

**Rhetoric or Reform: Investigating the role of monks within the
pastoral care of the laity at Winchester during the tenth-century
Benedictine Reform**

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Introduction

The king [...] used the royal authority to order the canons to choose one of two courses: either to give place to the monks without delay or to take the habit of the monastic order¹

This extract depicts King Edgar (r. 959 - 975) ordering the secular clergy of the Old Minster at Winchester to either surrender their place in the minster to monks, or to become monks themselves. This order was given in 964, and was part of the Benedictine Reform movement that called for a revival of ‘correct’ monastic practice within the Anglo-Saxon church.² With the support of King Edgar, the three main leaders of the reform - Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury (909 - 988), Archbishop Oswald of York and Worcester (925 - 992), and Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester (909 - 984) – all monks themselves, sought to place Benedictine monks or nuns in minster churches “on the assumption that these had all originally been Benedictine”.³

Scholars are currently debating the effects of the Benedictine Reform within different contexts of Anglo-Saxon England.⁴ This thesis seeks to contribute to this debate by investigating the impact of the Benedictine Reform at Winchester under Bishop Æthelwold’s episcopacy (963 - 984). Winchester was an important ecclesiastical and royal centre at the

¹ Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and transl. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), chapter 18, pp.32-33.

² Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ch.18, pp.32-33.

³ J. Barrow, ‘The ideology of tenth-century English Benedictine “reform”’, in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. P. Skinner (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp.141-54, p.146.

⁴ See for instance, S. Foot, ‘Women and the tenth-century monastic revolution’, in *Veiled Women, vol. 1: The Disappearance of Nuns from Anglo-Saxon England* ed., S. Foot (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp.85-110; J. Barrow, ‘Clergy serving local churches 800-1200’, in *The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, their Families and Careers in North-Western Europe, c.800-c.1200* ed. J. Barrow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp.310-343; J.M. Pope, ‘Monks and Nobles in the Anglo-Saxon Monastic Reform’, in *Anglo-Norman Studies XVII Proceedings of the Battle Conference* ed. C. Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994-5), pp. 165-80.

time, and Æthelwold was one of the main instigators of the reform movement.⁵ Æthelwold's activities are seen by scholars as being particularly radical during this period, so investigating Winchester reveals not only the potential extremes of the reform movement, but also the nature of the Benedictine propagandist rhetoric.⁶ In particular, the focus of the investigation is on the impact that the Benedictine Reform had for the pastoral care of the Winchester laity. Before King Edgar's order, the secular clergy had looked after the spiritual needs of the laity through activities such as baptism, preaching, hearing confession, issuing penance, visiting the sick and dying, and burying the dead. Following the removal of the secular clergy under the Benedictine Reform and their replacement by a monastic community (who traditionally strove for seclusion from society), there is an ambiguity as to how the spiritual needs of the laity were met. Central to this thesis is the question of who looked after the pastoral needs of the laity at Winchester during the Benedictine Reform. The attention of this thesis will be primarily on the monks, as the monks and minsters are the focus of the sources themselves. Investigating the extent to which they were involved in pastoral matters will reveal whether the division of secular and monastic clergy was as strict as King Edgar's order suggests. In addition, it will illuminate what the nature of monasticism was under Æthelwold, and what characterised the relationship between the monastic clergy and the laity of Winchester.

⁵ For Winchester see M. Biddle, 'Felix Urbs Winthonia: Winchester in the age of monastic reform', in *Tenth-Century Studies: essays in commemoration of the millennium of the Council of Winchester and the 'Regularis Concordia'* ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore, 1975), pp.123-40. For Æthelwold see B. Yorke, ed., *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1988).

⁶ The study of the rhetoric used by the reformers and the way that it reflected or ignored the lived reality of the reform is an area of study that deserves further study. J. Barrow has shown the reality of clerical life, although not necessarily in relation to the Benedictine Reform, in her book *The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, their Families and Careers in North-West Europe, c.800-c.1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Of more relevance is F. Tinti's reconstruct of the nature of the monastic community at Worcester during the Benedictine Reform, see *Sustaining Belief: The Church of Worcester from c.870 to c.1100* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2010).

Contextualising

The Benedictine Reform arguably centres around the interpretation of the word *monasterium*. Prior to the tenth century, *monasteria* (monasteries, minsters) was a term used to denote communities of clergy, whether they were withdrawn from society as contemplatives (monks, hermits, nuns: ‘monastic clergy’), or not (priests, deacons: ‘secular clergy’).⁷ Within the seventh and eighth centuries in Anglo-Saxon England, minsters commonly contained a mix of monastic and secular clergy. During the ninth century, the compositional balance of the communities seems to have shifted, with there being an increased focus on the pastoral guidance of the laity, and as such, on the activity of the secular clergy. The pastoral activities of the secular clergy were vital for the spiritual health of the laity, and as pastoral care was cheap to provide and was supported by authoritative ecclesiastics, many of the minsters were taken over by bishops in this period. Indeed, by the beginning of the tenth century, “the minsters of Anglo-Saxon England seem to have been mostly staffed by communities of [secular] clergy”.⁸

This situation was a cause for growing discord, as the secular clergy were increasingly viewed as undisciplined, uncommitted, and inconsistently educated, and therefore unable to ensure correct ecclesiastical practice. In Wulfstan of Winchester’s *Life of St Æthelwold*, the secular clergy are characterised as being

involved in wicked and scandalous behaviour, victims of pride, insolence, and riotous

living to such a degree that some of them did not think fit to celebrate mass in due order.

⁷ Barrow, ‘The ideology of tenth-century English Benedictine “reform”’, p.143; see also T. Pickles, ‘Church Organization and Pastoral Care’ in *A Companion to the Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland, c.500-1100* ed. P. Stafford (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp.160-76, p.168.

⁸ Barrow, ‘The ideology of tenth-century English Benedictine “reform”’, p.143; see also J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp.344-45.

They married wives illicitly, divorced them, and took others; they were constantly given to gourmandizing and drunkenness⁹

In order to raise the standard of the liturgy, the reformers strove to cleanse the clergy through ‘monasticising’ them.¹⁰ As well as having a unified religious practice in observing the *Regula Sancti Benedicti*, monks were seen to be undistracted, unsullied, and better disciplined than the secular clergy, and hence more able to ensure the salvation of souls.¹¹ Further to this, some reformers desired to establish minsters as solely monastic communities. Bishop Æthelwold interpreted *monasterium* as, at its root, a Benedictine notion, and thought that “they all ought to be brought back to a state of ascetic purity”.¹² This led to the sharp distinction of the concepts of ‘secular’ and ‘monastic’ clergy as seen in the 964 order given by King Edgar at Winchester’s Old Minster, and ultimately resulted in Æthelwold completely replacing the secular clergy within the Winchester minsters with monks during that same year.¹³

There are three points here that deserve further discussion: the issue of distinction between ‘secular’ and ‘monastic’ notions; the meaning of monasticism; and the unique quality of Æthelwold’s approach to the Benedictine Reform. Of the first point, the interpretation of the Benedictine Reform as the time in which a distinction can be made between ‘secular’ and ‘monastic’ communities is too simplistic. It does not consider regional variation and nuance, and Catherine Cubitt has suggested that distinctions between monastic

⁹ Wulfstan, *Life of Æthelwold*, ch.16, pp.30-31.

¹⁰ For a discussion of this term as more appropriate than talking of the Benedictine ‘reform’ see Barrow, ‘The ideology of the tenth-century English Benedictine “reform”’, p.154.

¹¹ Barrow, ‘The ideology of tenth-century English Benedictine “reform”’, pp.144-45.

¹² J. Barrow, ‘English cathedral communities and reform in the late tenth and eleventh centuries’, in *Anglo-Norman Durham 1093–1193*, ed. D. Rollason, M. Harvey and M. Prestwich (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 25–39, p.35.

¹³ See Wulfstan, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ch.18, pp.32-33 (see ch.20, pp.36-37 for the expulsion of secular clergy at the New Minster).

and secular clergy can be found earlier, in the works of Bede.¹⁴ Cubitt shows that Bede's use of the words *clericus* and *monachus* denote his understanding of them as distinct and different terms, in the same way that he does not use *ecclesia* or *monasteria* as interchangeable notions.¹⁵ As such, whilst the Benedictine Reform saw a period of renewed focus on the distinctions between secular and monastic clergy, this was not a novel concept.

Regarding the second point, nuance is also needed in establishing the role of the monk within medieval society. The original notion of monasticism, rooted in the Desert Fathers, was one of withdrawal from society and seclusion. In modern historiographical tradition, scholars have subsequently placed monks at the periphery of medieval society – recognising them as an important aspect of, but removed from, the wider population.¹⁶ Dom Knowles supports this theory in stating that throughout the tenth to the thirteenth centuries “the monks of England took no share whatever in the work of preaching or administering the sacraments to layfolk outside the walls of the monastery”.¹⁷ Knowles also stated that “the normal abbey church and cathedral monastery was intended primarily for the use of monks, and was in no sense a parish church”.¹⁸ These theories are being increasingly challenged as scholars have recognised that in reality, monastic involvement in lay society was unavoidable. First was Frank Barlow's recognition that “it became not unusual for monasteries to supplement the parochial work of a sparse and sometimes remiss priesthood”, especially as it became

¹⁴ C. Cubitt, ‘The clergy in Early Anglo-Saxon England’, *Historical Research* 78 (2005): 273-87. See also F. Tinti, ‘Looking for local priests in Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Men in the Middle: Local Priests in Early Medieval Europe* ed., S. Patzold and C. van Rhijn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), pp.145-61, and S. Foot, ‘Anglo-Saxon minsters: a review of terminology’, in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* ed., J. Blair and R. Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.212-25.

¹⁵ C. Cubitt, ‘The clergy in Early Anglo-Saxon England’, p.275, 279.

¹⁶ This can be seen in the work of D.D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: a history of its development from the times of St Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council, 940-1216* (2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). An early work that questioned this notion but that seems to have been neglected by scholars is that of M. Chibnall, ‘Monks and pastoral work: a problem in Anglo-Norman history’, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 18 (1967): 165-72.

¹⁷ Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, p.595.

¹⁸ Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, p.595.

increasingly common for monastic oblates to advance to priesthood.¹⁹ Thomas Amos recognised that the Rule of St Benedict doesn't actually stipulate a withdrawal from society, and that in fact, St Benedict himself may have been in regular contact with his local laity.²⁰ Sarah Foot then acknowledged the extent of the paradox of Anglo-Saxon monasticism in that "however much individual monks might aspire to forsake the things of the world and live apart in contemplation and devotion, in practice no religious institution of which record survives were completely isolated from the lay society of their locality".²¹ She went further to state that as far as she could see, there was no apparent incompatibility "between being a monk and performing sacramental functions for the laity", or in monks being involved in activities outside of the monastic community.²² As such, it would seem that a comprehensive reassessment into the roles of monks within Anglo-Saxon society is needed; this thesis can only hope to contribute an insight into the situation at Winchester.

Of the last point, it is clear that the complete removal of the secular clergy and their replacement by monastic clergy at the Winchester minsters under Bishop Æthelwold was an exceptional occurrence. Scholars such as David Parsons, and more recently Mark Atherton, have shown that in comparison to the reforming activities of Dunstan and Oswald, Æthelwold's approach to the reform was particularly radical: Parsons suggested that there was "a serious difference of opinion between Dunstan and Oswald, the moderates, on the one hand, and Æthelwold and his adherents, the radicals, on the other, about the pace and rigour of the reform".²³ In the reformed houses of Dunstan and Oswald, the change from a secular to

¹⁹ F. Barlow, *The English Church, 1000-1066: a history of the later Anglo-Saxon church* (2nd ed. London-New York: Longman, 1979), p.334, as noted by M. Clayton, 'Homiliaries and preaching in Anglo-Saxon England', *Peritia* 4 (1985): 207-50, pp.233-34.

²⁰ T.L. Amos, 'Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages', in *Religion, Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Richard. E. Sullivan* ed. T.F.X. Noble and J.J. Contreni (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), pp.165-80 – the whole article is relevant to this point.

²¹ Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon minsters', p.217.

²² Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon minsters', p.217.

²³ D. Parsons, ed., *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and 'Regularis Concordia'* (London-Chichester: Phillimore and Co., 1975), p.3; M. Atherton, *The Making of England: A New History of the Anglo-Saxon World* (London-New York: I.B.Tauris & Co, 2017). See

a monastic clergy was a slow and gradual transition, with the communities living together in unison.²⁴ In comparison, at Winchester there is an emphasis within the medieval contemporary works of there being a complete transition from secular to monastic clergy within the minsters during 964.²⁵

In addition to these points is one final contextual matter that needs to be outlined: the rapid increase in the number of local churches throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries. This is the subject of various studies and is a matter of great historiographical debate, however at its most basic, the increase in the number of local churches broke up the larger ecclesiastical territories of the minsters and led to the modern 'parish' system.²⁶ This also saw an increase in the numbers of clergy being based in small manorial households and private, or local, churches. These developments fundamentally altered the organisation of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

These various considerations show the complexity of studying the Benedictine Reform. As implied, scholarship focussing on the Benedictine Reform itself is vast, with numerous studies existing on its origin, development, and impact on later Anglo-Saxon society.²⁷ In line

also A. Gransden, 'Traditionalism and Continuity during the Last Century of Anglo-Saxon Monasticism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40:2 (1989):159-207. For a further comparison into the different approaches of the reformers according to their historiographers see C.T. Riedel, 'Debating the role of the laity in the hagiography of the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon Benedictine Reform', *Revue Bénédictine* 127:2 (forthcoming): 315-46. I would like to thank C.T. Riedel for kindly sharing this article with me ahead of its publication.

²⁴ M. Atherton, *The Making of England*, pp.229, 252: "[...] it cannot be too often emphasised that Dunstan, though clearly a reformer, was flexible in terms of the kind of community he liked to build; unlike Æthelwold's exclusive communities of monks Dunstan allowed both clerics and monks to cooperate alongside each other." See also D.T. Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation' in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and 'Regularis Concordia'* ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore and Co., 1975), pp.37-59, p.41: "Oswald's gradual introduction of monks into his cathedral church or Worcester can hardly have begun before 972 at the earliest".

²⁵ See for instance, Wulfstan, *Life of Æthelwold*, ch.18 and ch.20, pp.32-33, 36-37.

²⁶ J. Blair, *The Church*. This hypothesis stems from the 'minster debate' – for further reading see E. Cambridge and D. Rollason, 'Debate: the pastoral organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church: a review of the 'Minster Hypothesis'', *Early Medieval Europe* 4:1 (1995): 87-104; J. Blair, 'Debate: ecclesiastical organization and pastoral care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 4:2 (1995): 193-212; F. Tinti, 'Introduction', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp.1-16.

²⁷ For a brief outline of the Benedictine Reform see J. Barrow, 'The ideology of the tenth-century English Benedictine "reform"'. For a concise introduction into the historiography of the Benedictine Reform, see N. Robertson, 'The Benedictine Reform: Current and Future Scholarship', *Literature Compass* 3 (2006): pp. 282–99; C. Cubitt, 'Review Article: The Tenth-Century Benedictine Reform in England', *Early Medieval Europe* 6 (1997): 77–94; Y. Hen, 'Review Article: Liturgy and Religious Culture in late Anglo-Saxon England', *Early*

with more general historiographical trends, scholarship has tended to focus on the ‘macro’ concepts of situating the Benedictine Reform within wider Anglo-Saxon politics,²⁸ ecclesiastical contexts,²⁹ and European trends³⁰. Interest in the ‘micro’ focus is increasing, however, with investigations into the effects of the reform in particular localities, or among those of a lower social standing revealing a fluid and adaptable quality to the reform.³¹ This thesis shall be more in line with the latter, as it specifically focuses on Winchester, and the reform under the episcopacy of Bishop Æthelwold.

Approach

Pastoral care is increasingly being understood by scholars as a valuable approach from which to witness the religious experiences of the laity and comprehend societal relationships.³² ‘Pastoral care’ is a term that has been variously defined, but ultimately it

Medieval England 17 (2009): 329-42. See also M. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); J. Barrow, ‘The ideas and application of reform’, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity III: Early Medieval Christianities, 600-1100*, ed. T.F.X. Noble and J.M.H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 345-62; J. Barrow, ‘The chronology of the Benedictine ‘Reform’, in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations* ed. D. Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp.211-33.

²⁸ Pope, ‘Monks and Nobles in the Anglo-Saxon Monastic Reform’, pp. 165-80; D. Scragg, ed., *Edgar, King of the English 959-975: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), esp. Part IV ‘Edgar and the Monastic Revival’.

²⁹ M. Chibnall, ‘Monks and pastoral work: a problem in Anglo-Norman history’, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 18 (1967): 165-72; H.R. Loyn, ‘Church and State in England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries’, in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millenium of the council of Winchester and ‘Regularis Concordia’*, ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore and Co., 1975), pp.94-102.

³⁰ P. Wormald, ‘Æthelwold and His Continental Counterparts: Contact, Comparison, Contrast’, in *The Times of Bede: Studies in Early English Christian Society and its Historian*, ed. P. Wormald and S. Baxter (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), pp.169-206; S. MacLean, ‘Monastic reform and royal ideology in the late tenth century; Ælfthryth and Edgar in continental perspective’, in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1987-1947)*, ed. D. Rollason, C. Leyser, H. Williams (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp.255-274.

³¹ A.R. Rumble, ‘The laity and the monastic reform in the reign of Edgar’, in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975* ed. D. Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp.242-251; J. Wilcox, ‘Ælfric in Dorset and the landscape of pastoral care’, in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp.52-62.

³² F. Tinti, ed., *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005). Much of the scholarship prior to Tinti’s work focussed on the early medieval period, of the seventh to the ninth centuries, or on the later medieval period, of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. For the former see J. Blair and R. Sharpe, ed., *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), especially chapter 6: A. Thacker, ‘Monks, preaching and pastoral care in early Anglo-Saxon England’, pp.137-70. See also C. Cubitt, ‘Pastoral care and religious belief’, in *A Companion To Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland c.500-1100* ed. P. Stafford (Chichester: Blackwell, 2009), pp.395-413; J. Smith, ‘Religion and Lay Society,’ in *The New*

encompasses “all the activities carried out by the clergy to assist and support the spiritual life of the laity”, and was a fundamental part of medieval life.³³ Pastoral activities central to medieval society, such as baptism, burial, confession, and penance, relied on the involvement of a priest. As such, there is a natural allusion to an exchange of information and a place of contact between the clergy on the one hand, and the laity on the other. In many cases, this pastoral contact is the only glimpse that can be had of people that are elsewhere lacking representation in medieval sources such the poor, the illiterate, and the undocumented, and it also illuminates the expectations for the clerics who carried out the care. In addition, whilst much is known about medieval religious practice in theory through sources such as charters, councils, and liturgical documents, this may not be a true reflection of how religious practice was carried out in reality. The question remains as to how much the medieval prescriptive ideals align with the lived, flexible reality of religious practice. Studying pastoral care through a wide variety of textual and material sources gives an insight into the actuality of religious practices, with sources painting a scene of diverse, regionalised, and fluid rituals. The study of matters of pastoral care can therefore potentially give a valuable insight into the reality of religious practice at a lower level of society.

