilies.[136]

This apparent preference for pejorative modification of *gield* invites consideration of far better-attested *hǣþengield* (×69) and *dēofolgield* (×296). Poetic examples of these compounds are few but revealing. *Hǣþengield* is confined to Cynewulfian verse, where it always means 'idol'; it is used either for metrical convenience (*Juliana* 15a; *Andreas* 1101b) or appositively with *wēoh* as specifying variant (*Juliana* 22b; *Fates of the Apostles* 47a). Poetic examples of *dēofolgield* seem less assured, but tend also to weigh in favour of 'idol'. Two instances in the

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[130] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2171; ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1248
[131] ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1245; AldV 2.3.1 (Nap), 184. See also ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1267 *þǣm gildendum* 'at the performance of rites' glossing *Lupercalibus*.
[132] AldV 13.1 (Nap), 4717
[133] Bede 2 (B), 1.96.15; *HE* 2.1
[134] Bede 2 (B), 1.96.15; *HE* 2.1
[135] LS 17.1 (MartinMor), 217; LS 17.2 (MartinVerc 18), 204
[136] ÆCHom I, 29, 427.266; 31, 446.109; ÆCHom II, 38, 283.104; 39.1, 293.183

metrical psalms clearly translate *simulacra*.[137] In *Exodus*, meanwhile, the poet declares that when Pharaoh's army was overthrown *druron dēofolgyld. Dæg wæs mǣre* (47) 'the idols/idolatries fell. The day was renowned'. The plural *druron* sensibly favours 'idols', but *dēofolgield*'s alliteratively convenient deployment also suggests it possessed a semantic generality as a negative token. In *Juliana*, the saint speaks to her father thus:

> gif þū tō sǣmran gode
> þurh **dēofolgield** dǣde biþencest,
> hætsð hǣþenwēoh
>
> (51b-53)

[if you confide in a lesser god through **devil-worship/an idol**, call upon an idol]

While *þurh* can express an action noun-phrase, *dēofolgield* here too sensibly reads 'idol', first, because *-wēoh* seems the more specific nominal variant of an appositive construction (as with *hǣþengield* on l.22b); second, the context, which implies erroneous attempts at divine communion through lifeless images, finds extensive support in commonplace Old Testament statements concerning dumb, breathless idols.[138] Examples in *Andreas*, however, are certainly more ambiguous. The poet's concluding remarks that the Mermedonian converts *dīofolgild,/ealde eolhstedas anforlǣtan* (1641b-42) 'forsake idolatry/idols, old sanctuary-places' remain open-ended, because *eolhstede* does not specifically denote 'idol'. And while the iconoclastic overtones of *tōdrīfan* in *herigeas þrēade, dēofulgild tōdrāf ond gedwolan fȳlde* (1687b-88) 'he threatened the shrines, scattered idols/idolatory, and defiled error' favour 'idol' (as in *Exodus* 47a), the poet has clearly situated *dēofolgield* mid-way in a progression from concrete *hearg* to action-noun *gedwola*, which suggests he was alive to its semantic valency.[139]

In prose, *hǣþengield* is mostly attested in Ælfrician homilies and WS hagiography, while *dēofolgield* is spread broadly across lWS and Alfredian texts, as well as in the *Martyrology*. *Hǣþengield* is typically a direct object of worship or destruction, or an indirect object of sacrificial devotion, which closely resembles the syntactic tendencies of *gield* in prose. The semantic breadth of *dēofolgield*, meanwhile, is apparent in Bede. It here translates action noun

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[137] PPs 113:12 (36a), 134:15 (41a)
[138] See Psalms 115:4-8; 135:16-18; Isaiah 44:18-20; 46:7-8; Jeremiah 10:14; 51:17-18; Habbukuk 2:18-19
[139] See also *Elene* 1039b-40

idolatria 'idolatry', as well as concrete *idolum* 'idol' and *dii* 'pagan gods', which corroborates the poetic evidence for this compound.[140]

Three related compounds present similar oscillations between concrete 'idol' and abstract 'idolatry'. *Godgield* (×14) translates *idolum*, *sculptilis* 'graven image' as well as *ara* '(pagan) altar' in Bede.[141] It also means 'idol' in the *Martyrology*.[142] The translator of Orosius, meanwhile, uses this compound to capture the combined active and concrete force of *caerimonias eius et templa deposuit* 'he abolished their rituals and temples', producing *hē hēora godgieldum eallum wiðsōc* 'he refuted all their idols'.[143] *Fēondgield* (×7) is peculiar to the *Dialogues*, where it directly renders *idolum*,[144] but the translator also supplies it to complete the underlying sacrificial idea of *nisi immolata commederent* 'unless they would eat the sacrificial food' in terms of idolatry: *þe hī hēora fēondgyldum onsǣgd hǣfdon* 'unless they should sacrifice to their idols'.[145] The two examples of *īdelgyld* (×2), likewise reflect this range, translating *idolum* in the Durham Canticles and *vanitas* in the Heptateuch.[146] Collectively, this evidence suggests that *gield*-compounds were useful to ecclesiastical stylists, because they could succinctly convey, without further elaboration, all the components of proscribed 'idolatry', including its essential connection to blood-sacrifice.

Glossary evidence for these compounds also confirms their versatility, but more conclusively suggests that the action-noun provided the original basis upon which the concrete embodiments of proscribed worship were accrued. *Dēofolgield* (×55) mostly occurs in psalters, primarily translating *sculptilis* and *simulacrum*,[147] but also *demonia* and Belphegor.[148] It consistently translates *idolum* in the psalter canticles and the *Liber Scintillarum* (an eleventh-century collection of Biblical and patristic sayings).[149] It also consistently renders *idolatria* 'idolatry' in the titles to Prudentius' *Pyschomachia*, a text concerned with the contest of abstract virtues and vices.[150] Glosses to Aldhelm are earlier than these examples and the individual examples

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[140] Bede 2, 6.114.31 (*HE* 2.6); Bede 2, 16.148.14 (*HE* 2.20); Bede 2, 12.142.2 (*HE* 2.15)
[141] PsCaD (Roeder), 7(6).21; PPs 105.17; Bede 1, 7.34.29 (*HE* 1.7)
[142] Mart 5 (Kotzor), July 19, A.10 and other examples.
[143] Or 2, 5.45.10; Oros. *Hist.* 2.8.2
[144] GD 2 (C) 10.123.17; *Dial.* 2.10.1 and other examples.
[145] GDPref and 3 (C) 27.232.14; *Dial.* 3.27
[146] MonCa 3 (Korhammer), 12.25; Deuteronomy 32:21
[147] PsGlD (Roeder), PsGlH (Campbell) 96:7 and other examples.
[148] PsGlI (Lindelöf), 105:28; 105:37
[149] PsCaE (Liles), 7(6).21 and other examples; LibSc 21.24
[150] PrudT 1, 8 and other examples.

present a wider range that includes *delubrum* and *templum* as well as *idolum* and *idolatria*;[151] all are captured once, where *þā ansǣtan dīofolgild* 'the hateful *dēofolgield*' simply translates *execranda lustramenta abhominanda idola detestando cubilia ferarum* 'the detested ritual, the abominable idols, the detested bed of wild things'.[152] Earlier still in Cleopatra 1, *hǣþengield* glosses *lustratio* (a Roman purification ritual), while *godgyld* translates *ceremoniis* and *Lupercalibus*, and elsewhere *sacra* in Sedulius,[153] all of which corroborate the glossary evidence for simplex *gield*, and, moreover, appear to confirm an original, core status as action nouns denoting heathen ritual.

Importantly, *dēofolgield* also glosses *lustramenta* 'means of purification' in Cleopatra 1. This suggests that the active, core semantics of -*gield* compounds from the outset, possessed a strong connotative relationship to the material accoutrements of heathen worship.[154] Compound structure appears to betray the origins of the neologisms *hǣþengield* and *dēofolgield*. The broadly descriptive *hǣþengield* 'heathen sacrificial worship' could reasonably have resulted from the univerbation of an adjectival phrase, while *dēofolgield* is more directed as a determinative compound conveying doctrinal force 'sacrificial worship of/to/for the devil'. Relevantly, neither of these compounds explicitly signals 'idol', which shows that these connotations were accrued some time after the words were coined. The present study argues that the Gregorian missionaries might have coined *dēofolgield* early on to convey the idea that communal sacrificial worship (*gield*) of heathen gods was a payment to the devil, to be distinguished from communal worship of the Triune God and festivities in honour of His saints. According to this view, therefore, the compound could be regarded as having arisen directly in connection with practical implementation of the nuanced approach to sacrifice which the Mellitus letter hints – that the ritual's potential for establishing communion with demons be neutralised as a first priority.

Dēofolgield's literal meaning, therefore, would have been understood during the conversion period as 'sacrifice to the devil', with immediate, practical force implying the heathen gods, whose deposition was urgent.[155] Having gained currency as a vernacular Christian term, the

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[151] AldV 13.1 (Nap), 3705; AldV 1 (Goossens), 3595; AldV 1 (Goossens) 2541; AldV 3.3 (Page), 82
[152] AldV 1 (Goossens), 1877
[153] AldV 3.3 (Page), 81; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 1610, 3538; SedGl 2.1 (Meritt), 117
[154] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3502
[155] *HE* 1.30 *necesse est ut a cultu daemonum in obsequio veri Dei debeant commutari* 'it is essential that they [the shrines] be changed from the worship of devils to the service of the true God'

emergent Anglo-Saxon clergy would have begun to use *dēofolgield* to translate *idolatria* during the subsequent, post-conversion stages of Christianisation. As 'sacrificial worship', pre-Christian *gield* already maintained a semantic synergy between the active and material, although the specifics – sacrificial objects and attendant rites – would have been obscured following reduction to a negative token. The underlying semantic structure of *idolatria* continues biblical Greek εἰδωλολατρεία 'serving idols' (Hebrew *avodah zarah* 'foreign service') and would have presented a formally similar synergy between active and concrete semantics, through which 'idol' could be introduced to eclipse 'sacrificial object' as the relevant material dimension. The fact that Christianisation almost certainly introduced the notion of 'idols' to OE religious terminology (as will be argued further in Chapters Two and Three) also strengthens the likelihood that such connotations were alien to the material semantics of pre-Christian *gield*.

There are just 25 examples of religious *gieldan*, all denoting heathen worship. In *Daniel*, Nebuchadnezzar demands the Israelites *gieldan sceolde* (212b) intransitively, which is translatable as 'must worship' and implies veneration of the golden statue. *Gieldan*'s intransitivity here, however, almost certainly reflects the fact that it traditionally governed a direct object of sacrificial offering to denote a transfer. Because *gield* was probably its normal object, speakers might have avoided tautologous expressions, which would have allowed *gieldan* to develop an intransitive sense denoting performance of the attendant rites. Semantic pejoration would have inclined this broader meaning 'worship' towards idolatry, which, within a poem focused on this theme, would have been deployable absent sacrificial detail. These circumstances are relevantly contrasted with *wīg wurðigean* (205b) 'worship an idol' several lines earlier, for *weorðian* did properly govern a direct object of veneration. For pre-Christian cult, however, this object would almost certainly have been a divine personhood, because this verb appears to have been strictly interpersonal traditionally. These lines, therefore, plausibly represent Christianising attempts to express the Abrahamic concept of 'idol-worship' (see Chapter 2 iv *weorðian*).

Examples from the *Martyrology* appear to confirm this scenario, where *gieldan* intransitively governs an indirect object of cult-focus or beneficiary, for example *þǣr hē dēofolgeldum geald*

'where he sacrificed to idols', but also *þǣr dēoflum geldan* 'there to sacrifice to devils'.[156] Rather than abstract 'honour', which *weorðian* already covered within the semantic field of worship, the implied direct object of *gieldan* is more likely 'sacrifice' understood as a tangible 'payment', according to the verb's basic meaning.

The Law of Wihtred provides especially important witness to the contemporary, practical significance of *gieldan* immediately post-conversion, against which to assess later usages in the *Martyrology*. The verb occurs in the protasis of three exculpatory provisions, each structured *gif ... dēoflum geldaþ* 'if they sacrifice to devils'.[157] This syntax is identical to that of the *Martyrology*, with the important difference that the indirect object is personified *dēoflum* rather than a concrete cult-focus *dēofolgield*. Wihtred's Law could have been directed specifically to survivals of heathen cult, perhaps vestigial or even thriving, within his now-Christianised kingdom, and since the prologue states that it was proclaimed to the great assembly of Kent, its language would doubtless have been pitched in meaningful terms to a public that had living memory of such cults. Because of the likelihood that the law's phraseology reflects authentic pre-Christian usage, the present study argues that traditional practice conceived *gieldan* as transfer to a divine personality rather than an object in the manner of an idol.

This in turn corroborates the present study's view that *dēofolgield* originally meant 'sacrifice to/for the devil', with the compound being determined by the relevant beneficiary or purpose for payment and comparable to other *gield*-compounds such as *wergild* 'payment for a man' or *scipgild* 'tax for ships'. This scenario also further evidences that the Gregorian missionaries first focused on identifying the heathen gods (i.e. the personalities intimately known to the pagans) with demons. This strategic move should reasonably have preceded any emphatic shift to the more abstract notion of idolatry, which would have at first been unintelligible to a culture that knew no scripturally-grounded, ideological conceptualisation of cult in terms of the worship of useless objects, but did recognise demonic forces. Moreover, early introduction of a foreign concept such as idolatry would have appeared internally contradictory in view of Christianity's own traditional cult-foci such as relics or the cross.

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[156] Mart 5 (Kotzor), September 4, A.2; Mart 5 (Kotzor), July 30, A.4. Two exceptions govern an accusative of cult-focus: *hǣðengyld* Mart 1 (Herzfeld-Kotzor), December 25, B4; *dēofolgyld* Mart 5 (Kotzor), June 18, A.4.
[157] LawWi, 12, 13

Gieldan and *āgieldan* are unambiguously sacrificial in their glossing of *immolare* in Psalms 26:6, 49:14 and 105:37 across the Cambridge, Vespasian and Junius psalters.[158] The translations are unique, because these verbs gloss *reddere* and *retribuere*, respectively, in other psalters, while *offrian* consistently glosses *immolare* in 49:14. Relevantly, the verb is ditransitive in each of these verses, governing a direct object of victim and indirect object of beneficiary, i.e. 'sacrifice [victim] to [a god]'. In Cambridge, for example, Psalm 105:37 *filios suos et filias suas demoniis* 'they sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons' is rendered *guldun bearn & suna hyra & dohtra hyra dēoflum*, which resembles the syntax of Wihtred's law and the *Martyrology*.

Very importantly, the periphrastic glossing of *venerantur* 'they revere' in Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* with the transitive construction *<borg> gildaþ* 'they pay a pledge' makes plain that the religious semantics of *gieldan* were fundamentally linked to the verb's core meaning of 'payment', and that the ritual performance it denoted would have been properly recognised in terms of an obligatory transfer of material value from one party to another.[159] Furthermore, as payment, *gield* was of a particular kind, mandated by the community according to customary law within formal public proceedings, whether by way of legal compensation (*wergild*) or forms of tax due a legitimate authority, communal or sovereign.

At the comparative level, only the WGmc languages evidence a relationship between *geldan-* and worship. The *Heliand* poet regularly deploys *geld frummian/lêstian* to mean 'worship' or 'perform religious rites', always referring to ancient Jewish ritual in the Temple, for example Zachary burning incense (90b, 179-80a, 191a), Mary and Joseph at the Presentation (461b, 528-29a), or when the child Jesus teaches there (794-96). In *Genesis*, the syntax in *uualdandes geld/folmon frumidun* (178-80a) 'they performed the ruler's worship with hands' indicates that *geld* was conceived as 'possession' and involved formal activity, corroborating the idea that cultic usages fundamentally denoted the transfer of material value to a deity. Abraham is described thus when the three angels encounter him at Mamre: *uuaran ênna uuîhstedi endi scolda ûsas uualdandas/geld gifrummian* (749-50) 'protecting a shrine-place and obliged to perform our ruler's worship'. The significance of wardenship over a shrine is discussed in Chapter 3 (i). Relevant here is the obligatory nature of Abraham's *geld* as a customary payment

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[158] *gieldan* PsGlC (Wildhagen), PsGlA (Kuhn), PsGlB (Brenner) 105:37; *āgieldan* PsGlA (Kuhn), PsGlC (Wildhagen), 49:14; PsGlA (Kuhn), PsGlB (Brenner), PsGlC (Wildhagen), 26:6
[159] SedGl 2.1 (Meritt), 149

or tax, together with *frummian*'s conveying a practical set of perfected actions, which approaches the sense of *gield* in *Genesis A* as the complete sacrificial occasion.

Two baptismal vows of the late eighth century reveal that *geld* was also a key term for Carolingian missionaries.[160] The OS Baptismal Vow probably represents an official catechism for Saxon territories following Widukind's conversion in 785 and contains the promise *ec forsacho allum diobolgeldae* 'I forsake all devil-worship'.[161] Scholars have argued that the Vow derives from a Northumbrian text preserved at Utrecht,[162] which if correct, would further support the view that *dēofolgield* originated among Gregorian missionaries to the Anglo-Saxons with the practical force of identifying the heathen gods and the sacrifices they required with Christianity's central demonic adversary, for preceding the promise is the question *forsachistu diabolae end allum diobolgelde* 'do you forsake the devil and all devil-worship?' Another OS vow requires the forsaking of *allon hethinon geldon endi gelpon, that hethina man te geldon ende te offara haddon*[163] 'all heathen rites and festivities, that heathen men had for cults and sacrifices', which again, in the pairing of *geld* with *gelp* 'tumult, merry-making' (OE *gilpan* 'boast, revel in'), attests the connection of religious *gield* to communal sacrificial festivity.

As for OE, the OHG glossary record of *gelt* favours a collective sense of ritual performance. *Gotes gelt ł ehalti* 'a (heathen) god's worship and custom' renders *caerimonia* 'ceremonies'.[164] For the same Latin noun, *kelt ł ploostar* 'heathen rites and sacrifice' occurs in *Samanunga*, which as with the baptismal Vows, links *gelt* to animal sacrifice.[165] Finally, in one manuscript of *Abrogans*, the glossator translates *sacrificare* periphrastically thus: *dee zi demo kipete kiltit* 'he who sacrifices in prayer', which confirms the fundamental application of this verb to the perfection of a sacrifice.[166] Late eighth-century glosses of *heidangelt* importantly appear to confirm the original status of OE *hǣþengield* as an action noun, glossing *sacreligium* and *idolatria*,[167] and moreover support the view that this compound's meaning of 'idol' in OE resulted from habitual, literary identification with *idolatria*.

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[160] Bostock (1976), 109-110
[161] Braune (1994), 38; Bostock (1976), 109
[162] Mostert (2013), 87-130
[163] Braune (1994), 38
[164] StSG I, 651.66 (Ezekiel 44:5)
[165] StSG I, 67.33 (*Samanunga*)
[166] StSG I, 37.34 (*Abrogans*)
[167] StSG I, 292.18 (1 Samuel 15:23); StSG I, 282.50 (Numbers 25:18)

A related noun *ghelstar* is also attested in an early ninth-century OHG translation of Isidore's *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, where it consistently translates *sacrificium*.[168] This same form also translates *tributum* 'tribute' and *vectigal* 'tax revenue' in late eighth-century biblical glosses,[169] and finds a direct cognate in Gothic *gilstr* which, as with *kaisara gild*, translates φόρος 'tribute'.[170] Morphologically, *gelstar < *geld-tra-* shows an instrumentative suffix, which probably conveyed the material sense and substance of a tribute as the means of perfecting an obligatory payment.[171]

Importantly, these cognates demonstrate that the *gield* word-family's relationship with tax or tribute, which remained current in OE into the eleventh century, was almost certainly ancient and primary at the common Germanic level. The present study argues that this meaning specifically occasioned the religious sense of *gield* and its cognates. With sacrificial import, these terms would have denoted a 'tax' or 'tribute' due the higher powers, which further implies that this form of sacrifice would have been central to public worship in the form of offerings made periodically by a community at large according to customary requirements, in order to maintain an existing relationship to the tribal gods.

To summarise, *gield* appears to have broadly denoted the collective of ritual actions that perfected a sacrificial occasion. In this sense as 'sacrificial worship', it plausibly included the consecration, dispatch and dedication of a victim or offering, and possibly also the subsequent consumption of a communal feast (see v *hūsel*). The scope of this action noun and its parent verb *gieldan* is comparable to ON *blóta* and Gothic *blotan*, which probably covered similar territory in the absence (less conclusively for Gothic) of religious usages for the cognates of *gield* in these languages. The WGmc languages apparently did know such usages, suggesting they were traditional at least along the North Sea coast and Jutland Peninsula. The core meaning of the *gield* word-family, however, also indicates that these ceremonial actions were essentially conceptualised as a regular, obligatory payment by way of 'tribute', or even 'tax', payable by the community to the tribal gods according to custom. This focus probably underlies the identification that early glossators made between *gield* and the public worship of ancient

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[168] *De fid. cath.* 27.9 and other examples; Bostock (1976), 122
[169] StSG I, 293.26 (Genesis 49:15); StSG I, 470.17 (Ezekiel 7:24)
[170] Luke 2:2; Romans 13:6
[171] Ringe (2006), 293; Lehmann (1986), 156; Osthoff (1877), 313-33, esp. 315; De Vries (1962), 49

Roman festivals. The noun's core religious meaning, therefore, was probably concrete and, in this narrower sense, plausibly denoted the sacrificial objects themselves. Its status as an action noun denoting 'rites' probably developed by a metonymy, which the accompanying presence of *gieldan* could reasonably have motivated. Both meanings appear to have maintained currency, just as MnE 'sacrifice' unproblematically encompasses object, activity and occasion together.

The fact of *gield*'s semantic pejoration, along with *tīber* and *blōtan*, two terms demonstrably related to blood-sacrifice, implies that sacrificial *gield* possessed similar associations, by which it was irredeemable. Moreover, this importantly suggests that, within the heathen system, animal slaughter was proper to the public, tribal worship that *gield* denoted, occurred on a communal scale, and was perhaps categorically distinguishable from the votive transfers denoted by *lāc* in form and purpose (see iv). Furthermore, if *gield* referred to communal 'tributes' paid to heathen gods, an urgent missionary task would have been to identify these recipients with the devil and to repudiate such payments. The present study argues that the Christian neologism *dēofolgield* was first coined during the conversion period to convey this urgent idea. Subsequent development with *hǣþengield* to 'idol' almost certainly reflects the literary influences that attended the establishing of ecclesiastical infrastructure, representing more the after-effects of semantic pejoration than negative inculturation. This new concrete meaning could only develop once *gield* as an action noun had been reduced to a negative token for heathen worship, whence it would probably have been used to translate *idolatria* in literate circles from the eighth century onwards.

iv. *lāc*

Lāc (m, *a*-stem, ×543) is extremely well attested across poetry, prose and glosses. Around 55% of examples imply 'sacrificial offering', a meaning that crosses over from its primary social meaning that denotes a type of gift transferred either for establishing friendly relations, or securing a beneficial outcome. With this meaning, it translates *munus* exclusively among the sacrificial nouns. It will be argued in this discussion that both social and cultic usages find common ground in the core semantics of 'object transferred in a relationship of exchange'. While *lāc* was inculturated and gradually developed as a Christian term for spiritual offerings

such as prayer and fasting, it always retained a capacity to denote pagan sacrifice. A comparison of this positive fate with the marginalisation of *tīber* and *gield* from positive usage suggests that *lāc* was incidentally rather than essentially associated with blood-sacrifice, and might have encompassed forms of votive offerings that were more personal than communal, and which were transferred in order to establish friendship with a divine being or secure a beneficial outcome.

Lāc is the direct object of a verb of delivery in around 52% of examples, typically *bringan* and *offrian*. Ælfric prefers *lāc offrian* for religious contexts, restricting *bringan* to secular, interpersonal exchange, while non-Ælfrician hagiography prefers *lāc bringan* for sacrifice, for example *brōhton ðām lārēowe lāc* 'they brought gifts to the teacher'[172] and *þæt ic mōt Gode gecwēme lāc bringan* 'that I may offer a fitting sacrifice to God'.[173] *Lāc* applies equally to pagan and Old Testament sacrifice in ecclesiastical prose, where other vernacular terms such as *blōtan* or *dēofolgield* only describe pagan rites, for example *offrode his lāc þām hǣðenum godum* 'he offered his sacrifice to the heathen gods'[174] and *þæt hē mīne lāc forbærne mid upplicum fȳre* 'so that He burn up my offerings with heavenly fire'.[175]

While *bringan* is strongly represented, accusative constructions are more varied in poetry. As discussed in (i), *Genesis A* shows both *bringan* (976a) and *onsecgan* (1792b, 2843b-44a) with sacrificial meaning. In his final speech to Beowulf, Hrothgar gnomically summarises the diplomatic function of a *lāc* donation for establishing friendship between nations: *sceal hringnaca ofer heafu bringan/lāc ond luftācen* (1864-65a) 'the ring-ship must bring over the seas gifts and tokens of love'. These diplomatic connotations, an extension of the personalised semantics of *lāc*, arguably also underlie the opening line of *Wulf and Eadwacer*, *lēodum is mīnum swylce him mon lāc gife* (1) 'it is as though my tribe had been given a gift'. Spoils would have almost certainly had special currency for such exchanges, a meaning that the *Beowulf* poet inverts to express the antithesis of friendship in describing the men that Grendel carries off as *lāðlicu lāc* (1584a) 'loathsome spoils'. Funerary-goods donated by mourners also appear to have been another traditional context for *lāc*, where the poet tells of Scyld Scefing: *nalæs hī hine lǣssan lācum tēodan* (43) 'with no fewer gifts did they furnish him there'.

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[172] ÆCHom II, 10. 87
[173] LS 18.2 (NatMaryAss 10J), l. 332
[174] ÆCHom II, 38.280
[175] ÆLS (Book of Kings), l. 107

Lāc onsecgan is mostly a poetic expression, which *Genesis A* further suggests to have been a convenient off-verse.[176] In *Juliana*, the persecutor Eleusius threatens torture unless the titular saint *lāc onsecge* (199b) 'should dedicate an offering'. The demon also exhorts *þæt þū lāc hraþe/onsecge sigortīfre* (254b-55a) 'that you immediately dedicate an offering with a victory-sacrifice' to propitiate (*cwēman* 252b) Eleusius' gods, wherein Cynewulf, for thematic reasons discussed in (i), disrupts the conventional off-verse structure to include *sigortīber* with instrumental force. The respective distribution of both nouns here closely corroborates *Genesis A* l.2852-59, 2891 and 2934, wherein *lāc* emphasises the perfected sacrifice as a gift-exchange, wherewith a favourable outcome is achieved, and *sigortīfre* the concrete means of initiating the exchange.

Cynewulf's phraseology appears to have influenced the *Andreas* poet. During the scenes of human sacrifice in Mermedonia, the man selected by lot to be killed and devoured declares that he will offer his own son (*sylfes sunu syllan wolde* 1109), whereupon the crowd seize the boy, before he is saved by God's intervention: *hīe ðā lāc hraðe/þēgon tō þance* (1111b-12a) 'they then immediately received a gift to their delight'. It will be argued in (v) that *þicgan* traditionally governed *hūsel* to denote a sacrificial meal, but because this noun had been thoroughly inculturated as 'Eucharist', it would not have been available for describing a pagan feast. It is possible too that l.1111b recapitulates the propitiatory idea of *lāc* in *Juliana*, for the man appeases the Mermedonians with his son's life.

There are two clear poetic examples of an inculturated sacrificial *lāc*. The *Guthlac B* poet deploys *lāc onsecgan* to express the spiritually-directed practices of prayer and thanksgiving:

> Ongon þā his mōd staþelian
> lēohte gelēafan   **lāc onsægde**
> dēophycgende   dryhtne tō willan
> gæstgerȳnum   in godes temple
>   (1110b-13)

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[176] One example in prose LS 25 (MichaelMor), 75.

[His spirit then began to strengthen with the light of belief, he **dedicated an offering (gave thanks)** to the Lord's pleasure, meditating in God's temple upon soul-mysteries.]

This *lāc onsægde* recurs in the tenth-century prose Life of Guthlac, varying *lāc offrode*.[177] An inculturated meaning seem to prevail in *Christ A*, where the archangel Gabriel celebrates Mary's dedication of virginity to God in terms both spiritual and traditionally sacrificial:

> þe þā beorhtan **lāc**
> tō heofonhāme   hlutre mōde
> siþþan sende.
>
> (292b-94a)

[who sent these bright **offerings** to the heavenly home with a clean spirit]

In prose, *lāc* frequently occurs within a number of adverbial phrases. *Tō lāce* 'as an offering' (×46) matches *tō blōte*, and Ælfric especially favours it for sacrificial contexts, for example *bærnon uppan þām wēofode Drihtne tō lāce* 'they burnt them upon the altar as an offering to the Lord'[178] and *hwā wille blōtan ðǣm fæder tō ðance & tō lācum his ǣgen bearn* 'who wishes to sacrifice to the father in thanks and as an offering his own son'.[179] *On lācum* has perhaps been influenced by poetic *on tīfre*, but only occurs in prose, mainly Ælfrician, for example *lamb wē offriað on Godes lāce* 'we offer the lamb as God's sacrifice'.[180]

Mid lācum is less frequently sacrificial and, unlike the previous two phrases, it occurs in poetry, where it denotes a diplomatic donation. In *Genesis A*, the dove flies back to the ark *mid lācum hīre* (1472a) 'with her gift' of an olive branch, while Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, *mid lācum cōm* (2103b) 'came with gifts' to Abraham. The poet omits that these gifts are of bread and wine, instead probably intending to mean a diplomatic tribute for Abraham's role in defeating the Elamites.[181] This coheres with Hrothgar's farewell of Beowulf: *hēt <hine> mid þǣm lācum lēode swǣse/sēcean* (1868-69a) 'he commanded him seek his own people with those gifts'. With inculturated meaning, this traditional phraseology expresses key Christian

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[177] LS 10.1 (Guth), 20.41
[178] Leviticus 3:5 *adolebuntque ea super altare in holocaustum*
[179] CP, 43.343.6
[180] ÆCHom II, 12.1, 358
[181] Genesis 14:18 *proferens panem et vinum*

practices of spiritual devotion and almsgiving in *Juliana* and *Guthlac A*: *lufige mid lācum þone þe lēoht gescōp* (111) 'he should love with offerings Him that created the light' and *lufiað mid lācum þā þe lǣs āgun* (79) 'they love with gifts those who have less'.

Adjectival modification frequently appears to have provided an additional means of conveying the inculturated semantics of *lāc*, which suggests that, while semantically renovated, the noun's new Christian meanings required clear distinction from its more self-evident, secular semantics. This concern with distinguishing innovations from traditional usages seems to underlie Ælfric's statement *ūre gāstlican lāc sint ūre gebedu* 'our spiritual offerings are our prayers'.[182] Elsewhere, Ælfric uses qualitative adjectives to express the essential, positive attributes of gifts offered to God, for example *godcundan lāc* 'divine offerings',[183] *līflican lāc* 'vital offerings',[184] *dēorwurðan lāc* 'worthy offerings',[185] *līcwurðe lāc* 'acceptable offerings'.[186] *Gecwēme lāc* 'acceptable offerings' is also attested in non-Ælfrician prose.[187] *Dēoflic lāc* is the only negative example, which Ælfric deploys twice in hagiography.[188] He also especially favours the quantitative phrase *manigfeald lāc*.[189]

Hālig lāc occurs once in both Ælfric and one of the Vercelli homilies.[190] This expression might have found a precedent in Latin phraseology similar to Bede's *victimas sacrae oblationis* 'victims of the holy oblation', which his translator rendered *asægdnesse ... þæs hālgan lāces* 'sacrifices of the holy offering'.[191] This story concerns the miraculous release of a certain Imma from prison through the constant prayer and saying of masses by his brother Tunna, the abbot of Towcester. Bede consistently describes this intercessory power with Christianised Latin sacrificial terminology, earlier writing *per ... oblationem hostiae salutaris* 'through the oblation of the salvific victim', rendered in OE *þurh lāc þǣre hālwendan onsægdnesse* 'through the offering of the healing sacrifice'.[192] *Lāc* consistently translates *oblatio* 'thing brought' and *onsǣgedness* a 'victim' noun, a distribution which further evidences the former's semantic

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[182] *ÆCHom* I, 3, 204.164
[183] *ÆCHom* II, 12.1, 114.160 and other examples.
[184] *ÆCHom* II, 24, 205.174 and other examples.
[185] *ÆCHom* II, 45, 341.195 and other examples.
[186] LS 29 (Nicholas), 429
[187] HomM 11 (ScraggVerc 14), 157; LS 18.1 (NatMaryAss 10N), 321
[188] ÆLS (Maurice), 30, (Alban), 38
[189] *ÆCHom* II, 9, 79.232 and other examples.
[190] *ÆCHom* II, 9, 80.247; HomM 13 (ScraggVerc 21), 100
[191] Bede 4, 23.330.16; *HE* 4.22
[192] Bede 4, 23.330.13; *HE* 4.22

relevance to exchange and the latter as focus of verbal ritual activity, a meaning that was probably ceded from *tīber* to *onsægedness* as a new, more neutral noun formed from an original verb of transfer.

The third instance in Bede of *lāc* translating *oblatio* importantly reveals one way that this noun might have been inculturated within practical ritual. Augustine requests advice of Gregory on urgent matters regarding the apportioning of 'offerings' (*oblationibus*) brought to the altar by the faithful, which Bede's translator renders *þām lācum*.[193] Gregory's response clarifies that such offerings constituted monies (*stipendium*) for maintenance of the clergy, upkeep of the churches and the poor. If pre-Christian cult knew an analogous practice of depositing votive oblations within sacred space (which archaeology suggests it did), a native term encompassing all such objects at their material broadest would have been available for inculturation, for the incidental rather than essential connection with blood-sacrifice.

This scenario is supported by the fact that during the Anglo-Saxon mission to Germany a century later, Gregory II permitted Boniface to rehabilitate German traditions of offerings made to the dead, while staunchly condemning animal sacrifice (see vii Analogues). In Book 3 of the OE translation of Bede's *History*, *lāc* translates *munus* in reference to a relic of the Heavenfield Cross that was gifted interpersonally to an injured monk.[194] These examples thus evidence the idea that sacrificial *lāc* had broad concrete force in relation to objects intended for formal, religious transfer by one or several persons.

Around 25% of the glossary examples (×108) denote sacrifice proper, with other examples translating *munus* for secular, interpersonal gifts or spiritual offerings.[195] A number of other Latin nouns of gifting and exchange are attested, including *munusculum* 'small service, gift',[196] *munificentia* 'largesse',[197] *xenium* 'gift for hospitality',[198] *donum* 'gift',[199] *praemium* 'bribery',[200] *elogium* 'clause in a will'.[201] The prevalence of *munus* over other nouns of gifting importantly evidences the fundamentally bilateral semantics of *lāc*, because where *donum*

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[193] Bede 1, 16.64.7; *HE* 1.28
[194] Bede 3, 1.156.27; *HE* 3.2
[195] Matthew (Ru) 2:11; ProspGl, 1.9 and other examples.
[196] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3896 and other examples.
[197] AldV 1 (Goossens), 448
[198] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2258 and other examples.
[199] AldV 1 (Goossens), 3721
[200] OccGl 78.1 (Meritt), 9
[201] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2022

concerns unilateral magnanimity, *munus* denotes transfer in expectation of return, which explains the meanings 'work', 'service' and 'wages'.[202] *Xenium* is also explicable on these terms, as ancient hospitality was recognised as a reciprocal means of ensuring peace. While *munus* is the dominant glossary term, *lāc* also translates *holocaustum*, *hostia* and *oblatio* in the psalters.[203] Further glosses of *rēaflāc* for *spolia* in Psalm 67:13 confirm the concrete force of *lāc* in relation to traditional forms of gift-giving attested in *Beowulf* and *Genesis A*.[204] The apparent explanatory force of *cwicum lācum* 'with live offerings' for *holocaustomatibus* in the Rushworth Gospel also seems to confirm the impression that speakers primarily understood *lāc* in relation to inanimate objects.[205]

The concrete semantics of *lāc* diverge strikingly from other members of this word-family in OE and in other Germanic languages. An obvious semantic relationship to *lācan* (VII, ×21) 'move about, swing, combat' was probably obscure for heathen Anglo-Saxons, because this rare poetic verb never refers to concrete offering. Formulaic tendencies and the presence of a reduplicative preterite *leolc* strongly indicate that this verb had the status of an archaism within historical OE.[206] Most examples refer to movement of the elements or of airborne creatures, for which collocation with *lyft* is typical, for example *fugel uppe sceal/lācan on lyfte* (38b-39a) 'fowl shall flit above in the air'.[207] The planets are described as *þā þe lācað ymb eaxe ende* (28.18) 'those which move around the end of the axis',[208] while *lagu lācende* (437a) describes the tumult of the sea in *Andreas*, and *lācende līg* four times describes fire or 'flickering flame'.[209] Importantly, three examples demonstrate that *lācan* did know the semantics of exchange: *wordum lācan* (19b) 'exchange words' denotes dialogue in Riddle 31, and in *Beowulf*, those fleeing the dragon are described as *ðā ne dorston ǣr dareðum lācan* (2848) 'those who dared not earlier engage with spears'. These examples relate to bilateral relationships of conversation and combat. Likewise, *forlācan* (903b) refers to the betrayal, i.e. 'handing over', of Heremod to the Jutes.

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[202] Zagagi (1987), 129-32
[203] PsGlJ (Oess), PsGlG (Rosier) 19:4; PsGlK (Sisam) 26:6; PsGlI (Lindelöf) 50:21
[204] PsGlD (Roeder) 67:13 and other examples.
[205] Mark 12:33 (Ru)
[206] Campbell (1959), 57 (§§146, n.1), 317-20 (§§745(a), 746)
[207] *Maxims II*
[208] *Metres of Boethius*
[209] *Elene* 580a, 1110a; *Daniel* 475a; *Christ* C 1594a

Nominal *gelāc* 'motion, tumult' (×9) occurs also in restricted poetic contexts of sea and battle, for example *ȳða gelāc* 'tossing of waves',[210] *storma gelāc* 'tossing of storms',[211] *sweorda gelāc* 'tumult of swords', and *æt ecga gelācum* 'at the tumult of blades'.[212] Its metrical deployment is basically identical to *lācan*, almost always as second lift of the on-verse; furthermore, the clause *ȳða ofermǣta þe wē hēr on lācað* (854) 'waves beyond measure on which we move',[213] which links *ȳða* and *lācan*, suggests that poets perceived a synchronic relationship between the archaisms *gelāc* and *lācan* to the exclusion of *lāc*. Either *gelāc* derived directly from *lācan*, or was derived from *lāc* as a collective *ge*-noun before the latter primarily began to denote concrete objects.

These cognate forms potentially support a prehistoric semantic development of *lāc* 'activity of exchange' > 'object of exchange'. Examples of *lāc* in *Genesis A* suggest these meanings co-existed fluidly. A concretised connotative sense 'the exchange', referring to the object of transfer, might have superseded the core active semantics 'an exchange' within the more specialised and habitual context of sacrificial ritual. The apparent non-applicability of parent verb *lācan* to such contexts may have been significant factor in the weakening of sacrificial *lāc*'s active semantics. An important, isolated example from *Guthlac B* reveals that *lāc*'s semantic range did (at one point) extend beyond donation: *unlǣt lāces* (1034a) 'ready for battle' describes the saint's readiness for death in heroic terms and occupies the second lift in the on-verse, as is typical for *gelāc* and *lācan*. If this is a traditional battle formula, it indicates that *lāc* once found semantic parity with *gelāc*.

These divergences between concrete 'gift' and active 'exchange' seem reconciled, to an extent, by the *lāc* compounds, for they distribute evenly between these two meanings. In the first group, *rēaflāc* 'spoils', *frēolāc* 'oblation' and *brȳdlāc* 'marriage gift' are determinative compounds where the first member defines the offering or gift. *Bernelāc* likewise translates *holocaustis* in metrical *Psalm 50* (140a), arguably with similar explanatory force to *brynegield* in *Genesis A*. The second group are less transparent, including *beadulāc* 'battle' and similar forms, *aglāc* 'misery', *lyblāc* 'sorcery', *scīnlāc* 'necromancy', *hǣmedlāc* 'intercourse', and *wīflāc* 'intercourse'. Combat and sexual intercourse clearly imply bilateral activity. *Wedlāc*

[210] *The Wife's Lament* 7a
[211] *Meters of Boethius* 20.171; 26.28
[212] *Beowulf* 1040a; 1168a
[213] *Christ B*

'pledge' and *wītelāc* 'punishment' occupy a middle ground between concrete and active meaning. While MnE 'wedlock' is an abstract noun for matrimony, medieval pledges and securities were traditionally materialised, such aspects surviving in the exchanging of rings and vows.

Cognates of *lāc* in ON, OHG and Gothic show exclusively active rather than concrete meaning, although they diverge concerning the types of activity. Gothic *laikan* consistently translates σκιρτάω 'leap',[214] and with a transitivising prefix, *bilaikan* translates ἐμπαίζω 'mock', perhaps having developed from the meaning of verbal interchange.[215] *Laiks* (m), a direct cognate of *lāc*, translates χορός 'dance' once in the parable of the Prodigal Son.[216] It is possible that Wulfila was attempting to preserve a distinction with ὀρχέομαι, the unmarked Greek verb for dancing which he elsewhere translates with *plinsjan*.[217] Χορός rather denoted both a 'round dance, used at banquets or festive occasions' and the organised troop who performed it (*chorus*, *choir*).[218] If Wulfila recognised this meaning, it is possible that *laiks* had specialised significance among the Goths as an organised dance performed by a group at festive occasions, perhaps akin to leaping, features which recall Tacitus' description of a Germanic athletic spectacle whereby young men 'bound and leap amidst swords and threatning spears' (*inter gladios se atque infestas frameas saltu iaciunt*).[219] This idea of performance is certainly the predominant meaning evidenced by later OHG glosses of *leih* for a diverse range of musical terminology, including *modus* 'scale', *modulus* 'rhythmical measure', and *versus* 'verse', with *leihhôd* glossing *hymnaeus* 'hymn'.[220] ON *leika* 'play' and *leikr* 'game', meanwhile, apply broadly to organised activity that is bilateral and recreational.

Etymological considerations also strongly support the idea that physical activity was the core semantic idea of the root underlying **laikan-* < **lóig-e-* 'leap'. Other derivatives from the same IE root include MHG *lecken* 'jump', OIr. *lingid* 'jump', and Lithuanian *láigyeti* 'run around wildly'.[221] The present study proposes that **laikan-* could plausibly have first accrued cultural semantics through the association of leaping with sport and performance. The bilaterality

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[214] Luke. 1:41, 1:44, 6:23
[215] Mark 15:20 and other examples.
[216] Luke 15:25
[217] Matthew 11:17
[218] *LSJ*, 891
[219] Tac. Germ. 24.1
[220] StSG II, 66.19 (Boethius); 558.47 (Prudentius); 27.7 (Arator); 636.46
[221] Kroonen (2013), 323; Lehmann (1986), 225; De Vries (1962), 351

inherent in the idea of teamplay would have provided the basis for the semantics of exchange and extended the word-family's application to combat and other kinds of game. From here, scholars have found little agreement over the peculiar OE development of concrete semantics for *lāc* and its application to gifting and sacrifice.[222] Grimm proposed that it occurred via the gradual identification of ritual dances and games performed at a sacrificial occasion with the sacrificial object.[223] The present study argues, alternatively, that the OE evidence for this word-family comprehensively favours a different explanation: the relationship of *lāc* to sacrifice was grounded in its concrete meaning as a kind of 'gift' transferred interpersonally. This meaning, in turn, developed from earlier status as an action noun denoting exchange; it is clearly preserved in some compounds and probably retained connotative force after *lāc* primarily came to denote the material embodiment of exchange.

To summarise, *lāc*'s Christianising fate was positive, unlike the sacrificial terms previously considered. While continuing to apply to both sacred and secular gifts, as well as pagan sacrifice, it was also inculturated with the highly personalised, abstract Christian concept of a spiritual offering. The fact of this rehabilitation arguably bespeaks an incidental relationship with blood-sacrifice, a view that finds support in the noun's basic denoting of a gift exchanged interpersonally or between communities in expectation of a favourable outcome, which in sacrificial terms would have encompassed a broad range of material objects. On the most practical level, missionaries would have recognised pre-Christian *lāc*, and attendant habits of depositing valuable objects within sacred space in hope of building a relationship with the divine, as sufficiently neutral to establish a secure analogy with almsgiving and donations to the church, unimpeded by fundamental associations with blood-sacrifice.

Lāc importantly contrasts with *gield* in two ways. First, while the idea of transfer is inherent to both nouns (gifting and payment), *gield*'s status as an action noun denoting sacrificial performance was probably strengthened by the accompanying role of *gieldan*. The absence of *lācan* in sacrificial contexts would have freed *lāc* to entrench as dominant a concretised meaning 'the exchange' that it had acquired within customary transfers, which emphasised the gift's status as centerpiece of a bilateral exchange. This development probably occurred during the period of Anglo-Saxon heathenism, following settlement in Britain, because sacrificial

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[222] Helm (1913) I, 53; Düwel (1970), 236
[223] Grimm (1875) I, 32

semantics are only attested for *lāc* among its direct Germanic cognates. Second, it was argued in (iii) that *gield*'s marginalisation proceeded from a fundamental association with festive blood-sacrifices that were probably recognised as a kind of tax or tribute payable to the divine powers, further implying more specialised application to public cult and communal worship. *Lāc*'s focus on interpersonal transfer rather suggests that it included (and perhaps primarily denoted) private forms of sacrificial worship, whether for ancestral veneration or other forms of individualised devotion. This may have been another reason for its attractiveness to inculturation within a religion that prioritised personal devotion as a moral necessity.

v. *hūsel*

Hūsel (n, *a*-stem ×264) always means 'Eucharist' with a handful of exceptional 'sacrifice' examples. Derivatives *hūslian* 'administer the Eucharist' (×22) and *hūslung* (×4) 'communion ritual' mostly occur in Ælfric. It is possible that the majority of compound forms originated in connection with the Christian communion ritual: *hūselfæt* (×7) 'vessel for communion', *hūseldisc* (×6) 'dish for communion', *hūselhālgung* (×4) 'attending communion', *hūselþegn* (×4) 'acolyte', *hūselbox* (×2) 'box for communion', *hūselportic* (×1) 'sacristy', *hūsellāf* (×1) 'remains of Eucharist', with *hūselgang* (×30) 'taking eucharist in communion' and *hūselgenga* (×4) 'communicant' possible exceptions. Unlike the vernacular terms previously considered, *hūsel* has been thoroughly inculturated with Christian meaning. Accordingly, its pre-Christian meaning 'sacrificial food' is not immediately transparent in OE, but can be securely reconstructed on the basis of comparanda in Gothic and ON.

Hūsel also differs from the other more transparent sacrificial terms because its inculturation smoothly rehabilitated the peculiar, technical ambit of the noun's heathen meaning, which was exclusively cultic, on analogy with its Christian counterpart in the consumptive focus of a fundamental sacrament. With these origins, the noun's fate epitomises the smooth transition from old to new cult that the missionaries may have aimed to accomplish by monopolising the sacral kernel of heathen ritual. *Hūsel*'s status is further comparable to *bletsian* in this regard, with both (it will be argued in the following discussions) inculturated concurrently to convey the Eucharist on the basis of a functional analogy with the consecration, reception and consumption of a sacrificial feast. More widely, both terms belong with *hǣlsian* and *fulwīan*

as native terms for particular ritual activity that were also thoroughly inculturated during the conversion's earliest stages.

Poetic examples are sparse, but revealing of the connotations of Christianised *hūsel*. In *Maxims I*, the line *hūsl hālgum men, hǣþnum synne* (131) 'eucharist [is] for a holy man, sins [are] for a heathen' develops the idea of *hūsel* as potent object that is emblematic of a societal type and embodies its principal activity. Such a statement is similar in kind to preceding attributive statements such as: *scyld sceal cempan, sceaft rēafere/sceal brȳde bēag, bēc leornere* (129-28) 'the shield is for the warrior, the shaft for a robber, a ring for the bride, books for the scholar'. This identification of the eucharist as source and symbol of priestly craft may plausibly have been developed in learned environments of the later seventh century, perhaps on the basis of more practical beliefs that had gained currency during the conversion period.

These ideas also seem to have influenced the poet of *Guthlac A*. While wrestling with demons, the titular saint is styled heroically as *wuldres cempan/hālig hūselbearn* (558b-59a) 'champion of glory, holy communicant'. At Guthlac's apotheosis, the poet reiterates the idea that those who accomplish God's work on earth will join Christ's retinue: *þæt bēoð hūsulweras,/cempan gecorene, Crīste lēofe* (796b-97) 'they are communicants, chosen champions, dear to Christ'.[224] The heroic force of *hūsulweras* might also justify 'eucharist-warrior'. Where *Maxims I* identifies discreetly the earthly *cempa* with his shield and holy man of the eucharist, the poet of *Guthlac A* conflates them, with the host as the heavenly warrior's defence and symbol of his fellowship in Christ.

In *Daniel*, *hūselfæt* refers to the sacred vessels looted from the Temple which Belshazzar displays at his feast, before seeing the writing on the wall: *Isrāela gestrēon,/hūslfatu hālegu* (703b-704a) 'the treasure of Israel, the holy sacramental vessels'.[225] Having summoned Daniel to interpret the writing, the prophet reminds the king of his pride in keeping the sacred objects: *þū for anmedlan in ǣht bere/hūslfatu hālegu* (747-48) 'out of arrogance you bear in your possession the holy sacramental vessels'. In places, *Daniel* diverges strikingly from the Vulgate, perhaps owing to the influence of extra-biblical content or Septuagint readings that may have been further mediated via Old Latin texts.[226] The terminology describing the sacred

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[224] Roberts (1979), 204
[225] Daniel 1:2, 5:2-3, 5:23
[226] Remley (1996), 231-333; Jost (1977-78), 262

vessels is one such example, being closer to Greek traditions.[227] Belshazzar's desecration of the vessels symbolised the sins of pride and inebriation, and their description makes this relationship more explicit in *Daniel* and the Septuagint.[228] The Vulgate first describes them straightforwardly *et partem vasorum domus Dei* 'and part of the vessels of the house of God', and then by appearance at Belshazzar's feast *vasa aurea et argentea* 'gold and silver vessels'.[229]

Ælfric's use of *māðmfatu* where treating these verses seems to reflect this tradition.[230] Daniel 1:2 in the Septuagint reads καὶ μέρος τι τῶν ἱερῶν σκευῶν τοῦ κυρίου 'and some part of the sacred vessels of the Lord'. Modification of σκεῦος 'vessel' with ἱερός 'holy' finds no parallel in any known Latin tradition, all of which rather stress the value of the vessels over their sacrality. Although Septuagint Daniel 5:3 agrees with the Vulgate in referring to the value of the vessels, the *Daniel* poet continues the 'holy vessels' of 1:2 with *hūslfatu hālegu* (704a, 748a).[231] The translator of Bede twice produces *hūselfæt* for *sacra* and *sancta vasa* 'holy vessels', perhaps further supporting the view that a translational epitome motivated its use in *Daniel*.[232]

The reception of *hūsel* is almost always expressed by *(ge)-þicgan* (V) and this verb's basic meaning 'accept' frequently concerns food and drink. Its cognates in OS *thiggian* and OHG *digen* show the wider range of 'request, receive', but the verb's etymological basis in the IE root **tek-* 'reach out the hand' (Lithuanian *tèkti* 'reach for') suggests a core semantic of tactile reception.[233]   Related derivatives *þegn* and *degan* might be viewed in this light, developing culturally from 'one receiving/requesting patronage in hand' in a context of social relations. *Þicgan* normally governs accusative *hūsel*, for example *sume prēostas nellað þicgan þæt hūsel* 'some priests do not wish to receive the host'.[234] Genitive *hūsles* sometimes modifies abstract *þigen* 'consumption', for example *þurh ðæs hālgan hūsles þigene* 'through consumption of the holy eucharist'.[235] The relative infrequency of *þicgan* (×58) compared with unmarked verbs of

[227] Remley (1996), 324, n.240
[228] Remley (1996), 325
[229] Daniel 1:2; 5:2
[230] Remley (1996), 324, n.240; ÆCHom II, 33, 252.100, 253.137, 254.149
[231] Daniel 5:3 τὰ σκεύη τὰ χρυσᾶ καὶ τὰ ἀργυρᾶ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ 'the gold and silver vessels of the house of God'
[232] Bede 1, 16.88.31 (*HE* 1.29); Bede 5, 18.466.14 (*HE* 5.20)
[233] Kroonen (2013), 536; Derksen (2015), 462; Rix (2001), 618-19; Pokorny (1959) I, 1058
[234] ÆLet 3 (Wulfstan 2), 93. See also LawIudDei VIII, 1.
[235] ÆCHom I, 19, 329.114

reception *onfōn* (×252) and *underfōn* (×199) highlights its specialised semantics of consumption. *Onfōn* and *underfōn* occasionally govern *hūsel* where continuous aspect is expressed, for example *hē ælce dæge underfō þæt hūsel* 'he should receive the host each day'.[236] Where both *-fōn* and *þicgan* occur together, the latter clearly refers to ingestion, for example:

- *hēo gewilnode hīre wegnestes, þæt is hūsl, & hēo þā þām onfēng & þæt geþigde*[237]
  [she desired from her food for the journey (to death), that is the eucharist, and she received it and consumed it]

Wærferth might have expanded *viaticum petiit et accepit* 'she desired and received food for the journey' in order to clarify the Christianised application of *viaticum* for communion administered to the dying and to represent the familiar stages of the ritual, reception in hand and consumption.

Poetically, *þicgan* always denotes formal reception of food, drink or valuable objects in a social context. Wiglaf reminds Beowulf *ic þæt mæl geman, þær wē medu þēgun* (2633) 'I remember the time we partook of mead', before recalling their making of vows and payments of tribute at this occasion (2634-36), which situates *þicgan* as communal consumption properly accompanying the formalities of warrior society in the hall. Similarly, at the feast where Hrothgar rewards Beowulf, the poet states *wolde self cyning symbel þicgan* (1010) 'the king himself wished to partake in the feast'. The verb also applies to the counter-society of the monsters, for example Beowulf says of the sea monsters *þæt hīe mē þēgon/symbel ymbsǣton sǣgrunde nēah* (563b-64a) 'they consumed me, sat about a feast near the seabed'.

When it refers to drinking, *þicgan* is always prefixed and governs (-)*ful* 'cup'. In the first feast, for example, Hrothgar *on lust geþeah/symbel ond seleful* (618b-19a) 'with pleasure consumed the feast and hall-cup', while at the second Beowulf *þæt ful geþeah* (628b) 'received the cup' from Wealhtheow.[238] The significance of the *ge*-prefix resides in its imparting of perfectivity to an already telic verb of consumption in order to express a singular consumptive act, akin to MnE 'drink up' as opposed to 'drink', which further implies that these scenes represent the

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[236] *ÆLet* 3 (Wulfstan 2), 15. See also *Conf* 10.4 (Ker), 65
[237] *GDPref* and 4 (C), 16.285.17; *Dial.* 4.15
[238] See also *Beowulf* 1014b-15a, 1024b-25a.

drinking of toasts. Compound *bēorþege* (617b) 'beer-party' further evidences the social relationship of *þicgan* to feasting. Because of this traditional relationship with feasting, it would be reasonable to suppose that *hūsel þicgan* implied communal consumption of sacrificial food and drink within pre-Christian culture.

Where *þicgan* denotes consumption of the Eucharist feast of bread and wine together, *tō hūsle gān* 'go to communion' expresses participation in the ritual occasion.[239] The adverbial phrase *ad communionem* might have provided a model for this OE expression,[240] which Anglo-Saxon writers also used to translate intransitive *communicare* for the holistic, occasional sense of the Eucharist.[241] It is probable that *hūslian* represents an attempt by later stylists to imitate the overt relationship between *communicare* and its base noun. *Tō hūsle* also expresses transubstantiation where modifying *bletsian* and *gehālgian*, for example *hē blētsode hlāf and wīn tō hūsle* 'he blessed bread and wine as eucharist'.[242]

Hūsel syllan (×11) might also have been a traditional expression. The etymology of *syllan* strikingly overlaps with *þicgan* in the semantics of manual transfer. Its etymon **saljan-* is a causative to the IE root **selh₁-* 'take' (Greek ἑλεῖν), while ON *selja* and OFris. *sella* primarily mean 'to hand over' and Gothic *saljan* was explicitly linked to sacrifice.[243] Related nouns OE *salu* and OHG *sala* meant 'delivery of possession'. Most occurrences are in the *Martyrology* for the administration of communion, for example *hȳre gesealde hūsl* '(he) gave her communion'.[244] Although examples are few, *syllan* is the only attested verb of giving to govern accusative *hūsel*. Despite frequent Latin use of *dare* in eucharistic contexts, *giefan* is never attested. In Bede, for example, the translator produces *þǣm folce hūsl syllan* for *eucharistiam populo dare*.[245] There is one example in Ælfric, *se hālga Benedictus him sealde Godes hūsel mid his āgenre handa* 'St. Benedict gave him God's communion with his own hand',[246] although Ælfric prefers *hūslian*.[247] *Hālig* modifies around 20% of the examples. This adjective was especially favoured by Ælfric, who also employs *dēorwurðe* twice in the Life of St. Basil, and the technique is consistent with his method for developing religious nouns

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[239] ÆCHom I, 34, 468.87 and other examples.
[240] BenR, 63.115.2; *Reg.* 63 and other examples.
[241] GD 2 (C), 23.152.21 (*Dial.* 2.23); RegCGl (Kornexl), 49.1194, 65.1566 and other examples.
[242] ÆLet 1 (Wulfsige X a), 140
[243] Kroonen (2013), 424-25; Orel (2003), 316; Lehmann (1986), 294; De Vries (1962), 469 more sceptical.
[244] Mart 5 (Kotzor), 1195 (October 19, A.16) and other examples.
[245] Bede 2, 5.112.7; *HE* 2.5. See also GD 2 (H), 24.155.1; *Dial.* 2.24
[246] ÆCHom II, 11, 103.371
[247] ÆLet 1 (Wulfsige X a), 84

elsewhere. A plausible epitome for this collocation is *sacer* or *sanctus*, for example *þæs hālgan hūsles* renders *sacrae communionis* in the *Dialogues*, and *for ðæs hālgan hūsles* renders *propter communionem sanctam* in Benedict's Rule.[248]

Of the few attested glosses (×10), seven translate *eucharistia* and three *sacrificium*. Aldred produces *miltheortnisse ic willo & nis hūsul* for Matthew 12:7 *misericordiam uolo et non sacrificium* 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice', and likewise *hvsvl & ēostorlic* for *sacrificium paschale* 'Paschal Sacrifice' in the Durham Ritual.[249] Glosses to both Latin nouns are also attested in Cleopatra and Antwerp-London.[250] It is relevant that *hūsel* was used for *sacrificium*, because elsewhere only *onsægedness* and *offrung* translate this noun, both of which, the present study argues, were Christian coinages for the dedicated object and perfected ritual. It is possible that Anglo-Saxon translators recognised in *hūsel* something of the core semantics of *sacrificium* 'things made sacred'. In Roman paganism, this Latin noun practically meant foodstuffs immolated on the altar (*ara*), or sometimes deposited on a flat table (*mensa*) within the temple building (*cella*).[251] The equation of *hūsel* alone among traditional vernacular sacrificial terms with *sacrificium* indicates that it referred to the result of a sacrificial ritual; when interpreted together with the evidence for other OE sacrificial terms, this chapter will argue that *hūsel* most plausibly denoted a consecrated (*bletsian*) and slaughtered (*blōtan*) victim that was ready for consumption.

Wider comparanda support these conclusions. Gothic *hunsl* (×6) normally translates θυσία, for example *armahairtiþa wiljau jah ni hunsl* 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice'.[252] Like *sacrificium*, θυσία includes both rites and the things immolated (θύω 'burn up').[253] Wulfila reserved *blotan* for Jewish Temple worship and *saljan* for pagan sacrifice. Greek λατρεία 'service, work; worship' does not strictly include blood sacrifice, but it seems to be implied by the whole context of John 16:2:[254] *sahvazuh izei usqimiþ izwis, þuggkeiþ hunsla saljan guda* 'whosoever kills you will think he performs a service to God'.[255] With its core meaning 'transfer possession', *saljan* does not directly match προσφέρω 'offer'. It seems likely that

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[248] GDPref and 4 (C), 58.346.18 (*Dial*. 4.56); BenR 38.63.1 (*Reg.* 38)
[249] Matthew (Li) 12:7; DurRitGl. 34.19
[250] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2127; AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 944
[251] Scheid (2003), 71; Egelhaaf-Geiser (2007), 206
[252] Matthew 9:13 ἔλεος θέλω καὶ οὐ θυσίαν. See also Luke 2:24; Mark 9:49; 1 Corinthians 10:18; Ephesians 5:2.
[253] *LSJ*, 372; Beekes (2010), 567-68
[254] *LSJ*, 466; Grimm (1875) I, 31
[255] John 16:2 ὁ ἀποκτείνας ὑμᾶς δόξῃ λατρείαν προσφέρειν τῷ θεῷ

Wulfila deployed an idiomatic expression for the perfection of a ritual sacrifice, because this clause thematically relates worship and slaughter. *Hunsla saljan* also provides a strong comparative basis for regarding *hūsel syllan* as traditional, which in OE exclusively expresses the transference of eucharistic bread and wine to communicant.[256] As with *blotan*, Wulfila's application of Gothic sacrificial vocabulary to 'worship' holistically also further evidences the practical centrality of sacrifice within Germanic cult.

The status of *hunslastaþs* 'altar' is harder to determine, because it finds no comparanda and matches θυσιαστήριον as a calque.[257] Likewise for *hunsljan* translating σπένδομαι and *unhunslags* for ἄσπονδος 'implacable'.[258] The Gothic weak first class was highly productive, which makes *hunsljan* comparable to *hūslian* of the equally productive OE weak second class, with both probably representing neologisms.[259]

Couplet *hunsl jah sauþ* translating προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν provides another context for comparing the semantic range of *hunsl* with a close synonym.[260] The couplet recurs in *Skeireins*, instead governed by *saljan* instead of *atgiban* in Ephesians 5:2.[261] It is likely that the translator of Ephesians attempted to match προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν with a vernacular equivalent, deploying *sauþ* for θυσία – a match attested also in Romans 12:1 and Mark 12:33 – with *hunsl* for προσφορά.[262] Both nouns seem to have been compatible for aspects of blood-sacrifice. Etymologically, *sauþ* relates to OE *sēoðan* 'boil, seethe' and ON *sjóða* 'boil', as well as *sauðr* 'sheep', doubtless a typical sacrificial meat, which corroborates the conclusion that Germanic sacrificial meat was boiled, or stewed, rather than burnt.[263] Further to this point is the comparison of calque *alabrunstim jah saudim* for ὁλοκαυτωμάτων καὶ θυσιῶν[264] with *brynegield* in *Genesis A*, which arguably represents an attempt to render the sense of *holocaustum*. Whichever meat was used, whether horses for kings, sheep among the Scandinavian population, or cattle among the Anglo-Saxons and Frisians, *sauþ* practically implies a broth or a kind of gravy, cooked and consumed together with the sacrificial meat *hunsl*.

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[256] While OE never uses *giefan*, see Luke 2:24 *gebeina fram imma hunsl*: δοῦναι θυσίαν.
[257] Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 1:11; 1 Corinthians 10:18
[258] 2 Timothy 4:6; 2 Timothy 3:3
[259] Lehmann (1986), 195
[260] Ephesians 5:2
[261] *Skeireins* I.5
[262] Friedrichsen (1939), 257ff. arguing that the Epistles were translated in the mid-fifth century in northern Italy.
[263] Kroonen (2013), 428; Green (1998), 23; De Vries (1962), 464; Pokorny (1959) I, 914; Grimm (1875) I, 32
[264] Mark 12:33

ON *húsl* (×18) occurs in Christian prose, typically governed by *taka* and sometimes modified by *heilagr* 'holy'. De Vries argued that this noun is an Anglo-Saxon loanword, but such influence might extend only to its Christianised meaning.[265] Very importantly, Runic East Norse *hūsli*, recorded on the Rök runestone (Ög 36) in Sweden, evidences a pre-Christian Norse cognate. Dated to the first half of the ninth century, this stone preserves an extensive pre-Christian runic inscription that presents interpretative difficulties for its cryptic combination of cipher runes and kennings.[266] Like most runestones, it was erected to commemorate deceased kinsmen – by Varinn for his son Vāmōðr – but the inscription continues with several brief, fragmentary allusions to Theodoric the Great, followed by an amalgamation of myth with obscure traditions of the local community to which Varinn and Vāmōðr belonged. In this last section is inscribed *sagwmogmeni (þ)ad hOaʀ igOldga Oaʀi gOldin d gOonaʀ hOsli*,[267] which may be translated: 'now let us tell this to the youth, who of the race of Inguld was redeemed by the sacrifice of a woman'.[268] More recently, it has been translated: 'as a reminder to the people, who of the Ingvald-settlers were indebted by the sacrifice of a wife'.[269] This statement apparently recalls a woman who died on behalf of the local people and potentially connects the stone to Ingvaldstorp just to the south of Rök.[270] Although isolated and contextually obscure, connection of *hūsli* with a person is semantically suggestive of 'victim' and the sentence might also provide evidence for sacrificial use of *gjalda* in Norse dialects.

Etymology is also revealing. PGmc **hunsla-* can be analysed as an instrumental *-sla-* derivative of the IE root **ḱuen(t)-*; from the same root may also derive various Balto-Slavic *o*-stem adjectives meaning 'holy', for example Lithuanian *šveñtas* and Russian *svjatój* < **śwentos*, and perhaps also Avestan *spənta-* 'holy' representing PIE **ḱuent-o-*.[271] Whether **ḱuen(t)-* was verbal or adjectival is uncertain, but *-sla-* typically derives nouns from verbal roots, so it might

[265] De Vries (1962), 268
[266] Düwel (2008), 115
[267] Holmberg (2016), 81 OEN *sagum mōgminni þat, hvār Inguldinga vaRi guldinn at kvānar hūsli*
[268] Gordon (1957), 188-89
[269] Holmberg (2016), 81 'Sägom som ett minne för folket vem av Ingvaldsättlingarna som blev gäldad genom en hustrus offer'
[270] Wessén (1958), 24; Gustavson (1991), 25; Holmberg (2016), 81. See also Höfler (1952), 259
[271] Derksen (2015), 456; Kroonen (2013), 256-57; De Vries (1962), 268; Pokorny (1959) I, 630; Sceptical Feist (1939), 277; Lehmann (1986), 196: 'Feist ... probably correct in considering it a pre-Gmc religious word whose source cannot be determined'.

reasonably have meant 'consecrate, make holy'.[272] Others have alternatively connected *hunsla- with Gothic *hansa* 'band of men', the former denoting the sacrificial feast consumed by a gathered war-band.[273] But on the strength of a common Balto-Slavic adjective for 'holy' from *ḱuent-o-*, against a background of wider cultural terminology that this language family shares with Germanic, it is not unreasonable to argue that *hunsla- < *ḱunt-slo-* preserves the same root with a core factitive meaning 'consecrate'. Through customary usage over time, the actualisation of sanctification might have become identified practically with its object in the final stages of sacrificial ritual.

To summarise, pre-Christian *hūsel* appears to have denoted the result of transformative ritual procedures (*bletsian* and *blōtan*) enacted upon a sacrificial object. Practically, this would have meant victuals ready for consumption following consecration and preparation, whether the meat of a victim (*tīber*), but perhaps also drink (see vii Analogues). *Hūsel* was thoroughly inculturated with the functionally analogous Christian sacrament of the Eucharist, denoting both consumable components of bread and wine. Together, *tīber* and *hūsel* lexically encapsulate the idea that a heathen might have recognised the specifically religious dimensions of sacrifice in terms of transformative potential, through which transferable objects (*tīber*) underwent a fundamental, and extraordinary, change of state (*hūsel*). It is reasonable to suppose that *hūsel* was adapted by the Gregorian missionaries at the earliest stages of their engagement with the Anglo-Saxons, where the success of evangelisation hinged not only on familiarising the population with Christianity's essential sacraments, but, moreover, enfeebling the religious potential of heathen cult with more powerful, yet culturally convincing, ritual successors.

vi. *bletsian* and *bletsung*

The situation of *bletsian* 'bless' (×c.1100, wk. 2nd class) is unique, for this verb is the only inculturated term, among those considered in this study, to have been absolutely Christianised, with no explicit trace of its pre-Christian semantics surviving in the OE literary sources; furthermore, potential cognates are wanting from the records of the other Germanic languages, wherewith a secure etymology might be established. These circumstances are more extreme

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[272] Kroonen (2013), 256-57; Pokorny (1959) I, 630
[273] De Vries (1962), 268; Trier (1942), 234. But sceptical Meissner (1900), 72; Lehmann (1986), 177.

than those surrounding *hūsel*, which, while having undergone a similarly thorough degree of inculturation, can be securely reconstructed as a sacrificial noun on the basis of very spare OE glossary evidence, Gothic *hunsla*'s clear deployment with such meaning, and the wider testimony of eastern IE languages for the semantics 'consecrate'.

In the absence of unambiguous comparanda of this kind, reconstruction of *bletsian*'s pre-Christian semantics must proceed, rather, by considering the semantic implications of its morphology and status within the evidential matrix for -*sian* verbs. Having established a plausible derivational basis, the verb may be interpreted meaningfully against a background of relevant external factors. These include the distribution of other, more transparent cultic terms with which *bletsian* was putatively interrelated in the heathen system, together with the fact that absolute inculturation weighs in favour of pre-Christian status as an exclusively religious term that would have been narrowly defined according to a particular ritual purpose and occasion.

Further adding to the difficulties that the formal linguistic situation of *bletsian* presents for semantic reconstruction is the breadth of meanings attested in the literary sources. These examples reflect the OE verb's translational epitome in Christian *benedicere* 'bless', broadly encompassing: the pragmatic performance of effective ritual speech and action upon both people and objects in diverse ministerial contexts (a 'blessing ritual'); the conceptual basis of these rituals in the transfer of divine favour to persons; a further, distinctive sense of 'praise', both interpersonally and from humans to God, that is semantically closer to *weorðian* 'venerate' and *herian* 'praise'. Prefixed *gebletsian* (×225) fully coheres with this scope, while the derived action noun *bletsung* (×c.475) weighs more towards the conceptual meaning.

Through a long process of cross-cultural translation, this extensive ambit ultimately traces back to Hebrew *barak* 'kneel, worship', which in scripture encompasses ritual, devotional and panegyric semantics.[274] Observant Jews, for example, may recite a *berakhah* 'blessing' before eating or performing a *mitzvah*, and sometimes refer to God with the euphemism *HaKodesh Baruch Hu* 'the Holy One, Blessed be He'. Greek εὐλογέω 'praise, speak well of', a verb that primarily relates to social contexts, was deployed to translate *barak* in the Septuagint, thence acquiring the compass of Hebrew meanings and religious connotations. Likewise orientated to

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[274] Hallander (1966), 118-19

expressing social relations, classical Latin *benedicere* 'speak well of' presented a formal and semantic counterpart to εὐλογέω that, in turn, acquired biblical semantics with Christianisation of Latin-speakers in the Empire. From here, *benedicere* developed peculiarly pragmatic semantics analogous to the core religious terminology of heathen ritual through habitual usage in sacramental performance.

In this pragmatic sense too, the Latin verb's meaning is still quite broad, with the 'blessing ritual' encompassing the *signum crucis*, the sprinkling of holy water to purify or consecrate persons, space and objects, or the perfection of the Eucharist. Because these rituals were instrumental to Christianising people and space, the pragmatic sense of *benedicere* would have been ubiquitous from the earliest stages of the Gregorian mission, whether in mass-baptism, celebration of the Eucharist in the open air, or consecrating new ecclesiastical space. Since the Christian sense of 'blessing' resulted from the assimilation of distinct ritual and social meanings through several stages of cultural translation, pre-Christian *bletsian* seems unlikely to have possessed a comparable semantic range to *benedicere*. More plausibly, the verb's inculturation might have occurred initially via a very specific available analogy in Anglo-Saxon practice; from here, *bletsian*'s ritual application could have expanded during the conversion period, with the verb later acquiring the conceptual breadth of biblical meaning which attended increasing acquaintance with scripture.

It will be argued that the most likely context within which *bletsian* was rehabilitated as a Christian term would have been to convey the Eucharist in vernacular terms – an urgent initial priority for the evangelisers of the Anglo-Saxons; moreover, *bletsian* was arguably Christianised concurrently with *hūsel* for this purpose, in order to present an effective ritual alternative to sacrifice as the central form of worship in heathen cult. Inculturation would, therefore, have been predicated upon a functional analogy established between the particular Christian blessing performed within this sacrament and the mode of ritual speech that made sacrificial offerings effective for transfer to the divine. Before turning to the relevant linguistic arguments that support reconstruction of a pre-Christian meaning 'verbally consecrate a sacrificial offering', the semantic breadth of *bletsian* and its syntactic tendencies in the Christian sources will be first reviewed.

In *Genesis A* (×4), *bletsian* refers only to God's beneficence on humans in return for acts of piety. Assuming an early date for the poem, this restricted usage might indicate that the verb

had not yet accrued the full compass of Judaeo-Christian meaning inherent to *benedicere*, which includes the semantics of praise, together with divine beneficence and favourable interpersonal attitude. Three instances concern the blessings of progeny and prosperity in the prehistoric covenants. God first makes the Edenic Covenant with Adam and Eve: *þā gebletsode blīðheort cyning ... ðā forman twā ... 'tēmað nū and wexað'* (192-94) 'then the merciful King blessed the first two "procreate and grow"'.[275] The Noahide Covenant follows in similar terms: *þā hē Nōe/gebletsade and his bearn somed* (1504b-05) 'when he blessed Noah and his sons together', likewise exhorting *tȳmað nū and tiedrað* (1512a) 'grow now and multiply'.[276] At Abraham's request, God confers a similar blessing on Ishmael: *ic Ismael ēstum wille/bletsian nū swā þū bena eart* (2358-59) 'I now wish to bless with grace Ishmael, as you are a petitioner (as you have asked)'.[277]

The fourth example significantly shows the mutual restriction of *bletsian* and *weorðian* in *Genesis A* as religious verbs for divine beneficence and praise, respectively. God first blesses Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3 in the following terms:

> 2. Faciamque te in gentem magnam, et **benedicam tibi**, et magnificabo nomen tuum, **erisque benedictus**. 3. **Benedicam benedicentibus tibi**, et maledicam maledicentibus tibi, atque in te **benedicentur** universae cognationes terrae.

> [And I will make you a great nation, and **I will bless you**, and magnify your name, and **you will be blessed**. 3. **I will bless them that bless you**, and curse them that curse you, and in you shall all the kindred of the earth **be blessed**.]