Francesca Tinti has raised questions as to the implications of the Benedictine Reform for pastoral care. In particular, she highlights the fact that “[...] it does not seem possible that all the priests who had taken monastic vows subsequently gave up their pastoral functions, otherwise not enough people would have been left to take care of the urban population’s needs”.³⁴ In addition, Tinti emphasises the paradox that the three main leaders of the

Cambridge Medieval History II: c.700-c.900, ed. R. McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.654-678. For the latter see C. Gunn and C. Innes-Parker, ed. *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2009). See also F. Tinti ‘Looking for local priests in Anglo-Saxon England’.

³³ Tinti, ‘Introduction’, p.1.

³⁴ F. Tinti, *Sustaining Belief: The Church of Worcester from c.870 to c.1100* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), pp.245-6.

Benedictine Reform, Dunstan, Oswald, and Æthelwold, despite their efforts of establishing monastic communities with the connotations of seclusion and withdrawal from society, “had episcopal responsibilities”. Although they had all taken monastic orders themselves, their roles as bishops and archbishops implicitly involved them in lay matters.³⁵ These observations were catalysts for this thesis, as they show just how much is still unknown about the Benedictine Reform from the perspective of pastoral care. In conjunction with the need for a reassessment of the roles of monks within medieval society, this thesis hopes to illuminate the ways that the monks were (and were not) involved in the pastoral care of the laity during the Benedictine Reform, and the consequences that this had for Winchester. This will have implications for our understanding of the nature Benedictine Reform, the organisation of pastoral care, and the relationships between clerical and lay groups at Winchester. As it turns out, for instance, the monks of the Old Minster were involved in preaching to the laity, which questions the extent to which the monks were withdrawn from lay society, and highlights the nuanced reality of the strict division between ‘secular’ and ‘monastic’ clerical behaviours at Winchester.³⁶

Sources

There is a tendency for studies of late Anglo-Saxon pastoral care to be drawn to the works of Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham (born c.955 - died c.1010) and Archbishop Wulfstan II of York (appointed 1002 – died 1023), religious men who created large bodies of writing on pastoral matters in what has been described as ‘the second generation’ of the Benedictine Reform.³⁷ Because of the prolificacy of these men and their focus on matters of pastoral care,

³⁵ Tinti, ‘Introduction’, p.7.

³⁶ See Chapter 1 of this thesis, from p.23

³⁷ Robertson, ‘The Benedictine Reform: Current and Future Scholarship’, p.289. See M. McC.Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977); J. Hill, ‘Monastic Reform and the Secular Church: Ælfric’s Pastoral Letters in Context’, in *England in the*

their work has often been used retrospectively to try and gain an insight into attitudes to pastoral care of an earlier period. Whilst valuable in some respects, this approach can be problematic as there is a risk of anachronisms and of confusing ideals with reality. These men were taught at Winchester under Bishop Æthelwold, so there is a relevance of their work to this thesis, however there are also a wide number of sources predating or dating from the time of Æthelwold's episcopacy that directly depict the nature of pastoral care at Winchester. These include homilies, charters, saints' lives, and ecclesiastical codes.

Of incredible value to this thesis' area of research is the 'Winchester Series'; a collection of comprehensive studies on various aspects of Winchester that date from the second half of the twentieth century.³⁸ The series initiated from an in-depth archaeological project under the direction of Professor Martin Biddle from 1961-1972, which led to an assessment of the archaeological and topographical aspects of Winchester throughout the ages. Since then, the series has grown to encompass other sources relevant to Winchester, such as Alexander Rumble's discussion of charters, and Biddle's analysis of the Winton Domesday.³⁹ Michael Lapidge's contributing volume, *The Cult of St Swithun*, contains translations and editions of sources relating to the cult of St Swithun, a figure central to Æthelwold's activities at Winchester. Two of these sources, Lantfred of Winchester's *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni*, and Wulfstan of Winchester's *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno* are of particular importance to this thesis.⁴⁰ Lantfred wrote whilst Æthelwold was alive, and although Wulfstan wrote slightly after the bishop's death, his writings often rely on personal recollection, as he was a child oblate at the Old Minster under Bishop Æthelwold.

Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium ed. C. Hicks (Stamford: P. Watkins, 1992), pp.103-117.

³⁸ For further information see <http://winchesterstudies.org.uk/> accessed 01/12/2017.

³⁹ A.R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents relating to the topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman city and its minsters*, Winchester Studies 4.iii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002); M. Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: an edition and discussion of the Winton Domesday*, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

⁴⁰ M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun* Winchester Studies 4.ii: The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), Part II, chapters 1 and 2.

These writings tell of the discovery, translation, and miracles of St Swithun, a saint whose cult gained an international following after its promotion by Æthelwold. The sources reveal much about the norms and practices of the time and will hence be used as a ‘case-study’ throughout the thesis, giving insight into not only the functions and activities of the monks, but also of the laity and the character of Winchester as a whole during Æthelwold’s episcopacy.

After contextualising the topographical factors of Winchester during Æthelwold’s episcopacy, this thesis will focus on three aspects of pastoral care: preaching, penance, and burial. Preaching was an edificatory tool carried out through sermons and homilies that aimed to elevate the actions and thoughts of its audiences to be more in line with Christian doctrine. In a time of limited access to formal education, sermons and homilies were also a basic teaching tool, through which most people learned about Christianity. The practice of penance was seen as both a disciplinary opportunity and as a medicinal ‘cleansing’ of one’s sinful behaviours to better prepare one’s soul for salvation. Aside from prayers for the dead, burial was the final opportunity for the clergy to ensure the best chances of salvation for a soul. Matters of burial also had important implications for administration within the Anglo-Saxon Church.⁴¹ These are not the only elements of pastoral care, but they are the ones that are best evidenced in sources from Winchester at this time. All of these activities ultimately strove to ensure the best chances of spiritual salvation for the medieval people, and all required the involvement of a cleric that had taken priestly orders.

Despite Æthelwold’s apparently scathing opinion of secular clergy due to their relations with the laity, this thesis finds that the monks were regularly in contact with the laity as their spiritual guides, behavioural role models, and societal neighbours. The monks are seen to be

⁴¹ This is a noteworthy contrast with the situation on the Continent, where baptism was “the crucial factor which would distinguish a mother church from a dependant chapel” as stated by Tinti, ‘Introduction’ p.12. For further studies on continental baptism see S.A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

involved in aspects of preaching, penance, and burial activities, and were certainly partly responsible for helping to ensure the best chances of spiritual salvation for the Winchester population. Nuance is needed, however, as the monks and their minsters are found to be only part of the system for pastoral care within Winchester. The presence of smaller, local churches within the city walls indicates that there were other centres for pastoral care. In addition, the sources do not depict the monks carrying out all aspects of pastoral care, suggesting that there were other clergy members within the city that had a pastoral role. The sources from the time unanimously focus on the minsters and their monks, and the lack of references to the local churches or secular clergy highlights the need for caution on this topic. Appreciation for apparent paradoxes is also needed: whilst Æthelwold removed the secular clergy from the minsters and replaced them with monks, it does not seem that these monks were totally removed from lay society or from the pastoral needs of the people. In addition, it may be that despite their removal from the minsters, the pastoral and ecclesiastical activities of the secular clergy continued within Winchester throughout the Benedictine Reform.

Understanding Æthelwold's Winchester

The history of the minsters is diverse and central to the growth of Winchester throughout the ages. The Old Minster was founded in c.648 and from its beginnings played a significant role in both ecclesiastical and political spheres of Anglo-Saxon England. Archaeologists have shown that during the tenth century, the Old Minster would have been a small, one-roomed building until Æthelwold's renovations in c.980. Due to its small size, Martin Biddle theorises that during the tenth century the Old Minster could not function as a church for the wider population, especially as the numbers of Winchester citizens grew with the city's increasing significance in matters of trade and education. He suggests that instead, the New Minster, founded in around 901, was built with the purpose of being the local burgh church.

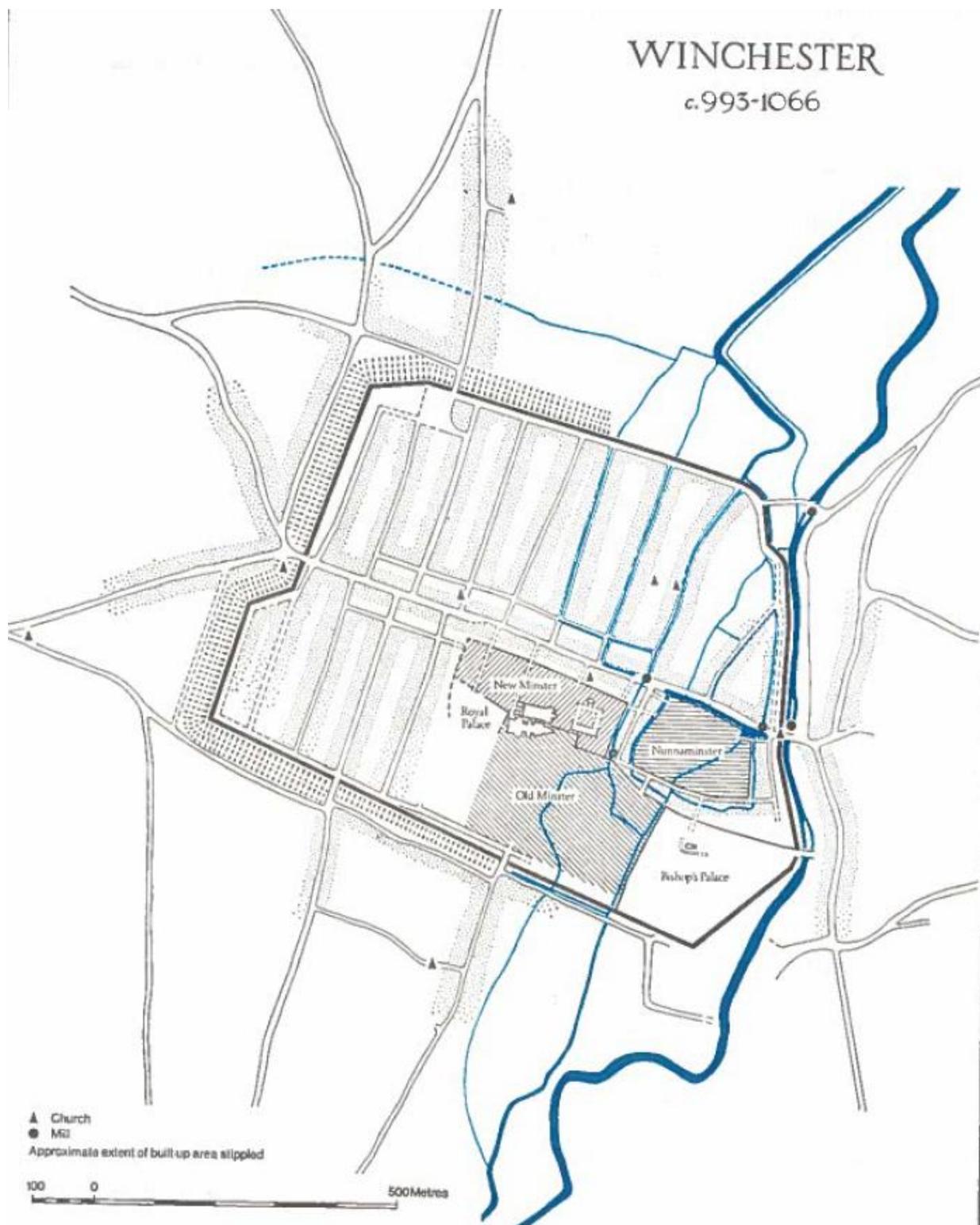


Figure 1: Winchester c.993-1066. Only the churches known to have existed before the Norman conquest are shown.⁴²

⁴² Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, Figure 25 facing p.449.

The New Minster was built in close proximity to the Old Minster, suggesting that the two had different functions within society; perhaps the Old Minster served as the base of the bishop's see and was too steeped in veneration and tradition to be adapted to the growing population, hence the New Minster being built for the Winchester laity.⁴³ Just after the foundation of the New Minster, Nunnaminster was founded a little distance away with the purpose of being a nunnery. Unfortunately, not a lot is known about Nunnaminster and due to this thesis focussing on elements of pastoral care, a matter limited to male priests, Nunnaminster's role within Winchester society should be the focus of its own study.⁴⁴

Many of the suggestions about the minsters and their relationship with each other are no more than speculations, however it does seem apparent that prior to the Benedictine Reform, the New Minster was particularly involved with the Winchester laity. Biddle suggests that before the reform, "New Minster may have served the urban community as a whole, and the canons of both Old and New Minsters may have served the growing number of lesser churches in the city".⁴⁵ Little is known about these lesser churches, although they are of central importance to this thesis. From archaeological investigations, it is known that by the late thirteenth century, fifty-seven parish churches existed in Winchester. Of these, only ten or eleven can be proved to have existed before 1066. Biddle suggests that in reality however, most of these fifty-seven churches were founded before the Norman Conquest.⁴⁶

It is not clear exactly what role these churches had within the Winchester society: due to their number and the increase of these churches throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries, Biddle states that the removal of the secular clergy at the minsters during the

⁴³ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.314. See also M. Biddle, 'Felix Urbs Winthonia: Winchester in the age of monastic reform', in *Tenth-Century Studies: essays in commemoration of the millennium of the Council of Winchester and the 'Regularis Concordia'* ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore, 1975), pp.123-40, p.131.

⁴⁴ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, pp.321-33. For a discussion on Nunnaminster and the relationship between the minsters, see H.F. Forbes, 'Squabbling siblings: gender and monastic life in late Anglo-Saxon Winchester', *Gender and History* 23:3 (2011): 653-84.

⁴⁵ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.464.

⁴⁶ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.329, 458.

Benedictine Reform may have “served as a stimulus to the parochial evolution of the lesser churches within the city”.⁴⁷ This would suggest that the smaller churches fulfilled an ecclesiastical need within society that initiated after the Benedictine Reform, such as the pastoral care of the laity and access to liturgical rituals. The numbers of the churches suggest that they were of importance to many of the Winchester citizens and played an important role within the city as a whole. In comparison, Gervase Rosser states that before 1000, the supplementation of pastoral care by the local churches was likely to be limited.⁴⁸ Instead, Rosser suggests that the churches are symptomatic of “a demand for intimacy and independence in lay worship” by a few individuals, rather than for Winchester society at large.⁴⁹ This would suggest that these churches only saw to the pastoral and liturgical needs of a few, with the majority of the population still relying on the minsters for their religious needs. The positioning of these churches, such as St Mary’s, in Tanner Street, Winchester, “in which the sole original door opened into a private dwelling”, could indicate that the local churches were primarily of a private and limited nature.⁵⁰ Clearly, the relationship between the minsters and the local churches is difficult to ascertain. Aside from archaeological evidence, there is not much further information on the roles of these smaller churches within Winchester society, especially given that the sources that emanate from Winchester are focused on the monks and the minsters. The presence of these local churches is, however, the ‘elephant in the room’ within this thesis: by looking at the roles of the monks in pastoral care and their relationship with the Winchester laity, it is hoped that more light will be able to be shed on the matter of these smaller churches.

⁴⁷ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.459.

⁴⁸ G. Rosser, ‘The cure of souls in English towns before 1000’, in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* ed., J. Blair, and R. Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.267-84, p.274.

⁴⁹ Rosser, ‘The cure of souls’, p.274.

⁵⁰ Rosser, ‘The cure of souls’, p.274.

Into this context of Old Minster, New Minster, Nunnaminster, and a growing number of smaller churches, arrived Æthelwold, who was consecrated as Bishop of Winchester on the 26th November 963. Very soon after his installation, during the course of 964, Æthelwold removed the secular clergy from the Old and New Minsters and replaced them with Benedictine monks from Abingdon.⁵¹ Æthelwold's actions at Winchester were legitimised by the Pope and by King Edgar, and should be seen within a wider ecclesiastical network: not only had Æthelwold already reformed the clergy at Abingdon by this time, but he would go on to ensure the refoundation of the monastery of Ely and Chertsey, and the foundation of monasteries at Peterborough and Thorney among others.⁵² After refounding the Winchester minsters, Æthelwold placed one of the Abingdon monks, Æthelgar, as the abbot of New Minster in 964, with himself seeing to the community at the Old Minster. In addition, Æthelwold initiated extensive renovations to the Old Minster. Æthelwold started these building works after the translation of St Swithun's relics in 971, presumably in anticipation of a growing number of pilgrims to the site. These renovations (there was another, later set of building works that was completed after Æthelwold's death) were completed in 980. Alongside the building works was a redefinition of the monastic precincts in order to allow sufficient room for the monks and to ensure that "the monks and nuns living therein might serve God more peacefully, removed from the bustle of citizens".⁵³ Thus, from his installation at Winchester, Æthelwold can variously be understood as an active reformer within Anglo-Saxon England; a bishop with episcopal responsibilities for the Winchester people; an abbot at the head of a monastic community; and as a monk himself.

⁵¹ Æthelwold was the abbot of Abingdon from c.955 and had reformed the community there. See Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, chapters 17 and 18, pp.30-33.

⁵² For a detailed study on Æthelwold's life, see B. Yorke, ed., *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1988).

⁵³ 'Charter for the establishment of the precincts of the three minsters at Winchester by King Edgar', in Rumble, *Property and Piety*, document VI, p.137. Also see the 'Electronic Sawyer', document S.807, accessed through <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/about/index.html> on 17/10/2017. [Henceforth, references to documents on the 'Electronic Sawyer' website shall be indicated with 'S.(document number)'].

Winchester was already an important royal city by this time, as evidenced by the presence of a royal palace there from perhaps as early as the middle of the seventh century.⁵⁴ Winchester was therefore a vibrant political hub as well as a centre of ecclesiastical activity and learning. As seen throughout the thesis, many charters were written at Winchester, or contain evidence of influence from Winchester, indicating the significance of the city within Anglo-Saxon England. As such, although this thesis focuses on the impact of the reform specifically at Winchester, the nature of the reform within this city had implications within a wider context of Anglo-Saxon England, as other clerics looked to Æthelwold's example.⁵⁵

Now that a feeling for the area of Winchester can be had, we will delve into the matters of pastoral care there during the Benedictine Reform. Fundamentally, this thesis seeks to determine the extent to which the monks were involved in the pastoral care of the laity at Winchester, and how the relationship between the clergy and the laity was characterised. It seeks to establish the role that the minsters had in the lives of the laity, and the significance of this role in the face of the changes of the Benedictine Reform. Looking specifically at the pastoral matters of preaching, penance, and burial, this thesis will investigate which aspects the monks were - and were not - involved in, and the implications of this for the organisation of pastoral care at Winchester. This will subsequently give an insight into the nature of the Benedictine Reform in this city, and, more generally, in the quality of the rhetoric surrounding the Benedictine Reform. Whilst the quotation from the edict of King Edgar would suggest that the minsters became centres of solely monastic activity, this thesis observes that the monks can often be seen carrying out the roles attributed to the more secular

⁵⁴ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.289. See also M. Biddle, 'Felix Urbs Winthonia', p.125, where Biddle suggests that the Old Minster was founded in 648 to serve as the palace church.

⁵⁵ N. Robertson shows that in reform scholarship there is a lack of "an integrated approach" to the study of Dunstan, Oswald, and Æthelwold, as each has been studied in isolation: see Robertson, 'The Benedictine Reform: Current and Future Scholarship', *Literature Compass* 3 (2006): pp. 282–99, p.292. Robertson shows, however that there is an assumption that the reformers worked together. This is an area that has recently garnered further interest; see for instance, C.T. Riedel 'Debating the role of the laity in the hagiography of the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon Benedictine Reform', *Revue Bénédictine* 127:2 (forthcoming): 315-46, for an investigation in to how the hagiographers of these men were influenced by each other's works.

clergy. As such, whilst our understanding of the Benedictine Reform is framed by the rhetoric of the reformers, this thesis will seek to reveal the 'lived reality' of the reform at Winchester.

Chapter 1: Preaching

Contextualising preaching practices

This chapter seeks to determine the state of preaching specifically at Winchester during the Benedictine Reform. In what capacity were the minsters involved in the preaching of the laity? Where did the preaching occur, by whom, and with what regularity? How did the transition from a secular to a monastic clergy affect preaching practices at Winchester? Looking at narrative sources and liturgical codes, as well as charters and pictorial aspects of manuscripts, this chapter will seek to establish the practice of preaching at Winchester during the Benedictine Reform.

Preaching “offered the best opportunity for building popular piety and instructing people in correct religious practices and beliefs”.⁵⁶ Preaching to the laity was expected on Sundays, holy days, and feast days.⁵⁷ Various modes of preaching existed with various levels of formality, but the most visible type of preaching in sources stems from sermons and homilies. Paul Szarmach clarifies the distinction between sermons and homilies, stating that “It is customary to define sermons as a general discourse on a moral theme often with exhortation. Strictly speaking a homily is a discourse based on a passage from the Bible, typically, the New Testament”.⁵⁸ Mary Clayton identifies three types of homilies: those for private devotion, those to be read in the Office, and those for preaching to the laity.⁵⁹ As

⁵⁶ T.L. Amos, ‘Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages’, in *Religion, culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Richard. E. Sullivan* ed. T.F.X. Noble and J.J. Contreni (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), pp.165-80, p.175.

⁵⁷ As stated in the *Regularis Concordia*, when on feast days “the bells shall ring to call the faithful [lay congregation] together and Mass shall be begun”: Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, chapter 23, p.19. Also see J. McCune, ‘The Preacher’s Audience, c.800-c.950’, in *Sermo doctorum: Compilers, Preachers and their Audiences in the Early Middle Ages* ed. M. Diesenberger, Y. Hen, M. Pollheimer (Brepols: Turnhout, 2013), pp. 283-338, who sets out many of the Carolingian preaching traditions that were echoed in Anglo-Saxon England.

⁵⁸ Szarmach, ‘Sermons and Saints’, p.49.

⁵⁹ M. Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and preaching in Anglo-Saxon England’, *Peritia* 4 (1985): 207–42, p.216.

always, however, identifying an audience for most of these texts is not straight forward, and it is clear that more nuance is needed as these categorisations do not reflect such a strictly bordered reality; texts could be used for various purposes and in various scenarios. Indeed, recent research by James McCune has highlighted the fact that these texts should be understood less as an inflexible script from which preachers read, but more as an aid to “what were intended as primarily oral discourses”.⁶⁰ In addition, one must consider the suggestions of Francesca Tinti, of the importance of non-written traditions in preaching: “The role of aural memory and imitation should not be underestimated, bearing in mind that many local priests may have re-enacted homilies that they had heard from senior colleagues.”⁶¹ These are considerations that need to be acknowledged when investigating preaching practices at Winchester, especially in light of the fact that very little vernacular preaching material survives from tenth century Winchester.⁶²

There seems somewhat of a chronological gap on the topic of monastic preaching within contemporary scholarship. Alan Thacker addresses the role of the *monachi* in preaching in seventh- and eighth-century England.⁶³ At the other end of the scale, *Medieval Monastic Preaching*, edited by Carolyn Muessig, focusses on the period from c.1135 to 1500.⁶⁴ Investigations into the situation of preaching between these two periods in Anglo-Saxon England has a tendency to focus on individuals or on specific manuscript collections,

⁶⁰ McCune, ‘The preacher’s audience’, p.310.

⁶¹ F. Tinti, *Sustaining Belief: The Church of Worcester from c.870 to c.1100* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), pp.300-1.

⁶² D.G. Scragg states that of the preaching material existent prior to Ælfric, “We know nothing of Winchester”, in ‘The corpus of vernacular homilies and prose saints’ lives before Ælfric’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 8 (1979): 223-77, p.266.

⁶³ A. Thacker, ‘Monks, preaching and pastoral care in early Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. J. Blair and R. Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.137-70. Thacker highlights the fact that the term *monasterium* “embraced communities of very different size and status, with very different ways of life. Undoubtedly some, such as Bede’s Jarrow, were close to the strict Benedictine ideal. They, however, were the exception. Many others seem to have been loosely organized establishments ruled by an abbot and housing priests and other inmates who might be described as *monachi* or *clerici*”, p.139.

⁶⁴ C. Muessig, ed., *Medieval Monastic Preaching* (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 1998).

with – due to the nature of the existing sources – a particular attention to vernacular works.⁶⁵ Scholarship on preaching in tenth- and eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon England has focussed predominantly on the body of vernacular work from the Blickling and Vercelli collections, and on the pastoral writings of Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham, and to a lesser degree, Archbishop Wulfstan II of York.⁶⁶

In order to understand the practices of and attitudes towards preaching in Anglo-Saxon England, a brief exploration of the Vercelli and Blickling collections and Ælfric’s work is needed. These works frame the period just before, during, and just after the Benedictine Reform, so help to situate preaching trends at the time of the reform movement. In addition, whilst the Vercelli and Blickling collections originate away from Winchester, their influence can be seen within a wider ecclesiastical network that most probably included Winchester; these texts should certainly not be seen as static, and ecclesiastical traditions at significant religious centres, whilst often localised, should not be understood as isolated. In comparison, Ælfric’s links to Winchester are more direct, as he had been educated there under Bishop Æthelwold. As such, Ælfric’s works often stem from his experiences at Winchester and reflects the Winchester tradition. Increasingly, scholarship has focussed on determining who the intended audiences were for these pieces; a development which provides an insight into

⁶⁵ Scholarship into the ninth-century, for instance, has a tendency to focus on the writings of King Alfred. J. Bately notes that dating the (vernacular) works in the century before the reform is problematic, as there is a “virtual non-existence of texts ... to which a date of composition in the period c.900 to c.970 can be securely assigned”: J. Bately, ‘Old English prose before and during the reign of Alfred’ *Anglo-Saxon England* 17 (1988): 93-138 p. 108-9, as highlighted by S. Irvine, ‘Religious Context: Pre-Benedictine Reform Period’ in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed., P. Pulsiano and E. Treharne (Oxford-Malden Ma.: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp.135-50, p.136.

⁶⁶ The literature on these sources is vast, however for an introduction see P.E. Szarmach, ‘Sermons and Saints: From the late tenth to the eleventh centuries’, in *A Companion to British Literature* ed., R. Demaria, H. Chang, S. Zacher (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), pp.48-64. See also M. Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and preaching in Anglo-Saxon England’, *Peritia* 4 (1985): 207-42 (as a response to M. McC. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977)); and J. Hill, ‘Reform and Resistance: preaching styles in Late Anglo-Saxon England’, in *De l’homélie au sermon: Histoire de la prédication médiévale*, ed. J. Hamesse and X. Hermand (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1993), pp.15-46.

the relationship between the laity and the clergy (whether monastic or not), and the mentalities towards pastoral care.⁶⁷

The Vercelli Book is a miscellaneous collection of texts, traditionally thought to have been copied by a scribe in the south-east of England in the second half of the tenth century.⁶⁸ The collection has a pious focus, but aside from that there seems to be no overall design to the collection of texts, which contains twenty-three prose ‘homilies’ and six verse poems.⁶⁹ Donald G. Scragg contends that the book in fact only contains two items which are homilies “in the sense of expounding the pericope”; of the rest, two are “are narrative pieces with virtually no homiletic content”, two others draw heavily upon saints’ lives, and the remainder are more properly identified as sermons.⁷⁰ This illustrates the problematic and restrictive nature of definitions, as although these texts cannot all be identified as the same genre, they can all be seen as useful preaching material. Due to the ambiguity in dating and place of origin, the relation of the collection to the Benedictine Reform is still being debated, with there also being various hypothesis as to the audiences of the texts.⁷¹ As there seems to be no liturgical order, Kenneth Sisam has suggested that the collection should be viewed as a ‘reading book’ for personal devotion, perhaps in a monastic environment, with the motivation

⁶⁷ This focus on audience can be seen in McC.Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England*; Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and preaching in Anglo-Saxon England’; Muessig, ed., *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience in the Middle Ages*, specifically part 6; P.E. Szarmach, and B.F. Huppé, ed., *The Old English Homily and its Backgrounds* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978); M. Swan ‘Constructing preacher and audience in Old English homilies’, in *Constructing the Medieval Sermon* ed. R. Andersson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp.177-88. For a parallel discussion of audience and preaching on the continent that in many ways influenced the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon situation, see R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789-895* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977) and J. McCune, ‘The Preacher’s Audience, c.800-c.950’.

⁶⁸ Although, “the possibility of composition within a range from the later ninth to the later tenth centuries must remain open” - D.G. Scragg, ed., *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.xxxix. In addition, the origin of the texts is thought to be mixed – Scragg argues that “homilies VI-X came from a south-eastern collection of the second half of the tenth century, homilies XV-XVIII from a Mercian collection and homilies XIX-XXI from a late West-Saxon one”. Also see Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and Preaching’, p.227.

⁶⁹ Scragg, *The Vercelli Homilies*, p.xx.

⁷⁰ Scragg, *The Vercelli Homilies*, p.xix.

⁷¹ See S. Zacher, *Preaching the Converted: The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2009) p.32-42. See also, S. Zacher and A. Orchard, ed., *New Readings in the Vercelli Book* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

of the compiler's personal interests perhaps explaining the lack of a liturgical framework for the collection.⁷² However, the ambiguity of purpose for this collection makes it relevant to many situations, and means that without further evidence little can be said as to the functions or audiences of this collection.

Thought to be slightly younger, the 'Blickling Homilies' are a collection of Gospel expositions, sermons, and saints' lives.⁷³ The Blickling collection contains fragments of eighteen homilies, copied by at least two scribes, and is arranged in a much more recognisable way than the Vercelli Book, as it follows the order of the liturgical calendar in celebrating certain Sundays and feast days. Based on its use of vocabulary, the origin of the collection is thought to be Mercian, although it also shares features of continental homiliary models.⁷⁴ Mary Clayton hypothesises that the presence of narrative saints' lives in the collection suggests that it was used for preaching to the laity, as monks would have read of saints' lives "principally from legendaries or passionals, not homiliaries".⁷⁵ Despite this however, there are also indications that an ecclesiastical audience was expected: Homily IV "describes the punishments reserved for the minister of God who fail to guide the people correctly."⁷⁶ As such, whilst the use of the vernacular and narrative content would suggest a lay audience to the collection, the contents also alludes to a mixed audience of lay and ecclesiastics: the situation is perhaps best summarised by the title of Gatch's 1989 work, 'The Unknowable Audience of the Blickling Homilies'.⁷⁷

Although there is still much to be known about these two works, this brief synopsis gives an insight into the context of preaching within Anglo-Saxon England before, and

⁷² K. Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p.118; Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p.227.

⁷³ R.J. Kelly, ed. and transl. *The Blickling Homilies* (London: Continuum, 2003). See Clayton's summary of the discussion around its dating, possibly as early as c.875 to as late as c.971 in 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p.222.

⁷⁴ Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', pp.221-25.

⁷⁵ Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', pp.224-25.

⁷⁶ Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p.225.

⁷⁷ M. McC.Gatch, 'The Unknowable Audience of the Blickling Homilies', *Anglo-Saxon England* 18 (1989): 99-115.

perhaps during, the Benedictine Reform. There is a preference throughout for flexibility and ambiguity, as both lay and clerical audiences are addressed. In addition, whilst Vercelli may present a more ‘private’ reading, the Blicking collection seems to prepare for an aural reception, showing how various mediums for delivery were employed for ‘homiletic’ material.⁷⁸

The audiences for Ælfric’s writings are perhaps easier to allude to, given that the author and origin are known. Little is known about Ælfric’s life, however it is thought that he was given to the Old Minster at Winchester as a child oblate in c.960. He makes several references to his study at the minster under Bishop Æthelwold, where he became a monk and priest, before moving to Cerne Abbas, Dorset, in 987.⁷⁹ Ælfric’s compositions date to between c. 990 and 1010 when he was at Cerne Abbas and, among others, include two series of *Catholic Homilies* and letters on the matter of pastoral care.⁸⁰ On the two series of *Catholic Homilies*, despite Ælfric stating in the prologues to the series that he was writing for the instruction of the unlearned laity, there is still an ambiguity, a flexibility to the form and content of the homilies that suggests that this was not all. Clayton illuminates instances where the homilies seem to address more of a monastic or clerical audience, or contain liturgical matters that “go beyond the normal scope of a homiliary for preaching to the laity and cover material related to the Office, rather than to the Mass”.⁸¹ Given that Ælfric was writing just after the Benedictine Reform, with its attempts to refine the clergy, Clayton suggests that Ælfric’s vernacular compositions provided resources for the education of the monks who may not have had strong Latin skills; many monks would have entered the monastery in their later

⁷⁸ J. Black, L. Conolly, K. Flint et al. ed., *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature* Vol. I: *The Medieval Period* (Ontario-Plymouth-Sydney: Broadview Press, 2009 (2nd ed)), p.154.

⁷⁹ M. Lapidge in *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch. 4, p.575-76.

⁸⁰ See P.A.M.Clemons, ‘The chronology of Ælfric’s work’, in *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies in Some Aspects of Their History and Culture, presented to Bruce Dickins* (London, 1959), pp.212-47.

⁸¹ Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and Preaching’, p.238.

years from lay backgrounds with various levels of education. As the liturgy could only be practiced in Latin, Clayton recognised that “preaching in English could only take place in the rather extra-liturgical context of preaching to the people; and Ælfric appears to have exploited this situation by providing monastic material while still ostensibly addressing the people”.⁸² As such, whilst legitimised through its apparent lay audience, the use of the *Catholic Homilies* in diverse environments should be acknowledged: it can be seen to be used for a secular clerical environment, a monastic environment, a lay environment, but also in an environment that mixed all of these audiences together. In addition to this, one should consider the fact that Ælfric’s texts were not restricted to any one particular audience: whilst he may have written with an audience in mind, such as the laity or the group of newly ordained monks, other, more varied audience groups would later have come into contact with the texts due to their being prolifically copied in Anglo-Saxon England. Jonathan Wilcox has shown that Ælfric wrote nearly 15% of the surviving corpus of Old English, with his *Catholic Homilies* appearing in just over 10% of all manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon.⁸³ This suggests that potentially many audience groups were able to access Ælfric’s material.

Ælfric’s work is viewed within its medieval context in the work of Jonathon Wilcox, who highlights instances within the locality of Cerne Abbas, Dorset, where Ælfric was writing, that had a need for this ‘mixed audience’. One such place is Cerne itself, which possessed a small number of monks in a monastery that was reformed in c.987. However, the ‘earliest fabric’ of the parish church dates to about 1300, leading Wilcox to suggest that prior to this, “villagers and monks presumably shared a place of worship with the monastic community providing pastoral care for the village”.⁸⁴ The mixed audiences addressed in the homilies, as well as their vernacular nature and the popularity of these writings throughout

⁸² Clayton, ‘Homiliaries and Preaching’, p.241.

⁸³ J. Wilcox, ‘Ælfric in Dorset and the landscape of pastoral care’, in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp.52-62, p.53, footnote 3.

⁸⁴ J. Wilcox, ‘Ælfric in Dorset’, p.58.

Anglo-Saxon England leads Wilcox to suggest that they reflect “an institutional Church reacting to the pastoral needs which arose from an increasingly decentralised system of local churches and the multiple providers of pastoral care at the turn of the millennium”.⁸⁵ The survival of numerous copies of his texts also suggests that Ælfric’s writings were well-liked throughout Anglo-Saxon England regardless of the situation of the church: perhaps due to the accessibility of his writing, the clarity of his teaching, or the focus of his message. As an influential instigator of ‘the second wave’ of the Benedictine Reform, Ælfric’s writings answered a need within Anglo-Saxon society that rose from the societal changes caused by the reform movement. His solution is arguably rooted within his experiences and education at Winchester.

These three brief explorations of the Vercelli, Blickling, and Ælfrician material go some way to contextualising the state of preaching during the Benedictine Reform. Preaching should be understood as deeply rooted in Christian tradition, but subject to a wide number of variations of content, form, audience, and material expression. There is an indication of a change in the nature of preaching with the Benedictine Reform, as a response to the increasing numbers of local churches and the need to educate an influx of monks from various educative backgrounds was realised. Within this context, the state of preaching at Winchester under Bishop Æthelwold shall now be addressed.

Narrative sources

Observing the unity of dialect in Old English texts in the eleventh century, Helmut Gneuss hypothesises that the origin of standard Old English is rooted in the scriptorium of Winchester under Bishop Æthelwold.⁸⁶ Wulfstan’s *Vita S. Æthelwoldi* emphasises

⁸⁵ Wilcox, ‘Ælfric in Dorset’, p.61.