God's blessing is active (*benedicam*) and Abraham's reception of favour passive (*benedictus*). Divine favour extends to humans, who may also bless (*benedicentibus*) other persons, through which conferral will humanity receive blessing (*benedicentur*). These verses encapsulate the conceptual dimensions of the Judaeo-Christian 'blessing' as a favourable attitude precedent to

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[275] Genesis 1:28 *benedixitque illis Deus et ait: crescite et multiplicamini* 'and God blessed them and said "increase and multiply"'

[276] Genesis 9:1 *benedixitque Deus Noe et filiis eius. Et dixit ad eos: crescite et multiplicamini* 'and God blessed Noah and his sons. And he said to them "increase and multiply"'

[277] Genesis 17:20 *Super Ismael quoque exaudivi te. Benedicam ei et augebo et multiplicabo eum valde* 'Concerning Ishmael also have I heard you. I will bless him and increase and multiply him greatly'

acts of beneficence that is central to God's relationship with His faithful. Importantly, however, the action is not a divine prerogative, for it is also expected of man in imitation of the divine.

The poet renders this passage differently, deploying a passive *bletsian* construction to translate God's role in terms of a lord-retainer relationship: *þū gebletsad scealt/on mundbyrde mīnre līfigan* (1752b-53) 'thou shalt be blessed to live under my protection'. *Weorðian*, meanwhile, expresses humanity's attitude to Abraham and their relationship with God in terms of concrete benefits: *lisse selle, wilna wæstme þām ðē wurðiað* (1757b-58) 'I will grant joys, fruits of their desires, to those who honour you'. Finally, God's blessing on the world is also more expansive, stressing the reception of blessing (*bletsung*) in concrete terms from God:

> Þurh þē eorðbūende   ealle onfōð,
> folcbearn, freoðo   and frēondscipe,
> blisse mīnre   and **bletsunge**
> on woruldrīce.
>
> (1759-61a)

> [Through thee all earth-dwellers, children of mankind, will receive peace and friendship, my grace and **blessing** in the kingdom of the world.]

God's later promise to Abraham regarding Isaac is phraseologically and thematically similar in terms of reception of worldly benefits granted by divine prerogative: *Hē onfōn sceal/blisse mīnre and bletsunge* (2332b-33) 'he shall receive my grace and blessing'.[278]

Further examples of *bletsung* in *Genesis A* concern divine beneficence. In Genesis 14:19, Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, blesses (*benedixit*) Abraham thus: *Benedictus Abram deo excelso* 'blessed be Abraham by the most high God'. The poet renders this clause periphrastically with the noun phrase *and him on sette/Godes bletsunge* (2105b-106a) 'and he set upon him God's blessing', which suggests a tangible conveyance, where the source is more expressive of attitude. Exegetically as a type of Christ at the Last Supper – and in contemporary terms for the poem's audience – Melchizedek also speaks as a priest performing the Eucharist (*lēoda bisceop*, 2103a), situated in ritual terms as the human conduit for what is, in possessive

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[278] Genesis 17:16 *filium cui benedicturus sum* 'a son whom I will bless'

terms (*Godes bletsunge*), divine prerogative. The source expresses a more instrumental idea of blessing facilitated by God: *benedictus Abram deo excelso*.

Again, *weorðian* renders the interpersonal dimensions of Melchizedek's direct speech: *wæs ðū gewurðod on wera rīme* (2107) 'be thou honoured among the number of men', before expounding Abraham's martial victories in the heroic style. The poet concludes this exchange with explicit reference to the patriarch's spoils as the tangible profits of blessing: *Him þā se beorn bletsunga lēan þurh hand āgeaf* (2120-21a) 'then the man gave him the reward of blessings by hand'. While Genesis 14:20 mentions the formal handover of tithes, the poet explicitly connects these diplomatic formalities to the blessing, recapitulated in plain words.[279] The distribution of *bletsian*, *bletsung* and *weorðian* in *Genesis A* shows that the poet recognised a 'blessing' in restrictive terms, exclusively for denoting the divine prerogative to convey tangible beneficence upon humans; additional semantic aspects of scriptural *benedicere*, such as favourable interpersonal attitude, are recognised, meanwhile, in terms of praise and veneration.

In *Daniel*, by contrast, *bletsian* is explicitly a verb of human praise to the divine. In Daniel 3:51-90, the Three Holy Youths utter repeated imperative forms of *benedicere* from the furnace, together with other verbs of praise and veneration, for example *laudabant, et glorificabant, et benedicebant Deum in furnace* (3:51) 'they praised and glorified and blessed God in the furnace', a verse that the poets of *Azarias* (×10) and *Daniel* (×6) faithfully reproduce with *herian*, *brēman* and *weorðian*:

> Wē ðec **herigað**,   hālig drihten,
> and gebedum **brēmað**!   Þū **gebletsad** eart,
> **gewurðad** wīdeferhð   ofer worulde hrōf
>
>   (404-406)

> [We **praise** you, Holy Lord, and **celebrate** you with prayers! Thou art **blessed**, **revered** for all time over the world's roof]

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[279] Genesis 14:20 *et dedit ei decimas ex omnibus* 'and he gave to him a tithe of everything'

Both poets maintain *bletsian* as a verb of praise further throughout their rendition of the Benedicite verses in Daniel, for example *bletsien þec, bilwit fæder* 'may you be blessed, merciful father';[280] *and þec ligetu,/blāce, berhtmhwate, þā þec bletsige* 'and the flashes of lightning, bright, swift, may these bless thee'.[281] This second example from *Daniel* corresponds to lines in *Azarias* with *hergen* (106b) that reveal their interchangeability as verbs of praise. Part of the Benedicite Canticle corresponding to *Daniel* l.362-64 was inscribed in runes on a silver clip of the later eighth century discovered at Honington, Lincs. in 2011, which reads the Northumbrian form *blætsigæ* and may evidence the use in liturgy of these vernacular lines derived from scripture.[282]

The *Andreas* poet continues the possessive, prerogative sense of *bletsung* observed in *Genesis A*, where Christ says to Andrew: *hafa bletsunge ofer middangeard mīne, þǣr þū fere* (223b-24) 'have my blessing over middle-earth, wherever you fare'. In *Christ A*, with reference to the Christ-child, the *bletsung* as gift is understood as durative, remaining with the recipient: *nū bletsung mōt bǣm gemǣne, werum ond wīfum ... wunian* (100-103) 'now a blessing may be able to dwell in common for both men and women'. In *Guthlac A*, the ritual sense of blessing as consecration occurs when the saint blesses the ground (*wong bletsade*, 178b) around his hermitage where spiritual victories have been earlier won; the saint also 'blesses' God in praise (608). Later in the poem, the bird-life also bless the saint in the manner of praise, *hine bletsadon ... trēofugla tuddor* (733b-34a) 'the offspring of tree-fowl blessed him', which recalls the blessings given by creatures and forces of nature in Daniel 3:59-81. As with the interchangeability observed between *Daniel* and *Azarias*, the corresponding passage in *Guthlac B* employs *weorðian* (918b) instead of *bletsian*, reflecting their overlap in the semantics of veneration.

Not unsurprisingly, *bletsian* maintains both meanings of praise and divine beneficence in the Psalms. Around 50% of the total examples for *bletsian* are glosses to the psalms, with highest concentration in the late WS psalters. In these texts and the Paris Psalter, *bletsian* consistently renders *benedicere*. Many verses open with imperative singular *bletsa* or plural *bletsiaþ*, for example *bletsa mīne sāwle blīðe Drihten* 'bless the Lord, O my soul'.[283] Although the

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[280] *Azarias* 139. See also *Daniel* 362 *ðē gebletsige, bylywit fæder* and other examples.
[281] *Daniel* 379a-80; Daniel 3:73. See also l.388-89, 399-400 and other examples.
[282] DOE s.v. *bletsian*; Hines (2015), 272; Birkett (2017), 28
[283] PsFr 102:1 *Benedic, anima mea, Domino*. See also PsCaC (Wildhagen) 8(7).4 and other examples.

semantics of praise apparently permitted poets to equate *bletsian* with *herian* and *weorðian*, the Paris Psalter and psalter glosses consistently reserve *herian* to *laudare* and *bletsian* for *benedicere*.[284] Like earlier poets, however, the versifier of the metrical psalms also sometimes translates *benedicere* periphrastically with *bletsung*, for example *þīne bletsunge bring ofer ūs* 'bring your blessings over us' is an imperative rendering of indicative *et benedixit nobis* 'he blessed us'.[285]

Fewer times, *bletsung* consistently translates *benedictio*.[286] The periphrastic translation of *noluit benedictionem* 'he would not have blessing' with *nolde hē bletsunge biddan ne tilian* (49) 'he did not want to pray for, nor strive after blessing' is very interesting for its connection of the biblical idea of blessing as divine favour commuted from God to man with the contemporary realities of Christian prayer and spiritual life.[287] The blessing is properly initiated and effected through the prayer ritual, with supplication and spiritual yearning clarifying the straightforward language of desire in the source. The second part of the verse also recasts *et elongabitur ab eo* 'and it will be withdrawn from him' with *forðon hīo him wæs āfyrred of ferhðcōfan* (50) 'thus it was removed from his spirit-cave [breast]', which clarifies the blessing in this tenth-century text as essentially inward and spiritual, rather than the more tangible benefits inferred in *Genesis A*.

In prose, *bletsian* and *bletsung* express almost all semantic aspects of *benedicere*, which evidences the complete development of this word-family as Christian terminology by the ninth century. *Bletsian* shows the fullest range, including the notion of 'blessing' as praise from man to God, where *bletsung* is restricted to the conferral of favour and ritual performance. While these examples primarily reflect the usage of *benedicere* ideologically within Christian literary tradition, as well as pragmatically in contemporary religious ritual of the ninth and tenth centuries, aspects of the traditional semantics of *bletsian* are arguably discernible through comparison of the verb's syntactic tendencies with those of its Latin epitome. *Benedicere* always governs a dative noun in the Vulgate, for example *benedixitque illis Deus* 'and God blessed them', doubtless reflecting the literal meaning 'speak well to [a beneficiary]'.[288] While

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[284] PPs 62:4-5 (11-12), 144:2 (4-5) and other examples.
[285] PPs 113:21 (62)
[286] PPs (prose) 28:6; PPs 83:6 (20a)
[287] PPs 108:18
[288] Genesis 1:28

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periphrastic clauses such as *sȳ ūrum Gode bletsung* 'blessing be to our God' possibly show the influence of this Latin syntax,[289] *bletsian* clauses without exception govern an accusative.

If mono-transitivity was inherent to the traditional semantics of *bletsian*, the verb would have been confined to expressing singular enactment upon a direct object, without the beneficial ideas attending *benedicere* or, within OE, *onsecgan*. In relation to inanimate objects, this straightforwardly permits application to healing and consecration as a transformative action, for example *and his wunda bletsode* 'and he blessed his wounds',[290] and *hē bletsode þone hlāf* 'he blessed the loaf'.[291] The blessing of persons, meanwhile, was a central feature of contemporary Christian ritual, for example *gedafenað þæt hē ... ðā gesamnunga bletsige* 'it is fit that he ... blesses the congregation' and frequently would have included a similar sense of transformative verbal action.[292] Periphrastic constructions, however, might have been required to convey the broader beneficial ideas of *benedicere*, which arguably explains the development of *bletsung* in *Genesis A* for expressing the conveyance of tangible benefits.

Bletsung is almost as strongly represented in prose as *bletsian*, especially in hagiography, and its tendency to collocate with verbs of giving and receiving *syllan*, *onfōn* and *underfōn* supports the view that the noun was originally employed to express the beneficial semantics of Judaeo-Christian blessing, whether as praise or conferral of favour. For example, *se ealda Symeon him sealde ðǣr bletsunge* 'old Simeon there gave him blessings',[293] *Abraham for his gehȳrsymnysse underfēng swilce bletsunge æt Gode* 'Abraham received such blessings from God for his obedience'.[294] As observed in (i) and (v), *syllan* seems to have traditionally expressed formal alienation of possession between persons, rather akin to MnE 'grant'.

As observed in metrical psalm 108:18 (l.49-50), the hagiographers also favour collocation of *bletsung* and *biddan*. This conceptual association is certainly Christianised and probably developed to express the obtaining of blessing through ritually prescribed petition. The blessing is typically genitive, with the besought person either accusative or in an adverbial phrase. This is conventional syntax for *biddan* clauses (see Chapter 2 i). A great many of these examples, if

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[289] ÆCHom I, 36, 486.13
[290] ÆLS (Maur), 169
[291] ÆCHom I, 26, 395.186
[292] Conf 1.1 (Spindler), 110
[293] ÆHom 11, 20
[294] ÆLS (Memory of Saints), 25

not the majority, refer to the petitioning of persons, for example *hine bletsunge bǣdon* 'they asked blessings from him'[295] and *bidde ēac gōddra manna bletsunge* 'let him pray also for the blessing of good men'.[296] The second example also shows that the possessive idea not only continued in prose, but was extended to humans as well as the divine.

These collocations of *bletsung* and *biddan* find an epitome in ecclesiastical writing, much of it practical. In the Rule of Benedict, for example, *bletsunge bidde* directly translates *benedictionem petat*.[297] Similarly, in the *Dialogues*, the couplet *mid gedæftum biddað & mid bletsunge nimaþ* 'pray with meekness and take with blessings' translates *tranquille petite, cum benedictione percipite*.[298] In late WS translation of the Old Testament, *bletsian* as ritual act and *bletsung* as the speech component sometimes harmonise to convey the dominant mode of blessing in this text as divine favour from God, usually where the source has *benedicere* with a verb of speech introducing direct speech, for example *And God hī ðā gebletsode mid ðyssere bletsunge: Wexað and bēoð gemenigfylde* 'and God then blessed them with this blessing "grow and be manifold"'.[299] This idea of verbal conveyance seems to reiterate the durable and tangible sense of grace observed in *Genesis A*. When God blesses Abraham in Genesis 22:17, for example, Genesis 22:19 reads *reversus est Abraham ad pueros suos, abieruntque Bersabee simul* 'Abraham returned to his young men and they departed to Bersabee together'. The Heptateuch translator, rather, supplies a noun to specify that Abraham departs with the conferred blessing *Abraham ðā gecyrde sōna tō hys cnapum & ferde him hām swā mid heofonlicre bletsunge* 'Abraham then turned immediately to his servants and took himself home with divine blessing'.

There is evidence that the Christian semantics of *bletsian* were also honed through consistent usage of these terms in daily worship. Earlier in this discussion, an apparent exchange between the scriptural and liturgical in the runic inscription of the Honington Clip was noted. Perhaps exerting contemporary influence on the phraseology of *bletsung* in tenth-century prose is the construction *bletsian ... mid bletsunge* that recurs in late WS liturgy with reference to ritual performance, for example, in the Exeter list of relics *þā offrunge mid heofonlicre bletsunge*

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[295] LS 10.1 (Guth), 15.11
[296] ÆCHom I, 31, 450.311
[297] BenRGl, 63.106.7
[298] GDPref and 3 (C), 14.202.9; *Dial.* 3.14
[299] Genesis 1:28 *benedixitque illis Deus et ait*. See also ÆHex, 351; ÆHomM 15 (Ass 9), 331.

gebletsode 'and he blessed the offerings with heavenly blessing'.[300] Modified by *heofonlic*, the biblical notion of blessing as divine prerogative conferred upon men aligns with features of recognisable Christian practice. The phrase *mid bletsunge* itself might find a plausible Latin epitome similar to that observed in the *Dialogues*, where *mid bletsunge nimaþ* translates *cum benedictione percipite*.[301]

A range of literary genres further evidence the currency of the Christian idea that blessing was abiding and personal. For example, Ælfric writes *Īsaac æfter him leofode mid bletsunge* 'Isaac lived after him with (a) blessing';[302] a chronicler reports *Wulfred arcebiscop gehwyrfde mid bletsunge þæs papan Lēones eft tō his biscopdōme* 'Archbishop Wulfred returned with (the) blessing of Pope Leo home';[303] a charter concludes *Godes bletsung sī mid ūs eallon ā on ēcnysse* 'God's blessing be with us all, always in eternity'.[304]

As in the psalters, *bletsian* regularly glosses *benedicere* in Prudentius, the *Regularis concordia*, and the Rule of Benedict. *Bletsung* glosses Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis* with more variation, but solidly confirming its application to conferred favour and ritual performance. Translating *signacula* and *signa*, *bletsung* stands as concrete sign of divine favour, and sometimes occurs in such usages with *tācn*, which recalls Ælfric's homiletic statement *ðǣre hālgan rōde tācn is ūre bletsunge* 'the sign of the Holy Rood is our blessing'.[305] More frequently, *bletsung* glosses *eulogia* in Aldhelm, doubtless reflecting the literal meaning of *benedicere*.[306]

It may be observed finally that the gradual Christianisation of *bletsian* has probably motivated a near-complete semantic eclipsing of *segnian* (×9) 'make the sign of the cross', a loan-derivative of *signare*, because the latter OE term is markedly infrequent, despite the importance to Christian practice of the action it denotes. This situation strongly contrasts with OHG *seganōn* and *segan* (m), which encompassed *signare* and *benedicere* together.[307] Where

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[300] Rec 10.8 (Först), 163 (Exeter list of relics). See also Lit 4.2.10 (Thorpe), 1 (Bidding Prayer for blessing); Lit 4.10.2.2 (Ker) (Rubrics and directions for the use of prayers).
[301] GDPref and 3 (C), 14.202.9; *Dial.* 3.14
[302] ÆLS (Memory of Saints), 25
[303] ChronF (Baker), 815.1
[304] Ch 1467 (Rob 91)
[305] AldV 1 (Goossens), 2440; AldV 13.1 (Nap); ÆCHom II, 13, 136.290
[306] AldV 7.1 (Nap), 135; AldV 9 (Nap), 169; AldV 12 (Nap), 24
[307] Green (1998), 233-34

sources can be identified, *segnian* seems to translate *signare*, for instance in the *Dialogues*, within the context of a blessing ritual. The couplet *segnian and bletsian*, however, appears to show the core relationship of *bletsian* to speech. For example, Bede's translator renders *þā sette hē his hond on mīn hēafod & mæc sægnade and blædsade* 'then he set his hand on my head and agreeably signed and blessed' for *qui inponens capiti meo manum, cum uerbis benedictionis*.[308] Bede's phrase 'with words of a blessing' expresses the verbal component to the ritual act, which seems to be allocated to *bletsian* according to the distribution of the two verbs.

Two principal observations emerge from this survey of the corpus evidence. First, although *bletsian* attests the full Judaeo-Christian range of *benedicere*, Christian authors seem to have been more inclined to use it as a religious term of art for activity fundamentally identified with a divine source than for denoting interpersonal attitude. Second, *bletsian* and *benedicere* have different syntactic properties, which reveal that the Latin verb's core semantics were essentially beneficial and, by extension, affected persons, while *bletsian* denoted a mono-transitive enactment that more likely affected things. While this still leaves open a range of possible actions for pre-Christian *bletsian*, comparison with *segnian* weighs in favour of its denoting a speech act which (in line with the present study's broader presumptions) was plausibly defined narrowly according to purpose.

From here, the etymological issues can be addressed. The older view proposes a verbal pre-form *bletsian* < **blōdisōjan* deriving from the etymon of *blōd* 'blood'.[309] This pre-form would have undergone *i*-mutation, medial vowel shortening, syncope of *i* after a heavy syllable, and shortening of the root vowel before two consonants (**blǣdisǣjan* > **blǣdsejan* > **blēdsian*) to produce Mercian *bledsian* attested in the ninth-century glosses to the Vespasian Psalter.[310] With Northumbrian *blǣdsiga*, these Anglian examples with *d* are the strongest linguistic evidence for a 'blood' etymology, because – assuming agreement between the phonological and orthographic value of Anglian *d* – it is difficult to conceive *d* < *t* in a -*ts*- cluster, while the converse *d* > *t* through assimilation with *s* is plausible.

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[308] Bede 5, 6.402.17; *HE* 5.6. See also ÆLS (Exalt of Cross), 155.
[309] Sweet (1880), 156-57; Jente (1921), 41; Philippson (1929), 195; Holthausen (1934), 20; Campbell (1959), 122 (§288).
[310] Ringe and Taylor (2014), 228, 281; Campbell (1959), 77 (§196); 121 (§285)

Those supporting this chain of derivation have argued, therefore, that *blōdisōjan* would have meant 'to stain, moisten with blood', perhaps further entailing a mode of consecrating an altar or cult focus.[311] Two external analogues are suggestive that this activity was traditional to Germanic ritual. The closing lines of *Genesis A* (2932b-33) appear to depict Abraham reddening (*onrēad*) a cult-focus with ram's blood. More widely, the expression *rjóða stalla í blóði* 'redden the altars with blood' is attested in a number of sagas, with *rjóða* potentially a direct cognate of *onrēad*.[312] A phraseological link between both analogues potentially evidences a shared basis in Germanic sacrifice, implying that the ritual involved the 'reddening' of a cult-focus. As discussed in (i *tīber*), however, the *Genesis A* poet might plausibly have introduced such details from Leviticus, while other factors suggest that the semantics of *stallr* in ON prose represent later semantic development (see Chapter 3 i).

The alternative etymology proceeds from the more urgent linguistic issue of how to explain the *s* in the verbal suffix *-sian*.[313] According to Hallander's important study, *-sian* verbs do not represent a single derivational class, but rather the morphologically identical outcome of separate historical processes. He proposed four categories to which a *-sian* verb belongs on the basis of its semantics and relationship within a word-family. One group derives from *i-/ja*-stem adjectives such as *milde*: *mildsian* and *clǣne*: *clǣnsian*, while another derives intensives from a parent verb.[314] A third group can be shown to derive from old neuter *s*-stem nouns, which showed the allomorphic variation *-es/-os* between the nominative and oblique cases, respectively. The *-sian* suffix preserves the *s* of the nominal stem, which developed *z > r* or disappeared in any surviving noun forms. The PIE noun class was already disintegrating in PGmc, and remnant case forms had already been assumed individually into other stem classes in historical OE according to their phonological differences. This explains the existence of morphologically near, synonymous noun-pairs such as *sige < *sigiz < *siges-* (nominative): *sigor < *siguz < *sigos-* (oblique) 'victory' and *hǣl < *hailiz < *hailes-* (nominative): *hālor < *hailuz < *hailos-* (oblique) 'portent', which show that the nominative stem was re-analysed as an *i*-stem, while the oblique cases developed into the *a*-stem suffix *-or*.[315]

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[311] Sweet (1880), 156

[312] *Heimskringla* (*Hákonar saga góða* 14, 187.3-4), (*Ynglinga saga* 15, 30.19); *Hervarar saga* 7, 44.20. See Sweet (1880), 157.

[313] Hallander (1966), 113

[314] Hallander (1966) *passim*

[315] Hallander (1966), 83; Weye (1904), 87

While *hæl* and *hālor* provide a clear derivational basis within OE for a -*sian* verb such as *hālsian* (see Chapter 2 ii), other factors must be considered for *bletsian* in the absence of similar evidence within OE. Significantly, there is no evidence either that *a*-stem *blōd* or a relevant cognate originated as a neuter *s*-stem, nor that -*sian* verbs derived from *a*-stems. The only possibility would be the derivation of *bledsian* as a de-verbal intensive to *blēdan* 'to bleed', but this fails on the basis that this category of -*sian* verbs must be syntactically equivalent to their parent form, and it is very improbable that *bletsian* originally meant 'to bleed profusely'. There is thus little basis for relating *bletsian* to *blōd* against the wider background of -*sian* derivational morphology. Comparative linguistic evidence, however, opens up the possibility of supposing derivation from a neuter *s*-stem **blōtes*- 'incantation, ritual speech'. This reconstruction is suggested by Finnish *luote* 'charm, magic song', an early Germanic loanword that evidences a trace of an original *s*-stem in genitive singular *louttehen < *luottezen*.[316] If derived from this noun, the PGmc etymon of *bletsian* could plausibly have meant 'pronounce a ritual formula'.[317]

Importantly, this scenario also supports (and is mutually supported by) the probable etymological connection of *blōtan* with ritual speech (see ii).[318] An original relationship between *bletsian* and *blōtan* seems most economical, both for its coherence with the most plausible scheme of -*sian* derivation for this verb within OE and the wider background of comparative evidence, presenting an etymology that is morphologically and semantically supported in fact. Although formally possible, exceptional Anglian *bledsian* seems untenable as the original OE form in view of the wider matrix of relevant factors, and scholars have convincingly argued that it resulted analogically through proximity to *mildsian* in repeated scribal and liturgical contexts.[319]

Etymological connection to *blōtan* also crucially situates *bletsian* according to a definite ritual purpose and occasion. For the Christian blessing ritual at its broadest, both proposed etymologies 'incantate' and 'sprinkle with blood' might reasonably have provided the basis for inculturation on analogy with diverse forms of verbal blessing and the aspergation of holy water. The absolute inculturation of *bletsian* as a Christian religious term, together with the

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[316] Sahlgren (1915), 148; Karsten (1915); Flasdiek (1958), 27-36; Hallander (1966), 110-112; De Vries (1962), 45; Kroonen (2013), 70
[317] Hallander (1966), 119
[318] Flasdiek (1958), 27-36. Grimm (1875) I, 29 'ich leite davon [*blōtan*] her *blêtsian*'.
[319] Flasdiek (1958), 27-36; Hallander (1966), 122, 132

hesitance of earlier Anglo-Saxon authors to apply it to interpersonal attitude, however, bespeaks pre-Christian status as a technical cultic verb, which, as with *blōtan* and *hǣlsian*, would have been defined narrowly in relation to a specific ritual such as sacrifice. Moreover, the semantics of *blōtan* and *bletsian* seem mutually explicable. Assuming that PGmc **blōtana-* and its nominal counterpart **blotes-* originally together denoted verbal consecration of a sacrifice, the shift of **blōtana-* to ritual killing of a sacrificial victim would have been metonymic and motivated by the habitual observation of animal sacrifice in communal worship; requiring a new verb to express the verbal component of sacrificial ritual, speakers would have derived **blōtisōjan-* directly from **blōtes-*.

Finally, this interpretation has the advantage of meaningfully integrating all the other native sacrificial terms, which otherwise correlate awkwardly without *bletsian* as the technical heathen verb of sacrificial consecration: purely cultic *blōtan*, *tīber* and *hūsel* might reasonably convey an animal sacrifice, but they uneasily account for the consecration of inanimate offerings; Christian authors appear to have recognised *onsecgan* as a verb of consecration, but a minority of examples show non-religious usages that situate it in the semantic field of legal transfer. Not only would these extra-religious semantics make *onsecgan* atypical as a term for effective cultic activity, but its inherent di-transitivity, which essentially emphasises a semantic beneficiary, further supports a traditional connection with conveyance that more comfortably situates this verb with *lāc* and *gieldan* for denoting sacrifice as a legal transfer of property to the divine. A verb of consecration is more properly a mono-transitive action that changes the state of a single grammatical patient. From this holistic perspective, therefore, reconstruction of *bletsian* as the traditional Anglo-Saxon verb of sacrificial consecration resolves the asymmetries presented by assuming that *blōtan* (a technical cultic verb) and *onsecgan* (apparently not inherently cultic) encompassed this aspect of heathen sacrifice.

To summarise, despite the difficulties that the absolute inculturation of *bletsian* and corresponding absence of linguistic comparanda present for semantic reconstruction, it is clear that Christian authors were more comfortable using the verb as a religious term of art without the idea of beneficiary inherent to its Latin epitome *benedicere*. Its absolute inculturation supports the idea that the verb was not only traditionally cultic (unlike *biddan*, *weorðian*, *begangan* or *herian*), but that its Christianisation occurred at the outset of the Gregorian mission to the Anglo-Saxons, whereupon it would have been rehabilitated with *hūsel* (likewise exclusive to cult) to replace the effective ritual core of heathen sacrifice with a sacramental

analogue in the Eucharist. The interpersonal connotations of *benedicere* might then have been fully accrued at a later stage, with the advance of Christian education and narratology, whereupon *bletsung* was also arguably coined. Although the Christian blessing ritual is contextually diverse, the best interpretation of *bletsian*'s morphological properties as a *-sian* verb supports the view that the pre-Christian verb pertained to ritual speech, and further permits formal connection to *blōtan* that would restrict this act to sacrifice.

vii. Historical and archaeological analogues

Since sacrifice was fundamental to pre-Christian European worship, Classical testimonies of its Germanic forms usually record only those customs that appeared peculiar to the Romans or would have affected them directly in their dealings with barbarians. Accordingly, most examples concern rituals performed during warfare, especially the execution of human captives. Tacitus mentions both military and peacetime sacrificial practices several times in his works. His claim that the Germani appeased Mercury with 'human victims' (*humaniis hostiis*) on appointed days and Mars and Hercules with 'lawful animals' (*concessis animalibus*) conveys two essential points.[320] First, the idea that only certain animals were suitable as victims corroborates the linguistic evidence for *tīber* as 'pure' victim. Second, the suggestion that human sacrifice occurred occasionally or seasonally, although the precise circumstances outside military contexts are less clear. Tacitus relates that the Suebian Semnones, situated between the Elbe and Oder, would gather annually in a sacred wood and commence their rituals by 'slaying a man on behalf of the people' (*caesoque publice homine*), although the name of the deity is not mentioned.[321]

Perhaps more directly relevant to Anglo-Saxon traditions, Tacitus also claims that at the conclusion of the Nerthus procession among the tribes around the North Sea coast, slaves would clean the goddess' idol and cart in a secluded lake before being ritually drowned.[322] Although the purpose of slaughter remains unstated, it was perhaps a customary protective measure afforded the sanctuary, in light of a provision in the eighth-century *Lex Frisionum*

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[320] Tac. Germ. 9.1
[321] Tac. Germ. 39.1. See North (1997a), 139-43 for Ingui-Freyr; Höfler (1952), 59-60 and De Vries (1957) II, 32 for Mercury-Wodan.
[322] Tac. Germ. 40.4

mandating that sanctuary robbers be dedicated to the god of the shrine by drowning, having had their ears and genitals cut off.[323] Scholars have argued that the survival of a provision that seems obviously non-Christian indicates that this text represents an early (perhaps first) draft of the law as it was transmitted from oral form.[324] If so, the penalty may preserve an analogous tradition to the Nerthus ritual that survived among the Frisians, another indigenous north-sea tribe. Interestingly too, the *Genesis A* poet states that the sun rose *up ofer dēop water* (2876b) 'up over deep water' when Abraham and Isaac arrive at Mount Moriah, a detail finding no precedent in exegetical or apocryphal tradition. Schwab concludes thereby that the poet instinctively associated the imminent human sacrifice with a body of water in accordance with north-sea coastal tradition.[325]

Testimonies of Visigothic heathenism from the mid-fourth century corroborate both essential aspects of the Nerthus ritual.[326] Sozomen recounts how the Terving king Athanaric required his people to sacrifice to a carved idol (ξόανον) that was drawn on a cart through every settlement, commanding also that Christians who refused be burnt in their tents.[327] The *Passion of St. Sabbas* is more specific, relating that the edict required Christians to eat sacrificial meat, and upon refusing, the titular saint (an ethnic Goth) was submerged by a plank and drowned.[328] A contemporary letter by St. Basil of Caesaraea confirms death by water as the method of execution, further suggesting that other martyrs also died this way with Sabbas.[329] Since drowning was not a feature of Roman persecution, it was more likely a Germanic tradition,[330] and more specifically, in light of evidence from the North Sea coast, a form of human sacrifice proper to the worship of a hypostasis of Ingui-Freyr. Athanaric's edict highlights the communal nature of sacrifice within seasonal cults and its importance as an expression of tribal identity under the king as chief celebrant and guardian of public worship.

The classical sources also attest to the ritualised, mass-destruction of armaments following defeat of an enemy army. Tacitus' account of the Varian massacre in the Teutoburg Forest of 9 CE mentions that broken weapons and dismembered horses (*fragmina telorum equorumque*)

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[323] *Lex Fris.* Additio XI
[324] Schmidt-Wiegand (1992), 581
[325] Schwab (1981), 484-85
[326] North (1997a), 147-48
[327] Sozom. 6.37.13
[328] *Pass.Sab.* 3.1-4, 4.1-3
[329] Basil, *Epist.* 164.2 τὸ ξύλον, τὸ ὕδωρ, τὰ τελειωτικὰ τῶν μαρτύρων 'the beam, the water – these are the instruments of the perfecting of martyrs!'
[330] Helm (1937) II.1, 57; Thompson (1966), 99

were strewn across the battlefield, while the skulls of captives were nailed to trees.[331] Because the defeat was a disaster for Rome, some of these details are likely exaggerated,[332] but his account of a war between the Chatti and Hermunduri in 58 CE concerning a river (probably the Werra around Bad Salzungen, Thuringia) more faithfully reckons with the cultural motives underlying ritual despoliation.[333] Both tribes, it is reported, made vows dedicating the opposing host to Mars and Mercury 'implying the extermination of horses, men, and all objects whatsoever' (*equi, viri, cuncta victa occidioni dantur*).[334]

Orosius provides the fullest account of ritual despoliation in his description of Marius' defeat at Arausio in 105 BCE by the Cimbri and Teutones. The barbarians destroyed everything they captured under a 'strange curse' (*insolita execratione*): clothing, armour, and harnesses were ripped apart, while the metalwork and horses were cast into the river and captives hung from surrounding trees.[335] Although writing centuries later in the early fifth century, Orosius importantly mentions that the spoils were cast into a body of water, which crucially links his testimony with the extensive archaeological evidence for weapon deposits in wetlands (see below).[336] While unprofitable, mass-expenditure at pure loss is not unusual in societies governed by gift-exchange relationships, which attribute a religiosity to wealth that binds the individual to both clan and divinity.[337] Such cultural precepts could plausibly justify forms of mass-expenditure in fulfilment of vows made to a deity that was believed to preside over a military outcome.[338]

Regarding the human sacrifice during warfare, Strabo (early first century CE) relates that tribal seeresses or priestesses (προμάντεις ἱέρειαι) of the Cimbri would slit the throats of captives over a cauldron and utter prophecies of 'victory for the tribe' (νίκην τοῖς οἰκείοις) by observing the blood-flow and inspecting the victim's entrails.[339] Late antique authors more explicitly relate such executions to vows made during warfare. Ammianus Marcellinus claims that the Alamanni sought peace with Constantius at Raurica on 'the authority of the sacrifices' (*auctoritate sacrorum*), while the Goths made vows 'according to their custom' (*ex more*)

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[331] Tac. Ann. 1.61
[332] Polomé (1992), 401
[333] Jackson, trans. Tac. Ann. (1937), 99, n. 2
[334] Tac. Ann. 13.57.2
[335] Oros. Hist. 5.16.5. See Appendix A (ii).
[336] Polomé (1992), 401
[337] Mauss (1925), 69-70
[338] Simek (2005), 27
[339] Strab. 7.2.3

before battle with Valens.[340] Although certainly exaggerated according to his polemic presentation of pre-Christian history, Orosius claims that the Gothic king Radagaisus vowed to slaughter all captured Roman citizens 'according to barbarian custom' (*ut mos est barbaris*) when he invaded Italy in 405.[341] Procopius claims that the ancestors of the Ostrogoths worshipped Ares above all, for whom slaughter of the first captive in battle was the 'noblest of sacrifices' (τῶν δὲ ἱερείων σφίσι τὸ κάλλιστον), either by throwing the victim among thorns, hanging, or torture.[342] Jordanes repeats the claim that Mars was appeased with war captives, adding that the first share of spoils were also dedicated by being hung from trees.[343]

Procopius' claim that the ritual execution of military captives had a special prestige moreover shines important light on the glossing of *hostia propriae* 'special victim' with *fyrdtīber* 'army-victim' and also the lexical relationship of *sigetīber* and *sigorlēan*, suggesting the practice had similar value for the pre-Christian Anglo-Saxons. Most relevant here is the mid-fifth-century testimony of Sidonius Apollinaris. Living through the political collapse of the Western Empire, the Gallo-Roman aristocrat claims in a letter to Namatius that the Saxon seafarers who were raiding the Channel would select one in ten prisoners by lot to be crucified or drowned in fulfilment of vows before they departed on a voyage, and moreover believed such torture a 'religious duty' (*religiosum*).[344] This method of selection recalls the *Andreas* poet's depiction of human sacrifice among the Mermedonians, and with Procopius, both sources attest to diverse methods of dispatch that are strongly suggestive of public spectacle in the humiliation of torture.

While sacrifice was fundamental to heathen cult, the church was ideologically averse to these practices and officially determined to abolish them. Sacrifice was an essential battleground in Rome's great transition from paganism to Christianity that the early medieval church re-instigated in evangelising barbarian societies. Early medieval hagiography and missionary documents reflect these ideological priorities, emphasising animal slaughter, ritual feasting and their relationship to idolatry, all of which were unremarkable to Classical commentators, yet probably present a broader perspective on mainstream cult practices, especially those hindering the church's attempts to reform the prevailing habits of the critical mass of converts.

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[340] Amm. 14.10.9; Amm. 31.7.10
[341] Oros. Hist. 7.37.4-5
[342] Procop. Goth. 6.15.24-26. See also 6.14.2 on the Heruli.
[343] Jord. Get. 5.41-42
[344] Sid. Apoll. Epist. 8, 6.13-15. See Appendix A (iii).

The Alamanni of the mid-sixth century, settled throughout the Alpine regions of Swabia and Lake Constance, were apparently accustomed to sacrificing horses, cattle and other beasts by beheading in sacred woodlands,[345] and also to dedicate vats of beer 'to their god Woden' (*deo suo Vodano*).[346] The latter practice is also attested for the Salian Franks of the early sixth century.[347] While scholars have expressed doubt over the authenticity of these details within hagiographical narrative,[348] Jonas of Bobbio's observation that the barrels were 'dedicated in the heathen fashion' suggests shared awareness of customs that experienced missionaries witnessed. Nor should it be doubted that special beer, implicated in the cultic proceedings, would have been drunk during seasonal sacrificial feasts.[349] The *Paenitentiale Columbani* prohibits the consumption of food and drink 'beside sanctuaries' (*iuxta fana*), suggesting that forms of feasting took place within sacred precincts and that such customs were still practised in Burgundy around Columbanus' foundation at Luxeuil in the mid-590s.[350]

The sources are rather inconsistent concerning sacrificial consumption. The sixth-century *Lex Salica*, for example, penalises theft of sacrificial boars (*maialem sacrivum*).[351] Gregory's letter to Mellitus meanwhile, identifies the mass-slaughter of cattle as a seasonal practice capable of realignment with dedicatory feasts of thanksgiving to God and the saints, if re-focused away from the heathen gods. The policy of the Anglo-Saxon mission to Germany was apparently stricter. Over a century later in 732, Pope Gregory II determined the widespread consumption of horse-meat in Germany a 'filthy and abominable custom', advising St. Boniface to suppress it 'in every possible way'.[352] That an issue of diet was condemned so absolutely suggests the customs had an essential relationship to heathen cult that was determined to be irremediable.[353] The same letter also indicates that sacrifice to Jupiter was persisting among those already baptised, which might explain the narrower degree of leniency, and also perhaps, indirectly, attest to the real hindrance and conservatising force which ancient tribal cult-sites (such as Jupiter's Oak) may have presented to reforming the religious habits of continental Germans.[354]

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[345] Agath. Hist. 1.7.1
[346] *Vit.Colum.* 1.27
[347] *Vit.Ved.* 7.
[348] *Vit.Colum.* introduction to translation by O'Hara and Wood (2017), 273
[349] Helm (1913) I, 79-80
[350] *Paen.Columb.* B 24; Kursawa (2017), 105
[351] *Pact. Sal.* 2.16
[352] Talbot, trans. (1954) '16 Pope Gregory II invests Boniface with the Palium', 85-86
[353] Simek (2005), 50
[354] Talbot, trans. (1954), 86-87. See also *Vit.Bonif.* 6 *robor Iobis* 'Jupiter's Oak' was worshipped by the Hessians (pp. 30-31).

Writing in the eleventh century, Adam of Bremen identifies the temple at Uppsala as a similarly ancient cult-site where the Swedes gathered seasonally every nine years at the vernal equinox.[355] The Swedish kings led the proceedings at this festival, whereby nine male creatures, including dogs, horses, and human captives were decapitated and their bodies hung from sacred trees beside the temple.[356] It is plausible that the grove was indeed the location of ritual dispatch, while wider analogues for cultic buildings suggest that the 'temple' probably functioned as a kind of cult-hall within which the occasion's social dimensions, such as feasting, occurred (see Chapter 4 iv *ealh*). Adam also observes that the sacrifices were accompanied by continual incantation, corroborating the probability that *bletsian* traditionally expressed the verbal aspects of sacrificial rite.

Bede's summary of the heathen Anglo-Saxon calendar very importantly details some of the seasonal festivities observed generally elsewhere:[357] cakes were offered to certain deities in *solmōnath* (February); *Hrētha* and *Ēostre* were honoured with sacrifices and feasts in *hrēthmōnath* (March) and *ēosturmōnath* (April), both probably related to the growing season; as the month of cattle-slaughter, *blōdmonath* (November) corroborates the customs noted in Gregory's letter to Mellitus.

The scale of animal sacrifices implied by these analogues indicates that they were certainly communal and, because they were also seasonal, arguably comprised the *gield* or 'tribute' paid regularly to the tribal deities. For the Anglo-Saxons, sacrificial cattle would also have provided supplies of meat, while reducing excess populations of livestock over winter when fodder was scarce.[358] As with Frankish sacrificial boars, they possibly belonged to a herd of animals ear-marked by the community for annual slaughter and protected under customary law, for Alcuin attests that the Frisians of Heligoland maintained such cattle within the sanctuary enclosure of Fosite (ON *Forseti*).[359]

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[355] Scholion 146 (137) to *Gest.* 4.27. See Appendix A (iv).
[356] *Gest.* 4.27
[357] *De temp. rat.* 15
[358] Wilson (1992), 36; Helm (1913) I, 295-96
[359] *Vit.Will.* 10-14

Snorri's account of the *blótveisla* at Hlaðir is the most detailed surviving description of a seasonal sacrificial feast.[360] This occasion was politically intended by its host Sigurðr, Jarl of Hlaðir to mediate reception of the Christian king Hákon inn góði by the staunchly heathen populace of Trøndelag, who expected the monarch to participate as celebrant-in-chief according to tradition. Snorri relates that the feast took place in a *hof*, probably a type of cult-hall; it was supplied by the local farmers, who slaughtered much livestock and collected the blood in *hlaut* bowls to be sprinkled on the walls, altars (*rjóða stallana*) and participants; the meat was stewed in cauldrons that hung centrally in the hall. The feast proceeded with toasts (*full*), firstly the chief celebrant's dedicating the food and ale to Odin, Njǫrðr and Freyr. The participants would then toast the chief in return (*bragafull*), before individually proposing memorial toasts to ancestors and kinsmen (*minni*); ale-drinking was mandatory (*skyldu allir menn ǫl eiga*).

Snorri's comprehensive description reflects the semantic breadth of *blót* denoting all aspects of a ritual occasion, including slaughter, ritual dedication and festive consumption. The following scene further suggests that the king's opening toast involved drinking the broth (*sóð*) of stewed horse-meat, both of which Hákon refuses to consume.[361] Deriving from **seuþan-* 'boil', *sóð* is directly cognate to Gothic *sauþs* and its narrative function might be relevant to interpreting the couplet *hunsl jah sauþ*, which translates προσφοράν καὶ θυσίαν 'oblations and burnt-offerings'.[362] Since neither Gothic noun exactly renders the New Testament exemplar, it is plausible that Wulfila responded to a Greek couplet expressing sacrifice with a vernacular, two-fold conception of the sacrificial meal comprising meat (*hunsl*) and broth (*sauþ*). The toasts of this scene also recall the festive proceedings in *Beowulf*, where *ful* denotes the drinking vessels received (*þicgan*) in Heorot. The use of an identical noun denoting a ritualised draught suggests that heathen Anglo-Saxons knew similar customs. The poet also terms the feast a *bēorþege*, which might further corroborate Snorri's emphasis that ale-drinking was obligatory.

Alongside communal festivity, a few sources also refer to private sacrificial worship. Bede mentions that after his baptism, King Rædwald maintained in his hall a Christian altar beside

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[360] *Heimskringla (Hákonar saga góða* 14, 186-87). See Appendix A (v).
[361] *Heimskringla (Hákonar saga góða* 17, 192)
[362] Ephesians 5:2

another 'small altar on which to offer victims to devils' (*arulam ad victimas daemoniorum*).[363] This implies a form of private sacrifice within a syncretic context that Bede compares with the Samaritans, but which possibly found a direct cultural precedent in Germanic Arianism.[364] Adam of Bremen mentions that devotees would cast private offerings into a sacred well at Uppsala.[365] There is also evidence that offerings were made to the dead in Germanic tradition, implying a form of ancestor worship.[366] In his correspondence with Boniface, Gregory II permitted such customs to continue if restricted to Christians who had not died in sin, indicating that the church was open to inculturating ancestral cults with Christian conceptions of salvation and the afterlife.[367] It was argued earlier in (iv) that this wider category of offerings might have provided an analogical basis wherewith *lāc* was inculturated while other sacrificial terms were marginalised.

The archaeological evidence for continental Germanic sacrifice is extensive and corroborates the essential observations of written testimony regarding the seasonal use of major cult-sites and the typical forms of sacrificial worship more conclusively within a broader, material perspective. Numerous Iron Age weapon deposits in Jutland, the Danish Islands and southern Sweden appear to confirm the tradition of weapon despoliation. In many cases, the armaments were purposely damaged, with shafts splintered, swords and spear-points bent out of shape and shield bosses hammered flat.[368] While there is a dearth of insular Anglo-Saxon evidence for a similar scale of practice, the bulk of the continental record dating between the second and fourth centuries CE strongly suggests their immediate ancestors knew such traditions, especially with the increased militarisation of the migration period.[369]

Thorsberg Moor, a small lake near Süderbrarup in Angeln, Schleswig-Holstein was used for almost seven centuries, certainly for some of that time by the Angles before migrating to Britain (see Figure 1.1).[370] The weapons were deposited from a platform extending onto the lake into an area demarcated by a wicker fence. A similar structure was also present at Nydam, and at both sites, the weapons were sunk immediately, while at Ejsbøl and Illerup Ådal, they were

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[363] *HE* 2.15
[364] Wallace-Hadrill (1988), 76
[365] Scholion 138 (134) to *Gest.*
[366] Procop. Goth. 6.15.24-26
[367] Talbot, trans. (1954), 86
[368] Kaul (2003), 19; Simek (2005), 27-28
[369] Heather (1996), 68
[370] Hines (2001), 37, 43; Simek (2005), 29

first burnt and bundled before sinking.[371] Similar deposits pre-dating the hall at Uppåkra suggest that the building was erected on a long-established cult-site and possibly also became a repository henceforth for weapons.[372] The toponymy of both Thorsberg and Vimose on Funen (< *vé*) clearly attest their cultic significance. The scale of individual deposits is also remarkable. Equipment for a small army of around 200 men, primarily spears and shields with a smaller number of swords, was deposited at Ejsbøl and Illerup Ådal. At Hjortspring on Als, a much older deposit (c.400 BCE), 131 shields, 138 spear-heads, 11 swords, and several mail-coats were enclosed within a 60 foot clinker vessel that was sunk into the bog. A ritually dismembered horse, two dogs, a lamb and calf were also buried contemporaneously beneath this boat. Horse bones have also been found at Thorsberg.

Figure 1.1: Thorsberg Moor, Angeln, Schleswig-Holstein.

Alongside these sizable, single-instance deposits, miscellaneous, private offerings were also continuously brought to these sites: small vessels containing food, drink, flax and hair, sickles, spades, pitch-forks, threshers, other farm tools, and later combs, coins and jewellery.[373] Deposition of these more quotidian items continued for centuries after the cessation of large-scale weapon deposition around 500.[374] Traditions of lake deposition were also known among east Germanic tribes around the Oder and Passarge between the second and third centuries, but

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[371] Simek (2005), 28
[372] Larsson (2007), 11-25
[373] Simek (2005), 40-41
[374] Ewing (2008), 28

notably without weapons (weaponless graves are also characteristic for these cultures), yielding mainly coins, amber and neck torques.[375]

There is also evidence that convivial forms of blood-sacrifice occurred at major cult-sites. At Oberdorla, Thüringen, a total of 276 animal remains spanning all periods of the site's use (sixth century BCE – early fifth century CE) suggest, in the excavator's opinion, that seasonal feasting probably took place every two to three years within the sanctuary complexes surrounding the lake.[376] The statistical distribution of animal victims strikingly corroborates Bede's and other early medieval testimony: eighty percent are domestic animals, 68% cattle, 20% sheep and goats, with smaller numbers of horses, dogs, pigs and also isolated examples of fish and poultry. The unbroken bones of these animals are typically situated within the shrine enclosures, especially skulls, often hard by the turf-altars or free-standing cult-foci, indicating that these parts of the victim were purposely reserved and deposited therein; traces of water-troughs outside the enclosures are suggestive of ritual cleansing before slaughter.[377]

Although considerably less numerous than animal remains across all periods, around 76% of the enclosures show fragmentary evidence for other forms of sacrifice, including ceramic vessels containing votive offerings (predominant in the later Roman period), wooden vessels, clubs, fish-traps, torches, weaving boards and carpentry tools.[378] While smaller in scale, a similar range of offerings dating to the second and third centuries CE were found near the spring at Bad Pyrmont, Niedersachsen, exclusively cattle, sheep, horses and dogs along with around 300 combs. Another large, communal cult-site of the early centuries CE at Skedemosse on Öland shows the following distribution: 35% horses, 28% cattle, 23% sheep/goats, 5% pigs and 2.5% dogs.[379] The contemporary settlement at Feddersen Wierde near Bremerhaven shows an exclusive preference for horses, cattle and dogs.[380] Its fifth-century abandonment, as for Thorsberg Moor, suggests the inhabitants were immediate ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons. On the insular side, a pile of ox-bones were deposited during the early seventh century within the cult-hall termed D2 at the western end of the Yeavering complex (see Chapter 4 iii *ealh*).

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[375] Helm (1937) II.2, 41-42
[376] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 98; Dušek (2002), 467-73
[377] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 98-110
[378] Dušek (2002), 473
[379] Rives (1999), 161-62; Hagberg (1967), 55-62
[380] Reichstein (1991), 323

This extensive evidence conclusively situates sacrificial activity in relation to traditional spaces and structures of worship and, thereby, idolatory, with parts of an animal victim or votive offering necessarily placed in close contact with cult-foci. Likewise, the presence of fire-places within or around some of the enclosures at Oberdorla, and stoves at two spring sites in southern Sweden,[381] points to ritual consumption occurring *in situ*, which recalls St. Columbanus' prohibition on feasting *iuxta fana*. Animal remains show that decapitation or a blow to the head were predominant means of slaughter; the victim was then flayed and the choicer cuts stewed, with the skull, bones, skin and tail separated and sometimes bundled together within a hide.[382] This not only corroborates Agathias' remark concerning the Alamanni, but also perhaps contextualises the *Genesis A* poet's use of *cwellan* and *slēan* for the near-slaughter of Isaac.

The evidence for human sacrifice at major cult-sites tends to be isolated. Among extensive animal remains, there are a few instances at Vimose and Oberdorla.[383] A single skeleton was deposited with a wooden idol and cauldron in the wetlands at Possendorf, Thüringen.[384] Likewise, the skeleton of a young woman was deposited with forty wagon wheels and bundles of sheep and horse bones at Rappendam on Zealand.[385] The deposits at Skedemosse dating between the fourth to fifth centuries are unusually large, with around fifty persons of diverse sex and age buried together with around one hundred horses, eighty cattle and sixty-five sheep and goats.[386] Outside the major cult-sites, there are many contemporary examples of bog bodies showing diverse modes of death, including strangulation and blows to the head, although their significance as execution or sacrifice is inconclusive.[387]

viii. Conclusions

The semantic distribution of *tīber*, *blōtan*, *gield*, *lāc*, *hūsel* and *bletsian* collectively attest the two stages of Christianisation: first, the tangible results of missionary pragmatism, and subsequently, the attitudinal shift to sacrifice motivated by the advance of a text-based religion.

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[381] Simek (2005), 43
[382] Simek (2005), 49-50
[383] Simek (2005), 54-55
[384] Behm-Blancke (1957), 129-135
[385] Simek (2005), 44
[386] Rives (1999), 159; Hagberg (1967), 55-62
[387] Simek (2005), 57

Furthermore, these terms collectively bespeak the probable absence in heathen cult of a conceptualisation 'sacrifice' that Christianity recognised within its negative ideological critique of pagan practice. Gregory's letter to Mellitus presents the tip of an iceberg as far as the church's attitude to sacrifice and other features of pagan worship was concerned, revealing a selective policy that was equally discerning in its proscriptions of practices as it was open to the re-alignment of cultural forms. Targeting communal festivity, the communication specifically identifies the ritual consecration of sacrifices to demons (pagan gods) as problematic; at the same time, Gregory permits such convivial occasions to continue, if re-aligned as a dedication to God and denuded of any effective ritual basis.

This chapter has argued that the Gregorian missionaries prudently ear-marked *bletsian* 'verbally consecrate a sacrificial offering' and *hūsel* 'sacrificial food' for thorough inculturation with the Eucharist, in order to enfeeble heathen sacrifice of its potential for communion with demons, and to replace, decisively, this principal form of communal pre-Christian worship with the true, effective ritual counterpart, in terms that would have convinced the converts that the new cult was in-waiting within their own traditions. For a rival cult to be accepted as efficacious, it had to be not only exclusive in its potency, but also perceived as culturally appropriate. For this reason, *bletsian* and *hūsel* were semantically monopolised.

It has also been argued in this chapter that *dēofolgield* was first coined under these conditions to convey the crucial idea that sacrificial tributes were payments to demons. It has also been claimed here that traditional terms pertaining to animal sacrifice *tīber* 'victim', *blōtan* 'sacrifice a victim' and *gield* 'communal sacrificial worship' might have maintained their currency for a time, and furthermore, that *Genesis A* preserves a memory of this interim concession, wherein the traditional forms of blood-sacrifice (and perhaps also idolatry) were permitted to continue, if realigned in terms of ancient Israelite monotheistic cult. Inevitably, at the second stage of Christianisation, these three terms were marginalised for their associations with animal sacrifice, following the more active engagement with the negative conceptualisations of pagan worship encountered in Christian literature.

Lāc was, it is suggested here, safe for retention at the second stage for a number of reasons. The pre-Christian noun fundamentally denoted a type of gift transferred in the hope of establishing a friendly relationship, whether between individuals, or diplomatically between populations. In sacrificial contexts, this implies a votive offering, transferred to build friendship

between the worshipper and a divine being. The noun was thus neither exclusively cultic, which might have affected its treatment at the first stage, nor essentially connected to animal sacrifice, which almost certainly secured its retention at the second stage. The missionaries could thus have pragmatically realigned *lāc* with donations to the church or the dead, a position confirmed by evidence of the later Anglo-Saxon missions to Germany. Furthermore, because the noun entailed a personalised form of devotion, it would also have been available for further inculturation with the more abstract connotations of a spiritual offering encountered in Christian writing.

With its core semantics 'renounce', *onsecgan* plausibly denoted the verbal means of alienating property. With *bletsian* monopolised, *onsecgan* could have become identified as a primary sacrificial verb during the first phase, albeit with mere dedicatory force. At the second stage, it would have been safe for further inculturation as a verb of consecration, maintaining equal application to pagan and Christian ritual, because it was neither essentially cultic nor contextually defined by animal sacrifice.

It is important to appreciate that OE sacrificial terminology uneasily conveys either a unitary or essentially religious notion of 'sacrifice', rather identifying the practice according to component features. *Gield* is the closest to a catch-all term for sacrificial worship, but it primarily denotes a type of payment made under customary law, either as compensation or tax, while *lāc* is a kind of gift. This suggests that, if pressed, the heathen might have conceived sacrifice as a legal transfer of possession (*onsecgan*, *syllan*), but in very particular terms according to mode and purpose. The exclusively cultic dimensions denoted by *bletsian*, *blōtan*, *tīber* and *hūsel* imply highly particular forms of speech and action, and the objects upon which they were properly enacted with transformative potential. To a heathen, therefore, the cultic kernel of sacrifice concerned the procedures by which movable property was converted into an acceptable form for effective transfer to the divine. The subsequent Christian development of loan-terms *offrian* and *offrung* probably reflects the need for a singular definition of sacrificial practice, which increased engagement with ecclesiastical literature would have compelled in the face of a semantically (and now ideologically) scattered vernacular terminology.

A final observation can be made about *Genesis A*. As shown, this poem seems to represent a high-water mark of inculturation or syncretism that may well evidence the provisional toleration of animal sacrifice and forms of idolatry during the conversion period. Gregory's

letter to Mellitus indicates the immediate, pragmatic grounds for these concessions, with scriptural justification in the Israelites. But this tribal identification was arguably also being pitched on a deeper level to assuage anxieties that the first generations of Christian Anglo-Saxons would have had about whether they would see their pagan ancestors in heaven. It is reported that Radbod, the last independent Frisian king, broke off his baptism at the font, when he received a negative answer to this question, declaring that he would rather be in hell with his royal ancestors than in heaven *cum parvo pauperum numero* 'with a small collection of beggars'.[388]

Anglo-Saxon Christianity's intense engagement with the Old Testament could well have found its beginnings in the strategic response of the missionaries to these anxieties, encouraging the English to identify their ancestors with the ancient Israelites, who would enjoy a special dispensation at the Redemption.[389] Patriarchs Noah and Abraham might now be presented in culturally familiar terms as noble, proto-Christian monotheists, ethically and spiritually on the right path, but worshipping erroneously under special concession from God. Gregory advises as much in his letter to Mellitus that God preserved in the Israelites the forms of cult to which they were accustomed, redirected to His worship, until they were ready to receive the true sacrifice in Christ.

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[388] *Vit.Wulfr.* 9
[389] Revelation 7:4-8

2

Prayer and Veneration

This chapter groups four verbs *biddan* 'pray', *hālsian* 'entreat; exorcise', *begangan* 'worship' and *weorðian* 'honour, worship' under the categories of 'prayer' and 'veneration'. Although these categories provide useful access points to the linguistic data in the Christian sources, the plausible pre-Christian meanings of the terms discussed, which emerge from close analysis of syntax and comparanda, are uneasily contained by them and arguably demonstrate that 'prayer' and 'veneration' were novel conceptualisations which Christianisation introduced to heathen terminology. In this way, the present chapter contributes to a central argument of this study that Christianisation proceeded in two stages. In the previous chapter, it was argued that the first stage involved the inculturation of key ritual terms that could demonstrate the efficacy of Christianity as cult in terms that heathens recognised; it will now be argued that the second phase of Christianisation involved the ideological re-definition of religion around the novel conceptualisations of 'prayer' and 'worship', which brought vernacular terms that were previously marginal to the heathen system into the heart of the technical Christian religious lexicon and developed them in new ways.

i. *biddan*, *gebed* and *bed(u)*

Biddan (V) is extremely well attested (c.×3200), ranging through the semantic shades 'ask, entreat, demand, beg, formally petition, pray'.[1] Prefixed forms *gebiddan* (c.×1250) and *ābiddan* (c.×130) encompass all these meanings except 'beg'. *Ābiddan* importantly extends to 'obtain as the result of petitioning'. *Bebiddan* (×2) is exceptional. A number of related nouns

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[1] DOE s.v. *biddan*. Later texts also show 'command', probably through conflation of *bæd* with *bēad*, the preterite singular of *bēodan*. In ApT *grētan biddan* and *gesund bēon biddan* translate *valedicere* 'bid farewell'.

are attested: *gebed* (n, *a*-stem, c.×1500) 'prayer, a request, prescription, rhetorical speech', *bed* (n, *a*-stem, c.×75) 'prayer, request', *bedu* (f, ō-stem ×2), agent noun *biddere* (m, ×4) 'petitioner, suitor', and compounds *gebedhūs* (× c.90) and *bedhūs* (×4). Other Germanic languages match the semantic situation of *biddan*, with individual peculiarities concerning related nouns. This collective evidence strongly indicates that *biddan* was a traditional verb of formal request in pursuit of a concrete outcome that was equally appropriate to interpersonal or human-divine interchange. Status disparity defines the relationship of the parties, which arises from the potential to bestow, withhold, act, or omit.

With religious meaning in the OE literary sources, *biddan* expresses both precative request as well as intransitive performance of a 'prayer ritual'. This latter usage almost certainly results from inculturation with Christianity's particular notion of prayer as a technical religious activity. Because *biddan* and its Germanic cognates evidence a clear, well-established applicability to social relations, it is likely that pre-Christian religious usage of this verb flowed naturally from the status disparity inherent to the relationship of worshipper and divinity. In other words, once communication had been secured through technical cultic procedure, one would properly address a god as a social superior. While the weight of comparative evidence indicates that these ancillary cultic meanings were traditional to pre-Christian *biddan*, this study argues that the word-family would have begun to acquire a more technical religious import, denoting the formal practice of spiritual exercises, with the growth of monastic infrastructure, the essence of which institutions centred around the regular, communal practice of Christianity's highly-developed precative traditions.

Biddan is extremely common in prose with both social and religious meaning, often together in the same text. The balance of 'ask' vs. 'prayer' falls on the former, but, where transitive, both contexts are normally indistinguishable syntactically and share identical constructions. This suggests that social and religious requests were contextually rather than semantically differentiated, from which it can be inferred that petitions of God and of man were conceptually identical. Intransitive *biddan* seems exceptional, however, and normally (but not strictly) denotes 'praying' as activity unto itself (the prayer ritual).

There is some evidence that translators preferred these intransitive constructions. Ælfric, for example, produces *eft upāhafenum handum langlīce bæd* 'again he prayed for a long time with raised hands' for the transitive clause *precem diutissime fudit* 'he poured out a prayer for a very

long time' of his probable source.[2] Another possible influence might have been Gospel phraseology such as *biddaþ & ēow bið geseald* 'ask and it is given to you'.[3] *Biddan* often governs a subordinate clause of direct speech, or a *þæt*-clause: in *Beowulf*, for example *wordum bǣdon/þæt him gāstbona gēoce gefremede* (176b-77) 'they prayed with words that the soul-destroyer provide them aid', and in the Heptateuch *gē biddaþ, lǣtaþ ūs faran & offrian ūrum Gode* 'ye ask "let us go and sacrifice to our God"'.[4]

Differences between *biddan* as 'ask' and 'pray' are perhaps clearer in the exclusive attestation of certain constructions with one or other meaning. Clauses with an infinitive or parenthetical to an imperative verb occur only for interpersonal request, always with a sense of urgency in the translational context. For example, *bæd him drincan* 'he asked (for himself) to drink' translates *da mihi obsecro paululum aquae* 'give me, I beseech, a little water';[5] in *beraþ, ic bidde, ēowre byrþena ēow betwynan* 'bear, I implore, your burdens between you', the translator complements an imperative verb in the source with indicative, syntactically parenthetical *biddan*.[6] On the other hand, benefactive dative or accusative phrases are more typical for prayer, for example *hē bæd swīðe inweardlīce for þæt dysige folc* 'he prayed inwardly a great deal for the foolish people'.[7]

Further differences observed in the syntactic treatment of an implored entity might be of a diachronic nature. In the first group, *biddan* governs an accusative direct object of the implored entity; in the second group, the besought entity is expressed periphrastically within an adverbial phrase. The desired object is normally genitive, though sometimes accusative for both. *Genesis A* and *Andreas* provide examples of the first group: *bæd him fultumes/wǣrfæst hæleð willgeðoftan* (2025-26) 'the faithful hero asked the companions for help for himself' and *merelīðendum miltsa biddan/wuldres aldor* (353-54) 'to pray to the Prince of Glory for mercy for the seamen'. In the Life of Eustace, *bide hine fulluhtes* 'ask him for baptism' is clearly uninfluenced by the epitome *quaere ab ipso baptismum gratiae* 'to seek baptism of grace from him' with its dative adverbial phrase of besought entity and accusative of desired thing.[8]

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[2] ÆCHom I, 4, 211.134; *Vit.Iohan.* 2, 58.14
[3] Matthew (WSCp) 7:7 *petite et dabitur vobis*
[4] Exodus 5:17 *dicitis: eamus et sacrificemus Domino*
[5] Judges 4:19
[6] ÆHom 2, 200; Galatians 6:2 *alter alterius onera portate*
[7] LS 29 (Nicholas) 420
[8] LS 8 (Eust) 69; Act.Eust. 1.4

Constructions belonging to the second group employ an adverbial phrase of besought entity with *æt*, *tō* or *fram.* In this way, they are closer to the Latin model in the previous example, which presents a potential precedent for *fram* in the use of *a* and *ab*; a similar example is attested in the Rule of Benedict: *se gingra bletsunge bidde fram þām yldran* 'the younger may ask a blessing from the older' translating *iunior a priore benedictionem petat.*[9] Only *æt* and *tō* occur for prayer, with *tō* also infrequent for social request, for example *þes man bæd æt Gode* 'this man prayed to God'[10] and *mon sceal tō Gode almihtig āne biddan* 'one shall pray to God almighty alone'.[11] It is plausible that *tō* and *æt* were influenced by the use of *ad* and its prefixing of *adorare*. While neither group is strictly confined to social or religious request, the relatively higher concentration of *tō* and *æt* constructions for religious prayer suggests that the second group, comprising *biddan* clauses that express the besought entity within an adverbial phrase, represents stylistic innovations that were developed in response to the Latin syntactic models encountered in Christian literature, which conveyed ideas of prayer that were arguably novel.

Biddan also occurs idiomatically for a range of formal, customary contexts, the phraseology of which seems to have resisted translational or generic pressures in prose. In Apollonius of Tyre, marriage proposal, for example, is rendered thus: *ic bidde þīnre dohtor mē tō gemæccan* 'I ask for your daughter as a spouse for me' with an expected genitive of desired thing against an accusative in the source.[12] Also diverging from the source, the challenge to single combat finds *ānwīges biddan.*[13] *Biddan* with a genitive of *friþ* or *grið* and accusative of the besought expresses a suit for peace or at law, for example *hē ūs georne friðes bæd* 'he eagerly sued us for peace'.[14] Such contexts in Latin rather govern an accusative of the desired thing.

A similar conservatism prevails in earlier poetry. *Biddan* in *Beowulf* (×8) normally refers to social requests, for example Scyld Scefing's request for a ship funeral (*swā hē selfa bæd* 29b) or Beowulf's request to fight Grendel alone (426b-32). Wealhtheow bids Hrothgar be blithe at the feast (*bæd hine blīþne æt þære bēorþege* 617). Importantly, however, *biddan* also occurs in the poet's description of heathen ritual. To procure divine intervention against Grendel, the Danes *wordum bædon/þæt him gāstbona gēoce gefremede* (176b-77) 'prayed with words that

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[9] BenR 63.117.2
[10] ÆCHom I, 9 249.22
[11] HomU 1 143; Matthew 4:10 *dominum deum tuum adorabis*
[12] ApT 4.8; Hist.Apollon 4.8 *petentibus nobis filiam tuam in matrimonium*; Goolden (1958), xxxii-iv
[13] Or 3, 6.60.3; Oros. Hist. 3. 6.2 *singulariter pugnam inchoavit*. See also LS 25 (MichaelMor) 85.
[14] Genesis 42:21 *dum deprecaretur nos*

the soul-destroyer provide them aid'. The authenticity of this passage's representation of heathen worship is debated.[15] It will be argued further in Chapter 3 that this segment of *Beowulf* may be meaningfully interpreted alongside the similarly targeted comments on idolatry in *Maxims I*, *Daniel* and *Exodus* as reflecting a critique, primarily inspired by the ideological precepts encountered in Christian texts, that learned Anglo-Saxon Christians writing shortly after the conversion period began to mount in reaction to the religious syncretism of the preceding generation. It might also be relevant that *bǣdon* suits the A-type of l.176b where *hǣlsodon* is precluded. Nevertheless, the transitive construction of l.176b-77, explicitly stating the desired outcome in the manner conventional to social request favours the view that these lines accurately convey pre-Christian religious usage of *biddan*, differently to an intransitive construction that might have contrived an analogue to the Christian prayer ritual.

Biddan also overwhelmingly has social meaning in *Genesis A* (×8). Two certain examples of divine petition are clearly intercessory, where God tells Abimelech that Abraham can intercede for him (*hē ābiddan mæg* 2661b) and performance of this intercession (*ārna biddan* 2751b, 2759b). As shown in Chapter 1, religious worship in *Genesis A* is primarily sacrificial and invocatory. Excepting *ābiddan* (2661b), all instances of *biddan* as prayer in *Genesis A* and *Beowulf* are identical to social petitions in their specification of a desired outcome. *Exodus* (×1) also coheres, where Moses exhorts the Israelites: *þæt gē geweorðien wuldres Aldor,/ond ēow Līffrēan lissa bidde* 'that you may worship the Prince of Glory and I will pray to the Life-lord for favours for you (270-71). This description of worship conceives a bilateral relationship where the giving of honour (*geweorðian*) predicates the verbal request for concrete advantage from the higher power. Since *ābiddan* stands out as the only intransitive prayer verb in these poems, the possibility cannot be discounted that this prefixed form of *biddan* possessed certain semantic properties suitable for expressing prayer intransitively as activity unto itself where *biddan* was avoided. This provides further evidence for the view that the idea of prayer itself forming the effective ritual conduit between worshipper and divine was traditionally unknown to the semantics of *biddan*, and was, moreover, accrued gradually with the ongoing inculturation of this word-family.

Turning more closely to prefixed forms, *gebiddan* shares the collocational tendencies of *biddan*, lacking only the latter's 'beg' semantics. While scholars continue to debate the

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[15] Fulk et al. (2008), 127-28

definitive function of pre-verbal *ge-*, it is agreed that its semantic effect was aspectual, with frequency and distribution consequently determined by the core semantics of the verb. Although very frequently prefixing a past participle (89%), OE *ge-* was not grammaticalised in this role (unlike in MnG and Dutch) and extended into other non-functional verb forms such as the finite past (20.1%). The canonical view is that *ge-* was a perfective marker,[16] but it has also been suggested that it directed a verb's semantics forward, towards an advanced reference point.[17] Recent corpus-based analysis tends to confirm the traditional interpretation, suggesting *ge-* favours a range of contexts which can be loosely defined as resultative,[18] especially 'environments suggestive of perfectivity and/or telicity'.[19]

Telicity refers to verbs with core semantics 'tending towards a goal' that is realised in perfective tenses, but contingent in imperfective tenses (for example 'eat' and 'drink').[20] McFadden's study has shown that *ge*-prefixing is statistically much higher for telic than for atelic activity or stative verbs in OE.[21] Of the 31 common verbs considered, the upper ranges include *hǣlan* (85.1%), *hālgian* (78.4%), *niman* (53.1%) and *tēon* (42.8%). At 28.1%, *biddan* would sit in the upper quarter of McFadden's analysis, which includes *weorðan* (33.9%), *þencan* and *wyrcan* (29%), *nemnan* (26.5%), and *āscian* (24.3%). It may be argued, therefore, that telicity was traditionally inherent to *biddan*, which could further support the view that the examples in putatively earlier poetry reflect the inherited tendencies of this verb in their consistent specification of a desired outcome – the 'end point' or 'goal'. The absence of the meaning 'beg' for *gebiddan*' might further be explained by the greater remoteness of the desired goal in begging as opposed to formal request.

Ābiddan is attested for both groups of *biddan* construction, but with peculiar properties: it governs an accusative of the desired thing instead of the genitive typical for *biddan*; only *æt* and *fram* occur within adverbial phrases of besought entity, never *tō*, which occurs frequently for *biddan*. Semantically, *ābiddan* also includes 'obtain', always with an accusative of attained thing and an adverbial *æt*-phrase with a dative of besought entity. The transfer is implied to have proceeded with formal petition, for example Joseph of Arimethea's request for the body

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[16] Streitberg (1891), 70-177. More recently endorsed in Eythórsson (1995).
[17] Lindemann (1970), 37
[18] McFadden (2015), 15-48. See also Van Kemenade and Los (2003), 79-118.
[19] McFadden (2015), 17
[20] Garey (1957), 95
[21] Basic telic verbs *cuman*, *etan* and *drincan* are statistical outliers.

of Jesus: *ic hyne ābæd and on clǣnre scytan befēold* 'I obtained him and wrapped him in clean sheets'.[22] One example from the Chronicle concerning property suggests the customary status of this verb alongside other traditional terms for transfer of ownership: *hit sum ōðer mann ābiddan wolde oððe gebicgean* 'a certain other man would get it (by grant through formal petition) or buy it'.[23] These resultative semantics certainly flow from the prefix *ā-* < PGmc **uz-* 'out, out of' (Gothic *us-*, OHG *ir-*), which traditionally assigned perfective aspect to the base verb, for example *āgieldan* 'pay up' from *gieldan* 'pay'. The precise relative chronology of this process is debatable, but what is known about the effect of *ā-* assists understanding of the semantic relationship between the two verbs. Where *biddan* expresses an instrumental process looking forward to a concrete aim, *ābiddan* assumes the result of this process – attainment – while maintaining focus on the formal petition that engenders the gain. For these reasons, it is possible to interpret *hē ābiddan mæg* (2661b) in *Genesis A* as evidencing an earlier attempt to express Christian prayer and intercession – the communicative rapport enjoyed by the faithful with God – in terms of manifest success.

Nouns *gebed* and *bed/bedu* differ fundamentally from *biddan* and its derivatives in their basic semantic confinement to religious 'prayer', only scarcely meaning 'petition'.[24] In their relationship to *biddan*, the two nouns have separate derivational histories, with *bedu* the older form and *gebed* more probably a WGmc innovation.[25] Nevertheless, *Daniel* (×3) suggests that *gebed* was established as a vernacular term for religious prayer by the early eighth century, applicable for pagan and Christian worship, as well as the prayer ritual and prayers themselves discretely. As singular, *tō þām gebede* (202a) 'to that prayer ritual' refers to worship of the golden idol, performance of which Nebuchadnezzar fails to compel the Three Youths, while their actual utterances (*gebedu rǣrde*, 191b) are plural. Further on, the Youths cry out: *wē þec herigað, hālig drihten,/and gebedum brēmað, þū gebletsad eart* (404-405) 'we praise thee, holy Lord, and extol thee with prayers, thou art blessed'. Comparison with Daniel 3:52 shows that the poet has augmented the ideas of benediction and praise in the source with a prayer noun.[26] Although there is a strong chance that the alliterative needs of *gebletsad* in l.405 might have motivated inclusion of *gebed*, its ready applicability importantly shows that *gebed*

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[22] Nic (A) 12.1.15
[23] ChronE 1043a. 1
[24] See also ByrM 1, 3.3.113. Byrhtferth's use as 'speech' or 'discourse' is peculiar.
[25] Kluge (2012) s.v. *gebet* https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/KLUGE/entry/kluge.3570/html
[26] Daniel 3:52 *Benedictus es, Domine Deus patrum nostrorum: et laudabilis, et gloriosus, et superexaltatus in saecula* 'Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers, and worthy to be praised and glorified, and exalted above all forever and ever'

encompassed more semantically than just the instrument of request for concrete benefits (like *biddan* in *Genesis A*), including also the idea of prayer as instrument for the praise of God, through which spiritual life was exercised and strengthened by the faithful.

This idea of prayer as a ritual act of moral necessity recurs in Cynewulfian verse. The closing homiletic lines of *Guthlac A* speak of the faithful as weathered against sin through pious activities, including prayer:

> Fæsten lufiað,
> beorgað him bealonīþ   ond **gebedu** sēcað,
> swincað wið synnum,   healdað sōð ond ryht.
>   (808-10)

[They love fasting, they shelter themselves from baleful hate and seek **prayers**, they toil against sins and they hold truth and right.]