⁸⁶ H. Gneuss, ‘The origin of standard Old English and Æthelwold’s school at Winchester’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 1 (1972): 63-83. See also M. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) and L. Lazzari, ‘The scholarly achievements of Æthelwold and

Æthelwold's role as teacher, author, and translator⁸⁷, and Gneuss' analysis of 'Winchester words', reveals a consistent, specific, and planned vocabulary that emanates from the city. Despite this evidence of activity, relatively few manuscripts containing vernacular homiletic/sermon material survive that have a Winchester origin from the time of the Benedictine Reform.⁸⁸ There was, however, an active transference of information and manuscript material throughout Anglo-Saxon England and with the Continent, so it is likely that although little material can be found originating from Winchester at this time, it was a part of a network of sharing and exchange that connected it to preaching texts. Despite this, without a corpus of vernacular preaching manuscripts an investigation into the matter of preaching at the Winchester minsters must utilise indirect sources, such as narrative accounts. Narrative evidence for the role of the minsters in the preaching to the laity can be seen in Lantfred of Winchester's *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni* (written between 972 x c.974)⁸⁹, Wulfstan of Winchester's *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno* (written between 994 x c.1000)⁹⁰, and to a lesser extent, Wulfstan's *Vita S. Æthelwoldi* (written c.996)⁹¹. These sources cast a light on the minsters as having a tradition of preaching to the laity through the character of St Swithun, and also illuminate the seriousness with which Æthelwold took his role as fatherly shepherd to both lay and clerical audiences.

his circle', in *Form and Content of Instruction in Anglo-Saxon England in Light of Contemporary Evidence: Papers presented at the International Conference, Udine, 6-8 April, 2006* ed. P. Lendinara and L. Lazzari (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp.309-47.

⁸⁷ Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and transl. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), chapter 31, p.47-49: "It was always agreeable to him to teach young men and the more mature students, translating Latin texts into English for them, passing on the rules of grammar and metric, and encouraging them to do better by cheerful words". Æthelwold was also instrumental in the creation of the *Regularis Concordia*, and translated the *Regula Sancti Benedicti* into Old English.

⁸⁸ See H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), see index, and manuscripts referenced under 'homilies and sermons' – entries for both Latin and Old English anonymous sermons/homilies.

⁸⁹ Lantfred of Winchester, *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni*, ed. and transl. by M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch. I, pp.252-333. For dating see p.237.

⁹⁰ Wulfstan of Winchester, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, ed. and transl. by M. Lapidge in *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch. 2, pp.372-551.

⁹¹ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, p.xvi.

Throughout the depictions of his life, Swithun is presented as guiding and preaching to the laity. Most prominent is Lantfred's depiction of a dream scene in which Swithun summons a paralysed man to encourage him to do no evil:

do not hasten to harm someone who harms you, but rather hasten to imitate Christ the creator of all things Who, [...] when He was suffering, did not issue threats, but implored His Father on behalf of those afflicting Him that they be saved, saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' [Luke 23:34] Likewise Christ the Lord instructed his followers: 'Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: that you may be the children of your Father Who is in heaven.' [Matt. 5:44-5] And the Apostle: 'But thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him to drink.' [Rom. 12:20]⁹²

Although given to an audience of one, this admonition carries homiletic qualities with its references to the New Testament, and its topic of forgiveness and love could be widely applied throughout Anglo-Saxon society. That Swithun should have preached is unremarkable, as preaching was an activity implicit in the role of a bishop: a bishop was responsible for the salvation of the souls within his diocese and so ensured the pastoral care of the laity. What is emphasised by Lantfred is the fact that the homily was delivered whilst Swithun was dressed in 'priestly regalia', suggesting that Swithun's role as a bishop was at its core the role of a priest. This priestly aspect of the bishop's position is interestingly presented alongside a monastic quality: throughout his *Translatio et Miracula*, Lantfred repeatedly portrays Swithun's appearance as monastic, such as when he is seen by lay people whilst "clothed in a snow-white cowl".⁹³ This is despite the fact that there is no evidence to indicate

⁹² Lantfred, *Translatio*, chapter 35, pp.326-27.

⁹³ Lantfred, *Translatio*, chapter 10, pp.294-95.

that Swithun had been ordained as a monk during his lifetime.⁹⁴ That Swithun should appear variously in priestly regalia and in monastic dress suggests that these roles were interchangeable, and normalises the involvement of monastic clergy in the lives of the laity. In Lantfred presenting the bishop in a monastic cowl, it seems that he was attempting to normalise the ‘monk-bishop’ position through giving it a historical tradition: it was a role that was unique to Anglo-Saxon England, and has been highlighted as initiating with Æthelwold’s appointment as Bishop of Winchester in 963, after which such a duality of position can be found until the Norman Conquest.⁹⁵ Lantfred’s depiction also portrays the familiarity, acceptance, and even esteem associated with the dual role. Given that the bishop was responsible for the pastoral care of the lay people in his bishopric, promoting an image of the bishop as a monk, with no apparent conflict of interests, suggests that for at least certain monks an interaction with the laity in a pastoral context was not problematic.

Lantfred’s inclusion of a dialogue containing homiletic material in his *Translatio et Miracula* is also suggestive of ‘a homily within a homily’. Through the reading or aural reception of this text, the audience themselves received the admonitory words of Swithun. Saints’ lives were read on the feast day of the saint. Lantfred gives an insight into the practical realities of this, as his *Translatio* is preceded by a prefatory letter to the monks of the Old Minster at Winchester. In it, Lantfred makes clear that the *Translatio* was written at the request of the monks at the Old Minster, and states his aims of documenting a selection of St Swithun’s miracles for the benefit of future generations. Lantfred suggests that the text should be used to help “abandon the inflexibility of [the human mind’s] conviction” and “relinquish [ones] mental obstinacy”; biblical phrases that are indicative of an edificatory

⁹⁴ Lantfred, *Translatio*, p.294, footnote 189 draws attention to the lack of evidence to suggest that Swithun was a monk whilst living.

⁹⁵ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, p.31, fnt.5. See also F. Barlow, *The English Church, 1000-1066: a history of the later Anglo-Saxon church* (2nd ed. London-New York: Longman, 1979), pp.62-6

element to the work.⁹⁶ Lantfred states that the text should be received through ‘reading or hearing’, which in combination with the edificatory element of the text, denotes a preaching context. Furthermore, he writes

I therefore have proceeded in particular to the narration of this saint’s miracles since, just as it is most worthwhile to praise God’s favours and most appropriate to proclaim those who are unaware of them, so it is most wicked to deny them by keeping silence, and most shameful not to expound them to people in ignorance of them.⁹⁷

The emphasis on ‘those who are unaware’ and of ‘people in ignorance’, alongside the recognition of the text being accessed aurally as well as visually, allows this text to have a varied audience of literate and illiterate; of knowledgeable and ignorant; and of lay and clergy, as the text makes no efforts to limit the edification to solely clerical members. On this account, it is important to highlight the fact that it was the monks of the Old Minster who had requested the production of the text, independent from (although with the support of) Bishop Æthelwold. As such, it would seem that the monks themselves wanted material prepared that enabled them to teach and preach to varied audiences that included lay people.

The production of this text, dated 972 x c.974, should be seen contextually as a time when Bishop Æthelwold was striving to establish the cult of St Swithun. The relics of the saint had been exhumed on the 15th July 971 with much celebration, and the numbers of subsequent miracles was noted as being unprecedented: “nor [...] was any mortal saint [...] ever known to have restored so many to a life of either heavenly or earthly welfare”.⁹⁸ With the promotion of such miracles, the establishment of the Old Minster as an important miracle

⁹⁶ Lantfred, *Translatio*, pp.254-55. As stated in fnt.11 and 12, the first phrase can be seen in Matt.19:8, Mark 10.5, 16:14.

⁹⁷ Lantfred, *Translatio*, pp.252-55.

⁹⁸ Lantfred, *Translatio*, pp.258-59.

site would have seen a rise in the number of pilgrims visiting the city. This in turn would have increased the number of ‘people in ignorance’ at the minster, and would have provided a suitable audience to which to preach to about the miracles of St Swithun, and the accompanying edificatory themes. As such, it would seem that the monks had the resources and the desire to preach to those that visited St Swithun’s relics, and thus in this way looked after the pastoral needs of the laity. This investment of time and energy by the monks would not have been without reward: the more people knew about the miracles of St Swithun, the more pilgrims would travel to the city, and the more the monks would gain from financial endowments given to the minster in thanks or hope of miracles.

Swithun is not the only bishop depicted as preaching to the laity at Winchester. It has been seen that a bishop’s concern with the spiritual welfare of those in his diocese is to be expected, and it would seem that Æthelwold’s care for the Winchester citizens was particularly noticeable.⁹⁹ After his death, Æthelwold appears in the dream of a blind man, who recognises the bishop by his voice, indicating the regularity with which Æthelwold addressed lay citizens.¹⁰⁰ In addition, when a famine hit England in 976 and led to many poor people suffering, Wulfstan depicts Æthelwold as breaking the silver ornaments from the church’s treasuries and getting it turned into money for the benefit of those in need.¹⁰¹ With regards to preaching, on Sunday 9th July 971, Æthelwold “came forth as usual” to celebrate mass as it was the Lord’s day, indicating that this was a regular occurrence on the sabbath.¹⁰² Here Æthelwold “instructed, aroused, renewed, improved and adorned the people with his healthful discourse”.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ For a discussion of Æthelwold’s particular concern with the laity in comparison to the other reformers of the Benedictine Reform see C.T. Riedel, ‘Debating the role of the laity in the hagiography of the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon Benedictine Reform’, *Revue Bénédictine* 127:2 (forthcoming): 315-46.

¹⁰⁰ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, chapter 42, pp.64-65. The blind man resided in Wallingford, a town between Winchester and Abingdon, which indicates that Æthelwold also actively toured his see.

¹⁰¹ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, chapter 29, pp.44-45.

¹⁰² Wulfstan, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, pp.452-53.

¹⁰³ Wulfstan, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, pp.452-53.

It would seem, moreover, that Æthelwold's care for the people in his see was not delineated by 'clerical' or 'lay' groupings, as he preached to congregations that contained a mixture of lay and clerical people. This can be seen in the mass that was celebrated after the translation of St Swithun's relics, where "Here the monks, here the people rejoice together in the Lord".¹⁰⁴ There is a pictorial depiction of such a united congregation of laity and monks in the manuscript of the 'Benedictional of Æthelwold', London, British Library, Additional MS 49598, folio 118v, written for Æthelwold during his episcopacy (see below).¹⁰⁵ The congregation is shown in attendance during a blessing by Æthelwold, perhaps on the occasion of the dedication of the newly renovated Old Minster in 980. Albeit clearly a special occasion, the image shows both lay and clerical figures, with the monastic clergy in the lower levels of the church, whilst the upper area of the church is filled by those in lay clothing, including a female figure.¹⁰⁶ This is a scene which is reflected in the narrative account in Wulfstan of Winchester's *Life of St Æthelwold*, which states that "there were present King Æthelred and virtually all the ealdormen, abbots, thegns and leading noblemen of the whole race of the English".¹⁰⁷ This mixing of lay and clerical audiences suggests that the two groups shared the space of the minsters and were united in Æthelwold's spiritual guidance. In performing the mass with both groups in attendance, there is an insinuation that these celebrations occurred in the vernacular, which perhaps also assisted those who had newly joined the monastic order and whose Latin knowledge was rudimentary.¹⁰⁸ The image given here of the relationship between the monks and the laity is one of close proximity, and of a shared attention to the ritual led by Æthelwold.

¹⁰⁴ Wulfstan, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, pp.460-61.

¹⁰⁵ *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, London, British Library, Additional MS 49598, fol. 118v accessed through http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_49598_fs001r on 31/10/2017.

¹⁰⁶ For a discussion of the female figure see H.F.Forbes, 'Squabbling siblings: gender and monastic life in late Anglo-Saxon Winchester', in *Gender and History* 23 (2011), pp.653-84, p.653.

¹⁰⁷ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, chapter 40, p.61-63.

¹⁰⁸ As pointed out above, see Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p.241.



Figure 2: Folio 118v from the 'Benedictional of Æthelwold', London, British Library, Additional MS 49598.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ accessed through http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_49598_fs001r on 31/10/2017.

Charter sources

Contemporary to the Benedictine Reform is King Edgar's foundation charter for the New Minster at Winchester.¹¹⁰ Publicised in 966, this lavishly illuminated manuscript was drafted by Bishop Æthelwold and was designed to be read during the year, as a reminder of the duties and expectations of both the laity and the monks. Whilst being primarily concerned with confirming the monks "in their possession of the New Minster and its property while giving them guidance in the keeping of the Benedictine Rule", the document also exhibits a concern with lay behaviour towards the monks.¹¹¹ Biblical references are made in the drawing of parallels between the clergy and the figure of Adam, giving a sermonising tone to the piece. Prior to his fall, Adam lived in paradise 'without reproach'; a life that contains parallels to the life that was expected of the clergy, as it states that "He was not ravaged by the vanity of petty pride, but, uniting with his Maker, he flourished marvellously in humility", and that "Vainglory did not make him swollen with pride, but memory of the Creator made him more devoted".¹¹² In the process of the Fall, however, Adam succumbed to pride, greed, and arrogance, just as the secular clergy were seen to be flouting their duties and living sinfully without appropriate devotion to God. Clearly, as in the Fall of Adam, reform of the secular clergy was needed, and hence the attempts of the monastic clergy to right these clerical wrongs.¹¹³ Written in Latin and with parts in rhyming half-lines, the relevance of this piece as a sermonising text for the monks – at least in part – is clear. Unfortunately, aside from the tantalising heading 'How many times, and why, this document should be read to the brothers in the course of the year'¹¹⁴, the content of chapter xxii is lost, meaning that we can

¹¹⁰ As edited and translated by A.R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents relating to the topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman city and its minsters*, Winchester Studies 4.iii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), document iv, pp.65-97 (with intro). Also see S.745 and chapter 31 of *Councils and Synods*, ed. Whitelock et al., pp.119-33.

¹¹¹ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.67.

¹¹² Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.76.

¹¹³ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.78.

¹¹⁴ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.92.

only suppose at the practicalities of reading such a document, but it is apparent that it was read at least once a year to an audience of monks.

Whilst some chapters are clearly more monastic in focus, such as xii ‘What sort of monks are to dwell in this monastery, and in what way’ (“Let regular monks therefore, not seculars, dwelling in the aforementioned monastery ... conform to the practices of a rule”)¹¹⁵, others clearly have a lay audience in mind, such as xviii ‘That no secular person should unlawfully encroach on the monastery’s property’.¹¹⁶ These references to the laity are mostly in relation to physical matters of territory or threat to the monks, indicating that the laity were aware of this text and its conditions to some degree. In addition, there is a figure throughout the text that unites both monastic and lay groups: King Edgar. Throughout this charter, Edgar is presented both as an abbot protecting the monks, and as a priestly shepherd guiding his lay flock.¹¹⁷ This monastic quality to the character of the king, and of his queen, Ælfthryth, was a theme within many of the texts of the reform, particularly of those written by Bishop Æthelwold. Robert Deshman explains this by stating the Æthelwold was influenced by texts he had read on the earlier Carolingian rule of Louis the Pious on the continent, who promoted a “monastic ideal as a model for rulership”.¹¹⁸ Simon MacLean, however, sees this representation as indicative of a need to redefine royal power “in an attempt to legitimize potentially controversial political actions”.¹¹⁹ These controversial acts perhaps centred around the marriage of Edgar to Ælfthryth: Edgar had a consort at the time, Wulfthryth, who had to

¹¹⁵ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.84-85.

¹¹⁶ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.90.

¹¹⁷ In Rumble, *Property and Piety* see chapter xiv.: ‘In what way the king should defend the abbot and the worshipping monks’, p.88; and chapter vii, p.81, where “[...] I, [King Edgar], the vicar of Christ, have expelled the crowds of depraved canons from the various monasteries of our kingdom”.

¹¹⁸ As noted by S. MacLean, ‘Monastic reform and royal ideology in the late tenth century; Ælfthryth and Edgar in continental perspective’, in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century; Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1987-1947)* ed. D. Rollason, C. Leyser, H. Williams (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp.255-274; see R. Deshman, ‘*Benedictus monarcha et monachus*: Early Medieval Ruler Theology and the Anglo-Saxon Reform’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 22 (1988): 204-40 and T.F.X. Noble, ‘The monastic ideal as a model for empire: the case of Louis the Pious’, *Revue Bénédictine* 86 (1976): 235-50.

¹¹⁹ MacLean, ‘Monastic reform and royal ideology’, p.262.

be dropped, and both had been married before, suggesting that “the sexual propriety of the royal household was becoming a more significant political issue”.¹²⁰ Depicting the king and queen as heads of monastic houses negated any qualms that may have existed, as it carried the connotations of purity, spiritual devotion, and restraint. Royal sexual misconduct was a matter that was relevant to both lay and clergy, and warranted Æthelwold’s widespread efforts to establish the monarchy in a monastic light. In addition, this connection with the monarchy would have underlined Winchester’s status as a royal centre, so strengthening its political and social relevance within Anglo-Saxon society. As such, through striving so strongly to establish the separation of the New Minster from lay society, the document paradoxically unites them in purpose and in audience. Whilst the charter was clearly read to the monastic community, it contained matters relevant both to the Winchester laity, and the wider Anglo-Saxon population. Thus it would seem that its message was relayed to a lay audience in some capacity, and given its biblical resonance, it seems likely that this may have been done in a preaching environment.

Liturgical sources

In addition to these narrative and charter sources, one can glimpse preaching traditions through liturgical sources. The *Regularis Concordia* is a crucial source for our understanding of the Benedictine Reform, as it was the document in which the reforming clergy in Anglo-Saxon England asserted how the *Regula Sancti Benedicti*, the Rule of St Benedict, was to be followed.¹²¹ It is particularly relevant for understanding the clerical situation at Winchester, as it was written at a council held at Winchester, and was chiefly

¹²⁰ MacLean, ‘Monastic reform and royal ideology’, p.268.

¹²¹ D.T. Symons, ‘Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation’ in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and ‘Regularis Concordia’* ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore and Co., 1975), pp.37-59.

compiled by Bishop Æthelwold.¹²² This document pertains to the daily lives of the reformed monks throughout Anglo-Saxon England, so in many aspects it does not provide insight in to the lives of the laity at Winchester and the matter of their pastoral care. In some instances, however, it does allude to the relationship between the monks and the laity, when the laity are encountered in the minsters for specific rituals. There seems to be an assumption within the *Regularis Concordia* that mixed audiences of lay and monastic clergy were a somewhat regular occurrence: on the occasion of feast days it is stated that that “Tierce being said, the bells shall ring to call the faithful [i.e. the lay congregation] together and the Mass shall begin”.¹²³ It is clear from the narrative and manuscript sources that this was a reality in Æthelwold’s Old Minster, and was made all the more possible with Æthelwold’s extensive reconstruction and expansion of the Old Minster in 980.¹²⁴ As in the depiction in the ‘Benedictional of St Æthelwold’¹²⁵, this presents the monastic and lay people as a united audience in celebrating the mass, although clearly this is a circumstance that was reserved for special occasions.

This text also alludes to the preaching practices of the clergy, in stating that “all being seated again, the Rile or, on feast days, the Gospel of the day, shall be read and the prior shall explain what has been read according as the Lord shall inspire him.”¹²⁶ Whilst this section should not be necessarily understood as linked to the laity, it suggests that the monks were familiar with explaining Biblical texts ‘through the Lord’s inspiration’; which proposes an element of spontaneity and improvisation to the preaching. This may well have equated to a completely oral delivery of sermons from memory or through experience, and could go some way to explaining why so little preaching material is extant from Winchester at this time.

¹²² See D.T. Symons., transl. and intro., *Regularis Concordia* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953).

¹²³ D.T. Symons., transl. and intro., *Regularis Concordia* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953), p.19.

¹²⁴ See Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, pp.19-20.

¹²⁵ Folio 118v in the ‘Benedictional of Æthelwold’, London, British Library, Additional MS 49598.

¹²⁶ Symons, transl. and intro., *Regularis Concordia*, p.17.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be seen that Bishop Æthelwold regularly preached to the laity at the Old Minster. The audiences of this preaching often contained a mixture of lay and monastic communities, which is suggestive of the propensity for the vernacular to be used within the church. In addition, it would seem that the monks themselves had the resources and the motivation to preach to the laity, particularly in regard to the telling of the miracles of St Swithun at the Old Minster. Indeed, despite there being a dearth of source material for vernacular preaching, the depiction of St Swithun in the narrative accounts in both monastic and priestly garments highlights the fact that there was an appreciation of the fluidity of movement between these roles, and suggests that at least some monks had priestly responsibilities. St Swithun is depicted preaching to the laity without issue, suggesting that despite the Benedictine Reform, the monks at Winchester could also preach to the laity easily and without implication. This chapter has seen that the New Minster foundation charter was read in some capacity to the monks at the New minster. The fact that this document contains so much information of value to the laity, in terms of administration (in the territorial boundaries) and politics (in redefining the role of the monarchy) suggests that it was also relayed to the laity in some way. Whilst this charter may not have been communicated in a manner that can be identified strictly as ‘preaching’, in the context of a liturgical sermon, it does suggest at a connection between monastic and lay audiences to transfer this information, such as through forming the basis of a reading or an improvised message. Finally, the investigation in to the *Regularis Concordia* supports the portrayal of Æthelwold (or other senior clergy) leading the mass in front of a mixed audience of lay and monastic groups. In addition, it would seem that there may have been a tradition of improvisation of homiletic messages at the minsters, that may explain why so little preaching material survives.

Chapter 2: Penance

Contextualising penitential practices

This chapter will focus on the insights that liturgical, legislative, and narrative sources associated with Winchester can give as to the relationship between monastic and lay people and the practice of penance during the Benedictine Reform. This chapter seeks to determine the ways in which the monks were involved in the confessional and penitential activities of the laity, and the ways in which they were absent. It queries how the relationship between monastic clergy and lay person can be defined in respects to penance at Winchester, and asks what Æthelwold's expectations were for the organisation of penitential care at Winchester.

Penance is a concept that can be viewed from many different angles and seems almost amorphous within Christian society. Elements of its practice changed throughout the centuries, and it seems to have been practiced in various ways. Fundamentally, *poenitentia*, 'penance', was an act of repentance and atonement for one's transgressions: it required the contrite admission of one's sins through confession, and an attempt to make amends for these sins in order to ensure the salvation of one's soul after death. Performing penance required the guidance of the clergy – in medieval society it was to priests that confession was made, and it was these priests that both asserted the type of penance that was required for redemption and witnessed that the penance was carried out. As such, during the tenth century penance was a sacrament that, theoretically at least, was based on a regular, continuous, and mutual involvement of lay and clergy, and hence provides a valuable window through which to view social and religious relationships.

The study of penitential practices has seemingly joined scholars of the Middle Ages in a way that the study of other aspects of pastoral care, such as preaching and burial traditions, has not. The collaboration of scholars of penance predates the modern historiographical

movement for ‘interdisciplinary’ or ‘multidisciplinary’ research, and reflects the extent to which matters of penance transgress academic specialisations or categorisations: early medieval scholars collaborate with late medieval scholars, and there is a strong dialogue between Carolingian or ‘continental’ specialists and researchers of Anglo-Saxon England. This observation reflects the integral nature of penance: geographically, chronologically, and in terms of its expression in various sources, one can see a fluid but fundamentally interconnected characteristic of penance. This permeance of academic ‘categorisations’ has meant that the historiography of penance is far from straightforward.¹²⁷

Penitential practice is traditionally viewed within scholarship as having developed in three stages. The first stage relates to the origins of penance in late antiquity, when penance was imposed as a public shaming ritual, performed only by the bishop. Its application was limited to once in one’s lifetime, and it was regarded as a preparation for Lent, with the penitents being expelled from the church at the beginning of Lent, only to be publicly reconciled on Maundy Thursday. This strict ritual seems to have lost popularity around the sixth century, when a ‘secret’ or ‘private’ penance of insular tradition provided a more flexible option: confession could be made to a priest, who would provide a route to absolution through tariffed penitential acts. As this penance ritual could be carried out more

¹²⁷ S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050* (The Royal Historical Society: The Boydell Press, 2001) gives a detailed account of the historiography, see ‘Introduction’. See also M.M. Sauer (with S. Aleshire and C. Lozensky), ‘Penitentials and Confessionals’, in *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms, Methods, Trends* ed. A. Classen (Berlin-New York: De Gruyter, 2010), pp. 1968-79. See R. Meens, ‘The Frequency and Nature of Early Medieval Penance’, in *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages* ed. P. Biller and A.J. Minnis (York-Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1998), pp.35-61 as a response to B. Bedingfield, ‘Public penance in Anglo-Saxon England’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 31 (2002): 223-55 and A. Murray, ‘Confession before 1215’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 3 (1993): 51-81. For a discussion of later Medieval penance see R. Meens, ‘Penitentials and the practice of penance in the tenth and eleventh centuries’, *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006): 7-21, idem., ‘Remedies for Sins’, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity III: Early Medieval Christianities, 600-1100*, ed. T.F.X. Noble and J.M.H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.399-415. In regards to Anglo-Saxon England specifically see A.J. Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1983); S. Hamilton, ‘Remedies for ‘great transgressions’: penance and excommunication in late Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), pp.83-105; and C. Cubitt, ‘Bishops, priests and penance in late Saxon England’, *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006): 41-63. Most recently, see R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe 600-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

than once in a lifetime, penitentials, as lists of sins with their corresponding penitential tariffs, were developed to guide the priests in the care of their flocks.¹²⁸

The second stage of the development of penance stems from the Carolingian period, with the reforms in education and religious practice. It is a stage that is currently being challenged and reassessed within scholarship. Traditionally, it was thought that in this period the reforming clergy strived “to promote the practice of two separate forms of penance [...] public sins merit public penance, hidden sins hidden penance”.¹²⁹ Increasingly academics are questioning the reality of this divisive separation, as it would seem that perhaps the degree of publicity of one’s penance depended on one’s social elevation and political importance: as Mayke de Jong has suggested, “the truly public sinners were those with a reputation that mattered”.¹³⁰ The conflict between ideal and reality can be seen in the sources: prescriptive texts paint a picture of the two forms of penance as distinct entities, whilst there appears to be less of a concern with separating the two types of penance in other sources, such as narrative accounts, where a more ambiguous and fluid concept of penance can be seen.

The third stage of the development of penance relates to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 when “a new interiorized ethical form of penance emerged” – a development that is beyond the focus of this thesis.¹³¹

Although they should be understood more as a reflection of historiographical trends rather than as definitive ‘stages’, these movements need to be considered when analysing the state of penance during the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine reform of the tenth century. They reflect the ambiguities of penance as a concept: was it private or public, or a mixture of both? Was it a ritual of education and healing or one of shame and punishment (or were its

¹²⁸ For a discussion of this movement and the concepts of ‘public’ and ‘private’ penance see M. de Jong, ‘Transformations of penance’, in *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* ed. F. Theuvs and J.L. Nelson (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2000), pp.185-224.

¹²⁹ Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance*, pp.4-5.

¹³⁰ M. de Jong, ‘Transformations of penance’, p.220.

¹³¹ R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe*, p.4. Also see Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance*, p.7.

purposes moulded to circumstance)?¹³² Was it a unique, one-off event or something to be repeated throughout one's life, and in either case, what did this mean for the gravity of the penitential rite? Fundamentally, penance seems to have entailed different things to different people in different eras and, as with everything, generalisations about its function are misleading. There does not seem to be one set ritual for the correct performance or application of penance; instead its practice was adapted depending on circumstance and location, as well as the social status of penitent and the ideology of the clergy extracting confession. Due to its relevance to many aspects of medieval life, penitential aspects can be seen within various types of sources: as well as in the expected penitentials, aspects of penance can be seen in charters, law codes and judicial documents, as well as in sermons, narrative accounts, and educative texts.

Despite the apparent pervasiveness of the practice of penance as hinted at in sermons, liturgical codes, and judicial legislation, only five vernacular penitentials from the tenth and eleventh centuries are known from Anglo-Saxon England.¹³³ Although there is evidence for the transmission of penitential sources from the continent to England at this time, connections seem limited to certain episcopal sees, predominantly those of Worcester, Canterbury, and Exeter, and discussions of penance within Anglo-Saxon authorship are limited to certain clerics, primarily Archbishop Wulfstan.¹³⁴ Of other manuscripts that contain penitential texts and excerpts, many have an unknown provenance or can be associated with various ecclesiastical centres, meaning that an attempt to pinpoint their practice to a specific region is

¹³² Penance was viewed as a healing sacrament that strived to cleanse and restore the soul, but it could also be interpreted as a disciplinary, corrective, and "preventative act, designed to protect Christians from the consequences of their sinful mortal life in their immortal life" – see Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance*, p.2; M. de Jong, 'Transformations of penance', p.199.

¹³³ See <http://www.anglo-saxon.net/penance/index.php>, accessed 01/11/2017.

¹³⁴ As established in Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe*, pp.163-64. For a discussion of the late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts containing penitential texts see Hamilton, 'Remedies for 'great transgressions''.

problematic and reductive.¹³⁵ Despite being frustrating in some respects, embracing this fluid nature of the texts acknowledges the existence of a wider network between ecclesiastical institutions that was used for sharing knowledge and ideas about ecclesiastical practices. Due to it being such an influential centre of learning and education, it is reasonable to assume that Winchester was active within this ‘sharing network’. As such, although there may be a lack of penitential manuscripts originating from Winchester at this time, it is probable that the penitential knowledge in centres such as Worcester, Exeter, and Canterbury, where penitential texts can be traced, was also present at Winchester.¹³⁶ This would have included guidelines for penitential tariffs and texts on the nature of confession; aspects of which can be indirectly seen within the liturgical, legislative, and narrative sources that do originate from Winchester. It should also be acknowledged that manuscripts often contain more than one penitential. This could indicate that, in a parallel to texts associated with preaching, penitentials were a source of inspiration: priests took the context of the sin and the sinner into account before issuing penance, so the penitentials should be seen as a fluid and adaptable source of influence, rather than as an inflexible codex.¹³⁷ As such, whilst there are no vernacular penitentials surviving from Winchester, this is not to say that Winchester priests weren’t influenced by penitentials or penitential teachings in their pastoral work.

Monks and Penance

Aspects of penitential practices during the Benedictine Reform can be seen within liturgical and narrative documents. One such liturgical document is the *Regularis Concordia*,

¹³⁵ See manuscripts referenced under ‘Penitential literature’ within the index of H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), p.176.

¹³⁶ See the propensity for these ecclesiastical centres to be the origin or provenance of penitential manuscripts in H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001).

¹³⁷ See Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe*, p.164 and Bedingfield, ‘Public penance in Anglo-Saxon England’, pp.248-53

which was written with the aim of ensuring that the reforming clergy had a united vision for the reform movement.¹³⁸ As has been seen in the chapter above, due to Æthelwold's influence, the *Regularis Concordia* is especially useful for investigating Æthelwold's interpretation of the Rule of St Benedict. Insight into how the ordinances of the *Regularis Concordia* were implemented at the Winchester minsters can be seen through a parallel analysis of narrative sources, particularly Lantfred's *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni*.¹³⁹ Confession and penance were an integral part of the monastic life, and the contents of the *Regularis Concordia* relate strictly to the monastic clergy rather than to the lay citizens. However, given his personal investment as the main instigator of the text, the *Regularis Concordia* can be seen as a reflection of Æthelwold's particular expectations for his monastic community at Winchester, and of his approach to penance as a whole – such as the manner, regularity, and contexts in which penance should be carried out. It has been seen throughout this thesis that the monastic community was in close proximity to the wider lay society, with an often porous division between lay and clerical boundaries in many aspects.¹⁴⁰ This, twinned with Æthelwold's inherent episcopal responsibility to the people of Winchester, may have seen a transfer of penitential ideals from a clerical to a lay context. As such, an analysis of the penitential rituals within the *Regularis Concordia* and the reflection of such rituals in narrative sources, may provide some insight into penitential aspects of the pastoral care of the Winchester laity.

The *Regularis Concordia* contains two chapters on the aspect of penance for the monastic community. Chapter twenty-one seems concerned with a more 'public' penance,

¹³⁸ D.T. Symons, transl. and intro., *Regularis Concordia* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953). See also D.T. Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation' in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and 'Regularis Concordia'* ed. D. Parsons (London-Chichester: Phillimore and Co., 1975), pp.37-59.

¹³⁹ Lantfred of Winchester, *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni*, ed. and transl. by M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch.I, pp.252-333

¹⁴⁰ See also C.T. Riedel, 'Praising God Together: Monastic Reformers and Lay People in Tenth-Century Winchester', *The Catholic Historical Review* 102:2 (2016): 284-317

and is worth relating almost in full. Following the daily Morrow Mass and subsequent prayers and readings, an opportunity for confession is given:

[...] any brother who is conscious of having committed some fault shall humbly ask forgiveness and indulgence. But a brother that is accused, no matter for what reason, by the abbot or by one of the senior officials, shall prostrate himself before speaking. And when asked by the prior the reason for this, he shall answer by admitting his fault, saying *Mea culpa domine*. Then, when bidden, let him rise. If he acts in any other wise he shall be deemed guilty. Thus whoever, when rebuked by a superior for any fault or for anything done amiss in the workshops, does not immediately prostrate himself as the Rule ordains, must undergo the greater punishment. Indeed, the more a monk humbles himself and accepts blame, the more mercifully and gently shall he be dealt with by the prior. For it is meet that in all our negligences, whether of thought, word or deed, that we should be judged in this present life by sincere confession and humble penance lest, when this life is over, our sins declare us guilty before the judgement-seat of Christ. When this duty of spiritual purgation has been gone through, the five psalms set forth below shall be said for departed brethren¹⁴¹

This confession and penance is acted out in audience of the full community – whether after the Morrow Mass, or within a workshop/throughout the day if rebuked by a superior. Despite referencing negligent thoughts and words, it relates fundamentally to flaws that could be *consciously* identified by the brethren themselves, or with tangible faults that could be highlighted by a superior. This suggests at a physicality to these wrongs, and of their relevance to the rest of the community. Given that there is a dedicated daily window of time set aside for this scene, and that one could be called on throughout the day to be penitent, it

¹⁴¹ D.T. Symons, transl. and intro., *Regularis Concordia* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953), pp.17-18.

would seem that these ‘negligences’ were a common occurrence. Moreover, it would seem that this penitential enactment was part of the morning routine, a ‘duty of spiritual purgation’ that cleansed the monks ready for the day ahead.

In comparison, chapter twenty-two seems concerned with a more ‘private’ penance, and of a confession perhaps more sacramental than disciplinary.¹⁴² It states that on Sundays:

[...] each monk shall by humble confession reveal the state of his conscience to his spiritual father or, if he be absent, to whomsoever acts in his place. And if the number of the brethren be such that all cannot make their confession on that day, let them do so on the next, that is, on Monday. Nor shall the *schola* even, on the score of their tender age, ever omit this duty but, although they are as yet untroubled by temptations, let them make their confession in the customary way as the elder brethren do. If, moreover, a brother, urged by some temptation of soul or body, needs to confess at any other time, let him by no means delay to have recourse to the healing remedy of confession¹⁴³

These weekly confessions differ from the daily confessions in that there is no sense of accusation from others – rather, there is much more of a focus on the brethren identifying matters requiring confession themselves. Whereas the previous extract focussed on ‘faults’ and ‘negligences’, this chapter focuses on ‘temptations’, indicating more of a dilemma of morals and internal turmoil than a tangible failing. Although initially set out as a weekly occurrence, the *Regularis Concordia* recognises the opportunity for this confession as and when the monks required it. There is no mention of penitential acts in this chapter, but there is a sense of accountability, in that the monks are expected to report to their spiritual father (the abbot of the community). This is something that both extracts share – of the confession

¹⁴² As suggested by Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p.18 footnote 6: “we must understand Sacramental Confession as distinguished from the disciplinary ‘confession’ connected with Chapter”.

¹⁴³ Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p.18.

being overseen by the abbot, or, if unavailable, a clerical superior. This implies bishop Æthelwold's direct role in the regular occurrence of confessional matters: as head of the monastery, his involvement was an expected norm within such matters in Anglo-Saxon England.