The phraseology of l.809b recurs exactly in *The Phoenix* (458b) attributing similar piety to the wondrous bird. The demon in *Juliana* identifies the forgoing of prayer as his first casualty when inflaming temptation: *Ic hine þæs swīþe synnum onǣle/þæt he byrnende from gebede swīceð* (372-73) 'I strongly inflame him with sins, so that burning, he desists from prayer', followed by retreat from the *gebedstowe* (376a) 'prayer-place'. Cynewulf thus conceives prayer as first defence and bulwark against an ever-active threat of temptation to sin and the prayer-place as a protected zone for its performance.

The collocational tendencies of *gebed* are remarkably consistent in later WS homilies and hagiography where the noun overwhelmingly occurs in the plural oblique cases. Adverbial phrases *mid gebedum* and *on gebedum* semantically express 'prayers' discretely, indicating that performance of prayers collectively stands for the ritual, differently to an equivalent MnE expression 'in prayer'. Such phrases are frequently modified by *his* or *hire* and governed by *āstreccan* (normally in Ælfric), *āwunian, þurhwunian* and *standan*, with *handa āhebban* also extremely common, for example *Matheus þā þurhwuniende mid gebedum* 'Matthew thus persisting with prayers (in prayer)'.[27] Accusative plural *gebedu* occurs with *singan* and

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[27] LS 1.1 (Andrew Bright), 31

begangan, for example *sang his gebedu on sǣlicere ȳðe* 'he sang his prayers in the ocean wave'[28] and *beēode hȳre gebedu* 'she performed her prayers'.[29] Examples of adverbial prayer phrases with either *æt* or singular *gebed* are exceptional.[30] The singular is typically reserved clearly for one discrete prayer, for example *on þām paternoster swā swā Crīst sylf ūs gesette þæt gebed* 'in the Pater Noster just as Christ himself established that prayer for us'.[31]

The local examples in late WS prose frequently diverge from available source models. In Ælfric's Life of St. Lucy, for example, *āstrehton hī on gebedum* 'they stretched themselves out in prayers' translates *prostaverunt se* 'they prostrated themselves',[32] and *þurhwunode on gebedum* 'he persisted in prayers' translates just *oravit* 'he prayed';[33] the instrumental *mid gebedum* sometimes directly translates *orationibus*.[34] The periphrastic treatment of the second example might reflect sensitivity to narrative context, occurring immediately after the saint has been disembowelled. But it is probable that these constructions were ultimately inspired by Latin and became established vernacular phraseology. In Bede's *History*, for example, *in precibus peragere* 'carry out in prayers' is attested *inter alia* and coheres with *āwunian* and *þurhwunian* constructions. Outside late WS homily and hagiography, the position is less consistent. Scripture typically follows the source, for example *þā hē of gebede ārās* 'when he arose from prayer' for *cum surrexisset ab oratione*.[35] Alfredian texts also prefer singular *on his gebede*, overwhelmingly governed by *āstreccan* but they sometimes show the plural construction.[36] Adjectival modification with *hālig* is also common throughout early and late prose, frequently with no local precedent, for example *in hālgum gebedum* 'in holy prayers' translates *in oratione* in Bede,[37] but it is unlikely that *hālig* was fundamentally needed to identify precative contexts, because *gebed* almost exclusively translates *oratio*, *deprecatio*, *postulatio* and *prex* in glosses. Of 381 examples in the psalters, 97% gloss *oratio*, which is the basic prayer noun.

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[28] ÆCHom II, 10 88.78 (St. Cuthbert)
[29] ÆCHom I, 9. 255.194
[30] LS 10.1 (Guth), 20.6; LS 18.2 (NatMaryAss 10J), 144, 270, 300
[31] ÆHomM 7, 98
[32] ÆLS (Lucy) 20; *Pass.Luci.* 107, 29-30
[33] ÆLS (Lucy) 127; *Pass.Luci.* 109, 15-27
[34] ÆLS (Lucy) 36; *Pass.Luci.* 107, 28
[35] Luke (WSCp) 22:45
[36] GD 1 (C) 2.16.18, 9.70.2; *Dial.* 1.2, 1.9
[37] Bede 4, 26.350.6; *HE* 4.23

The relative infrequency of *bed* makes its unique tendencies more difficult to define. Occasional examples in homily and hagiography are similar to *gebed*, for example *on his bedon ðurhwunede* 'he persisted in his prayers'.[38] Similarly to *gebed*, in the singular, *bed* refers to a discrete prayer, for example *þæt hālig bed þæt is pater noster* 'that holy prayer that is the Pater Noster'.[39] Singular *bed* is scattered throughout the corpus with plural *beodo* consistent in the Durham Ritual translating *preces*.[40] Rarely in psalters, *bed* coupled with *bēn* once translate together *oratio* and *deprecatio*, respectively, while another couplet with *gebed* finds *bed* for *deprecatio*, suggesting a hierarchy of preference for these three prayer nouns in relation to *oratio*.[41] There are traces of an original feminine *ō*-stem *bedu* with unambiguous Germanic cognates.[42] The Ælfrician example *hī heora beda beēoden* 'they performed their prayer(s)' is less certain for its potential scribal confusion of *a* for neuter plural *u*,[43] but *bedu* for *postulatio* in the *Liber Scintillarum* is verifiable for concordance in number.[44]

Compounds reveal some intriguing correspondences. *Cnēowbed* 'knee-prayer' is often compared with OS *kneobeda* as evidence for a traditional Germanic compound, but the local contexts are seldom discussed in detail. In the *Heliand*, this noun expresses the adoration of the Magi:

> Thea uurekkion fellun
> te them kinde an **kneobeda**   endi ina an cuninguuîsa
> gôdan grôttun
>
>> (671b-73a)

> [The heroes from foreign lands fell in **knee-prayer** to the good child and greeted him in the royal manner]

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[38] LS 5 (InventCrossNap) 183. See also LS 18.1 (NatMaryAss 10N), 139, 297, 371.
[39] LS 5 (InventCrossNap), 546
[40] DurRitGl 1, 6.22, 8.18, 39.19 and other examples.
[41] PsGlE (Harsley) 39:13; PsGlK (Sisam) 54:2
[42] Pressure from *gebed* might have motivated re-analysis of *bedu* as a neuter *a*-stem.
[43] ÆLS (Julian & Basilissa), 119
[44] LibSc, 54.11

The poet's rendering of Matthew 2:11 expands *et procidentes adoraverunt eum* 'and falling down they adored him' with the observation that the Magi greet the Christ-child in the 'royal way'.[45] This provides further evidence for a certain equivalence of terminology between social custom and worship in Germanic culture. Later with reference to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, the adverbial phrase *craftag an kniobeda* modifies *hnîgan* (4744): *iak imu thô selƀo gihnêg sunu drohtines/craftag an kniobeda* (4744-45) 'and the powerful son of the Lord bowed in knee-prayer', which periphrastically translates *et positis genibus procidit in faciem suam et orabat* 'and kneeling he fell upon his face and prayed'.[46]

Comparable OE constructions occur just twice in a version of the Invention of the Cross: *þā fēol hē on cnēowbedum* 'then he fell in knee-prayer' and *ðā fēol hē ōðre sīðen on cnēowbedum* 'then he fell a second time in knee-prayer'.[47] Plural *cnēowbedum* accords with the tendencies for adverbial phrases of prayer in late WS prose, but modification of *feallan* is very rare. There are four more late WS examples with *cnēowgebed*, all adverbial phrases with a dative plural, two of which modify *feallan*.[48] It is possible the compound is a vernacular attempt to render *genuflectio*, but the calque *cnēowbiging* (×3) 'knee-bending' was also available.[49] Some scholars have further compared these compounds with Vedic Sanskrit *jñubā́dh-* 'knee-pressing', a *hapax* attested in a verse from an early part of the *Rig Veda* (c. 1500-1200 BCE) where it refers to worship of Agni.[50] Secure etymological connection of *beda* and *bā́dh-* remains disputed (see below),[51] but assuming it obtains, *bā́dh-* in the sense of 'pressing' might have important implications for an interpretation of past participle *gebeden* glossing *compulsus* 'pressed'[52] and further evidence the antiquity of the the *biddan* word-family's devotional connotations alongside its social meanings.

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[45] Compare Tat. 8.6 *inti nidarfallente betotun inan* 'and falling down they prayed/worshipped him'
[46] Compare Tat. 181.1 *inti nidargilegiten kneuuon fiel* 'and he fell on laid-down knees', combining Luke 22:41, Matthew 26:39 and Mark 14:35.
[47] LS 5 (InventCrossNap), 131, 140
[48] ÆLS (Julian & Basilissa), 49; ÆHomM 15 (Ass 9), 274; LS 14 (MargaretCCCC 303), 20.1; RegC 1 (Zup), 51
[49] RegCGl (Kornexl), 43.1024, 43.1035; Mark (Li) 1:40;
[50] Schmitt. (1967), 199; *RV* 6.1.6. Geldner, trans. (1951) II, 92:

> *saparyeṇyaḥ sa priyo vikṣvaghnirhotā mandro ni ṣasādā yajīyān |*
> *táṃ tvā vayáṃ dáma ā́ dīdivā́ṃsam úpa **jñubā́dho** námasā sadema ||*

> [In Ehren soll man den bei den Clanen beliebten Agni halten. Der erfreuliche Opferpriester hat sich niedergelassen, der Opfertüchtigere. Dir, der im Hause leuchtet, wollen wir **die Kniee beugend** mit Verneigung nahen.]

[51] Mayrhofer (1996) II, 222
[52] AldV 1 (Goossens), 4460; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 4580

The translational capacities of Germanic comparanda may evidence a shared, inherited basis for the *biddan* word-family, which could plausibly aid the distinguishing of traditional constructions from syntactic innovations. Gothic *bidjan* (×122) is very frequent, translating an array of New Testament terms for praying, asking and entreaty. It always translates προσεύχομαι (×28), which is the normal verb for praying to God in the Synoptic Gospels and Pauline Epistles; such constructions are typically intransitive or introduce a relative clause.[53] *Bidjan* also translates αἰτοῦμαι 'ask' (×26), ἐπαιτέω (×1) and παρακαλέω 'call to' (×30), which almost always express social entreaty, as well as ἐρωτάω 'ask' (×19) and δέομαι 'be in need of, implore' (×11) in both social and religious contexts.

Interestingly, *usbidjan* once translates the traditional Greek verb of ritual precation εὔχομαι (×3), a usage not entirely dissimilar to that of *ābiddan* in *Genesis A*.[54] Issues surrounding the authorship of the Gothic Gospels and Epistles, respectively, aside,[55] the syntactic consistency of *bidjan*-clauses strikingly contrasts the diversity of the Greek. *Bidjan* almost always takes an accusative of besought entity and a genitive of the thing desired,[56] undisturbed by Greek syntax, wherein all prayer verbs govern an accusative of desired thing and δέομαι a genitive of the person requested. As in OE, customary formality also seems to invite idiomatic usage, for example *bidjiþ gawairþjis* 'he bids of peace (sues for peace)' with the expected genitive translates ἐρωτᾷ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην 'he desires those things in accordance with peace' with an adverbial phrase.[57] Wulfila also supplies *bidjan* to imperative clauses, for example *bidja þuk usgagg fairra mis* 'I bid you, depart from me!' translating ἔξελθε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ 'depart from me!'[58] Likewise, the beneficiary of prayer is consistently rendered *bi* + accusative where the Greek alternates between περί and ὑπέρ + genitive.[59] While there are isolated instances of *bidjan* with adverbial constructions that are analogous to Greek syntax,[60] the balance of examples present a vernacular syntax and semantics comparable with constructions observed as typical for *biddan* and are, therefore, suggestive of traditional usage.

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[53] Luke 9:18 *was is bidjandins*: προσευχόμενον 'as he was praying'; Mark 13:18 *bidjaiþ ei*: προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα 'pray ye that...' and other examples.
[54] Romans 9:3
[55] Ratkus (2018), 3-34; Falluomini (2015) *passim*.
[56] John 14:14 *jabai hvis bidjiþ mik*: ἐάν τι αἰτήσητέ με 'if you ask me of anything' and other examples.
[57] Luke 14:32
[58] Luke 5:8
[59] Matthew 5:44 *bidjaiþ bi þans*: προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν 'pray for them'; John 17:9 *ik bi ins bidja*: ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐρωτῶ 'I pray for them' and other examples.
[60] 2 Corinthians 13:7; 2 Thessalonians. 3:12

The noun *bida* (×30) is less frequent but basically coherent semantically with *bidjan*, translating προσευχή (×11) and δέησις (×11) in equal measure, once both together.[61] Along with ἔντευξις 'prayer, intercession' (×1), however, these are all prayer contexts; there are just two examples of *bida* expressing a social request, whereby it translates αἴτημα 'request' and παράκλησις 'summons'.[62] Although the Gothic evidence is limited by the nature of the source material, like OE, the noun is heavily weighted towards religious meaning. Although collocational tendencies are harder to establish with fewer examples, there are two instances where *bidai anahaitan* 'invoke with prayer' reproduces a Greek verb of request with no adverbial noun phrase.[63] It is possible that this Gothic expression was proper to requests made within religious contexts. This view is strengthened by evidence for the association of the *haitan* word-family with cult and suggests that formal declaration to the divine power of a *bida* was a feature of pre-Christian worship.

The OS evidence reveals a slightly different state of affairs. Collocation of *te bedu/bedo* with a verb of prostration such as *hnîgan* or *feallan* is the main means of expressing performance of a prayer ritual in the *Heliand*, and *beda* (×10) is not attested outside such constructions, for example *te bedu gihnêg* (981b) 'he bowed in prayer'. This example is typical, with the adverbial *beda*-phrase occupying the third foot in the line followed by the verb it modifies. *Hnîgan* occurs in six such instances, the construction probably rendering *orare* in Tatian.[64] The poet twice employs *te bedu* with *fôrin* 'they fared' and *gangan* 'go' to render *orare* and *adorare* with a finite verb of movement.[65]

As with OE and Gothic, *biddian* (×28) enjoys greater currency than *beda*, but is more markedly restricted to social request, typically governing an accusative construction of interpersonal petition, sometimes with a genitive of the thing desired. Where an epitome obtains in Tatian, the verb is frequently *petere*. The few instances of *biddian* expressing human-divine petition are all transitive, with examples of intransitive 'praying' (attested in OE and Gothic) entirely absent. Examples include: *bidid thene hêlagon drohtin* (3500b) 'he prays to the Holy Lord' and *ferahes biddian* (5412a) 'to ask for the life'. Very frequently, *biddian* governs a *that*-clause

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[61] 1 Timothy 5:5 *jah þairhwisiþ in bidom*: καὶ προσμένει ταῖς δεήσεσιν καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς 'perservere in prayer and supplications'

[62] Philemon 4:6; 2 Corinthians 8:17

[63] 1 Thessalonians 4:1 *anahaitam bidai izwis*: ἐρωτῶμεν ὑμᾶς 'we beseech you; 2 Timothy 2:22 *bidai anahaitandam fraujan*: ἐπικαλουμένων τὸν κύριον 'calling on the Lord'

[64] *Heliand* 1565b (Tat. 34.1); 1579b (Tat. 34.2); 3122b (Tat. 91.1); 4739b (Tat. 180.3)

[65] *Heliand* 593b (Tat. 8.1); 4787b (Tat. 182.1)

of request, where Tatian's Latin expresses it in direct speech. Where no verb of asking occurs in the source, the context of entreaty seems to provide such motivation for the OS translation. For example, the Song of Simeon opens: *et dixit 'nunc dimittis servum tuum Domine* 'he said "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart'. The poet reproduces the verse with a complex sentence of formal request:[66]

> 'Nu ic thi hêrro scal' quad he,
> '**gerno biddean**,   nu ic sus gigamalod bium,
> that thu thînan holdan scalc   nu hinan huerban lâtas
>   (480b-82)

[Said he 'now Lord, I thee shall **earnestly bid**, now I am so old, that thou lettest thy loyal servant turn hence]

There are further examples where a verb of speaking is re-interpreted explicitly as a request with *biddian*. For the Wedding Feast at Cana, *siu thô gerno bad* (2021b) translates *dicit* + direct speech.[67] When Jesus calms the storm, the poet responds to the rhetorical urgency of *clamavit dicens* with *endi gerno bad* (2948b). Context provides similar motivation in the account of the Syro-Phoenecian woman's daughter (2986b) and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (3388b), with *misere mei* 'have mercy on me' opening direct speech in both cases.[68] When the Sanhedrin interrogate Jesus with *dixit* or *ait* + direct speech, the poet reproduces *endi gerno bad* (5084b).[69] The exhortations of Pilate's wife *im helpan bad* (5455b) find *dicens* + direct speech in the source.[70] Jesus' entreaty of forgiveness on the cross reads: *god fader/mahtigna bad* (5540b-41a) for *dicebat* + direct speech.[71] The imperative words of the Penitent Thief *Domine memento mei* 'Lord, remember me' are re-cast as formal request *williu thena landes ward/thena godes suno gerno biddian that* (5598b-5599).[72] Jesus' statement of thirst finds the request: *drincan biddian* (5641b). Where the centurion says he is not worthy that Christ 'should enter under my roof' (*ut intres sub tectum meum*), the poet rephrases that the man dare not 'bid' (*biddien*, 2122b) him enter.

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[66] Luke 2:28-29
[67] Tat. 45.2-6
[68] Tat. 81.4; Tat. 107.3-4
[69] Tat. 190.1
[70] Tat. 199.5
[71] Tat. 202.4
[72] Tat. 205.6

These examples collectively reveal *biddian* as highly idiomatic for petitions characterised by status disparity, urgency, or customary formality. Together with Wulfila's augmenting of imperative clauses with *bidjan*, the OS examples evidence the significance of this verb within the formal rhetoric of request in Germanic tradition, wherein its core meaning 'ask' was qualified by a connotative texture that was culturally defined. *Ābiddian* (×3) shares a similar context of formality with *biddian*, but seems confined to intercession: where the crowd petitions the life of Barabbas (5405a, 5415b) and again where John requests for Peter be let into the high priest's courtyard (4952b). Meanwhile, *gibiddian* always means obtain, specifically through begging (3341a), which is the exact converse of OE *ābiddan* and *gebiddan*.

Bedôn (×2), a weak second-class derivative of *beda*, only expresses the prayer ritual as a form of worship, translating *adorare* where Jesus is tempted by Satan.[73] The allative prefix *ad-* seems significant to the semantic modulation from prayer as 'request' to 'worship'. The third *Genesis* fragment suggests how *bedôn* and *biddian* might have interrelated. When Abraham receives the three angels, the couplet *bedode endi bad gerno* (166) 'he prayed and asked earnestly' renders Genesis 18:2 *adoravit in terram* 'and worshipped down to the ground', which is followed by *dixit* introducing Abraham's direct speech in 18:3. *Bedôn* is a recent derivative of *beda*, which seems to have been semantically weighted towards worship across the Germanic languages. In the Saxon *Genesis*, it encompasses the idea of prayer as ritual or 'act of worship', while *biddian* concerns the request itself.

The contemporary, but very direct OHG translation of Tatian can be compared with the *Heliand*. The semantic split between 'ask' and 'pray', which is only occasionally realised lexically in OS with *biddian* and *bedôn*, is thoroughly established in the East Franconian dialect of Tatian. Distribution is consistent: *betōn* occurs always for *orare* (×28) and *adorare* (×21), with one exception of *rogare*, but all religious contexts; *bittan*, however, occurs about as many times, but almost always socially for *petere* (×23), *rogare* (×23), *posco* (×2), *postulo* (×1) and *deprecor* (×1). Further comparison of *bittan* with other verbs of asking reveals a consistency of distribution, with *fragēn* always for *interrogare* (×33) and rare *eiscōn* (×3) for *interrogare, sciscitor* and *reptere*, both of which verbs were more related to informational inquiry. For

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[73] *Heliand* 1104a, 1109b (Tat. 15.5)

prayer nouns, *gibet* prevails (×7) exclusively for *oratio*, *deprecatio*, *obsecratio* and *observatio*, with no attestation of *beta*. This situation is rather comparable to OE, and indeed perhaps reflects Anglo-Saxon influence at Fulda.

Germanic comparanda, thus, strongly suggest that social and religious semantics were both traditional to the pre-Christian *biddan*-word-family. While its etymology remains unresolved, the main issues are briefly reviewed here for their potential implications concerning the relative chronology of the verb's social and ritual semantics. Three views are defended. First, scholars have argued that PGmc **bedjan-*, from earlier **bidjan-*, was a zero-grade derivative of **bīdan-* (I) 'await, expect' < PIE **bʰéidʰ-e-* (πείθομαι 'trust, rely, be persuaded', *fīdere* 'trust') which underwent an attendant semantic shift 'expect' > 'ask'.[74] According to this view, the related causatives attested in Gothic *baidjan* and OE *bǣdan* < **baidjan-* 'compel, force' most transparently preserve the IE root semantics of 'compulsion' (πείθω 'make someone to obey', OCS *běditi* 'compel'), which in Germanic refers to the exertion of moral rather than physical pressure, the latter of which was covered by **nauþjan-*.[75]

The basic idea 'press someone to do something' would, therefore, underlie the meaning 'request', with **bidjan-* (reflecting an original zero-grade derivative to the PIE root **bʰéidʰ-*) shifting to **bedjan-* on analogy with **legjan-* and **setjan-*.[76] Recent authorities, however, have shown that merger of *e* and *i* required for such analogy occurred separately in East and West Germanic, diminishing the probability of this interpretation.[77] The existence of related noun **bedō* might also speak against this explanation, because the feminine *ō*-stem class was productive at a very early stage and it would also, presumably, have had to change its root vowel analogically in all branches of Germanic.

The second opinion argues that the original core meaning of the *biddan* word-family was religious, but this interpretation depends upon the hotly debated phonological development of word-initial PIE **gʷʰ-* > PGmc **b-*.[78] This view proposed PGmc **bedjan-* < **gʷʰedʰ-ié-* 'pray' on the basis of putative direct cognates in Welsh *gweddi* 'pray', Young Avestan *jaiδiiemi* 'I

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[74] Orel (2003), 45; De Vries (1962), 35; Jóhannesson (1951-56), 604; Falk and Torp (1903-06), 50; Osthoff (1882), 140ff.

[75] Benveniste (1973), 95, 99; Kroonen (2013), 57; Jóhannesson (1951-56), 631; Holthausen (1934), 14

[76] Osthoff (1882), 140ff.

[77] Kroonen (2013), 57; Boutkan and Siebinga (2005), 46.

[78] Seebold (1967), 112-13; Meillet (1924), 23-24. More tentatively Bezzenberger (1890), 252; Zupitza (1896), 31.

ask, pray', Greek θέσσεσθαι 'implore, obtain by supplication' and Gaulish *uediíumí* 'I pray, ask'.[79] Wider cognates include iterative $g^{wh}od^h$-*éie*- (Greek ποθέω 'I long for, desire', OIr. *guidiu* 'I pray')[80] and nasal-present $*g^{wh}end^h$- (Lithuanian *pa-si-gendù* 'long for, miss', OCS *žędati* 'desire, thirst'), which point to a root meaning 'desire'.[81] Two recent and important studies in Germanic historical linguistics accept this etymology as the 'more attractive' for its semantic coherence with a wider array of IE prayer vocabulary, while acknowledging its total dependence on a disputed phonological development.[82]

A third view argues for an underlying root $*b^hed^h$- 'bend, press, afflict' which accrued precative connotations through habitual use in contexts of social or religious entreaty.[83] The main evidence for these semantics are Albanian *bindem* 'bow myself' and Sanskrit *bā́dhate* 'urge, press, afflict', the latter of which justifies proposing a genetic, phraseological connection between Vedic *jñu-bā́dh-* 'knee-bending, prayer' and OS *knio-beda*.[84] This is indeed an intriguing parallel and oft-cited by earlier scholars with, admittedly, less attention paid to the local contexts of both sides. Some important recent authorities, however, doubt Pokorny's relationship of *bā́dhate* with *biddan* and other 'oppressing' cognates on the basis of apparently irreconcilable root-structures.[85]

A traditional, core association of *biddan* with worship is possible only for the $*g^{wh}ed^h$-*ié*- 'pray' etymology, but it is harder to account for its semantic expansion from technical cultic verb into the field of social relations. Derivatives of $*b^heid^h$- 'expect, compel', rather, relate firmly to interpersonal obligations in the social sphere, which the Germanic evidence at large shows to have been firmly established for *biddan* and its cognates.[86] Because of the specialised nature of cultic terminology, it is more economical to suppose semantic expansion from social to ritual meanings rather than the converse. Both explanations, however, present certain unresolved phonological issues. On balance, derivation from $*b^hed^h$- 'press, urge', seems the most

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[79] Beekes (2010), 544; Rix (2001), 217; Blažek (2008), 73

[80] Rix (2001), 217; Beekes (2010), 544, 1215-16; Kroonen (2013), 61

[81] Rix (2001), 217; Beekes (2010), 1215-16.

[82] Kroonen (2013), 61; Ringe (2006), 105-106; Rix (2001), 217

[83] Boutkan & Siebinga (2005), 46; Lehmann (1986), 67-68; Pokorny (1959) I, 114; Feist (1939), 89, 337; Meringer (1928), 120; Specht (1927), 19ff; Vendryes (1921-22), 235; Osten-Sacken (1909), 377; Schweizer. (1852), 561. See also for Indo-Iranian Mayrhofer (1992), I, 447 s.v. *jñu-bā́dh-*; II, 422 s.v. *bā́dhate*; Hoffmann (1960), 114; Uhlenbeck (1898-99), 189 s.v. *bā́dhate.*

[84] Boutkan and Siebinga (2005), 34; Pokorny (1959), I, 114; De Vries (1962), 35; Van Windekens (1941), 94; Feist (1939), 337; Vendreyes (1921-22), 235; Lloyd et al. (1998), s.v. *bitten* [online]

[85] Rix (2001), 68; Mayrhofer (1996), II, 222

[86] Benveniste (1973), 84-100.

economical solution with respect to linguistic form and semantic content: the phonological issues are less severe, and semantic expansion of a core meaning 'bend, press' into new, figurative usages under the influence of cultural habits is readily plausible.

To summarise, this study argues that pre-Christian *biddan* denoted formal request between parties whose relationship was characterised by status disparity, primarily within a social setting, but also extending unproblematically into religious contexts. Correlation with the syntactic tendencies of Germanic comparanda appear to confirm that this overlap of social and religious meaning was more contextual than sharply semantic, because verbal activity conceived in relation to an explicit, desired outcome was common to both situations, and a *biddan* request made to one's lord or divinity as superior personalities was arguably conceptually identical in pre-Christian Germanic culture. The OE literary sources indicate that these religious connotations were gradually developed in a more technical direction to convey Christianity's particular concept of prayer as a ritual unto itself. In other words, Christian *biddan* was renovated as a verb of effective ritual activity, with prayer now the regular means of establishing and maintaining communication with the divine, and a morally necessary exercise for the worshipper. This contrasts *biddan*'s status within the heathen system as an ancillary activity performed once the human-divine conduit had been established through other technical procedures. Christian prayer also encompasses 'praise' and 'veneration', similarly to be conveyed through the conduit that prayer established.

It is plausible that intransitivity and the absence of explicit reference to a desired outcome are the syntactic markers of inculturation with such ideas in *biddan* constructions. The diversity of syntactic and collocational means for expressing this concept of prayer in other Germanic languages, likewise suggest innovations conceived in response to new ideas foreign to pre-Christian worship, where *biddan* was an appropriate gesture within a devotional setting, rather than definitive of the communicative rapport enjoyed with divinity. Furthermore, despite the availability of an ancient noun in *bedu* (Gothic *bida*), it seems likely that *gebed* was innovated to convey the new 'prayer ritual', because the older noun was too firmly entrenched in the semantics of request for a desired outcome. Nevertheless, *bedu* and its cognates probably possessed stronger religious connotations than *biddan*, because OHG *beta* provided the basis for a new prayer verb *betōn*, which lexicalised the inherited contextual split between social and religious activity. To a heathen Anglo-Saxon, *biddan* as 'prayer' would have meant the

instrumental part of a devotional act, the cultic identity of which was defined by other, technical terminology such as *blōtan*, *bletsian* or *hālsian*.

ii. *hālsian* and *hālsung*

Hālsian (×248, wk. 2) presented an alternative precative verb to *biddan* that was more restricted to prayer ritual. This difference between the two verbs reflects the fact that pre-Christian *hālsian* was almost certainly exclusive to cult, where *biddan* primarily pertained to social relations. Furthermore, although both verbs imply procedural formality, examples in the corpus show that *hālsian* denoted a stronger register of request closer to 'implore' or 'entreat'. Ritualistic overtones also frequently accompany the performance of *hālsian*, usually by way of invocation in the name of higher powers in order to procure a favourable outcome; in earlier sources, these characteristic features of a *hālsian* performance are defined according to the particular ritual contexts of exorcism for Christian practice and forms of omen-reading within heathen tradition. Abstract noun *hālsung* (×78) shows a similar semantic range in 'supplication', 'entreaty', 'exorcism' and 'augury'; agent nouns *hālsere* (×12) and *hālsiend* (×5) denote 'exorcist'. Also attested are the compounds *hālsunggebed* (×1) 'prayer of supplication', *hālsunggebēn* (×2) 'prayer of supplication', *hālsungbōc* (×1) 'book of exorcisms' and *hālsungtīma* 'time of supplication' (×1).

Germanic comparanda support the connection of pre-Christian *hālsian* to forms of divination that were typical to communal, tribal cult, such as augury, haruspicy and the observation of celestial phenomena; further supportive is a transparent etymological connection with *hǣl* 'omen'.[87] The question remains as to the circumstances surrounding the verb's inculturation. In one sense, *hālsian* is comparable to *bletsian* and *hūsel* as another technical term for an effective heathen ritual that was particular to purpose and occasion; more transparently than *bletsian*, which must be reconstructed from external comparanda, *hālsian*'s affiliation with portents is internally transparent in the OE corpus. Differently to *bletsian* and *hūsel*, however, *hālsian* has not been absolutely inculturated with Christian meaning. Traces of the verb's

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[87] The present study departs from previous scholarly categorisation of *hālsian* under 'Divination' and 'Magic' (see Jente [1921] 'Los und Weissagung', 251-53; 'Zauber', 324-26 and Philippson [1929], 'Zauber' 208, 'Weissagung', 223), because the procedures for procuring portents, denoted by this verb in OE, were highly conventional features of public worship within ancient religions, essentially concerned with the maintenance of relations between a community and its divine patrons.

heathen semantics survive in earlier sources, and it maintains equal application to pagan and Christian worship throughout the corpus, as well as, in a minority of examples, to social entreaty. It will be argued in this discussion that *hālsian* was inculturated (like *bletsian* and *hūsel*) at the early stages of the Gregorian mission for the particular ritual purpose of exorcism and arguably, by extension, miraculous healings; it will be further argued that this rehabilitation was secured by an available analogy in the invocation of higher powers for procuring a beneficial outcome from the divine; with *bletsian* and *hūsel*, this rehabilitation was motivated by the need to match heathenism's effective ritual forms in order to succeed them decisively.

Hālsian very typically occurs in the first person in direct speech, normally singular, and almost always as the main verb governing a *þæt*-clause. Such constructions account for around 49% of the data, for example *ic hālsige þē ðurh God þæt ðū mē ne þrēage* 'I beg thee through God that you do not torment me';[88] *wē hālsiað ēow muntas & dena þæt gē ūs oferfeallan & bewrigen* 'we entreat you, mountains and valleys, that you fall upon and cover us';[89] *ic ðē hālsige þurh God þæne līfigendan þæt þū secge ūs gif þū sȳ Crīst þæs līfigendan Godes sunu* 'I adjure you by the living God that you tell us if you are Christ, son of the living God'.[90] These examples are representative of the kinds of formal syntactic features that together associate *hālsian*-clauses with invocatory ritual that was intended to procure an outcome in the name of a higher power. They are statements of direct address that explicitly identify the addressed party first with an accusative second-person pronoun *þē* or *ēow* and sometimes also a vocative noun, differently to *biddan* where comparable word-order *ic bidde mē* is always reflexive. The declaration very frequently invokes the agency of a higher power, for example *ðurh God* or similar phrasing. Such invocations tend not to occur in preterite constructions, which are much fewer in number than present-tense clauses. The *þæt*-clause expresses the request, which is normally either an act or omission rather than bestowal of a tangible benefit.

Scripture certainly provides direct analogues for this invocatory mode. In both examples above from the Gospels, the entreaty is identical: *adjuro per Deum*. Other translations provide many further examples, for example *ic gihālsigo ðec ðerh blōd driht' vs' hǣl' crīst'* translates *adiuro te per sanguinem domini nostri* in the Durham Ritual.[91] Other less direct examples appear to

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[88] Mark (WSCp) 5:7 *adjuro te per Deum, ne me torqueas*
[89] HomU 6 (ScraggVerc 15), 121
[90] HomS 18, 110; Matthew 26:63 *ait illi 'Adjuro te per Deum vivum, ut dicas nobis si tu es Christus Filius Dei'*
[91] DurRitGl 1 (Thomp-Lind), 113.5. See also GD 1 (C), 8.53.18; *Dial.* 1.8 and other examples.

confirm that invocation in the name of a higher power was inherent to the semantics of *hālsian*. The translator of Psalm 30:4 has been prompted to recast the sentence *et propter nomen tuum deduces me et enutries me* 'and for your name's sake you will lead me and nourish me' into a *hālsian*-construction in the first person: *and on þīnum naman ic þē healsige þæt þū bēo mīn lādþēow, and mē fēde* 'and in your name I entreat you that you be my leader and feed me',[92] doubtless because this was the best available vernacular response to *propter nomen tuum* within a religious precative context. One example in *Beowulf* shows unique phraseology for the invoked entity, however, which may be traditional. Beowulf recounts Hrothgar's plea to pursue Grendel's mother where the higher power (Hygelac) is invoked with a dative/instrumental phrase: *þā se ðēoden mec ðīne līfe healsode hrēohmōd* (2131-32a) 'then the prince entreated me, by your life, rough of mind'. Interestingly, the context here is social, with Hygelac a higher power for his superior position as Beowulf's lord, and the entreaty for procuring the performance of a heroic act.

In the preamble to beseeching, *hālsian*-clauses are typically verbose compared to other verbs of asking. Marked by length and enumeration, the structure of the diction probably preserves elements of traditional verbal formulae. This example from *Juliana* is typical:

> Forþon ic þec **hālsige**   þurh þæs hȳhstan meaht,
> rodorcyninges giefe,   se þe on rōde trēo
> geþrowade,   þrymmes ealdor,
> þæt þū miltsige   mē þearfendum
>
> (446-49)

> [Therefore, I **entreat** you through the power of the Highest, grace of the Heaven-king, he who on the rood-tree suffered, Prince of Hosts, that you have mercy on me in my needing]

Actual practice of this formal, expansive style is best represented in administrative documents recording contemporary legal procedure. In each of the three West-Saxon laws of ordeal (*iudicia dei* 'judgments of God'), a provision entitled *hālsung* in two of the texts itemises

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[92] PPs (Prose) 30:4; Psalm 30:4

various invocations to be recited in a correct execution of an ordeal trial.[93] In the third text, the statement *hālsie man ðonne man hēr*[94] 'should be recited when one is present' stands instead of a section title.[95]

The invocation of higher powers in a legal context is conceptually akin to oath-swearing. Caiaphas' imploring of Jesus to reveal his identity at the Sanhedrin trial (Matthew 26:63) recurs throughout the corpus, in each case *hālsie* translating *adjuro*, which shows that this verse was clearly perceived as an appropriate context for the verb, especially since his plea is made *per Deum vivum*.[96] Almost all examples of this verse (mostly in homilies) reproduce its direct speech, although Ælfric once renders it indirectly: *Þā āxode hine. se ealdorbiscop and mid āðe hālsode* 'then the prince-bishop asked him and implored with oaths'.[97] This example provides a valuable local context in which to compare *hālsian* as a marked verb of asking with unmarked *ācsian*. The two verbs are directed differently, *ācsian* to the eliciting of information and *hālsian* to the ritualistic mode of delivery that is signalled adverbially by *mid āðe*. Charters and wills are another relevant group of administrative document where the entreaty is typically that of a testator to successors (*alle ūre æfterfylgend* or similar), stipulating conditions attached to the bequeathed property.[98]

Hālsian sometimes couples with *biddan*. It is likely, however, that *biddan* has been introduced to these contexts, because all examples show features more typical to *hālsian* constructions, such as a dependent *ðæt*-clause and invocation in the name of a higher power, for example *forþām ic bidde ēow and hālsige þurh þone līfiendan God þæt gē geswicon ēowres unrihtes* 'because I bid and entreat you by the living God that you cease your iniquity'.[99] In some cases, the couplet seems purely stylistic, for example *bidde & hālsie* occurs consistently in one ninth-century account of the invention of the true cross where another version reads *hālsie* alone.[100] Elsewhere, for instance in wills and grants where the text concerns future preservation of

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[93] LawIudDei VI, 1; LawIudDei VII, 12.1
[94] LawIudDei VIII, 0.1
[95] LawIudDei VIII, 0.1. See Appendix A (vi) for a representative example of a lengthy, formal *hālsian* invocation.
[96] HomS 19 (Schaefer), 127; HomS 24.2 (Schaefer), 187; HomS 24 (ScraggVerc 1), 65; HomS 24.1 (Scragg), 188; Matthew (Ru) 26:63; Matthew (Li) 26:63
[97] ÆCHom II, 14.1, 141.121
[98] S 1289 (Rob 21), 9; S 1449 (Rob 49), 26 and other examples. See also S 914 (Kem 715, 847), 66 and S 325 (Birch 493), 26 with lengthier, formal *hālsian* stipulations.
[99] LS 6 (InventCrossMor), 178. See also HomU 46 (Nap 57), 221 and other examples.
[100] LS 6 (InventCrossMor), 161, 178, 226, 232. Compare LS 5 (InventCrossNap), 214, 309

Christian property and institutions, the couplet serves a rhetorical purpose to convey solemnity together with the urgency of an ongoing plea to future generations.[101]

The rhetorical potential of *biddan* and *hālsian* together seems to have been especially useful for translating certain adverbial nuances. The translator of Bede four times recasts an adverbial construction with *obsecrans* 'supplicating' with preterite forms of *biddan* and *hālsian* as main verbs. This example is representative:

> Tōæteacte ēac swelce se gesīð his bēnum, þæt hē his tēaras gēat & wēop & geornlīce **bæd & hālsade,** þæt hē tō ðǣm untruman men inēode & him fore gebǣde[102]

> [Now the companion increased such with his prayers, that he poured his tears and wept and he eagerly **petitioned and entreated**, that he go in to the infirm man and pray for him]

Where Bede states 'he added tears to prayers', the translator supplies a subordinate noun clause to express weeping and a new main clause with *bæd & hālsade* for adverbial *diligenter obsecrans*. In Bede's Preface to the reader, *suppliciter obsecro* is translated *bidde & hālsige*.[103] It may also be relevant that *hālsian* regularly translates *obsecrare* while *biddan* hardly ever translates it alone. Another possibility is that *hālsian* possessed inherently continuous aspectual properties that were appropriate for translation of *obsecrans* as a finite verb. It was observed in (i) that *biddan* was inherently resultative or telic, and these couplets with *hālsian* are statistically higher in the preterite tense, where aspectual ambiguity is greater than in direct speech.

An underlying aspectual rationale for this couplet could also be tested in relation to *ge-*prefixing capacity. It was argued earlier in (i) that the relatively strong propensity of *biddan* for *ge*-prefixing indicates that its core semantics were inherently resultative, with prefixed forms notably absent for the meaning 'beg', where the outcome of the request is less certain.

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[101] See Rec 6.5 (Whitelock), 13. This inscription in the Codex Aureus, a mid-ninth-century collection of Latin Gospels, records the book's donation to Christ Church, Canterbury by Ælfred, ealdorman of Surrey, stipulating (*biddað ond hālsiað*) that it never be sold or separated from the church.

[102] Bede 5, 5.396.21; *HE* 5.5 *Addidit autem uir etiam lacrimas precibus, diligenter obsecrans, ut intraret oraturus pro illo* 'the man added tears to prayers, earnestly beseeching that he should enter to pray for him [the servant]'

[103] BedePref, 4.2

By contrast, *gehālsian* is very rare. Five present tense forms are attested in the Durham Ritual and four preterite forms across separate late WS prose texts, all in translational contexts identical to the un-prefixed forms. If *ge-* is indeed an accurate index for inherent verbal aspect, its absence with *hālsian* might suggest that its semantics were inherently continuous. Examples in the corpus at large favour this interpretation, showing clearly that this verb was proper within direct speech to denote a verbose invocation or precative delivery, activities which are inherently continuous and, furthermore, connote urgency and a certain uncertainty of outcome.

As verbs of asking, *biddan* and *hālsian* accordingly complement one another in terms of aspect. In prose and glosses, *hālsian* regularly translates *adiurare* and *obsecrare*, while *biddan* covers the complete prayer act and more general verbs of request, for example *þā gebæd Moyses tō Drihtne, & cwæð: Ic hālsie ðē, Drihten, milsa þisum folce* 'then Moses prayed to the Lord and said: "I entreat thee, Lord, be merciful to this people"', where *gebæd* translates a preterite verb of speech *ait* and *hālsie* the declared supplication *obsecro* in the present tense.[104]

Sometimes, however, the distribution seems simply an established formula and not reflective of essential lexical differences. In the Arundel prayers, for example, *deprecor et rogo* once finds *ic bidde & hālsige*, with more general *rogare* translated with *hālsian*,[105] while elsewhere, the typical model is *rogo et obsecro*.[106] Very interestingly, the couplet's order is reversed once in Bede where *adjurare* comes before *obsecrare* in reporting an entreaty to St. Cuthbert:

& hine ðurh ðone lifigendon Dryhten **hālsedon** & **bǣdon** oþþæt ...[107]

[and they **entreated** him by the living God, and they **supplicated** until ...]

Where the translator faced two Latin verbs natural to *hālsian*, it seems *adiurare* was preferred most probably because the clause included an oath in the name of a higher power. This provides further evidence for the essential identity of the *hālsian* entreaty as a species of oath-swearing. In all versions of the Gospels, *hālsian* consistently translates *adiurare*.

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[104] Exodus 32:31 *Reversusque ad Dominum, ait: Obsecro, peccavit populus iste peccatum maximum, feceruntque sibi deos aureos: aut dimitte eis hanc noxam* 'Returning to the Lord, he said "I beseech, this people have sinned a great sin, they have made themselves golden deities. Either forgive them this trespass ..."'
[105] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 43.25
[106] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 14.3
[107] Bede 4, 29.368.11; *HE* 4.26 *adiurant per Dominum, lacrimas fundunt, obsecrant, donec ...* 'they entreated by the Lord, poured tears, supplicated until ...' See also ÆCHom II, 10, 88.244 which retains the syntax.

For *hālsian* alone, the translational possibilities are more varied. In the Arundel prayers, it glosses *obsecrare, supplicare,*[108] but also *adiurare,*[109] *interpellare,*[110] *quaesere,*[111] and *exorare.*[112] In hymnals and the psalters, it glosses *deprecor,*[113] *obsecrare,*[114] and *supplicare,*[115] while *quaesere* regularly in the psalter canticles.[116] In the rules of Benedict and Chrodegang, both interlinear glosses or prose versions, *hālsian* regularly translates *obsecrare.*[117] A range of Latin prayer verbs could thus be matched with *hālsian*, but all share solicitation and connotations of exigency. *Deprecor*, for example, is intercessory or a prayer made urgently with preventative intent. In other words, *hālsian* does not translate the unmarked prayer verbs (*petere*, *orare*), but those semantically directed to the urgency of request for an act or omission. The great majority of examples involve this mode of prayer as the urgent solicitation of higher powers.

A smaller number of examples concern exorcism. While it is debateable whether pre-Christian Anglo-Saxons knew a procedure analogous to this Christian practice, the exorcism ritual takes the form of an entreaty in the name of higher powers (God, Christ and the saints) to drive out demons and procure a miraculous healing, which is in turn a tangible, manifest demonstration of divine power in the world. The prevalence of the conventional syntactic features of a *hālsian* entreaty indicate that Christian exorcism was perceived in like terms, as a ritually specific form of prayer directed to procuring a miraculous intervention. While use of *hālsian* for precative or social entreaty is thoroughgoing in the corpus, its connection with the portentous is certainly traditional, and three early glosses provide important evidence for these semantics. In Corpus, *haelsadon* glosses *auspicantur* 'they took auspices'.[118] In Cleopatra 1, *ariolandi* 'prophecying' is translated *on wīgbede tō hālsienne*.[119] Entreaty, exorcism and divination all share the idea of soliciting a beneficial outcome from another potent entity, the granting of which is the prerogative of that power to perform.

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[108] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 16.24, 18.31, 29.10 and other examples.
[109] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 14.1
[110] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 29.6
[111] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 1.6, 3.1
[112] ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb), 35.30
[113] PsGlI (Lindelöf) 44:13; PsGlK (Sisam) 141:2; HyGl 2 (Milfull), 52:1
[114] PsGlA (Kuhn), 36:7
[115] HyGl 2 (Milfull), 133:4
[116] PsCaE (Liles), 14(8).20; PsCaA 1 (Kuhn), 13.16
[117] BenR 2.13.8; BenRW, 2.17.29; ChrodR 1, 8.7; BenRGl, 2.14.11; BenR, 2.13.10
[118] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 1.948; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 416
[119] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 534

As a precative noun, *hālsung* corresponds to the translational range of *hālsian*. For example, in the prose psalms, *Drihten, gehȳr mīn gebed and mīne healsunga* 'Lord, hear my prayer and my entreaty' respects the nominal distribution in the source *exaudi orationem meam, Domine, et deprecationem meam*.[120] Elsewhere, *hālsung* also translates *obsecratio* both in the Paris Psalter and late WS psalter glosses.[121] Although *hālsung* occurs sometimes in close proximity to *gebed*, it only forms a couplet with *bēn*. In a homily on Easter Day, *sēo bēn and sēo hālsung* refers to the pleas of souls to Christ for release during the Harrowing of Hell.[122] In some psalter canticles and hymns, this merism reproduces *supplicatio* and *deprecatio*.[123]

The Rule of Benedict deploys *hālsung* with definitive sense, for example *hālsung, þat is: Kyrieleison*.[124] The definitions of prayer in this text are purposive, and reservation of *hālsung* to the Kyrie is not only consistent with its supplicative character, but also the purpose of averting divine indignation. For comparison, other prayers include *bletsingsealm* for *benedicite*,[125] *drihtenlic gebed* for the Pater Noster,[126] *lofsang of ðām godspelle* for the Magnificat.[127] Elsewhere in the same text, the phrasal variant *hālsunge bēn* 'prayer of supplication' perhaps reveals more about the relationship between *bēn* and *hālsung* that underlies their use in merism.[128] Corpus analysis of both words reveals a common affinity with the verbal aspects of prayer, respectively its content and delivery, which probably explains their compatibility.[129]

The phrase *þurh hālsung* sometimes denotes effective action against the devil in prose, for example *þurh þæs sacerdes hālsunge se dēofol <wyrð> āflȳmed fram þære menniscean gesceafte* 'and by the supplications of the priest, the devil was routed from human creation', which aligns with the semantics of exorcism and the idea that *hālsian* implied an effective ritual activity.[130] *Mid hālsunge* sometimes expresses the same idea,[131] but more typically modifies

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[120] PPs (prose) 38.14
[121] PPs 142:1 (3a); PsGlI (Lindelöf) 27:6; PsGlK (Sisam) 142:1 and other examples.
[122] HomS 28, 115
[123] PsCaE (Liles), 16(12).13; HyGl 2 (Milfull), 18.3
[124] BenRW, 17.53.27 and other examples.
[125] BenR, 12.36.17
[126] BenRW, 17.53.27
[127] BenR, 17.41.9; BenRW, 17.53.27
[128] BenR, 9.33.21; BenRW, 9.45.8
[129] The author has produced additional research on *bēn* to be included in an expanded version of this chapter.
[130] WHom 8b, 17. See also HomS 16 (Ass 12), 21; WPol 3 (Jost), 26
[131] WHom 8c, 30

biddan to express a supplicant's attitude, for example *mid hālsungum God wæs biddende þæt hē him sum bearn forgeafe* 'with supplications he was praying God that He grant him a child'.[132] In comparison to the parity of *hālsung* with *bēn*, the status of *hālsung* seems more subordinate when used with *biddan*, denoting the register of prayer rather than a precise semantic equivalent to this verb. *Mid hālsung* recurs in several accounts of Adam's supplication of Christ at the Harrowing of Hell.[133] Two glosses to Aldhelm explicitly link *hālsung* to exorcism, one of which occurs concurrently with *adiuratio*, again showing no conceptual difference between either ritual.[134]

Wherever *hālsung* refers to heathen ritual, it denotes divination and the procuring of omens. The Penitential of Theodore of Canterbury enumerates several distinct markers of heathenism: *se ðe hālsunga and galdorcreaftas and swefnhrace behealdað, þā bēoð on hæðenra manna gerīme* 'those who practices divinations, invocations and seances are counted among heathen people'.[135] His source speaks of *auguria, auspicia, sive somnia vel divinationes* and is valuable for its insight into how the church might have identified a heathen outwardly in the late seventh century.[136] It is likely that *hālsung* encompasses *auguria* and *auspicia* together, for it also translates these two nouns throughout Bede's *History*. Æthelberht agreed to meet Augustine in the open air because of *ealdre healsunge* 'old superstition' (*vetere usus augurio*).[137] The territorial gains of King Edwin, meanwhile, are identified *on healsunge* (*in auspicium*) in terms of a favourable portent, manifesting in worldly prosperity, that flowed directly from his accepting the Faith.[138] There is one example of *hālsung* for *auguria* in Cleopatra 1.[139] While the application of *hālsian* to divination is conclusive, by contrast, such examples are limited to earlier glossaries. Bede's *History* importantly reveals another potential difference in the relative status of *hālsian* and *hālsung*. Where the verb is regularly used for prayer, *hālsung* is confined to the vocabulary of omens, which suggests that the respective inculturation of verb and noun occurred independently and proceeded at differing paces, with *hālsian* shedding its traditional connotations earlier than *hālsung*.

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[132] LS 7 (Euphr), 8
[133] HomS 28, 100. See also Nic (A), 24.1.8; Nic (C), 359; HomS 26 (BlHom 7), 69
[134] AldV 1 (Goossens), 3967; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 4083
[135] Conf 5 (Mone), 208
[136] Poen.Theod. 1.15.4
[137] Bede 1, 14.58.21; *HE* 1.25
[138] Bede 2, 8.118.31; *HE* 2.9
[139] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 327

The limited instances of *hālsere* and *hālsiend* refer directly to the exorcist, finding its scriptural archetype in Christ, for example *exorcista þæt is hālsere*,[140] *exorcista is hālsiend*,[141] and *Crīst wæs hālsere*.[142] Earlier sources, however, refer to soothsayers, for example *hālseras* and *hālsendas* gloss *auruspices* (*haruspices*)[143] as well as *extipices* (*exstipices*),[144] both denoting a ritual specialist that inspected the entrails of animals for omens. Despite this confinement to exorcism and divination, Ælfric's definition of the Christian exorcist is entirely consistent with the formal features peculiar to *hālsian* as a verb of prayer, again suggesting the two practices of exorcism and supplication were conceptually akin:

> *Exorcista* is on englisc: se þe mid āðe **hālsað** þā āwyrgedan gāstas, þe wyllað menn dreccan, þurh þæs hǣlendes naman, þæt hȳ þā menn forlǣton[145]

> [*Exorcista* is in English: he who **implores** with oaths those cursed spirits who wish to afflict people, through the Saviour's name, that they leave those persons.]

The differences of scope between *hālsian* and its nominal cognates can be summarised. The verb is broadest, ranging through 'prayer, supplicative prayer, entreaty (social), exorcism, divination', with the last meaning not attested after the ninth-century. *Hālsung* is more definitely cultic, whether denoting prayer or exorcism, with only two instances of social request. *Hālsere* and *hālsiend* only denote ritual specialists, whether Christian or pagan and not a general 'petitioner'.

The semantic restriction of the nouns to specialised cult practice is consistent with the observed tendencies of pre-Christian technical religious vocabulary (see *blōtan*, *bletsian* and *hūsel*), against which *hālsian*'s social semantics may be determined an innovation. Two factors arguably motivated this expansion. First, with the extinction of its particular, technical pre-Christian rite, *hālsian* may have become identified as a species of Christian prayer, partly distinguished as a strident form of request. Renovated as a precative verb, *hālsian* would have

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[140] ChrodR 1, 83.1; WPol 3 (Jost), 26
[141] ÆLet 2 (Wulfstan 1), 103
[142] WPol 3 (Jost), 26
[143] HlGl (Oliphant), E562; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2074
[144] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 5.484; HlGl (Oliphant), E562; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2074
[145] ÆLet 1 (Wulfsige X a), 32; ÆLet 1 (WulfsigeT), 32

been brought into proximity with *biddan*, from which it could acquire the latter's social semantics by association. Assuming an earlier date for *Beowulf*, the social semantics attested for *hālsian* on l.2132a might attest that this shift was readily underway already by the early eighth century.

Direct cognates in OHG cohere with the specialised meanings of the *hālsian* word-family. In biblical glosses of the late eighth century, *heilisōn* always glosses *augurari* 'perform augury, divination; seek omens'.[146] Like OE, two forms of agent noun are attested, with *heilisāri* glossing *aruspices* and *augur* in early biblical glosses, and *augur* consistently in Prudentius' *Psychomachia*,[147] and also participial *heilisōnt* for biblical *ariolus* 'soothsayer'.[148] *Heilisunga* glosses *auspicium* 'divination' in Prudentius, but also *omen* in Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*.[149] This comparanda supports a view that the *hālsian* word-family traditionally concerned human-divine interchange performed by ritual specialists for the very particular and technical purpose of seeking omens, rather than prayer or worship in the Christian sense.

Etymological considerations likewise situate pre-Christian *hālsian* technically in relation to omen-seeking. Earlier scholars were concerned with whether the vocalic distinction between *hǣlsian* and *hālsian* merely represented orthographic variation or implied etymologically separate stems. Bosworth and Toller appear to promote the latter position, and further conclude that the two verbs were later conflated.[150] Jente agrees, identifying *hǣlsian* with soothsaying and *hālsian* as 'entreaty, exorcise'.[151] Philippson declines an opinion, stating only that *hālsian* essentially denotes exorcism, a practice that he claims was common to both heathenism and Christianity, because both systems shared similar beliefs about demonic possession.[152]

More recent historical linguistic scholarship, however, accepts that *hǣlsian* and *hālsian* are etymologically identical.[153] The evidence of OHG *heilisōn* also strongly supports a unitary basis for the OE word-family. Hallander proposes *hǣlsian* to be the original form showing *i*-mutation < **hailisōjan-*, with *hālsian* an orthographic innovation that was influenced by the

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[146] StSG I, 344.36-38; 353.47 (Leviticus 19:26); StSG I, 309.60-61; StSG I, 317.60 (Genesis 44:5)
[147] StSG I, 455.10-11 (2 Kings 21:6); StSG I, 594.31 (Isaiah 2:6); StSG II, 394.60 (Prudentius) and other examples.
[148] StSG I, 619.17 (Isaiah 3:2)
[149] StSG II, 517.60 (Prudentius); StSG II, 15.30 (Aldhelm)
[150] Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 503-504
[151] Jente (1921), 252, 326
[152] Philippson (1929), 208
[153] Orel (2003), 152; De Vries (1962), 218

frequent and proximate use of *hālgian*.[154] Despite disagreements over stem morphology, scholars have long agreed that *hǣlsian* is to be related to a feminine *i*-stem *hǣl* 'favourable omen' < **hailiz*.[155] Furthermore, as observed in Chapter 1 (vi), Hallander concluded that, on account of its situation within the matrix of evidence for *sian*-verbs, *hālsian* < **hailisōjan*- would have originally been derived from a neuter *s*-stem **hailes*- to mean 'procure a portent'.[156] When this IE nominal declension disintegrated in PGmc, the allomorphic variants (-*es*/-*os*) that differentiated the nominative-vocative-accusative stems (**hailiz*-) from those of the oblique cases (**hailuz*-) were re-analysed, respectively, as *i*-stems and within a special class of *a*-stems, resulting in the near-synonymous noun-pairs *hǣl*: *hālor*, with *sige*: *sigor* and other examples.[157]

It seems clear from their corpus distribution that *hǣl* (n, ×3) and *hālor* (n, ×3) were archaisms in historical OE. *Hǣl* transparently glosses *omen* once in Corpus.[158] Interestingly, the phrasal contexts of both nouns may well reflect their origins as allomorphic stem variants. Both examples of *hǣl* in *Beowulf* are straightforwardly accusative and seem to reveal the dual connotations of a heathen omen both as a sign besought with ritual and the beneficial result of procured intervention: where Beowulf is encouraged on his quest, *snotere ceorlas ... hǣl scēawedon* (202b-204b) 'wise freemen ... inspected the omens'; later, when Hrothgar leaves Heorot under Beowulf's protection for the night, each man *him hǣl ābead* (653b) 'wished him luck', which refers to the good fortune attendant upon divine intervention.

Hālor is only attested within identical phrases in *Juliana*: the demon confesses he was sent to *āhwyrfan from hālor* (360a) 'turn from salvation' the saint;[159] finally, he reiterates that he was sent *mōd oncyrre,/hyge from hālor* (439b-40a) 'that I might turn the mind, the spirit from salvation'. This study argues that *from hālor* was a phrasal archaism, preserved in poetic tradition, not least because it was convenient to constructing a basic A-Type on-verse. Although dative singular, the absence of inflection not only evidences its origins in the oblique cases of a neuter *s*-stem,[160] but, moreover, that this morphology remained undisturbed by re-

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[154] Hallander (1966), 83; Krahe and Meid (1967), 131-33; Orel (2003), 151-52. Other reconstructions include Ringe and Taylor (2014), 131 **hailisōn*; Kroonen (2013), 200 **hail-sō(ja)n*-
[155] Hallander (1966), 178; De Vries (1962), 218; Jente (1921), 253 for *hǣlsian*.
[156] Hallander (1966), 163-87
[157] Hallander (1966), 82-83, 174; Weyhe (1905), 87; Campbell (1959), 259 (§636)
[158] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 13.160
[159] See also l.327a *āhwyrfen* 'we should turn'.
[160] Campbell (1959), 259 (§636)

analysis as an *a*-stem. This implies that the adverbial phrase *from hālor*, preserving the old dative stem **hailuz-*, might have maintained currency independently of the simplex as a traditional expression denoting the beneficial result of procured intervention.

Cynewulf's usage of *hālor* is best determined a localised instance of the Christianisation of traditional poetic diction, because cognate *hǣlu* (f, c.×1700) is far better attested as Christian 'salvation'. This noun was originally a feminine *-īn* abstract, assimilated to the *ō*-stems, and possessed a broad semantic range including 'health', 'luck' and 'prosperity'.[161] The many examples of *hǣlu* denoting 'salvation' indicate that, of the **hail-* word-family, it was specifically selected for inculturation with this idea.[162] The fact that Cynewulf declined to deploy dative singular *hǣle* on l.327a, 360a and 340a, where it would have been metrically permissible and semantically sensible, supports the view that *from hālor* was a traditional phrase, not only equally capable of bearing this meaning, but perceived as more proper to inherited diction.

The phrase *from hālor* may provide an important clue as to the initial circumstances under which *hālsian* was inculturated, because it attests that an analogy to Christian salvation was perceived as available in the beneficial results that heathens believed were properly procured through technical procedures of omen-seeking. With its pre-Christian meaning 'procure a portent', missionaries may have recognised *hālsian* as an effective ritual activity that could be readily analogised with Christian miracle-working. In the Old Testament, the miraculous is typically a 'God-given sign pointing beyond itself to a supreme miracle' of deliverance (Hebrew *ôth*, Greek σημεῖον); the plagues of Egypt, for example, point to the salvation of the Exodus.[163] In the Gospels, the miraculous is defined more precisely around Christ's healings and exorcisms, which were principal signs of His divinity manifest in the world, pointing to salvation through death and resurrection.[164] The performance of such signs was also fundamental to His apostolic charge 'these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name, they will drive out demons'.[165] Missionaries would have been concerned to demonstrate God's power in similar terms, presenting Christian miracle-working as the natural, effective

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[161] Campbell (1959), 236 (§589.7)
[162] DOE s.v. *hǣlu* 4.a.
[163] Fuller (1963), 16
[164] Fuller (1963), 15
[165] Mark 16:17. See also Mark 6:7 'gave them authority over impure spirits'; 6:13 'they drove out many demons and anointed with oil many people who were ill and healed them.'

ritual successor to pagan portents, through which divine beneficence was actualised in the world. In practice as healing and exorcism, this would have served the urgent aim of demonising the heathen gods through the performance of advantageous acts that were consistent with the apostolic charge of a salvific religion.

To summarise, this study argues that pre-Christian *hālsian* denoted the technical ritual procedure for procuring a portent from the divine. Early on, missionaries would have monopolised the verb in order to present Christian exorcisms and healings as potent replacement rituals to omen-seeking. Through these definitive apostolic acts, the heathen gods could be effectively demonised, while convincingly demonstrating the salvific aspects of the new religion in culturally recognisable terms, by which the populace could, with the psalmist, trust to 'see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living'.[166] In this latter regard, resemblances between the outward form of heathen invocation and the Christian exorcism would also have provided an advantageous analogical basis for inculturation. Exorcism and omen-seeking both involved direct, lengthy, and formulaic verbal address, declared in the name of a higher power whose authority one sought to avail presently. Exorcism therefore would have served the double purpose of familiarising a population with Christianity's worldly benefits, while inverting the old value system; traditional modes of addressing the old gods ('babbling like pagans') could be retained as 'outward comforts ... reserved to them', in order that the heathens be brought readily 'to accept the inward comforts' of a salvific faith.[167]

An early and thorough inculturation of *hālsian* could have meant that the verb became familiar as a species of Christian prayer, partly analogous to a strong entreaty or supplication. During the secondary phase of Christianisation, a precative *hālsian* might have been brought into close contact with *biddan* through habitual encounter of precative terms such as *petere*, *deprecor* and *obsecrare* in Christian literature, hence acquiring wider application to social entreaty. Such meanings were almost certainly not traditional to *hālsian*, according to the presumption that the technical vocabulary of pre-Christian cult was exclusively religious. Although Christ Himself contrasted formalistic, pagan declarations from the novel concept of prayer as a private, internally-directed exercise, performed in expectation of moral and spiritual growth, Christian *hālsian* practically retained its heathen essence as a verbose, efficacious invocation.

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[166] Psalm 27:13
[167] Matthew 6:7; *HE* 1.30

Where *biddan* was renovated to convey Christian prayer as a distinctively religious activity, *hālsian* incorporated the old forms. In this way, both verbs together epitomise the reciprocity of Christianisation, and the status of authentic heathen rituals as 'uncredited subcultures' within Christian rites that were inherently public and performative.[168]

iii. *begangan*

Begān (c.×375) and *begangan* (VII, c.×130) include performative 'worship' among a range of wider, non-religious meanings. Although etymologically separate, *gān* and *gangan* were semantically coterminous, and their derivatives are discussed together here, because they behave identically in the historical record of OE.[169] All nominal derivatives, however, are to *begangan*, and only this form is attested for WGmc at large, suggesting it to be original. Substantives include *begang* (late WS *bīggeng* c.×60, m *a*-stem) 'exertion, ritual, cult practice', agentive *bīggenga* (c.×70),[170] *beganga* (×2), and *biggengere* (×2) 'worshipper, operator, inhabitant', and abstract *begengnes* (×2).

The verbal form comprises a verb of motion prefixed with *be-*, which ultimately derives from locative adverb **bi* < PIE **h₁epi* (Greek ἐπί 'on, upon', Sanskrit *ápi* 'near'). The semantic and syntactic functions of the inseparable verbal prefix *be-* and preposition *be* 'by, about, next to, at' that are attested in the literary record were almost certainly established already within WGmc. The prefix is typically understood to impart transitivity, but the contextually diverse uses of *begangan* trace through 'attend to' back to a core idea of movement in relation to stationary surroundings 'go by, about, through', which is closer to the original adverbial force of **bi* in meaning.[171]

As for *biddan* and *weorðian*, the *begangan* word-family was traditionally rooted outside the semantic field of cult, with application to religious activity apparently incidental rather than exclusive. Although ultimately inculturated with Christianity's peculiarly technical notion of 'worship' as a ritual act, the word-family maintained application to heathen and non-religious

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[168] North (2015), 9
[169] Kroonen (2013), 174-75; Beekes (2011), 706
[170] See Fulk (2018), 96 (§5.7) on the lengthening of *be-* > *bī-* following the word-initial shifting of stress to nominal prefixes in prehistoric OE.
[171] Jente (1921), 35-36 *umgehen*

contexts throughout the OE corpus.[172] *Begangan* was essentially a verb of activity, especially focused on the interaction between a subject and his immediate, inanimate environment. It will be argued in this discussion that, within a religious setting, the verb denoted a set of interactions with cultic objects and structures that may have traditionally been recognised as necessary for a worshipper to perform.

On the basis that the verb was not exclusive to cult, these actions plausibly included activities both technical and incidental to cult practice. It will be argued, furthermore, that the verb was initially inculturated not to secure an effective ritual replacement in the manner of *bletsian* or *hālsian*, but simply to describe the array of ritual acts, whether Christian or heathen, which collectively identify practical worship in terms of performance rather than veneration; adaptation to Christianity's technical sense of 'worship' in the sense of 'veneration' and 'praise' may have occurred later and gradually with increasing learned clerical usage.

In order to determine more precisely the pre-Christian religious import of *begangan*, cultic and non-cultic usages must be compared together, whether denoting motion, labour, in the sense of 'exertion, practice, craft, duty', or settlement as 'farming, settlement, cultivation, occupation of land'. As a verb of motion, *begangan* denotes the fact of personal movement in relation to the space through which conveyance occurs, implying more precisely 'pass by', 'visit', 'traverse' or 'circumvent', for example *genēddon bīgeongende & bīfærende sumne* 'they seized one who was passing through and travelling'. [173] Perfective clauses sometimes additionally express the experiential sense of a journey, for example *hē ðā þanon tō ōþran portgeate ēode ... and hē þā <portgeate> ealle beēode* 'he then went to the other gates ... and when he had visited all the gates'.[174] This sense of completion aligns with frequent translation of *circumire* and *circumdare*, for example Ælfric renders *dēaþes geomerunga mē beēodon* 'death's groaning encompassed me' for *circumdederunt me gemitus mortis*.[175] This adverbial focus on the interaction of subject and space shades into the sense of interference which underlies an isolated glossing of *invadere* 'invade, attack'.[176]

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[172] Philippson (1929), 194
[173] Mark (Li) 15:21 *angariauerunt praetereuntem quempiam*
[174] LS 34 (SevenSleepers) 461; Sept.dorm. 230 *circuiuit omnes portas*
[175] ÆCHom II, 5 50.261
[176] PrudGl 4.2, 49; *Psych.* 589

More common by far are the culturally-marked usages relating to farming, settlement, curation, execution of tasks, and performance of ritual. In the broadest sense, *begangan* regularly translates *exercere* 'exercise, operate, practice' in a variety of contexts. Bede applies it to monastic disciplines. In writing of spiritual warfare, for example, the translator reproduces *ad exercendam militiam caelestem* with *tō bigongenne þone heofonlican comphād* 'for pursuing the heavenly warfare'.[177] Likewise, it is written of the discipline instilled by Abbess Hild: *hēo swā swīðe leornunge godcundra gewreota & sōðfæstnisse weorcum hire underþēodde dyde tō bigongenne* 'she put her subordinates so much to the exercise of learning divine texts and with deeds of righteousness', which translates the main verbal idea *subditos ... execere faciebat*.[178] *Begangan* regularly glosses *exercere* also in the interlinear glossaries of the later tenth and eleventh centuries, as well as Aldhelm and a ninth-century Kentish gloss to Proverbs.[179]

Bīggong likewise translates *exercitatio* in the *Liber Scintillarum* and across three psalters, including ninth-century Vespasian.[180] Its earliest record is in Épinal-Erfurt of the late seventh century where *bīgongum* translates past participle *exercitus*.[181] In the eighth century, this gloss was introduced to Corpus (emended to *exercitiis*) and reproduced again in Cleopatra 1.[182] To the same gloss were added *laboribus* and *studiis* in the eleventh-century Harley manuscript.[183] The youngest record suggests that *begang* as 'exertion' underwent cultural specification in connection with the typical activities of monastic discipline, both ritual and intellectual. Two other late sources concur. *Bīgenga* glosses *studia* once in the Stowe Psalter,[184] and in the Epistle of Eusebius to Carpinus, a Northumbrian text associated with Aldred, *mið micile begong* glosses *magno studio*.[185]

Begangan also frequently translates *exhibere* in contexts of hospitality, for example in Bede *gestlīðnesse bīgonge* 'practice of hospitality' reproduces *exhibenda hospitalitate*.[186] The verb could also apply to other culturally-defined practices, whether singular or habitual, that were

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[177] Bede 3, 18.236.23; *HE* 3.24
[178] Bede 4, 24.334.16; *HE* 4.21
[179] DurRitGl 2 (Thomp-Lind), 184.23; PsGlJ (Oess) 76:13; AldV 7.3 (Meritt), 14; OccGl 49 (Zupitza), 24.27 and other examples.
[180] LibSc. 32.64; 32.74; 44.6; PsGlA (Kuhn), 54:2; PsGlC (Wildhagen), 54:3; PsGlB (Brenner), 54:3
[181] ErfGl 1 (Pheifer), 357
[182] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 5.387; ClGl 1, 2055
[183] HlGl (Oliphant), E448; Pulsiano (2001), 218
[184] PsGlF (Kimmens) 9:12
[185] LiPraefEuseb (Skeat), 2
[186] Bede 1, 16.66.7; *HE* 1.27

regarded as wrongful such as perjury or witchcraft, for example *se þe mǣne āþas begā, fæste III gear* 'he who perjures should fast three years'[187] and *se man þe begā wiccecræft, swelte hē dēaðe* 'that one who practices witchcraft should die with death'.[188] The second example re-casts the more private sense of Leviticus 20:27, *in quibus pythonicus, vel divinationis fuerit spiritus* 'in whom there is a pythonical or divining spirit', in terms of proscription of an actual practice.

Most frequent of all are translations of the *colere* word-family, which had a core meaning 'inhabit', developed to 'cultivate' and culturally to 'protect, curate', 'cult' and 'worship'. The near-complete overlap with *begangan* is striking and the OE word-family naturally translates many derivatives that encompass the key spheres of farming, settlement, curation and worship. These include *incolere* 'dwell', *excolere* 'cultivate', *accolere* 'dwell near', *circumcolere* 'dwell around', *agricola* 'farmer', *rupicola* 'inhabiter', *incola* 'inhabitant', *inquilinus* 'tenant', *colonus* 'farmer, settler', *ancilla* 'female slave (lit. 'one who dwells around')', *cultura* 'cultivation, agriculture', *cultus* as past participle of *colere* 'tilled, protected, worshipped' and *cultus* (fourth declension) 'tillage, worship'. Locally, Bede's translator equates *begangan* with settlement a number of times, for example *þā fram Angellðēodum & Brytta & Scotta & Pehta wǣron begongne* 'that were inhabited by the Angles, British, Scots and Picts' translating *incoluntur*.[189] In the *Dialogues*, Gregory describes ravaged countryside: *ab omni cultore destituta* 'destitute of every farmer', which Wærferth, arguably influenced by a variant reading *cultura* 'cultivation', re-produces as *fram ælce bīgonge þis land līgeð tōlȳsed* 'of every cultivation this land lies desolate'.[190]

Bede's translator also consistently uses *bīgang* for *cultus* and *cultura*, whether referring to pagan or Christian worship. For example, St. Alban's persecutor warns the martyr not to depart *fram þām bīgang ūre æfestnysse* 'from the rite of our religion',[191] while the saint replies: *ic symble bīgange & mē tō him gebidde* 'I always worship and pray to Him'.[192] The same consistency is observed for Northumbria's renunciation of heathenism in Book 2. King Edwin speaks of *þēos nīwe lār & þære godcundnesse bīgong* 'this new doctrine and worship of the

[187] Conf 5.1 (Thorpe), 2
[188] Leviticus 20:27. See also Conf 5 (Mone), 113.
[189] Bede 5.17.460.7; *HE* 5.19
[190] GD Pref and 3 (C), 38.258.15; *Dial.* 3.38
[191] Bede 1, 7.36.3; *HE* 1.7 *a cultu nostrae religionis*
[192] Bede 1, 7.36.19; *HE* 1.7 *adoro semper, et colo*

divinity'[193] and Coifi alike of the old cults in terms of *ūra goda bīgange* 'worship of our gods'.[194]

While the evenness of applicability to pagan or Christian worship is not exclusive to *bīgang*, but also inherent to *cultus*, other features of the translator's style in this passage may reflect vernacular peculiarities. When Coifi first speaks of the old gods *þæt wē beēodan* 'that we worshipped', the OE directly matches *colebamus*.[195] But when he further declares that no virtue resides in the heathen cults, *sīo ǣfæstnesse þe wē oð ðis hæfdon & beēodon* 'the religion, which we until now held and practiced', the translator faced with *tenuimus* 'we held' augments its direct match in *habban* with *begangan*.[196] If *begangan* was indeed necessary here to accurately render the sense of a clause where a main verb of belief or practice governs a direct object meaning 'religion', this suggests that the 'practicing' rather than 'holding' of religion seemed more natural to the ninth-century (possibly eighth-century) translator.

Further examples of this augmentative *begangan* support the idea that OE recognised a fundamental relationship between a nominal sense of 'religion' and its performance expressed verbally. Bede reports that King Eadbald of Kent *tōwearp al þā bigong þāra dēofolgelda þā hē ǣr beēode* 'overthrew all the practices of idolatory, which he previously practiced'.[197] The translator's complex sentence expands Bede's absolute clause *anathematizato omni idolatriae cultu* 'having denounced all practice of idolatry', taking the core nominal idea 'practice of idolatory' and constructing a *figura etymologica* with *begangan*. Later, Bede relates that the continental Saxon's feared that *ueterem cogeretur noua mutare culturam* 'their old worship would be compelled to change to the new' under the influence of the two Hewalds.[198] Again, the translator recasts a strictly nominal operative idea of worship (*cultura*) with a finite verb clause: *þæt hīo hīora ald bigong forleorte & þæt nīowe beēode* 'that they should give up their old worship and practice the new (one)', once more closely relating substantive ritual to its performance.[199]

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[193] Bede 2, 10.134.7; *HE* 2.13 *nouus diuinitatis ... cultus*
[194] Bede 2, 10.134, 15; *HE* 2.13 *culturae deorum nostrorum*
[195] Bede 2, 10.136.12; *HE* 2.13
[196] Bede 2, 10.134.12; *HE* 2.13 *religio illa quam hucusque tenuimus*
[197] Bede 2, 6.114.31; *HE* 2.6
[198] *HE* 5.10
[199] Bede 5, 11.416.12; *HE* 5.10 *sicque paulatim omnis eorum prouincia ueterem cogeretur noua mutare culturam*

It was observed at the outset that the even applicability of religious *begangan* to pagan and Christian worship implies that the verb traditionally described a set of practices, rather than specifically denoting a technical procedure. Together with the syntactic evidence for the identification of cult with action, the Anglo-Saxons appear to have understood this sense of 'worship' in terms that were fundamentally practical, universal, and free of formal or ideological precepts that would have distinguished their cult-practice from those of other peoples. Despite *begangan*'s freedom from the ideological distortions that attended marginalised terms such as *hearg* or *blōtan*, some texts reveal an anxiety to clearly signal right worship from wrong. Ælfric almost always uses *begangan* and *begang* (*bīggeng*) to mean 'worship', often translating *cultus*. He prefers adverbial phrases for *begang*, normally modified adjectivally or with another noun in the genitive to distinguish the worship qualitatively, for example *mid gōdum biggencgum* 'with good worship;[200] *mid hālgum biggencgum* 'with holy worship';[201] *mid wōlicum biggencgum* 'with wrong worship';[202] *fram Godes bīggencgum* 'from God's worship';[203] *on dēofles bīgencgum* 'in the devil's worship'.[204]

Such stylistics are especially useful where narrative context concerns the confrontation of righteous with forbidden worship, and Ælfric often expands the source to serve this purpose. For example, in the story of Elijah and King Ahab, Ælfric expands *et secuti estis Baalim* 'and you followed Baal' thus: *gē þe forlēten God and fyligdon Baal mid fūlum bīggencgum* 'you who gave up God and followed Baal with foul worship'.[205] The full significance of the direct factual statement that Baal was worshipped is thereby made explicit: God was first abandoned, and subsequent practices were abhorrent. Ælfric always uses the plural of *begang*, again implying a conception of 'worship' as a collective of rites. The two examples of *begangness* cohere with this idea. In one Vercelli homily, *bigangnes* means the observance of holy days, while it glosses *kalendas* in the Durham Ritual, which refers to feast days.[206]

It was observed in (i) that *transigere*, *peragere* and other verbs of performance typically govern nouns, or are modified by adverbial phrases of prayer and are reproduced in OE by *āwunian*

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[200] ÆLS (Pr Moses), 111
[201] ÆHom 3, 51
[202] ÆLS (Book of Kings), 386; 2 Kings 18:3-4 (King Hezekiah's destruction of the brazen serpent). See also ÆLS (Book of Kings), 461; 2 Kings 22:2 (King Josiah).
[203] ÆLS (Denis), 280
[204] ÆLS (Denis), 162
[205] ÆLS (Book of Kings), 88; 1 Kings 18:18
[206] HomS 39 (ScraggVerc 12), 1; DurRitGlAbbrev, 189.17a

and *þurhwunian*. Occasionally, *begangan* is used in such constructions, for example *hē sceal his gebedu begān* 'he should perform his prayers',[207] and in Ælfric: *beēode his gebedu on sumum mynstre drohtniende* 'he performed his prayers living in a certain monastery'.[208] With the late WS glossing of *studium*, these examples also support the view that *begangan* was adapted to the specifics of monastic practice during the tenth century, a development that could plausibly be connected with the Benedictine reform. A writ issued by Edgar the Peaceful, implementing aspects of the revival, refers to *þyses hālgan regules bigenc* 'practice of this holy rule'.[209] Under these conditions of monastic re-establishment, *begang* as 'practice' could have become closely identified with the details of Benedict's Rule.

The collocational features of *begang* in poetry possibly reflect traditional phraseology. Consistently, another noun in the genitive determines *begang*, with both occupying the lifts of a B-type verse. Such phrases often refer to great expanses of space or time, for example in *Beowulf*: *under swegles begong* (860a, 1773a) 'under the expanse of heaven'; *flōda begong* (1497b) 'expanse of water'; *sioleða bigong* (2367a) 'the expanse of seas', and in *Christ A*: *tīda bigong* (235b) 'the course of time'; *wonga bigong* (680b) 'the expanse of plains'. The three poetic examples of *begangan*, rather, reflect the word-family's diverse semantics while also showing metrical and phraseological consistencies. Cultic meaning prevails in *Juliana*, which arguably demonstrates the currency of *begangan* as 'Christian worship' by the mid-eighth century, for example *nemne hē mægna God/geornor bigonge* (109b-110a) 'unless he more eagerly worship the God of powers'.

In *Christ C*, however, *hē his sāwle wlite/georne bigonge* (1581a) 'he should eagerly cultivate the appearance of his soul' is syntactically and structurally near-identical, but semantically distinct. Lines of similar structure in *Guthlac A* introduce its central theme of spiritual warfare: *þonne hē his ænne hēr/gæst bigonge* (27b-28a) 'when he cultivates his one excellent spirit'. As A-type verses, these examples of *begangan* distinguish themselves from the more numerous B-type *begang* collocations, but in both kinds, the operative word occupies the verse's second lift. It is possible that the few poetic examples of *begangan* represent innovations inspired by a traditional nominal phraseology, confined as they are to three texts described as 'Cynewulfian' that share lexical and phraseological features.

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[207] ThCap 1 (Sauer), 21.331.73. See also 29.349.1.
[208] ÆCHom II, 42, 315.164. See also ÆCHom I, 9. 255.194.
[209] RevMon (Whitelock), 287

Of the agent nouns, *bīggengere* occurs just twice. In a papal bull, the phrase *Godes bīggencgerum* 'God's worshippers' simplifies the source: *cultoribus deo decretae christianae religionis* 'from worshippers of (to) God of determined Christian religion'.[210] The second example in Ælfric's *Colloquy* translates *operatores* in the sense of manual fabrication within the context of a trade or craft:

> ic hæbbe smīþas, īsene smīþas, goldsmīþ, seoloforsmīþ, ārsmīþ, <trēowwyrhtan> & manegra ōþre mistlicra cræfta **bīggengeras**[211]

> [I have smiths and iron smiths, goldsmith, silversmith, coppersmith, carpenters and many other **practitioners** of different crafts]

Feminine *bīgengestre* glosses *cultrix* 'female worshipper' in two glossaries to Aldhelm[212] and *inserviens* 'one who looks after' in Harley.[213] Although sparse, these agent nouns clearly reflect both the semantics of curation and the technical religious identifications of the late tenth century, and further indicate that the word-family was identified with recognised kinds of manual work. It may be relevant that the agentive suffix *-ere* is a loan-derivative from Latin *-ārius*, which typically expressed the practicing of trades and professions.

The better attested *bīgenga* is a Germanic *n*-stem and probably the original agent noun. *Beganga* occurs only in the B manuscript of Bede, twice translating *incola* 'inhabitant'.[214] *Bīggenga* prevails elsewhere, consistently in Ælfric and contemporary texts where it typically translates a range of Latin terms for 'inhabitant'. In the Rule of Chrodegang, for example, *neorxnawoncges bīgencga* 'Paradise's inhabitant (Adam)' translates *paradysis colonum* (accusative).[215] More frequently, *bīggenga* translates *incola*. In Alexander's Letter to Aristotle, for example, *bīgengean þæs londes* 'inhabitants of the country' renders *incolae regionis*.[216] Peculiarly, *bīgengena* glosses *Christi-colarum* 'of Christ-worshippers' in hymnal glosses,

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[210] Rec 15, 8 (Birch 105, 6)
[211] ÆColl 205
[212] AldV 1 (Goossens), 1388; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 1358
[213] HlGl (Oliphant), C2179
[214] BedeHead (B) 1.6.4; Bede (B) 1, 17.90.28; *HE* 1.1, 8; 1.33, 114
[215] ChrodR 1 54.20
[216] Alex 9.5; Epist.Alex 9.4

perhaps to be connected with late WS efforts to particularise *begangan* as Christian term of art.[217]

One example of *bīggenga* in an eleventh-century charter is comparable with *bīggengere* in the *Colloquy*. The witnesses are each identified according to recognised societal positions, for example *Brihtrīc geounga & Æþelric bīgenga & Þorð Þurkilles nefa & Tofi & Ælfwine prēost* 'Brihtric the younger and Æthelric *bīgenga* and Thorth Thorkill's nephew and Tofi and Ælfwin the priest'.[218] The meaning and orthography of *bīgenga* in this series remains uncertain. One view argues for a cognomen Æthelric Bigga.[219] The later OE record, however, provides enough evidence for *bīgenga* denoting occupational activity to be a plausible reading. The charter's context as declaration of real property arrangements made between the priest Eadsige and Christ Church, Canterbury opens two possibilities for the noun's meaning: some form of religious devotion, since most of the other witnesses are clergymen; alternatively, *bīgenga* refers to a social position, which is perfectly conventional in OE legalese, for example *Ælfgifu sēo hlǣdige & Æðelnōð Arcebiscop* occur in the same charter. As title, *bīgenga* might mean a kind of farmer or small land-holder.

A tenth-century gloss supports this meaning, where four Latin terms *colonus .i. incola cultor inquilinus* are together matched with *bīgenga tilia inbūend*.[220] Although synonymous for one who uses and occupies land, the word-order is significant. *Colonus* and *incola* both have connotations of social position dependent on the use and occupation of land. *Cultor* is more straightforwardly agentive, broadly denoting one with a curatative task, but especially for cultivation and ongoing maintenance of land, whether as occupier or labourer. The various connotations of *tilian* proceed from the idea of the labour process, thereby aligning with *cultor*. In the post-Roman period, *inquilinus* referred to a more temporary occupier, but still possessing status implications like *colonus* and *incola*. *Inbūend* is a *hapax* derived from *būend* 'dweller' and probably influenced by the structure of the Latin compound. The distribution of these occupational synonyms shows *bīgenga* as most closely associated with the relationship between social status and the use and occupation of land translating *colonus* and its first

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[217] HyGl 3 (Gneuss), 127.4
[218] S 1465 (Rob 86), 25
[219] Robertson (1956), 173
[220] HlGl (Oliphant), C1564

synonym *incola*. From this, it can be further inferred that *begangan* concerned labour which was not only socially recognised as good or curatative, but also a source of personal dignity.

Direct cognates are attested in OHG and OS. These importantly reflect the broader semantics of 'exertion' and culturally specific 'cult', which strongly suggests that the coexistence of these meanings was inherited from WGmc. *Piganc* once glosses both *exercitium* and *exercitio*, as well as *ritus* and *cultus* in two manuscripts of *Abrogans*.[221] *Iares piganc* 'course of the year' glosses *annua* in all three copies, a phrase structurally and substantially resembling the poetic phraseology of OE *begang*.[222] Its attestation in an early Upper German text largely pre-dating Anglo-Saxon or Carolingian influence would justify regarding the collocation of *begang* with a genitive determinant as traditional WGmc phraseology, preserved independently in OE and Bavarian. In Tatian are attested agentive *bigengiri* for *dei cultor* 'worshipper' and *acarbigengiri* for *agricola* 'farmer (field -cultivator')' also reflecting both cultic and social semantics,[223] but the German authenticity of these forms is uncertain due to the potential influence of OE on the texts at the Anglo-Saxon foundation of Fulda.

The evidence of the *Heliand* is especially interesting. *Begangan* occurs once in relation to the duties of Caiaphas as high-priest, a role the poet defines as wardenship of the Temple:

> huand he that hûs godes
> thar an Hierusalem **bigangan** scolde,
> uuardon thes uuîhes
>
> (4161b-63a)

[because he had to **take care of** God's house there in Jerusalem, to guard the shrine]

The phrase *uuardon thes uuîhes* is discussed further in Chapter 3 (i) as comparative evidence for the idea that Germanic shrines were traditionally curated or protected by local individuals, whose authority for discharging such duties was socially esteemed. The apposition of *bigangan* with *wardon* in these lines gives further support to the view that the semantics of curation were also inherent in its usage as a verb of worship. Both verbs involve interaction with the sacred

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[221] StSG I, 241.33-34 (*Abrogans*)
[222] StSG I, 36.1, 37.1 (*Abrogans*)
[223] Tat. 132.18; Tat. 167.1

space and structure of the Temple, one denoting its protection, the other presumably its maintenance. In a near-identical passage a few lines earlier (4149-50), *gômian* (4149b) 'heed, take care, guard' stands instead of *bigangan*. OE *gȳman* 'heed' is contextually broad (like *begangan*), but its etymological meaning 'hide' likewise focuses on spatial human interaction with a stationary object.[224]

With the Temple as direct object, these passages accord contextually with an interactive interpretation for the verbal semantics as defence and maintenance. This evidence for the possible pre-Christian situation of *bigangan* as a verb of worship importantly also indicates how this culturally-defined meaning relates to the neutral semantics of spatial interaction. As worship, *bigangan* appears to have fundamentally concerned the interaction of the devotee with cult space and stationary structures of worship.

To summarise, the core semantics of *begangan* concern the interaction of a moving entity with stationary surroundings. Through habitual usage in culturally-particular contexts, the verb could have acquired new connotations, through which *begangan* and its derivatives could gradually become identified with recognised social practices and societal roles. Comparanda show that such religious connotations were arguably inherited from WGmc, which would imply they were traditional to heathen Anglo-Saxon cult. It is clear, however, that non-cultic usages persisted throughout the history of OE, especially with respect to the maintenance of land and the practicing of a craft.

Holistically, therefore, the word-family encompasses habitual, socially-recognised forms of exertion or curation, often serving as a source of personal dignity for individuals in society. This even applicability to pagan, Christian and secular contexts also indicates that *begangan*'s religious meaning collectively described a set of practices or 'rites', both technical and incidental to heathen cult, rather than denoting a particular procedure. Such status could also have plausibly preserved the verb from either early, absolute inculturation as a Christian ritual replacement (as argued in Chapter 1 for *bletsian*), or later ideological marginalisation (as argued for *blōtan*). As will be argued in the next discussion on *weorðian*, the inherent transitivity of *begangan* is essential to reconstructing the pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon conception of 'worship'. Where *weorðian* traditionally acts *in personam* for exalting an

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[224] Kroonen (2013), 171-72

individual, *begangan* operates *in rem* towards things within spatial limits. This is clear from its application to cult in the *Heliand*, referring to recognised activities performed on, and within, the sacred space and structure of the Temple.

As a verb of 'worship', *begangan* may have denoted regular interaction between a worshipper and the objects, spaces and structures proper to cult, rather than with a divinity. Practically, this might have involved: habitually visiting a local shrine; performing proper votive acts therein; regular curation of cultic space, whether by looking after special cultic objects, purification, decoration, the upkeep of its fixtures; managing the natural surrounds, whether by pruning or planting. Wardenship of such spaces might also have involved armed defence. Since 'worship' during the conversion period would have primarily related to syncretised practices, it seems likely that *begangan* was smoothly inculturated, with little semantic distortion. Alone, however, the verb was insufficient to convey the full sense of Christian veneration as a religious act unto itself, requiring the concurrent semantic renovation of *weorðian* to complete the introduction of this idea to Christian Anglo-Saxon religious life.

iv. *weorðian*

Weorðian (wk. 2, ×818) and its derivatives *weorðscipe* (m, ×304) and *weorðung* (f, ×122) comprise another OE word-family of religious veneration which gradually eclipsed *begangan* in the twelfth century as *weorðscipe* came to provide the basis for the MnE verb 'to worship'. While *begangan* and *weorðian* overlap semantically as verbs of Christian worship in OE literary sources,[225] their core semantics, respectively, reveal that *weorðian* traditionally acted *in personam*, where *begangan* denoted interaction with fixtures; for this reason, it will be argued that they were inculturated under different conditions. Deriving from *weorð* 'price' or 'worth', which developed the abstract meaning of 'honour' in relation to persons, *weorðian* traditionally expressed transferral of respect between parties in a social context and came to denote purely religious activity only in later texts. In this way, its development parallels that of *biddan*, and with this verb, it will be argued that *weorðian* expanded as a religious term under the influence of concepts peculiar to Abrahamic monotheism, especially notions of 'idol-worship' and the idea of veneration (like prayer) as a ritual unto itself.

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[225] *ÆGram*, 168.3 *ic begange oððe ic wyrðige* translating *colo*.

Ideological inculturation with the idea of 'idol-worship' could plausibly have extended the verb's application to inanimate objects, bringing *weorðian* semantically closer to *begangan*. In the heathen system, however, these verbs were probably quite separately conceived, respectively, in terms of the honour afforded an important personality to whom one had gained access through technical ritual, and the necessary interactions with sacred moveables and fixtures, activities which were incidental to cult practice. With *biddan* and *begangan*, *weorðian* likewise maintained equal applicability to heathen and Christian worship. Action noun *weorðung* perhaps reflects the gradually increased development of *weorðian* as a religious verb expressing habitual Christian cult, rather than interpersonal honour-giving in a social context. Compound *weorðmynd* (m/f, ×210) 'honour, token of honour' appears to have been the more traditional noun paired with *weorðian* for its original social usages and was gradually overtaken by abstract *weorðscipe* and occasional *weorðness* (f, ×5).

Weorðian almost always involves the transferral of honour between parties in *Beowulf*, *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, with implications of social hierarchy. The first example from *Genesis A* describes God's relationship with the rebel angels: *þe hē ær wurðode/wlīte and wuldre* (35b-36a) 'whom he formerly honoured with beauty and glory'. Transferral of honour from God is linked to the angels' acquiring of status through their place in heaven with God, which they lose forthwith. Instrumental phrases akin to *wlīte and wuldre* expressing the means by which honour is conveyed are also typical for *weorðian* constructions. Abraham's blessings are conceived in similar terms. God first blesses the patriarch promising: *lisse selle,/wilna wæstme þām þē wurðiað* (1757b-58) 'I will grant joy, the fruits of delight, to those who honour you'. The Vulgate reads *benedicere* throughout, but, as observed in Chapter 1 (vi), the *Genesis A* poet reserves *bletsian* to God alone, preferring *weorðian* for interpersonal blessings.[226] When Abraham meets Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem declares:

> 'Wæs ðū **gewurðod**   on wera rīme
> for þæs ēagum   þe ðē æsca tīr
> æt gūðe forgeaf.'
> (2107-109)

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[226] Genesis 12:3

['Be **honoured** among the numbers of men before the eyes of Him who gave you the glory of spears in battle']

The source has *benedictus*, but the poet employs a different verbid with the poetic register of battle, suggesting that *weorðian* was traditionally linked to the idea of worldly status flowing from military success. Abraham responds, the poet recounts: *ædre for eorlum, elne gewurðod,/dōme and sigore, drihtlīce spræc* (2137-38) 'right then, before the earls, honoured with courage, with renown and victory, he spoke like a lord'. The poet reiterates the means by which honour is manifested or embodied with the usual instrumental phraseology – through virtue and successes, such as courage, renown and victory – and, importantly, that Abraham's acquired status publicly manifests (*drihtlīce*) before aristocratic peers (*eorlum*).

This traditional phraseology is also neatly adapted to doctrinal concepts. Adam is described as *gāste geweorðad* (1137b) 'honoured with a spirit' upon creation, with the soul realising sovereign status over living things. There is only one example of religious use in terms of human-divine relations, when Abraham departs Egypt: *þǣr se ēadga eft ēcan drihtnes/nīwan stefne noman weorðade* (1885-86) 'there the blessed one honoured the name of the Eternal Lord again with a new voice', which translates *invocavit ibi nomen Domini* 'there he called the Lord's name'. Through the adverbial phrase *nīwan stefne*, the poet faithfully adapts a traditional *weorðian*-construction to the invocatory act in Genesis 12:3. The veneration is consistent in Anglo-Saxon terms – honour is intended to pass from one (Abraham) to another (God) and actualised by what is transferred – here the devotee's voice. These examples from *Genesis A* demonstrate that the transferral of honour or 'worth' could move either way between parties of disparate status, whether God to angels or retainer to lord, and the honour-giving was communally recognised, thereby realising elevation of the recipient's status.

In *Exodus*, *weorðian* also attends worldly advantage and status elevation through favour from God in heroic terms. The poet describes the pillar of cloud with the apparently conventional instrumental arrangement: *mid wuldre geweorðode/þēodenholde* (86-87a) 'He honoured with glory those loyal to the Prince'. In speaking of the leadership of Moses, the poet relates that God likewise *gewurðode werodes aldor,/Faraones fēond, on forðwegas* (30-31) 'honoured the prince of the troop, Pharaoh's enemy, on the journey'. When Moses delivers his speech of encouragement to the Israelites, he urges: *þæt gē gewurðien wuldres aldor* (270) 'that you honour the Prince of Glory'. In the poem's finale, the Israelites celebrate on the shore of the

Red Sea (l.564-90) with music (according to Exodus 15:1-20) and divide the spoils according to Germanic customs. Zipporah is described *on geofones staðe golde geweorðod* (581) 'on the shore honoured with gold' before taking her customary place at the treasure-dealing, where *hēo on riht scēodon/gold ond gōdweb* (587b-88a) 'she according to custom shared gold and precious garments' in a way comparable to Wealhtheow in *Beowulf* (1215-31).[227] The compound *halswurðunge* (582b) 'necklace' (literally 'neck-honouring') importantly shows that *weorðung* as an activity was also outwardly recognised as conveyed through personal ornamentation.

These materialistic features of *weorðian* within traditional social life are more explicit in heroic poetry. When Beowulf presents Hygd with the *healsbēah*, the poet states: *hyre syððan wæs/æfter bēahðege brēost geweorðod* (2175b-76) 'her breast was thence honoured after the ring-receiving'. During the digression on Finn and Hengest, the poet recounts the terms of the truce between the Danes and surviving Jutes, which include that the Frisian king *Dene weorþode* (1090b) 'honour the Danes' each day *æt feohgyftum* (1089a) 'at a dispensing of treasure'. The *Waldere* poet refers to the ornamented corslet of Ælfhere as *gōd and gēapneb, golde geweorðod* (19) 'fine and curve-fronted, adorned with gold', where the dative/instrumental noun *golde* conveys the means of marking the corslet's status as a valuable object. Similar phraseology in *Beowulf* expresses the embodiment of honour in outward appearance: the Geatish retinue are *wǣpnum gewurðad* (331a) 'honoured with weapons'; the eight horses that Hrothgar presents to Beowulf are *since gewurþad* (1038b) 'honoured with treasure';[228] Beowulf is also *since geweorðad* (1450b) before diving into Grendel's mere.

The Danish coast-guard's remark *nis þæt seldguma/wǣpnum geweorðad* (249b-50a) 'that is no mere noble, honoured only in weapons' indicates that honour could also be acquired for personal qualities, and the performance of great deeds might be one means of acquiring this type of honour. Returning to Heorot with Grendel's head, the hero is *dǣdcēne mon dōme gewurþad* (1645) 'the deed-bold man, honoured by acclaim'. Later, Beowulf declares to Hygelac *þǣr ic, þēoden mīn, þīne lēode/weorðode weorcum* (2095-96a) 'there, my prince, I honoured your people with deeds'. Honour actualised by great deeds together with material transfer occurs in the second marriage digression, when the poet recalls *Offa wæs/geofum ond*

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[227] Lucas (1977), 147

[228] See also *Elene* (1192) *mearh under mōdegum midlum geweorðod/brīdelshringum* 'the horse honoured among the brave for its bits and ringed-bridles'.

gūðum, gārcēne man,/wīde geweorðod (1958-59a) 'Offa, spear-bold man, was widely honoured by gifts and battles'. In *Judith*, the Hebrews are *sigore geweorðod* (297b) 'honoured by victory'. The concluding lines of Hrothgar's 'sermon' (1782-1784) also connect honour by renown with the custom of treasure-giving where the king bids Beowulf take his place at the feast *wīggeweorþad* (1783a) 'battle-honoured', promising that many treasures will be shared between them on the morrow.

These examples reveal a poetic preference for past participle *geweorðod* with adjectival meaning, describing the state of having been honoured. Likewise, in heroic contexts, *weorðmynd* nominally focuses on the result, symbol or embodiment of eminent deeds, often in material terms. The sword which Beowulf finds in Grendel's mother's lair is described as *wigena weorðmynd* (1559a) 'honour of warriors'. It is recounted of Scyld Scefing that he *weorðmyndum þāh* (8b) 'prospered in honour'. Hrothgar refers to the *weorðmynda dǣl* (1752b) 'portion of honours' given (*sealde*) by God which encourage greed in a king. Ælfric alludes to this relationship between the reception of honour and its fruits in relation to Jonathan Apphus, one of the Maccabees, who *wunode on wurðmynte ðā lange and cynegas hine wurðodon mid wordum and gifum* 'lived in honour a long time and kings honoured him with words and gifts'.[229]

There is one adjectival example of *weorðian* in *Daniel*, where Jerusalem is described as *weallum geweorðod* (41a) 'honoured with walls'. Other examples concern religious worship, pagan and Christian alike: *guman glædmōde God wurðedon* (259) 'the glad-spirited men worshipped God' describes the Three Youths, and with the description of Jerusalem implies a personality (the city being personified); *wurðedon wīhgyld* (182a) 'they worshipped an idol' describes the Babylonian's worship of the statue on the plain of Deira (Daniel 3:1-7), and is plausibly to be reckoned a Christianised expression that was coined to express idolatory. Not only does traditional verse overwhelmingly show that *weorðian* was interpersonal, but, as argued in the previous discussion, it is more likely that *begangan* semantically covered religious interactions with inanimate fixtures in the heathen system.

Weorðian occurs frequently in prose. The syntactic preference for expressing transferral of honour with an instrumental phrase persists, but unlike in poetry, *mid* usually conveys the

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[229] *ÆLS* (Maccabees), 728; 1 Maccabees 8-13

adverbial sense. As in heroic poetry, accolades are publicly recognised and secured through material transfer. The Vulgate states that God granted favour to the Israelites in the sight of the Egyptians (*dedit gratiam populo coram Aegyptiis*) after the slaying of the first-born, for which reason the Egyptians render them with provisions (*ut commodarent eis*).[230] The translator of the WS Exodus (Heptateuch) reproduces this verse: *Drihten his folc wurðode Israhela bearn mid þāra Egyptiscan gestrēone* 'the Lord honoured his people the children of Israel with the Egyptian treasures'. Elsewhere, the traditional phraseology recurs for interpersonal honours. In the Life of Chrysanthus, the senate and emperor *wurðodon* 'honoured' the martyr's pagan father *mid fullum wurðmynte* 'with full honours'.[231]

Another important group of examples associate *weorðian* with personal attitude and practice, for example *mid rihtum gelēafum God wurðode* 'he worshipped God with right belief';[232] *Abraham wurðode God mid al his heortan* 'Abraham worshipped God with all his heart';[233] *mid lofsangum hine wurðode* 'he worshipped him with praise-songs'.[234] Ælfric also favours the expression *wurðodon þone ælmihtigan God mid biggencgum* 'they worshipped Almighty God with rites',[235] which coheres with his consistent use of *bigencg* for specifically Christian forms of ritual (see iii). These examples more clearly show the influence of the same peculiarly spiritual, personalised Christian concept of devotion which influenced the development of *biddan*. For this Christianised *weorðian*, honour is transferred through performance of prayer and praise, and the abstract, internally-directed commitments of belief and the heart.

The frequent connection of *weorðian* to *lufu* and *lufian* further reflects the Christianised semantic shift towards a devotee's internal attitude. The couplet *lufian and weorðian* sometimes occurs in later WS prose,[236] but its attestation in *Guthlac A* for devotion through piety and good works indicates a currency perhaps as early as the later eighth century.

> Ic þone dēman   in dagum mīnum
> wille **weorþian**   wordum ond dǣdum,
> lufian in līfe

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[230] Exodus 12:36
[231] ÆLS (Chrysanthus), 6
[232] ÆCHom II, 5, 43.73
[233] ÆLet 4 (SigeweardB), 247
[234] ÆCHom II, 6, 58.179
[235] ÆLS (Maccabees), 514
[236] WHom 10a, 3; LawICn, 1 and other examples.

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(618-20b)

[I will **worship** the Judge in my days with words and deeds, love him in life]

Weorðian is also frequently associated with feast days in prose. Exhortative clauses in homilies are typical, for example *weorþian wē nū tōdæg þone tōcyme þæs hālgan gāstes* 'let us honour today the coming of the Holy Spirit'.[237] The strength of this connection to feast days is perhaps indicated by translation of *colere* here, a verb normally reserved to *begangan*.[238] A number of examples concerning feast days in the Heptateuch show *weorðian* for *celebrare*[239] and *custodire*.[240] The translator further adopts a *weorðian*-construction, *þis synd ðā dagas, ðe gē sceolon Drihtne hālgian & wurðian* 'these are the days which you shall sanctify and honour', periphrastically for *hae sunt feriae Domini, quas vocabitis sanctas* 'these are feast-days you shall call holy', supplying a verb of veneration presumably because it was idiomatic in tenth-century Christian vernacular terminology.[241]

The connection with feast days importantly reveals that, at least from the later ninth century (if not earlier, on the evidence of *Daniel* l.41a), *weorðian* encompassed the honouring of abstract entities (feast day) or inanimate objects. In his account of the Maccabees, Ælfric writes of the temple in Jerusalem which had been adorned by king Seleucus: *wīde of middanearde man wurðode þæt templ* 'widely through the earth the temple was honoured'.[242] The use of *weorðian* is probably predicated on the relationship between status, reverence and the transfer of wealth (here to a building).

Later prose evidence shows that *weorðian* retained its social semantics alongside novel application to Christian ritual. Probably only in the tenth century did *weorðian* begin to converge with *begangan* through the gradual accrual of ritualistic connotations, culminating in the latter's ousting by the twelfth century. A handful of times in the Heptateuch, *weorðian*

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[237] HomS 47 (BlHom 12), 3
[238] HyGl 3 (Gneuss), 98.1; HyGl 2 (Milfull), 98.1
[239] Exodus 12:14; 23:14
[240] Exodus 12:17
[241] Leviticus 23:1
[242] ÆLS (Maccabees), 750 (2 Maccabees 3:2 *reges et principes locum summo honore dignum ducerent et templum maximis muneribus illustrarent* 'kings and princes esteemed the place worthy of the highest honour and made the temple illustrious with the greatest gifts'

translates verbs of ritual worship *colere* and *sanctificare*, although not consistently.[243] In three eleventh-century psalters, *weorðian* renders *colere*[244] and *adorare*,[245] and *veneror* in the canticles of the Vespasian (ninth-century Mercian) and Canterbury psalters.[246] Anglian *worðian* frequently translates *adorare* in the Rushworth and Lindisfarne gospels with connotations of 'worship' rather than imploration, for example *aldro ūso in mōre ðisum geworðadun* 'our fathers worshipped on this mountain', translating *patres nostri in monte hoc adoraverunt*.[247] Aldred twice glosses *honorare*[248] and *honorificare*,[249] and interestingly supplies the couplet *geworðade & gewuldrade* for *glorificabat*,[250] perhaps attesting the survival of an idiomatic association of *weorðian* and *wuldor*, but also confirming that the core semantics of *weorðian* still concerned elevation of the honouree as the result. *Worðian* translates *colere* just once in Mark 7:7, *in vanum autem me colunt* 'in vain do they worship me'.[251]

Turning to nominal derivatives, *weorðscipe* never refers to ritual (as MnE 'worship'), but rather abstract acclaim which the recipient of veneration obtains through being honoured, a usage that survives in the MnE style 'your worship'. Traditionally, *weorðmynd* seems to have encompassed this peculiar notion of acclaim, but, as poetry shows, this noun had more materialistic connotations, often denoting chattels or land. Comparing both, *weorðscipe* is almost entirely absent from poetry and *weorðmynd* less frequent in prose (often coupled *wuldor and weorðmynt*), which suggests that the latter was ousted in favour of an abstract innovation which could encompass an evolving, more immaterial, concept of personal worth. In this, *weorðscipe* assumed rather than erased the semantics of *weorðmynd*, for example, the phrase *mid micelum weorðscipe* 'with great honour' is typical in Chronicle entries or other formal texts for the public acclaim of an individual, but also includes the property attached to honours. In early glosses, *weorðmynd* clearly denotes tangible markers of social status. In Corpus, *tō wyrðmyndum* translates *ad fasces*,[252] suggesting political authority and *titulus* in Cleopatra 3

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[243] Exodus 32:17; Deuteronomy 32:51
[244] PsCaF (Rosier); PsCaG (Rosier), 7(6).17
[245] PsGlC (Wildhagen), 105:19
[246] PsCaA 2 (Kuhn), 14(2).2; PsCaE (Liles), 14(8).2
[247] John (Li) 4:20. See also John (Ru) 4:23; Matthew (Li) 2:11, 14:33; Mark (Li) 15:19
[248] Mark (Li) 7:6
[249] Mark (Li) 2:12; John (Li) 5:23. See also John (Ru) 5:23; Matthew (Ru) 6:2.
[250] Luke (Li) 13:13
[251] Mark (Li) 7:7. Glossing of *excolere* in Matthew (Li) 23:24 seems a misreading of the verse.
[252] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 1.229; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 204

points even more specifically to rank.[253] Both include the idea that the honour is formally recognised by the community according to cultural tradition. Glosses of *privilegium*, *prerogativa*, and *excellentia* in Aldhelm further denote the abstract implications of rank.[254]

Worship as religious performance is reserved to *weorðung*, which translates various ritual terminology, often involving sung rite, for example glossing *canor*, *cantus* and *modulatio* in Harley.[255] The translator of Bede produces *weorþuncge Ēastrena* for *observatione Paschae*[256] and *in weorðunge symbeldaga* for *in celebratione dierum festorum* 'in celebration of feast days'.[257] *Weorðung* also sometimes means honour, especially the adverbial phrase *tō weorðunge* 'in honour (of)'. *Worðung* regularly glosses *honor* in tenth-century Northumbrian texts.[258] In some constructions, *weorðung* is governed by *syllan* which aligns with the semantics of transfer inherent to *weorðian*, for example *& hi saldon Gode weorþunga* 'and they gave honours to God'.[259] Such constructions possibly find Latin influence,[260] but, as observed in Chapter 1, *syllan* was also traditionally associated with sacrifice as a verb of legal transfer for alienating possession of property to another party.

Corpus distribution of the *weorðian* word-family indicates that its cultural origins were in Germanic societal customs where elevation of socio-political status depended upon formal acquisition of land and material wealth within the prevailing power structure as adjuncts of personal worth. Comparative evidence may be briefly considered. Cognates of *weorð* were (and remain) widespread throughout Germanic as a basic term for 'value', and significantly in older usages, in relation to personal 'worth'. The noun's derivative *weorðian* finds a direct cognate in Gothic *wairþōn* (×1) 'to value', a *hapax* referring to the man-price of Jesus: *andawairþi þis wairþodins þatei garahnidedun fram sunum Israelis* 'the price of the one valued, whom they valued of the sons of Israel'.[261] Importantly, two different Gothic verbs *wairþōn* and *ga-rahnjan* translate τιμάω in this verse (Vulgate *appretiare*), which implies that Wulfila recognised a fundamental vernacular difference between the perfective act of

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[253] ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1958
[254] AldV 1 (Goossens), 4686, 5270; AldV 1 (Goossens), 2117; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 2572
[255] HlGl (Oliphant), C247
[256] Bede 3, 14.206.1; *HE* 3.17
[257] Bede 4, 20.314.22; *HE* 4.16
[258] Mark (Ru) 6:4; DurRitGl 1 (Thomp-Lind), 105.3
[259] HomS 33 (Först), 182; HomS 44 (Baz-Cr), 136
[260] PsGlD (Roeder), 67:35 *sellað weorðunge Gode* translating *date honorem deo* 'give honour to God'.
[261] Matthew 27:9 τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν ἰσραήλ

esteeming (*ga-rahnjan*) and the more stative, passive and adjectival usage of the past participle of *wairþōn* to describe Jesus' value in the eyes of his tribal community.

It is further relevant that Wulfila's apparently special usage of *wairþōn* can be more directly compared to a prominent group of *weorðian* examples in OE poetry which show either adjectival *geweorðode* or passive *wæs geweorðod* constructions. It is also interesting to compare the WS gospels, translated from Greek, which render Matthew 27:9 similarly to Wulfila: *þæs gebōhtan wurð þone ðe wæs ǣr gewurþod fram Israhela bearnum* 'the price of the bought one, whom was earlier valued out of the sons of Israel'.[262] This is the only example of *weorðian* explicitly referring to material value. Greek τιμάω includes literal 'value' and figurative 'honour', for both of which the WS translator uses *weorðian*.[263] Wulfila, however, respects the differences of τιμάω, always using *sweran* (×9) for the Greek verb's figurative meanings. Although sparse evidence, *wairþōn* is potentially very significant for its implication that the etymon of *weorðian* was relatively confined in Germanic tradition to the *in personam* valuation of man-price and thereby status within a social group. The expansive potential of *weorðian* in OE might be related to the increase of wealth circulation and opportunities for social advancement which characterised societies during the migration period.

OE *weorð* always means 'price' and only glosses *pretium*.[264] A direct cognate *wairþ* (×4) is attested in a mid-sixth century Ostrogothic deed denoting 'price' paid for land,[265] while Wulfila uses *andawairþi* (×2) synonymously. Adjective *wairþs* (×105) occurs many times with figurative meaning, however, translating both ἱκανός 'sufficient' and ἄξιος 'worthy'.[266] It seems probable that Paul's translator has deployed a vernacular idiom with *briggan* to express the idea of figurative esteem ('honouring') verbally: *du wairþans briggan izwis þiudangardjos gudis* 'that you may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God' translating εἰς τὸ καταξιωθῆναι ὑμᾶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.[267]

The status of *weorðian* as a verb of worship is peculiar to OE, with the **werþa-* word-family in the other Germanic languages confined to the semantic field of 'value'. By comparison to

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[262] Matthew (WSCp) 27:9
[263] John (WSCp) 12:26; Mark (WSCp) 7:6
[264] ÆGl (320.10), AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 949; HyGl 2 (Milfull), 31.8, 104.2.2
[265] Streitberg (2000), 479-80
[266] Matthew 8:8; 1 Timothy 5:18 and other examples.
[267] 2 Thessalonians 1:5. See also 2 Thessalonians 1:11.

the *gelda-* family, which was solidly concrete, *werþa-* appears to have included abstract connotations of 'honour'. In all Germanic languages, a lexical split is apparent within this word-family between a concrete noun meaning 'price' and an adjective that also includes figurative semantics 'worthy, honourable'. Recent authority favours the adjective as original, with the noun a substantivised form with concrete application to transactions.[268] The etymology remains unclear.[269] Possible connection with *werþan-* 'become' or Avestan *a-varǝtā* 'valuables, property' have also been proposed, which would secure an IE basis.[270] With respect to verbal derivatives, two separate stems are attested which also broadly reflect this semantic allocation between literal and figurative evaluation: weak first class *gewyrðan*, ON *virða*, MHG *wirden* 'value, estimate'; weak second class *weorðian*, OS *gi-werðōn* 'honour, respect', Gothic *wairþōn*; a weak third class in OHG *giwerdēn* 'deign' possibly represents an old factitive (literally 'make worthy').[271]

A parallel to this split between material 'value' and 'honour' at the common Germanic level perhaps survives in the difference between MnG *(be-)werten* 'to value quantifiably' and *würdigen* 'appreciate, pay tribute to a person (figuratively)', a more occasional verb denoting public recognition of a person's qualities and achievements. This split is comparable with OE *wyrðan* and *weorðian*, although the transferral of 'honour' probably also involved a public transfer of material wealth within migration-period society. The definitive semantic features of *würdigen* seem very similar to *weorðian*: both act *in personam*, the occasion for honour-giving is formal and public, the relationship of verb and subject frequently passive and receptive (*er wurde für sein Lebenswerk gewürdigt*), and the means of honour-transferral essentially depends upon communal perception within a social organism or power-structure.

To summarise, this study argues that pre-Christian *weorðian* was grounded in social relations, denoting the transferral of 'honour' between persons, effective outwardly in the eyes of the community through privileges or status symbols. Rather than as a technical verb of cultic procedure, religious usage would have flowed incidentally from the veneration that a deity was afforded as another high-status entity, probably communally by the tribal group with sacrificial tributes, just as persons were honoured with precious objects. Christianisation ultimately

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[268] Kroonen (2013), 581; De Vries (1962), 655
[269] Kroonen (2013), 581; Lehmann (1986), 391; De Vries (1962), 655
[270] Orel (2003), 458; Jóhannesson (1951-56), 145; Bartholomae (1904), 176; Feist (1939), 546-47
[271] Ringe (2006), 236

imparted to *weorðian* the more peculiar, technically religious sense of 'worship' as personal, habitual performance of prescribed ritual, which Jente argued would have been inculturated at an early stage.[272]

In line with the model for inculturation proposed in the present study, however, it seems more likely that *weorðian* would have acquired these peculiarly Christian cultic meanings under the influence of literary terminology during the later stages of Christianisation. The basis for the verb's initial adaptation was, instead, arguably restricted to the core semantics of honour-giving, now singularly to God rather than the heathen deities, and incidental upon His status as divine sovereign. During the conversion period, practical ritual might have been the exclusive preserve of *begangan*, in line with its inherent semantic relationship to inanimate fixtures.

It is possible that the capacity to denote a religious act unto itself (like MnE 'worship') was acquired gradually, and the consistent attestation in later OE of *weorðian*-constructions modified by an instrumental phrase expressing the means by which honour is transferred bespeaks the endurance of traditional meaning. As for *biddan* and *begangan*, the inherently social semantics of *weorðian* probably also account for its dual capacity to denote pagan and Christian worship, which is generally not observed for technical cultic terms such as *blōtan*, *bletsian* or *wēoh*.[273] *Weorðian*'s social meaning probably developed in connection with the Germanic tradition of a 'man-price'. In WGmc, the verb may have further expanded with the gradual militarisation of Germanic society in the centuries leading up to the migration period, with the growing prevalence of the war-band as the dominant power structure. These conditions might have given the *weorðian* word-family pronounced currency within the Anglo-Saxon culture which missionaries first encountered in the seventh century.

v. Conclusions

Comparative treatment of *biddan*, *hālsian*, *begangan* and *weorðian* demonstrates that Christianisation inculturated novel concepts of 'prayer' and 'worship' into OE vocabulary, through which words that were ancillary to the heathen cultic system were re-defined as

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[272] Jente (1921), 33
[273] *Wēofod* is an exception, see Chapter 4 (i).

technical religious terms. Semantic renovation with these ideologically-grounded ideas may have occurred after the initial phases of inculturation, which saw the urgent adoption of key ritual terms that empowered the missionaries to prove the Triune God's efficacy over the old cults. Ideologically, Christian prayer as a personalised religious act proceeds directly from the Hebrew Bible's inward turn towards private prayer and repentance in opposition to public, communal sacrifice. And while prayer's status within Christianity as a technical religious act that established and maintained a relationship with God meets the heathen understanding of cult to a certain extent, it included moral rather than instrumental implications.

Biddan and *hālsian* epitomise the yoking of two competing definitions of religion that the missionaries maneuvered. This study argued in (i) that pre-Christian *biddan* denoted a formal act of request to a person in a position of power to act or omit. This implies that its religious usage was coincidental upon a relationship with the divine having been established (the essential function of pre-Christian cultic actions) and that divine personalities were treated in a similar way to a social superior, differing only in means of access and potency. Hence, it could gradually acquire new connotations of the Christian prayer ritual through continued clerical usage, although these were almost certainly inculturated after the establishing of an ecclesiastical infrastructure.

Hālsian presents a very different case. On the basis of its etymology, it appears to have denoted a technical form of invocation delivered in order to effectively harness a favourable omen (*hǣl*) from the divine. The verb was plausibly inculturated formally on analogy with the invocations of Christ that were uttered during Christian exorcisms and healings, and conceptually through an alignment of divine omens with miracle-working. These acts would have been crucial to demonstrating the Triune God's supreme power during the conversion's early stages. *Hālsian* later came to mean a strong entreaty and also expanded into interpersonal request under the influence of *biddan*.

The inculturation of *begangan* and *weorðian* likewise attests innocence to heathen cult of a holistic or even technical religious conception of 'worship'. As for *biddan*, both verbs are semantically grounded in human actions: *begangan* described a set of necessary interactions with material fixtures by way of curation of the sacred objects and spaces which belonged to a revered personality; *weorðian* denoted the honour afforded this personality, in social terms as an extension of the family or tribe. Importantly, the split between *in rem* and *in personam*

transitivity that was inherent, respectively, to *begangan* and *weorðian* shows that the heathen Anglo-Saxon arguably found the Judaeo-Christian, ideological concept of 'idol-worship' unintelligible. The sacred objects, rather, had to be looked after, not worshipped, because they had extraordinary properties as the touchstones to a divine personality that was revered.

3

Objects of Worship

The preceding chapters claimed that Christianisation developed 'prayer' and 'worship' as peculiarly cultic activities within Anglo-Saxon religious practice, and furthermore, that Judaeo-Christian ideology defines these precepts against their negative counterparts in 'sacrifice' and 'idolatry'. The categorisation 'objects of worship' is a useful means of accessing material cult, because the Christian sources presume this definition. It also remains sensible to modern perspectives conditioned by monotheism. Chapter 2 concluded, however, with the observation that 'idol-worship' was probably a foreign concept for heathen Anglo-Saxons, because Christian authors used two verbs to convey religious 'worship' that, respectively, denote interaction with things (*begangan*) and persons (*weorðian*). The question of how a heathen would have conceived 'idols' must, therefore, remain open. Alternatively, it may be useful to speak in terms of cult-foci, which characterises religious objects and structures as essential fixtures of cultic procedure, without defining their status as targets of veneration in Abrahamic terms.

Pre-Christian Germanic culture knew a range of objects and structures that were perceived as having extraordinary properties, four of which are discussed here. Christian authors use *wēoh* to translate 'idol'. This identification seems authentic against the linguistic background of related compounds *wēohsteall* 'sanctuary' and *wēofod* 'altar', as well as archaeological evidence for traditional branch-idols. Unsurprisingly, this noun was marginalised and then probably eclipsed by the more versatile *gield*-compounds (see Chapter 1 iii), which would explain its sparse attestation. The remaining three nouns have received less attention in earlier scholarship on Anglo-Saxon heathenism. *Cumbol* and *þūf* are arguably OE reflexes for certain cultic objects which, according to classical testimony, the Germani brought into battle. With these moveable items, *bēam* is the best vernacular contender for a sacred tree, the devotional

significance of which might have been implicated in the sacral identity of woodland used by a settlement (see Chapter 4 iv *bearu*).

In Christian literature, heathen religious objects and spaces typically occur within iconoclastic scenes. Bede's account of the destruction of the shrine at Goodmanham is a *locus classicus* for Anglo-Saxon paganism. It is related that King Edwin resolved to accept Christianity upon the full agreement of his counsellors.[1] Through the voice of the pagan 'high-priest' Coifi (*primus pontificum*) and another noble spokesman, Bede voices the Northumbrian elite's rationalist attitude to Christianity: the new religion should be accepted, if it be proved more effectual and to give them more certain information.[2] The story then takes a more dramatic turn as Coifi suddenly sees the truth of Christian teaching and realises that the old cults were worthless. Action follows witness as the priest resolves to ruin the *aras et fana idolorum cum septis* 'altars and shrines of idols with enclosures' that he had once consecrated at Goodmanham.[3] Spear in hand, he mounts the king's stallion and sets out to destroy the idols (*pergebat ad idola*). Bede relates that Coifi threw the spear into the shrine (*fanum*) when he approached it and rejoiced in knowledge of the True God. He then ordered the shrine and its enclosures (*septis suis*) to be burned down.

Bede arguably contrived this story from a collection of local memories that had acquired semi-legendary status, because it suited the *History*'s dramatic needs, as well as the religious inclinations of his generation.[4] As national history, it presents Anglian acceptance of Christianity as a testimony of their innate wisdom and pragmatism. Moreover, as ecclesiastical literature, it satisfies the conventional presentation of conversion in terms of iconoclasm, on the model of Sulpicius Severus' *Vita Martini*.[5] This kind of Christian writing frequently dramatises ideological transition as a singular, confrontational encounter: turning from wrong worship (idolatry) to salvation in the Truth. The Goodmanham story hinges around these key precepts of scripture and patristic literature. For this reason, it may reflect the religious inclinations of learned Anglo-Saxon Christians who sought to refine their national religion according to precepts they encountered in text rather than practice.

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[1] *HE* 2.13

[2] Wallace-Hadrill (1988), 71-72 comparing Clovis' conversion in *HF* 2.29-31.

[3] *HE* 2.13. See Appendix A (vii).

[4] See North (1997a), 330-40 for the view that Coifi was the by-name that local Anglians gave Paulinus on account of his hood < Latin *cofia* 'clerical hood'. See also North [Forthcoming], 1-22.

[5] Hen (2002), 236

The present study argues, rather, that the outnumbered missionaries would not have easily succeeded through vandalism or visceral invective and that Christian treatment of heathen sacred spaces and fixtures would have rather proceeded by way of adjustments, re-alignments and negotiations. Relevantly, it was observed in Chapter 1 (iii) that the form *dēofol-gield* transparently shows that 'devil-worship' preceded the semantic development of this compound to 'idolatry' and 'idol'. This implies that the missionaries nuanced the earliest critiques of paganism in terms of the worship of demons rather than lifeless objects. This would have been advantageous for three reasons: the native traditions recognised demonic personalities; replacement of the heathen gods with the Triune God in practical cult was probably the most urgent initial priority of missionary activity; 'idolatry' is an ideological concept that would have been rather bemusing to persons unfamiliar with the Judaeo-Christian literary tradition.

For these reasons, pointed critique of idolatry may have been more characteristic of the later phases of Christianisation, once a critical mass of Anglo-Saxon Christians had become familiar with the new religion's textual tradition. References to idolatry in putatively early poetry might, therefore, be interpreted in terms of a critique which some of these Christians began to mount against the syncretic forms of worship that had been tolerated during the conversion period. In this way, attitudes to idolatry might provide a key index for the two-phase model of Christianisation, which also implies that native sacred objects were inculturated at the early stages and were a feature of early Anglo-Saxon Christianity.

i. *wēoh*

Wēoh (m, *a*-stem) is a very sparsely attested noun (×7) meaning 'idol' in OE literature. Direct cognates in ON *vé* and OS *wîh*, however, appear to denote a space or structure of worship. English *wēoh* place-names, the origins of which lie in the heathen period, remain semantically ambivalent on this point, with scholars preferring 'small wayside shrine'.[6] It will be argued that pre-Christian *wēoh* did indeed denote an 'idol' or 'sacred object' within Anglo-Saxon heathenism, on the strength of the most reasonable linguistic explanation of its relationship to *wēohsteall* and *wēofod*, interpreted against archaeological evidence for cultic objects in

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[6] Wilson (1992), 10

prehistoric Germanic culture. Furthermore, *wēoh*'s marginalisation indicates that it was closely identified with the veneration of a divine personality and would have provided an available vernacular term for expressing 'idol-worship' in Christian writing. It will also be argued that this noun would have been especially useful to earlier Anglo-Saxon Christian authors for making pointed critique against the persistence of heathen cultic forms in contemporary religious life. Similar ideological incentives would have motivated the creation of *wīhgyld* 'idol' (×2), *wēohweorðung* 'idol-worship' (×2), *hǣþenwēoh* 'idol' (×1) and *wīgsmið* (×1) 'idol-maker'.

Differently, *wēohsteall* (×2) 'church sanctuary' and *wēofod* (×424) 'altar' describe features of church architecture, which suggests inculturation of traditional terms for heathen sacred space. This is supported by ON *véstallr* and archaeological evidence for turf-altars. *Wēolēah* (×5) is attested in three tenth-century charters and adjective *wēh* 'holy' just once. *Wēoh* and its derivatives are a spare remnant in OE of the Germanic **wīha*-word-family (Gothic *weihs*, OHG *wīh*), one of the two traditional terms for the sacred, the transparent meanings of which were eclipsed in OE by the *hālig* word-family.[7] *(Ge-)fulwīan* 'baptise' (c.×275) probably reflects absolute inculturation of factitive *wī(h)ian* 'make holy, consecrate' with the Christian sacrament of baptism, for which it is comparable to *bletsian* and *hūsel* as terms monopolised early in the conversion for the purpose of ritual replacement.

It was observed in Chapter 1 (i) that *wēoh* may be attested in *Genesis A*, according to one interpretation of l.2932b-33a that earlier scholars of the poem preferred. On this reading, *brynegield onhrēad,/reccendne weg rommes blōde* (2932b-33) 'he reddened (moistened?) the burnt-offering, the smoking idol (altar-piece?) with ram's blood' finds *onhrēad* 'he adorned' emended with *onrēad* 'he reddened' and *reccendne weg* 'directing path' with *rēcendne wēh* 'smoking idol'.[8] While manuscript *weg* is orthographically ambiguous, it is plausible that it represents a form of *wēoh* having undergone Anglian Smoothing.[9] The present study defends the view that this poem (with *The Dream of the Rood* and *Cædmon's Hymn*) was produced within a religious culture strongly marked by syncretised beliefs and cult-forms that would have characterised the first phases of Christianisation. The poet was required to negotiate the

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[7] Green (1998), 354; Baetke (1942), 196ff., 207ff.
[8] Dietrich (1856), 337-38; Grein (1857), 76; Cosijn (1894), 457; Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 756 s.v. *onrēadan* and *onrēodan*; Grein and Köhler (1912), 793; Holthausen (1914), 88; Cassidy and Ringler (1971).
[9] Doane (2013), 398 *wībed(d)* (1791a, 1806a, 1882b) prevails over *wēobedd* (2842a).

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requirements of cultural familiarity and scriptural fidelity in presenting basic Christian stories as replacement myth. For the present example where Abraham sacrifices a ram in place of Isaac, it was earlier argued in Chapter 1 (i) that these competing needs are discernible in the poet's representation of the *holocaustum* or 'whole burnt-offering' as a novel concept.

It is suggested here that the inclusion of *wēoh* might have been intended to off-set aspects of the scene which were unfamiliar or perceived more in terms of funerary ritual than traditional sacrifice. *Onrēad* governs both *brynegield* and *wēg* denoting the ritualised smearing of ram's blood. Since *gield* positively denotes sacrifice elsewhere in this poem, consistency militates against its meaning 'idol' here; *gield*'s semantic pejoration also probably began as a translational response to *idolatria* within Christian polemic. The smearing of ram's blood on a *wēoh* might have Levitical precedent, although this Israelite ritual properly concerned the altar of the Tabernacle. *Wēofod* would also have been unproblematic strictly as a matter of biblical fidelity, because Isaac's pyre is an *altar* in Genesis 22:9, so its absence suggests the poet purposively avoided it. *Wēoh* was plausibly used here, rather, because it presented the best available analogy between Levitical ritual and a Germanic custom of smearing a sacred object that sat upon a raised structure with sacrificial blood.

Because *wēoh* in *Genesis A* is peculiar and positive, its treatment as cult-focus within this Christian source may well be more authentic than for other usages which express idolatry. Scholars have argued, however, that the negative example in *Maxims I* also preserves culturally authentic information about *wēoh*. The poet states *Wōden worhte wēos, wuldor alwalda/rūme roderas* (132-33a) 'Woden made idols, the All-Ruler [made] glory, the spacious heavens'. These lines are notable for the presence of an Anglo-Saxon theonym and also because they are metrically atypical. They also have the force of a pointed critique, made within an environment where the pre-Christian religious tradition was not merely remembered, but remained a live source of cultural anxiety.

In these lines, the poet has adapted vernacular words for a god and a technical religious noun to scriptural commonplaces that oppose *daemonia* and lifeless *idola* with the singular creativity of the Eternal God.[10] Psalm 95:5 reads: *omnes dii gentium daemonia at vero Dominus caelos*

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[10] Cavill (1999), 132-55, 162; Whitelock (1951), 1-19. See also Psalms 113:12-13; 135:15-18; Isaiah 2:8.

fecit 'for all the gods of the nations are demons, but the Lord made the heavens';[11] Jerome's psalter *iuxta Hebraeos* reads differently: *omnes enim dii populorum [sc. sunt] sculptilia, Dominus autem caelos fecit* 'for all the Gods of the nations [are] carved things',[12] with which the Roman psalter agrees, excepting *daemonia* for *sculptilia*.[13] 1 Chronicles 16:26 is syntactically identical, but reads *idola* for *daemonia*.

Wōden worhte wēos integrates both nominal ideas *daemonia* and *sculptilia/idola* of these verses, but the poet differently ascribes agency to the heathen god, rather than to human worshippers. One view is that this aims to neutralise the perceived creative and sustaining powers of heathen deities.[14] More convincing, however, is the argument that the poet has adapted these scriptural commonplaces for critiquing a specific set of traditional practices that were contested at the time. Through comparison to Scandinavian analogues of the *trémaðr* 'tree-man' (an anthropomorphic cult-focus), it has been proposed that Woden's creative potency over idols reflects Anglian belief that deceased kings and warriors became semi-deified by this god's necromancy; the deceased enjoyed his patronage in the afterlife, through his bestowing their cult-images (*wēoh*) with weapons and armour.[15] Free-standing posts representing deceased persons may have, therefore, been maintained as the physical means of 'resurrection' through Wodenic ritual. This view also justifies contextualising *wēoh* within a system of ancestor worship.

There are four examples in *Daniel*. All denote the giant idol erected by Nebuchadnezzar, first introduced: *wēoh on felda/þām þe dēormōde Dīran hēton* (170-71) 'an idol on the plain that bold men called Dira'.[16] Subsequent examples present the Anglian form *wīh*, first the compound *wīhgyld* in apposition with *cumbol* and *hearg*:

> þā hīe for þām **cumble**   on cnēowum sǣton,
> onhnigon tō þām **herige**   hǣðne þēode,
> wurðedon **wīhgyld**
>
> (180-82a)

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[11] Philippson (1929), 154; North (1997a), 88-89
[12] De Sainte Marie (1954)
[13] Cited in North (1998a), 89
[14] Cavill (1999), 182
[15] North (1997a), 97-110, esp 103-110
[16] Daniel 3:1

[Then they set on their knees before that **symbol**, the heathen nations bowed to that **idol**, they worshipped an **idol**]

Despite poetic synonymy, this nominal distribution is significant. Only *wīhgyld* is governed directly by a verb of worship, appearing preferred for expressing the idol's specific function as cult-focus, while *cumbol* and *hearg* are reserved to describing the spatial relationship of idol and worshippers adverbially. *Wīh* alone as direct object occurs twice further, when the Three Youths reject the idol: *þæs wīges wihte ne rōhton* (201) 'they did not care for that idol', and when they declare that they will *ne þysne wīg wurðigean* (207b) 'not worship this idol'. These examples from *Daniel* show that, among synonyms for 'idol', *wēoh* was preferred accusatively as direct object of an interactive verb. Although capable as an object of worship, however, the probable traditional *in personam* force of *weorðian* implies *wīg weorðian* to represent a Christianised expression for idol-worship (see Chapter 2 iv).

Concerning St. Bartholomew's martyrdom in *Fates of the Apostles*, Cynewulf deploys *wīg weorðian* (48a) as secondary, and perhaps more specific variant of *hæðengild hȳran* (47) 'serve heathen-idols'. He repeats this lexical arrangement in *Juliana* when characterising the pagan antagonist Eleusius: *oft hē hǣþengield/ofer word godes, wēoh gesōhte* (22b-23) 'he often sought a heathen-idol over God's word, an idol'. As argued in Chapter 1 (iii), *gield* is best interpreted as 'idol' rather than 'worship' in *Juliana*. The idiomatic usage of *sēcan* open the possibility that *wēoh* refers to a place visited, but in negative contexts, this verb more typically connotes 'resort to' or 'be reduced to'.[17]

A little further in *Juliana*, *hǣtsð hǣþenwēoh* (53a) 'you vow to a heathen idol' as direct object of a verb of worship is secondary variant to the adverbial phrase *þurh dēofolgield* (52a) 'through an idol/devil-worship' and appears to support the view inferred from *Daniel* that *wēoh* was preferred for accusative contexts. These negative usages of *wēoh* share this tendency with positive *wēg* in *Genesis A*. An accusative object of *hātan* 'declare, vow to' is, however, unexpected against wider evidence for this verb. It is more sensible to suppose *hǣþenwēoh* as scribal error for a beneficial dative singular *hǣþenwēo* 'to a heathen idol', syntactically

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[17] Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 854

paralleled by *dēofolgieldum ... gaful onhāte* (149-51) '[that] I should vow tribute to idols' later in the poem, but with an unexpressed accusative object.[18]

Wēohweorðung is a nominal reflex of the Christianised expression *wēoh weorðian*, literally translating 'idol-honouring'. Juliana declares she will never submit to Eleusius' rule, *būton þū forlǣte þā lēasinga,/wēohweorðinga* (179-80a) 'unless you renounce those falsehoods, idol-worshipping rites', with *wēoh* again occurring as a more specific secondary variant to a general noun for pagan error and specified with a plural that might imply 'rites' rather than a singular abstract 'idolatry'.

Wēohweorðung also conveniently comprises a basic D-type on-verse in the oblique and plural cases, which is how the *Beowulf* poet uses it when the Danes lapse into heathen worship: *hwīlum hīe gehēton æt hærgtrafum/wīgweorþunga* (175-76a) 'sometimes they vowed honour to idols at shrine-tents'. The present study argues that this segment of *Beowulf* partakes of the same animus underlying *Maxims I*, in terms of critiquing particular, contested issues with scriptural commonplaces: *ne wiston hīe drihten God* (181b) 'they did not know the Lord God', but the audience does, infers the poet, so they have no excuse.

The difference between locative *hearg* and accusative *wīg-* again obtains in *Beowulf* l.175-76a, as in *Daniel* l.181-82a. The tautological couplet *hīera wīggild & hīera dīofulgild on ðās dagas weorðedon* 'they worshipped their idols on these days' also conveys this idea of a cult-focus governed by a verb of worship.[19] *Wēohsteall*, however, spatially denotes the apse of sanctuary of a church where the altar stood in Wulfstan's ecclesiastical regulations: *ne cume ... binnan wēohstealle* 'he should not come within the apse'.[20] In the *Vision of Leofric*, the same phraseology denotes the sanctuary of St. Clement's, Sandwich: *ēode binnan þone wēohstal on norðhealfe* 'he went into the apse on the north-side'.[21] Although these texts are both late, ON *véstallr* opens the possibility that *wēohsteall* was a traditional term for sacred space that was inculturated to describe a church sanctuary.

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[18] DOE s.v. *hātan*, I.D.1
[19] HomS 36 (ScraggVerc 11), 4
[20] WCan 1.1.1 (Fowler), 46; Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 1222; WCan 1.1.2 (Fowler), 46 varies with *wēofodsteall*.
[21] Leof, 67

The glossing of *diva* 'godlike, belonging to a god' with *wēh* is important as the only surviving reflex of Germanic **wīha-* 'sacred', which was ousted in OE by *hālig* 'holy'.[22] Scholars have argued that *hālig*'s success was ensured during the conversion period for its concern with the gift of divine favour resultant in earthly advantage, especially for kings.[23] *Hālig < *hailaga-* also belongs etymologically with *hǣl* 'omen' and *hālsian* 'procure a portent', which might justify reconstructing the pre-Christian adjective more specifically as 'portentous'. Conversely, **wīha-* plausibly denoted the 'remoteness, power, and numinous quality arousing awe and fear' reserved to divinity.[24] This meaning is clearly present in *wēh*'s glossing of *diva*, proving that Anglo-Saxon heathenism recognised the Germanic tradition of sacrality inherent to **wīha-*. Physical objects identified as **wīha-* (such as idols) were thus arguably regarded as the sacrosanct possession of divinity, in contrast to amulets or other items invested with **haila-*, such as the Pietroassa Ring (c.400) with its runic inscription: *gutani [?] wi hailag* 'of the Goths [?] holy'.[25]

Continental cognates of *wēoh* show spatial meaning. While adjective *wīh* is quite well represented in OHG, the only nominal example translates *nemus* 'grove' in a late eighth-century biblical glossary.[26] OS *wîh* (×45) meanwhile denotes a structure of worship in the *Heliand*. It is the most frequent term for the Temple in Jerusalem, among other synonyms *alah* (×14), *rakud* (×5), and *Godes hûs* (×6). It varies *alah* 12 times, for example *the he thar an themu alahe gisprak,/uualdand an themu uuîhe* (4246b-47a) 'when he spoke there in the Temple, Ruler in the Temple'. Both nouns typically occur within similar adverbial phrases expressing the spatial relationship between worshipper and Temple, usually occupying the on-verse.

Allative constructions with a verb of motion are also frequent, for example *geng ... an thana uuîh innan* 'he went into the Temple'.[27] These tendencies are also observed for *hûs* and *rakud* as 'temple'. There is also little evidence that *alah* and *wîh* respectively meant the building and inner sanctum of the Temple. They are practical synonyms, when the focus is on activities proper to the Temple's identity as a structure of worship. For example, Zacharias worships *at*

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[22] PrudGl 4.2 (Page), 91
[23] Green (1998), 354, 361
[24] Green (1998), 361
[25] Baetke (1942), 80-122, 196ff; Green (1998), 361; Grundy (2014), 15; Düwel (2008), 31-32; Braune (1918), 398-404.
[26] StSG I, 316.60 (Genesis 21:33)
[27] *Heliand* 102b-103a and other examples.

them uuîha (90a), the Jewish elders *an them alaha* (794a), the moneylenders *sâtun/an themu uuîhe innan* (3737-38a), and Jesus is brought before Herod *at themu uuîhe* (5257a).

Individual characteristics of *wîh* and *alah* are, however, discernible beyond practical synonymy. *Alah* is used wherever the noble status of persons interacting with the Temple is signalled (see Chapter 4 iii *ealh*). *Wîh* shows two phraseological capacities unrecorded for *alah*. First, *wîh* shares with *hûs* the capacity to form possessive constructions of the type *godes uuîh* or *uuîh godes*. This common ground indicates that *wîh* inferred the idea of ownership and/or occupancy.[28] Second, genitive singular *wîhes* is governed by *wardon* 'guard, watch over' (OE *weardian*, ON *varða*) four times, and once modifies *ward* 'guardian'. All examples concern the Temple priesthood, for example *the thes uuîhes uuardon scoldun* (812-14) 'those who had to guard the Temple'.[29] The high priest Caiaphas is twice identified with the role in fitt 50, the poet adding that he was elected by the people specifically to perform this duty for an annual term:

> Kaiaphas uuas he hêten;   habdun ina gicoranen te thiu
> an theru gêrtalu   Iudeo liudi,
> that he thes godes hûses   gômien scoldi,
> **uuardon thes uuîhes**
> > (4147-50a)

[Caiaphas was he called; the Jewish people had chosen him that year that he must take care of the house of God, **guard the Temple**]

> huand he that hûs godes
> thar an Hierusalem   bigangan scolde,
> **uuardon thes uuîhes**:
> > (4161-63a)

[because he had to curate the house of God there in Jerusalem, **to guard the Temple**]

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[28] *Godes wîh* 457a, 1081b, 5160b; *wîh Godes* 96b; *Godes hûs* 1465b, 3734a, 3748a, 3778a, 4149a, 4275a
[29] See also l.4216.

In these excerpts, *wardon* varies *gômian* and *bigangan* secondarily. *Bigangan* appears to have been a traditional WGmc verb that denoted (*inter alia*) the regular maintenance of objects or spaces; in a religious context, this plausibly included ritual, sacrifices and other relevant duties (see Chapter 2 iii *begangan*). The verb's contextualisation with *wîh* in these lines opens the possibility that *wēoh* was the conventional object or arena for *begangan* within pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon tradition. The descriptor *iro biscop* (4941b) 'their bishop' for Caiaphas is varied with *iro uuîhes uuard* (4942a) 'their guardian of the Temple'. Neither this epithet nor the idea of annual election finds scriptural precedent, suggesting these details presented a native Saxon analogue to priesthood. *Wîhes ward* is the specifying variant to *biscop* in these lines, succeeding the loanword with a native term familiar to the newly-Christianised.

ON *vé* as 'sanctuary' agrees with the spatial meaning of *wîh*, as well as the attendant ideas of ownership and occupancy. The noun presented a convenient ideological symbol for skalds depicting the cultural confrontation of paganism and Christianity in late tenth-century Norway. The examples (×14) indicate that deities were believed to inhabit the *vé*, which were curated by tribal leaders (e.g. jarls of Lade) to ensure divine favour. *Valdi vés* 'owner of the sanctuary' is a kenning for 'ruler' in *Sigurðardrápa* (c.960).[30] This theme of sanctuary-patronage continues in skaldic accounts that rehabilitated Hákon the Good as a heathen.[31] In *Hákonarmál* 18 (c.961), Eyvindr declares that the king's favourable reception by the gods after death was due to his curation of sanctuaries, *hvé sá konungr hafði/vel of þyrmt véum* 'how well the king had cared for the sanctuaries'.[32]

Some decades later, Hallfreðr termed Olaf Tryggvason *végrimmr* 'fierce against sanctuaries' and *hǫrgbrjótr* 'altar-smasher' (c.996).[33] Einarr skálaglam (c.975) likewise described the sons of Erik Bloodaxe as those who *þorði granda véum* 'dared to destroy the sanctuaries', interpreting their power struggles against Hákon jarl in terms of the late tenth-century cultural conflict.[34] The skald also praises Hákon's restoration of sanctuaries in *Vellekla* (c.985). He not only describes them with possessive phrases *vé banda* and *vé hapta* 'sanctuaries of the gods', but further states that, because of their restoration, *ásmegir hverfa til blóta* 'the sons of the Æsir turn to the sacrifices' and *byggva vé hapta aptr órhryggva* 'once again inhabit the sanctuaries

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[30] KormQ *Sigr* 6[III/5]. Author's word-order.
[31] Marold (1992), 687-88
[32] Eyv *Hák* 18[I/3]
[33] Hfr *Óldr* 1
[34] Eskál *Hákdr* 1[I/3-4]. Author's word-order.

of the gods without sorrow'.[35] Importantly, these lines identify *vé* as a dwelling-place for divine beings, whose continued occupation depended upon human interaction with the space and its cult-foci through maintenance, protection, and sacrifices.

Heathen skalds utilised the concept of *vé* as dwelling-place poetically. Þjóðólfr deploys *ginnunga vé* 'falcon sanctuaries' as a kenning for 'skies' in the late ninth-century *Haustlǫng*,[36] while *útvés flóðrifs* 'of the outlying sanctuary of the sea-rib' is a kenning for 'coast' in *Þórsdrápa* (c.1000).[37] These connotations of possession and occupancy also prevail in later eddic verse: Heimdall is said to *valda véum* 'rule over sanctuaries' as *vǫrðr goða* 'guardian of the gods'; in *Lokasenna*, Skadi declares that his hostile speech comes *fra mínum véum ok vǫngum* 'from my sanctuaries and plains'; Valhalla is termed *vé heilagt* 'holy sanctuary (dwelling place?)'; *alda vés jaðar* 'rim of men's sanctuaries' is a kenning for Midgard.[38] ON evidence also suggests that the duties of maintaining a *vé* were proper to those in positions of power, including kings. Þjóðólfr deploys *vǫrðr véstalls* 'warden of the sanctuary-altar(?)' as a kenning for 'ruler' in *Ynglingatal* (c.890),[39] which establishes a linguistic connection to both *wēohsteal* and *uuîhes uuard* that justifies regarding the compound and the concept of a 'shrine-warden' as traditional to Anglo-Saxon paganism.

The semantic split between OE 'idol' and 'sanctuary, temple' in ON and OS might be resolved through close analysis of *véstallr*'s compound structure. *Steall* means 'place, position' and continues the core semantics of PGmc **stalla-* (direct cognates MW *stadl* 'position', Latin *stabulum* 'stable, hut'), an instrumentative noun derived from PIE **steh₂-* 'stand'.[40] It denotes the means (and by extension place) for standing something in position, for example 'stable' < 'place for standing animals'. With all-purpose meaning, *steall* and cognates frequently constitute the second member of a determinative compound, particularised by the first member denoting the standing entity. It never compounds attributively with an adjective, which rules out *wēohsteall* meaning 'sacred stall'. Examples range widely: OHG *liutstal* 'military outpost' < 'place for stationing the army', OE *weardsteall* 'watch-tower' < 'place where a guard stands',

[35] Eskál *Vell* 14^I/4, 15^I. Author's word-order.
[36] Þjóð *Haustl* 15^III/4
[37] Eil *Þdr* 13^III
[38] *Grímnismál* 13; *Lokasenna* 51; *Hyndlaljóð* 1; *Hávamál* 107
[39] Þjóð *Yt* 11^I
[40] Bosworth and Toller (1882-1898), 913; Kroonen (2013), 472-73

trēowsteall 'tree-plantation', and *scipsteall* 'place for a ship'.[41] *Burgsteall* glosses *clivus* 'hill', identifying the mound as place where a fortress stands, shading into 'supporting foundations', as for *wealsteall*.[42] All other OE examples likewise imply larger dimensions that, by extension, situate, enclose, or support the standing entity. The relationship is clearly discernible in *Exodus*, where the Israelite camp is first termed *wīc* (87b) and then identified as a camp-place marked out by God: *wīcsteal mētan* (92b).

Differently to *steall*, *stallr* narrowed purposively around the connotations of 'support'. This meaning prevails in Icelandic prose and post-tenth-century skaldic, frequently for smaller supportive structures. For example, *baugstallr* 'ring-seat' and *í stalli gemlis* 'in the perch of the hawk' are kennings for 'arm' and 'hand', respectively.[43] Against this ON-internal evidentiary background, *vé* as 'idol' is preferable to 'sanctuary' within *véstallr* meaning a support structure. Later Icelandic authors certainly identified *stallr* as altar-piece or pedestal for idols.[44] Snorri also explicitly conceives of the idol and pedestal as dual components when Óláfr Tryggvason knocks the statue of Thor *af stallinum* 'off its pedestal' in the *hof* at Þrandheimr.[45]

Elsewhere, he provides intriguing details of its function in ritual. In *Ynglinga saga* 15, the Svíar resolve to sacrifice (*blóta*) King Dómaldi and *rjóða stalla með blóði hans* 'redden the altars with his blood',[46] and in *Hákonar saga góða* 14, Snorri relates how during sacrificial festivity at Þrœndalǫg, *skyldi rjóða stallana ǫllu saman* 'the altars were to be reddened all over' (see Chapter 1 vii Analogues).[47] The similarities are striking with *Genesis A* l.2932b-33 of five centuries earlier. While the substance of these activities (smearing blood on a cult-focus) may share a traditional basis, it is questionable that the meaning 'pedestal' underlies the shared tradition of *wēohsteall* and *véstallr*. Reasonable probability would suggest that *véstallr* originally reflected the compositional conventions of *steall*, meaning 'place where idols stand' like *trēowsteall* 'plantation'.