These references to penance within a monastic context must only be taken as a depiction of the ideal, rather than as a description of what actually occurred in reality. There is often a difference between the two, a point that is relayed in Lantfred's narrative account of the miracles of St Swithun, where the monks fail to carry out the rulings of their bishop. Æthelwold had told the monks that whenever a miracle of St Swithun's occurred, they were to immediately go to the church and "magnify God appropriately".¹⁴⁴ However, when Æthelwold was briefly away at the king's residence¹⁴⁵, the monks "bore it ill that they were so frequently awakened from their night-time sleep" to celebrate the vast numbers of miracles that Swithun performed, so they abandoned Æthelwold's directive in preference, presumably, of sleeping more soundly.¹⁴⁶

Although indicative of the ways in which ideal and reality differed, Lantfred's narrative source also contains a strong theme of monastic penance, and often complements the liturgical guidelines expressed in the *Regularis Concordia*. This can be seen in the same passage as the one related above, with the outlining of the consequences for the monks' disobedience. The lack of celebration of the miracles distressed St Swithun, who, after a fortnight of the monks' rebellious behaviour, appeared in a dream to 'a certain respectable lady' and urged her to tell Æthelwold about the reality of the situation. After the lady had

¹⁴⁴ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch. 10, p.293.

¹⁴⁵ See Lanfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch. 10, p.296-97, ft. 194 on the location of this royal residence: it is apparent that it was not the royal residence that was in Winchester, as this was only 40 metres away from the minster and Æthelwold would surely have been aware of such disobedience had he been this close. Lapidge points out that there were other royal residences near to Winchester at this time, such as King's Worthy, King's Somborne, Kingsclere, Andover etc.

¹⁴⁶ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.10, p.295.

related her dream, Æthelwold asserted that anyone disobeying the ruling “would do penance for seven days, eating and drinking nothing besides water and bread”; Lantfred states that the order was afterwards obeyed.¹⁴⁷ It is noticeable here that penance served as a disciplinary threat to a tangible action (or lack thereof), as seen in chapter twenty-one of the *Regularis Concordia*. In a parallel to the directions of the *Regularis Concordia*, as the ‘spiritual father’ of the community, this scene also establishes Æthelwold as the ultimate the giver and overseer of the penitential requirements. What is more, there is an emphasis on the monks being found guilty by others, insinuating an awareness of the difference between faults that were proactively admitted through confession, and those that had to be raised as accusations, as outlined in the *Regularis Concordia*.¹⁴⁸

Although Swithun was the one to raise the issue through the dream of the lady, ultimately it was God who was ignored by the monks; he was the “omnipotent author of miracles”, and it was he whose displeasure the monks risked provoking.¹⁴⁹ Swithun highlights this point in his dream dialogue and gives a more spiritual implication of the monks’ behaviour, in that “if the monks desist from praise, the miracles of Almighty God will cease”.¹⁵⁰ This spiritual sanction furthers Æthelwold’s imposition of a physical penance. Whilst Æthelwold’s judgement addressed the tangible behaviour of the monks, God’s unspoken judgement implies a soul-searching, moralistic aspect to the scene that is perhaps more in line with the sacramental element of confession and penance. God’s omniscient

¹⁴⁷ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.10, p.297.

¹⁴⁸ This also distinguishes the differences between the more ‘sacramental confession’ and the ‘disciplinary confession’ as highlighted by Symons.

¹⁴⁹ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.10, p.295. As a saint, Swithun was the conduit for God’s power – there is a large body of scholarship on the nature of sainthood, as an introduction see J.M.H. Smith, ‘Saints and their Cults’, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity III: Early Medieval Christianities, 600-1100*, ed. T.F.X. Noble and J.M.H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.581-605; for England in particular see P.A. Hayward, ‘Saints and Cults’, in *A Social History of England, 900-1200* ed. J. Crick and E. van Houts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.309-20.

¹⁵⁰ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.10, p.295.

presence was unavoidable, and he was the ultimate spiritual father to whom one could reveal the state of their conscience.

The potential withdrawal of miracles from Winchester would have had consequences for the monastic community at large, as it would have established the monks as out of favour with God and would have negatively impacted the functionality of the Old Minster as a pilgrimage site, relying as it did on the performance of miracles to attract lay audiences. Ultimately, this would have posed as a spiritual and financial threat for the monks, as they relied on the minster's reputation as a divinely active and favoured community to secure endowments, political favour, and regional authority. Swithun states that, "on the other hand [if] they do not stop praising the heavenly king, He the Lord of all things shall perform so many and such miracles in that place, that no-one alive will recall such miracles ever having been performed hitherto".¹⁵¹ As such, whilst the depiction of disobedience and the consequential penance of fasting implemented by Æthelwold can be seen as a physical penance imposed for a tangible fault, this is perhaps the more superficial issue at hand. Underlying this is the threat of spiritual sanctions and the unspoken judgement imposed by God on the morality of the monks, and their ability to overcome temptations of 'soul or body'. The threat of spiritual sanctions presents this scene as an effort to establish an increased celebration of miracles, perhaps in order to promote the spiritual validity of the community at Old Minster at a time when this had been challenged or needed to be emphasised.

Both aspects of penance outlined in the *Regularis Concordia* can therefore be seen as reflected within the narrative source: both the disciplinary, and the more sacramental and spiritual. This would suggest that Æthelwold's understanding of penance was in line with the

¹⁵¹ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.10, 295.

Regularis Concordia, and that more often than not, he followed the liturgical guidelines in practice.

The role of the laity within this scene should not go unflagged. It was to ‘a certain respectable lady’ that Swithun appeared, and it was she that enabled the penitential threat to be put in place by Æthelwold.¹⁵² This suggests that there was not only a communicational link between the monastic community and the laity, but that the citizens of Winchester were invested in the behaviour of the monks and were involved in their penitential judgement in some capacity. The monitoring of the monks’ liturgical standards by the laity is glimpsed at in other ways, such as in the sacrist being urgently reminded by a man who had gained his speech by St Swithun’s miracles to “go, call the monks, so that they may give thanks to God in their usual manner”.¹⁵³ Nowhere else, however is there such a clear association between the laity and the penitential rituals of the Winchester monks, although there are references to the involvement of the monks in the penitential and judicial experiences of the Winchester laity. This will be the subject of the remainder of this chapter.

Laity and Penance

The lack of penitentials at Winchester, along with the lack of penitential ‘handbooks’ explaining the correct practice of the ritual, makes glimpsing lay penitential practices difficult. However, indications of the involvement of the minsters in penitential aspects of lay life can be seen in narrative accounts, such as in the miracles of St Swithun.

¹⁵² Ælfric’s *Epitome Translationis et Miraculorum S. Swithuni*, written as an abbreviation to Lantfred’s *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni* in the period between 984 and c.998 also contains this scene, although interestingly, Swithun appears in a dream to a ‘certain trustworthy man’. See Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, p.571. Lapidge comments that this altering of the gender may be an indication that Ælfric had personal knowledge of the event (see footnote 22 on pp.570-71). Regardless, their lay status remains constant.

¹⁵³ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, ch.5, p.289.

In four consecutive chapters, Lantfred illuminates judicial practices within Anglo-Saxon England, and the ways in which they were interlinked with matters of penance.¹⁵⁴ In chapter 24, Lantfred depicts a man whose punishment for murder required him to wear nine metal rings on his body during nine years of penance. One cut across his stomach “so much so that it was already penetrating into his vital inwards”.¹⁵⁵ On hearing of Swithun’s miracles, the man travelled to Winchester and there, with God’s permission, he received the “sanative intercession of the holy bishop”.¹⁵⁶ The rings miraculously fell off the man’s body, and one, as witness to the event, “is still hanging up in the same minster”.¹⁵⁷ As well as abating his pain and ending the physical manifestation of his disciplinary penance, the releasing of the rings is noted as being a medicinal, healing act, through the use of the Latin word *medicabilem*. Along with the fact that the man implores God to help him “in humble prayers”, a depiction that resembles inner confession and true repentance, this cleansing aspect of Swithun’s miracle pertains to the more spiritual implications of penance. The terminating of the man’s penitential state due to the intercession of St Swithun at Winchester is significant, as is the hanging up of the memento. It suggests that the minsters were the site of penitential judgements and of divine forgiveness, implicitly involving the monks in the penitential experiences of the laity. The display of the ring indicates that the monks wanted to foster and promote this connection with penitential practices.

This depiction of penitential ‘healing’ occurred as a response to a judgement that had already occurred. In the section following this, chapter 25, Lantfred depicts the involvement of the minsters in a judicial matter that was yet to be resolved. Whilst less penitential in nature, it nonetheless depicts the ways in which religious and legal matters overlapped. The chapter depicts the ordeal of a slave, who was to carry a red-hot iron bar to determine his

¹⁵⁴ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, chapters 24-27, pp.306-17.

¹⁵⁵ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, pp.306-7.

¹⁵⁶ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, p.306-7.

¹⁵⁷ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, p.306-7.

guilt. If, on the third day after carrying the bar, the slave's hands were found to be wounded, then he would be deemed guilty.¹⁵⁸ The owner of the slave implored St Swithun to intercede, and lo, on the third day when the slave's hand was revealed, "the man's supporters saw the blister and swelling – whereas the prosecutors saw the hand to be as well healed as if it had never touched the heated metal".¹⁵⁹ The slave was found guiltless, so was freed and donated to St Swithun in thanks for the miracle. The two chapters that follow are similar to this, in the respect that they present St Swithun as correcting flawed judicial proceedings. As such, not only were the minsters involved in terminating penance, but they were implicated in judging when penitential proceedings or judicial disciplinary were necessary, and when they were not.

These depictions reveal a connection between the minsters and matters of lay penance. They show the monks fostering a reputation of the minsters as a site for the ending of penitential ordeals, through divine intervention. This implicates the minsters as places in which confession was made by the laity through prayers, and consolidates the minsters as suitable places in which to establish one's repentance. These scenes also depict the possibility of the minsters being appealed to by those awaiting penitential judgement, meaning that all 'stages' of penance can be seen at the minsters. These scenes do not, however, show the monks as actively involved in the penitential pastoral care of the laity. They do not explain who confession was carried out to when it was discussed aloud, or the process in which the penitential requirements were decided on. Instead, they show that the monks were interested in lay penance from afar, through the actions of St Swithun, and that they wished to promote their minsters as sites of divine forgiveness, and of divine judgement. This lack of direct involvement in penitential matters is curious, especially given the wealth of evidence for

¹⁵⁸ Lapidge details the specifications of the ordeal in *Cult of St Swithun*, footnote 231, p.309.

¹⁵⁹ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, p.310-11.

penitential rituals within the minsters, and of Æthelwold's obvious concern with the matter. Clearly there was an active culture of lay penance at this time; the ritual was vital for ensuring the health of one's soul, and the laity of Winchester appear to have been frequently exposed to the 'penitential pilgrims' that visited the minsters. The absence of any mention of how the penitential rituals of the laity were managed suggests that this was done away from the minsters, perhaps at the local churches. This would have given an opportunity for the priests to discuss confession and the reparative measures on a more personalised, individualised level. This would align with Biddle's supposition that the removal of the secular clergy at the minsters "served as a stimulus to the parochial evolution of the lesser churches" within Winchester during the Benedictine Reform; as the minsters became centres of monastic clergy, and as they were increasingly focussed on attracting pilgrims, the space and time for managing the penitential needs of the local laity would have been reduced.¹⁶⁰

This absence of monastic involvement can also be seen in disciplinary matters within the city. Whilst not strictly related to sacramental penance, it can be seen that the monks called for the laity to face religious sanctions for behavioural misdemeanours, without further involving themselves in the practical application of these sanctions. This can be seen within the New Minster refoundation charter, which was created by Bishop Æthelwold and issued in King Edgar's name in 966.¹⁶¹ The New Minster refoundation charter asserts the rights of the monks of the New Minster, justifying their replacement of the secular clergy, and validates their position as supported by King Edgar. It establishes and defends the property of the New Minster in anticipation of future disputes, and gives guidance to ensure the correct following of the Benedictine Rule. The charter makes conditions for the punishment or benediction of those outside of the walls of the monastery whose behaviours affect the lives of the monks.

¹⁶⁰ Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.459.

¹⁶¹ A.R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents relating to the topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman city and its minsters*, Winchester Studies 4.iii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), document IV, pp.65-97. See also S.745.

Chapter xi is titled ‘Concerning the anathema on those who plot against the monks’, and in a similar fashion, chapter x follows with ‘Also concerning the anathema on those who plot’.¹⁶² Chapter xi relates to the blessing to be given to those who honour and respect the monks, stating that they “have a share with Christ in the dwellings of Heaven”.¹⁶³ Given that the references are to anathema, the extracts here relate more properly to monastic involvement in lay matters of discipline, rather than to penance and confession, but there is a clear incitement of religious consequences for any poor behaviour from the laity.

Whilst these clauses in the refoundation charter exist out of a desire to establish a separation between lay and monastic communities, they implicitly depict a connection between the two groups. There must have been some association if the laity were able to plot against, or honour and respect the monks, and there must have been some means of the monks knowing about this behaviour. Although the monks are not depicted as carrying out the punitive or rewarding measures, they are seemingly responsible for initiating such processes, as they demand anathemas or blessings on those who transgress their ideals or commit crimes against them. In much the same way that Swithun and the lay lady were instrumental in the process of correcting the monks, so the monks were a catalyst by which the laity could be corrected.

These examples demonstrate the fact that whilst intrinsically involved, the monks were also markedly absent from both the penitential and judicial matters of the laity. This suggests that the every-day management of corrective, disciplinary, and ‘cleansing’ activities of the laity, whether spiritual or not, occurred away from the minsters. Without further evidence these activities can only be hypothetically linked to the local churches, however it would be logical to look for these activities occurring in close proximity to the local

¹⁶² Rumble, *Property and Piety*, document iv, p.83-84.

¹⁶³ Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p.84-85.

population, and within centres that were able to give tailored responses to the laity. The number of the local churches, their convenient positioning all around the city of Winchester, and the fact that their numbers only rise throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries, makes it tempting to suggest that the local churches increasingly played a role in this aspect of pastoral care of the laity.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is clear from the *Regularis Concordia* that Æthelwold was invested in the practice of penance at Winchester, both as a disciplinary measure and as a sacramental rite. This concern with penance can also be seen in the behaviours of the monk and the laity, who seem in balance as mutual ‘initiators’ of the penitential practices of the other if so required. This was seen in the lay lady being the catalyst that prompted Æthelwold’s penitential ruling for the monks, and in the New Minster refoundation charter that established which lay actions against the monks required a religious sanction. The monks are seen to be proud of the authority that the miracles of St Swithun had within penitential matters. They seem keen to promote themselves as linked to the penitential matters of the laity through displaying the penitential ring, and through the documentation of so many miracles referencing penitential and judicial events. They are not, however, depicted as being involved in lay penitential or confessional matters themselves, but only through the actions of the saint. This could suggest that the monks were not part of the practicalities of penance as a pastoral need, but were limited to recommending when lay penance was needed, and in witnessing when penance had been completed through the miracles of St Swithun. Although there is little evidence to see how the penitential needs of the laity were met during the Benedictine Reform, this would suggest that the laity received this aspect of pastoral care from elsewhere,

perhaps from the local churches that may have been able to determine the needs of the people on a much more individualised basis.

Chapter 3: Burial

Contextualising Anglo-Saxon burial practices

Anglo-Saxon scribes wrote little on the matter of burial in late medieval England. Scholars of the period have therefore relied on a corpus of non-textual material to better understand burial practices, as seen in the growing body of archaeological investigations.¹⁶⁴ At present, these investigations focus for the most part on select urban, and especially ecclesiastical, centres, meaning that much still remains to be known about rural burial practices. Regardless, these studies provide valuable insight into the specificities of burial practices in particular areas, illuminating the increasing dominance of the church on the ritual throughout the tenth century.¹⁶⁵ Aside from these archaeological insights, references to burial practices can be glimpsed indirectly through sources such as law-codes, liturgical documents and narrative sources, which help to understand the social contexts and mentalities behind the burial practices.¹⁶⁶ Although textual evidence mainly only survives from ecclesiastical or royal sources, they indicate that burial practices were of concern for all levels of society. Scholars are increasingly striving to marry the non-textual and the textual investigations – often these sources have been studied in isolation by their respective specialists, but recent

¹⁶⁴ See for instance, B. Kjølbbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration: the disposal of the Winchester dead over 2000 years', in *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100-1600*, ed. S. Basset (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.210-47; D.M. Hadley, *Death in Medieval England: An Archaeology* (Stroud: Tempus, 2001); D.M. Hadley and J. Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead in late Anglo-Saxon England', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp.121-47; J. Buckberry and A. Cherryson ed., *Burial in Later Anglo-Saxon England c.650-1100 AD* (Oxford-Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2010). See also J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁶⁵ As stated by Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead', p.126.

¹⁶⁶ See Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead'; V. Thompson, 'Constructing salvation: a homiletic and penitential context for late Anglo-Saxon burial practice', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales* ed. S. Lucy and A. Reynolds (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2002), pp.229-40; F. Tinti, 'The 'costs' of pastoral care: church dues in late Anglo-Saxon England', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp.27-51.

historiographical trends for interdisciplinary approaches within academia has highlighted the value of considering all the available evidence in harmony.¹⁶⁷

The tenth century appears, in both archaeological and textual sources, to have been a period of transition for burial practices in Anglo-Saxon England. D.M. Hadley and J. Buckberry show that prior to this period, there is limited involvement of the church in the burial process; there doesn't seem to be a desire to strictly control burial practices, and there is "little to suggest that burial in a cemetery at, or belonging to, a mother church, or indeed any church, was either expected or demanded" at this time.¹⁶⁸ It is only during the tenth century that there is a significant focus within legislative texts on promoting the church cemetery as the expected burial place, including establishing tariffs for the possession of consecrated ground and for the burial ritual itself.¹⁶⁹ This insinuates that there was a new interest in church burials, a factor that may have been driven by the growth in the number of church foundations that also occurred at this time.¹⁷⁰ However, it must be acknowledged that the lack of textual sources prior to the tenth century regarding burial practices is not indicative of a lack of interest in burial practices by ecclesiastical and royal institutions: archaeological evidence shows that for at least some members of society, both clergy and lay, burial occurred in association with churches and monasteries from an early period.¹⁷¹ In the same vein, Hadley and Buckberry show that even with the issuing of administrative and legislative documents in the tenth century, the burial process was far from uniform in the

¹⁶⁷ See for instance, the value of the Winchester Studies series, which combines archaeological, topographical, hagiographical, and chartered sources to better understand the political, religious, and cultural aspects of Winchester throughout the ages: <http://winchesterstudies.org.uk/> accessed 01/12/2017.

¹⁶⁸ Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead', p.126.

¹⁶⁹ See Tinti, 'The 'costs' of pastoral care'.

¹⁷⁰ For a discussion on the growth of local churches at this time and the implications for ecclesiastical organisation see Blair, *The Church*.