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[41] StSG I, 292.48 (1 Samuel 10.5 *statio*); AntGl 6 (Kindschi), 431 (*conspicilium*); Ch 402 (Birch 666), 4; Ch 702 (Birch 1085), 2
[42] HlGl (Oliphant), C1121; *The Ruin* 28a; *The Wanderer* 88a
[43] Anon *Liðs* 7^{1/2}; *Hátt.* 2^{III/7}
[44] *Gyðinga saga* 18.4 *stalla*; 1 Maccabees 2:45 *aras*
[45] *Heimskringla* (*Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* 69, 385.8)
[46] *Heimskringla* (*Ynglinga saga* 15, 30.18-19)
[47] *Heimskringla* (*Hákonar saga góða* 14, 187.4-5)

Several factors support this view: the inculturation of *wēohsteall* as 'apse' in the seventh-century on analogy with space not structure; this capacity for rehabilitation also speaks to a degree of formal separation from later marginalised *wēoh*; *wēohsteall* as 'pedestal' would be tautologous to *wēofod* < *wīh-bedd*, already a definitive support-structure. Further, the ON 'supportive' meanings are apparently novel: pre-eleventh-century *vǫrðr*-kennings for 'ruler' typically specify territory rather than things, for example *vǫrðr grundar*, *vǫrðr foldar* (c.970),[48] so *vǫrðr véstallr* should imply space rather than accessory structure; *véstallr* as 'idol-enclosure' should also preclude *vé* originally as 'sanctuary', just as *wīh-steall* and *wīh-bedd* should not have been tautologous.

The early tenth-century Glavendrup runestone on Funen (DR 209) documents the actual status of *vé* in a local community. The inscription commemorates a deceased man, identified by his social role: *auft ala saulua kuþa uia l(i)þs haiþuiarþan þiakn* 'in memory of Alli, religious celebrant of the Sølve, honourable thegn of the sanctuary-retinue'.[49] *Kuþa* (*guþi*) reflects an older form of *goði*, also attested in two other Younger Futhark inscriptions from Funen, and one Elder Futhark phrase *ek gudija* 'I the religious celebrant' of the early fifth century.[50] Gothic *gudja* (n) 'religious celebrant (Levitical priest)' is directly cognate, indicating that its Germanic etymon included religious semantics.

Interpreted against Icelandic sources, *goðar* were apparently less a priesthood than important, local persons, acknowledged as qualified for performing the duties of a religious celebrant.[51] The Glavendrup stone not only supports this view of *goði* as one among several social roles an influential person performed for a community, but also corroborates the peculiar description of Caiaphas in the *Heliand*. Alli was the local head of a family, *goði* in the area, lord (*trutin sin*) of the named runic scribe Sóti, and a warrior in the 'sanctuary-retinue' (*uia l(i)þs*). Importantly, this last compound suggests *vé* traditionally enjoyed armed protection. This further contextualises their targeting by invading armies and the significance of OS *uuîhes wardon*.

The **wīha-* word-family's concept of sacrality as that reserved to divinity is supported etymologically by the root **weik-* 'separate' (Sanskrit *vinákti* 'separate'). Cultic usage is also

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[48] Glúmr *Gráf*, 5[I/4], 9[I/3]
[49] Düwel (2008), 100. Alternatively, *saula* means 'pale' with *uia* and *l(i)þs* separate: 'Alli the Pale, religious celebrant of the sanctuary, honourable thegn of the retinue'.
[50] Düwel (2008), 36, 99: Helnæs (DR 190); Flemløse (DR 192); Nordhuglo (KJ 65 U)
[51] North (1997a), 333; Helm (1953) II.2, 189-90

attested by Italic cognates in Latin *victima* 'sacrificial animal' and Umbrian *evietu* 'let him consecrate'.[52] In Germanic, various weak factitive verbs meaning 'make holy, consecrate' derive from the adjective (Gothic *weihs,* OHG *wīh*). Certain Elder and Younger Futhark inscriptions evidence practical contexts. One interpretation of the runes on a spear-shaft from a late fifth-century weapon deposit at Kragehul, Funen reads *he[lmat]lija hagala wiju bi g[aia]* 'I consecrate helmet-destroying hail by the spear'.[53] The shaft thus becomes a 'vehicle for sacral action'.[54] The bind-runes g͡ag͡ag͡a (also attested on the Anglo-Saxon Undley Bracteate) directly precede the sentence, perhaps abbreviating the ritual formula *g[ebu] a[nsiwi]* 'I give to the god'.[55] The casting of a spear over a captured weapon-hoard, denoted by the kenning 'helmet-destroying hail', might have ritually consecrated the hoard into a god's possession.[56] As a substantivised adjective,[57] **wīha-* > *wēoh* 'sacred thing' might have originally referred to an object's accrual of new identity, following conversion as divine property. This keeps open the possibility, indicated at the outset of this chapter, that *wēoh* might have included an array of sacred objects as well as divine images. The idea that consecration assigned exclusive possession to a deity would also reasonably underlie the identification of *vé* as a divine dwelling-place.

Nineteen certain *wēoh* place-names have been identified, most of which are no more than a mile from ancient routeways.[58] Distribution of *wīh* to the north and east, with *wēoh* south and west broadly conforms to expected dialect contours. Gelling proposed that the irregular spread of *wēoh*-sites in the south and centre reflect late survivals in areas that were last to be Christianised.[59] Sites closer to early monastic centers would have disappeared quickly, but those in remote regions or on political peripheries might have survived longer. *Cusanwēoh*, apparently preserving a personal name, is one such example and is attested in the Latin bounds of a very early grant by King Cædwalla (688) for the foundation of Farnham minster, a late ecclesiastical establishment.[60] The Weedons in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire probably stood on the West Saxon marches. No heathen toponyms, however, occur in

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[52] De Vries (1962), 648; Kroonen (2013), 585-86; Lehmann (1986), 398; Benveniste (1973), 450-52. But Baetke (1942), 55-57 'bind' also possible.
[53] Krause (1966), 67; Düwel (2008), 28
[54] Grundy (2014), 15
[55] Pieper (1999), 303-24
[56] *HE* 2.13; *Vǫluspá* 24
[57] Orel (2003), 466
[58] Wilson (1992), 10; Watts (2004); Gelling (1973), 109-28. See Appendix C (i) for *wēoh* place-names.
[59] Gelling (1961), 21-22
[60] S 235; Whitelock (1979), 484-85. See Appendix B (i) for *wēoh* in boundaries.

Oxfordshire, where (according to Bede) missionary activity among the West-Saxons began in 634 under Birinus at the instigation of Honorius I.[61] Wyham, Lincs. also supports this view, since the many surrounding Norse toponyms suggest the land was sparsely settled before the ninth century.[62] *Cusanwēoh* suggests a status for *wēoh* as personal property, perhaps of a local leader, as also for the field-name Patchway < *Pæccel-wēoh* on the boundary of Patcham and Stanmer, Ssx., one adjoining settlement retaining the same personal name. These examples importantly corroborate the implications of the Glavendrup runic inscription.

The possibility cannot be excluded that *wēoh* as first toponymic element was adjectival, meaning 'sacred', especially where the second member denotes a larger area. Weoley toponyms corroborate the identity of woodland as sacred space. *Wēolēah* occurs in three tenth-century charters concerning land in Hampshire, one of which is represented today in Willey, Hants.[63] Wyville, Lincs. belongs to a large class of 'well' toponyms, and either preserves adjective **wīha-* or originally denoted a structure associated with the well. Given the rapid obscuration of this adjective in favour of *hālig* during the seventh century, Wyville could represent an archaic survival, distinct from the numerous Halliwell-sites. Likewise, Wokefield Park, Berks. is named *æt wēonfelda* in a tenth-century charter, the prepositional phrase preserving the *-n-* of a weak adjectival dative singular.[64] Both *Wekefelda* (1167) and *Wenfeld* (13th C.) were subsequently recorded, the nominative ultimately surviving in Wokefield.[65] Symeon of Durham records a similar locative phrase *apud Weondune* (1107) as an alternative name for *Brunnanburh*,[66] and a Latin charter of 1065 records *æt Weodune* for Weedon, Bucks.[67] Both examples further evidence that *æt*-phrases were idiomatic for culturally significant places in Anglo-Saxon toponymy (see Chapter 4 iv *bearu*). Icelandic parallels *at Forsi* 'at the waterfall' and *at Lundi* 'at the grove' designate sites where sacrifices were regularly performed.[68] If speakers habitually used locative *wēon-* when speaking of customary activities performed at the site, this morphology could have become established in composition and preserved long after the adjective became obsolete.

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[61] Gelling (1973), 104-105; Gelling (1978), 159; *HE* 3.7
[62] Gelling (1973), 102
[63] S 382, 7; S 942, 5-6; S 1007, 13
[64] S 578, 11
[65] Watts (2004), 692; Stenton (1970), 291
[66] *Libellus* 2.18; Stenton (1970), 291, but Gelling (1973), 102 sceptical.
[67] S 1040, 12
[68] Turville-Petre (1964), 237

The material dimensions inferred for *wēoh* 'idol' and *wēohsteall* 'enclosure containing idols' find historical and archaeological analogues. Bede identifies the architectural features of the Goodmanham shrine in terms of *aras et fana idolorum cum septis* 'altars and shrines of idols with enclosures', mentioning *septum* once further.[69] According to the present study's linguistic analysis, three of these features 'idol', 'altar' and 'enclosure' match the discrete, yet closely related vernacular terms *wēoh*, *wēofod*, and *wēohsteall*. The square enclosure was apparently typical of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon cult-space. At Yeavering, a fenced, square enclosure encompassing both graves and small, free-standing posts pre-dated the cult-building D2 and later formed its annex.[70] The comparable layout at Slonk Hill, Suss. also encompassed contemporary burials, with evidence of ritual activity.[71] A rear door of the hall building at Cowdery's Down, Hants. accessed an open, square annex with a central, free-standing post, the space and structure together forming 'a kind of domestic shrine'.[72] The same design is also discernible at New Wintles Farm, Oxon. Further evidence for sacred enclosures is discussed in Chapter 4 (i) and (iii).

As traditional compounds, *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* would have derived their identity from *wēoh* within the heathen system. Their inculturation as 'altar' < 'earthen base for idol' (see Chapter 4 i) and 'sanctuary, apse' < 'enclosure where idols stand', despite their transparent linguistic connection to a marginalised term, corroborates the lenient evangelising policy attested in Gregory's letter to Mellitus: the pope advises not to destroy the temples (*fana*), but only the idols (*idola*) within them.[73] The precise identity of an Anglo-Saxon temple is discussed in Chapter 4 (iii *ealh*), but the salient point here is that the Gregorian missionaries were permitted to analogise Christian spaces and structures with heathen cult-space and accessory structures of worship, but not the cult-foci themselves. *Genesis A* and *The Dream of the Rood* (see iv), however, might evidence that the syncretising margin was actually pitched more widely, with attempts to analogise sacred objects indulged for a time.

Together, linguistic, historical, and material evidence have long proved Tacitus' claim that the Germani did not fashion idols more ethnographic commonplace than fact.[74] It is also internally

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[69] *HE* 2.13; Blair (1995), 2
[70] Hope-Taylor (1977), 158-61
[71] Blair (1995), 16
[72] Blair (1995), 16-17
[73] *HE* 1.30. See Appendix A (i).
[74] Tac. Germ. 9.2; Rives (1999), 162-63

contradictory, for he also claims the image of a ship was worshipped among the Suebi, and that the Nerthus cult involved an idol concealed in the cult-wagon.[75] Substantial examples of crude, wooden idols, dating from the pre-Roman Iron Age into the migration period, have been preserved in wetlands of northern Europe.

The most important discovery at Oberdorla, Thüringen has yielded 39 rudimentary, anthropoid figures fashioned from branches or wooden blocks, some with genitalia and facial features, others more aniconic and suggestive. The excavator classified the findings in four groups: *Pfahlidole* 'stake-idols', *Stockidole* 'stick idols', *Astgabelidole* 'fork-branch idol', *Kantholzidole* 'square-timber idols', and *Brettidole* 'board-idols'.[76] All were discovered within most of the 86 wickerwork enclosure-shrines, which were situated through time (La Tène – migration period) at different spots around the cult-lake in relation to its changing water-levels.[77] The main stem of the fork-branch constitutes an idol's body, the fork providing its legs. Sometimes arms were affixed in holes drilled on either side. The examples at Oberdorla are often without visage (Figure 3.1). Smaller examples have been regarded as feminine, while some larger branches that stood like a post are masculine, because they have a side-branch phallus.[78] Most such fork-posts date to the first century and might be associated with the Hermunduri.
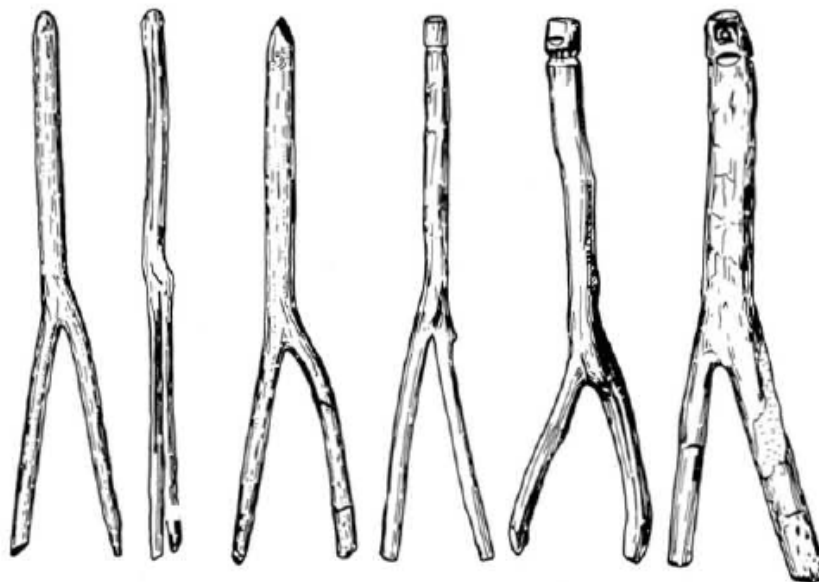

Figure 3.1: Fork-branch idols from Oberdorla.

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[75] Tac. Germ. 9.1, 40. See Kiernan (2020), 41 note 63 and Gell (1998), 109-16, 143-45 note that Tahitian To'o are ceremonially unwrapped for fear of exposure to divine substance.
[76] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 89-93; (1976), 381-83
[77] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 37-71
[78] Dušek (2002), 474

One square-timber female figure (third-century) uniquely presents Gallo-Roman features, situated within an idol-hut resembling a rudimentary *fanum* (see Chapter 4 iii *ealh*).[79] The destruction and ritual burial of this artefact suggests inter-cult hostility.[80] Because of the presence of dog skulls, boar and deer remains, Behm-Blancke identified this goddess as 'Diana' (Figure 3.2).[81] A similar 90cm square-timber idol (third-century), with raised arms fixed into the sides, was discovered further south at Possendorf (Figure 3.3).[82]

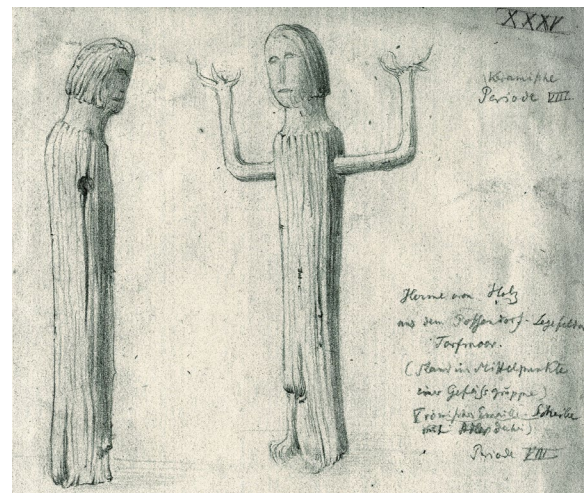Figure 3.2: Original 'Diana' (left) and reconstruction.   Figure 3.3: Possendorf Idol.

The findings at Oberdorla match closely with examples from further north, and fewer isolated examples from further south.[83] The geographic spread of these related findings, combined with their long durée suggests continuity of a traditional form. A fork-branch found at Broddenbjerg, Denmark (c.530 BCE) presents a crudely carved, bearded face with a large phallus formed naturally (Figure 3.4). Two very large fork-branches discovered at Braak, Holstein represent a male and female pair (early fourth – mid-third century BCE).[84] Both possess crude visages, with holes either side for arms and for a phallus on the larger male (2.8m), while the female (2.3m) has breasts and a wider bulge at the fork (Figures 3.5, 3.6).[85]

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[79] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 64, 67, 152
[80] Dušek (2002), 470, 475
[81] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 197, 244-51
[82] Behm-Blancke (1957), 129-30
[83] Schirren (1995), 333; Kiernan (2020), 70
[84] Dietrich (2000), 177-79
[85] Dietrich (2000), 188-98

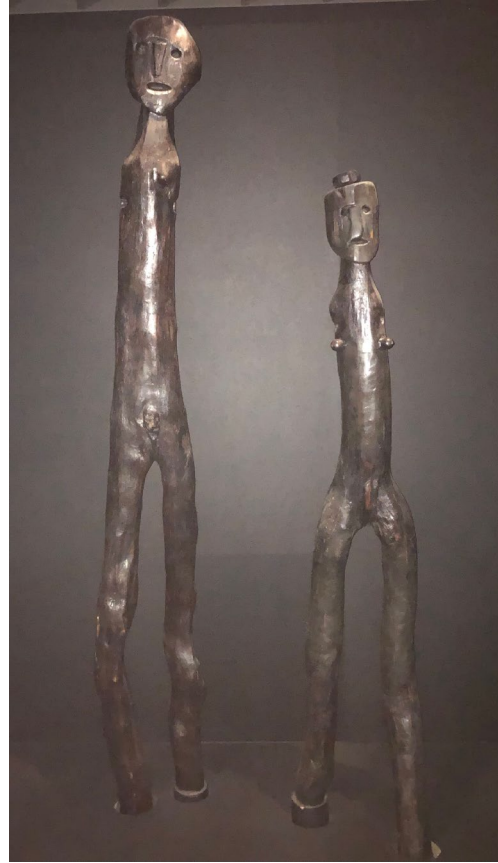Figure 3.4: Broddenbjerg idol (Nationalmuseet, Denmark)

Figure 3.5: Braak idols (Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig-Holstein)

Figure 3.6: Male Braak idol upon discovery in 1946.

Both were intentionally buried near older barrows, with the male's phallus hacked off.[86] At Bad Doberan, Ostsee, a smaller fork-branch (60cm) was also intentionally damaged and immediately buried under a covering of branches, with ceramic vessels deposited at its feet and a cattle horn between the fork.[87] With striking similarities to the bog-burials, this burial mode suggests a ritual process rather than vandalism.[88]

The apparently temporary installation at Bad Doberan indicates that idols were moveable property, as well as permanent fixtures in larger cult-complexes like Oberdorla. Furthermore, the attendant damage and burial corroborates recent anthropological opinion of idols as 'objects endowed with social agency and possessing biographies', with such personhood always assigned or annulled through ritual.[89] Coles notes that fork-branch idols so despoiled show damage on the left, perhaps a traditional means of neutralising their power.[90] In societies retaining such customs, the idol's significance concerns less its aesthetic value and more the perceived capacity for agency. This would account for the fluidity of iconic and aniconic form observed for the Germanic idols discussed here, conceived rather as 'artefactual bodies'. It also supports interpreting *wēoh* in terms of a divine occupancy or ownership that was secured through technical procedure (*wīhjan-*); ritual would have brought the idol to life or enlivened its capacity as touchstone to a divine being.[91] The display of idols is crucial to the ritual encounter of worshipper and cult-focus, for example the ritual beholding of an idol in Hindu traditions (*darshan*),[92] or adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance of traditional Catholic ritual. The importance of visibility to such forms of devotional experience might relevantly explain the layout of an enclosure (*wēohsteall*), where idols stood to be seen, as well as their elevation on a *wīg-bedd*.

To summarise, OE literary evidence and Germanic comparanda show that *wēoh* was the main term for a sacred object that was closely identified with a divine or semi-divine personality. This identification flows from the root meaning of *wīh-* 'sacred, separated', implying the object was reserved to the divine. From this idea of exclusive enjoyment, ON *vé* and OS *wīh* could have developed to mean 'divine dwelling-place'. Metonymic identification of the sacred

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[86] Struwe (1975), 334; Dietrich (2000), 203-209
[87] Schirren (1995), 322-26
[88] Schirren (1995), 334
[89] Kiernan (2020), 2, 1-23
[90] Coles (1990), 332; Schirren (1995), 334
[91] Kiernan (2020), 15-17; Gell (1998), 97-98
[92] Kiernan (2020), 18; Elsner (2007), 18

object with the enclosure in which it stood as focal structure may also have plausibly motivated this shift (see *hearg* and *bearu*). The comparanda also show that these sacred objects and spaces were traditionally curated under the wardenship of important persons, whether local or tribal, through upkeep, armed protection and devotional acts. Possessive *wēoh*-toponyms in England suggest such traditions were also a feature of Anglo-Saxon paganism. The fact that *wēohsteall* was inculturated to denote the restricted part of a church (sanctuary) implies that access to a sacred enclosure was restricted to the wardenship. This form of cult-space defined by separation coheres typologically with the norms of many other ancient religious traditions, including the classical *cella* and the Israelite Tabernacle.

This study argues that *wēoh* was marginalised, probably for two reasons: its close identification with divine personalities would have made it a target for critique of idol-worship; more pointedly, *wēoh* had an essential relationship with spaces that Christians recognised as sacred (sanctuary), whereas other cult-foci were proper to contexts (warfare and woodland) of less immediate concern. Its semantic pejoration, however, appears to have been rather confined. It was probably eclipsed into obsolescence by the *gield* compounds, which were more versatile, because Christian authors coined them specifically as all-purpose terms of art for expressing idolatry and sacrifice together. *Wēoh* may also have been less versatile as a negative term, because of its transparent linguistic connection to inculturated *wēohsteall* and *wēofod*.

The negative examples of *wēoh* are better explained as local, pointed criticisms that poets advanced against the contemporary survival of heathen cult-forms, or even inculturated forms of these sacred objects within syncretised cult. *Wēoh*'s status during the early phases of Christianisation is less clear, although *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* were arguably rehabilitated early on through local, negotiated re-adjustments of sacred space; the positive treatment of *wēoh* in *Genesis A* suggests that it too may have been a feature of these early cults, supported by *dēofolgield*'s indicating that the missionaries emphasised 'devil-worship' over 'idolatry' within more calculated criticism of traditional religion.

ii. *cumbol*

Scholarly recognition of *cumbol* (n, *a*-stem ×6) 'army standard' as a cult-focus has been limited, because the noun and its five compound forms relate *prima facie* to warfare. Neither Jente nor Philippson discuss *cumbol*. One certain literary example of its denoting an object of worship, however, together with historical analogues for the use of sacred objects within military contexts among the Germani and the Gauls, justifies testing the evidence for *cumbol* and *þūf* as traditional terms for portable cult-foci proper to warfare.[93] These sources are discussed first, because they carry special weight for the inclusion of both nouns.

Tacitus states: *effigiesque et signa quaedam detracta lucis in proelium ferunt* 'from sacred groves they remove certain images and symbols that they carry into battle'.[94] This is the earliest testimony for military cult-foci among the Germani, although earlier authors recorded similar practices too among the Gauls.[95] He reiterates this statement in an account of the Batavian revolt of 69-70AD, juxtaposing Roman legionary standards against *depromptae silvis lucisque ferarum imagines, ut cuique genti inire proelium mos est* 'images of wild beasts taken from the woods and groves, which each tribe carries into battle according to custom'.[96] For rhetorical reasons, it is uncertain whether *effigiesque et signa* imply two categories of object.[97] Their juxtaposition with legionary standards reproduces a commonplace antithesis of Roman and Barbarian cultural forms. Rhetoric aside, both statements agree on the circumstantial detail, that the objects represented animate beings and were brought into battle from repository in sacred groves.

The existence of discrete terms *wēoh* and *cumbol* for revered items suggests that military cult-foci may have been distinguished from the sacred objects which stood within a sanctuary. Scholars have argued that *effigies* and *imagines* represented beasts, and *signa* divine attributes like the spear or hammer, affiliations that belong to the mythological plane in later Icelandic sources.[98] More practically, such military symbolism could have been the traditional means by which the battle-groups comprising a tribal army identified themselves. Tacitus earlier describes

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[93] Much (1967), 161
[94] Tac. Germ. 7.2; Rives (1998), 80
[95] Polyb. 2. 32.6; Caes. Gall. 7.2
[96] Tac. Hist. 4. 22.2
[97] Rives (1998), 152
[98] Much (1967), 160; Müllenhoff (1920), 201; Schrader (1917-29) I, 208; Grimm (1875) I, 86

this unit as a 'wedge' formation (*cuneus*).[99] Immediately after mentioning *effigies et signa*, he relates that the *cuneus* was formed from kin-groups (*familiae et propinquitates*), a loose term for local networks of neighbours and relatives rather than a single household, probably numbering around 50 men.[100]

Germanic battle tactics involved a series of 'sporadic assaults' by these wedge formations; incentive would have been more personalised, unlike the institutional or transactional loyalty of a professional army, and would have appeared local and disorganised to a Roman observer.[101] The close succession of ideas from *cuneus* to cult-foci opens the possibility that they were culturally interrelated. Tacitus' remark in *Histories* that each tribe (*cuique genti*) carried the revered objects strengthens this conclusion. Assuming some of these symbols served to identify recognised kindred groupings, they might have derived their cultic significance within a system of ancestor worship. It is also possible that Tacitus false-etymologised *cuneus* with **kunja-* 'clan', finding the nearest formal Latin equivalent to the word used by his native informant to describe a battle-formation.[102]

A number of migration-period sources corroborate this impression of barbarian armies. In the late sixth century, the Byzantine emperor Maurice observed that the Franks and Lombards organised according to clan, mutual relationships and emotional attachment.[103] While he possibly just recapitulates Tacitus,[104] Maurice's observation widens the identity-basis from kin to kith. This would include the bond of lord and retainer, a relationship that expanded in significance during the migration period in opposition to the older kindred system.[105] A provision of the early seventh-century *Pactus* to the *Lex Alamannorum* includes the phrase *heris generationis*.[106] Vernacular *heris* represents the common Germanic noun for 'large-scale army formation' (OE *here*, OHG *heri*, Gothic *harjis*), which when modified by *generationis* means 'an army organised according to kindred groupings'.[107] These sources indicate that kindred grouping was still integrated within Germanic military structure during the migration

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[99] Tac. Germ. 6.4
[100] Tac. Germ. 7.2; Much (1967), 161
[101] Thompson (1965), 64. But Murray (1983), 53-56 sceptical.
[102] With thanks to Richard North for this suggestion.
[103] Maur. Strat. 11.4
[104] Murray (1983), 53
[105] Green (1998), 102
[106] *Pact. Alamann.* ii. 45
[107] Lehmann (1966), 169

period, despite lordship and kingship gradually becoming the dominant basis for social organisation.[108]

Hildebrandslied, a poem with plausible late sixth-century origins among the Lombards, Alamanni or Bavarians, further supports the idea that a *heri* was traditionally comprised from kindred groupings.[109] Hildebrand and his son Hadubrand face each other as leaders of two opposing armies. Hildebrand's opening speech is first directed to establishing his opponent's lineage, asking who Hadubrand's father was *fireo in folche* (10a) 'of the men in the battle-group',[110] continuing:

> '... eddo hwelihhes **cnuosles** du sis.
> Ibu du mi enan sages,   ik mi de odre uuet,
> chind, in chunincriche: chud ist mir al **irmindeot**'
>   (11b-13)

['or of which **lineage** you are. If you tell me the one, young man, I'll know the other, for known to me is the entirety of the **great-tribe** in the kingdom.']

These lines attest a military structure organised around descent and, moreover, show that genealogical knowledge was integral to the customary formalities of battle: Hildebrand claims that he knows all the relevant social-military groupings within the *irmindeot* 'great-tribe' or 'nation'; *folc* denotes an individual battle-group of the *heri*, with *cnuosl* (OE *cnōsl*) its implied basis.[111] Hadubrand later replies of his father: *her was eo folces at ente* (27a) 'he was always at the head of the battle-group', which evokes the wedged *cuneus*.

Several other ancient sources relate practical rituals during military adventure with ancestor worship. Ammianus Marcellinus claims the Goths sang wildly of the deeds of their ancestors before joining battle with Valens, with Jordanes making a similar observation, importantly providing the vernacular term *Ansis* (*æsir*) for these semi-divine figures.[112] Eunapius'

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[108] Green (1998), 66
[109] Van der Kolk (1967), 37-38; Norman (1973), 47
[110] See also *Beowulf* 251-56 (Danish coast-guard); 332b (Geats arrive at Heorot); 371-76 (Beowulf meets Hrothgar)
[111] Green (1998), 90-92
[112] Amm. 31.7.11; Jord. Get. 43, 78

contemporary impressions of the Terving migration across the Danube in 376 preserves the most direct testimony for a tangible relationship between ancestor worship and sacred objects that found ritual expression during warfare. The Greek historian observed: Εἶχε δὲ ἑκάστη φυλὴ ἱερά τε οἴκοθεν τὰ πάτρια συνεφελκομένη, καὶ ἱερέας τούτων καὶ ἱερείας 'each tribe carried ancestral sacred objects from its household, drawing [them] along after it, and [with them] the "priests" and "priestesses" of these [tribes]'.[113] Eunapius continues that these objects (as for Tacitus) remained abstruse to the outsider, due to the secrecy and protection by which the Goths 'persist in guarding the ancestral sacred objects nobly and honestly' (τὰ πάτρια ἱερὰ γεννικῶς τε καὶ ἀδόλως φυλάττοντες [διετέλουν]).

Despite their alleged esoteric significance, Eunapius importantly notes that these objects were sacred symbols of the lineages (τὰ πάτρια ἱερὰ) by which the constituent tribes or kindreds (φυλαί) of the Tervings publicly identified themselves on the march.[114] OE *mǣgburh* may preserve a reflex of the Gothic term for these tribal subsidiaries, intimated in *Exodus* to have been a cornerstone of the specialised genealogical recitations traditional to war and migration (see iii *þūf*). If symbols, they might have been auspicious signs under which a group marched and fought;[115] they were probably wooden, but maybe ornamented with precious materials, depending on a community's wealth.

Turning to the linguistic evidence, *cumbol* is confined to poetry and typical of the traditional battle-register that survived into later WS. It denotes a cult-focus only in *Daniel*, varying two other nouns to describe the golden statue of Nebuchadnezzar (see i *wēoh* and Chapter 4 ii *hearg*). Upon hearing the strains of a trumpet (*bȳman stefne* 179a), all are commanded to prostrate themselves and worship the statue:[116]

> Þā hīe for þām **cumble**   on cnēowum sǣton,
> onhnigon to þām **herige**   hǣðne þēode,
> wurðedon **wīhgyld**,
>
>   (180-82a)

[113] Eunap. Frag. 55; Thompson (1966), 56-57
[114] See Wolfram (1988), 387-88 note 58 on the origins of *Terving* < **triu-* 'tree' meaning 'forest-people'.
[115] Schramm (1954), 248
[116] Daniel 3:10

[Then they set on their knees before that **symbol**, the heathen nations bowed to that **idol**, they worshipped an **idol**]

It was argued in (i) that *wīhgyld* refers to the statue's role as an object of worship in accusative (as well as Christian) terms, because *weorðian* governs it, while *hearg* and *cumbol* adverbially cover the statue's spatial relationship to the worshippers. The poet clearly prefers to use *wīh* (182a, 201a, 207b) and *hearg* (181a, 192a, 203a) to refer to this statue. *Cumbol* seems exceptional. Its capacity to complete l.180 with off-verse *cnēowum sǣton* – a clause grounded in the source – is metrically advantageous.[117] *Bēacen* a few lines on (another general term for 'symbol') appears similarly advantageous in binding *gebedu* (191b) 'prayers', continuing *bȳman sungon* (192b) 'trumpets sang' in the following line.

Other local details, however, might attest more particular significance for *cumbol* in these lines. *For þām cumble* 'before the symbol' spatially conveys circumstantial activity occurring 'in view of' the cult-focus, differently to the allative and accusative interventions, respectively, of *tō þām herige* and *wurðedon wīhgyld*. This phraseology for *cumbol* is suggestive of a military standard, just as an army parades 'before' a standard and the Gauls made their solemn oaths *collatis militaribus signis* 'before the assembled war-standards'.[118] The noun's varying of *hearg* and *wīhgyld*, however, also evidences undeniable cultic connotations that would plausibly have been concurrent with its identity as a standard.

Together, the poetic vocabulary and biblical source for this scene indicate a basis for including martial terminology with religious worship. The statue's location *on felda* 'on the plain' translates *campo Dura*, which perhaps connoted a field of military activity;[119] the source twice states that an orchestra's music accompanied worship;[120] poetic evidence for *bȳme* 'trumpet' reveals that this noun was also typical to battle poetry.[121] The pagan congregation are also designated as warriors (*hæleða* 178a), and Nebuchadnezzar twice as *hǣðen heriges wīsa* (203a, 539) 'heathen army-leader', perhaps playing on the near-homophony of *hearg* and *here*.

[117] Daniel 3:10 *prosternat se* 'they prostrated themselves'
[118] Caes. Gall. 7.2
[119] Daniel 3:1
[120] Daniel 3:10, 3:15 *symphoniae et universi generis musicorum* 'symphonies and all kinds of music'
[121] See *Beowulf* 2943-44 (Hygelac's relief of the troop besieged by Ongentheow)

Overall, the poet's reproduction of this scene in overtly martial terms seems an instinctive response to the unique combination of particulars in Daniel 3: veneration of a cult-focus by a large congregation in an open space, accompanied by music, and under the decree of a national leader. This study argues that the poet adapted this peculiar assemblage of detail to *cumbol*-rituals proper to the battle-field, in order to critique traditional customs that were still practiced in the early eighth-century. Such traditions might well have descended from those Tacitus described, and their cultic aspects may have been controversial within a cultural environment that harboured antipathy towards perceived excesses of religious syncretism. Classical testimony for the role of music in battle further supports the idea that Daniel 3's depiction of mass-cultic activity in the open-air, on a tribal scale, accompanied by music, would have suggested warfare to a Germanic reader.[122] It may also be relevant, by contrast, that non-military cult-practice tended to occur in more secluded places, such as hills, woodlands, and bodies of water.[123]

Bede's account of King Oswald raising a free-standing cross at Heavenfield before battle with Cædwallon provides an important analogue for Anglo-Saxon martial cult involving communal worship of a raised cult-focus on the battlefield.[124] Centrally placed in the *History*, this episode marked the decisive moment where the first true Christian Anglo-Saxon king emerges.[125] The narrative's symbolic structure also mirrors the resolution of cultural, religious, and political antitheses into new unity through the syncretising agency of the king himself, for the lapse of Osric and Eanfrith in 633-34 probably meant that Oswald's Deiran-Bernician force was still largely heathen.[126] Having the cross speedily wrought before battle, Oswald places it *ipse fide fervens* 'himself fervent in faith' into the ground, holding it while his soldiers heap earth around the base. The king then leads *cuncto exercitui* 'with the whole army' in genuflective, communal prayer on Heavenfield before the cross. For Bede's story, this dramatically actualises the unity of sub-kingdoms, religions, and devotional habits which together recognised a post raised by the king as a cult-focus.[127]

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[122] Tac. Germ. 3.1; Tac. Hist. 2.22. 1; Tac. Ann. 4.47. 3; Amm. 16.12. 43; 26.7. 17; 31.7. 7
[123] Tac. Germ. 7.2, 9.2, 10.2, 39, 40.2-4; Tac. Ann. 1. 50-51
[124] *HE* 3.2
[125] Bintley (2013), 225
[126] *HE* 3.1; Bintley (2013), 225; Stancliffe (1995), 64
[127] Bintley (2013), 225

This story provides further evidence for contextualising the syncretic cult which, the present study argues, might have prevailed in the seventh century and produced new cultural forms such as the insular free-standing cross, as well as securing the inculturation of heathen sanctuaries. The passage also provides a positive analogue to the kinds of practices that Daniel 3 might have suggested, more negatively, to the *Daniel* poet several generations later: a king raises a cult-focus in a large, open space and the tribe gather to regard it, expressing conspicuous allegiance thereby to the body politic and its official cults.

In *Exodus*, the Egyptian army's march is accompanied by music (*byman sungon* 159b), shading into the strains of the 'beasts of battle' (*hrēopon herefugolas*, 162a; *wulfas sungon*, 164b). The poet identifies the warrior-pharaoh's might with an assemblage of princely styles and military paraphernalia (172-76) and states: *cumbol līxton/wiges wēnum* (175b-76a) 'the standards shone, expecting war'. *Cumbol* might have more defined meaning on l.175, because it occupies the third lift.

Embodying worldly, pagan power, the pharaoh's military campaign counterpoints the Israelites' spiritual march of faith. The poet accordingly distinguishes the two nations by their accoutrements. Bintley has recently argued that Moses' staff (*grēne tācne* 98b) and the pillars of fire and cloud (*bēamas twegen* 94b) reflect analogies that the Anglo-Saxons were first encouraged to draw during the conversion between their own sacred trees, posts, and staves and the divine apparata of the ancient Israelites, all as legitimate precursors to the Cross.[128] Assuming the poet intends this syncretised symbolic scheme, the Egyptians present the converse, with *cumbol līxton* probably connoting the same heathen cults that are more explicit in *Daniel* l.180a.

Daniel and *Exodus* show the only clear examples of *cumbol* with cultic connotations. In other poems, the noun simply occurs within battle narrative. In *Beowulf*, the hero recounts of Dæghrefn: *ac in campe gecrong cumbles hyrde* (2505) 'but in combat fell the standard's keeper'. Beowulf fights the Hugas' champion in single-combat (*tō handbonan* 2502a), before the army (*for dugeðum* 2501a). If the epithet *cumbles hyrde* reflects a traditional rank within a migration-period army, *cumbol* might be supposed the highest order of emblem. It would have represented the tribal leader and/or *here* at large, borne by his champion, rather than a *folc*

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[128] Bintley (2013), 211-17

battle-group. While A-type off-verses that formed from *hyrde* modified by another genitive singular noun are widespread in poetry, this stylistic productivity does not automatically discount the possibility that some of these phrases might have been authentic titles denoting a socially recognised position of guardianship (see i *wīhes ward*).[129]

The three remaining examples of *cumbol* are formulas concerning the progression of battle and suggest the noun became fossilised as an archaism. A-type *cēne under cumblum* 'resolute under the standards' figuratively expresses the attitude of combatants pressing into the fray in *Andreas* (1204a) and *Judith* (332a); the plural form is comparable with *Exodus* l.175, although the literal semantic import is probably general. The phrase in *Judith* alliterates with *compwīge* (332b) and is comparable to the binding of *campe* and *cumbles* across the caesura in *Beowulf* l.2505. The third example in *Andreas* (4) shows similar lexical binding *<camprǣdenne> þonne cumbol hnēotan* 'in conflict when the banners clashed' and is also comparable to other figures of speech with *hnītan* (×6) that are proper to battle poetry.[130]

Formulaic and figurative usage also prevails for *cumbol* compounds. The collocation of *cumbol* and *hnītan* has been nominalised *cumbolgehnāstes* (49) in *Brunanburh*, while other examples have developed on the metonymic basis of 'warfare': *cumbolwīga* 'soldier',[131] *cumbolgebrec* 'battle',[132] *cumbolhete* 'warlike hatred'.[133] Perhaps more traditionally, the demon in *Juliana* speaks of targeting spiritless warriors who shelter *under cumbolhagan, cempan sǣnran* (395) 'under the banner-enclosure, a weaker warrior'. Although the context implies an area away from the vanguard, the pairing with *cempa* suggests that *cumbolhaga* was simply a convenient alliteration which came to mean 'army-enclosure' metonymically, rather than literally denoting the area where a standard stood; this would also seem directly opposed to the sense of *cēne under cumblum*.

In *Elene*, *eoforcumbol* 'boar-crest' refers first to the crested helmet worn by Constantine during his dream-vision (75b-76a) and then a part of the military paraphernalia that identify St. Helena's retinue as a splendid fighting force (256-59a). *Eoforcumbol* provides a vernacular

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[129] *yrfes hyrde* (*Genesis A* 1067b, 1545b, 2199b); *sinces hyrde* (*Genesis A* 2101b); *þrymmes hyrde* (*Elene* 348a, 858b, *Juliana* 280a) and many other examples.
[130] See *Beowulf* 1327b, 2544b
[131] *Judith* 243b, 259b
[132] *Psalm 50* 11b
[133] *Juliana* 637a

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link between *cumbol* and the bestial symbols that Tacitus described. Moreover, its application to a helmet crest shows that *cumbol*'s core semantics concerned the symbol itself, rather than the standard with which it could be raised.

Herecumbol is potentially more significant. The poet emphatically distinguishes this compound from the Cross: *hebban heorucumbul, ond þæt hālige trēo* (107) 'raise the army-standard, and the holy tree'. Earlier in the poem, Constantine's great battle at the Milvian Bridge is ritually commenced *wordum ond bordum/hōfon herecombol* (24-25a) 'with words and shields, they raised the army-standard'. While metrical convenience is possible, the local detail finds no formulaic parallels and corroborates pre-battle formalities attested in the historical analogues. If *herecumbol* is authentic, it would further support the conclusion that *cumbol* was symbolically situated in relation to the *here* – the largest body martial of a traditional army – as an emblem of a tribal leader.

Comparative evidence is also revealing. *Cumpalporon* 'cumpal-bearers' glosses *choortes* (*cohortes*) in *Abrogans*.[134] It is recorded as a secondary synonym to the principal entry *legiones*, which in turn translates *scefina*.[135] If denoting a type of judge (MnG *Schöffe* 'lay-judge'), the latter gloss has probably been influenced by the following entry *legitima/iudicia*, and preceding entries *leges/lator*, and *legale*.[136] Locally in this text, therefore, *choortes* seems reasonably identified with the whole army bearing a standard, rather than strictly as sub-division of a Roman legion.[137] Elsewhere, *chumbarra* glosses *tribus* in an eighth-century biblical gloss;[138] if etymologically related to *cumpal*, this noun would further support the view that *cumbol* denoted the symbol of a tribal army (*here*).[139]

OS *cumbal* (×3) denotes the star of Bethlehem in the *Heliand*, which conveys both religious and genealogical connotations as a sign from God and symbol of Christ's royal descent from King David. The Magi see *thana cuningsterron cuman, cumbal liuhtien* (635) 'the king-star coming, the sign shining'. *Cumbal* occupies the third lift as specifying variant for the novel Christian idea of a *cuningsterro* to convey its identity as religio-royal emblem in vernacular

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[134] StSG I, 203.2
[135] Bostock (1976), 96
[136] StSG I, 202.32-36, 203.4-5
[137] Beck (1965), 12; Schützeichel (2004) V, 370; Splett (1976), 284
[138] StSG I, 293.13 (Genesis 27:29); Schramm (1954), 248
[139] StSG I, 293.13 (Genesis 27:29); Schramm (1954), 248

terms. It occurs once more in third position: *thô gengun eft thiu cumbl forð* (648b) 'then the sign went forth'. The poet finally identifies this star as as a divine portent: *antkendun sie that cumbal godes* (657a) 'they (Magi) recognised God's sign'.

These few examples show that *cumbal* probably retained vitality as a cultural term in the wake of the Saxon conversion, especially given the noun's deployment as an auspicious sign within the paramount Christian event of the Nativity. Importantly, the fact that *cumbal* was capable to convey royal lineage and divine power together opens the possibility that symbols of royal lineage were perceived as having their source, and, therefore, legitimacy in the divine. The poet states as much that stars *uuârun thurh Krista/giuuarht te thesero uueroldi* (657b-58a) 'were made by Christ for this world'. Although the centralised kingship on the Frankish model was apparently alien to the Saxons,[140] the association of *cumbal* and *cuning* (if more than metrically convenient) attests the existence of hereditary chieftain figures, whose power was legitimised publicly through genealogy.

ON *kumbl/kuml* means 'grave' and 'grave-marker' in the family sagas and two versions of the *Landnámabók*.[141] In *Brennu-Njáls saga*, compound *herkumbl* denotes the markings by which parties to a conflict identify themselves before combat.[142] This sense of an identifying marker also underlies two skaldic kennings for 'wounds', *harðlig herkumbl* 'harsh war-token' and *jǫtunkumbl* 'giant-markers' in *fornaldarsǫgur*.[143] Runic evidence demonstrates that *kuml* also meant runestone by the tenth century, which almost certainly intersects with 'grave-marker' in prose, especially as object of *gørwa*, *resa* and *setia*.[144] As also for *þúfa* (see iii), semantic development of *kumbl* from 'symbol' to 'grave-marker' was probably conditioned by commemorative customs, whereby typical symbols of battle regalia that could be raised aloft or embossed on armour, began to be used in funerary contexts, because they represented ancestral identity.

The etymology of *cumbol* is uncertain. It has been connected with *kumbr* 'block of wood', from which the cultural meaning 'symbol' would have developed through habitual use of

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[140] *HE* 5.10
[141] *Laxdœla saga* 38, 136.19; *Sturlubók* 120, 164.33
[142] *Njáls saga* 142, 378.8
[143] Ásmk Lv 4[VIII] (*Ásmundr saga* 10); StarkSt *Vík* 32[VIII] (*Gautreks saga* 40)
[144] Nielsen (1941), 48

wood-carvings in cultic display.[145] This interpretation is plausible in light of extensive archaeological evidence for wooden cult-foci (see i *wēoh*). Alternatively, scholars have proposed a connection with *kimbull* 'bunch' according to the parallel development of *þúfa* 'bunch of leaves' > 'battle-standard' > 'grave-marker'.[146] This seems unsatisfactory, however, given that both nouns survived independently. It is more likely that *cumbol* and *þūf* maintained separate concrete identities as wood-carvings and wreath-like objects, their functions coming to intersect gradually through shared usages in battle and funerary contexts.

To summarise, the heathen Anglo-Saxon *cumbol* was a cult-focus that arguably found its proper devotional context in warfare, funerary ritual, and, ultimately, forms of ancestor worship. Vernacular sources intimate that it was a symbol used as a battle standard, arguably the emblem of a tribal group. It seems to have been more proper to the *here* than *folc*, although the scale and import of these terms shift according to period. Its associations with kingship would have proceeded from the hereditary origins of this office ('of the *cynn*'), which was legitimised by lineage. To heathen Anglo-Saxons, a *cumbol*'s import may have depended upon the extent to which kingship had expanded from chieftainship into the larger military-political bodies of the early middle ages.[147] Among sixth-century settlers in Britain, the *cumbol* might have symbolised the independent chieftainships of founding leaders, which gradually coalesced into nascent kingdoms. As sacred object, a *cumbol* might have been distinguished from a *wēoh* as a symbol of ancestral group identity, rather than the personalised representation of an ancestral individual; it may be presumed that they were handled differently within ritual.

Although medieval kingship retained much of the cultural inheritance of pre-Christian tribal chieftainship, *cumbol* was not inculturated with Christian meaning. *Exodus* and *Daniel* suggest that *cumbol* was, for a time, identified as a problematic cultural feature, perhaps for its continued usage within religio-political forms of cult that were open to critique by learned Christians. The noun escaped full semantic derogation, instead becoming neutralised as a non-productive poetic archaism, proper to the traditional register of battle poetry and shorn of religious connotations. Shrunken, it was redeemed within the ideological context of Christian warfare, a value system that survived long after heathen cult faded, a fate different to *wēoh*, *gield* or *blōtan*, which found no such refuge.

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[145] Meringer (1906), 445
[146] Falk and Torp (1903-06), 335; De Vries (1962), 333-34
[147] Green (1998), 133-34

iii. *þūf*

Þūf (m, *a*-stem) 'army-banner, crest' is a very sparsely attested noun (×4) within its better-documented word-family that denotes 'leafiness'. From this semantic point of departure, development of *þūf* as a cultural term runs largely parallel to that of *cumbol*, and is also interpreted against analogues for the use of cult-foci in warfare.

There are three poetic examples. In *Exodus*, it was observed that *cumbol* forms a pagan counterpoint to the divine assets guiding the Israelites (see ii). *Þūf* is associated with both sides, however. Of the Egyptian army, the poet states: *hīe gesāwon ... þūfas þunian, þēod mearc tredan* (155a-60) 'they saw ... banners making noise, the nation march to the border'. With greater focus, the poet draws attention to the Israelites' tribal identities when they pass through the Red Sea (310-61). He prioritises this knowledge while the source speaks only of *filii Israel* 'the children of Israel'.[148] The poet's distribution of terminology for socio-political groupings seems significant when describing the tribes. Simeon fares forth *folca þrȳðum* (340b) 'with the might of battle-groups', continuing: *þridde þēodmægen þūfas wundon/ofer gārfare gūðcyste onþrang* (342-43) 'the third national-force bravely pressed on, the banners streamed over the spear-expedition'. Compound *þēodmægen* clearly identifies the tribe as a subsidiary component of the national body, in turn possessing its own multiple *folc*-groups, and of which many *þūfas* are a proud expression.

As a *cyn* (310a), Judah leads the procession, raising the symbol of a lion (320-21) before the line of King David and Christ. The poet describes the symbol in talismanic terms: *bē þām herewīsan hȳnðo ne woldon/bē him līfigendum lange þolian* (323-24) 'by that army-leader they would not any longer suffer humiliation among those living'. In line with the previous discussion (ii), this symbol was probably a *cumbol* as emblem of *here*, *cyning* and *cynn*.

For Reuben, the poet focuses on how Jacob's eldest forfeited his patrimony *on lēodsceare* (337b) 'in relation to the tribal divisions' for sinful deeds.[149] Traditionally, *lēod* denoted the political dimensions of the national body, including all participants of the assembly. In this sense, Moses is termed *lēodfruma* (354a) 'national-political leader'.[150] While the poet uses

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[148] Exodus 14:21-31. But see Numbers 1:52, 2:2 where the Israelite tribal standards are mentioned.
[149] 1 Chronicles 5:1-2; Genesis 35:22
[150] Green (1998), 96

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þēod, *lēod* and *cynn* interchangeably for the entire Israelite nation, the use of *þēod* for its tribes suggests that early Christian Anglo-Saxons might have perceived these groupings akin to peoples of their own traditions, in the manner described in *Widsith*. The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (and other early medieval successor kingdoms) were united by culture and language, but politically independent, as were the twelve tribes when they conquered Canaan and through the period of the Judges. The remaining tribes are a successive procession of subsidiary bodies: *folcmægen fōr æfter ōðrum* (347) 'battle-groups went one after the other'; *folc æfter wolcnum/cynn æfter cynne* (350-51a) 'battle-groups following the heavens, tribe after tribe'. As they march, the poet observes: *cūðe æghwilc/mǣgburga riht* (351-52a) 'each one knew the right of their kindred-lineage'. This emphasises that self-conscious demonstrations of kindred identity were essential to participation within the national body politic and performatively appropriate to such occasions.

Lines 310-61 are a traditional response to the narrative theme of a 'nation on the march' in Exodus 13-14: the nation is constituted from tribes and clan-groups that march in sequence; knowledge of lineage is essential for legitimising each within its greater body; cultic objects directly related to the various levels of group identity (lion of Judah, *þūfas*) are openly displayed. Because the poet seems especially concerned to represent tribal identity in traditional terms, the present study argues that *þūfas* has been deployed precisely in relation to consistently plural *folc* to denote the emblems of a battle-group within a tribal army. This representation also strikingly resembles Eunapius' description of the Visigoths' passage over the Danube, in sequence according to tribe (φυλή), led by warriors who display cult-foci (ἱερά πατριά) symbolising ancestral identity.

Examples in *Elene* and *Judith* seem more conventional to battle poetry than the usages in *Exodus*, which seem to have related more precisely to clan-identity. Common to both, however, is the situation of *þūf* within a battle-group. As Constantine's forces press forward (*stōpon stiðhidige*, 121a), *þūf* in third position refers to the standard of the cross: *þā wæs þūf āhafen./Segn for <swēotum>, sigelēoð galen* (123b-24) 'then was the banner raised, the sign before the troop, the victory-song sung'. Although this scene contains multiple words for cross, *þūf* occurs at the decisive moment of victory.[151] Moreover, its significance as a military

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[151] *Sigores tācn* (85a); *bēacen* (92b, 100b); *Crīstes rōde* (103b); *godes bēacen* (109a); *tācn* (104b); *hālige trēo* (107b).

standard with talismanic potency (the cross) is stronger than for *cumbol*, which Cynewulf separates from the iconography of the cross (see ii).

With similar phraseology in *Judith*, the Israelites press (*stōpon cynerofe*, 200b) into the fight: *bǣron sigeþūfas/fōron tō gefēohte forð on gerihte* (201b-202) 'they bore the victory banners, went straight into the fight'. While it is possible a *cumbol* was kept back from the front lines, *Elene* and *Judith* both show that a *þūf* was carried right into the fray. Furthermore, they associate *þūf* with the positive attitude of those carrying it at the decisive moment of battle. If traditional, this might evidence pre-Christian status as talismanic symbol of a warband's vigour.

An analogue in Bede's *History* supports, and also expands, the present interpretation of *þūf*. It is recalled that King Edwin's glory was of such excellence that a standard bearer always went before him carrying *illud genus vexilli, quod Romani "Tufam," Angli vero appellant "Thuf"* 'that kind of banner, which Romans call "Tufa" but the English "Thuf"'.[152] It is possible that this equivalence represents Bede's 'usual practice' of matching vernacular and Latin terminology.[153] The Roman *tufa* is a *hapax* attested in a military treatise of the early fifth century, the precise meaning of which is obscure.[154] Vegetius includes it while enumerating other similar terms: *muta signa sunt aquilae, dracones, vexilla, flammulae, tufae, pinnae* 'speechless signs are eagles, dragons, banners, small cavalry banners, *tufae*, feathers'.[155]

The Byzantine author John Lydus reproduced the term in the mid sixth-century, writing of long lance-heads decorated with horse-hair: καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὰς οἱ μέν Ῥωμαῖοι ἰούβας, οἱ δὲ βάρβαροι τούφας, βραχύ τι παραφθαρείσης τῆς λέξεως 'which the Romans call *iubae*, but the barbarians, with a pronunciation certainly corrupt, call *tufae*'.[156] Together with its absence from the classical record, John's statement strongly suggests the *tufa* was a Germanic word that entered Latin with growing barbarian presence in Roman ranks from the fourth century. Furthermore, Romanian *tufa* 'bush' appears to reflect the noun's core vernacular semantics rather than Roman analogy and its geographical situation would suggest Gothic influence.[157]

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[152] *HE* 2.16
[153] Wallace-Hadrill (1988), 80-81; Bintley (2013), 223
[154] Lewis and Short (1879), 1907 s.v. 'a kind of military standard'.
[155] Veg. Epit. mil. 3.5. See Deansley (1943), 138 and Jones (1932), 248-49 for the influence of Vegetius throughout Bede's *History*.
[156] De mag. 1.8
[157] Schramm (1954), 248-49

If a Germanic loanword, Romanian *tufa* would support the idea that *þūf* and its cognates reflect a common tradition of making military standards from leaves and stalks, perhaps akin to a wreath.

Bintley has recently argued that Bede and his contemporaries identified Edwin's *tufa* and the *virga* of the monk-king Sigeberht with the talismanic objects of the ancient Israelites, such as Moses' staff.[158] Like the poetic *þūf*, Edwin's *tufa* travels at the head of his small retinue (*cum ministris*). Bede's remark that its use in peace-time was atypical indirectly corroborates classical testimony for the display of enigmatic tribal symbols occasionally in time of war. In this detail, as for the Heavenfield Cross and Sigeberht's rod, Bede again registers an example of seventh-century syncretism in action; inculturation of cultural forms proper to battle would convey the idea that a Christian king is always at war spiritually. Interestingly, the OE translation of the *History* omits all reference to Edwin's banner.[159] It is unlikely that a detail with explicit ethnographic significance would have been omitted from this important text during the Alfredian revival, unless such meanings had become redundant. The scarce preservation of *þūf* in poetry tends to support this scenario.

As with John Lydus' description, *þūfum* translates *crinibus* in glosses to Prudentius, which primarily denotes a tuft of hair, but also the tail of a comet or tentacles of a sea anemone.[160] This reveals the core, descriptive meaning of a bristling apex sprouting from a base. This could reasonably include a vegetative bunch of bushy flora and leaves, which is the unambiguous semantic range of the *þūf* word-family. Adjectival *geþūf* (×10) finds not only *viriscens* 'growing verdant' and *luxoriante*, but also *frondeus* 'leafy' and *frondosis* 'full of leaves' in Harley.[161] Likewise, *þūfig* (×1) glosses *frondosus*, while *þūfbǣre* (×4) includes both *frondeus* and also *frondentis* 'putting forth leaves'.[162] The species *þūfeþistel* 'sow thistle' compounds with adjective *þūfe* 'bushy'.[163] A collective noun *þūft* is once attested for *frutex* 'shrub'.[164] Finally, the noun *þȳfel* (×16) 'bush, thicket' is attested, together with several compound forms denoting the dominant species of low vegetation: *wiðigþȳfel* 'willow withies', *brēmelþȳfel* 'brambles', *riscþȳfel* 'rushes'. Its dimensions seem to have been those of a shrub, while the

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[158] Bintley (2013), 223
[159] *HE* 2.14
[160] PrudGl 1 (Meritt), 1036; Lewis and Short (1879), 482
[161] AldÆ 2 (Nap), 28; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3682; HlGl (Oliphant), F775, F778 and other examples.
[162] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2658; AldV 1 (Goossens), 2183; SedGl 2.1 (Meritt), 94
[163] Lch II (3), 8.1.1
[164] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 2667

adjectival forms point to 'leafiness' as the essential quality. Collectively, this evidence indicates that the *þūf* word-family's core meaning was 'leafiness'; as a cultural product, therefore, a *tufa* might have resembled 'a wooden emblem, perhaps topped with branches or leaves'.[165]

A feminine cognate in ON *þúfa* shows additional semantic aspects. In Icelandic prose (×23), it typically denotes a mound. 'Mound' probably developed by metonymy from 'symbol' through habitual use as a grave-marker for warriors. The personalised *Grettisþúfa* 'Gretta's mound' presents a relevant example,[166] and, more tellingly, a hill called Arnarþúfa in northeast Iceland denotes the image of an eagle mounted on a stake.[167] The OE meaning 'battle-standard' can be related to the commemorative customs implied in ON, if it is supposed that the symbols traditionally displayed in battle began to be erected permanently as markers, because they represented communal identity.

A similar semantic shift from 'ancestral symbol' > 'grave-marker' through commorative custom was presumed for ON *kumbl* (see ii).[168] This parallel development of *kumbl*, in light of wider analogues such as Romanian *tufa* (< Gothic?), suggest that *þúfa* semantically developed 'leafy cult object, wreath' > 'military banner' > 'mound'. As a grave-marker, *þúfa* coheres with the present study's view that *cumbol* and *þūf* derived their religious significance within a cult of ancestor worship as discrete symbols of kindred and lineage.[169] It is possible that the Anglo-Saxons also knew similar commemorative functions for *cumbol* and *þūf*, alongside their military-cultic role, in light of Bede's description of the standard (*vexillum*) erected over King Oswald's grave in Beardeneu monastery church, Lindsey.[170]

To summarise, pre-Christian *þūf* apparently denoted a wreath-like object or a bunch of freshly-trimmed leaves that were traditionally used as a battle standard. This meaning proceeds from the transparent semantics of the *þūf* word-family which imply foliage. As with *cumbol*, the meaning of 'standard' might have developed secondarily from the typical occasion within which these symbols were displayed. *Þūf* also appears to have been shorn of its pre-Christian

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[165] Bintley (2013), 223
[166] *Grettis saga* 84, 268.3
[167] De Vries (1962), 626; *Landnámabók* 221
[168] De Vries (1962), 626, esp. 334
[169] Schramm (1954), 249
[170] *HE* 3.11

significance and neutralised as an archaism in battle poetry; differently to *cumbol*, however, Bede provides direct testimony for early attempts to inculturate *þūf* as a symbol of Christian kingship.

While *wēoh* can be fairly easily distinguished from *cumbol* and *þūf* according to ritual occasion, it is less clear how the two nouns for military-religious symbols might be differentiated on this plane. The presence of two discrete vernacular nouns for military cult-foci presents an intriguing parallel to Tacitus' couplet *signa effigiesque* in this regard. Both *cumbol* and *þūf* appear to have related to ancestral lineage. The evidence for *cumbol* is more strongly suggestive of the *here* and tribal leadership, while *þūf* may have identified a smaller *folc* battle-group, implying different planes of communal identity. King Edwin' *tufa*, however, would suggest these differences faded with Christianisation, as the symbol of a small retinue was incorporated (for a time) into Christian kingship. The most obvious differences between *cumbol* and *þūf* are tangible: one was made of wood, the other leaves. For this reason, a *cumbol* would have been a more permanent sacred object, like a *wēoh*; if *þūfas* comprised fresh foliage, they would have had to be wrought *in situ*, and discarded when the occasion was over and they began to wither.

iv. *bēam*

Bēam (m, *a*-stem) is well represented (×179) as 'tree' and 'timber beam'. Several compounds are also attested, mostly denoting tree species. The noun's corpus distribution is remarkable for the higher concentration of examples in poetry and charters as opposed to literary prose. The present discussion proceeds in the light of recent scholarly interest in the status of trees as cult-foci within Anglo-Saxon heathenism.[171] Blair's conclusion that '*bēam* tended to be used rather than *trēow* to mark out a *special* tree from among the thousands of ordinary trees in the landscape' is a point of departure for close analysis of the linguistic record for *bēam* against the evidence of place-names, topography and archaeology.[172] It will be argued that the poetic meanings of *bēam*, and its usage as a place-name element, together suggest that the noun's 'tree' semantics, within the heathen system, were culturally-specific as a 'special tree';

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[171] Bintley and Shapland, eds. (2013) *passim*; Blair (2013), 186; Hooke (2010); Semple (2010)
[172] Blair (2013), 187

furthermore, some of the charter boundary examples may well attest the survival of such trees in the landscape long after the conversion.

The Dream of the Rood presents a fine example of how vernacular arboreal vocabulary was inculturated with the cross. Importantly, the poem seems to document the syncretism of Christianity's central cult-focus with an analogous cultural form in native tradition, whether a sacred tree, or its hypostasis in the form of a post fashioned from a tree-trunk. The runic inscription corresponding to l.39-42, 44b-49a, 56b-59, 62b-64 on the Ruthwell Cross, which has been dated c.685, proves that a form of this poem originated during the early phases of Christianisation.[173] Ó Carragáin has recently argued that this cross was the main focus of 'daily liturgical action' for the local community.[174] This monument thus situates the poem's language within a definite ritual context. The fact that *bēam* was inculturated to describe this attested cult-focus supports an initial presumption that the pre-Christian noun possessed religious connotations and was capable of renovation on analogy with the ritual usages of the free-standing cross as a columnar cultic structure, rather than the cross's literal significance as an instrument of punishment.[175] Moreover, the free-standing stone cross is peculiar to the British Isles as a Christian monumental form with obscure origins,[176] supporting the view that it was a peculiar product of religious syncretism.

Bēam and *trēow* are interrelated in the opening lines of *The Dream of the Rood* within the poet's initial vision of the transfiguring cross:

> þūhte mē þæt ic gesāwe   syllicre **trēow**
> on lyft lǣdan,   lēohte bewunden,
> **bēama** beorhtost.   Eall þæt bēacen wæs
> begoten mid golde.
>
> <div align="center">(4-7a)</div>

[It seemed to me that I saw a more wondrous **tree**, carried in the air, wound with light, the brightest of **beams**. That symbol was completely covered with gold.]

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[173] Swanton (1970), 25; Ó Carragáin (2005), 7
[174] Ó Carragáin (2005), 60
[175] Pre-Christian *rōd* almost certainly denoted an instrument of punishment without cultic connotations. The author has also produced research on this noun, to be included in an expanded version of the present study.
[176] Swanton (1970), 24

The rood's transfiguration proceeds categorically from literal 'growing tree' (*trēow*) > 'remarkable tree in relation to a special category of trees' (*bēam*) > 'wrought object' (*bēacen*). The superlative phrase *bēama beorhtost* implies this category's cultural relevance. *Trēow* occurs only in this opening section (1-27), always occupying the non-alliterating lift of the off-verse and modified adjectivally *syllicre trēow* (4b), or with a genitive singular noun *wuldres trēow* (14b), *wealdendes trēow* (17b), *hǣlendes trēow* (25b). From here, *trēow* only occurs again within *gealgtrēow* (146a), relegated to an instrument of punishment. *Bēam* occurs three times during the exposition of the rood's devotional significance (78-156), with compound *sigebēam* (13a, 127a) in both halves. Assuming the extant form of the poem is a singular work,[177] the transformation from *trēow* to *bēam* is complete in *wuldres bēam* (97b) and the dreamer's statement *gebæd ic mē þā tō þan bēame* (122a) 'I prayed then to the tree'.

The wider poetic corpus reflects this distribution of *bēam* and *trēow*, with ideological implications. They are sometimes synonymous (*Genesis A*, 891-92; 1468-70), but unlike *bēam*, *trēow* is proportionally far less frequent in poetry than in prose. *Trēow* is typically modified where denoting a culturally valued tree, for example *līfes trēow*.[178] *Bēam*, however, could stand alone. Where modified, its adjectival range was apparently limited. It may be significant that *hālig* never modifies *bēam* for the cross, while *hālig trēow* is attested, suggesting that it was necessary to assign sacral connotations to *trēow* (as with *hālig rōd*), but not to *bēam*.[179] The half-line *bēama beorhtost* is probably a traditional formula belonging to a type comprising a genitive plural and superlative adjective: *bēama beorhtost* 'brightest of trees';[180] *mǣrost bēama* 'most renowned of trees';[181] *æþelust bēama* 'most noble of trees';[182] *ealra bēama ... beorhtast geblōwen* 'of all trees brightest blossomed'.[183] This phraseology seems proper to a devotional context; conversely, no like examples are attested for *trēow*.

Bēam was also inculturated with forms encountered in Christian narrative. In *Genesis B*, the two Edenic trees are starkly differentiated: *līfes bēam* 'tree of life' and *dēaðes bēam* 'tree of

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[177] But see Neidorf (2016b), 51-70 for the view that l.1-77 represent the poem's original core to which l.78-156 were added later.
[178] *Elene* 664a and other examples in poetry and prose.
[179] This is comparable to *hālig rōd*, given that *rōd* probably did not have cultic connotations before Christianisation, but simply denoted an instrument of punishment.
[180] *The Dream of the Rood* 6a; *Exodus* 249a; *Guthlac B* 1309a
[181] *Elene* 1012b, 1224b
[182] *Menologium* 84b
[183] *The Phoenix* 177-79a

death'.[184] The *bēamas twegen* (94b) of *Exodus* appear to have adapted the idea of a vertical structure to the biblical pillars of fire and cloud, perhaps more properly a tree-trunk or column with auspicious connotations.[185] A similar conception in *Guthlac B* refers to the column of divine light that conveys the saint to heaven: *bēama beorhtast. Eal þæt bēacen wæs/ymb þæt hālge hūs, heofonlic lēoma* (1309b-1310) 'the brightest of columns, that sign was all around the holy house, the heavenly light'. It is possible that a traditional formula *bēama beorhtost*, shorn of meaning with the loss of heathen devotional conditions, provided the basis for semantic development of *bēam* as shaft of light. A further trace of traditional collocational linkage of *bēam* and *beorht* survives in *beorhtra bēama*, which refers to heavenly trees in a tenth-century homily. This is a rare instance of *bēam* as 'tree' outside poetry.[186] The semantic and alliterative correlate *blāc bēam* 'bright beam' is also attested,[187] which finds a (negative) phraseological parallel in the *Heliand*: *blêk undar them bôme* (5608a) 'pale under the cross'.

Bēam also collocates with *bearu*. Both are comparable as cultural terms relating to woodland that were preserved in poetry, having been stripped of overt religious connotations. While there are obvious alliterative advantages in their binding (as with *beorht*), *bearu*'s probable pre-Christian significance as space of worship strengthens the likelihood that the *bēam* located there was a cult-focus (see Chapter 4 iv *bearu*). In *Genesis A*, *bēam on bearwe* (902a) 'tree in a grove' denotes the Tree of Knowledge, which is overtly religious; a similar collocation opens Riddle 53: *ic seah on bearwe bēam hlifian* (1) 'I saw a tree towering in a grove'.

The *Daniel* poet appears to critique the relationship of *bēam* and *bearu*. The tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream-vision (497-522) is certainly 'special'; it is primarily identified as *wudubēam* (498a, 504a, 515b) and *bēam* (507a, 544a, 553a, 562b) during the vision, and in Daniel's exposition. It is a *trēow*, however, when felled (510b, 555a). Importantly, the poet distances this heavenly tree, *wudubēam wlitig* (498a) 'beautiful forest-tree', from its heathen counterpart: *næs hē bearwe gelīc/ac hē hlīfode tō heofontunglum* (499b-500) 'he was not like (one) in a sacred grove, but he towered to the heaven-stars'. The poet's statement assumes shared cultural knowledge concerning the relationship between grove and distinguished tree that suggests it was designed to resonate immediately with the audience. Moreover, in line with

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[184] Doane (1991), 139; Bintley (2013), 217

[185] Bintley (2013), 218. See also PPs 104:34 (107a) *fȳrenne bēam* for *ignem.*

[186] HomS 42 (Baz-Cr), 85

[187] *Exodus* 121a plural for 'beams' of light; *Elene* 91a singular denoting the inscribed cross which Constantine sees in his dream-vision before the battle of Milvian Bridge.

this poet's use of traditional terminology for cult-foci, this statement might have been intended to critique surviving arboreal cult-forms, whether syncretised or authentic, and to distance such traditions from Christian worship.

In *Maxims I*, the distribution of *bēam* and *trēow* might evidence a similar attitude to traditional terminology. Lines 25-36 develop a gnomic sequence on transience that commences: *bēam sceal on eorðan/lēafum līþan, leomu gnornian* (25-26) 'a tree on earth shall lose its leaves, its limbs shall mourn'. This association of *bēam* with negative processes continues in a sequence concerning growth: *licgende bēam lǣsest grōweð/trēo sceolon brǣdan ond trēow weaxan* (158-59) 'the tree lying down grows least, trees shall spread and troth grow'. Apart from the attractive axiomatic linking of near-homonyms *trēo* 'tree' and *trēow* 'truth, troth', their moral and organic flourishing is contrasted categorically with the inert *bēam*.

This gnomic mode invokes culturally-recognised themes in order to catalogue transition. Assuming *Maxims I* belongs to the early eighth century,[188] the transition from heathenism to Christianity may well have been a source of cultural anxiety. It was shown previously that this poet was concerned to demonstrate the true God's creative power over Woden and his *wēos* (132). Likewise, the *bēam* as cult-focus is toppled and lifeless, while *trēow* enjoys renewed life as symbol of the Truth. Admittedly, *bēam* denotes the cross in other OE texts. The explicit critique of idol-worship in *Maxims I*, however, makes it plausible to infer that these anxieties conditioned the poet's treatment of *bēam* as an attempt to enfeeble a popular cult-form that was now perceived as unacceptably idolatrous, and replace it with one that was semantically neutral.

Other poems show a more accommodating attitude to *bēam*. Its affinity to *bearu* as a noun of woodland might plausibly have provided a basis for inculturation with the narrative theme of Paradise as the archetypal natural and sacred space. The Edenic setting of *The Phoenix* accommodates them in this way, with *bēam* re-habilitated as God's tree. In a *sunbearo* 'sun-grove', *þā bēamas ā/grēne stondað, swā him God bibēad* (35-36) 'the trees always stand green, as God commanded them'. They are sentient subjects of God's sovereignty, with the Phoenix's home especially revered as a *hēah bēam*, repeatedly in long-lines alliterating on *h*.[189] This tree

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[188] Neidorf (2016a), 137-53

[189] *ðæt is se hēa bēam* (447a); *on hēanne bēam* (112b); *ðǣr hē hēanne bēam* (171a); *ofer hēanne bēam* (202a)

is so marked by God's patronage that it is the only one *ealra bēama ... beorhtast geblōwen* (177-179a) 'of all trees ... [to have] blossomed most brightest'. *Trēow* varies *bēam* secondarily three times, but once alone refers to the cross as instrument of death (*on rōde trēow* 642) rather than victory. *Ealra bēama* again suggests the idiomatic reference of *bēam* to discrete kinds of tree, which as sentient beings in this poem enjoy a personal relationship with God. This usage is never attested for *trēow*.

There are seven more examples of *hēah bēam*, mostly within the adverbial phrase *on hēanne bēam* modifying verbs of hanging such as *āhōn*.[190] Comparison with the similar construction *on rōde āhōn* is revealing. This expression was probably traditional to *rōd*'s function as instrument of punishment. Where *rōd* is adjectivally modified (often with *hālig*), it is always definitely determined. This disruption of the traditional expression indicates that *hālig rōd* is a Christianised phrase. The single example of *hālig bēam* shows the same construction: *þæs hē on þone hālgan bēam āhongen wæs* 'for that he was hung on the holy tree'.[191] It is proposed that modification of *bēam* with *hālig* was unknown to traditional expression, as for *rōd*. The existence of *on hēanne bēam* next to *on þone hālgan bēam* precludes the idea that a definite determiner was syntactically required where a noun within a prepositional phrase was adjectivally modified. Moreover, the structure and frequency of *on hēanne bēam* suggests that it reflects traditional (perhaps devotional) phraseology, as with *bēama beorhtost*.

Were *hēah bēam* a pre-Christian devotional appellative, it could be inferred that great height was a criterion for cult-focus; the phrase would also have been able to outlive the loss of a devotional context, because it was simply descriptive. It might have motivated the use of *bēam* in the *Metres of Boethius* for rendering *dabat ... umbras altissima pinus* 'the tallest pine gave shade' as *slēpon/under bēamsceade* (27-28) 'they slept under tree-shade'.[192] The phrase *under bēamsceade* also occurs in *Genesis A* (859a), indirectly translating *in medio ligni* with reference to Eden.[193]

There are traces of the ascribing of personality to a *bēam*, which is also suggestive of traditional devotional significance. Nominative and accusative examples are roughly even, statistically

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[190] *Christ* B 678b; *Christ* C 1446b; *Elene* 424b; *Juliana* 228b, 309b; *The Fortunes of Men* 21b; *Daniel* 553a
[191] *Christ* C 1093
[192] Cons.Phil.met. 2.5.10-12
[193] Genesis 3:9

evincing a high degree of agency. Admittedly, it is difficult to distinguish potential examples of a cultic tree-persona categorically from those reflecting the Anglo-Saxon poetic commonplace of ascribing personality to inanimate objects, or to prove whether this persona was restricted to *bēam* and not *trēow*. With the conviction of a spiritual convert, *The Dream of the Rood* presents a fully-fledged tree-persona, who voices the social ethics of a faithful retainer. This hierarchy more widely coheres to the relationship observed between object-personae and their human employers in the Riddles.[194] Likewise, *The Husband's Message* is declared by a piece of wood (*þisne bēam* 13b), who declares: *trēocyn ic tūdre āwēox* (2) 'I grew from a race of trees' and now bears a carved, runic message of love. The delineation of *bēam* and *trēow* is clearer in this poem, where one stands for the living organism, the other its transformation into a precious cultural object.

Riddle 55 explores the origins of the rood-tree in terms of genealogy. Delineation between living organism and wrought object is less marked, however, with various terms for 'wood' and 'tree' interchangeable. Anglo-Saxon poets were interested the ambiguities of identity surrounding the transformation of raw material into wrought object. Here, the poet deploys *bēam* where adopting the mantle of traditional genealogist to speak of the rood's pedigree: *Ic þæs bēames mæg/ēaþe for eorlum æþelu secgan* (7-8) 'I may easily speak of the noble lineage of that tree before noblemen', with named ancestors (maple, oak, yew and holly) revealing the tree-persona identity conceived in similar terms to human society. This declaration also recalls the oral-traditional genealogising of *Exodus* (351-53b, 359-61) as specialist knowledge essential to the preservation of aristocratic identity. Metrical Psalm 143:13 is comparable. *Bogum æþelum/settum bēamum samed ānlīce* (45b-46) 'together alike unto noble boughs, planted trees' renders the biblical simile *quorum filii sicut novellae plantationes in juventute sua* '(we) whose sons are like new plantations in their youth', where the psalmist supplies *bēam* and *æþelu*, with *trēow* also metrically possible for l.46a.

Bēam is less frequent in prose and almost always means 'timber beam'. Examples recur within Jesus' famous teaching on the mote and beam, for which the relevant verses in Luke and Matthew read *trabs* 'timber beam'.[195] Ælfric's rendering of these verses imply his congregation idiomatically understood a beam to 'lie' like a rafter: *ne mæg se langa bēam licgan on þīnum*

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[194] Orton (1980), 11-12

[195] ÆHom 14, 24; Matthew (WSCp) 7:3-5; Luke (WSCp) 6:41-42; CP, 33.225.7; CP 33.219.13; CP (Cotton), 33.222.24; CP (Cotton), 34.222.7; BenRW, 2.17.3

ēagan 'may not the long beam lie in your eye',[196] while the beam simply 'is' (*est*) in one's eye in the Gospels.[197] *Bēam* regularly translates *trabs* elsewhere, representing its prosaic meaning as an architectural component for speakers of the later Anglo-Saxon period.[198] Chronicle entries for 978 record the collapse of an upper gallery at Calne that injured and killed many members of the Witan, except St. Dunstan: *āna ætstōd uppan ānum bēame* 'alone he stood upon a beam'.[199]

Bēam occurs infrequently as 'tree' in prose. Where it does, usages are more restricted than in poetry, which show that the noun's positive cultural semantics had diminished by the later Anglo-Saxon period. In his homily on the Exaltation of the Cross, Ælfric juxtaposes the sign of the cross (*hālig rōd*) from the tree of which it was wrought. The rhetorical purpose is to emphasise the imperishability (*æfre ā unbrosnigendlic*) of the eternal sign of the cross (*sēo gāstlice getācnung*), as opposed to the impermancy of the wood itself: *þēah þe se bēam bēo tōcoruen* 'though the beam be cut up' and disseminated in fragments.[200] While Ælfric possibly intended to convey the contemporary tenth-century meaning 'timber', his statement might also be interpreted as counteracting the syncretism of *bēam* and *rōd* familiar to inherited poetic tradition. Ælfric's cult-focus is emphatically *hālig rōd*, with *bēam* relegated to a concessive subordinate clause expressing the disembodied object, and, by extension, its perishability and death.

Another homily on the invention of the true cross refers to the tradition that King Solomon fashioned the final beam (*bēam*) of the temple from a sacred tree (*hālig trēow*) planted by his father David.[201] Ælfric's life of St. Martin is especially revealing of the ideological attitudes inferred from his homily on the cross. In Sulpicius' Life, the saint demolishes a pagan temple and fells its sacred pine-tree,[202] which Ælfric denotes interchangeably with *trēow* (×6) and *bēam* (×3).[203] *Trēow* introduces the tree, but *bēam* occurs wherever Martin confronts its cultural value, and, specifically, enfeebles its 'special' status. He first declares: *þæt on þā bēam nǣre nān synderlic hālignyss* 'that there was no special holiness for that tree'.[204] This verbal

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[196] ÆHom 14, 153
[197] Matthew 7:4; Luke 6:41
[198] Ægram, 65.11; ByrM 1, 3.1.114; Bede 3, 14.202.2 (*HE* 3.16); Or 2, 8.52.36 (Oros. Hist. 2.19)
[199] ChronD (Cubbin), 978.1; ChronE (Irvine), 978.1; ChronF (Baker), 978.1
[200] ÆLS (Exalt of Cross), 143
[201] LS 5 (InventCrossNap), 343-49
[202] *Vit.Mart.* 13, 167 *arborem pinum quae fano erat proxima* 'pine tree which stood near the shrine'
[203] ÆLS (Martin), 388-426
[204] ÆLS (Martin), 396-78

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derogation precedes the tree's physical felling, which is described as a prostration to the saint: *se bēam þā feallende bēah tō Martine* 'the tree then falling bowed to Martin'.[205]

This dramatic portrayal symbolises conversion of the community that once worshipped the tree. Ælfric's ascription of agency, however, might attest memories of traditions concerning a tree-persona. Brought low, shorn of its cultural power, the *bēam* becomes a *trēow* wrought into a cross (*þæt feallende trēow worhte rōdetācn*).[206] While *bēam* and *trēow* are basically synonymous in this homily, their relative distribution seems to convey the neutralisation of a pagan tree's cultural significance and its subsequent translation into the new system through succession of cult-forms, rather than syncretism. It is also interesting to compare the phraseology of this text (and Ælfric's summary homiletic version) with poetry. *Hēagan pīnbēam* and *hēahne pīnbēam* are proper to *bēam*,[207] while *hālig trēow* is also attested in Ælfric's homily, supporting the view that *trēow* needed modification to express a new sacrality that it accrued through inculturation.[208]

Onomastic use of *bēam* appears to have maintained currency in prose. *Bēam* conventionally forms the second member of onomastic compounds specifying different species, for example *gorstbēam* 'gorse', *cistbēam* 'chestnut tree', *elebēam* 'olive tree', *wananbēam* 'spindle tree', and MnE Whitebeam, Hornbeam and Quickbeam. In one homily, Ælfric uses *trēow* synonymously with *sycomeres bēam*.[209] While *trēow* is not restricted from onomastic use either, comparison of *cedarbēam* (×54) and *cedartrēow* (×19) 'cedar of tree' in the psalters shows that *bēam* was preferred for tree-names. Through onomastic tradition, the cultural identity of a tree-persona and species (*cynn*) might have been sustained through diurnal use in connection with the natural environment, long after the heathen system had disintegrated.

Most glossary examples concern Jesus' teaching about the mote and beam. Twice in the psalters, *bēam* alone refers to the cedar of Lebanon.[210] In Cleopatra, *bēam* glosses *trabs* 'timber beam', with compounds *webbēam* for *licatorium* 'loom cross-bar', *wīnbēam* for *partica* 'vine-pole', and *sulhbēam* for *buris* 'plough-tail'.[211] Elsewhere, *scearbēam* glosses *brigacus*

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[205] ÆLS (Martin), 406-407, 413
[206] ÆLS (Martin), 414
[207] ÆLS (Martin, 407; ÆCHom II, 39.1, 292.161
[208] ÆCHom II, 39.1, 292.163
[209] ÆHomM 12 (Brot 1), 21
[210] PsGlG (Rosier), 91:13; PsGlC (Wildhagen), 36:35
[211] ClGl 2 (Quinn), 782; ClGl 2 (Quinn), 110; ClGl 2 (Quinn), 780; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 791

'plough-beam'.[212] This small group shows that the practical meaning of *bēam* also applied to a range of smaller devices, alongside its dominant meaning 'timber beam'. *Glīwbēam* (×23), a kenning for 'harp' in poetry and glosses, is almost certainly traditional. Other arboreal glosses suggest the part rather than whole of a tree, for example *geþūfe bēamas* 'bushy boughs' for *frondea robora* and *of bēame* 'from the tree-trunk' for *de stipite*.[213]

Because of its early date, the Law of Ine (c.694) can be read in light of poetic evidence for the distinguished status of *bēam*. Three provisions concern woodland husbandry, one imposing a penalty for burning up a *bēam* and the other two for cutting down trees (*trēow*).[214] The laws impose a penalty of 60 shillings equally for burning up a *bēam* and felling a *trēow* in wood-pasture for swine; the *bēam* provision only relates to arson, while *trēow* is the subject of logging. The law differentiates arson as theft (*forþāmþe fȳr bið þēof*) from logging (*forþon sīo æsc bið melda nālles þēof* 'because the axe is an informer not a thief'), presumably because a timber source could re-grow.[215]

This legal distinction is important for interpreting the full import of these provisions. The early twelfth-century Latin translation of Anglo-Saxon law (*Quadripartitus*) reads *trabs* 'timber beam' for *bēam* in the relevant provision, which doubtless reflects the predominant late WS (and MnE) meaning. It is difficult to conceive, however, a sensible rationale for penalising arson of a single timber beam within woodland. If *bēam* instead means 'tree' rather than 'timber beam', the seventh-century law would reasonably seem to deter deliberate acts of arson against trees that a community recognised as 'special' or even 'sacred'. The fact that the provision was drafted indicates such acts occurred, or there was at least a fear the trees would be attacked.

These provisions imply that *bēam* had cultural worth in the late seventh century rather than *trēow*. Furthermore, a *bēam* might have possessed separate possessory rights (private or communal) from a *trēow*, because the drafters classify the arson as a theft different in kind from a grazier taking in excess from communal woodland. It is reasonable to imagine such acts of sabotage occurring in neighbourly feuds and community rivalries. Bavarian villagers still engage in similar (now friendly) acts of sabotage against the *Maibaum* of a neighbouring

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[212] HlGl (Oliphant), B508
[213] HlGl (Oliphant), F778; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 1786
[214] LawIne, 43 (*Quadr.* 109); LawIne, 43.1 (*Quadr.* 109); LawIne, 44 (*Quadr.* 109)
[215] LawIne, 43, 43.1 (*Quadr.* 109)

settlement. The temporal proximity of Ine's law to the heathen period makes it especially valuable documentary comparanda for traditional differences of cultural value between *bēam* and *trēow* which are suggested in poetry. The idea that a *bēam* was an important feature of local identity may be related to the toponymic evidence for the founding of royal centres at *bēam*-sites during the same period, which is discussed further below.

Compared to *bēam*, OS *bôm*, OHG *boum* and OFris. *bām* present a converse semantic situation. They expanded to become the unmarked term for 'tree' and eclipsed cognates of *trēow* in these languages. Accordingly, it is harder to identify potentially traditional, cultural aspects of the *bôm-boum* word-family's arboreal semantics. *Bôm* (×11) is the unmarked noun for 'tree' in the *Heliand*, but also varies *galga* and *crûci* for the 'cross' six times. *Treo* (×2) always means 'beam'. *Hard trio* (1707a) varies *swâran balkon* (1706a) for the 'beam in thine own eye', and *bômin treo* (5554a) 'wooden beam' denotes the cross. The adjective derived from *bôm* indicates that this noun was also semantically akin to OE *wudu*. Upper German *paum* glosses both *arbor* and *lignum* in *Abrogans*, and *lignum* in biblical glosses, which reflects the dual semantics of *bēam* in OE as 'tree' and 'beam'.[216]

The prevalence of *bēam* in toponymy and charters is striking.[217] Blair observes that functional interpretations for place-names such as Bamford, Derbs. 'timber beam serving as a ford' are usually unsatisfactory. Local topography often speaks against such interpretations – Bamford, Derbs., for example, is situated on a fast-flowing stretch of the Derwent that would have been difficult to bridge with a beam. A 'timber beam' is also rather indeterminate as a locational marker.[218] He argues instead that the toponymic *bēam* was a culturally significant landmark and that this importance remains discernible in local place-names and land-usage. From this perspective, Blair concludes that *bēam*-sites were typically both wooded and accessible by waterways, while the *bēam* itself was probably orientated in relation to other cult-foci in the area that together comprised a 'ritual arena' or 'holy zone'.[219]

Bēam is attested in 18 charters (see Appendix B ii). *Elebēam* 'elder tree(?)' occurs in five, with *crīstelmǣlbēam* and *sylbēam* once each. The boundaries of woodland at Tadley, Hants. (909)

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[216] StSG I, 50.31; 87.28 (*Abrogans*) and other examples; StSG I, 427.30-33 (2 Samuel 23:7)
[217] See Appendix B (ii) for cited examples of *bēam* in boundaries and Appendix C (ii) for *bēam* place-names.
[218] Blair (2013), 186, 192-94. Compare Watts (2004), 33, 50.
[219] Blair (2013), 206-207

proceed *ofer ēa* along a lynchet, continuing *on bēam lēage* into more wooded country *on āc hangram þonan innan sūð lēa* 'to oak thicket then into south woodland'.[220] Woodland is arboreal by definition, so *bēam lēage* should sensibly refer to an area marked by a distinctive tree. Just as this *bēam* is near a waterway, so the boundaries for land at Purbeck, Dors. (948) proceed from *bēam brōc* 'beam brook' along a river.[221] Again, because trees are ubiquitous on riverbanks, this landmark's onomastics probably refer to a remarkable tree. Three examples of possessive phrases suggest ownership by an individual or community: *brunes bēam* (724) along the river Limen, Kt.,[222] *ceorles bēam* (c.824) in the Meon valley,[223] and *Wulfredes bēam* near Farnham, Sry. (c.909), approached along a *burnan* 'stream' that formed the *sūð seaxna gemære* 'border of the South Saxons'.[224] The boundaries in this final example proceed immediately *tō brȳdelādes forda*, suggesting a waterway crossing traditionally used for wedding ceremonies.[225]

In fragmentary boundaries of uncertain date and provenance, *iii bēamum* are approached *andlang ðæs cynges gemær* 'along the king's border', opening the possibility that the trees stood together on a royal estate.[226] Possession by a kin-group is also suggested by *Cūðhelming bēam* at Oxhey, Herts,[227] and also association with wildlife in *earnes bēam* 'eagle's tree'.[228] It should be noted, however, that possessive phrases of this type are not peculiar to *bēam*, with more frequent like examples of *trēow* (e.g. *Cūðredes trēow*).[229]

Some of the examples just mentioned are contenders for original cult-foci situated within 'ritual arenas', according to Blair's topographical criteria.[230] Other *bēam*-sites show more overt signs. A *grēatan bēam* 'large tree' immediately precedes *Þunres lēa* 'Thunor's grove' in the boundaries of an estate situated in woodland near Droxford, Hants., among tributaries of the Meon.[231] This topography is comparable with Beam near Great Torrington, Dev., which is situated on high ground in the centre of a narrow meander in the river Torridge and about a

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[220] S 377, 4-8
[221] S 534, 1-2
[222] S 1180, 1
[223] S 283, 3
[224] S 382, 3-5
[225] Bosworth and Toller (1898), 130 s.v. *brȳde lāste* 'with conjugal footstep'
[226] S 1602, 2-3
[227] S 916, 16
[228] S 331, 5; S 864, 5-6
[229] S 726, 1
[230] Blair (2013), 187
[231] S 276, 15-16; S 446, 15-16

mile's distance from Staplevale and Furzebeam Hill. Its traditional name 'The Beam' suggests the tree once defined its immediate surroundings, while a court of common rights was held on Furzebeam Hill until 1834. This factual matrix suggests a 'sacred zone' orientated around a *stapol* meeting-place and accessible by waterway.[232]

Another estate in the Meon Valley near Privett, Hants. had two 'beams'. One was certainly near water, in an area apparently used by local farmers: *of scyteres flōdan on hriscmere. Of þām mere on ðone twisledan bēam. Of þām twisledan bēame on ceorla geat* 'from the shooter's water to the rush-pond. From the pond to the forked tree. From the forked tree to the gate of the small landholders'.[233] A littler further along the boundary, *coggan bēam* 'Cogga's tree' was a woodland boundary marker.[234] A *stapol* is mentioned at the survey's conclusion immediately succeeding a *mearc beorh* 'boundary barrow' leading to a ford.[235] *Stapol* landmarks are typical on boundaries and routeways – especially the *herepaÞ* – although this *stapol* might have been at a meeting place.[236] The estate's topography is comparable with Beam and Droxford, with two 'beams' co-situated in the surroundings alongside other traditional landmarks.

Where a local *bēam*'s distinguished or 'special' status is inconclusive, the language of the whole charter text may be relevant to interpretation. In the Privett charter, with *twisledan bēam* 'forked tree' is also recorded *twisledan āc* 'forked oak', which infers the surveyors identified some other feature distinguishing these two 'forked' entities. *Hole bēam* 'hollow tree' on an estate at Wheathampstead, Herts. also identifies a tree by its outward appearance.[237] *Hleadreadan bēam* 'laddered tree' close to Bedwyn, Wilts. indicates that a 'special' tree might also have been marked with signs of human intervention.[238] The surrounding environment of this large estate shows the tree was accessed through wood-pasture along *Cūðhardes pæð*, which terminated at Bedwyn and was marked by a series of gates.[239] Because of its location, the tree would have witnessed seasonal human traffic into the wood-pasture, which had been an important resource for graziers since the settlement period (see Chapter 4 iv *bearu*). The

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[232] Blair (2013), 194; Gover (1931) I, 123
[233] S 754, 5-6
[234] S 754, 6
[235] S 754, 12-13
[236] The author has produced research on *stapol* to be included in an expanded version of this study.
[237] S 1031, 5-6
[238] S 756, 13
[239] S 756, 11-13

laddered tree might have been used as a perch for swineherds, or even a platform from which to shake acorns or beechnuts from the boughs.

Grēat modifies *bēam* in two charters: one on the estate at Droxford, Hants. and another *grēatan mearc bēam on þām wuda lace* 'large boundary tree by the wood-pond' which stood on a large estate in the Meon Valley.[240] Both environments show relevant cultural features: *Þunres lēa* at Droxford, and the traditional use of a large tree as boundary marker. *Grēat* is also comparable with other qualitative adjectives *hēah* and *beorht*, which the literary sources suggest were traditional to *bēam*.

Evidence from the *Cura Pastoralis* is relevant here. In both versions, *grēat* modifies *bēam* twice in a paraphrase of Jesus' mote and beam teaching, against one instance with *micel*.[241] In Gregory's text, *trabs* remains unmodified by an adjective for 'big' or 'great', which suggests that vernacular idiom motivated the inclusion of *grēat*.[242] Comparing these adjectives of size, *micel* was the unmarked term for 'big', with *grēat* more limited in OE.[243] Therefore, modifying capacity and convention probably determined the distribution of *grēat* and *micel*, with the former preferred for trees. This is also apparent from a simile which Alfred has developed in the prose Boethius:

> Ac swīðe oft se **micla** anwald ðāra yflena gehrīst swīðe færlīce, swā <swā> **grēat bēam** on wuda wyrcð hlūdne dynt þonne men lǣst wēnað[244]

> [But very often the **great** power of the evil ones falls very quickly, just as a **large tree** in the forest makes a loud noise when men least expect.]

The subordinate clause concerning the tree is a vernacular supplement to the straightforward statement of the source: *quorum magna spes et excelsa facinorum machina repentino atque insperato saepe fine destruitur* 'their great expectation and the heights of their evil machinations

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[240] S 811, 21
[241] *grēat* CP, 33.225.7; CP (Cotton), 34.222.7; CP 33.225.2; CP (Cotton) 33.224.2; *micel* CP 33.219.13; CP (Cotton), 33.222.24
[242] *Reg. past.* 3.9.111 *trabes in oculo* 'beams in an eye'
[243] Typical examples of *micel*: ChronC 976.1 *Her wæs se miccla hungor on Angelcynne* 'here was the great famine in England'; ChronC 977.1 *þæt myccle gemōt æt Kyrtlingtūne* 'the great moot at Kirlington'.
[244] Bo 38.117.28

are suddenly destroyed and brought to an end, often unexpectedly'.[245] *Micel* aligns with *magnus* (also unmarked) in Boethius, while *grēat bēam* is Alfred's addition.

Grēat is very frequently attributive to certain natural features in charters, especially for trees identified by species, for example *grēatan āc* 'large oak',[246] *þone grēatan þorne* 'the large thorn',[247] *on ðone grēatan æsc* 'to the large ash',[248] *tō ðǣre grēatan lindan* 'to the large linden',[249] but also earthworks such as *dīc* 'dyke' and *hlinc* 'lynchet'.[250] In medical texts, the *grēat wyrt* apparently denotes a type of crocus.[251] In prose, *grēat* again appears categorically confined to body parts,[252] rods for punitive beating,[253] and hailstones.[254] These restricted examples suggest a core meaning of 'thickness' rather than height, which Ælfric's gloss of *grēat* for *grossus* supports.[255]

By comparison with *bēam*, *grēat trēow* and *micel trēow* are each attested just once.[256] Given the traditional phraseology of the charters, the absence of *grēat trēow* is notable and indicates that *grēat bēam* was idiomatic for specifying a particular tree, a situation corroborated by the fact that *bēam* was used onomastically for species. The phrase was evidently recognised well enough by the Alfredian translators that they could deploy it for either usage 'timber beam' or 'tree' without a Latin epitome.

Crīstelmǣlbēam may well denote a tree marked with a crucifix.[257] Situated on high ground in Worcestershire, *sȳlbēam* 'column-tree' is comparable with Beam, Dev. and Beam Hill, Staffs.[258] The first member *sȳl-* is comparable with the cult-focus *Irmin-sul*, the enormous column which the continental Saxons worshipped.[259] In composition with *bēam*, it might have described a dead tree that had been carved into a monument while still rooted in the ground.

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[245] Cons. phil. 4.4. 24-25
[246] S 423, 1 and other examples.
[247] S 312, 4 and other examples.
[248] S 416, 8 and other examples.
[249] S 1006, 14 and other examples.
[250] S 360, 25; S 427, 2.12 and other examples.
[251] Lch I (HerbHead), 22 *herba hieribulbus*
[252] LawAf 1, 75 and other examples.
[253] ÆLS (Chrysanthus), 188 and other examples.
[254] Joshua 10:11 and other examples.
[255] ÆGl, 317.2
[256] LawAf 1, 12; ÆCHom 1, 16, 311.120
[257] S 607, 1
[258] S 786, 97; Blair (2013), 194
[259] *Trans.Alex.* 3, 676; De Vries (1957) II, 386-87

Two toponyms are relevant to these overt indications of *bēam* as cult-focus: Bladbean, Kt. < *blōd-bēam* suggests a sacrificial context; Bemblowe, Gloucs. < *bēam-hlǣw* is a lost furlong name near Longney by the Severn and identifies a special tree by a barrow.[260] Blair relates Bemblowe with Wulfstan's objection to the great nut tree at Longney that overshadowed the manorial church of Ælfsige of Farringdon as implying a rival cult-focus.[261] With Ælfric's Life of St. Martin, this anecdote might evidence late tenth-century antipathy towards the residual presence of arboreal cult-foci in the south-west.

Another class of toponyms suggest that pre-Christian *bēam*-sites were adopted as royal centres in the late seventh century. Although the *DEPN* interprets the four Bamptons functionally as 'farm where beams are made',[262] *tūn* place-names first began to appear in the early eighth century, and with the meaning 'royal vill' rather than 'enclosed farmstead'.[263] *Bēam* is unproductive in place-names after this relevant period, so the Bamptons were probably established around the time that the conversion was politically completed. With consolidation of the 'Heptarchy', westward territorial expansion would have encouraged the construction of new royal centres. The presence of an important *bēam* would have made such sites politically attractive for legitimising the territorial control of newly-Christianised kings.[264]

Two Bamptons are in Cumbria, which was newly acquired territory in the seventh century. Meanwhile, the archaeological record at Bampton, Oxon. attests a 'long-term and multi-focal ritual complex'.[265] This village on the north bank of the Thames was the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster, built over a former Roman settlement. Both the parish church of St. John the Baptist and the Deanery chapel to its west stand upon bronze-age burial complexes and their central axes are aligned. Most importantly, on the same axis just a mile eastward sits a cottage that was traditionally known as 'the Beam'; its medieval predecessor was a St. Andrew chapel recorded as *Beme*.

Archaeology has revealed that the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlements in the area were situated on the perimeters of the Roman site, precisely where 'the Beam' is located together with

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[260] Blair (2013), 194; *Vit.Wulfst.* 2.17
[261] Blair (2013), 194
[262] Kirkbampton, Cumb., Bampton, Cumb., Bempton, Humb., Bampton, Oxon.; Watts (2004), 33, 50, 350
[263] Campbell (1986), 115
[264] Blair (2013), 196
[265] Blair (2013), 200-201

contemporary burials. Blair concludes that when the minster church of Bampton (*bēam-tūn*) was founded under royal patronage, it was not only named after the area's dominant cultural landmark, but also axially aligned to it.[266] This pattern of building-monument-burial alignment shows similarities to the royal complex at Yeavering (see Chapter 4 iii *ealh*).

To summarise, *bēam*'s semantic split between 'timber beam' and 'tree' was almost certainly traditional on the strength of linguistic comparanda. Examples of the noun in OE poetry, charters and place-names, however, reveal that *bēam* also inherited peculiar cultural connotations as a distinguished or 'special' tree. In this context, such trees may have been interacted with as a cult-focus or even identified with a tree-persona. The consistency with which *hēah* and *grēat* modify *bēam* (the former never for *trēow*), together with superlative phraseology, suggest that size and age were critical factors in ascribing such worth. Very tall, spreading or thick trees might have stood out as vigorous and imbued with divine favour.

Attitudes towards the cultural *bēam* appear to have been conflicted. The present study argues that this may reflect tensions which characterised Anglo-Saxon religious life in the early eighth century regarding the perceived excesses of cultic syncretism. Such opinions seem concerned to distance *bēam* from potential analogues in scripture and to differentiate it from the eternal *rōd* as a transitory form, thereby enfeebling devotional potential.

This reaction might have been directed at forms of sacred trees (or their hypostases in a post or column) that were inculturated with the cross during the conversion for use in practical ritual; one such cult-form might be attested in *The Dream of the Rood*, assuming a form of it was composed a generation earlier. The adoption of *bēam*-sites as royal centres and contemporary legal protection of a *bēam* supports this view that it denoted a valued cultural form in the late seventh century. As with other terms considered in this study, therefore, *bēam* presents a litmus of sorts for the spectrum of attitudes which might reflect two phases of Christianisation.

As 'tree', *bēam* was ultimately neutralised of devotional significance and preserved as an archaism in the traditional lexicon of woodland. Traces of its superlative identity, size and tree-persona remain embedded in phraseology. It is thus comparable with *cumbol*, *þūf* and *bearu*,

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[266] Blair (2013), 203

none of which were entirely pejorated, but rather stripped of problematic connotations and redeemed within a neutral semantic field. The innovative collocational tendencies of *trēow* in literary sources suggest that it expanded from concrete to cultural significance concurrently with *bēam*'s decline.

v. Conclusions

Anglo-Saxon heathens used a range of cult-foci, both moveable and stationary, for different religious occasions. Of the three nouns denoting sacred objects, *wēoh* was arguably most closely identified with a revered personality, on the evidence of its marginalisation as 'idol'. Etymological considerations support this view, because they suggest that the root **wīh-* concerned things reserved as divine personalty. Archaeology further demonstrates that a *wēoh* was probably a roughly anthropomorphic branch, perhaps displayed upon a turf-altar and/or within an open-air enclosure, which provides the relevant material context for understanding its relationship to *wēofod* and *wēohsteall*.

A heathen might have recognised the *wēoh* fundamentally as a touchstone to personalities revered (*weorðian*) by the community, whether divine or ancestral. The meaning of *begangan* as 'interact with an object' also corroborates this idea. Devotion may have been mainly local, the objects enjoying organised protection (*weardian*) and curation through offerings and maintenance (*begangan*). *Cumbol* and *þūf* were emblems of group identity (clan or tribe) that found a ritual occasion in warfare. It is less clear whether they were also identified with honoured personalities as for *wēoh*, although a system of ancestor worship may underlie the religious significance of all three nouns.

The devotional significance of *bēam* is less clear and its inclusion as a religious term proceeds from scholarly agreement that Anglo-Saxon heathenism recognised trees as cult-foci. A traditional concept of a tree-persona can be discerned in the poetical presentation of trees in *The Dream of the Rood* and some of the Riddles, which would bring the putative religious semantics of *bēam* close to those of *wēoh* in terms of identification with a revered personality. With more certainty, *bearu* and *lēah* demonstrate that woodland was sometimes identified as sacred space within heathen tradition; corpus evidence for *bēam* and *bearu* together,

meanwhile, evince a strong cultural interest in the process by which wood harvested from a special forest was wrought into a sacred object that was personified with an arboreal pedigree. These ideas may be interpreted in terms of the concurrent cultic and practical links that obtained between domestic and woodland space (see Chapter 4 iv *bearu*). A *bēam* could have been discovered within the landscape that humans used daily for harvesting resources, as well as for making sacred wooden objects such as *wēoh* or *cumbol*, and *þūf* from fresh foliage.

Finally, this chapter has argued that certain poetic usages of *wēoh*, *cumbol* and *bēam* may reveal that their Christianisation was hotly contested in the early eighth century, in reaction to the syncretic cults that prevailed in the seventh century. The single positive example of *wēoh* in *Genesis A*, as well as the alignment of *bēam* to the cross as cult-focus in *The Dream of the Rood* suggest traces of early attempts to re-habilitate these nouns into practical Christian ritual. *Daniel, Maxims I*, *Beowulf* and *Exodus*, on the other hand, all express antipathy towards idolatry. The *Beowulf* poet indirectly chastises his audience for lapses into *wīgweorþung*; in *Maxims I*, the poet is anxious to distinguish right from wrong worship, contrasting Woden's *wēos* with God's creative power, and a felled *bēam* from living *trēow*; the *Daniel* poet is similarly anxious to divorce *bēam* from *bearu*, and presses *wēoh*, *wīhgyld*, *hearg* and *cumbol* into negative synonymy; the *Exodus* poet states that *dēofolgyld druron* (47a) 'idols fell' on the day the Israelites left Egypt.

As with Bede's account of Goodmanham, these texts suggest a concern with implementing greater doctrinal fidelity in national religious practice, which may have characterised the second phase of Christianisation. As the need to translate negative ideological terminology became increasingly urgent, *wēoh* could have been marginalised with the sacrificial terms. The other nouns plausibly escaped this fate because *wēoh* and (-)*gield* together covered idolatry, but also for redeemable connotations; *cumbol* and *þūf* were apparently neutralised as poetic archaisms within battle poetry; *bēam* endured some critique, but was also neutralised for its benign relationship to nature.

Bede's description of King Rædwald's (c.599-624) dual heathen-Christian altar seems emblematic of the generational difference between the two putative phases of Christianisation. This altar's potential relationship with Germanic Arian cults was noted in Chapter 1 (vii

Analogues),[267] but it may well have been more particular to the Anglo-Saxon Christianity of its time. Bede mentions that King Aldwulf (c.663-713) claimed to have seen the shrine as a child, probably in the 640s. It is possible that he would have been brought up with syncretised cults, aware of Christian narrative as replacement myth in the manner of *The Dream of the Rood* and *Genesis A*, but lived into the early eighth century, when the new religion was being refined by an expanded clergy. Although Bede's Latin terminology is more stylistic than accurate (see Chapter 4 i *wēofod*), Rædwald's altar seems typical of converted sacred spaces that missionaries may have maneuvered through re-alignments and adjustments during the conversion period.

The positive usage of *wēoh* in *Genesis A*, combined with the inculturation of *wēohsteall* and *wēofod* for describing a church sanctuary, also corroborate this scenario. The present study argues that the missionaries would have negotiated with the local leader of a settlement, perhaps requesting that a roughly hewn wooden cross, not too dissimilar to the special wooden objects within a *wēohsteall*, stand henceforth on the *wēofod*; the *wēos* themselves need not be destroyed, for if they represented ancestors, they might be re-positioned around the turf-altar as markers representing the community of the faithful, which comprised the living and the dead within Christian sacred space.[268] It seems best to keep this scenario in mind moving into Chapter 4 and the opening discussion of *wēofod*.

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[267] Wallace-Hadrill (1988), 76
[268] Markus (1990), 146; Mark 12:26; Exodus 3:6

4

Spaces and Structures of Worship

The previous chapter concluded that the missionaries renovated the pre-Christian sacred enclosure into a church sanctuary via analogy as restricted ritual space where sacred objects were displayed. In a church, the cross, reliquary, or Blessed Sacrament stood on the altar for adoration at a distance, just as heathen Anglo-Saxons displayed special wooden objects within the enclosures. Robert Markus has argued that Europe's Christianisation gradually saw the appropriation of a sacred topography. Before the fourth century, 'Christians inhabited a spatial universe spiritually largely undifferentiated' in stark contrast to religious life in the ancient world, where 'all public and much private life was channelled through a system of sacred spaces ... Walls, temples, circuses, palaces defined the Late Antique town as a network of holy places.'[1] Northern European cultures, likewise, knew multiple forms of sacred space, often forming part of the natural landscape.[2] Christians spatially projected important events onto the pre-existing sacred environment through the building of churches to commemorate conversion or miracles, and to house the tombs of holy persons.[3]

Renovation of the Anglo-Saxon enclosure corroborates this pattern of inculturation: pre-Christian sacred spaces were subordinated to Christianity's dominant architectural form in the church building. The Christian church was a unique religious space (at least within the Classical world), because it combined restricted ritual areas with communal gathering space and also a burial ground under one roof. Importantly, the word for this building (*cirice*, *ecclesia*) also denoted the Church as institution, reflecting the fact that the building ultimately derived its sacrality from the body of the faithful.[4] For this reason, it is plausible that *cirice* <

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[1] Markus (1990), 141
[2] Semple (2010), 29-48. See generally Carver et al., ed. (2010).
[3] Markus (1990), 142
[4] Markus (1990), 140; Green (1998), 296-307

κυριακόν '[building] of the Lord' was preferred as a loan-word, because a single vernacular term may not have been available to cover the full range of functions.

The inculturation of *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* suggests that the missionaries attempted to go as far as they could. Traditional spaces and structures, however, would not have survived independently of incorporation into the church layout. The OE terminology for spaces and structures of worship reflects the diversity of pre-Christian ritual arenas. One might expect man-made features to have been marginalised, for want of an available analogy to the church building; if natural space, however, the terms were probably neutralised, because a church or chapel might simply be built within the space and become its dominant cultural feature.

Three terms are considered with a clear semantic relationship to cult, and one term for a natural space, the religious significance of which is reconstructable from comparanda and historical analogues. *Wēofod* 'altar' was apparently inculturated with the Christian altar, but also remained capable of denoting pagan altars. *Hearg* has been pejorated as a catch-all term for pagan spaces of worship. A pre-Christian meaning 'stone-altar, fireplace' is reconstructable, however, on the strength of comparanda, etymology and toponymy. It will be argued that *ealh* was a type of cultic building, although it is uneasily classified as a 'temple' on the Classical model, against the wider evidential matrix. *Bearu* is the most probable term for a sacred grove. It will be argued that *bearu* had dual sacral and practical character, which should be interpreted in light of how communities ordinarily used local woodland and connected their natural and domestic cult spaces systemically.

i. *wēofod*

Wēofod (n, *a*-stem) is very well attested (×424) as the basic OE term for 'altar', whether pagan or Christian. The late WS form of the noun used here represents an obscured compound. The first member transparently reflects **wīh*, a nominal member of the **wīha-* word-family. Two further issues, however, affect interpretation of the compound. First, scholars disagree over the noun's formal and semantic analysis: whether the first member represents *wēoh* 'idol' or **wīh-* 'holy', and whether the second member represents *bedd* 'earthen support' or *bēod* 'dining table'. Second, *wēofod* finds no attested cognates in other Germanic languages. Most studies

of Germanic heathenism presume *wēofod* is pre-Christian, but decline to reckon with these formal and semantic issues.[5] The basic purposive meaning 'altar' implies that inculturation occurred via a fairly straightforward analogy with a formal and/or functional pre-Christian precedent. These circumstances are harder to reconstruct, however, in face of the noun's linguistic ambiguities and for want of a formal control in *comparanda*, because *prima facie*, both meanings 'idol support' and 'holy table' could describe an altar-type structure.

The present discussion will review the corpus evidence for *wēofod* in a summary fashion, because the noun's meaning in OE literature is uncontroversial. Subsequently, it will be argued that **wīh-bedd* is preferable to **wīh-bēod*, when interpreted against the evidential matrix for *bedd* and *bēod* in composition, and against relevant phonological issues. Finally, the meaning 'earthen bed supporting an idol' will be correlated with extensive archaeological evidence showing the turf-altar to have been a traditional feature of pre-Christian Germanic cult.

Poetic examples are very sparse. In *Genesis A*, the lone partly-Saxonised form *wēobedd* occurs next to Anglian *wībed* (×3). *Wīgbed* twice translates *altar* in the Paris Psalter.[6] Around 50% of the examples are adverbial phrases expressing another noun's spatial relationship to a *wēofod* as focal accessory structure of worship, for example *dōn fȳr innan þæt wēofod uppan þām sticceom þe ðǣr tōsnidene bēoþ* 'place fire within the altar upon the sticks which are cut-up there',[7] *ðā lāc þe man brōhte tō ðǣm wēobude* 'the offerings brought to the altar',[8] *þonne man hālgað þæt hūsl æt þām wēofode* 'when the Eucharist is consecrated at the altar'.[9] The first example seems to distinguish the hearth-type structure of the Israelite tabernacle from a church altar-table, since *on* or *uppan* normally translate Latin *in*. Likewise, the third example specifically reflects Christian practice. The Eucharist ritual is completed when the priest raises the Host while standing *æt* the altar-table; in ancient Hebrew and classical practice, sacrificial consumption was perfected *on* the altar itself.

Accusative constructions comprise the second large group (14%). Verbs of construction *wyrcan*, *ārǣran*, or *getimbran* typically govern *wēofod*, but also consecration with *hālgian*, for

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[5] De Vries (1956) I, 376; Jente (1921), 17-21; Philippson (1929), 192
[6] PPs 83:3 (9a); 117:25 (70a)
[7] Leviticus 1:7 *subjicient in altari ignem, strue lignorum ante composita*
[8] CP (Cotton), 33.216.20; *Reg.past.* 3.9 *in ea videlicet superposita holocausta*
[9] ÆLet 1 (Wulfsige X a), 33

example *weorcað wēofod of eorðan mē* 'you should make me an altar of earth'[10] and *þǣr wēofod gehālgodon* 'they consecrated an altar there'.[11] The few examples of nominative *wēofod* almost always occur within copulative constructions; the genitive typically occurs in attributive phrases, for example *þæs wēofodes hyrnan* 'the horns of the altar'.[12]

Wēofod could denote both pagan and Christian altars, which is reflected in its capacity to translate both *ara* and *altar*. These nouns were developed distinctively within Medieval Latin. *Ara* was the normal pre-Christian term for an altar. It was typically a solid, columnar stone structure of waist-height with a cavity on top for burning offerings, usually meat, and situated in the open air.[13] In temples, *arae* were larger and aligned to the opening of the main temple building (*cella*), in full view of the resident god.[14] Sometimes the meat was cooked outside, and additional gifts (*sacrificia*), were left on a table (*mensa*) in the main building.[15] There was also a Classical commonplace concerning the monumental construction of larger *arae* by travellers.[16] This underlies Tacitus' claim that Ulysses built an altar in Germania at Asciburgium, as well as the altars of Alexander in Orosius (translated *hearg*) and elsewhere.[17]

By contrast, only plural *altaria* is attested in Classical Latin. It originally meant 'altar-kindling', expanding metonymically to denote the grander *arae* in large temples to the Olympian gods.[18] Singular forms were developed in Late Latin, becoming Christianised as the normal term for the altar-table of the Eucharist ritual. This motivated the semantic split between *altar* 'Christian altar' and *ara* 'heathen altar' that is generally (though not rigidly) observed in Medieval Latin.[19]

Jerome respects this distinction in the Vulgate, typically using *altar* for the Tabernacle and *ara* for non-Israelite worship. *Wēofod* translates both in the late WS Heptateuch, however, for example Balaam *ārǣrde ōðre seofan wēofoda* 'raised another seven altars',[20] and God

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[10] Exodus 20:14 *altare de terra facietis mihi*
[11] ÆLS (Martin), 341
[12] Leviticus 8:14 *cornua altaris*
[13] Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2007), 210; Rüpke (2007), 141; Scheid (2003), 66; Woodward (2006), 175
[14] Scheid (2003), 70; Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2007), 206
[15] Scheid (2003), 71; Rüpke (2001), 141
[16] Rives (1999), 126
[17] Tac. Germ. 3.2; Oros. Hist. 1, 2.5; Strab. 3.5, 5-6
[18] Lewis and Short (1879), 67
[19] Niermeyer and van de Kieft (2002), 50
[20] Numbers 23:14 *aedificavit Balaam septem aras* 'Balaam built seven altars'

commands the Israelites *tōwurp heora wēofodu* 'destroy their altars', referring to Canaanite cult.[21] Gregory also preferred to reserve *ara* to Classical paganism, for example *þær þæs ylcan Āpollones wēofod wæs* 'there was an altar of that same Apollo'.[22] The dual capacity of *wēofod* for *ara* and *altar* would also suggest that the translator of Orosius was motivated to use *hearg* for Alexander's *ara* on account of this monument's larger size (see ii).

Bede maintains the patristic separation of *ara* and *altare*, although this split is not always respected elsewhere in Insular Latin. He describes the Goodmanham sanctuary in terms of *aras et fana idolorum cum septis* 'altars and shrines of idols with enclosures'.[23] Two chapters further on, he lexically distinguishes the features of Rædwald's shrine: *et altare haberet ad sacrificium Christi, et arulam ad uictimas daemoniorum* 'and he had an altar for the sacrifice of Christ, and a small altar for victims of demons'.[24] While both of these analogues have been heavily influenced by Latin style, some elements may be authentic. The Goodmanham account reproduces iconoclastic commonplaces, but *septis* is marked and matches the archaeological evidence for Germanic sanctuaries. Meanwhile, Bede's lexical differentiation of *altar* and *arula* in describing Rædwald's altar coheres with patristic usage. It was suggested in Chapter 3, however, that this altar probably did exist, despite the terminology used, on the basis that *wēofod* was probably inculturated through stages of syncretism by degrees.

The *History*'s (probably Mercian) translator uses *wīgbed* for these passages, obscuring Bede's ideologically-motivated distinction.[25] For the Goodmanham sanctuary, the relevant distinction is of size, between the smaller *wīgbed* (*ara*) within a larger *herg* (*fanum*).[26] These dimensions recur for Rædwald's shrine, *in þām ilcan herige* (*in eodem fano*) 'in the same shrine', with *wīgbed* translating both *altare* and *arula*.[27]

Glossaries reflect the ideological neutrality of *wēofod*. In Antwerp-London, *wēofod* glosses *altar et area* together; in Prudentius, Anglian *wībed* translates *ara* and *arula* individually.[28] With positive meaning, *wēofod* and *onsægedness* gloss *ara* and *victima* together in the

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[21] Exodus 34:12 *aras eorum destrue confringe statuas, lucosque succide* 'destroy their altars, overthrow their idols, and cut down their groves'
[22] GD 2 (C), 8.121.27; *Dial.* 2.2 *ara eiusdem Apollinis*
[23] *HE* 2.13. See Latham (1975), 69-70, 115, *altare* sometimes pagan, but *altar* and *altarium* always Christian.
[24] *HE* 2.15
[25] Rauer (2017), 541-58
[26] Bede 2, 10.136.24-25, 138.16; *HE* 2.13
[27] Bede 2, 12.142.5; *HE* 2.15
[28] AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 718; PrudGl 1 (Meritt), 313, 418

hymnals.[29] Significantly, two further glosses supply *wēofod* as an accessory structure to pre-Christian soothsaying: in Antwerp-London, *wīgbedwīglere* translates *ariolus* (*hariolus*). More specifically, *on wīgbede tō hālsienne* translates gerund *ariolandi*, which opens the possibility that pre-Christian *hālsian* interacted with a *wīgbed*.[30]

Turning to the compound's structure, scholars have agreed that *wēofod* reflects univerbation of **wīh-* with either *bēod* (m) 'table', which the majority affirm, or alternatively *bedd* (n) 'bed, earthen bed'.[31] Bosworth and Toller ascribe the transparency of Anglian *wīgbed* to a later folk-etymological connection with *bedd*, although this form does not strictly preclude *bēod* phonologically. Almost all WS forms show intervocalic *b* > *f* [v].[32] The diverse vocalisms of the second syllable in *wēofed*, *wēofod*, and *wēofud* are all phonologically possible outcomes of *bedd* or *bēod*. Two important sound changes affected the first member **wīh-*. Breaking of *ī* before *x* > *īo* occurred at the earliest stages of prehistoric OE. Smoothing subsequently reversed these changes in Anglian dialects by the end of the seventh century, with the variant outcomes for the noun as *wīh* or **wēh*.[33] Shortly before the written record, lenition *x* > *h* between voiced segments occurred; in the pre-form of *wēofod*, this *h* was then rapidly voiced to *g* by assimilation with the *b* of the second member (*wīgbed*), or lost entirely (*wībed*).[34] Loss of *h* was precursory to WS intervocalic *b* > *f*, a change which certainly post-dates the earliest records.[35]

If the second member is *bedd*, the retraction *e* > *o, u* in the WS forms was probably analogical to similar interchanges that speakers observed in other obscured compounds, for example, between *ēored* and *ēorod* 'cavalry', or *earfeþ* and *earfoþ* 'hardship'.[36] Such analogies would doubtless have been motivated when intervocalic *b* > *f* obscured the compound in WS. Anglian *wīgbed* is self-explanatory with *bedd*, geminate *dd* being reduced in an unstressed syllable.

[29] HyGl 3 (Gneuss), 67.1.8
[30] ClGl 1 (Stryker) 534; AntGl 2 (Kindschi), 135
[31] DOE s.v. *bedd* and *bēod*, apparently preferring *bedd*; Ross (1934), 3 both possible; Holthausen (1932), 398 *bedd*; Campbell (1959), *passim bēod*; Jente (1921), 17-21, 20 prefers *bēod*; Philippson (1929), 192 *bēod*; Braune (1918), 399 *bēod*; Hoops (1911-13) I, 71 *bēod*; Bosworth and Toller (1882-98), 1221 s.v. *bēod*
[32] Excepting *Genesis A* 2842a *wēobedd*; *Cura Pastoralis* (×8) *wēobud*; PsGlD (×2) *wēobedd*.
[33] Hogg (1992), 146 (§5.95), 150
[34] Hogg (1992), 278-79 (§7.47); Campbell (1959), 97 (§230)
[35] Hogg (1992), 283 (§7.55)
[36] Campbell (1959), 158 (§382), 140-41 (§331, §336); Hogg (1992), 221-22, 233-34 (§§6.5, 6.27(4)-6.29). *Ēored* and *ēorod* (*ēoh* 'horse' + *rād* 'riding') result from independent phonological developments, but speakers perceived their relationship in diachronic terms *ēorod* < *ēored*.

If the second member is *bēod*, both the Anglian and WS forms must be reckoned as separate phonological outcomes of reduced diphthongs, which were 'very prone to modification' in obscured compounds.[37] All unaccented long vowels were shortened in prehistoric OE, both those which had escaped earlier WGmc and NWGmc reductions, as well as the results of new formations (compounds) with long medial and final vowels.[38] Accordingly, the diphthong of *bēod* would have been reduced to the nearest short vowel corresponding to either of its vocalic constituents, i.e. *ēo* > *e* or *o*. This explains variant forms *hēaderhundas* and *hēadorhund* < *hēahdēor* 'stag', and *lāreow* beside Northumbrian *lāruu* and South Northumbrian *lārow* < *lār-þēow* 'teacher'.[39] This is the most probable scenario for **wīh-bēod* > *wīgbed* and *wēofod*, which is best compared with the development of *hēahdēor*, since *dēor* shares with *bēod* a root diphthong in WGmc **iu*.

Although separate phonological processes were available to develop *bedd* and *bēod* in similar ways in composition, *bedd* is the more economic possibility, according to the distribution of these mechanisms in OE. The changes underlying -*bēod* > -*bed* or -*bod* are sporadically attested within and across dialects: for example *hēaderhund* and *hēadorhund* are both late WS forms. The mechanisms that would have changed original *e* > *o*, *u* on analogy with the *ēored*/*ēorod* split, however, correlate clearly according to dialect: Anglian forms never show a back vowel in the second syllable, except where the shift *b* > *f* has occurred to obscure the original structure (*wīfod* in a few late examples);[40] WS forms present the opposite situation, with only scattered examples of *wēofed*. This suggests that the back vowel of *wēofod* and *wēofud* depended first upon the compound's obscuration by *b* > *f*. Vowel harmonising of the second syllable with WS *wēo*- might also be supposed an additional factor.

Wider evidence for the compositional tendencies of *bedd* and *bēod*, as well as the semantic sensibility of their relationship to **wīh*-, also speak in favour of *bedd*. The etymon **badja*- is most plausibly connected with a range of IE words for digging and ploughing.[41] In Wulfila's Gothic, *badi* could refer to a moveable structure for sleeping (*ushafjands þata badi þeinata* 'take up thy bed').[42] This meaning, however, probably developed from a functional

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[37] Campbell (1959), 149 (§357)
[38] Campbell (1959), 147-49 (§355-56)
[39] Hogg (1992), 1, 234 (§6.30)
[40] Matthew (Ru) 23:18; PsGlE (Harsley) several times, including also *wībod*.
[41] Kroonen (2013), 46; Orel (2003), 55; Lehmann (1986), 55; De Vries (1962), 29; Holthausen (1932), 18
[42] Luke 5:24 ἄρας τὸ κλινίδιόν σου

connotation 'place for sleeping', since a basic prehistoric form of sleeping-place was a type of dug-out. This core meaning denoting a small, functional earthwork survives in MnE 'flower-bed' and MnG *Beet* 'beds for planting'.

The interrelationship between the distribution of *bedd* compounds in OE and their compositional tendencies also supports the idea that the noun's core meaning referred to a functional mound of earth. As 'earthwork', *bedd* is always the second member of a determinative compound. The first element always denotes what the bed supports (usually plants), thereby defining its purpose, for example *wyrtbedd* 'herb-bed', *fearnbedd* 'fern-bed', and *gærsbedd* 'grass-bed'. Only with the more defined meaning 'bed for sleeping' (ultimately its dominant meaning) does *bedd* occur as first member of a compound. In this position, it assigns function to the second, all-purpose nominal member, for example *beddclāþ* 'bed-sheets' and *beddrest* 'bed-rest'. Putative *bedd* in *wēofod*, therefore, as second member would possess the all-purpose semantics 'earthen bed'. *Bedd* never composes with an adjective, which rules out **wīh-bedd* as 'sacred bed'; nor does a determinative first member ever denote the area where a bed stands, which rules out 'sanctuary bed'. Rather, since a bed always supports the entity that defines its purpose, 'idol-bed' denoting a turf-altar is the most sensible interpretation, according to the conventional compositional tendencies of *bedd*. This also mutually corroborates the interpretation of *wēoh* as an object rather than a space.

Turning to *bēod*, this noun derives from **beudan-* 'offer' and finds direct cognates in all early Germanic languages meaning 'table or dish for food'.[43] This reflects the root semantics as 'surface on which food is offered'.[44] In this regard, the noun's semantic status is comparable to *bedd* 'bed for sleeping' as defined by a cultural purpose instead of possessing all-purpose application as 'table'.[45] Tacitus observes of Germanic dining customs that each man eats *separatae singulis sedes et sua cuique mensa* 'with a separate seat and table of his own', plausibly a kind of smorgboard for consuming *agrestia poma, recens fera aut lac concretum* 'wild fruit, fresh game and curdled milk'.[46] *Bēod* would certainly cohere with the archetype of a Christian altar in the Lord's supper table, where a communal meal is partaken. Unlike *bedd*, however, in composition *bēod* only ever occurs as first member. This condition probably

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[43] Orel (2003), 43; Lehmann (1986), 74; De Vries (1970), 40; Holthausen (1932), 19
[44] Uhlenbeck (1905), 268
[45] Schrader (1917-29) I, 537
[46] Tac. Germ. 22.1, 23.1; Stroh (1959), 15

reflects its status as a noun that was already culturally defined according to purpose. Instead, it determines more general nouns, for example *bēodclāþ* 'table-cloth' and *bēodbolle* 'crockery'. Putative **wīh-bēod* would, therefore, be automatically abnormal according to the conventional structure of *bēod* compounds.

In terms of the semantics of putative **wīh-bēod*, a nominal determinative compound meaning 'idol table for food' makes poor sense, while the adjectival attributive 'sacred table' is, admittedly, conceivable. Because this compound structure would be abnormal according to the tendencies of *bēod*, such a form could, in theory, represent a neologism coined by non-native speakers of OE to communicate the literal and symbolic import of the Christian altar as 'God's supper table' in readily understandable terms. This would have occurred at the earliest stages of missionary activity among the Anglo-Saxons, before **wīha-* was systematically excluded (to which *fulwīan* 'baptise' and *fulwiht* 'baptism' may be compared). As Chapter 1 argues for *bletsian* and *hūsel*, it is reasonable to assume that the Eucharist and other fundamental sacraments would have been inculturated at the outset of the Gregorian mission; a rudimentary supper table may reasonably have been an accessory structure.[47]

Whether pre-Christian turf-altar or a Christian neologism for an altar table, extra-linguistic analogues are very revealing for the evaluation of these competing interpretations of *wēofod*. The evidence in favour of *bēod* is slight, but interesting. In his story of the two Hewalds, Bede relates how the continental Saxons realised that these missionaries were of another religion when they saw their equipment *habentes secum vascula sacra et tabulam altaris vice dedicatam* 'having with them sacred vessels and a table hallowed instead of an altar'.[48] The Saxons identified the table as an unfamiliar structure of worship, and Bede's phrase *tabulam dedicatam* would closely match an attributive **wīh-bēod*.

The fulsome archaeological evidence for turf-altars discovered at Oberdorla (see Chapters 1 vii Analogues and 3 i *wēoh*) weighs heavily in favour of **wīh-bedd* as the original form. Over half of the shrine-enclosures that were installed around the lake between the mid-La Tène to migration periods contained at least one turf-altar, typically around 0.8-1m high and 1.3m wide, its sods held together by a wickerwork frame.[49] The altars are typically the dominant structure

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[47] Hoops (1911-13) I, 71
[48] *HE* 5.10
[49] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 37-76; Dušek (2002), 467-71

in the enclosure (Figures 4.1 and 4.2), although surrounded by evidence for other cultic objects, including wooden idols and free-standing posts (see Chapter 3 i *wēoh*).

Figures 4.1 and 4.2: Reconstructed turf-altars at Oberdorla.

The Hermunduri may have settled in the area from the late first century BCE.[50] From this time, individual altar-enclosures are distinguished from larger enclosures containing multiple altars, apparently reflecting the separation of private from communal cult. A large 'Pantheon' shrine possessed three turf altars in north-south alignment, the largest centrally, and two further altars on the north-west, one of which was ship-shaped (Figure 4.3).[51] A fork-branch idol discovered within probably stood near or upon the central altar. Importantly, it is apparent from the distribution of cultic objects in this 'Pantheon' that they were routinely exchanged and moved around within the enclosure space itself.[52] This suggests that the altars properly functioned for the displaying of one or other cultic object that was the particular focus of a ritual occasion. The turf-altars were also not used as fire-places, evidence for which is separately situated. Sacrificial remains, however, are located around the altars and cult-foci, which suggests the practical separation of oblation from ritual preparation.[53]

An enclosure of the second century CE contained two altars. Behind one stood three free-standing posts (Figure 4.4). A board-idol was displayed on the other, behind which a small wooden ship was probably hung between two erect fork-branches as a divine attribute. Of the two ship-shaped enclosures of the fifth century, the larger one possessed an altar adjacent to a post topped with a horse skull. The layout of these spaces and structures, which was consistent

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[50] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 36
[51] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 51-54; Dušek (2002), 469
[52] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 52; Dušek (2002), 468
[53] Dušek (2002), 469

over several centuries, directly corroborates the literal import of *wīg-bedd* and *wēoh-steall*, according to their most sensible linguistic interpretations.

Figure 4.3: Reconstruction of the 'pantheon' shrine enclosure at Oberdorla.

The spatial relationship that obtained between cult-focus, turf-altar, and enclosure in the shrines at Oberdorla, well into the migration period, also shines relevant light on Bede's statements about pagan Anglo-Saxon structures of worship. He emphasises that the Goodmanham sanctuary possessed enclosures (*cum septis*), a detail that seems additional to the Latin commonplaces for pagan shrines; he also concludes that Coifi destroyed and defiled the altars *quas ipse sacraverat aras* 'which he himself had consecrated', which would suggest that possession of these enclosures and their fixtures were ritually assigned (**wīan*) to a deity as sacred property.[54]

Figure 4.4: Reconstructed second-century enclosure at Oberdorla.

To summarise, *wēofod* almost certainly continues pre-Christian **wīh-bedd*. The compound plausibly denoted a turf-altar, perhaps held together by a wicker frame, that stood within a

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[54] *HE* 2.13

sacred enclosure and supported a *wēoh*. While *bēod* or *bedd* are phonologically possible as second members of the obscured compound, an integrated reading of both nouns' compositional tendencies weighs in favour of **wīh-bedd*. This is supported by clear archaeological evidence that the turf-altar was traditional to Germanic cult. *Wēofod* is comparable to *lāc* as a traditional term that was inculturated with Christian ritual, but maintained even capacity to express heathen forms. It was observed that *lāc* was neither a technical cultic term, nor essentially connected with proscribed practices of idolatry or sacrifice. *Wēofod*'s situation is somewhat different, since it is a technical cultic term, and moreover, would have maintained a transparent relationship with *wēoh* 'idol' during the conversion.

It was argued earlier in this chapter and Chapter 3 (i) that the semantic situation of *wēoh*, *wēofod*, and *wēohsteall* in the literary record attests the historical implementation of Gregory's policy that only the idols be destroyed, while the *fana* 'shrines' (i.e. spaces) where they stand be re-consecrated, and *altaria construantur, reliquiae ponantur* 'altars be constructed, relics placed'.[55] The analogical basis for inculturation of *wēofod* would have been straightforward as support for a cult-focus, whether *wēoh* or relic.

More intriguingly, Gregory assumes that new altars would need to be built in converted shrines. Arguably, however, the first Christian **wīh-bedd* may not have needed to be constructed from scratch, because it could have been converted in the first instance through subtle re-adjustments. The ecclesiastical Latin distinction of *ara* and *altar*, therefore, may not have affected vernacular conceptualisation of an altar until Bede's time. By this stage, *wēofod* would have been well-established within church architecture. Nor did the distinction between pagan and Christian altar partake of the ideological binary that necessitated a negative terminology for idolatry and sacrifice, but was a peculiar lexical result of pre-fifth-century mass-Christianisation; conversely, the fact that *altar* was imposed throughout continental German reflects the strength of the Latin distinction in Europe. To Anglo-Saxon Christians, however, the heathen altar remained fit for purpose and arguably escaped marginalisation, first for the light touch of Latinity during the conversion, and later, because it fell outside categories of ideological critique.

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[55] *HE* 1.30

ii. *hearg*

Hearg (×68, m *a*-stem) is the most frequently attested traditional noun for sacred space. It always refers to a heathen location, but with little circumstantial or architectural particularity, ranging through 'temple', 'shrine', 'grove' and 'idol'.[56] This semantic situation shows that *hearg* was pejorated and marginalised as a negative marker for denoting any place where proscribed worship occurs. Three compounds *heargtræf* (n) 'shrine-tent', *heargweard* (m) 'guardian of the shrine', and derivative *hearhlic* are each once attested.[57]

The semantic ambiguity of *hearg* in the literary record is complemented, however, by toponymy and linguistic comparanda. Some 17 English place-names document the presence of *hearg* in connection with (or possibly denoting) cultural space during the settlement period. A more specific impression of the pre-Christian *hearg*'s circumstantial characteristics may be gained through consideration of the topographical consistencies observed in connection with these sites. It will be further argued in this discussion that comparanda and etymological considerations permit reconstruction of a *hearg*'s architectural characteristics in terms of a rudimentary stone-altar, which plausibly functioned as a fire-place.

As discussed in Chapter 3 (i) and (ii), the *Daniel* poet varies *hearg*, *cumbol* and *wīhgyld*, which together across three paratactic clauses describe the giant idol of the Babylonians:

> þā hīe for þām **cumble**   on cnēowum sǣton,
> onhnigon tō þām **herige**   hǣðne þēode,
> wurðedon **wīhgyld**
>
> <div align="center">(180-82a)</div>

> [Then they set on their knees before that **symbol**, the heathen nations bowed to the **idol**, they worshipped an **idol**]

These lines present a good example of the effects of semantic pejoration, which enabled poets to press traditional terminology into negative synonymy and subordinate it to ideological

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[56] Jente (1921), 9
[57] *Heargtræf* is attested only by emendation in *Beowulf* 175b.

concepts, thereby signalling proscribed worship. The poem's focus on the first five chapters of Daniel concerning Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar reflects its main thematic concern with pagan pride, and, by extension, idolatry.[58] In order to convey 'idolatry' as poetic theme, therefore, three vernacular nouns are yoked, which were not equivalent within the heathen system. *Hearg* denoted space and a structure, probably made of stone, while *wēoh* and *cumbol* were different kinds of wooden objects; the statue in Daniel, meanwhile, is golden, which the poet acknowledges elsewhere.[59]

The phraseological distribution of these nouns, however, is distinctive: *wīhgyld* is an accusative object of a verb of veneration, while *hearg* and *cumbol* convey the same idea of cult-focus within adverbial phrases that describe the additional religious interactions of prostration (*onhnigon*) and genuflection (*on cnēowum sǣton*). *For þām cumble* suggests a raised, stationary object of worship. While *hnigon* points in the same direction for *hearg*, it seems likely, on the basis of similar examples in the corpus, that *tō þām herige* is an inherited phrase that originally denoted allative movement, as for *tō þām gielde* in *Genesis A* (see Chapter 1 *tīber*). Importantly, *hearg* and *cumbol* are never governed by verbs of worship elsewhere in the corpus. It may also be relevant that *hearg*-worship here concerns the *þēod*, a population unit that was traditionally understood as 'the whole people, bound together by ties of blood and constituting an ethnological and political whole'.[60]

The semantic implications of the syntax in *Daniel* 180-82a are more explicit for the description of pagan worship in *Beowulf* 175-78a: *hwīlum hīe gehēton æt hærgtrafum/wīgweorþunga* (175-76a) 'sometimes they made vowed honour to idols at shrine-tents'. *Hærgtrafum* and *wīgweorþunga* are not in apposition: rather these lines distinguish a location of worship *æt hærgtrafum* from interactions with cult-foci governed directly by *hātan* as a verb of worship. The poetic context also implies these rites were conducted at the highest level *wiþ þēodþrēaum* (178a) 'in face of national emergency' by Hrothgar in his capacity as *þēoden* (201a ff.) 'tribal/national leader', celebrant-in-chief, and representative of Ingui (Freyr) on behalf of the Danish *þēod* as *Ingwine* (1044, 1319) 'Ing-friends'.[61]

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[58] Caie (1978), 1-9
[59] *Gyld of golde* (175a); *gyldnan gylde* (204a)
[60] Green (1998), 125, 84-101
[61] North (1997a) *passim*, especially 44-77, 172-203

The composition of *hearg* with *træf* (n, ×4) 'tent, pavilion, building' is also significant. In *Judith*, this rare noun always denotes Holofernes' tent and is once termed *þēodnes træf* (268a) 'national leader's tent'. In *Andreas*, however, *tigelfāgan trafu* (842a) designates the stone buildings of Mermedonia. When the Mermedonians are converted, they are brought *fram helltrafum* (1691b), which develops this expression for the city's buildings to describe her population's extraction from sin. *Wearhtræf* (926a) 'dwelling of the condemned' denotes Hell in *Elene*.

While these Cynewufian usages are ironic or figurative, all concern stately dwellings and might have developed as connotations to royal power (of a *þēoden*) that were traditional in OE. Germanic cognates of *træf*, however, lack these meanings: ON *traf* 'head-scarf, small garment', plural *trǫf* 'threads', Shetlands Norse *traf* 'rag', OHG *traba* 'tatters, threads', perhaps also Spanish *trapo* 'cloth, rag' < Gothic or Suebian; more distantly, Lithuanian *drāpanos* 'clothes, linen' and Sanskrit *drāpi-* 'cloak' show this word belonged to an ancient word-family denoting textiles.[62] If Germanic **trabō-* meant human-scale textiles, the question remains how OE *træf* developed an association with prestigious structures. The use of *geteld* as the unmarked term for tent suggests that *træf* would have denoted a more specialised pitched structure. Tents were primarily used during warfare, but there is archaeological evidence from Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of smaller pitched structures having been used for religio-commemorative purposes (see iii *ealh*).

Træf might also have denoted wall-hangings, since wooden interiors (including ritual space) were embellished with textiles throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.[63] Perhaps relevant here is Tacitus' report that the Nerthus idol was enclosed *in eo vehiculum, veste contectum* 'in a cart covered with a garment';[64] likewise, Gregory of Tours relates that Clotilde decorated a church 'with hangings and curtains' (*velis ... atque curtinis*) in order to persuade Clovis to accept baptism 'by this ceremony' (*hoc misterio*), having failed to persuade him with reason.[65] The later renown of English embroidery also bespeaks the value of this craft among the Anglo-Saxon nobility. A *træf* might, therefore, have acquired its prestigious connotations through the customary decoration of ritual spaces that were under the patronage of an influential sponsor;

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[62] Kroonen (2013), 520; De Vries (1962), 597
[63] Blair (2011), 732
[64] Tac. Germ. 40.3
[65] *HF* 2.29

the form *heargtræf* shows that a *hearg* was one such arena that might have been embellished with textile, whether as draping or a pitched structure.

Hearg occurs twice in *Andreas* during the iconoclastic scenes at the poem's conclusion, which recall Martin and Boniface.[66] The apposed clauses *se hālga herigeas þrēade/dēofulgild tōdrāf* (1687-88a) 'the saint suppressed the shrines, scattered idols' reproduce iconoclastic commonplaces. But *hearg* arguably also recalls the earlier scene where the Mermedonian populace gather (*þēod gesamnod* 1098, *þēod wæs oflysted* 1112b) in the *þingstede* 'assembly place' to sacrifice and consume imprisoned foreigners. Lots are cast with heathen rites (*taan wīsian*, 1099b, *hæðengildum/teledon betwinum* 1102b-1103a) to select the victims. Those presiding over the ceremonies are termed *hæðene herigweardas* 'heathen shrine-wardens', who also muster the army *here samnodan/ceastrewarena* (1124-25a).

It was mentioned in Chapter 3 (ii) that the *here* was a traditional tribal army, comprising all free men who partook in the assembly and had the right to bear arms.[67] The poet exploits the assonance of *hearg* and *here*, describing the victim as *gehæfted for herige* (1127a) 'bound before the army/shrine'. Likewise, the devil accuses the captured Andrew thus: *se ðyssum herige mæst hearma gefremede* (1198) 'he who has done most harm to this army/shrine'.[68] This association might be more than aural, however, for the poet again plays on the dual connotations of war and sacrifice in his use of *beadulāc* (118b) 'battle-play/battle-sacrifice' to describe the intended slaughter of the victim. The recurrent connection of *hearg* with *þēod* and seasonal festivity here is striking, despite the possibility that a negative 'pagan' scene has been contrived from inherited fragments.

Almost all examples in prose translate terms for idols, shrines and temples, often within commonplaces that signal 'proscribed worship'. *Hearg* consistently translates *idolum* in the *Cura Pastoralis*;[69] it alternates for *idolum* and *simulacrum* in the Heptateuch.[70] In a homily derived from the Apocalypse of Thomas, *godgyld & hergas* renders the probable reading

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[66] North and Bintley (2016), 304-305
[67] Green (1998), 86
[68] North and Bintley (2016), 274
[69] CP 21.153.22; *Reg Past.* 2.10.40 (Ezra 8:10) and other examples.
[70] Leviticus 26:1, 26:30

idola.[71] As in poetry, *hearg* is typical within locative adverbial phrases. Only verbs of destruction govern accusative *hearg*; prose translators prefer *dēofolgield* as an accusative object of worship.

An interesting example is the prohibition against child-sacrifice of Leviticus 20:2: *si quis dederit de semine suo idolo Moloch* 'if anyone gives of his seed to the idol Moloch'. The West-Saxon translator alters the verse in terms of idolatory: *gyf ǣnig man gelȳfe on Mōlōches hearh* 'if anyone believes in Moloch's idol (shrine?)'. *Gelȳfan on* 'believe in' is almost certainly a Christianised expression, proper to the concept of faith, and it is usually directed *in personam* (*gelȳfan on Crīst*) or towards abstract entities rather than concrete structures. This example shows that even where *hearg* is a cult-focus, the translator avoids a verb of worship and prefers to use a non-traditional phrase with a preposition, which corroborates the view that *hearg* was idiomatically locative.

Bede's translator consistently uses *hearg* for *fanum* and never *templum*. For the Goodmanham shrine, Bede uses *templum* just once when Coifi proposes its destruction. The translator renders plural *templa et altaria* 'temples and altars' directly with a singular loanword *þæt templ & þā wīgbedo* 'the temple and the altars.[72] A few sentences on, Bede modifies this couplet in terms of *aras et fana idolorum* 'altars and shrines of idols', which the translator reproduces *ðā wīgbed & þā hergas þāra dēofolgilda*.[73] From here, Bede uses just *fanum* and it is translated with *hearg*.[74] For Rædwald's shrine, Bede again uses *fanum* twice to denote the space containing the altars (*altar* and *arula*), translated with *hearg* and *wīgbed*.

These examples indicate that the translator distinguished *templum* and *fanum* according to size (as in Classical Latin), because singular *þæt templ* includes several *hergas*.[75] Bede's usage of *templa* and *fana* seems stylised to produce synonymous couplets with *altaria* and *ara*, respectively. As in previous examples too, the translator's distribution of *hearg* to *fanum* and

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[71] Hom U 12.1 (Förster) *cadent idola gentium* 'the idols of the nations will fall'. Wright (2003), 27-64, especially 58. The transmission of sources for the Apocalypse of Thomas is very complicated. Of the six new Latin copies, all read *cadent idola gentium* for the fourth sign.
[72] Bede 2, 10.136.17; *HE* 2.13
[73] Bede 2, 10.136.23; *HE* 2.13
[74] Bede 2, 10.138.7; *HE* 2.13; Bede 2, 10.138.10; *HE* 2.13
[75] See also Bede 5, 2.390.8; *HE* 5.2. See GD 2 (C), 8.121.17; *Dial.* 2.2.8. Wærferth uses both *hearg* and *templ* for *fanum*.

dēofolgield to *idolum* suggests *hearg* was preferred for spaces and locations rather than objects of worship.

Hearg translates a wider range of terms for pagan spaces and structures of worship in Orosius, but not without sensitivity to local context. The Orosian tradition regarded Alexander the Great as a negative example of pagan pride, so pejorative *Alexandres herga* for *aras ... Alexandri* 'altars of Alexander' is not unexpected over neutral *wēofod*.[76] It was mentioned in (i) that the translator might also have recognised Alexander's monuments, which were boundary markers along the Don, as larger than a *wēofod*. Bede's translator clearly recognised a similar distinction of size between *hearg* and the *wēofod* which it enclosed.

When Alexander goes into the temple of Jupiter Hammon (*ad templum*) in Egypt and compels the priest of the shrine (*antistes fani*) to reveal information about his parentage, the translator uses *hearg* just once for the whole structure.[77] Orosius, rather, distinguishes *templum* and *fanum* according to Classical meaning as temple complex and roofed sanctuary, respectively.[78] Certain details supplementary to the translation may reveal a rationale. The translator adds that Alexander compelled the priest to crawl inside a statue (*on þæs Āmones anlīcnesse þe inne on þǣm hearge wæs*), presumably within the *fanum*, and deliver the oracle to a large crowd gathered there at the king's behest (*hē and þæt folc hȳ ðǣr gegaderade*).[79] This not only implies location in the *fanum*, but the crowd's presence corroborates the evidence for an association between *hearg* and gatherings.

The glossaries show greater translational range for *hearg*. Examples in Corpus gloss *sacellum* 'open-air shrine with an altar (Classical), covered side-chapel (Christian)'[80] and *Lupercal*, the cave where the Lupercalia was celebrated.[81] While these glosses may simply reflect *hearg* as a negative marker for pagan spaces of worship, the early dating of Corpus opens the possibility that *hearg* was specifically equated with these nouns for open-air spaces and rudimentary structures. The glossing of *fanum*,[82] *lucus* 'grove',[83] and *sacellum* in Cleopatra continue this

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[76] Or 1, 1.9.1; Oros. Hist. 1, 2.5; Orchard (2002), 131
[77] Oros. Hist. 3.16.12-13
[78] Or 3, 9.69.20; Or 3, 9.69.24. See Rüpke (2007), 183.
[79] Or 3, 9.69.24
[80] Rüpke (2007), 176
[81] CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 10.325; CorpGl 2 (Hessels), 17.46; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3602
[82] ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1473
[83] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3603; ClGl 3 (Quinn), 975

dual application to spaces and structures.[84] Also in this glossary, *Capitolii* 'Capitoline temple to Jupiter' is glossed *ðæs hēafodlican hearges* 'the main shrine'.[85]

Fanum occurs again in Prudentius,[86] while in glosses to Aldhelm, *hearges* again translates *capitolii*.[87] One glossator appears to recognise distinctions according to size and features: he uses simplex *hearg* to translate *delubrum* 'shrine with a basin (Classical), baptismal font'[88] and for *templo*, he expands a couplet *herge & deofelgeld* to signal both space and cult-focus.[89] Scale probably also underlies translation of *sacello .i. templo* with *hālierne, hergan*, because -*ern* denoted a very small storage place, compared to the larger *templum*.[90] *Hālig-ern* appears occasionally in late texts meaning 'sanctuary'. Other glossators of Aldhelm render *hearg* for couplets of *delubrum* and *sacellum*, as well as for *templum* alone.[91] Others, however, use *hearg* to translate *idolum* and *simulacrum* together, which are cult-foci.[92] *Hearg* also glosses *simulacrum* consistently across eight psalters for Psalm verses 96:7, 113:12 and 134:15.