¹⁷¹ Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead', p.126. Monasteries as important burial sites can be seen with the focus on such places for royal burials - see M. Biddle and B. Kjølbbye-Biddle, 'Danish Royal Burials in Winchester: Cnut and his Family', in *Danes in Wessex: the Scandinavian Impact on Southern England, c.800-c.1100* ed., R. Lavelle and S. Roffey (Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2015), pp.212-49, in particular see table 12.2 (p.234) where the Old Minster and New Minster of Winchester, as well as Glastonbury and Malmesbury provide the common places of royal burials until the end of the tenth century.

years that followed, and remained a fundamentally localised affair.¹⁷² However, the increased involvement of the Church in burial throughout this period is apparent, and raises questions as to the nature and quality of the pastoral care that accompanied death and burial.

The pastoral care of the dying and dead is a topic that has garnered more study in recent years. As discussed below, Francesca Tinti has highlighted the tariffs that were paid to priests during the burial process, which suggests that there was an exchange for the pastoral services of the clergy.¹⁷³ In addition, Sarah Hamilton has highlighted instances in later eleventh century manuscripts where lay audiences are anticipated as the audience for burial rites performed by the priest.¹⁷⁴ These studies provide much insight into the burial situation of late Anglo-Saxon England. It is the aim of this chapter to channel this focus particularly into tenth century Winchester. How were burials managed within tenth century Winchester? In what capacity were the monks involved in the burial practices of the laity, and to what extent? What role did the minsters play in the rituals of the dead and dying? Ultimately, this chapter investigates the extent to which the Benedictine Reform affect burial rituals within Winchester.

Archaeological Evidence

Through excavations of Winchester's cemeteries, Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle has shown that men, women, and children were buried within Winchester.¹⁷⁵ As with any source, interpreting archaeological evidence can be problematic. There is a potential for unrepresentative impressions to be made due to the fact that as a whole, the minsters have been subjected to more focussed excavations than other areas within Winchester. In addition,

¹⁷² Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead', p.131.

¹⁷³ See Tinti, 'The 'costs' of pastoral care'. On this aspect also see also Hadley and Buckberry, 'Caring for the dead'.

¹⁷⁴ S. Hamilton, 'Rites of passage and pastoral care', in *A Social History of England, 900-1200* ed. J. Crick and E. van Houts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.290-308, p.301.

¹⁷⁵ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration'.

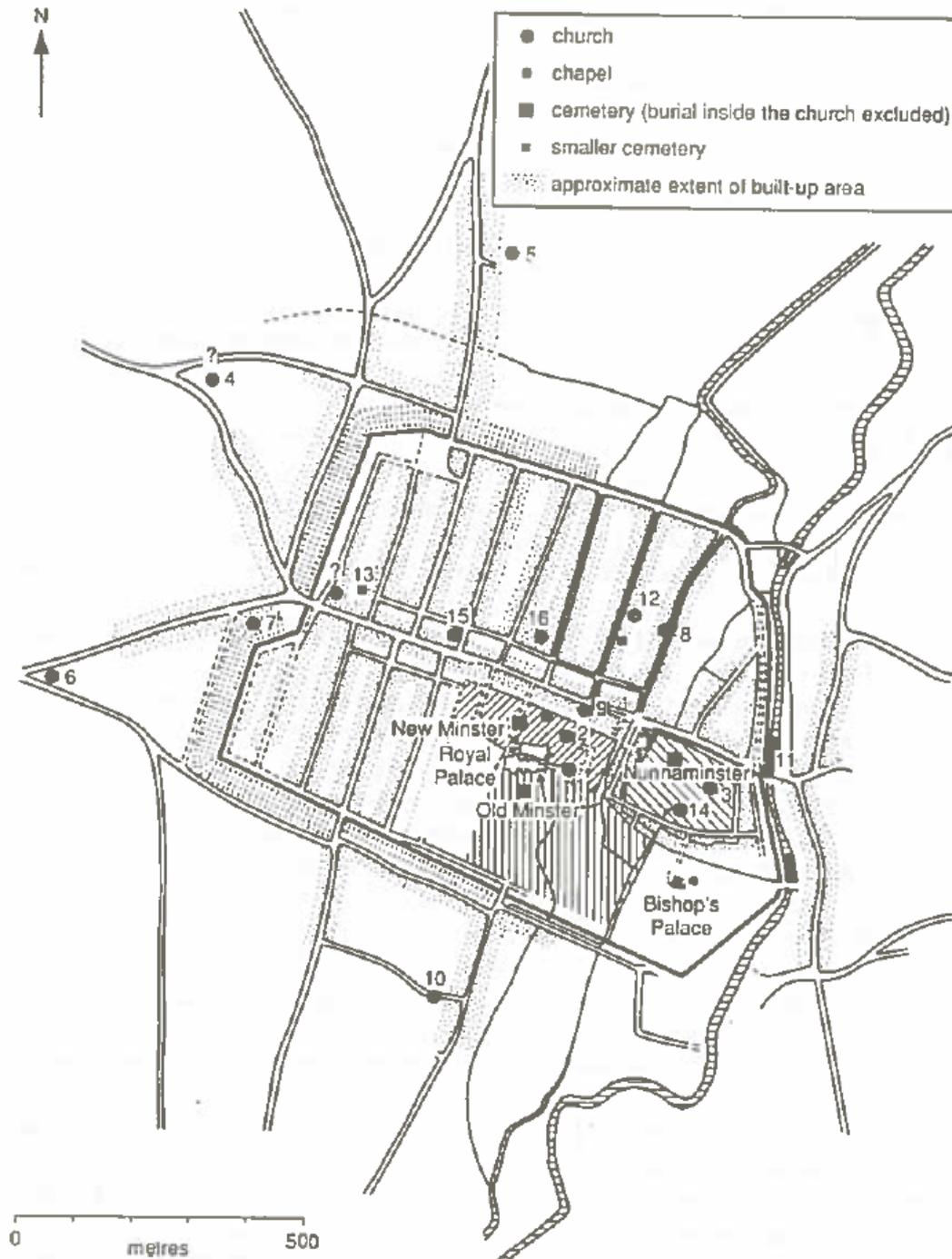


Figure 3: Image showing the known churches and cemeteries in Winchester from the late ninth to the late eleventh century (not necessarily before the conquest as in Figure 1). 1, Old Minster; 2, New Minster; 3, Nunnaminster; 4, St Anastasius; 5, St Bartholomew Hyde; 6, St James; 7, St Martin's in the Ditch; 8, St Mary in Tanner Street; 9, St Maurice; 10, St Michael outside King's Gate; 11, St Michael over East Gate; 12, St Pancras; 13, St Paul; 14, St Peter in Colebrook Street; 15, St Peter in the Fleshambles; 16, St Ruald¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.225, Figure 14.6. This image is based on Biddle's map of Winchester, with additions (see Figure 1 above, or Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, Figure 25 facing p.449).

the minsters themselves have been subject to varying levels of study – the Old Minster has been excavated the most and Nunnaminster the least, meaning that there is a potential risk of skewed evidence leading to flawed conclusions. Despite these potential issues, the findings of the archaeological expeditions are nonetheless invaluable, and conclusions can still be made as to burial practices within Winchester.

Burials within the city walls seem to have been restricted to the cemeteries of the minsters, particularly at the Old Minster and the New Minster. 109 graves have been excavated from the New Minster, which according to Kjølbye-Biddle is “a very small percentage of the graves located in and around the church”.¹⁷⁷ The density of the burials at the New Minster aligns with Martin Biddle’s hypothesis as outlined in the introduction of the thesis; that the New Minster was founded to provide for the needs of the growing urban population.¹⁷⁸ In serving as the local burg church until the Benedictine Reform, the New Minster seems to have established a tradition of being a burial site for the Winchester citizens at large. In 1110 the New Minster was moved to a new location at Hyde, just outside of the city walls. In a document outlining the legalities of this move, the “freedom which the citizens had enjoyed to choose burial at New Minster” was referenced and explicitly continued at the site at Hyde.¹⁷⁹ Although this document is from a significantly later date than Æthelwold’s episcopacy, this clause suggests at a long-standing tradition that may have been rooted in the foundation of the minster of the Winchester people being able to be buried at New Minster. As such, it would seem that the New Minster not only had a close relationship with the laity, but that it held a significant position within the city as a lay burial site. Biddle

¹⁷⁷ Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.226.

¹⁷⁸ See M. Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: an edition and discussion of the Winton Domesday*, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p.314; Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.226.

¹⁷⁹ Biddle, *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.314, referencing *Registrum Johannis de Pontissara Episcopi Wyntoniensis* ed. C. Deedes (Canterbury and York Society, London, 19 (1915) and 30 (1924), p.441.

states that the special consideration that the New Minster had on the matter of burial suggests that there was a controlled management of burial practices exercised by the cathedral, a notion which is supported by the fact that the cemeteries of the minsters seem to have such a strong monopoly on burial sites.¹⁸⁰

In total, 743 graves have been excavated from the Old Minster, 418 of which can be placed within the tenth to the eleventh centuries. Having calculated the minimum likely size of the cemetery at the Old Minster and assuming that there was “a comparable average density of burial to that found in the excavations”, Kjølbye-Biddle concludes that this is representative of a minimum of 2275 burials in the Old Minster for this period.¹⁸¹ It is hard to assess how this relates to population numbers, although Biddle’s study on the Winton Domesday, a twelfth century Winchester equivalent of the Domesday Book, gives some insight into the issue: he estimates that in the middle of the twelfth century, Winchester had a population of about 5,500 people.¹⁸² Without further evidence this figure can’t be narrowed down to a period closer to the tenth century, however it does show that large numbers of the population were buried at the Old Minster. Within the 743 graves that have been excavated from the Old Minster, approximately 60 percent could be identified as holding remains of a male, and 40 percent as the remains of female bodies. Roughly 38 percent of those that could be identified were the remains of children, and 62 percent as adult bodies.¹⁸³ This gives an indication of general burial trends at the Old Minster; men’s graves are more common than women’s graves, and significantly fewer children than adults were buried there, although it must also be acknowledged that young children’s bones tend to dissolve and disappear more quickly from the archaeological record.¹⁸⁴ Further insight into the trends of both the New and

¹⁸⁰ Biddle, *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.314.

¹⁸¹ Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, pp.226-27.

¹⁸² Biddle, *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, p.440.

¹⁸³ See table 14.3 in Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.227.

¹⁸⁴ I am grateful for my supervisor, Carine van Rhijn, for having pointed this out to me during the course of writing this chapter

Old Minster can be seen when considering the types of burials, and location of the graves at the sites.

There are various grave types existing within the New and Old Minsters. From the ninth to the eleventh centuries a type called the ‘charcoal grave’ gained popularity at Winchester, and it provides an easily identifiable point for comparison between the minsters. It is not known exactly what the meaning of the charcoal grave was, but it consisted of a layer of charcoal underneath the coffin that spread along the side of the grave, with some graves also containing a layer of charcoal above the coffin.¹⁸⁵ It is thought that the use of charcoal may signify an increasingly penitential aspect of the burial rite, with implications of humility and contrition, “just as ashes were used to signify contrition in the giving of penance”.¹⁸⁶ With penance being a fundamentally sacramental act requiring the oversight of a priest, as seen in the previous chapter, it is interesting that burial rites apparently took on this penitential quality. It is tempting to suggest that this association reflects an increased involvement of the clergy in burial rites, or perhaps a reassertion of the importance of clerical involvement in burial rites in order to secure the best chance of spiritual salvation.

It would seem that those buried in charcoal held some significance within their society, as the placement of their graves are either in close proximity to - or within - the churches themselves. Comparatively more charcoal graves were found at the New Minster than the Old, although more of those at the Old Minster contained additional indications of significance, such as coffins with iron fittings, iron nails, or iron rings. Fifteen graves with these high-quality coffins were found at the Old Minster, all with the remains of males within. One such coffin was found at the New Minster, containing what might be the remains

¹⁸⁵ Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.228.

¹⁸⁶ Hamilton, ‘Rites of passage and pastoral care’, p.303. See also Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.231, and Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.124. Charcoal was thought not to perish so could also signify eternity, or assert the permanence of the grave as be an attempt to dissuade any potential intrusion – see Kjølbye-Biddle, ‘Dispersal or concentration’, p.231.

of a female. Of the other, less elaborate, charcoal graves, the remains also indicate interesting gender differences. At the Old Minster the remains of 3 males were found to every female, whilst at the New Minster three females were found for every two males.¹⁸⁷ This data could suggest that the Old Minster was more commonly the place of burial for those very significant members of society, who were predominantly male, whilst the New Minster may have been more accessible as a burial site for those that were significant within society, but perhaps less wealthy or elite. The small selection of excavations make these conclusions tenuous, as with more data different patterns may emerge. What is clear, however, is that both male and female remains are found at both sites, suggesting that the cemeteries were not distinguished by gender.

The paucity of burials elsewhere within the city walls suggest that the minsters had a monopoly on the burials of the Winchester citizens. Kjølbye-Biddle identifies sixteen late Saxon churches in or in close proximity to Winchester, of which potentially only two had any graves, and the numbers of burials were significantly less than those found within the minsters.¹⁸⁸ Two Anglo-Saxon graves were found at St Pancras, and some tenth century graves (the numbers of which are not mentioned) at Staple Gardens cemetery may have belonged to the church of St Paul.¹⁸⁹ Kjølbye-Biddle suggests that these burials might have been allowed due to a special privilege; they may have been the burial sites of the private churches or of wealthy members of the local churches.¹⁹⁰ The lack of widespread burial practices at these smaller churches and the presence of only a few 'special' burials outside of the minsters seemingly supports Gervase Rosser's theory on these smaller churches as

¹⁸⁷ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.229-31, see table 14.5 on p.230.

¹⁸⁸ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.225, figure 14.6, copied above.

¹⁸⁹ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.226. Two other late Saxon burials on Upper Brook Street are thought to have occurred without authority, as they are not associated with any of the local churches, and are not within the grounds of a consecrated cemetery, see Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.226, 233.

¹⁹⁰ Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Dispersal or concentration', p.233. For further reading on the Staple Gardens burials see R. Kipling and G. Scobie, 'Staple Gardens 1989', *Winchester Museums Service Newsletter*, vi (1990): 8-9.

outlined in the introduction to this thesis.¹⁹¹ Rosser hypothesised that the placement of the churches suggests that their use was limited to certain individuals or groups. The presence of a very limited number of burials outside of the minsters would also indicate that these churches were used by a select few, and that the uses of the churches were limited. The focus of the burial sites at the minsters indicates that the majority of the Winchester laity still depended on the minsters for their religious needs. Alternatively, it could simply indicate that there was a greater desire among the people to be buried at the minsters, or that the minsters had a strong monopoly over the burial sites within Winchester.

Although it must be appreciated that the minsters have been the focus of the majority of the excavation work (and that there is much excavation still to be done), this data does suggest that the citizens of Winchester were most commonly buried within the cemeteries at the minsters, and that there was a continuation of burial activity before, during, and after the Benedictine Reform. This would suggest that despite the changes in clergy initiated by the Benedictine Reform, the duty of care that the minsters had to the pastoral needs of the laity, at least in terms of their burial practices, remained the same. This archaeological evidence does not indicate the extent to which the monks were involved in the burial rite, however: aside from highlighting the fact that the laity were buried at the minsters, there is no evidence here to suggest that the monks were responsible for the pastoral rites that were required alongside burial and death. As such, evidence from liturgy, charters, wills, and narrative sources also needs to be investigated.

¹⁹¹ G. Rosser, 'The cure of souls in English towns before 1000', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* ed., J. Blair, and R. Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.267-84, p.274.

Liturgical sources

Although the death and burial rituals of the monks cannot be used as an insight into the parallel rituals for the laity, they do show that there was an interaction between the laity and the monks on such occasions: the presence of the laity was often an important feature in public funeral processions of authoritative clerical figures such as Æthelwold, and it would seem that upon the death of a ‘normal’ monk, that is, someone not so especially authoritative, the monks left their cloistered walls and travelled through Winchester in procession.¹⁹²

The *Regularis Concordia* dedicates a chapter to the “care of a sick brother; and of the manner in which the dead shall be committed to the earth”.¹⁹³ Various stages of care are outlined: the witnessing of the illness by the whole community; the liturgical rituals to be carried out, complete with the sick brother receiving the Sacrament of Unction along with Communion; and the gathering of the whole community to assist in the final passing. Upon the death of the monk, Penitential psalms were to be sung for several days, as well as prayers and offerings of Mass, and notices of the death were sent to neighbouring monasteries, who were in turn expected to pray for the soul of the departed.¹⁹⁴ Special considerations were given to dead priest-monks, who as well as the standard washing and dressing of the body, were highlighted as having a priest’s stole placed over their cowl.¹⁹⁵ Practice of these rules can be seen in narrative hagiographical accounts such as that of Æthelwold, where, in addition to the grief of the clergy, the behaviour of the laity forms an active and important statement about the character of the deceased. In such accounts (limited to those authoritative ecclesiastical figures), the monks and the laity are united in their performance:

¹⁹² Æthelwold’s burial procession can be seen in Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ch.41, pp.62-65. The procession of a deceased monk shall be discussed further below, but see C.H. Turner, ‘The churches at Winchester in the early eleventh century’, *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1916): 65-68.

¹⁹³ Symons, *Regularis Concordia* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953), pp.64-68.

¹⁹⁴ Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p.64-67.

¹⁹⁵ Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p.65.

Here you might have seen wailing troops of monks, there pale-faced companied of virgins; here you might have heard the voices of the clergy singing high, there the groans of the weeping poor and the wailing of the shrieking needy, who could not bear to lose their shepherd's presence, and poured endless tears and cries to heaven.¹⁹⁶

Although undoubtedly a 'special' occasion, this ritual does demonstrate the unifying quality of death within Winchester, and points at the permeability of the community's social and physical boundaries.

This permeability is also alluded to in a manuscript written at Winchester in the middle of the eleventh century, that was soon after taken to Worcester and is catalogued as Worcester Chapter Library F 173.¹⁹⁷ Cuthbert H. Turner has transcribed the text beginning on folio 21a, which describes how the body of a deceased monk is to be taken to the surrounding churches, and a prayer said at each.¹⁹⁸ Although this text is thought to have been written after the Benedictine Reform, the number of churches that it mentions is consistent with the estimation of church numbers prior to the year 1000 given by M. Biddle.¹⁹⁹ As such, it may be that this text depicts a ritual that had an earlier tradition. The procession of the body to the different churches within Winchester connects the monastery to the city, "effectively transforming all of Winchester into ritual space".²⁰⁰ If the monks had been strictly cloistered in the monastery, it is interesting to consider *why* this ritual was thought relevant and necessary. Instead, the inclusion of the surrounding local churches in the ritual indicates that

¹⁹⁶ Wulfstan, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ch.41, p.63.