The glossary record for OHG *harug* (×17) shows similarly wide application to pagan spaces and structures of worship. *Nemus plantavit* of Genesis 21:33 epitomises this range, being translated *forst flanzota edo haruc edo uuih* 'planted a wood or sanctuary or shrine'.[93] *Harug* glosses *lucus*, *delubrum*, *capitolium*, and *fanum* in *Abrogans* and *Samanunga*.[94] Early ninth-century glosses to the Old Testament also include *ara* and *nemus* together with *lucus* and *fanum*.[95] A gloss to Aldhelm from the later ninth century shows similar range to the OE collections: *delubrum .i. templum demoniorum*, with interlinear glossing of *fanorum* in another manuscript a century younger.[96]

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[84] ClGl 3 (Quinn), 1542; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3004 *herculus*, ClGl 3 (Quinn), 895 *herculis*
[85] ClGl 1 (Stryker), 1364; HlGl (Oliphant), C315 *hearges*. See Cooke (1997), 456-57.
[86] PrudGl 1 (Meritt), 489
[87] AldV 1 (Goossens), 4800
[88] AldV 1 (Goossens), 3595; CollGl 21 (Nap), 21
[89] AldV 1 (Goossens), 3595; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 3705
[90] AldV 13.1 (Nap), 3237
[91] Ald V 1 (Goossens), 3127; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 1898
[92] AldV 1 (Goossens), 1490; AldV 13.1 (Nap), 1468
[93] StSG I, 316.60
[94] StSG I, 205.33 (*Abrogans* and *Samanunga*); StSG I, 99.40.u.A.2 (*Samanunga*); StSG I, 83.29 (*Samanunga*); StSG I, 145.22 (*Samanunga*)
[95] *Ara*: StSG I, 636.23 (Jeremiah 11:13). *Nemus*: StSG I, 316.60 (Genesis 21:33), 285.4, 383.19 (Judges 6:26), 493.14 (Esther 1:5). *Lucus*: StSG I, 283.25, 374.15 (Exodus 34:13), 620.8 (Isaiah 17:8), 447.59 (Deuteronomy 12:3), 447.59 (1 Kings 14:23), 605.66 (Isaiah 27:9). *Fanum*: StSG I, 5.43 (1 Maccabees 5:43).
[96] StSG II, 13.14.5, 20.50 (Aldhelm *De laude virginitatis*)

Although these entries collectively reveal few particulars about *harug*, it seems comparable to *hearg* as a negative signifier for spaces and structures of pagan worship. While Anglo-Saxon scribal traditions plausibly influenced central and northern examples, eighth-century Upper German texts were largely free of this influence. This opens the possibility that the wide capacities of *hearg* and *harug* were independently motivated by a common WGmc meaning that inferred an open space of communal worship; if defined more in relation to activity than architecture, the noun might have been applicable to a range of Latin terms for religious space.

Frankish law specifies one context for the WGmc **harug-* as a law court. In the *Lex Ripuaria*, verbs of probation and oath-taking sometimes occur *in haraho* (×7), which denotes a type of law court. Sohm understood the Frankish *harah* as identical to the *mallum* (OE *mæþel*).[97] This phraseology also shows that *harah* was recognised as a space within which people gathered periodically for a defined purpose. There are a small number of *harug*-toponyms in the Netherlands and northern Germany: Park Harga, Vlaardingen (*Harago*, 700), Hargen, North Holland (*Haragum Oork*, 960), a *hof* named Harrien in Künsebeck bei Halle, Nordrhein-Westfalen (*Horchan Darpe* 12th C.), Grossharrie, Kleinharrie, Negenharrie near Neumünster, Schleswig-Holstein (*Harge*).[98] The Frisians, Franks or Saxons may have frequented these places seasonally for assemblies with religio-legal purpose.

While ON *hǫrgr* broadly means 'shrine, cult-place of various types, altar',[99] some examples point to a definite structure. The earliest examples denote 'stone mound, stone shrine'. These meanings were also apparently maintained by the skalds. *Brúna hǫrg* 'mound of brows' (c.890) is a kenning for the 'head' of the escaped sacrificial bull which Egil son of Aun pursues and kills.[100] *Herr hǫrga* 'host of mounds' (c.1019) is a kenning for 'trolls'.[101] Where culturally-inflected in *Eiríksdrápa* (c.1100) as 'host of heathen shrines', the phrase metonymically means 'heathens' (here the Wends).[102]

Eddic *hǫrgr* normally forms a merism with *hof* denoting a cult-space within which divinity was understood to dwell.[103] The Æsir are introduced as the founders of right worship: *þeir er*

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[97] *Lex Rip.* 30.2; 32.2, 3; 33.2; 72.1; 77 (p. 133); Green (1998), 197
[98] Förstemann (1859), 1235
[99] Von See et al. (2004) IV, 435
[100] Þjóð *Yt* 14[1]/11
[101] Sigv *Austv* 2[1]
[102] Mark *Eirdr* 17[11]
[103] Von See et al. (2004) IV, 433

hǫrg ok hof hátimbroðo 'they who built towering shrines and temples'.[104] Forming a traditional synecdoche, both elements must have been recognised as definitive features of heathen worship, but discretely according to size, form, and function. In *Vafþrúðnismál* 38 (probably pre-dating *Vǫluspá*), it is said of Njǫrðr and specifically in relation to the Vanir: *hofum ok hǫrgum hann ræðr hundmǫrgum* 'he rules over a great many temples and shrines'. In *Helgakviða Hjǫrvarðssonar* 4, the bird's reply to Atli *hof mun ek kjósa, hǫrga marga* 'I will choose a temple, many shrines' implies *hǫrgr* as a smaller structure within the larger space of the *hof*, much like MnE 'hearth and home'.

Merism and synedoche are durable vehicles for cultural preservation, whereby essential components of a complex entity come to stand for the whole. For the sake of analogy, the sign of a pump on the motorway represents a petrol station. The location may also have a shop, car-wash or restaurant, but it is not a petrol station without pumps. This suggests that for heathen Scandinavians of the tenth century (if not earlier), *hǫrgr* was a definitive structure at a cult-site, without which its identity would have been incomplete.

The theme of divine hall-building occurs also in *Grímnismál*, to which *Vǫluspá* is heavily indebted.[105] Ullr (5), Odin (6), Baldr (12) and Njǫrðr (16) each built a *salr* 'hall'. Unlike the first three, it is also said of Njǫrðr: *hátimbruðum hǫrgi ræðr* 'he rules a high-timbered shrine', which continues the exclusive association of *hǫrgr* with the Vanir implied by *Vafþrúðnismál* 38. Njǫrðr's epithet *manna þengill* also seems to invoke aspects of popular cult. De Vries argued that *hátimbruðum* refers to a protective roof erected over the altar, partly recalling the *heargtræf* of *Beowulf* l.175b.[106] The phraseology of *Grímnismál* 16 is basically identical to *Vǫluspá* 7 and *ræðr* coheres with *Vafþrúðnismál* 38, suggesting the expression 'to rule over an altar' was traditional.

The previous examples identify *hǫrgr* as essential to cult-space and possibly connected with the Vanir, yet attest less of its outward appearance.[107] *Hyndluljóð* 10 precisely identifies the *hǫrgr* as a mound of stones used in sacrifices, presumably as a kind of altar:

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[104] *Vǫluspá* 7; Dronke (1997), 37
[105] Dronke (1997), 119
[106] De Vries (1956) I, 379; Dronke (1997), 119
[107] Von See et al. (2004) IV, 434

Hǫrg hann mér gerði hlaðinn steinum,

nú er grjót þat at gleri orðit;

rauð hann í nýju nauta blóði;

æ trúði Óttarr á ásynjur.

[He has made an **altar** for me of stone, now the rock has turned to glass, he reddened it with fresh ox blood, Óttar always trusts the goddesses.]

These lines belong to Freyja, also of the Vanir with Njǫrðr. The stanza also recalls relevant sacrificial details, such as the slaughter of cattle and the reddening of the altar. Although this poem is first attested from the early thirteenth century, *Hyndluljóð* 10 appears to connect the concrete *hǫrgr* of the tenth-century skalds to the noun's cultural connotations in earlier eddic poems, and also to wider Germanic analogues for sacrifice, suggesting that *hǫrgr* denoted a stone structure of worship in Scandinavian tradition. The assertion that rock turns to glass also seems to bespeak the stone mound's function as a fire-place.

It is possible that the phrase *hǫrgr ok hof* influenced semantic development from open-air stone altar to a roofed, wooden building. With the decline of heathenism in the eleventh century, the two originally distinct components of this phrase would have lost their grounding in practical cult, thereby becoming liable to semantic merger and preservation as a tautologous, poetic figure.[108] There is additional evidence for early *hǫrgr* toponyms in Iceland and eastern Norway being superseded by *hof* in the later eleventh century.[109]

Etymological considerations support the view that *hǫrgr* originally implied a stone structure of worship. Although *hearg* and its cognates are *a*-stems, most authorities reconstruct a *u*-stem etymon **harguz < *karkú-* meaning 'stone-mound, sacrificial place'.[110] This etymon apparently forms the basis of *karkko* 'pile, stone wall, cliff', an early Germanic loanword in Finnish that refers to 'stone' without cultural connotations. Other Germanic cognates representing *n*-stem **harhan-* are also firmly concrete: Norwegian *stenhar* 'cliff, rocky bottom'; Elfdalian *ar* 'bedrock, floor'; Dutch dialectal *hare* 'hillock'.[111] While earlier authorities attempted to determine a PIE etymon linking PGmc **harguz* with Welsh *carreg*

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[108] Turville-Petre (1964), 239-40
[109] De Vries (1956) I, 381; Turville-Petre (1964), 239
[110] Jente (1921), 12; Philippson (1929), 186; De Vries (1962), 281; Kroonen (2013), 211
[111] Holthausen (1934), 152; Specht (1937), 12; Orel (2003), 164.

'stone' and OIr. *carn* 'cairn', more recent opinions argue instead that all of these forms reflect independent borrowings from the pre-IE languages of Europe into the IE dialectal parents of Celtic and Germanic.[112]

The *u*-stem morphology of **harguz* is potentially very significant. Specht observed a consistent affiliation between *u*-stems and the semantics of worship in European IE languages (Baltic, Celtic, Slavic, Italic, Germanic), especially when paired with an *o*-stem of the same root with non-cultic meaning.[113] If **harguz* resulted from this process, it could arguably have been derived for the purpose of assigning cultic significance to the root semantics 'stone' or 'rock'.[114] In other words, the noun would have been created to denote a stone structure of worship very early in the prehistory of Germanic, according to an IE derivational process that later became unproductive.[115] Although not considered by Specht,[116] the relative chronology that this scenario implies would corroborate the assumption that an Old European loan-form **kark-* meaning 'rock' entered pre-PGmc dialects. It is possible, therefore, that **harguz* was derived during the Nordic Bronze Age, in order to describe new structures of worship that Indo-Europeans encountered in the agricultural cults of Neolithic farmers during the long period of merger between these two cultures (c. 2850-1500 BCE).[117]

It remains to determine whether *hearg* denoted a structure or space of worship within pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon cult. *Hearg* place-names (×17) are generally more phonologically transparent than *wēoh* sites, but also topographically for their consistent situation upon broad, open hill-tops.[118] This geographical distribution supports the view that the Anglo-Saxon *hearg* possessed, at least, a strong spatial identity. While the material record has yet yielded no trace of any definitive, man-made structures of worship at these locations (such as a stone altar), in several cases, there is evidence for long-term, communal ritual activity within the wider vicinity.

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[112] Orel (2003), 164; Bammesberger (1990), 156; De Vries (1962), 281; Pokorny (1959) I, 532; Specht (1937), 12; Jente (1921), 12. Against IE etymology: Kroonen (2013), 211; Beekes (2010), 782; Mayrhofer (1996) II, 618-19.
[113] Specht (1937), 4-12. For example, *Janus(-ūs)* and *Janus(-ī)*.
[114] Specht (1937), 4-6. This derivational rationale may also support the view that ethnonyms Ingvaeones < **Ingu-* and Istvaeones < **Istu-* were originally 'Kultverbände'. Likewise for *Mannus* < **manw-os* (Sanskrit *Mánu*).
[115] Krahe and Meid (1967), 3, 68 (§72); Bammesberger (1991), 154
[116] Specht (1937), 12
[117] Iversen & Kroonen (2017), 511-525, esp. 522
[118] Semple (2007), 368; Hines (1997), 384-91; Wilson (1992), 6; Gelling (1973), 114; Gelling (1961), 9-10; Stenton (1941), 10-11. See Appendix C (iii) for *hearg* place-names.

Harrow Hill, just north of Patching, Ssx. is a good example (Figure 4.5). The hill-top of this 'dramatic whaleback of land' was used successively from Neolithic times as a cult site, while the toponym *stonherie* (1256) is recorded nearby to the south-west on the border of Clapham and Findon parishes.[119] Two early Saxon cemeteries close to this *stonherie* were intervisible with Harrow Hill, suggesting successive Anglo-Saxon use within a wider arena of monument construction.[120] Archaeology of the hill-top shows especially intense activity during the Romano-British period, where 'repeated feasting and communal activities occurred' into the third century CE.[121] Arthur Wilson, one of the site's early excavators, interpreted further evidence dating to the fourth century into the sub-Roman period in connection with a revival of British cults and perhaps early Germanic settlers. He considered that, while evidence for habitation on the hill was wanting, the large amount of skulls with teeth (predominantly oxen, but also sheep and pigs) on the top layer, just under the turf, without any similar proportion of the other bones of these carcasses demonstrated intense, consistent usage of this site for organised animal slaughter and probably consumption.[122]

Figure 4.5: Harrow Hill, Sussex.

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[119] Watts (2004), 282; Semple (2010), 27; Meaney (1995), 31; Wilson (1992), 7, 44; Glover (1975), 165; Coates (1980), 309; Gelling (1973), 114-21
[120] Semple (2007), 375
[121] Holleyman (1936), 230-35 cited in Semple (2007), 375. See also Curwen and Curwen (1922), 1-53.
[122] Wilson (1942), 40-44

Other potential *hearg* sites support the idea that Germanic settlers adapted established cultic environments that they encountered in the South Downs: the Harrows, Harting (border Hants./Ssx); Mount Harry, Lewes; Harradines, Cuckfield.[123] Evidence for a Romano-British temple immediately north of Woodeaton, Oxon. overlaps with the field-name *Harowdonehull* (1406) recorded for the same area.[124] Likewise, the area around another 'whaleback ridge' at Heswall-cum-Oldfield, Chesh. preserved the densest concentration of Romano-British finds in rural Merseyside.[125] As an extreme westerly *hearg* site, it may represent a late Mercian heathen outlier founded around an established British cult-site.

The area around Farnham, Sry. may also have been a late enclave of heathenism. Two *hearg* sites are located here.[126] Peper Harow < *Pipereherge* (1086) reflects genitive plural *pīpera* 'of the pipers', perhaps indicating use of the space for musical performance.[127] The kin-group form *Besingahearh* may be compared with the personal name in *Cusanwēoh* in the same charter as evidence that *hearg* related to communal, seasonal worship, and *wēoh* local, private devotion.[128] *Gumeninga hergæ* (767), the earliest attested form of Harrow-on-the-Hill, Msx., also identifies a Middle-Saxon kin-group; again, this Harrow topographically resembles other namesakes as an impressive, isolated hill that visually dominates the surrounding Middlesex plain.[129]

The hamlet of Harrowden is situated on a dominant hill-top about two miles southeast of Bedford.[130] This place-name might attest a specific structure of worship, because eleventh-century forms *Herghetone* and *Hargedone* appear to reflect genitive plural *hearga* 'of the heargs', which is more suggestive (though not exclusively) of structure than space.[131] The second element *-dūn* denotes the elevated environment, with the first element defining its cultural purpose. These *hearga* might have once referred to several stone-altars at a large cult site.

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123 Coates (1980), 309
124 Gelling (1954), 195; Semple (2007), 379-81
125 Semple (2007), 371-77
126 Gelling (1973), 117
127 Watts (2004), 468; Gover et al. (1934), 206-20,
128 S 235; Meaney (1995), 32; Wilson (1992), 7-8; Bannard (1945), 76
129 Watts (2004), 282; Gelling (1978), 161
130 Gelling (1973), 120
131 Watts (2004), 282; Mawer and Stenton (1926), 91

Topography shows that a typical *hearg* site was visually impressive in the immediate environment[132] and accessible within five miles from an ancient road or routeway, yet somewhat distanced from settlements.[133] This might evidence status as common patrimony within a larger area, rather than affiliation to one settlement. Relevant here is the fact that Harrow Hill, Brington, Northants. is located on high ground at 'Nobottle', a traditional hundred name. Nobottle is five miles from Watling Street and accessible by several local routeways.[134] This relational geography also contrasts with *wēoh* sites, which are usually situated alongside or within one mile of an ancient routeway.[135] The Harrow Hill of Nobottle Hundred is around four miles from Weedon Bec and Weedon Lois, which lie much closer to Watling Street (see Chapter 3 i *wēoh*).[136]

Great Harrowden, Northants. is situated on the southern boundary of Orlingbury Hundred and Hamfordshoe Hundred. Three miles due south over this boundary lies the town of Wellingborough < *Wændelinga-burg* 'stronghold of the Wendlings', which was possibly the power-base of a local kindred community. Orlingbury < *Ordlinga-beorg* 'mound of the Ordlings' lies even closer, just under two miles northwest of Great Harrowden. Either or both of these groups could have gathered at the *hearg*. Harrowick, Bed. is another contender for a traditional meeting-place, sitting hard by the shire boundary and accessible by an ancient routeway.[137] Blair has also argued for Goodmanham as a *hearg* site, elevated on a bulbous spur and accessible, yet somewhat removed, from the larger settlement of Market Weighton about a mile and a half to the southwest, through which ran the Roman road from Brough to York.[138] Also potentially relevant are the patronymic name *godmundingaham*, the thick scattering of barrows 200m to the south-east, and the probability that this area might have been very early settled by Angles entering Britain along the Humber.[139]

Recent archaeology of *hearg* sites is sensitive both to the continuity of their usage as cult-spaces over the long-term and their geography relative to other features within a 1.5km

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[132] Semple (2007), 373
[133] Wilson (1992), 7-8
[134] Watts (2004), 280; Field (1972), 98
[135] Wilson (1992), 9-10
[136] *BNFAS* 5 (1971), 44
[137] Mawer and Stenton (1926), 14. *Herewik* (1287). *Wik* could have been added in the fourteenth century, by which time it meant 'farm' rather than 'trading settlement'. HER 780; HER MBB 22300; HER 2428
[138] Blair (1995), 22; Semple (2010), 27
[139] North (1997a), 332, 338 note 129

radius.[140] Earlier in this discussion, it was mentioned that Germanic settlers responded to a pre-existing 'extended sacred landscape' that was perceived through monumental continuity in the landscape (earthworks, megaliths, or Roman temples) and the usage of natural space for religious practices.[141] This holistic perspective suggests that the settlers established *hearg* sites on high, accessible open hill-tops that were practical for large, seasonal gatherings.[142]

Wider analogues are more disparate, but corroborate the stone-altar's function as communal fire-place, and potentially also the topographical characteristics of *hearg* sites. At Oberdorla, a rectangular, limestone altar, filled with ash and wood-coal, provided a fire-place during the site's earliest phase (late Hallstatt). Its shape resembles certain Alpine structures that were typically situated prominently on high peaks and rock spurs.[143] In Lithuania, small stone-altar fire-places (*aukuras*) are traditional in prominent, open spaces that can accommodate large gatherings and are lit during seasonal festivals (Figure 4.6). Importantly, the *aukuras* is situated separately from a sanctuary (*alkas*).

Figure 4.6: A stone 'fire-altar' (*aukuras*) at Kernavė, Lithuania.

To summarise, the pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon *hearg* might have referred primarily to a communal, open-air gathering place, often on a hill-top; more precisely, the noun might have denoted an accessory ritual structure that defined this area as a space of worship. On the strength of ON *hǫrgr*, this structure appears to have been a stone-altar, rather than a 'hill-top

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[140] Semple (2007), 368; Brink (2001), 106-107
[141] Semple (2007), 384; Semple (2010), 25. See also Kugele (2016), 22-24.
[142] Wilson (1992), 8
[143] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 39-40

sanctuary' in terms of a building, as some earlier scholars presumed.[144] Etymological evidence affirms the concrete semantics of *hǫrgr* as stone structure and its cultic function as an altar, in view of the possibility that **hargu-* was a *u*-stem derivative that ascribed religious meaning to a base noun for stone. Other WGmc analogues indicate that *hearg*'s semantics as a structure and the space in which it stood might have been quite fluid at the time of the conversion.

There is also evidence that *hearg* was traditionally identified with a *þēod* as a tribal group. The dimensions implied by English place-names and the meaning of *harah* as law court in Frankish law affirm the idea that the space might have been used for seasonal gatherings on the tribal scale of a religio-legal nature. If a stone-altar was the definitive feature around which these proceedings took place, perhaps as a fire-place, then the noun's development to denoting the communal space of worship itself could have been straightforward, in the absence of another peculiar feature that defined the gathering. The absence of theonyms from *hearg* sites might reflect its seasonal purpose as the location where diverse cults were celebrated at different times of the year.[145] Given that some cult-foci appear to have been moveable, they might have been brought from the enclosures to a *hearg* during these occasions. The pre-IE etymology and connection to calendar festivals, which find their origins in the prehistoric farming year,[146] permit further informed speculation that a *hearg* was used within Anglo-Saxon reflexes of the Vanir cults.

In OE literature, *hearg* was pejorated as a negative signifier for proscribed worship, semantically including space, structures and objects of pagan worship. Syntactically, however, the noun is restricted to locative phrases and governed by verbs of destruction rather than worship, which supports pre-Christian significance as an accessory structure or space of worship, rather than a cult-focus. This study argues that the noun's marginalisation occurred for three reasons. As communal gathering space, the *hearg* is a strong contender for the location where the types of seasonal sacrificial rituals implied by *gield* may have taken place. An essential relationship to animal sacrifice would have made *hearg* difficult to inculturate, as with *gield*, *blōtan* and *tīber*. More decisive, however, is the fact that pre-Christian ritual arenas seem to have been redeemable only if they could be incorporated into the architectural layout

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[144] Stenton (1941), 10
[145] Wilson (1992), 16
[146] Iverson and Kroonen (2017), 511. Farming arrived in northern Europe around the turn of the fourth millennium BCE.

of a church complex. The absence of an available analogy to a ritual fire-place might have precluded *hearg*'s inculturation with features of ecclesiastical architecture. Finally, Latin Christian literature used many terms for pagan spaces in negative contexts which required vernacular equivalents, for which *hearg* may have been available because of its already fluid spatial semantics.

iii. *ealh*

Ealh (m, *a*-stem) is very rare in OE (×3), as is compound *ealhstede* (×3). More consistent use of Gothic *alhs* and OS *alah*, however, prove its status in Germanic tradition as a structure of worship which translators equated with 'temple'. The question of whether Germanic tradition knew a form of roofed, religious building akin to the Classical temple has long been disputed. A re-examination of the linguistic evidence with recent archaeological opinions may contribute new perspectives to this issue. It will be argued that *ealh* was marginalised into obscurity, probably due to redundancy because it denoted a rival religious building to the *cirice*; nor was the *ealh* capable of direct incorporation into *cirice*, because its proper cultic function had social or festive aspects (as with *hearg*), which would have been 'worldly' in Christian terms. *Ealh* was probably also less versatile for pejoration as a negative signifier than *hearg*, because it denoted a prestigious type of cult-hall.

The recurrent phraseology *alh hāligne* (392a) in *Exodus* and *ealh hāligne* (3a) in metrical Psalm 78:1 either attests inter-textual influence, or, more probably, *ealh*'s status as an archaism preserved in formulas. This second example *ealh hāligne* from metrical Psalm 78:1 is the accepted emendation of manuscript reading *hēah hāligne*. The adjective *hēah* is emended to *ealh* because this noun agrees grammatically with *hāligne*; the emendation *ealh* also sensibly varies *hūs* on preceding l.2b, which finds support from l.392a of *Exodus*, where *alh* is the specifying variant to *tempel* in the preceding line. This apparent confusion suggests that *ealh* or *alh* was unrecognised by one of the psalter's scribes at a certain stage of the text's transmission.[147]

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[147] O'Neill (2016), 672

It was observed that *ealh* is also the specifying variant in both poems to *tempel* (391b) and *hūs* (2b), which, respectively, were the unmarked terms for a 'temple' and a roofed building in OE. The synonymy of *tempel* and *hūs* with *ealh* shows that the latter noun semantically included both the concrete idea of a roofed building and the cultural idea of a building with religious purpose. Significantly, both examples denote the Temple in Jerusalem, which aligns with the translational capacities of Gothic *alhs* and OS *alah*. These cognates are attested almost five centuries apart, which demonstrates consistency of application to a religious building.

Plural *ealas* glossing *delubra* 'temples' is the only other certain example in OE.[148] It was observed in (ii) that other collections of glosses on works by Aldhelm read *hearg* for *delubrum* and apparently distinguish it from *templum* according to size. The Classical *delubrum* denoted an enclosed building that 'housed' a deity, which was akin to an *aedes* or *cella*, but distinguished from these by the presence of a font or basin.[149] Comparison with *tempel* (n) is relevant here, for this loan-word became the unmarked OE noun for a roofed building of worship.

The fortunes of *tempel* (× c.830) are readily apparent, against relatively infrequent *hearg* (×68) and very rare *ealh* (×3). It was observed in (ii) that *hearg* presented a versatile vernacular word for inherited Classical terms that had survived in Christian literature, with more reduced meaning, as negative signals for smaller structures of pagan worship. The success of *tempel*, however, suggests that neither vernacular term was perceived as analogous to the dominant Classical and Near-Eastern building of worship. Furthermore, because a 'temple' occurred in both the positive biblical and negative pagan contexts, a culturally-neutral loanword would have been freer from potentially awkward traditional connotations for dual application.[150]

Ealhstede is also confined to poetry. Its meaning is less transparent than *ealh*'s, but perceivable through the compound's lexical associations. The phrase *ealhstede eorla* occurs twice in *Daniel* within a context relating to rulership and noble customs, societal ideals which the enclosed settlement of the *burg* embodies. The poet first describes the division of property by the heirs of Nebuchadnezzar in traditional terms:

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[148] AldV 3.3 (Page), 90
[149] In Verg. Aen. 2.225
[150] The author has argued elsewhere that *offrian* and *offrung* became prevalent terms for sacrifice under similar conditions.

Siððan þǣr his āferan   ēad bryttedon,
wēlan, wunden gold,   in þǣre wīdan byrig,
ealhstede eorla

                         (671-73a)

[Afterwards there his successors distributed the property, wealth, wound gold, in the large citadel, the **protected place(?)** of nobles]

A few lines on, the poet relates how the Babylonians under Belshazzar (*burga aldor* 676b) were subsequently conquered by the Medes because of the pride of their ruler and elites (*ealdormen in unrihtum* 685b). The Medean king resolves to raze the customary seat of the Babylonian nobles:

þæt hē Babilone   ābrecan wolde,
alhstede eorla,   þǣr æðelingas
under wealla hlēo   wēlan brytnedon.
                         (688-90)

[that he would destroy Babylon, the **protected place(?)** of nobles, where princes under the protection of the walls distributed wealth]

These passages show similarities: in both, *ealhstede* is specifying variant to nominal phrases denoting the city of Babylon (*Babilone* and *wīdan byrig*) and the descriptions focus on aristocratic life.

The *Daniel* poet continues this theme in terms which recall the descriptions of noble life in *The Ruin* and Heorot in *Beowulf*. Of all cities (*burga* 693a), Babylon is the greatest and most famous of fortresses (*þāra fæstna folcum cūðost/mæst ond mǣrost,* 691-92a), a high citadel (*hēahbyrig* 698b) within whose walls the arrogant nobles sat drinking wine (*sǣton him æt wīne wealle belocene* 695). Bosworth and Toller translated *ealhstede* in *Daniel* as 'sheltering-place of men'. The compound's collocation with *eorla* and local thematic context, however, seem to convey more exclusive connotations of nobility. The present study argues that *ealhstede* was used in *Daniel* precisely because it had such connotations. Furthermore, if the local usages of this

compound are evaluated as specifying variants of 'city' nouns, this may imply that *ealhstede* denoted a special building that was distinctive to royal centres.

Later in *Daniel* during the account of Belshazzar's feast, the poet alludes to the sacking of the Temple in Jerusalem: *ðā hīe tempel strudon,/Sālōmanes seld* (l.710b-11a) 'then they ravaged the temple, the seat of Solomon'. The variation of *tempel* (unambiguously a structure of worship) with *seld* is significant, because the latter means 'throne' and is also sometimes a synecdoche for 'hall' or 'palace' (i.e. 'royal seat'). This would indicate that traditional Anglo-Saxon conception of a royal centre included the idea of a sanctuary, since the poet appears to have conflated the Temple – a restricted space in ancient Israelite cult – with the hall where Solomon performed the rituals of kingship.

These examples in *Daniel* cohere with *ealhstede* in the closing scene of *Andreas.* As *cyninges cræftiga* (1633a) 'the king's craftsman', Andrew ordered (*hēt* 1632b) a church built where the flood-water miracle took place: *ciricean getimbran/gerwan Godes tempel* (1633b-34a) 'to build a church, construct God's temple'. The church is specified according to cultural purpose as God's property. Likewise, grand Heorot is commanded into being by royal edict, defined first by form, then cultural purpose: *þæt healreced hātan wolde,/medoærn micel men gewyrcean* (68-69) 'that he would decree men build a hall, a great mead-house'.

A crowd assembles for baptism. Unlike the gathering of the *þēod* at the Mermedonian *hearg* (see ii), however, this throng comprises warriors from the prestigious parts of the city (*secga þrēate/weras geond þā wīnburg* 1636b-37a) and the aristocracy (*eorlas ānmōde ond hīra idesa mid* 1638). They wish to receive baptism *ond dīofolgild,/ealde eolhstedas, anforlǣtan* (1641b-42) 'and to forsake the idols and old temple-places'. *Ealhstede* here is explicitly connected to heathen worship in these lines as a specifying variant to the versatile negative signifier *dīofolgild*, as well as circumstantially with nobility, akin to the usages observed in *Daniel*.[151] It also possible that *ealh-* was misinterpreted for *eolh-* by a late tenth-century scribe of the Vercelli Book (or an earlier intermediary), suggesting that the cultural setting of an *ealhstede* was obscure for later West-Saxon readers.[152]

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[151] North and Bintley (2016), 302
[152] Brooks (1961), 116

It was observed in Chapter 3 (i) that OS *alah* (×14), *wîh* (×45), *rakud* (×5) and *godes hûs* (×6) are functional equivalents in the *Heliand* for the Temple. To recapitulate: *wîh* is markedly more frequent than *alah*; *alah* supports *wîh* appositively 12 times, normally within adverbial phrases such as *an themu alah*; peculiar to *uuîh* over *alah* are genitive phrases (*godes uuîh*), and collocation with *wardôn* and *ward* to express curation of the building. Like all poetic examples of *ealh* and *ealhstede*, the use of *alah* as secondary variant for a structure of worship suggests that it may also have been an archaism with specialised meaning.[153]

The thematic environments of *alah* are very interesting. Almost every example concerns nobility, wisdom, age or prestige of character. It collocates with *erlos* twice: when Zachary comes out of the temple to the expectant nobles: *thô quam frôd gumo/ût fon them alaha erlos thrungen* (180b-81) 'then the wise man came out of the Temple, nobles thronged' and describing the Jews worshipping in the Temple: *erlos an them alaha sô it an iro êuua gibôd* (795) 'nobles in the Temple according to the command of their custom'.

Age and wisdom also relate to activity in the *alah*: Zachary is *ald aftar them alaha* (107a) 'the old man through the Temple' and Simeon both aged and noble: *aldan at them alaha aðalboranan* (464) 'the old noble-born man at the Temple'. When aged Simeon addresses Mary, another preference is revealed for associating *alah* with *idis* 'lady': *the aldo man an them alaha idis thero godun* (493) 'the old man to the noblewoman in the Temple'. Likewise, Anna the Prophetess is *ald innan them alaha* (504a) 'old in the Temple'; she lived her life as *erles an êhti eðili thiorne* (508) 'property of an earl, the noble girl' and together with her lord *bôdlo giuualdan* 'ruled the lands' (509b). The poet has supplied this description of noble status in traditional terms absent their inclusion in Luke 2:36. In the subsequent account of Anna's devotion (510-29), *wîh* refers to the Temple five times, but *alah* returns when the poet references her nobility: *thiu idis an them alaha* (529a) 'the lady in the temple'.

In the account of the widow's mite (fitt 46), *alah* signals the prestige of both Temple and worshipper.[154] *Wîh* only occurs once in these lines, at the opening to introduce the main location (3758a), which is unusal for descriptions of the Temple in the *Heliand*. The narrative then focuses on the building as a repository of wealth (*mêðmos, goduuuebiu, goldu*), with

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[153] Griepentrog (1995), 41
[154] Mark 12:41; Luke 21:1-4

epithets emphasising its status more than in any other comparable passage in the poem: *mârie hûs* (3761a), *tresurhûs* (3766a), *Godes hûs* (3778a). A noble widow enters: *idis armscapen, endi te themu alaha geng* (3765) 'a poor lady and went to the Temple', *alah* perhaps governing the alliterative scheme of this line in third position. Jesus contrasts the wealthy (*ôdaga man* 3771a), who bring a portion of the hoards they have won (*mêðomhord manag ... uuelona guunnen* 3772-73) with the widow who gave everything she had: *ac siu te thesumu alahe gaf al that siu habde* (3774) 'but she gave all she had to this Temple'.

Wulfila also uses *alhs* (f., root-noun) consistently for the Temple (×31). In doing so, he conflates the distinction between ἱερόν and νᾱός as complex and sanctuary, respectively.[155] *Gudhus* varies *alhs* just once: *ik seinteino laisada in gaqumþai jah in gudhusa* 'I always taught in the synagogue and the Temple'.[156] This alternative construction draws attention to the difference between two Jewish structures of worship: the synagogue as place of congregation and the Temple as God's house, because *alhs* is used where just the Temple is mentioned (e.g. Mark 14:49 ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ), when Jesus was *in alh laisjands* 'teaching in the Temple'.[157] It is implied, therefore, that *alhs* also connoted an assembly place, if only for nobles; for this reason, *gudhus* would have been required to distinguish the Temple from a *gaqumþs* 'coming-together'. This distribution may also suggest that the *alhs* was not as restricted a divine space as Classical or Near-Eastern temples, or even the Germanic sacred enclosures.

The Malberg Glosses to the *Lex Salica* preserve West Frankish evidence of the sixth century. In the earliest recensions, *alach-* glosses *casa*, *villa*, and *basilica* in compounds denoting trespasses to property.[158] Scholars have argued that the *villa* glosses are earliest, reflecting initial Frankish occupation of Gallo-Roman settlements, while *basilica* glosses are younger.[159] The translational range shows that *alach-* was 'not only used for ordinary houses', but also other grander, more specialised structures such as *basilica* that were primarily defined by a cultural purpose (governance), but also included residential functions. All *alach-* glosses identify roofed, Roman masonry inhabited by humans, the larger specimens of which doubtless would have appeared prestigious to the incoming Franks. While this evidence alone leaves

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[155] Lewis and Short (1879), 377, 524
[156] John 18:20 ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ
[157] Griepentrog (1995), 34-35
[158] Van Doorn (2018), 29 *alachescido, alachtaco, alatrude*
[159] Schmidt-Wiegand (1967), 290. But Griepentrog (1995), 42 notes that this *alach-* does not equate with 'temple'; Van Helten (1900), 335

unresolved the direction of semantic change between 'house' and 'cultural building',[160] the comparative situation in OE, OS and Gothic weighs in favour of 'cultic building' as traditional.

Onomastic examples of *ealh* are fulsome in WGmc, for example *Ealhmund, Ealhburg, Alahgund, Alhwin* and many others.[161] However, analysis of *ealh* in these names as 'temple' makes poor sense.[162] Germanic names were traditionally tautological, determinative compounds, the members of which mutually express a positive (often cultural) concept. Accordingly, the semantics of onomastic *ealh* are more sensibly related to *ealgian* 'ward off, protect', for example *Ealhmund* 'defence-protection' or *Alahgund* 'defence-battle'.[163]

This connection with *ealgian* invites etymological analysis for determining the literal and cultural import of *ealh* as a specialised building. Lithuanian *alkas* (m) 'sacred grove, hill-top grove' and Latvian *ęlks* (m) 'idol' are direct formal cognates of *ealh* and *alah* < WGmc **alha-* (m, *a*-stem) and, moreover, share a cultic meaning that points to the antiquity of these connotations in IE prehistory.[164] This relationship is complicated, however, by the fact that Gothic *alhs* is a feminine root-noun, rather than the masculine *a*-stem observed in **alha-* and its Baltic cognates. Root-nouns reflect an archaic IE declension that is characterised by direct inflection to the root without an intervening suffix.[165] They were greatly reduced in PGmc, with 23 certain examples and a smaller group surviving in OE.[166]

Recently, it has been proposed that the root-noun class became productive during the earliest stages of Germanic for assuming substrate vocabulary, arguably due to a formal resemblance between the structure of these nouns and pre-IE nominal morphology. According to this view, the substrate loan-form **alk-* would have been later re-modelled as an *a*-stem in WGmc and Baltic, but not in Gothic, where the original root-noun derivative survived.[167] Analysis of *ealh*

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[160] Van Doorn (2018), 29
[161] Searle (1897), 202-207; Jente (1921), 7. See Förstemann (1859), 74ff. for OHG.
[162] Griepentrog (1995), 39
[163] Griepentrog (1995), 43
[164] Derksen (2015), 49-50 including also Lithuanian *elkas* (m) 'hill-top for sacrifice' and Latvian *ęlka kalns* 'sacred hill-top for pagan ceremony'; Kroonen (2013), 22; Orel (2003), 14; Lehmann (1986), 27; Stang (1972), 67; De Vries (1956) I, 373; Pokorny (1958) I, 32; Holthausen (1932), 84; Philippson (1929), 185; Jente (1921), 7. But Griepentrog (1995), 48 'unter großem Vorbehalt'.
[165] Bammesberger (1990), 21-30, 188-203
[166] Hogg and Fulk (2011), 64-68 (§2.10-11). Survivals in OE are mainly feminine, including *bōc*, *burh* and *fōt*.
[167] Kroonen (2013), 22; Kroonen (2012), 242; Hansen (2014), 43-44; Stang (1972), 13 also entertained this possibility.

as reflecting a shared Baltic-Germanic term for an Old European cult-space resembles the arguments for *hearg*, but the semantic connection to *ealgian* still remains unexplained.

Griepentrog's more comprehensive analysis proposes that *ealgian* < *algōjan* derived either from **alha-* or **alh-* after the weak second class had extended from the feminine ō-stems to deriving verbs from all noun stems; the *g* would have replaced *h* in the root analogically through comparison with like derivatives.[168] Because this **algōjan* is a relatively late derivative, its nominal base must have denoted 'defence, protection' concurrently with 'building' in PGmc. Homeric comparanda suggest the 'defence' meaning to be ancient.[169] The root-noun dative singular ἀλκί 'defensive prowess' (a Homeric form of Classical Greek ἀλκή 'strength') occurs only within the verse-final formula ἀλκὶ πεποιθώς 'trusting in defensive prowess' (×7), in which poetic environment formal and semantic archaisms are not unexpected.[170] Homeric ἄλκαρ 'safeguard, defense' (×2), another morphologically archaic noun, further supports an IE origin for the semantics 'defence, protection'. Scholars agree that Sanskrit *rákṣati* 'protect, watch over' relates to this Greek word-family, which would also suggest the protection of something valuable.[171]

Since *alhs* and ἀλκί reflect identical root-nouns, it can be assumed that they shared a core meaning, at least at the earliest stages of PGmc. Gothic **alk-* and WGmc **alka-* would have derived independently from the PIE root **h₂elk-* 'defend' (Greek ἀλέξω 'defend'), but with the shared root-meaning 'defence, protection'; these semantics are also the basis for *ealgian* and probably also the personal names.[172] PGmc **alk-/*alka-* would have later concretised to denote a special type of building, a process supported by the fact that all Gothic root-nouns are concrete, despite their origins. This development was probably motivated by habitual use within defined cultural contexts, perhaps on a phraseological basis through expressions such as 'go into the protection of a deity',[173] or the king as his earthly representative.

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[168] Griepentrog (1995), 46
[169] Griepentrog (1995), 49; Mallory (2006), 90; Mallory and Adams (2006), 281; Jente (1921), 8; Lehmann (1986), 27; Orel (2003), 14; Holthausen (1932), 84. But sceptical of connection with the ἀλκή word-family: Stang (1972), 13; Beekes (2010), 64-65; Kroonen (2013), 21.
[170] Il. 17.61 ὡς δ' ὅτε τίς τε λέων ὀρεσίτροφος, ἀλκὶ πεποιθώς 'just as when the mountain-bred lion, trusting in defensive prowess'
[171] Mayrhofer (1996) II, 422; Beekes (2010), 64
[172] Griepentrog (1995), 55-56
[173] Griepentrog (1995), 56

Ealh place-names are scanty. Alkham, Kt. is the only plausible surviving contender. Two historical sites are recorded in charter-boundaries. *Puttan ... ealh* is attested in a grant of land at Little Bedwyn, Wilts. by the West-Saxon king Cynewulf in 778.[174] It is unclear from the text whether *ealh* is simplex or in composition; if the latter, it might preserve a personal name. Another grant by King Cenwulf of Mercia in 812 defines borders near Faversham according to landscape features in each compass direction, reading *a parte occidentali ealhflēot* 'from the western part *ealhflēot*'.[175] This river *ealhflēot* arguably refers to the main channel between Faversham and the sea (locally known as 'the Fleet').[176] The OE name implies that an *ealh* was not only situated along this waterway, but was its dominant feature.

For reasons unspecified, modern toponymists are unconvinced that *ealhflēot* was an *ealh*-site.[177] Alkham, Kt. is also treated hesitantly because of the apparent absence of other cultic toponyms in composition with settlement nouns like -*hām*.[178] But evidential want does not preclude contiguity of 'cult-space' with 'settlement'. The present study argues that the toponymic status of *ealh* should be re-evaluated against literary evidence for this noun's inclusive affinity to cult practice, domestic architecture and aristocratic social life. In light of the Malberg Glosses, it is also interesting to note that two *ealh* toponyms are in Kent, where Merovingian influence was strongest in the sixth century.

German place-names provide additional counter-examples to sceptical opinion. Alsfeld (*Alahsfelt)* and Alsheim (*Alahesheim*) both survive; the historical forms *Alahdorf* and *Alahstat* belong to the ninth century; *alahsteti* refers to the *Pfalz* of Thuringia.[179] A group of *Alstedde* sites are also recorded close to Münster.[180] These latter examples are direct cognates to *ealhstede* and corroborate its connection to royal power. As second member in composition, *alah* is always dative singular -*alaha* 'at the temple, palace'.[181]

Scholars have concluded that the decent representation of toponymic *alah* against its complete absence in OHG literature implies such sites were of ancient origin.[182] Strictly in relation to

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[174] S 264 (Birch 225), 14-15 *valli serie in puttan ... ealh* 'from the series of walls to *puttan ealh*'
[175] S 169 (Birch 341), 4; S 178 (Birch 353), 1 *alhflēot*
[176] Ward (1934), 127
[177] Gelling (1973), 115. But see Stenton (1941), 11-12.
[178] Gelling (1973), 115; Watts (2004), 8
[179] Grimm (1875) I, 53-54; Gockel (1984), 17
[180] Jellinghaus (1898), 267
[181] Griepentrog (1995), 33
[182] Griepentrog (1995), 43

German *alah* place-names, Grimm concluded: 'an sich denen ein heidnischer Tempel, eine geheiligte Gerichtsstatte oder ein Haus des Königs befand, denn nicht bloß das *fanum*, auch die Volksversamlung und die königliche Wohnung galten für geweiht'.[183] This impression coheres with the present study's interpretation of OE and OS literary evidence. While Scandinavian *-áll* is phonologically ambiguous, *Ullaráll* and *Ásaráll* importantly identify specific cults in the theonyms of their first members. A particularist connection to cult might support the etymological hints in favour of a protective deity.

Archaeology and historical testimony are ambivalent as to whether Germanic societies used cult-buildings that were analogous to a 'temple'. This term is familiar according to the Classical and Near-Eastern model of roofed building that 'houses' a deity, into which human access was limited and mainly restricted to the external enclosure. The prevailing opinion of twentieth-century scholarship understood temple-building as a late development within Scandinavian heathenism that evolved from more rudimentary, outdoor spaces of worship (see ii on *hǫrgr* and *hof*).[184] In the nineteenth century, Grimm and others (followed by Jente, and Philippson in the early twentieth century) argued specifically for the grove – a space enclosed by trees – as natural precursor to an enclosed cult-building.[185]

These inferences ultimately descend from Tacitus' observation that the Germani did not fashion idols nor enclose them in man-made structures.[186] Tacitus describes the abode of Nerthus as *nemus* 'grove' and *templum*, and the latter noun again to describe the structure of the Marsi around the Ruhr known as *Tamfana*.[187] Without doubting the existence of either sacred site, the existence of a building at either is inconclusive simply from his language, because the Classical *templum* properly denoted a sacred precinct established by augury, within which a building (*aedes*) stood that housed a deity.[188] The archaeological record for this period is also inconclusive, in contrast to the evidential wealth of votive offerings in bogs, lakes, and fenced outdoor areas.[189] Tacitus' statement has, therefore, been widely accepted as credible

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[183] Grimm (1875) I, 53-54
[184] De Vries (1956) I, 378; Turville-Petre (1964), 239-40; Hines (1997), 388; Dronke (1997), 119; Semple (2007), 366
[185] Grimm (1875) I, 55 '*Tempel* ist also zugleich wald'; Jente (1921), 8; Philippson (1929), 190
[186] Tac. Germ. 9.2
[187] Tac. Germ. 40.3; Tac. Ann. 1.51
[188] Rüpke (2007), 183
[189] Jankuhn (1966), 421; Rives (1999), 163-64

testimony that Germanic temple-building was undeveloped in the first century AD, but may have increased from the migration period.[190]

Alternatively, it may be proposed that Germanic cult-buildings co-existed with open spaces of worship and that they evolved concurrently, even if used for separate purposes. *Wēohsteall* appears to present the closest functional analogue to a Classical or Near-Eastern temple in terms of divine occupancy and restricted access. But equally, in the early fourth century the archaic noun *alhs* must have described a structure that was analogous to the Temple in Jerusalem on some level.

In conceiving a 'temple', modern observers share Roman expectations of a connection between the form of a building and its function as a segregated precinct. Since the early Germanic languages indicate that a form of cultic building was known, might these structures not have escaped notice, according to Classical expectations, because religious worship was 'one function among many in a high-status building of more general purpose'?[191] The key difference between Roman and Germanic cultic buildings, therefore, appears to lie in how they were used. The Germanic cult-hall might have been a ritually fluid space, wherein community leaders periodically gathered to celebrate one or other divine cult with feasting. This resembles a hall more than a Classical temple, but does not preclude the idea that the building would have had a religious significance for those who used it.

Bede should be read with these caveats in mind. Gregory advised Mellitus not to destroy the 'temples' (*fana*) that he presumed stood in sixth-century Britain, but only the idols that stood within; the buildings were to be consecrated with holy water and re-furbished with relics and a Christian altar.[192] It was argued earlier in this chapter that the inculturation of *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* with a Christian sanctuary shows that Gregory's policy was implemented, but furthermore, that their traditional situation was properly within an outdoor enclosure rather than a building. Gregory's *fanum*, however, almost certainly assumes Classical habits of religious buildings that may have been quite different among the Anglo-Saxons, especially if their cult-buildings were more exceptional structures located at centres of political power. It is

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[190] Turville-Petre (1964), 236; Olsen (1970), 259-78; Green (1998), 24; Simek (2016), 35-41; De Vries (1956) I, 376 notes the absence of common IE terminology for 'temple', 'idol' and 'altar'.
[191] Walker (2010), 83
[192] *HE* 1.30

thus harder to determine whether whole buildings were incorporated into the *cirice* layout, than for the internal fixtures of worship.[193] Since almost all English churches were rebuilt over centuries, evidence for the prior existence of a renovated heathen structure has been virtually non-discoverable to date at ecclesiastical sites.

Archaeology has yielded spare, but important testimony for Anglo-Saxon cult-buildings. Excavations at Yeavering in the 1950s revealed a *locus classicus* at this early Northumbrian centre of power (Figure 4.7). Within the main complex of the early seventh century (Figure 4.8), the main hall (A2) was aligned east-west with a large, double-palisaded enclosure immediately to the east. This enclosure was probably a corral for horses and cattle. To the west, A2 was aligned with a grand-stand structure (E). At the western end of the complex, two smaller timber buildings (D1 and D2) were differently aligned north-south, seemingly with an

[IMAGE REDACTED]

Figure 4.7: Artist's impression of the hall complex at Yeavering c.627.

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[193] Helm (1953) II.2, 172

ancient ring-ditch immediately to the south. They might have been Anglian renewals of earlier British houses.[194]
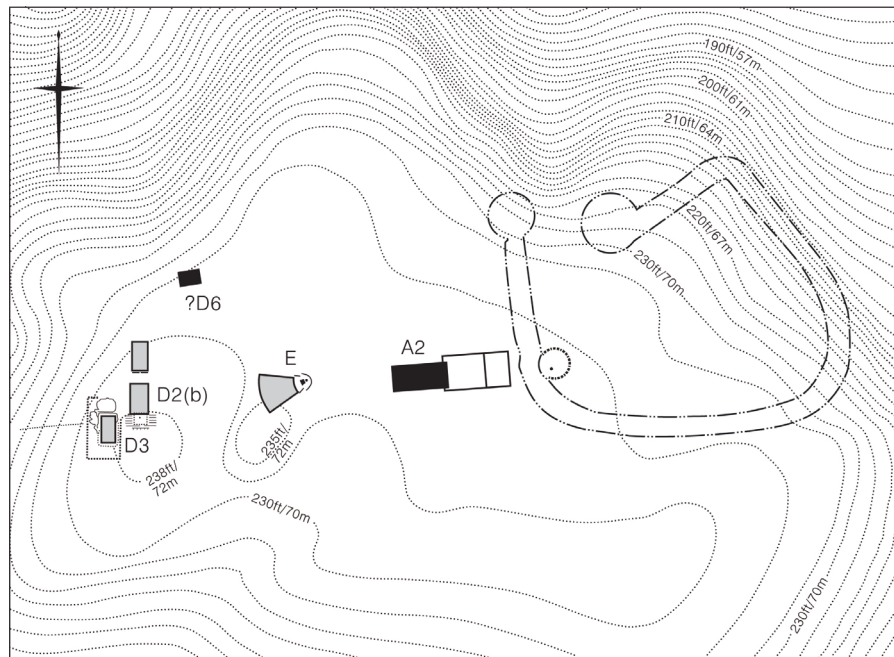

Figure 4.8: Yeavering, early seventh century (post-Roman phase IIIAB).

D2 is 'the only unequivocal excavated example' for an Anglo-Saxon cultic building (Figure 4.9).[195] Its structure reflects two chronologically distinct frameworks. D2a was the original structure, around which D2b was built as a shell; the double-wall encasing is unique to D2 at Yeavering and seems to evidence renovation.[196] The excavator dated D2a and D2b within the first three decades of the seventh century.[197] There were two openings on the D2's eastern and western walls; D2a may have had a small partition across the southern part of the room; three free-standing wooden posts stood in a row within D2a at its southern end, and another outside immediately to the north-west; ox-skulls and bones were formally deposited in a pit on the north side of the eastern door, successively in a way suggestive of seasonal use.[198]

Immediately behind D2's southern wall lay an inhumation cemetery on the western ring-ditch; the graves largely respect the building. Attached to the southern wall, a rectilinear, fenced enclosure contained another series of free-standing posts around which the burials are

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[194] North [Forthcoming], 9
[195] Semple (2007), 367; Wilson (1992), 45
[196] Hope-Taylor (1977), 158; Wilson (1992), 45
[197] Hope-Taylor (1977), 96-103
[198] Hope-Taylor (1977), 146-47, 326

clustered.[199] Hope-Taylor dated this annex to the early seventh century and regarded it as the direct successor to a ritual enclosure that pre-dated D2. This earlier enclosure also contained graves that were aligned to a series of larger, free-standing posts, which might have been the original cult-foci of the area and related to the origins of the western ring ditch.[200] According to the excavator, this earlier space served a very small community at the end of the sixth century in its last phase.[201]

[IMAGE REDACTED]

Figure 4.9: Plan of D2.

Because of these features, Hope-Taylor characterised D2 as 'a building of potent religious associations',[202] arguably used for seasonal worship, sacrifices and burial rituals. It has also been proposed that the chronological succession of D2a to D2b might evidence renovation of the building as a church, according to the manner described in Gregory's letter to Mellitus.[203]

Initial dating of the remains suggested that D2a would have been standing at the time Paulinus proselytised there (*Ad Gefrin*), perhaps in late March 628.[204] Later, D2 and other buildings within the complex were burnt, perhaps during the invasion of Cadwallon and Penda in the

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[199] Blair (1995), 18
[200] Hope-Taylor (1977), 158-61; Scull (1991), 57-60
[201] Blair (1995), 16; Scull (1991), 60
[202] Hope-Taylor (1977), 153
[203] Wilson (1992), 46-47
[204] Wilson (1992), 46; North [Forthcoming]; *HE* 2.14

early 630s. Evidence that the free-standing posts within D2 had been removed some time before the fire damage strengthens this view.[205] Recent archaeology, however, has prompted revision of the overall dating of the Yeavering complex, which complicates neat correlation of material with historical testimony.[206]

More recently, it has been proposed that A2 (great hall) also had a cultic purpose.[207] While D2 shows little evidence for regular human occupation, A2 was used on a daily basis. A2 was contemporary with D2b, while its predecessor A5 was contemporary to D2a. The spatial dimensions of A2 would have permitted 'hierarchical performance of ritual activities in their widest sense', such as special feasts, while the hall could revert by day to a domestic building.[208] Walker sees enough similarity in the architectural features of A2 and D2 to conclude their function was shared.[209] A2 also had entrances through both side walls, and two large partitioning palisades at either end that created antechambers.

Hope-Taylor considered D2's graveyard annex especially significant and proposed that pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon cemeteries might yield analogous cultic structures.[210] Traces of covered structures have indeed been discovered at such locations. Some appear to have been very small buildings, erected in isolated spots within the cemetery. Remains of a 'lych-gate structure' at Bishopstone, Ssx, and a 'small hut or funerary structure' at Polhill, Kt. have been discovered.[211] At Spong Hill, Norf., Morning Thorpe and Alton, Hants., square buildings are more ambiguously suggested by the remains of foundational trenches, respected by surrounding graves. Likewise, for sleeper beams of rectangular structures at Lyminge, Kt. and Portway, Hants., and a circular one at Sewerby, EYorks.[212]

Evidence for even smaller covered structures is more forthcoming. Some graves at St Peter's Broadstairs, Kt. reveal lateral sockets for posts supporting a 'pitched structure'. Thirty-three such structures also survive at Apple Down, Ssx. over cremation burials. Some post-holes contain cremated bone and fragments of grave goods, which suggests devotional curation in

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[205] Wilson (1992), 47
[206] Walker (2010), 87
[207] Walker (2010), 83. D2a was contemporary with A5, the predecessor of A2.
[208] Walker (2010), 86
[209] Walker (2010), 96
[210] Hope-Taylor (1977), 263
[211] Wilson (1992), 48-49
[212] Wilson (1992), 48, 53

the manner of a shrine.[213] Other similar square-enclosure supports have been detected at Morning Thorpe, Norf., Lechdale, Glouc., and Alton, Hants.[214] Two Continental sites of the third and fourth centuries might present relevant analogues to these. At Liebenau, Saxony, four post holes stood around a funeral pyre,[215] and post holes around an Iron Age long grave at Rijssen Overijssel might have supported a similar shrine-structure.[216]

The enclosure is also recognised as a typical structural feature of Anglo-Saxon heathenism and coheres with Bede's phrase *cum septis* describing the Goodmanham shrine.[217] The square fenced-enclosure that preceded D2 at Yeavering resembles a graveyard imposed on a Bronze Age ring-ditch barrow at Slonk Hill, Ssx. that shows 'clear evidence for ritual activity.'[218] And at Blacklow Hill, Warwicks., another rectangular enclosure 'looks like a giant version of Slonk Hill', wherein two graves align around a possible post-hole. More intriguing are the 270 shallow, circular, and empty pits further back, serving no clear purpose.[219] In Blair's opinion, Slonk Hill and Blacklow Hill corroborate the status of the D2 complex as a conventional representative of cultic space, and all together unambiguously attest the square enclosure as a prototypical Anglo-Saxon heathen structure of worship.[220]

The grave-post alignment within the D2 annex, and the enclosure's spatial relationship with the building finds further analogues from the late heathen period that are suggestive of private devotion.[221] A post stood centrally in the square annex to the hall at Cowdery's Down, Hants., which was entered from the building like a backyard. A similar post-enclosure complex has been discovered at New Wintles Farm, Oxon. The enclosure preceding D2 contained a single central post, succeeded in the later structure by several smaller ones. Perhaps also related are the penannular ditches with a central post located mainly on the peripheries of cemeteries at Broadstairs, Kt., Finglesham, Kt., and Spong Hill, Norf.[222] This strong relationship between burial and a monumental free-standing post has been interpreted in terms of ancestor

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[213] Wilson (1992), 57
[214] Wilson (1992), 53-55
[215] Wilson (1992), 59
[216] De Vries (1956) I, 378
[217] Blair (1995), 2; *HE* 2.13
[218] Blair (1995), 16
[219] Blair (1995), 18
[220] Blair (1995), 19
[221] Blair (1995), 16-17
[222] Wilson (1992), 61-62

worship.[223] In this perspective, Cowdery's Down, New Wintles Farm, and perhaps D2 may be interpreted as domestic shrines for a family, perhaps for deceased relatives.[224]

Figure 4.10: Reconstruction of third-century *casula* at Oberdorla.

Oberdorla has been mentioned several times. It is important to note here that the evidence for around 86 shrines across seven centuries conclusively demonstrates that open-air, wickerwork enclosures, containing turf altars and free-standing cult-objects, constituted a predominant layout for Germanic sacred space. These consistencies permit further conclusions as to what was exceptional. Roofed structures in the manner of a hut sheltering an idol and turf-altar are sporadically attested. The earliest dates to mid-La Tène, with several further examples from the first centuries CE .[225] The third-century hut that sheltered the 'Diana' idol strongly suggests influence from a Gallo-Roman *fanum* (Figure 4.10). A rival cult might have been introduced, since the structure, idol, and a coffin containing a teenage girl (priestess?) were all purposely destroyed.[226] The phrase *de casulis id est fanis* 'concerning huts, i.e. shrines' in a mid-eighth-century list of capitularies targeting heathen worship evidences the continuing presence of such shelters for cult-foci among the German populations whom Boniface had evangelised.[227] Such

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[223] Blair (1995), 20
[224] Blair (1995), 19
[225] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 43-62
[226] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 63-67; Dušek (2002), 470, 475
[227] *Indiculus* 4

structures are certainly comparable to the more scanty evidence for huts at Bishopstone and Polhill.

Ship-shaped enclosures are also represented at Oberdorla in all periods. Importantly, the excavator associated larger examples (Figure 4.11) with Anglian migration to the region in the late fourth century.[228] Similar structures were arguably known among the Angles of northern Britain (perhaps at Goodmanham), especially if the cult of Ingui (Freyr) was predominant.[229]

Figure 4.11: Reconstruction of an early fourth-century ship-shrine at Oberdorla.

More recently, a number of Scandinavian sites have been interpreted as cult-buildings, developing upon Olaf Olsen's earlier theory that the Icelandic *hof* conflated ritual and residential functions as a farm building that was sometimes opened to the wider community for cultic gatherings.[230] This merging of social and ritual life is also apparent for the much older seventh-century hall at Borg at Vestvågøy on the Lofoten Islands, which for its date is an important analogue for A2 at Yeavering.[231]

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[228] Behm-Blancke (2003) I, 220-23
[229] North (1997a) *passim*
[230] Olsen (1966), 280
[231] Walker (2010), 94-95

Most significant is the 'unmistakeable cult building' at Uppåkra, which was also contemporary (for a time) to Anglo-Saxon heathenism (Figure 4.12).[232] The central, rectangular hall is a tall stave building 13.5m long, 6m wide and underwent six re-buildings between the sixth to tenth centuries. Inside, the central hearth was supported by four large posts.[233] Around 115 gold figures (*guldgubbar*) were found beside the posts and might have been affixed to them.[234] Weapon deposits, dated from the Roman Iron Age to the late fifth century, lay either side of the building in shallow pits together with large deposits of bones. These preserve around 300 bent spear-heads, with a smaller number of shield bosses and handles.[235] Importantly, these finds indicate extensive cultic use of the area pre-dating the hall.

The *guldgubbar* are sometimes paired like a *hieros gamos* and might have been votive offerings, temple money or commemorative coins.[236] In this way, they evidence another purpose for the building as repository for valuable cult objects.[237] The display of valuable objects might have been a distinguishing feature of cult-halls as opposed to other halls. Uppåkra prompts reconsideration of the account of St. Ludger, the eighth-century missionary who is said to have translated to the bishop of Utrecht certain valuables stored in a heathen 'temple' (*in delubris*) among the Frisians.[238] In *Beowulf*, the *i[n]cge gold* (1107b) and *ingesteald* (1155) of Finn's hoard, upon which the Frisian king swears his oath with Hengest, might be interpreted as 'Ingui's gold'.[239] As a contemporary to Anglo-Saxon heathenism, Uppåkra is also highly relevant to interrogating the nature of Germanic cult-buildings at this time, and challenges the assumption that this structure of worship developed during the Viking Age. It also provides a clearer analogue for the 'separated cult building within the settlement complex', represented on a smaller-scale by its contemporary D2 at Yeavering, and at other smaller Scandinavian sites such as Lejre and Tissø.[240]

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[232] Larsson (2007), 11-25
[233] Larsson (2015), 145-58
[234] Larsson (2015), 149
[235] Larsson (2015), 150
[236] Simek (2016), 35
[237] Simek (2016), 35
[238] *Vit.Lud.*, 1.14 (p. 776)
[239] North (1997a), 70-72
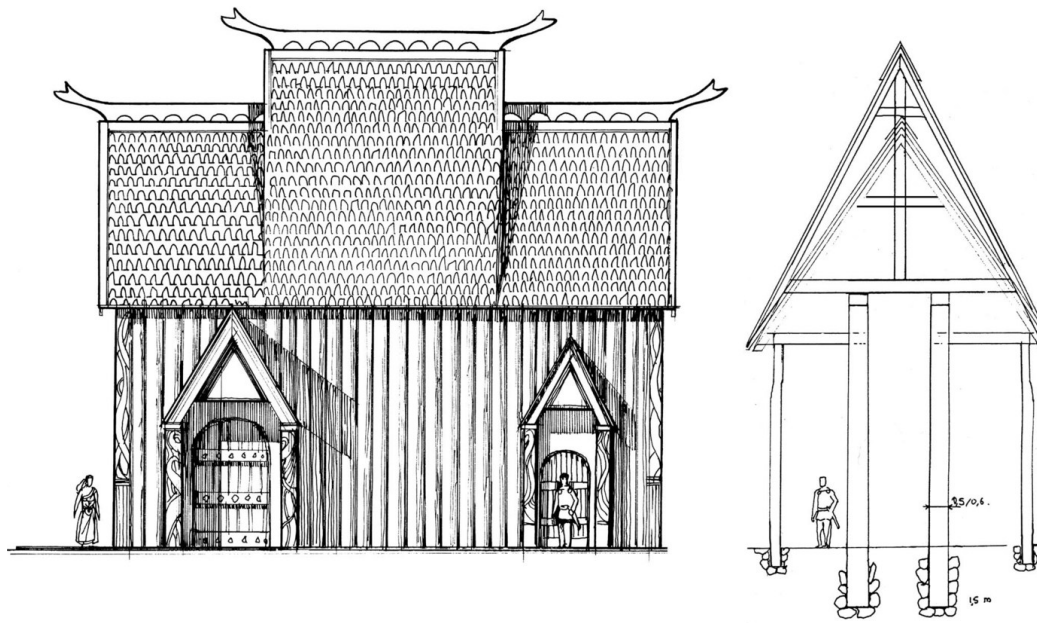[240] Walker (2010), 95-96

Figure 4.12: Artist's impression of the hall at Uppåkra.

To summarise, the linguistic evidence for *ealh* suggests that it denoted a specialised cult-hall with socio-religious function that was used by the elite. The building might also have been under the auspices of a divine protection that was mediated through the ruler. Recent archaeological opinion corroborates this interpretation that aspects of social and religious life were intertwined in the usage of architectural space within early medieval Germanic societies. Accordingly, the view that cult-buildings ('temples') were alien to Germanic cultures before the Viking Age should be revised independently of the search for classically-defined structures, which are more analogous the *wēohsteall* as a restricted area.

Differently to a *wēohsteall*, the *ealh* was arguably a structure of worship that merged social and religious functions. This was also possibly the case for *hearg*. However, an *ealh*'s definitive characteristic seems to have been its connection to sovereignty, while the *hearg* was a popular space. In this regard, it seems significant that *ealh* and its cognates consistently translate the Temple in Jerusalem. The analogy was probably available on several levels: the Temple was a prestigious and singular structure of worship, a tribal centre for pan-Israelite festivals and repository for their sacred objects. It was also the seat of the monarchy, built by royal decree under God.

Ealh's marginalisation into obscurity may have occurred for several reasons. First, it appears to have been difficult to analogise with Classical temples or shrines, for which *hearg* presented the more versatile option for pejoration as a negative signifier. The fact that Germanic authors preferred *ealh* for the Israelite Temple suggests that its tribal-political connotations were equally as strong as the religious semantics. For these reasons, an *ealh* would also have been a specialised structure, probably restricted to centres of power, and therefore not as conspicuous a feature of pre-Christian cult as a *hearg*. Finally, the *ealh* presented a rival structure to *cirice*. In theory, the superstructure of an *ealh* building could have been converted into a church, as hinted in Gregory's letter. This potentially happened to D2 at Yeavering. But *ealh* as a term would have been difficult to inculturate, because the gatherings peculiar to a church are defiantly non-worldly, whether socially or politically.[241] The ultimate obscurity of *ealh* evidences its peculiarity as a Germanic cultural term for religious space, because it resisted both positive and negative analogising with European forms, both pagan and Christian. Because of its political function, it seems more likely that an *ealh* would have been de-sacralised into another kind of hall (*heall*, *sele* or *reced*) as a Christian expression of soft power, wherein a king would continue to preside.[242]

iv. *bearu*

Bearu (m, *wa*-stem) is reasonably well-attested (×63). Around 46% of examples are poetic, which suggests that the meaning 'grove' was culturally marked. However, compounds (×26) and toponyms (×19) show that the noun also applied practically to woodland spaces. It was observed in (iii) that earlier scholars favoured the idea that groves were fundamental spaces of worship in early Germanic culture and, moreover, provided the prototype for later ritual arenas. This view proceeded from Tacitus' claims, further infused with contemporary romantic attitudes. In the grove, asked Grimm, 'sind uns hier nicht *alah*, *wih*, *paro*, *haruc* getreu beschrieben?'[243]

In different ways, Classical and Christian authors blurred the identities of traditional Germanic cultural forms, mainly by presenting a distorted impression of their systemic interrelationships.

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[241] Behr (2011), 315-16
[242] Walker (2010), 97
[243] Grimm (1875) I, 58, and 55-69 generally.

This study has argued that *ealh*, *wēoh* and *hearg* had discrete identities within the system of pre-Christian cult practices that existed independently either of a presumed common basis in woodland, or of diachronic development from natural to man-made space of worship. This discussion will attempt to re-determine the status of groves and woodland within Anglo-Saxon heathenism by reading the linguistic evidence for *bearu* in light of recent scholarship on practical, communal usage of woodland during the settlement period. The religious significance of *bearu* is presumed on the basis of linguistic comparanda and historical analogues, for want of explicit OE examples meaning 'sacred grove'. For this reason, the Classical sources are reviewed first, subsequently to be tested by the linguistic evidence, because these analogues carry special weight for reconstructing the religious connotations of the strongest vernacular contender for 'sacred grove'.

Tacitus identified woodland as the principal space of worship among the Germani, claiming that *lucos ac nemora consecrant* 'they consecrate groves and woods' for their gods to inhabit, rather than confining them within walls.[244] This statement was interrogated in (iii) on the basis that vernacular words prove traditional man-made structures analogous in form (*ealh*) and function (*wēohsteall*) to the Classical temple were known to Germanic culture. While this does not disprove part of his statement, it implies his emphasis on woodland may be undue and potentially distort the impression he presents of Germanic religion.

It will be argued that a woodland's cultic identity was interrelated with social and domestic spaces of worship, each being mutually dependent within the heathen system. Relevantly in regard to this interrelationship, it was argued in Chapter 3 (ii) and (iii) that *cumbol* and *þūf* are the most probable vernacular reflexes for Tacitus' claim that the Germani brought certain cultic objects into battle from the groves (*detracta lucis*) in which they were kept.[245] While this claim characterises the woodland as a sacred repository, the concrete meaning of *cumbol* 'wooden block' and *þūf* 'bunch of leaves' opens the possibility that they were brought from the grove, having been freshly fashioned there from its resources; this seems especially likely for *þūf*, since fresh leaves may wither quickly. Tacitus later claims *in insula Oceani castum nemus* 'on an island in the ocean (North Sea) is a sacred grove', wherein was preserved the sacred cart of Nerthus, an account which presents the grove more certainly as a repository.[246]

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[244] Tac. Germ. 9.2
[245] Tac. Germ. 7.2
[246] Tac. Germ. 40.3

The grove was also an important ritual arena. Worship of the Alci among the Nahanarvali occurred in *antiquae religionis lucus* 'a grove of ancient sanctity';[247] as intimates (*conscios*) of the gods, pure white (*candidi*) horses were kept *nemoribus ac lucis* 'in woods and groves' for divination rituals of the highest order, where they were led around by a king or *princeps civitatis* (*þēoden*?) who interpreted their snorts.[248] The Semnones annually performed human sacrifice on behalf of the people *in silvam auguriis patrum et prisca formidine sacram* 'in a forest hallowed by ancestral auguries and ancient dread'.[249] Tacitus claims that this grove's sacrality proceeded from the dual belief that it was communal patrimony (*inde initia gentis* 'where the tribe had its origin') and because the god worshipped there was all-powerful (*ibi regnator omnium deus*).[250] This analogue has been much debated.[251] For present purposes, however, it attests the grove as a cultic space on the tribal plane, together with the belief that a particular god presided there.[252]

Tacitus also alludes to these cultural features throughout the *Annals* and *Histories.* After the Varus slaughter of 9AD, the Roman spoils and standards were apparently displayed *Germanorum in lucis* 'in the groves of the Germani' and captives sacrificed *en masse* on the rudimentary altars that stood therein, which continues the idea of a grove as sacred repository and ritual arena.[253] Several further analogues indicate a grove's status as tribal patrimony under the protection of a presiding deity. The Batavii apparently celebrated a festivity in a special woodland, and Arminius' national confederation gathered *in silvam Herculi sacram* 'in a forest sacred to Hercules' near the Weser during the second campaign of Germanicus.[254]

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[247] Tac. Germ. 43.3
[248] Tac. Germ. 10.2
[249] Tac. Germ. 39.1. See Neidorf (2013c), 177. The Angles were related to the Suebes in antiquity. *Widsith* arguably preserves a memory of the tribal connection *Engle ond Swǣfe* (44a) 'Angles and Suebes', *Mid Englum ic wæs ond mid Swǣfum* (61a) 'I was with the Angles and with the Suebes. See also Swafham, Norf. < *Swǣfe + hām* in Anglian territory.
[250] Tac. Germ. 39.2
[251] Schröder (1924), 39-42; (1941), 48; De Vries (1957) II, 32; Höfler (1952), 1-67; Puhvel (1989), 198 'everything points to Wodan'; North (1997a), 141-43 'it seems better to leave Wodan out of the *Semnonenhain*' in favour of Ingvi-Freyr in his identity as *Gautaz*, the one 'cut, poured open'. For a sceptical view see Picard (1991), 132-41.
[252] Pettazzoni (1954), 141-45; Rives (1999), 289
[253] Tac. Ann. 1.59, 1.61
[254] Tac. Hist. 4.14; Tac. Ann. 2.12

It is also reported that 900 Roman soldiers were slaughtered in 28CE by the Frisii *apud lucum quem Baduhennae vocant* 'in a grove which they call Baduhenna'.[255] This vernacular word is a theonym comprising **badwa-* 'battle' (OE *beadu*) and *-henna*. The second member is a term for a feminine divinity recorded in votive inscriptions to the three Matronae from the Rhineland (e.g. *Renahenae* 'Rhine-*henna*'), for which **Baduhenna* might represent a Frisian reflex of the *dísir* or *valkyrja*.[256] *Baduhennae* might also represent a locative form. This is significant, because the locative case was apparently conventional within Germanic toponymy for locations that were frequented for a traditional purpose (see *Adbaruae* below). The key points from Tacitus are that groves were traditionally regarded as tribal patrimony, served as a ritual arena of sorts, and were presided over by a deity.

Turning to the literary evidence for *bearu*, the noun denotes a space of worship explicitly just once. In *Genesis A*, *bearo sette* (2841b) translates *plantavit nemus* for Abraham's grove at Beersheba.[257] The poet conflates the biblical detail of this scene with earlier examples of altar-building (see Chapter 1 i *tīber*). He also supplies the extra-biblical, domicile features of a hall (*reced*) and fortified enclosure (*burh*), which might also have included a form of cult-space, as observed in (iii *ealh*).

In these contexts which imply settled life, *bearu* appears more a cultivated than wild space. Two more examples in *Genesis A* show these connotations. At Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction, *bearwas wurdon/tō axan and tō yslan, eorðan wæstma* (2554b-55) 'groves became ashes and embers, fruits of the earth'. The noun's import here is surely conditioned by Lot's first sighting of the bountiful cities of the plain: *lagostreamum leoht* (1923a) 'watered with stream-ponds', *gelīc Godes/neorxnawange* (1923-24a) 'like God's paradise', *grene eorðan* 'green earth' (1921b) and *wæstmum þeaht* (1922b) 'covered with fruit'.[258] Overtly in relation to Paradise, the Tree of Knowledge is designated *bēam on bearwe* (902a) 'tree in the grove', a special tree in a bucolic, cultivated space that bears produce.

A fourth example in *Genesis A* associates *bearu* with bird-life. When Noah lets the dove from the Ark for the last time, the poet expands *quae non est reversa ultra ad eum* 'she did not come

[255] Tac. Ann. 4.73
[256] Simek (2016), 50-57; Lindow (2001), 224
[257] Genesis 21:33; Jente (1921), 8; Philippson (1929), 186; Helm (1953) II.2, 170; Green (1998), 27
[258] Genesis 13:10 *universa irrigabatur ... sicut paradisus Domini* 'everything was watered ... like the garden of the Lord'

back to him' with *ac hēo land begeat,/grēne bearwas* (1478a-80a) 'but she found land, green groves'.[259] Further exegetical interpretation is possible in view of traditions that the dove's final flight was a type for the saint's eternal rest with God.[260] Although scripture is silent as to the bird's destination, it would be consistent with the use of *bearu* in *Genesis A* if the poet understood Paradise as an arboreal, divine dwelling place on the religious plane together with woodland as an avian homeland.

The *Genesis A* poet identifies *bearu* with cultic-divine space, organised cultivation, and bird-life. Later texts continue these themes. The opening of *Judgment Day II* describes an Edenic garden of incomparable beauty, perpetual spring, and watered by streams.[261] *Bearu* is crucial to its representation in the speaker's immediate self-situating: *ic sæt innan bearwe ... holte tōmiddes* (1b-2b) 'I sat in a grove ... in the middle of a wood'. This also reveals the dimensions of *bearu* relative to other woodland terms as grove within a wood. In *Andreas*, the saint's vision of a blossoming grove prefigures the imminent expulsion of devils and the conversion of Mermedonia: *geseh hē geblōwene bearwas standan/blǣdum gehrodene* (1448-49a) 'he saw blossoming groves standing adorned with blossoms'.[262]

The ascetic narrator of *The Seafarer* retreats from a flourishing world that he describes in similar terms to the cities of the plain: *bearwas blostmum nimað, byrig fægriað,/wongas wlitigað* 'the groves take blossom, they beautify the cities, the plains become beautiful'. Psalm 104:32-33 refers to God's destruction of Egypt's horticulture and viticulture during the plagues: *et percussit vineam eorum et ficum eorum et confregit lignum finium eorum* 'and he destroyed their vines and their fig-trees and broke up the trees at their borders'.[263] The translator renders *furþor ne mihton/blǣda bringan ne bearwa trēow* (89b-90) 'they could not bring further of fruits nor trees of the groves' and surely intends to convey the idea of an 'orchard' or 'plantation' in collectively denoting the vineyards and fig-trees with *bearu*.

Other examples continue the idea of *bearu* as ideal avian dwelling. In *The Husband's Message* (23), the elegist speaks of *galan geomorne gēac on bearwe* 'the sorrowful cuckoo chanting in the grove'. Meanwhile, the concentration of examples in *The Phoenix* (×8) conflate the Edenic

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[259] Genesis 8:12
[260] Doane (2013), 339
[261] Hoffman (1968), 170; Caie (2000), 61-62. See also Songs of Solomon 4:12.
[262] North and Bintley (2016), 290-91
[263] Psalm 104:32-33

and avian aspects. Paradise is described with abundant arboreal vocabulary: *sindon þā bearwas blēdum gehongne/wlitigum wæstmum* (70) 'the groves are hung with leaves, with beautiful fruits'. It is well-lit: *sunbearo līxeð* (33b), *beorhtast bearwa* (80a), and well-watered: *foldan leccaþ/wæter wynsumu ... bearo ealne geondfarað* (64b-67b) 'winsome waters irrigate the ground ... they go completely through the grove'. The Phoenix is repeatedly described as the grove's natural occupant: *bearwes bigengan* (148a) 'grove's inhabitor', *wudubearwes weard* (152a) 'wood-grove's warden', *in scade weardað on wudubearwe* (168b-69a) 'in the shade he guards in a wood-grove', with *nest on bearwe* (432a) 'nest in a grove'.

This OE phraseology has been influenced by the distribution of *nemus* and *lucus* in the early fourth-century *De ave Phoenice*. For example, *bearwes bigengan* continues the substance of *hoc nemus, hos lucos avis incolit unica Phoenix* 'this woodland, these groves alone among birds the Phoenix inhabits'.[264] *Wudubearwes weard* might continue *antistes luci nemorumque verenda sacerdos* 'high-priest of the grove and revered priest of the woodlands', in light of the plausible pre-Christian import of *weard* as 'warden' of a sacred space (see Chapter 3 i *wēoh*).[265] In *The Phoenix*, *bearu* both harmonises Classical and Christian concepts of bucolic space and is used where the source explicitly conveys cultic resonances.

In *Beowulf*, Grendel's mere is depicted in relation to surrounding trees: *ofer þǣm hongiað hrinde bearwas* (1363) 'over it hang frosty groves'. Scholars have interpreted this as an 'evil garden' or anti-type of Paradise: the stream flowing into the pool surrounded by rock is a scriptural commonplace, but within a wintry landscape, the ice and frost symbolise Satan's cupidity as opposed to the warmth of charity in Paradise.[266] The present study argues that the Christianised uses of *bearu* for a *locus amoenus* or *horribilis* might have been inculturated into a traditional belief that the grove was inhabited by auspicious or divine powers.

Maxims II also presents a wilder impression: *wulf sceal on bearowe,/<earm> ānhaga,*(18b-19a) 'the wolf shall [dwell] in a grove, a poor lone-dweller' and continues the trope of a solitary inhabitant of a secluded place. The speaker of *The Wife's Lament* likewise dwells alone *on wuda bearwe/under āctrēo in þām eorðscræfe* (27b-28) 'in the woods in a grove, under an oak tree in a burrow'. In *Guthlac A*, the trope recurs in representation of the saint's hermitage:

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264 Lactant. Phoen. 31
265 Lactant. Phoen. 57
266 Robertson (1951), 33; Fulk et al. (2008), 201; Schrader (1983), 76-84

bimiþen fore monnum oþþæt meotud onwrāh/beorg on bearwe (145-46a) 'secluded from men, until the Measurer revealed a barrow in a grove'. In the source, the hermitage is an ancient *tumulus* with a cistern that was once plundered by grave-robbers.[267]

Bede's account of St. John of Beverley is a convincing analogue for an association between groves and grave-mounds within insular Anglo-Saxon practice. Situated at Acomb, just over a mile from Hexham across the Tyne, John's retreat (*mansio secretor*) was in a narrow grove (*nemore raro*) surrounded by earthworks (*vallo circumdata*). Bede's translator rendered this description *sumu deagol wiic mid walle & mid barwe ymbsealde* 'a certain secret settlement circumscribed with walls and with a grove'.[268] The area was dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel and Bede uses *clymeterium* to describe the building there. This noun is an unusual form that represents a corruption either of *coemeterium* 'grave-yard' or *oratorium* 'prayer-chapel'. The OE translator recognised the latter – *habbað þā wiic gebædhūs* 'the settlements have a prayer-house'[269] – but if the area was originally a burial-ground, John's retreat might have adapted a Wodenic cult-site.[270] The *History* provides further evidence for the imposition of ecclesiastical structures onto a pre-existing sacred grove. In 669, the Mercian king Wulfhere granted land to St. Chad for building a monastery, which became known as *Adbaruae*. Bede glosses this OE name *id est, Ad Nemus* 'that is "at the grove"' (*æt Bearwe*).[271]

The locative phraseology of the toponymy is important, because it suggests that speakers frequently referred to such places in connection with a cultural purpose, i.e. 'we are doing X "at the grove"' (see Chapter 3 i *æt Weodune*).[272] Similarly is recorded *Inderauuda* 'in the wood of the Deirans'.[273] The aristocratic identity of such 'mound groves' is also notable. It is unlikely that the Anglian king would have granted Chad poor land upon which to build a foundational Christian holy place. Wulfhere would have been intimately familiar with the important cult-sites of the aristocracy, having grown up in the staunchly heathen Mercia of his father Penda. These examples together suggest that Anglo-Saxon sacred groves were capable of being

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[267] *Vit.Guth.* 28, 25 *inter umbrosa solitudinis nemora solus habitare coepit* 'he began to dwell alone in shady groves of this solitude'. See also Roberts (1979), 132.
[268] Bede 5, 2.388.3; *HE* 5.2
[269] *HE* 5.2 (p. 202 note); Bede 5, 2.388.5; Mozley (1960), 578
[270] Blair (2005), 219; Yorke (2015), 173
[271] *HE* 4.3; Bede 4, 3.262.8; 7.280.28. See also *HE* 4.6; LS 3 (Chad), 54 (*æt bearwe*).
[272] Jente (1921), 9 *æt hearge* Harrow-on-the-Hill
[273] *HE* 5.2

subordinated to church infrastructure as the dominant type of Christian space, and that some groves would have continued as cult-sites in that capacity.

Bearu examples are also concentrated across seven Riddles, mainly those which might reasonably be dated between the time of Aldhelm and Bede.[274] The origins of the riddling tradition has long been debated. Latin literary models were available in Aldhelm's *enigmata* and Isidorian compendia. But vernacular influence cannot be discounted, because of the presence of phraseology and connotations that *bearu* shares with other poems. *Bearonæssas* 'grove-cliffs' are another avian dwelling in 57 'swallow'.[275] Collocation with *blēd* 'shoot', *bēam* 'tree' and *blōwan* 'bloom' occurs several times: 1 'storm' *þonne ic wudu hrēre,/bearwas blēdhwate, bēamas fylle* (8-9) 'when I disturb the quick-shooted groves, I fell the trees'; 30a 'cross' *ic eom ... bearu blōwende* (1-4) 'I am ... a blossoming grove' possibly implies the Resurrection. Just as *bearu* appears a traditional avian habitat, these examples additionally reveal it as the natural environment for an auspicious or distinguished tree.

Bearu also appears in another group as the location within which a precious resource is cultivated or produced. Riddle 53 'battering ram' opens with the declaration *ic seah on bearwe bēam hlifian,/tanum torhtne* (1-2) 'I saw a tree towering in a grove with bright branches', which is comparable with the tree-persona (*bēam*) of *The Dream of the Rood*. It is a distinguished tree, cut down in old age (*frōd dagum*), bound in bonds, and transformed by human hand into an instrument of warfare.

The collocation *brungen of bearwe* 'brought from a grove' in 21 'plough' and 27 'mead' (plural *bearwum*) is also very interesting. As with 'battering ram' and 'cross', the 'plough' is a wooden persona that has been brought from its natural habitat in a grove and wrought into an instrument by human skill. Moreover, the opening lines strikingly recall the worship of Nerthus among the ancient Anglii:[276]

> Ic snyþige forð
> **brungen of bearwe**,   bunden cræfte,
> wegen on wægne   hæbbe wundra fela

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[274] Salvador-Bello (2015), 15; Fulk (1992), 408
[275] All solutions from Salvador-Bello (2015).
[276] Tac. Germ. 40.3

(6b-8)

[I creep forth, **brought from a grove**, bound with skill, moved on a wagon, I have many wonders]

According to Tacitus' description, the deity was drawn out of a sacred grove in a covered wagon and processed throughout the surrounding country during the festivities. These lines suggest that cultural memory of this tradition was incorporated into the riddling occasion. Riddle 27 'mead' surely refers to honey, whether gathered naturally or from man-made hives that stood in woodland. This conclusion is further amplified if Riddle 80 can be interpreted 'drinking horn': *hæbbe mē on bōsm þæt on bearwe gewēox* (6) 'I have in my bosom what grew in a grove', which also refers to the mead in terms of honey that was presumably produced within a natural space.

Riddling traditions rely on condensed and arresting articulations of cultural currency. Much like a meme, they assume knowledge common to riddler and audience. With this traditional grounding, these riddles potentially convey aspects of a *bearu* that pre-Christian tradition would have regarded as essential and, furthermore, might have provided a basis for *bearu*'s poetic development. A bucolic type of grove may well have found its origins in bee-keeping, which would have required blossoming woodland. Bee-keeping had a long prehistory within ancient northern European cultures.[277] The production of mead has IE origins, and the protections afforded apiarists in Anglo-Saxon laws appear to show that these practices maintained a high social value.[278]

The Riddles also attest a traditional relationship between *bearu* and the production of culturally valuable objects. These products are *brungen of bearwum*, like the Germanic cultic objects *detracta lucis*, from an auspicious space that was also essential to identifying the object-persona's pedigree.[279] The ascription of personality to branch-idols might have been conceived in similar terms, whereby a 'tree-man' might be brought from his natural habitat and transformed ('brought to life') into a *wēoh* through ritual and skill; in this sense, the object-

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[277] Osborn (2006), 271-83; Storms (1948), 134; Strab. 4.5.5
[278] Williamson (1977), 216
[279] Tac. Germ. 7.2

persona was 'domesticated' within the community as a revered personality (*weorðian*) and looked after as a sacred object (*begangan*).

The archaeological evidence for branch-idols corroborates this interpretation of the poetic interest in the symbiosis between a *bearu* and human settlement. The branch-idols of Oberdorla were consistently made from the dominant species of the nearest small woodland: hazel, ash, maple, hawthorn, beech or linden.[280] Where Riddle 55 describes the rood-tree in terms of its genealogical pedigree (*æþelu*), the poet explicitly names arboreal ancestors in the manner of social personalities: *þǣr wæs hlin ond ācc ond se hearda īw/ond se fealwa holen* (9-10a) 'there was maple and oak and the hard yew and the fallow holly'.[281]

Bearu explicitly denotes a pagan grove a few times in prose, always with a Latin source. It occurs once in the *Dialogues* during the account of St. Benedict's destroying the groves of Apollo around Monte Cassino.[282] In the *Cura Pastoralis*, a quote from 2 Chronicles 19:3 is reproduced: *ðū ādydes ðā bearwas of Iudea londe* 'thou hast taken away the groves from the land of Judah', where *lucus* is a signifier for errant worship.[283]

Examples are most frequent in the *Letter of Alexander to Aristotle* (×7). *Bearu* glosses *nemus* and *lucus*, which both mainly denote woodland in this text, but occasionally imply sacred space. Persistent use of doublets for a single Latin noun is characteristic of this text.[284] Because the narrative setting is frequently wooded, *wudu* is a first choice, often supplemented by *bearu*. Three times, a couplet with plural *bearu* translates *nemus* where this Latin noun straightforwardly expresses the idea of woodland: *ceorfan ðā bearwas & þone wudu fyllan* 'cut down the groves and fell the wood';[285] *betweoh þā wudubearwas & þā trēo* 'between the wood-groves and the trees';[286] *geond þā bearwas & trēowu gongan* 'going through the groves and trees'.[287] When equated with plural *trēo*, *bearu* denotes a group of trees. Examples of *lucus* refer to the wondrous woods of India, and finally a sacred grove where Alexander worships the holy trees of the sun and moon.[288] This grove *divinum lucum* is first translated directly *þone*

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[280] Dušek (2002), 471

[281] Compare *Beowulf* 61: *Heorogar ond Hrōðgar ond Hālga til.*

[282] GD 2 (C), 8.121.20-25; *Dial.* 2.8.10

[283] CP, 46.355.5; *Reg.past.* 3.22 *abstuleris lucos de terra Juda* 'you have cut down the groves in the land of Judah'

[284] Orchard (2002), 132-33; Greenfield and Calder (1996), 99; Sweet (1954), 104

[285] Alex, 16.16-17; Epist.Alex. 16 *caedi nemus* 'woods to be cut down'

[286] Alex, 29.8; Epist.Alex. 29 *inuenimus nemora* 'we came into woods'

[287] Alex, 36.1; Epist.Alex. 36 *perambulare totum incipio nemus* 'I began to walk through the whole wood'

[288] Epist.Alex. 34-37

godcundan bearo 'the divine grove'.[289] Later unmodified *lucum* is rendered *þone hālgan bearo* 'the holy grove', where the noun's sacral connotations are emphasised.[290]

Classical Latin distinguished *lucus* as sacred grove from *nemus* as woodland and the split was generally (but not rigidly) maintained in Medieval Latin.[291] Early fifth-century definitions probably influenced medieval usages, with *lucus* denoting a 'multitude of trees with religious significance' and *nemus* a planned arboretum.[292] Bede only uses *nemus*. Elsewhere in the corpus (for example, in the *Dialogues*), *lucus* negatively implies pagan worship. The *Letter of Alexander* probably escapes this inflection, however, because it belongs to the tradition of marvels, in which pagan culture could be safely admired.

Some scholars have argued that the traditional *bearu* was analogous to non-cultic *nemus*.[293] The scarcity of explicit references to a cultic identity, however, probably reflect rehabilitation in poetry as 'bucolic' or 'special wooded place', once shorn of problematic connotations. Likewise, if ecclesiastical structures were built within former sacred groves, the wooded space would have continued to be used for religious purposes, with its sacral identity transferred to the new feature.

The glossaries also show a split between neutral *nemus* and cultic *lucus*. In Antwerp-London, *bearu* resolves both in the couplet *lucus et nemus*.[294] *Bearu* also translates another couplet *nemoribus et saltibus* in a collection of glosses to Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*, as well as *nemus* alone in Cleopatra.[295] The couplet from Aldhelm is the only example where *bearu* translates *saltus* 'wood-pasture' and corroborates the view that the noun traditionally implied practical usages, whether cultivation, timber-harvesting, bee-keeping or grazing.

Wudubearu is a frequent compound (×8) that normally denotes woodland at large. Other compounds denote tree species. In Rushworth and Lindisfarne, the consistent glossing of *oelebearu* for *olivetum* 'olive-grove' and also *palmbearwes* for *palmeti* in Cleopatra again

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[289] Alex 35.7; *Epist. Alex* 35
[290] Alex 37.12; *Epist. Alex* 37
[291] Lewis and Short (1879), 1082, 1200; Latham (1975), 1654
[292] Rüpke (2007), 275
[293] Gelling and Cole (2000), 222
[294] AntGl 4 (Kindschi), 217; AntGl 6 (Kindschi), 688
[295] AldV 13.1 (Nap), 1807; ClGl 1 (Stryker), 3218 and other examples.

relate *bearu* to orchards and tree-plantations.[296] There is an isolated reference to an *ācbearu* 'oak-grove' on an estate near Pitminster, Soms.[297] Another charter of 739 for land near Creedy, Devs. shows intriguing mythological references: *fram gryndelys pytte tō ȳfigbearo* 'from Grendel's pit (well?) to the ivy grove'; in the same boundaries are *Cāines æcer* 'Cain's field' and *egesan trēow* 'fearful tree'.[298]

The 20 certain *bearu* place-names are concentrated in the south-west.[299] Another group in the south-west are ambiguous, due to phonological conflation of *bearu* with *bær* 'swine pasture' and *beorg* 'barrow'.[300] *Bearu* differs from *holt*, which denotes a wood dominated by one species, and also from *grāf* (the etymon of 'grove'), which meant a 'wood of limited extent', later acquiring proprietary connotations. *Grāf* is very common in the Midlands, but absent from the south-west.[301] The locative of *Ad Baruae* probably underlies some toponyms, because their earlier forms show the *w* of oblique inflection.[302] Bede's *Ad Baruae* survives as Barrow upon Humber, and probably also Barton upon Humber three miles due west. Barton might have referred to a royal vill or *tūn* if it was established in the seventh century concurrently with St. Chad's monastery. Together with the evidence for *bēam*-sites, these places are all suggestive of a process by which the newly-Christianised aristocracy might have inculturated ecclesiastical infrastructure into the pre-existing sacred landscape.

Bearu constitutes the second member of a compound with nouns for animals and trees, for example Timbsbury, Soms. < *timber-bearu*.[303] These *bearu*-sites all relate to land-usage differently to the above examples, which suggest cultural rehabilitation. Proper nouns are also attested, for example Bagber, Dors. 'Bagga's Grove'. Most of these types of compounds occur in the south-west. There are two Anglian examples, but none in the southern and central east.

OHG comparanda for *baro* are scarce. The early testimony of *Abrogans* is very important, because the Latin definition *aruspes qui ad aras sacrificat* 'an augur, he who sacrifices at altars' is glossed *parauuari. de ze demo parauue ploazzit* 'grove-warden, he who sacrifices in

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[296] Matthew (Ru) 21:1 and other examples; Luke (Li) 19:29 and other examples; ClGl 3 (Quinn), 417
[297] S 440 (Birch 729), 5; S 475 (Birch 770), 5; S 1006 (Kemble 774), 20
[298] S 255 (Birch 1331), 2.6, 3.5
[299] See Appendix C (v) for *bearu* place-names.
[300] Hooke (2010), 127; Watts (2004), 51; Smith (1956) I, 22-23
[301] Hooke (2010), 127-28
[302] Watts (2004), 38. See Appendix C (v).
[303] Watts (2004), 540

a grove'.[304] This unambiguously shows that eighth-century Upper German speakers identified *baro* as a space of heathen ritual in particular terms.[305] Moreover, the ritual specialist is termed a *barowari* < **barwa-warjaz* 'grove-warden' or 'grove-defender', which again links wardenship of sacred space to the duties of a celebrant.

ON *bǫrr* 'conifer' differently denotes a single tree. This noun is confined to poetry, frequently within kennings for 'man', for example *bǫrr skjaldar* 'tree of shield' (warrior).[306] *Bǫrr* is also associated with bird-life, which opens the possibility of a shared tradition with *bearu*. In the fragmentary lay of Sigurðr, Gunnar ponders on the prophetic words exchanged by the raven and eagle *hvat þeir í bǫrvi báðir sǫgðu* 'what they both said in the tree'.[307] Given the difference between 'conifer' and 'grove, orchard', it is more likely the avian connotations reflect a common tradition than synchronic influence.

This discrepancy between ON 'conifer' and OE 'grove' might be resolved in light of IE comparanda. The *bearu* word-family is peculiar to Germanic and Slavic languages.[308] OCS *borъ* (pl. *borove*) 'coniferous forest, pine-tree' and Serbo-Croatian *bôr* 'pine tree' < **bʰoru-* probably reflect the *u*-stem from which PGmc **barwaz* < **bʰor-wo-* would have developed, apparently in relation to coniferous trees.[309] The semantics of the root **bʰer-* are unclear. It could mean 'carry', which would plausibly refer to a tree that bears fruit or pine-cones.[310] Alternatively, there is evidence for an identical root-form meaning 'prickle', which underlies OE *bere* 'barley' and ON *barr* 'grain' and (homonymous) 'pine-needle'.[311]

Recent authorities prefer to leave the question open.[312] The former etymology 'carry' is preferred here, because it resolves the OE evidence for fruit and flowering trees with wider evidence for conifers. PGmc **barwaz* might have denoted a tree that 'bore' produce, developing by metonymy 'single tree' > 'group of trees'.[313] For Anglo-Saxon heathenism, it is

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[304] StSG I, 37.33 (*Abrogans*) and other examples
[305] Helm (1953) II.2, 170
[306] *Atlamál in grœnlenzku* 30 (28)
[307] *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu* 17 (13) inferring Jónsson's emendation from *bǫðvi* in the Codex Regius.
[308] Kroonen (2013), 54; Orel (2003), 38; De Vries (1962), 70; Holthausen (1934), 18; Green (1998), 27
[309] Stang (1972), 15
[310] Jente (1921), 9
[311] De Vries (1962), 27,
[312] Kroonen (2013), 54; Orel (2003), 38
[313] Jente (1921), 9

reasonable to reconstruct the meaning 'group of trees', because little trace of the presumed earlier semantics survive and the OHG evidence also points to a space of worship.

To summarise, this study argues that the pre-Christian *bearu* denoted a group of trees that were interacted with for cultural and practical purposes. The OE evidence for a grove's precise religious significance is scanty. However, cultural resonances in poetry as a special, even auspicious natural space can be meaningfully interpreted with the unambiguous cultic meaning of OHG *baro* and wider analogues to justify reconstructing *bearu* as a traditional term for a space of worship. Tacitus implies that woodlands were used for ritual occasions, were tribal patrimony and were believed to be presided over by a divine being. These features cohere with the cultural resonances of *bearu* in a number of ways. The *bearu* is a dwelling place for a lone occupant; it is a productive place, where auspicious things originate and numinous processes occur; there is also evidence that a *bearu* might have been guarded, presumably because it was divine possession.

Woodland was also marked by human intervention for bee-keeping, the making of mead, fruit-picking, wood-gathering and wood-pasture. This latter purpose appears to have been especially important during the settlement period. As Della Hooke has shown, *lēah* 'woodland' denoted a larger tract of forest during this period that was used seasonally for woodland pasture, especially for feeding swine on acorns or beech nuts.[314] Place-names such as *Weogorena lēage* (Wyre Forest) and *Inderauuda* suggest the usage of such woodlands on a tribal scale. *Bearu*'s status within the heathen cultic system should be interpreted in light of two factors: its dual sacral-practical character, and residual cultural interest in the transformation of woodland resources into valuable man-made products. A settlement's use of woodland might have been regarded as a sacred relationship on this level, if daily activities, such as herding livestock or honey-harvesting, and more specialised tasks, such as the making of idols (*wēoh*) or other sacred objects (*cumbol*, *þūf*), were conducted under the patronage of a presiding deity.

This noun was largely neutralised of heathen connotations. This appears to have occurred on the ideological level through reduction to benign poetic tropes and inculturation with Christian literary analogues of Paradise and the *locus amoenus*. On the practical level, Bede's *History* and place-names hint that church-structures were constructed in pre-Christian groves. This

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[314] Hooke (2008), 369-70

would have transferred the site's religious identity to the new, focal building, while the *bearu* reverted back to nature.

v. Conclusions

The Christianisation of Anglo-Saxon spatial environments largely conforms to the model proposed by Markus for western Europe in the fourth century, in that the English church acquired a sacred topography in Britain through the subordination or incorporation of discrete pre-existing forms into the dominant, and more singular, ecclesiastical structure. During the conversion, therefore, the criterion for inculturation or marginalisation of pre-Christian spaces and structures probably first concerned a feature's compatibility with church layout and its effective rituals, rather than the ideological resonances, about which later authors (writing within an established ecclesiastical infrastructure) were more anxious. In this way, incorporated forms would have remained fit for purpose as accessory fixtures and spaces to Christianity's replacement rituals.

Wēofod and *bearu* demonstrate that compatibility probably determined the treatment of pre-Christian religious space rather than ideological categories. The *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* were adapted as the Christian sanctuary, despite their transparent relationship to idolatry. The pre-Christian **wīg-bedd* was arguably a turf-altar, its main function perhaps being to support a revered object (**wīg*) to which sacrificial offerings may have been brought; the archaeological evidence indicates that it was traditionally situated within a sacred enclosure in which other sacred objects might also have stood. To the first generations of Anglo-Saxon Christians, therefore, the practical differences between the turf-altar and church sanctuary may have been slight. More significant may have been the fact that they were now used as accessory fixtures for new, more effective replacement rituals. As religious space, a *bearu* might have been used for sacrifices, omen-seeking and perhaps other celebrations. These functions, however, apparently did not preclude the building of a church in a *bearu*, which brought replacement rituals, yet secured its continuing life as sacred space. With replacement rituals came replacement myths, as the Triune God succeeded the previous owners of these spaces.

Conversely, a *hearg* may have been incompatible first for want of formal compatibility between church fixtures and a stone-altar that functioned as a communal fire-place. In second place, the cults to which *hearg* was an accessory were almost certainly incompatible with Christianity's replacement ritual. The stone-altar plausibly stood in a large gathering place where seasonal festivities, relating to the agricultural calendar, might have been celebrated by large numbers of people, who might also have conducted other political or social business at the same occasion. These cults may also have primarily concerned Anglo-Saxon reflexes to the Vanir.

The missionaries appear to have been more accommodating to features of Æsir veneration than to the Vanir, staunchly rejecting Ingui (Freyr) as 'god of the world'.[315] On the cultic plane, the revelry that may have been associated with a *hearg* could find no place in the church, while the stillness of a *wēohsteall* and its possible usage (at least locally) for ancestor worship could be aligned with the dual identity of a church as sanctuary and burial ground. *Ealh*, meanwhile, as a type of cult-hall sat between these poles. With *hearg*, *ealh* may have been incompatible as a place where worldly activities took place, but its political dimensions in connection with sovereignty would have placed it outside the negative ideological categories that made *hearg* a target for prejoration. *Ealh* is arguably to be classed with other archaic cultural terms such as *þēoden*, which did not survive the transition from tribal leadership to Christian kingship.

Heathen Anglo-Saxons, therefore, knew a variety of ritual locations and encountered them for different reasons. The emphasis earlier scholarship gave to the grove seems best re-evaluated in terms of a productive relationship that human settlements had with the local woodlands that they daily used. It may also have been regarded as a sacred relationship, expressed through the ritualised translation of branches from tribal woodland to their new home in a *wēohsteall*, the enclosure of a settlement perhaps being conceived as a domestic counterpart to the grove.

It also seems important to appreciate that Anglo-Saxon heathenism had itself acquired a sacred topography in Britain not too long before the arrival of Christianity. It was observed at the outset of this study that Anglo-Saxon settlement appears to have been achieved by localised groups under disparate leaders, who gradually coalesced into larger polities. These conditions might imply their religious traditions were open to re-alignment, for want of a conservatising

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[315] North (1997a), 44-132, esp. 77.

influence analogous to the ancient cult-centres of Germania. Ecclesiastical inculturation of British sacred space might have been attractive to the leaders of the emerging Christian kingdoms, because it arguably offered cultic infrastructure on a larger scale than was possible during the settlement period, through which the *gens Anglorum* could define themselves as a new tribe in Britain.

Conclusions

i. Pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon Worship

This study began with the hypothesis that a heathen would have known 'religion' in terms of highly particular, discrete forms of speech and action that were recognised, according to custom, as effective for establishing (*wīan*) and maintaining (*bletsian*, *blōtan*) relationships with the divine realm, for harnessing its power in hope of a favourable outcome in the present (*hǣlsian*), and moreover obligatory for a community to perform regularly and attentively. Furthermore, it was proposed that the material dimensions of cult derived their 'religious' character in connection with such discrete forms of speech and action, whether in terms of an existence realised through ritual (*wēoh*), significance (*bēam*) as a tangible conduit to the divine realm, or recognition as the proper arena with which these activities were particularly associated (*hearg*, *ealh*, *bearu*).

Into this religious system, that was defined around such forms of effective speech and action as provided a means of securing human-divine relations, Christianity introduced, and then elevated, new practical categories which would have seemed unremarkable to a practising pagan in terms of their possessing any peculiarly religious character, less still as uniquely positive or negative actions. These include, namely, 'prayer' and monotheistic veneration, defined against their opposites 'sacrificial worship' and 'idolatry'. These conceptualisations emerged from the ideological critique of the norms of ancient religion that developed within ancient Judaism and is expressed throughout the Hebrew Bible. Sacrifice and the use of idols were fundamental, yet un-selfconscious features of pagan cult, while prayer and the giving of honour were incidental to any instrumental interaction with powerful personalities.

The foregoing analyses of this study have set out to test the hypothesis that Anglo-Saxon paganism conformed to a system of religion that was defined around special, discrete forms of speech and action, rather than conceptualisations; collectively, the lexical studies demonstrate that the semantic distribution of OE religious vocabulary largely reflects the contours of these competing definitions of religion, because the terms which maintain purely cultic meaning in the Christian sources, or appear etymologically to have known purely cultic pre-Christian usage, all relate to these particular speech forms and actions by which the divine was accessed, and the material dimensions within or whereupon which they took place. Conversely, precise vernacular equivalents are wanting in many cases for the Abrahamic categories that Christianity either introduced or emphasised as problematic (idolatry, sacrifice) or essential for maintaining a relationship with the Triune God (prayer, praise and worship). The semantics of the OE words that were chosen to render these latter concepts are always essentially non-cultic, mostly grounded in the realm of social relations (see Figure 5.1).
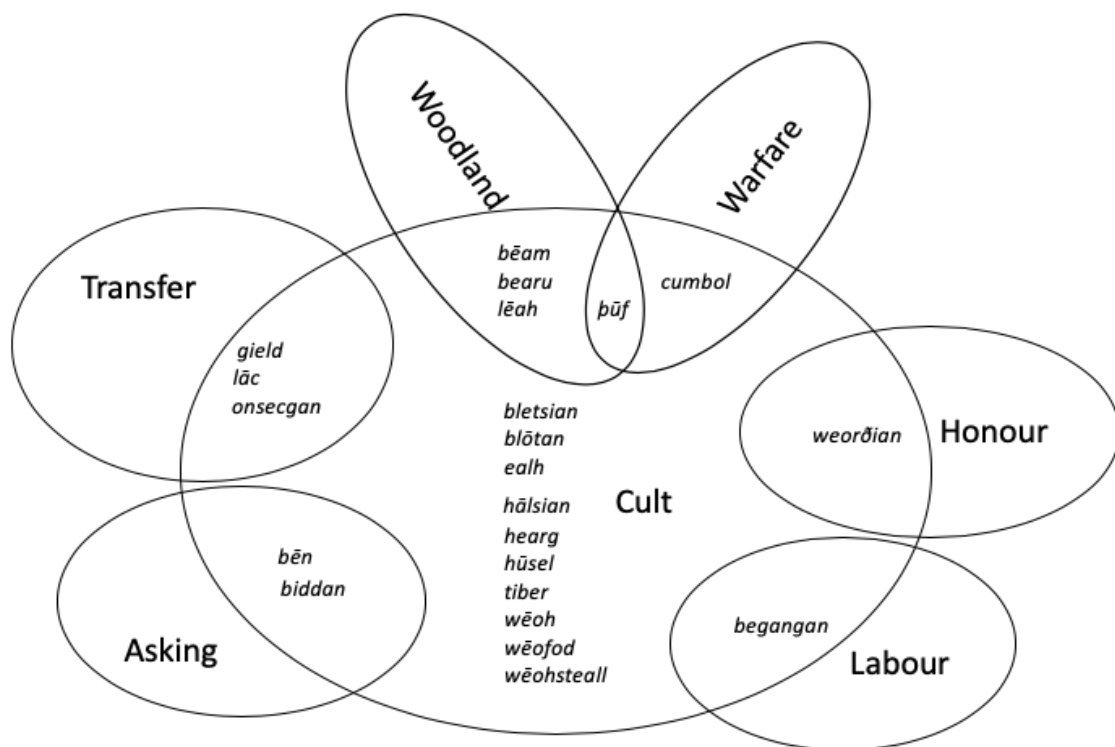

Figure 5.1: The pre-Christian semantic field of worship.

The absence from Anglo-Saxon heathenism of these conceptualisations that Abrahamic monotheism perceives is clear from the want of a collective OE term for 'sacrifice'. Seven

discrete words, rather, identify this central cultic practice in terms of its component parts. Four are exclusively cultic. This study has argued in the foregoing discussions that *bletsian* denoted the verbal ritual which made a sacrificial offering capable of transfer to the divine; if it was an animal, this also required a technical mode of slaughter (*blōtan*); *tīber* denoted the animal marked for ritual dispatch; *hūsel* meant the sacrificial meal, the sacral character of which was accrued through technical procedures (< *$\acute{k}$went-* 'consecrate'). *Gield* appears to have been the closest equivalent to a catch-all term analogous to MnE 'sacrifice' or 'sacrificial worship', although not only does the term cross over from the social sphere, but it apparently existed alongside *lāc* as another noun of transfer. Although Christian authors used *onsecgan* as a verb of consecration, it had non-religious meaning 'abjure, renounce' which also places it in the semantic field of transfer. If pressed for a conceptualisation, therefore, the heathen might have recognised 'sacrifice' as a legal transfer, but again in very particular terms, according to form and purpose either as a gift intended to establish a beneficial relationship or propitiate a favourable outcome (*lāc*), or alternatively as a form of tax, regularly payable by a community under customary law in order to maintain existing relationships with tribal gods (*gield*). What made sacrifice uniquely religious to the heathen was that specialised forms of speech and action were required in order to perfect such legal transfers, because they concerned divine and semi-divine beneficiaries.

Likewise, despite the essential role of sacred objects in pre-Christian cult, the heathen would almost certainly have found the idea of 'idol-worship' unintelligible or at best unremarkable. This is not only reflected by the Christian development of *dēofolgield* from a pre-Christian action noun, but, moreover, in the availability of two discrete verbs for 'worship'. *Weorðian* and *begangan*, both terms grounded in the social sphere, together indicate that a heathen would not have recognised sacred objects either as 'idols' or that they were 'worshipped' – for which reason *wīg wurðigean* (207b) in *Daniel* is almost certainly novel phraseology. To the heathen, sacred objects seem to have functioned as essential touchstones for accessing the divine and they owed this capacity as conduits to a uniquely religious act of consecration (**wīan*), while the personality behind the sacred object was reverenced in identical terms to the honour afforded a social superior (*weorðian*). Rather than being 'worshipped', a special object that had acquired such extraordinary properties was to be meticulously maintained, curated, and looked after. This is the precise import of *begangan*, which denotes this manner of careful and productive interaction with objects and fixtures. These actions were fundamental to cult, but un-self-conscious as 'religious' acts. What was remarkably religious about a sacred object was

that it had acquired these properties through a technical procedure of consecration and established contact with higher powers.

So too for 'prayer', a practice that Christianity and Judaism recognise as technically religious, the heathen system knew two verbs (*biddan*, *hālsian*). The fact of asking for something from a divine personality would have been unremarkable as a religious act, because *biddan*, as for *weorðian*, belongs to the semantics of social relations and describes the formal request made of a more powerful personality. Again, as far as a heathen knew prayer as a religious act, it was for the technical purpose of procuring a portent through lengthy, formalised invocation (*hālsian*) – 'babbling like pagans [with] many words'.

The role of 'money' in modern society might give a useful modern analogy for understanding how a heathen Anglo-Saxon might have received the peculiar focus that Christianity threw on fundamental features of his ancestral cults such as sacrifice and idol-worship. Money is essential to society's functioning; everyone knows its value and how to use it, but, excepting a small minority of economic theorists, most would not self-consciously label themselves a proud 'money-user'. What matters, rather, is how one uses money; its utility is self-evident and highly regarded, but un-self-conscious. A heathen, likewise, would have uneasily identified himself as a proud 'sacrificial worshipper' or 'idol-worshipper', although he knew the value of these practices intimately and unquestioningly. Moreover, he would have expected to encounter such practices among neighbouring peoples, whose cults and revered personalities differed from his own.

For several reasons, the present study argues that if pressed to define religion, an Anglo-Saxon heathen might have used the term *ǣ* (f, *ō*-stem), the traditional Germanic term for customary law, a meaning that close cognates OFris. *ēwe*, OS *ēo* and OHG *ēwa* also reflect, with a more distant cognate in Latin *ius* (n) 'law, legal right': the parity in their meaning is evidence for the antiquity of these semantics.[1] It is also etymologically identical to Gothic *aiws* and forms in the other WGmc languages meaning 'age, eternity', which show that customary law was perceived as venerable tradition inherited from time immemorial. Firstly, the marked degree of cross-over between cultic and non-cultic semantic fields that characterises the distribution of OE religious vocabulary supports this view that the norms governing human-divine relations

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[1] Kroonen (2013), 16; Lehmann (1986), 22

were not regarded as inherently separate from those governing social relations. The essentially tribal and communal nature of pagan religious identity supports this integrated view of religious culture.

Furthermore, the fact that *gield* primarily refers to payments mandated under *æ*, its application to sacrifice strongly indicates that public cult was regulated by such traditions; the two nouns are coupled in the OHG phrase *gotes gelt ł ēhalti* 'sacrificial worship of a god and custom' glossing *caerimonia*;[2] the *Lex Salica* and *Lex Frisionum* indicate, respectively, that sacrificial animals and sanctuaries were protected under such laws; Anglo-Saxon authors regularly used *ǣ* to translate the idea of the Mosaic Law and the Gospels, which combine social and religious norms. Finally, this idea that cult fell under law coheres with the probable absence of a priesthood from Germanic culture. Rather, the figures of authority appear to have been analogous to judges, such as the Icelandic *goði* and Frisian *āsega* 'law-speaker', elected by and from among the *goðar*. Such legal-religious celebrants or mediators may well have administered the customary laws which managed social relations in the same capacity as performing the vital verbal actions that managed divine relations.

An outline of the system of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon worship may thus be proposed. Communities might have owned sacred, open-air enclosures (*wēohsteall*) demarcated by a wicker fence. Within were perhaps displayed special wooden objects fashioned from branches (*wēoh*), sometimes being raised on a turf-bed that was held together by a wicker frame (*wēofod*). In local settlements, these objects may have been semi-divine ancestral figures, and perhaps tribal divinities in larger sanctuaries. Votive offerings (*lāc*) could be verbally consecrated (*bletsian*) and then legally transferred (*onsecgan*) to these divine beings to secure their friendship, whereupon requests could be made (*biddan*). The offerings were probably brought directly into the enclosures. Together with these personal acts, it was also necessary to maintain the enclosures and the special wooden objects, all such interactions (*begangan*) befitting the reverence afforded the personalities accessed therein (*weorðian*). According to tradition (*ǣ*), the enclosures were guarded (*weardian*) by men in service of the local chieftain.

The curated objects may have been harvested from a designated woodland (*lēah*) that several settlements would have used communally, with their translation from the woods being a ritual

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[2] StSG I, 651.66 (Ezekiel 44:5)

occasion (*wīan) of translation from natural (bearu) to domestic sacred space. These woods might also have enjoyed the divine protection of a tribal god and other semi-divine personalities, perhaps revered through selected trees (bēam); traditional symbols by which the community identified itself publicly in warfare (þūf, cumbol) could also have been fashioned from these trees. It is possible too that forms of divination (hālsian) took place in the groves.

At traditional times, several communities may have gathered in a larger, open area around a stone fire-altar (hearg) to worship tribal gods, celebrate seasonal festivities, and conduct other business under law. In the insular Anglo-Saxon context, these might have been the settlement groups in a surrounding area that formed a small polity. Designated animals (tīber) may have been ritually consecrated (bletsian) and slaughtered (blōtan) at such occasions and then legally transferred to a deity (syllan). These victims might have been ear-marked from a protection herd. The meat was possibly stewed (sēoðan) and consumed (hūsel) either near the enclosures or in the presence of the special wooden objects and parts of the animal deposited therein. In a royal burh, similar more exclusive festivities might have taken place within a designated cult-hall (ealh). These communal festivities might have been recognised as obligatory tributes payable under customary law to the divinities (gield). At other obligatory times, omens would be sought through ritual in these larger, designated tribal spaces (hālsian) on behalf of the community. The ritual of these larger occasions may have been conducted by local chieftains or a king, who knew and administered the customary law (ǣ).

ii. The Christianisation of Old English Vocabulary

Christianisation interfered with the heathen cultic system in two ways. First, it introduced a polarising ideological definition of 'right' worship against its opposite in forbidden practices. Second, and in tandem with this ideological premise, it introduced novel conceptions of religious practice, around which the vernacular terminology was re-distributed. In re-defining religion thus, the effect was to dismantle the interrelationships between pre-Christian cultural features and re-organise them according to concepts that were previously marginal. Thus disintegrated, pagan words were either inculturated with Christian semantic content and rehabilitated with a new status in this system, or marginalised from it, likewise losing their former status, but moreover acquiring wholly pejorative connotations that shrunk their

semantic function to that of a negative token. Another class of terms simply shed any explicit associations with religious activity. *Wēoh*, *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* are emblematic of these disruptions. Interdependent in the heathen system, together they describe a sacred enclosure. Following Christianisation, their interrelationship became dispensable. Likewise, *gield*, once reduced to negative semantic token, its relationship to sacrifice was distorted and it adopted significance as 'idol' which would have been entirely foreign to the pre-Christian noun's meaning.

The competing conceptions of worship inherent to Abrahamic ideology broadly appear to have governed this three-way split at the later stages of Christianisation. The essential practices of prayer and veneration motivated the inculturation of *biddan*, *weorðian* and *begangan*, bringing them to the fore with new status and developing them as technical religious terms, where previously they were primarily social and incidental to cult.

Inculturated terms that were essentially cultic in the heathen system include *bletsian*, *hālsian*, *hūsel*, *wēofod* and *wēohsteall*; it is likely that they were secured at an early stage on the basis of available analogies in Christian ritual. *Bletsian* and *hūsel* were arguably monopolised to convey the Eucharist as a replacement sacrificial ritual. *Hālsian* could have been analogised with invocation of the Triune God and his saints and presented a replacement ritual to pagan portents in apostolic miracle-working; *wēofod* and *wēohsteall* describing the sacred enclosure could replicate the function of an ecclesiastical sanctuary.

The promulgation of sacrifice and idolatry as negative ideological concepts plausibly increased during the later stages of Christianisation and motivated active marginalisation and semantic pejoration of other terminology. *Tīber*, *blōtan* and *gield* were probably condemned at this stage for their associations with communal festivities, which might have been tolerated in reduced form during the conversion period. Because *lāc* denoted a more personalised form of transfer, as well as a wider range of objects that were brought into a sacred enclosure, it was capable of rehabilitation with donations to the church and further ideological inculturation within Christian literature. *Onsecgan* likewise might have been saved as a sacrificial term, because it was a legal means of alienating property rather than technical ritual procedure. *Hearg* and *ealh* were both marginalised, primarily because they could not be incorporated into the layout of a church, but also because the ritual activities that took place in these arenas were, in ecclesiastical terms, worldly and incompatible with Christianity's definition of worship. *Hearg*

was pejorated, apparently presenting a versatile token for the pagan spaces encountered negatively in Christian texts. *Ealh* fell into obscurity as a cultural term with outdated religio-political meaning.

As the closest vernacular equivalent to an idol, *wēoh* was unsurprisingly marginalised, arguably because it was identified with a divine or semi-divine personality. The other cult-foci *cumbol*, *þūf* and *bēam* may have been saved, by contrast, because they partook of other semantic fields within which they retained a more restricted existence. Furthermore, it is unclear whether *cumbol* and *þūf* were touchstones to divine personalities or rather auspicious symbols that fit uneasily into the ideological category of idolatry, especially if restricted to thoroughly acceptable contexts of war and kingship. *Bēam* and *bearu* reverted to nature.

Finally, it seems highly significant that, excepting *hūsel* and *bletsian*, all of the inculturated terms maintained the capacity to express aspects of pagan worship. This reflects the church's attitude to ensure, as far as possible, a smooth transition into the new religion by presenting Christianity as the legitimate, improved successor to the old tribal cults. The condition of *hūsel* and *bletsian* is arguably explicable on the basis that they represent the only genuine continuations of heathen religion, defined in its own terms as a series of effective and discrete forms of speech and action. For this reason, they could not safely be shared, because they were fundamental to demonstrating the efficacy of the new cult in terms which the old recognised.

It may further be concluded that the earliest priorities of missionaries would have been to demonstrate the power of the Triune God over its heathen opponents, to take over their sacred spaces, and to familiarise the population with the new cult's basic, transformative rituals - baptism, the Eucharist and miracles – in terms that heathens recognised as potent and perhaps as having been in their traditional cults all along; because it would have been urgent to enfeeble the old cults, any indication that they too possessed effective ritual was inadmissible. It is plausibly at this time and for these reasons that **wīan* fell into abeyance, once the church decided to adopt *hālig* alone for the sacred.

The condition of *dēofolgield* also seems to corroborate this scenario as a negative term that was arguably originally coined to describe sacrifice in pointed terms as 'payment to the devil', without explicit reference to idolatry, but rather to deal with the tribal gods. Semi-divine ancestral figures, however, remained redeemable in their true character as analogous to, and

then identical with, lost Israelites, safely to be commemorated by poets and genealogists, and prayed for among the host of the saved. A scripturally-derived definition of heathen cult in terms of 'idol-worship' and 'pagan error' succeeded this initial attitude, with the establishing of ecclesiastical infrastructure and education. But first, the missionaries had to deal with heathenism on its own terms, which meant identifying the major tribal gods as a demonic host, monopolising their sacrifices and bringing their sanctuaries under new ownership – out with the old, in with the new.

Appendix A
Analogues

i. Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.30 (Colgrave, ed. and trans. 1969, 56-57)

Cum ergo Deus omnipotens vos ad reverentissimum virum fratrem nostrum Augustinum episcopum perduxerit, dicite ei, quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractavi: videlicet quia fana idolorum destrui in eadem gente minime debeant; sed ipsa quae in eis sunt idola destruantur; aqua benedicta fiat, in eisdem fanis aspergatur, altaria construantur, reliquiae ponantur: quia si fana eadem bene constructa sunt, necesse est ut a cultu daemonum in obsequio veri Dei debeant commutari; ut dum gens ipsa eadem fana sua non videt destrui, de corde errorem deponat, et Deum verum cognoscens ac adorans, ad loca quae consuevit, familiarius concurrat.

Et quia boves solent in sacrificio daemonum multos occidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollemnitas immutari: ut die dedicationis, vel natalitii sanctorum martyrum quorum illic reliquiae ponuntur, tabernacula sibi circa easdem ecclesias quae ex fanis commutatae sunt. de ramis arborum faciant, et religiosis conviviis sollemnitatem celebrent; nec diabolo iam animalia immolent, et ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant: ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reservantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius valeant.

Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus vel passibus non autem saltibus elevatur. Sic Israelitico populo in Ægypto Dominus se quidem innotuit; sed tamen eis sacrificiorum usus quae diabolo solebat exhibere, in cultu proprio reservavit, ut. eis in suo sacrificio animalia immolare praeciperet; quatenus cor mutantes, aliud de sacrificio amitterent, aliud retinerent: ut etsi ipsa essent animalia quae offerre consueverant, vero tamen Deo haec et non idolis immolantes, iam sacrificia ipsa non essent.

[However, when Almighty God has brought you to our most reverend brother Augustine, tell him what I have decided after long deliberation about the English people, namely that the idol temples of that race should by no means be destroyed, but only the idols in them. Take holy water and sprinkle it in these shrines, build altars and place relics in them. For if the shrines are well built, it is essential that they should be changed from the worship of devils to the service of the true God. When this people see that their shrines are not destroyed they will be able to banish error from their hearts and be more ready to come to the places they are familiar with, but now recognizing and worshipping the true God.

And because they are in the habit of slaughtering much cattle as sacrifices to devils, some solemnity ought to be given them in exchange for this. So on the day of the dedication or the festivals of the holy martyrs, whose relics are deposited there, let them make themselves huts from the branches of trees around the churches which have been converted out of shrines, and let them celebrate the solemnity with religious feasts. Do not let them sacrifice animals to the devil, but let them slaughter animals for their own food to the praise of God, and let them give thanks to the Giver of all things for His bountiful provision.

Thus while some outward rejoicings are preserved, they will be able more easily to share in inward rejoicings. It is doubtless impossible to cut out everything at once from their stubborn minds: just as the man who is attempting to climb to the highest place, rises by steps and degrees and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the Israelites in Egypt; yet he preserved in his own worship the forms of sacrifice which they were accustomed to offer to the devil and commanded them to kill animals when sacrificing to him. So with changed hearts, they were to put away one part of the sacrifice and retain the other, even though they were the same animals as they were in the habit of offering, yet since the people were offering them to the true God and not to idols, they were not the same sacrifices.]

ii. Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*, 5. 16.5-6 (Zangemeister, ed. 1889; Fear, trans. 2010)

5. hostes binis castris atque ingenti praeda potiti nova quadam atque insolita exsecratione cuncta quae ceperant pessum dederunt; 6. vestis discissa et proiecta est, aurum argentumque in

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flumen abiectum, loricae virorum concisae, phalerae equorum disperditae, equi ipsi gurgitibus inmersi, homines laqueis collo inditis ex arboribus suspensi sunt, ita ut nihil praedae victor, nihil misericordiae victus adgnosceret.

[5. After capturing the two Roman camps and a vast amount of booty, the enemy destroyed everything that they had laid their hands upon in some new, unexpected form of curse. 6. Clothing was ripped up and discarded, gold and silver thrown into the river, the men's armour was torn apart, the horses' harness scattered and the horses themselves drowned in the river, while the men had nooses tied round their necks and were hanged from trees. In this way the victor knew no booty nor the vanquished any mercy.]

iii. Sidonius Apollinaris, Letter to Namatius, 8, 6.13-15 (Anderson, trans. 1965, 428-33)

13 Cum quo dum tui obtentu aliquid horarum sermocinanter extrahimus, constanter asseveravit nuper vos classicum in classe cecinisse atque inter officia nunc nautae, modo militis litoribus Oceani curvis inerrare contra Saxonum pandos myoparones, quorum quot remiges videris, totidem te cernere putes archipiratas: ita simul omnes imperant parent, docent discunt latrocinari. unde nunc etiam ut quam plurimum caveas, causa successit maxuma monendi.

14. Hostis est omni hoste truculentior. inprovisus aggreditur praevisus elabitur; spernit obiectos sternit incautos; si sequatur, intercipit, si fugiat, evadit. ad hoc exercent illos naufragia, non terrent. est eis quaedam cum discriminibus pelagi non notitia solum, sed familiaritas. nam quoniam ipsa si qua tempestas est huc securos efficit occupandos, huc prospici vetat occupaturos, in medio fluctuum scopulorumque confragosorum spe superventus laeti periclitantur.

15. Praeterea, priusquam de continenti in patriam vela laxantes hostico mordaces anchoras vado vellant, mos est remeaturis decimum quemque captorum per aquales et cruciarias poenas plus ob hoc tristi quod superstitioso ritu necare superque collectam turbam periturorum mortis iniquitatem sortis aequitate dispergere. talibus se ligant votis, victimis solvunt; et per huiusmodi non tam sacrificia purgati quam sacrilegia polluti religiosum putant caedis infaustae perpetratores de capite captivo magis exigere tormenta quam pretia.

[13. I spent some hours with him (a messenger) in conversation about you, and he constantly affirmed that you had recently sounded the trump of war in the fleet and, in discharging the duties now of a sailor, now of a soldier, were roving the winding shores of Ocean to meet the curving sloops of the Saxons, who give the impression that every oarsman you see in their crew is a pirate-captain – so universal is it for all of them simultaneously to issue orders and obey orders, to teach brigandage and to learn brigandage. Even now there has cropped up a very strong reason for warning you to be specially on your guard against danger from them.

14. That enemy surpasses all other enemies in brutality. He attacks unforeseen, and when foreseen he slips away; he despises those who bar his way, and he destroys those whom he catches unawares; if he pursues, he intercepts; if he flees, he escapes. Moreover, shipwreck, far from terrifying them, is their training. With the perils of the sea they are not merely acquainted – they are familiarly acquainted; for since a storm whenever it occurs lulls into security the object of their attack and prevents the coming attack from being observed by victims, they gladly endure dangers amid billows and jagged rocks, in the hope of achieving a surprise.

15. Moreover, when ready to unfurl their sails for the voyage home from the continent and to lift their gripping anchors from enemy waters, they are accustomed on the eve of departure to kill one in ten of their prisoners by drowning or crucifixion, performing a rite which is all the more tragic for being due to superstition, and distributing to the collected band of doomed men the iniquity of death by the equity of the lot. Such are the obligations of their vows, and such the victims with which they pay their obligations. Polluting themselves by such sacrilege rather than purifying themselves by such sacrifices, the perpetrators of that unhallowed slaughter think it a religious duty to exact torture rather than ransom from a prisoner.]

iv. Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis* 4.26-28 (Schmeidler, ed. 1917, 257-60; Tschan, trans. 1959)

26. Nobilissimum illa gens templum habet, quod Ubsola dicitur, non longe positum ab Sictona civitate vel Birka. In hoc templo, quod totum ex auro paratum est, statuas trium deorum venerator populus, ita ut potentissimus eorum Thor in medio solium habeat triclinio; hinc et inde locum possident Wodan et Fricco. Quorum significations eiusmodi sunt: 'Thor', inquiunt, 'presidet in aere, qui tonitrus et fulmina, ventos ymbresque, serena et fruges gubernat. Alter

Wodan, id est furor, bella gerit hominique ministrat virtutem contra inimicos. Tercius est Fricco, pacem voluptatemque largiens mortalibus.' Cuius etiam simulacrum fingunt cum ingenti priapo. Wodanem vero sculpunt armatum, sicut nostril Martem solent; Thor autem cum sceptro Iovem simulare videtur. Colunt et deos ex hominibus factos, quos pro ingentibus factis immortalitate donant, sicut in *Vita sancti Ansgarii* legitur Hericum regem fecisse.

[26. That folk has a very famous temple called Uppsala, situated not far from the city of Sigtuna and Björkö. In this temple, entirely decked out in gold, the people worship the statues of three gods in such wise that the mightiest of them, Thor, occupies a throne in the middle of the chamber; Wotan and Frikko have places on either side. The significance of these gods is as follows: Thor, they say, presides over the air, which governs the thunder and lightning, the winds and rains, fair weather and crops. The other, - Wotan – that is, the Furious – carries on war and imparts to man strength against his enemies. The third is Frikko, who bestows peace and pleasure on mortals. His likeness, too, they fashion with an immense phallus. But Wotan they chisel armed, as our people are wont to represent Mars. Thor with his scepter apparently resembles Jove. The people also worship heroes made gods, whom they endow with immortality because of their remarkable exploits, as one reads in the *Vita* of Saint Ansgar they did in the case of King Eric.]

Scholion 138 (134): *Sictona*
Prope illud templum est arbor maxima late ramos, semper viridis in hieme et aestate; cuius illa generis sit, nemo sit. Ibi etiam est fons, ubi sacrificial paganorum solent exerceri et homo vivus inmergi. Qui dum non invenitur, ratum erit votum populi.

[Near this temple stands a very large tree with wide-spreading branches, always green winter and summer. What kind it is nobody knows. There is also a spring at which the pagans are accustomed to make their sacrifices, and into it to plunge a live man. And if he is not found, the people's wish will be granted.]

27. Omnibus itaque diis suis attributos habent sacerdotes, qui sacrificia populi offerant. Si pestis et fames imminent, Thor ydolo lybatur, si bellum, Wodani, si nuptiae celebrandae sunt, Fricconi. Solet quoque post novem annos communis omnium Sueoniae provintiarum sollempnitas in Ubsola celebrari. Ad quam videlicet sollempnitatem nulli prestatur immunitas. Reges et populi, omnes et singuli sua dona transmittunt ad Ubsolam, et, quod omni pena

crudelis est, illi, qui iam induerunt Christianitatem, ab illis se redimunt cerimoniis. Sacrificium itaque tale est: ex omni animante, quod masculinum est, novem capita offeruntur, quorum sanguine deos tales placari mos est. Corpora autem suspenduntur in lucum, qui proximus est templo. Is enim lucus tam sacer est gentilibus, ut singulae arbores eius ex morte vel tabo immolatorum divinae credantur. Ibi etiam canes et equi pendent cum hominibus, quorum corpora mixtim suspense narravit mihi aliquis Christianorum LXXII vidisse. Ceterum neniae, quae in eiusmodi ritu libationis fieri solent, multiplices et inhonestae, ideoque melius reticendae.

[For all their gods there are appointed priests to offer sacrifices for the people. If plague or famine threaten, a libation is poured to the idol Thor; if war, to Wotan; if marriages are to be celebrated, to Frikko. It is customary to solemnize in Uppsala, at nine-year intervals, a general feast of all the provinces of Sweden. From attendance at this festival no one is exempted. Kings and people all and singly send their gifts to Uppsala and, what is more distressing than any kind of punishment those who have already adopted Christianity redeem themselves through these ceremonies. The sacrifice is of this nature: of every living thing that is male, they offer nine heads, with the blood of which it is customary to placate gods of this sort. The bodies they hang in the sacred grove that adjoins the temple. Now this grove is so sacred in the eyes of the heathen that each and every tree in it is believed divine because of the death or putrefaction of the victims. Even dogs and horses hang there with men. A Christian seventy-two years old told me that he had seen their bodies suspended promiscuously. Furthermore, the incantations customarily chanted in the ritual of a sacrifice of this kind are manifold and unseemly; therefore, it is better to keep silence about them.]

Scholion 146 (137): *novem capita*
Novem diebus commessationes et eiusmodi sacrificia celebrantur. Unaquaque die offerunt hominem unum cum ceteris animalibus, ita ut per IX dies LXXII fiant animalia, quae offeruntur. Hoc sacrificium fit circa aequinoctium vernale.

[Feasts and sacrifices of this kind are solemnized for nine days. On each day they offer a man along with other living beings in such a number that in the course of the nine days they will have made offerings of seventy-two creatures. This sacrifice takes place about the time of the vernal equinox.]

v. Snorri Sturluson, *Hákonar saga góða* 14 (Jónsson, ed. 1893 I, 186.12-187.1-18; Finlay and Faulkes, trans. 2016, 98)

Sigurðr Hlaða-jarl var hinn mesti blótmaðr, ok svá var Hákon faðir hans; helt Sigurðr jarl upp blótveizlum ǫllum af hendi konungs þar í Þrœndalǫgum. Þat var forn sidr, þá er blót skyldi vera, at allir bœndur skyldu þar koma, sem hof var, ok flytja þannug fǫng sín, þau er þeir skyldu hafa, meðan veizlan stóð. At veizlu þeiri skyldu allir menn ǫl eiga; þar var ok drepinn allz konar smali ok svá hross, en blóð þat allt, er þar kom af, þá var þat kallat hlaut, ok hlautbollar þat, er blóð þat stóð í, ok hlautteinar, þat var svá gǫrt sem stǫkklar, með því skyldi rjóða stallana ǫllu saman, ok svá veggi hofsins útan ok innan, ok svá stǫkkva á mennina en slátur skyldi sjóða til mannfagnaðar; eldar skyldu vera á miðju gólfi í hofinu ok þar katlar yfir; skyldi full um eld bera, en sá er gerði veizluna ok hǫfðingi var, þá skyldi hann signa fullit ok allan blótmatinn, skyldi fyrst Óðins full – skyldi þat drekka til sigrs ok ríkis konungi sínum – en síðan Njarðar full ok Freys full til árs ok friðar. Þá var mǫrgum mǫnnum títt, at drekka þar næst Braga full, menn drukku ok full frænda sinna, þeira er heygðir hǫfðu verit, ok váru þat minni kǫlluð. Sigurðr jarl var manna ǫrvastr; hann gerði þat verk, er frægt var mjǫk, at hann gerði mikla veizlu á Hlǫðum ok helt einn upp ǫllum kostnaði.

[Sigurðr Hlaðajarl was very keen on heathen worship, and so was his father Hákon. Jarl Sigurðr maintained all the ritual banquets on behalf of the king there in Þroendalǫg. It was an ancient custom, when a ritual feast was to take place, that all the farmers should attend where the temple was and bring there their own supplies for them to use while the banquet lasted. At this banquet everyone had to take part in the ale-drinking. All kinds of domestic animals were slaughtered there, including horses, and all the blood that came from them was then called *hlaut* ('lot'), and what the blood was contained in, *hlaut*-bowls, and *hlaut*-twigs, these were fashioned like holy water sprinklers; with these the altars were to be reddened all over, and also the walls of the temple outside and inside and the people also were sprinkled, while the meat was to be cooked for a feast. There would be fires down the middle of the floor in the temple with cauldrons over them. The toasts were handed across the fire, and the one who was holding the banquet and who was the chief person there, he had then to dedicate the toast and all the ritual food; first would be Óðinn's toast – that was drunk to victory and to the power of the king – and then Njǫrðr's toast and Freyr's toast for prosperity and peace. Then after that it was common for many people to drink the *bragafull* ('chieftain's toast'). People also drank

toasts to their kinsmen, those who had been buried in mounds, and these were called *minni* ('memorial toasts'). Jarl Sigurðr was the most liberal of men. He did something that was very celebrated: he held a great feast at Hlaðir and stood all the expenses.]

vi. Preamble to Trial by Ordeal (LawIudDei VIII, 2-2.1 cold water)

Ic hālsie ðē, man, þurh ūres Drihtnes geflǣscnysse hǣlendes Crīstes & þurh þises wæteres dōm & þurh þā hālgan untōdǣlendlican þrȳnnysse & þurh þā hālgan englas & hēahenglas & þurh ealle Godes hālgan & þurh þone ondryslican dōmes dæg & þurh þā fēower & twentig gecorenra, ðe dæghwāmlīce God heriað, & þurh þā twelf apostolas & þurh ealle hālige þroweras & ealle andetteras & ealle hālige fǣmnan & þurh ealle þā heofonlican mægenðrymmas & þurh þā hālgan þrȳ cnihtas, þe dæghwāmlīce God heriað, & þurh ðā hunteontig & fēower & fēowertig þūsenda þrowera, þe for Godes naman cwylmede wǣron, & þurh þæt fulluht, ðe þū on gefullod wǣre,
Þæt, gyf ðū ǣnig ðing ðisse stale wite oððe gewita wǣre, ðonne gedylegie ðīn heorte, & þis wæter ðē ne underfō.

[I entreat thee, person, through the incarnation of our Lord Saviour Christ and through the judgment of this water and through the holy inseparable trinity and through the holy angels and archangels and through all God's saints and through the terrible Judgment Day and through the 24 chosen who praise God daily and through the 12 apostles and through all the holy martyrs and all confessors and all holy women and through all the heavenly hosts and through the holy three boys who daily praise God and through the 144,000 martyrs who were killed in God's name and through the baptism which you were baptised in, that if you should know anything about this theft or were a witness, then your heart shall perish and this water shall not receive you.]

vii. Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.13 (Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans. 1969, 286-87)

Statimque abiecta superstitione vanitatis, rogavit sibi regem arma dare et equum emissarium, quem ascendens ad idola destruenda veniret. Non enim licuerat pontificem sacrorum vel arma ferre, vel praeter in equa equitare. Accinctus ergo gladio accepit lanceam in manu, et ascendens

emissarium regis, pergebat ad idola. Quod aspiciens vulgus, aestimabat eum insanire. Nec distulit ille, mox ut adpropiabat ad fanum, profanare illud, iniecta in eo lancea quam tenebat: multumque gavisus de agnitione veri Dei cultus, iussit sociis destruere ac succendere fanum cum omnibus septis suis. Ostenditur autem locus ille quondam idolorum non longe ab Eburaco ad Orientem, ultra amnem Doruventionem, et vocatur hodie Godmunddingaham, ubi pontifex ipse inspirante Deo vero polluit ac destruxit eas quas ipse sacraverat aras.

[And at once, casting aside his vain superstitions, he asked the king to provide him with arms and a stallion; and mounting it he set out to destroy the idols. Now a high priest of their religion was not allowed to carry arms or to ride except on a mare. So, girded with a sword, he took a spear in his hand and mounting the king's stallion he set off to where the idols were. The common people who saw him thought he was mad. But as soon as he approached the shrine, without any hesitation he profaned it by casting the spear which he held into it; and greatly rejoicing in the knowledge of the true God, he ordered his companions to destroy and set fire to the shrine and all the enclosures. The place where the idols once stood is still shown, not far from York, to the east, over the river Derwent. Today it is called Goodmanham, the place where the high priest, through the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he himself had consecrated.]

Appendix B
Charter Boundaries

i. *wēoh*

S 235

Grant by King Cædwalla of the West Saxons to Cedde, Cisi and Criswa of 60 hides at Farnham, Surrey for the foundation of a minster, including 10 at Binton and 2 at Churt, and land at *Cusanwēoh*, *besingahearh* c. 685×687 (Whitelock 1979, 484-85)

S 382

Confirmation by King Edward to Winchester Cathedral of 60 hides at Farnham, Surrey and 10 hides at Bentley, Hants. c. 909.

> *Swā tō dīcgeate, þonan tō wēolēage, ðæt tō colriðe*
> 'Thus to the dyke-gate, thence to the shrine-woodland, then to the coal-thicket(?)' (Birch II, 627, 301.7)

S 578

Grant by King Edgar to Ælfgar of 3 hides *æt Wēonfelda* (Wokefield, Berks.) c.946×951.

> *In illo loco ubi iamdudum solicole illius regionis nomen imposuerunt æt Wēonfelda*
> 'In that place where long since farmers(?) of the region imposed the name *æt Weonfelda*' (Birch III, 888, 46.9-11)

S 942

Grant by King Æthelred to the church of St. Peter and All Saints, South Stoneham, Hants. of 10 hides at Hinton Ampner, Hants. c.990×992.

Ðanan andlang mearcæ on wēolēage. Of wēolēage on ðonæ grēatan hlinc

'Thence along the borders to the shrine-wood. From the shrine-wood to the large bank' (Kemble 712, 5-6)

S 1007

Grant by King Edward to Ælfwine, bishop of Winchester, of 8 hides at Hinton Ampner, Hants. c.1045.

Of ðām beorga on wēolēage. Of wēolēage on Wulfredes wyrð

'From the mound to shrine-wood. From shrine-wood to Wulfred's thicket' (Kemble 780, 13)

S 1040

Confirmation by King Edward to Westminster Abbey of 1 hide at Weedon, Bucks. granted by Siward the monk c. 1065.

et æt Wēodūne āne hide (Widmore 1743, Appendix no. 2, p. 17.12)

ii. *bēam* and *trēow*

S 276

Grant in 826 by King Egbert of Wessex to the minster of St. Peter and St. Paul, Winchester of 20 hides at Droxford, Hants.

on þonæ grēatan bēam þonne on þunres lēa middæweardæ

'to the large tree then to the middle of Thunor's wood' (Birch I, 393, 548.16)

S 283

Grant in 824 by King Ecgbert of Wessex to Wulfheard praefectus of 22 hides on the river Meon, Hants.

swā anlang hagan þið on ceorles bēame

'thus along the enclosure thence to the farmer's tree' (Birch I, 377, 515.3-4)

S 331

Grant in 862 by Æthelberht, King of Wessex and Kent to Dryhtwald minister of 10 sulungs at Bromley, Kt. See also S 864 (Kemble 657, 5-6).

be modinga hema mearce tō earnes bēame ðanne fram earnes bēame

'by the border of the Moding's boundaries to the eagle's tree, from the eagle's tree' (Birch II, 506, 114.5-6)

S 377

Confirmation in 909 by King Edward the Elder to Frithestan, Bishop of Winchester of 20 hides at Overton with woodland at Tadley, 15 hides at Waltham, and 5 hides at Bradley, Hants.

þæt ofær ēa on clofenan hlinc, þanan on bēam lēage, swā on āc hangran

'then over the river to the divided bank, then to the *bēam*-wood, thus on to the oak meadow' (Birch II, 625, 298.4-5)

S 382

Confirmation in 909 by King Edward to Frithestan, Bishop of Winchester of 60 hides at Farnham, Sry. and 10 hides at Bentley, Hants.

swā tō Wulfredes bēam ðæt tō brȳdelādes forda

'so to Wulfred's tree then to the bride's ford' (Birch II, 627, 301.5)

S 446

Grant in 939 by King Æthelstan to his sister Eadburh of 17 hides at Droxford, Hants.

on þonæ grēatan bēam of þām bēamæ on þunres lēa middæ weardnæ

'to the large tree, from the large tree to the middle of Thunor's wood' (Birch II, 742, 460.17-18)

S 513

Grant in c.944×946 for life by King Edmund to Queen Æthelflæd of 100 hides at Damerham and Martin, Hants., and Pentridge, Dors., with reversion to St. Mary's, Glastonbury.

and þanne tō þan ellene bēm
'and then to the elder tree' (Birch II, 817, 581.17)

S 534
Grant in 948 by King Eadred to Ælfthryth of 8 hides on the Isle of Purbeck, Dors. 948.

Ārest fram picanforð on bēam brōc
'First from pitch-ford to the tree-brook' (Birch III, 868, 13.1)

S 607
Grant on 13 February 956 by King Eadwig to Æthelwold abbot of woodland at Hawkridge, Berks. for the building of a church at Abingdon.

on þæne hagan þonne on crīstelmǣlbēam þæt andlang hagan on þa þornihtan leage
'to the enclosure then to the crucifix-tree, thence along the enclosure to the thorny woodland' (Birch III, 919, 87-88.2-3)

S 726
Grant in 964 by King Edgar to Beorhtnoth of 2 hides at Cookley, Wolverley, Worcs.

of ðan beorhge on Cūðredes trēow. Of ðan trēowe on þā dīc
'from the barrow to Cuthred's tree. From the tree to the dyke' (Birch III, 1134, 1-2)

S 754
Grant in 967 by King Edgar to Wynflæd of 8 hides at East and West Meon and Farnfield, Privett, Hants.

Of þām mere on ðone twisledan bēam. Of þām twisledan bēame on ceorla geat ... of þǣre ǣc andlang dene on coggan bēam of coggan bēame on wytlēahe

'From the pond to the forked tree. From the forked tree to the farmers' gate ... from the oak along the valley to Cogga's tree, from Cogga's tree to the wood' (Birch III, 1200, 6-9)

S 756

Grant in c.958×968 by King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey of 72 hides at Bedwyn, Wilts..

> *Þonne on þone hleadreadan bēam þonne on harmmes dene geat*
> 'Then to the laddered-tree, then to (Birch III, 1213, 13)

S 786

Grant in 972 by King Edgar to Pershore Abbey of privileges and restoration of land relating to many estates, including *Beornoðes lēahe*, Worcs.

> *of codran tō sȳl bēame of sȳl bēame tō crome* (Birch III, 1282, 97)
> 'from the Codra stream to the column-tree, from the column tree to Croma stream'

S 811

Renewal of charter in c.959×963 by King Edgar to Eadgifu his grandmother concerning 65 hides at Meon, Hants.

> *on þone grēatan mearc bēam on þām wuda lace*
> 'to the large boundary-tree on to the wood-lake' (Birch III, 1319, 21)

S 820

Grant in c. 973×974.by King Edgar to Old Minster, Winchester of 45 hides at Crondall, Hants.

> *Ðon on lilles bēam* (Birch III 1307, 15)
> 'then to Lill's (?) tree'

S 916

Grant in 1007 by King Æthelred to St. Albans Abbey of land at Norton, 1 hide at Rodanhangra and land at Oxhey, Herts.

Of þǣre lēge in tō cūðhelming bēam. Of þām bēame in on þā stīgele

'From the wood in to the Cuthelming tree. From the tree on to the stile' (Napier and Stevenson, 11, 16)

S 1031

Grant in 1060 by King Edward to Westminster Abbey of 10 hides of common land at Wheathampstead, Herts.

fram plumstīgele tō þām hole bēame. Fram hole bēame tō gilmere

'from the plum-stile to the holly tree. From the holly tree to the pond' (Gover et al. 1938, 313.5-6)

S 1180

Grant on 11 July 724 by Æthelberht son of King Wihtred of Kent to Abbess Mildrith of one sulung by the river Limen and meadow at Hammespot in Romney Marsh, Kt.

brunes [brimes] bēam

'Brune's(?) tree' (Birch I, 141, 1, 207.3 and footnote 7)

S 1602

Bounds of 8 hides of land at *-felesbrōc* (incomplete).

on gerihte tō iii bēamum. Of iii bēamum tō Wonboge

'straight ahead to three trees. From three trees to small-arch(?)' (Ker 1957, 370c, 441-42.3)

Appendix C

English Place-Names

i. *wēoh*

Cusanwēoh, Hants.

Patchway Field, Hants.

Weedon, Bucks.

Weedon Bec, Northants.

Weedon Lois, Northants

Upper Weedon, Northants.

Weeford, Staffs.

Wellington, Shrops.

Weondun, Ches.

Weoley, Worc.

Weyhill, Hants.

Whyly, Ssx.

Whiligh, Ssx.

Willey, Hants.

Wokefield Park, Berks.

Wye, Kt.

Wyeville, Lincs.

Wyfordby, Lincs.

Wyham, Lincs.

Wysall, Notts.

ii. *bēam*

Bamford, Derbs.

Bampton, Cumb.

Bampton, Oxon. (The Beam)

Beam Hill, Staffs.

Bemblowe Furlong, Longney, Gloucs.

Bempton, Humb.

Bemwick, Cambs.

Benfleet, Esx.

Bladbeam, Kt.

Kirkbampton, Cumb.

iii. *hearg*

Arrowfield Top, Worcs. (?)

Besingahearh, Sry.

Harradines, Cuckfield,

Harrow Hill, Brington, Northants.

Harrow (Harry) Hill, Ssx.

Harrow-on-the-Hill, Mx.

Harrow Field, Hinckley, Leics.

The Harrows, Harting, Hants.

Harrow Barrow, Old Hutton, Cu.

Harrowden, Beds.

Harrowden, Northants.

Harrowdown Field, Birdbrook, Esx.

Harrowick, Beds.

The Harris, Buriton, Ssx.

Mount Harry, Hamsey, Ssx.

Mount Harry, Brighton, Ssx.

Peper Harrow, Su.

iv. *ealh*

Alkham, Kt.
Ealhfleot, Kt.
Puttanealh, Wilts.

v. *bearu*

Bagber, Dors.
Barrasford, North. (< *Barwis-ford* 'ford of the grove')
Barraclough, Lancs. (< *bearwe + clōh* 'ravine at the grove')
Barrow, Shrops.
Barrow upon Soar, Leics.
Barrow upon Trent, Derbs.
Great Barrow, Cheshs.
Barrow upon Humber (*ad barue*), Humbs.
Barrow, Suff.
Barrow Gurney, Soms.
North Barrow, Soms.
South Barrow, Soms.
Harrowbarrow, Corn.
Ogbeare Corn.
Plumber, Dors.
Shebbear, Dors.
Sedgeberrow Worcs.
Sherbarrow, York West.
Timbsbury, Soms.

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