¹⁹⁷ See N. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), number 397; H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: a list of manuscripts and manuscript fragments written or owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), number 764; and studies of the manuscript referenced therein.

¹⁹⁸ C.H. Turner, 'The churches at Winchester in the early eleventh century', *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1916): 65-68.

¹⁹⁹ See M. Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: an edition and discussion of the Winton Domesday*, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p.329. See Figure 1 on p.17 of this thesis.

²⁰⁰ J. Howe, *Before the Gregorian Reform: the Latin Church at the turn of the first millennium* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), p.163.

the monks were familiar with them, and even had a relationship of some kind with them. As such, it is tempting to suggest that the monks knew these churches as their priests and clergy, having been ‘outsourced’ by the minsters. Was this, indeed, a chance for the laity to be involved in the death rite of the monk? Not in a liturgical context, but in the manner of saying ‘good-bye’ to their local priest and pastoral guide? This rare acknowledgement of the local churches within Winchester is a valuable insight into the mechanics of pastoral care in the city, although again, due to a lack of evidence elsewhere, it results only in suppositions.

Charter sources

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, there was a financial aspect of the burial process that can be seen in charters and judicial codes which gives an indication as to the norms and expectations of the ritual.²⁰¹ This financial element of a burial is rooted in an earlier tradition: the laws of King Alfred (c.885 x 899) state that should a man break his oath or pledge and he happens to be killed, “he is to lie unpaid for”, suggesting that had his character been held in higher esteem, payment for his corpse’s position and for his spiritual salvation would be expected.²⁰² Such references to the financial element of Christian death can be seen again at the beginning of the eleventh century, as Ælfric’s pastoral letter to Wulfstan (c.1006) states that

²⁰¹ Tinti, ‘The ‘costs’ of pastoral care’.

²⁰² Extracts from the Laws of King Alfred, c.1.5, *Councils and Synods Other Documents Relating to the English Church* vol.i, A.D. 871-1066 eds., D. Whitelock, M. Brett, and C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.22. A similar reference to a payment upon ones death is echoed in the King Athelstan’s ordinance on church dues, which states that “my reeves bring it about that the church-scots and the soul-scots are rendered to the places to which it legally belongs”, with ‘soul-scot’ referring to a payment made at the end of ones life to the clergy who ensured ones pastoral care as a form of ‘burial tax’: I Athelstan, c.4, *Councils and Synods* vol.i ed. Whitelock et al., p.46. Caution should be had with the dating of this extract, however, as although Whitelock dates the ordinance as 926 x c.930, Patrick Wormald has argued that this extract was a later addition by Archbishop Wulfstan at the beginning of the eleventh century: P. Wormald, *The Making of the English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* vol. 1 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), p.295, 314 as noted by Hadley and Buckberry in , ‘Caring for the dead’, p.122, fnt.3.

[182] Some priests are glad when men die, and they flock to the corpse like greedy ravens where they see a carcass, in wood or in field;

[183] but it is fitting for him to attend the men who belong to his parish, at this church;

[184] and he must never go into another's district to any corpse, unless he is invited.²⁰³

This extract sees the situation from the other perspective – not from the laity who died, but from the priest who was to be paid. The implication in this extract is that bodies were seen as profitable, resulting in priests being in competition to secure the coveted corpses. The fact that Ælfric established guidelines of conduct, limiting each priest to the bodies within his parish unless otherwise invited, shows that there was a tendency to ‘poach’ from other parishes, and encroach on the pastoral territory of another priest. This development only occurred after the Benedictine Reform, suggesting that the end of the tenth century was a period in which the pastoral implications of burial practices among a well-defined flock were only just beginning. This aligns with the theory posed by Hadley and Buckberry, that the tenth century was the period in which burial practices became a concern for the church.²⁰⁴ Explanations as to why Ælfric should need to establish such guidelines against ‘poaching’ corpses can be seen in the explicit reference to the exchange of money made in the laws of King Æthelred in 1008:

[12] And it is best that payment for the soul be always paid at the open grave.

[12.1] And if any body is buried elsewhere, outside the proper parish, the payment for the soul is nevertheless to be paid to the minster to which it belonged.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Past. L. II, cc.182-84 in *Councils and Synods* vol.i ed. Whitelock et al., p.295-96, as highlighted by Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.122.

²⁰⁴ Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.126

²⁰⁵ V and VI Æthelred, cc.12-12.1 in *Councils and Synods*, vol.i ed. Whitelock et al., p.352.

This extract suggests that a payment was made at the time of the burial, in a graveside transaction. This payment was seen as a form of ‘burial tax’, and was made to ensure that the soul of the deceased could benefit from the subsequent pastoral actions of the priest. Taken together, these extracts suggest that both the laity and the clergy expected to encounter such exchanges – whether on their death, or in gathering the payments among those in their pastoral care.

Such a reference to payment at the grave-side can be seen in relation to Winchester in a document from 871 x 877, where Bishop Ealhferth and the community at Winchester leased land to a certain Earl Cuthred and his wife, Wulfthryth, on the condition that it was “free from every burden except the construction of bridges and military service and the payment of eightfold church dues and the priest’s dues and burial fees”²⁰⁶. The conditions allowing for the continued construction of bridges and military services is a formulaic trope within such charters, so the inclusion of the clause regarding priest’s dues and burial fees directly alongside suggests that these, too, were familiar conditions to those making the agreement.²⁰⁷ Presumably there was an acquiescence to these demands, indicating that they were thought of as normal, or at least reasonable and fair, to both parties. This document suggests that the practice of burial tax was known to the minsters and the Winchester population in the ninth century, however, this isolated mention is the only reference that we have of such burial fees at Winchester, and there is no such mention in similar documents from the tenth century. Indeed, prior to the eleventh century, it seems that evidence for the practice of burial payments is inconsistent and somewhat localised, as the concept of the ‘burial tax’ is only codified in the early eleventh century and in the writings of Ælfric and Wulfstan.²⁰⁸ Although this charter indicates that there was, in some capacity, an agreement at Winchester between

²⁰⁶ S.1275, as highlighted by Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.122, fnt.3.

²⁰⁷ For such a clause in the charters of King Edgar see S.692, S.694, S.711, S.735, S.777, S.785.

²⁰⁸ Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.122. For further information on Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical payments focusing on the tenth and eleventh centuries, see Tinti, ‘The ‘costs’ of pastoral care’.

the clergy and the laity regarding the exchange of money for pastoral care at the grave-side, the question still remains as to what the relationship between the monks and the laity was in regards to burial during the Benedictine Reform.

Glimpses of the financial aspect of burials contemporaneous to the Benedictine Reform can be seen within the charters of King Edgar. In these charters, King Edgar seeks to establish the minsters as the principle receivers of any ecclesiastical fees. These codices should be seen in the context of the increasing numbers of local and private churches throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries, as highlighted by John Blair.²⁰⁹ Blair associates the proliferation of these local churches to the beginnings of the modern-day parochial system, and the gradual demise of the authority of the minsters. The ecclesiastical section of King Edgar's code issued at Andover, dated to 960 x 962, seeks to establish a hierarchy of authority in the collection of tithes and negate the effects of proliferation of local churches, as it attempts to assert the older ecclesiastical institutions, the minsters, as the primary recipients of any fees:

[1.1] And all payment of tithes is to be made to the old minster, to which the parish belongs; and it is to be rendered both from the thegn's demesne land and from the land of his tenants, according as it is brought under the plough.

[2] If, however, there is any thegn who has on his bookland a church with which there is a graveyard, he is to pay the third part of his own tithes into his church.

[2.1] If anyone has a church with which there is no graveyard, he is then to pay to his priest from the (remaining) nine parts what he chooses.

[2.2] And all church scot is to go to the old minster, from every free hearth²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Blair, *The Church*, p.491.

²¹⁰ II Edgar, cc.1.1-2.2 in *Councils and Synods*, vol.i ed. Whitelock et al., p.97-98.

Here, the seniority of the ‘old minsters’ is emphasised over the position of the newer churches, and the minster is portrayed as trumping other economic claims within the area.²¹¹ Although there is no direct reference to the grave-side payment of priests, the charter does indicate that cemeteries were profitable assets. The financial implications of a graveyard for the local church owner posed a threat of competition to the establishment of the minsters. Given that there is such an apparent monopoly over burial sites within Winchester, it seems that these burial fees were prominent on the minds of the communities of the minsters.²¹² Although the charters implicate the motives for managing the burial rites of the laity, there is still limited insight into the reality of this practice at the minsters during the Benedictine Reform. As such, sources more specific to Winchester – wills and narrative accounts – shall be investigated for more information.

Will sources

Further indications as to the relationship between the monks and the laity during the Benedictine Reform can be seen through wills, and the arrangement of burial wishes. Although it seems that the majority of these arrangements were made orally²¹³, there are instances in wills of specific declarations of the intent to be buried in a particular location or in a particular way. These seem to be primarily linked to wealthy members of society, who not only had valuable items of property to dispense of (and subsequently had more reason to write a will), but who perhaps had more autonomy on where and how they could be buried due to their ability to offer financial incentives. Whereas the documents discussed above seem to suggest that one was buried in the parish in which one resided (see the laws of King

²¹¹ As observed by F. Tinti, *Sustaining Belief: The Church of Worcester from c.870-c.1100* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), p.226.

²¹² See also Hadley and Buckberry, ‘Caring for the dead’, p.122.

²¹³ Allusions to oral arrangements can be seen in various wills, for example S.1504: “And I desire that a distribution of all the property which I hold on lease be made for the good of my soul, according to the directions which I have just given to the friends to whom I have been speaking”.

Æthelred²¹⁴) the wills indicate that the matter was more flexible, and wishes to be buried at specific ecclesiastical institutions could be granted.

For instance, the will of Ælfgifu (966 x 975) grants land to the Old Minster, pointedly stating that this is “where she intends her body to be buried”.²¹⁵ Given that the majority of the land that she bequeaths is in the Buckinghamshire area, it may be that she was not a Winchester resident, and as such had to establish her wish to be buried at the Old Minster outright. In a similar vein, the will of Ordnoth and his wife, dated as sometime in the tenth century, states that “the old church at Winchester [... will] provide for us such resting place as is necessary for us in God’s sight and fitting in the eyes of the world”.²¹⁶ The explicit mention of the Old Minster as oppose to the New could support the hypothesis that the New Minster was the ‘default’ location for lay burials, and that the Old Minster was especially reserved for wealthier, more elite members of society. In addition, burial in a monastic cemetery, in proximity to the saints and the prayers of the monks, was thought to create an advantageous environment for the salvation of one’s soul. This can be seen in the favour that members of the royal family had for burials within monasteries, and in the significance of the graves that were especially close to the buildings of the monasteries.²¹⁷

The will of Ordnoth and his wife also gives an insight into the personalisation of the death ritual. After detailing the bequests, the conditions are stated:

On these terms is the estate given to the [old] minster: that on the day of our death they will fetch us with the minster’s resources and provide for us such resting place as is necessary for us in God’s sight and fitting in the eyes of the world. It is for this that

²¹⁴ V and VI Æthelred, cc.12-12.1 in *Councils and Synods*, vol.i ed. Whitelock et al., p.352.

²¹⁵ S.1484.

²¹⁶ S.1524.

²¹⁷ C. Cubitt, ‘Pastoral care and religious belief’, in *A Companion To The Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland c.500-1100* (Blackwell, 2009), pp.395-413, p.405. This will be discussed further in the following section.

Ordnoth wishes to have the testimony of God and his community at the Old Minster: namely, that he and his wife announced in their presence that the part of his possessions which he stated was to go into his friends' possessions after his death, and the other part to the place where they shall be buried²¹⁸

With this statement, Ordnoth and his wife not only assume that care would be given, but aim to direct the way in which the care should be carried out. They request that on the day of their death they should be fetched (it is not known from where) at the expense of the Old Minster, and given a resting place, presumably at the Old Minster itself. This not only shows that the community at the minster had the capacity to care for the lay people, but that there were various degrees of care that could be prompted, supposedly depending on levels of donation. Fetching the dead on the minster's expense resembles the practices of the monastic brothers themselves – as seen for instance in the funeral rite of Bishop Æthelwold himself: Æthelwold died at Beddington, sixty miles from Winchester but was carried in procession back to Winchester, where many, “with grief and bitterness at heart [...] followed behind the bier, precious with its incomparable treasure, armed with holy gospels and crosses, decked with veiling cloths, protected on each side by lit candles, hymns to God and chanted psalms”.²¹⁹ Undoubtedly as bishop, this was a funeral rite of a highly special and unusual scale and would not have been replicated in the case of Orthnoth and his wife, but nevertheless, it shows that the retrieval of bodies was not unknown to monastic communities at Winchester. As such, it would seem that the laity could try to imitate the holiness of monks in the placement and manner of their burial.

²¹⁸ S.1524.

²¹⁹ Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and transl. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p.63.

As well as the special treatment that this couple request, it has been suggested that this couple need not necessarily already be dead when the transportation was to take place: “Ordnoth and his wife may have wanted to be fetched while still alive so that they would die in the Old Minster and receive the last rites there”.²²⁰ Helen Forbes suggests that Ordnoth and his wife, in calling on the minster in such a way, attempted to place themselves as ‘fellow servants of God’; drawing a parallel with trends found in early medieval Francia, “of lay individuals becoming full members of a community on their deathbeds”.²²¹ This would suggest that as well as the care of the body and the prayers after death, the brothers at the minster were also called upon to administer the last rites for particular members of the laity. Sarah Hamilton states that this practice only really grew in England in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries, with lay nobility “entering regular communities on their deathbed, becoming a *frater* or *soror ad succurrendum* in order to receive the benefit of the elaborate liturgical rites for dying”.²²² Arguably however, the observance of monastic practices and the desire for their emulation in a lay setting can be seen earlier, as in Ordnoth’s tenth-century will: the members of the minsters saw not only to the physical aspects of pastoral care in the burial of the couple, but also to their spiritual care before death – although it should be emphasised that this appear to be a very unusual situation, limited to a particular elite.

Narrative sources

The final discussion on burial rites and the involvement of monks in the pastoral care of the laity refers to the narrative sources of Lantfred and Wulfstan.²²³ As well as giving

²²⁰ H. Forbes, ‘Squabbling siblings: gender and monastic life in late Anglo-Saxon Winchester’, *Gender and History* 23:3 (2011): 653-84, p.668.

²²¹ Forbes, ‘Squabbling siblings’, p.668.

²²² Hamilton, ‘Rites of passage’, p.302.

²²³ Lantfred of Winchester, *Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni*, ed. and transl. by M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch.I, pp.252-333; Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and transl. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Wulfstan of Winchester, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, ed. and transl. by M. Lapidge in *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), Part II, Ch. 2, pp.372-551.

accounts of the burials of St Swithun and Æthelwold, these sources inadvertently give more details as to the composition of the cemeteries at the minsters. Swithun was first buried outside of the church of the Old Minster, “between this tower [of St Martin] and the nave”.²²⁴ He then appeared in the dream of a smith, desiring that his remains be found and exhumed and placed “suitably within the church”.²²⁵ As such, it is clear that burials within the church were more highly thought of than those without. Moreover, in justifying Swithun’s prior burial outside of the church, Lantfred states that

[...] indeed this blessed man of the Lord, so they say, was of such great humility that he would not even allow his most holy body to be buried on any account in the church after his death, nor even in the splendid cemetery of the monks – which was most worthy and holy – situated in the eastern part and the southern area of that remarkable church; but he ordered that he be placed in the more lowly cemetery of common people, which is located in front of the entrance to the Lord’s church [...] arguing with many tears that his corpse was not worthy to be buried within the church nor among the distinguished interments of ancient fathers.²²⁶

This account is vital for the acknowledgement of the existence of a separate cemetery for the monks – something that has not been supported archaeologically, as this site “lies under the present cathedral”.²²⁷ As stated by Lantfred, this site was positioned to the south and east of the Old Minster, and there was a clear distinction of the esteem given to the ‘worthy and holy’ site of the monastic cemetery, and the ‘lowly cemetery of common people’. This

²²⁴ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, pp.272-73. The tower of St Martin was a detached tower to the west of the original Old Minster. For a full discussion of the tower, its dating, and its positioning see D. Keene (with a contribution by A.R. Rumble), *Survey of Medieval Winchester* Part I and Part 2, Winchester Series 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

²²⁵ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, pp.262-63.

²²⁶ Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, pp.272-73.

²²⁷ As noted by Lapidge, *Cult of St Swithun*, p.273, fnt.103.

geographical separation allows for a potential difference in the ritual and sanctity of the burial celebrations, and suggests that even within the cemetery the monks strived to establish themselves as isolated from the laity.

Conclusion

To conclude, an investigation into the burial rituals at Winchester shows that the minsters seemed to have had a monopoly on cemeteries within the city. It seems that there were no divisions of gender between the minsters, but that specific burial spots were perhaps indicators of social standing, and that there was a choice of grave-type among the wealthier laity. The existence of a separate cemetery for monastic brethren suggests that there was a distinction in the burial rituals and sanctity of the ground for the monks from that of the laity, which indicates that there was a continued effort throughout life and death to establish a sense of withdrawal and separation from the wider Winchester society. This physical assertion should be understood as perhaps reflecting a slightly more nuanced reality, however, as the presence of the death ritual transcribed by Turner suggests that the monks were personally involved with the city. If this ritual is reflective of an earlier, tenth-century tradition, it would suggest that there was a connection between the monks at the minsters and the local churches, and as such, would suggest that the monks played an active part in the pastoral care of the laity. The charter evidence suggests that there may have been a financial incentive for the minsters to manage the burial rites of the laity, although again, there is no evidence to be able to clearly identify the characteristics of the ritual. If one had enough wealth, it seems that the minsters were able to meet specific demands, which indicates that they were not totally averse, or unused, to managing matters of lay pastoral care.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate the degree to which the monks were involved in the pastoral care of the laity at Winchester during the Benedictine Reform. The quote at the beginning of this thesis, detailing King Edgar's order, suggests that there was a complete change in the composition of the minsters at Winchester during the Benedictine Reform.²²⁸ The total replacement of the secular clergy with monastic clergy at Winchester shows a desire to establish those in the minsters as purely focused on their religious duties: they were unmarried, withdrawn from lay society, and united in their monastic order. In turn, this suggests that the organisation of lay pastoral care was also altered at this time, as the monks were focussed on their monastic duties within the walls of their communities, rather than on the religious practices of the local laity.

Both textual and material evidence shows, however, that the complete transition from the secular to the monastic clergy did not equate to a complete change in the relations that the minsters had with the Winchester laity. Indeed, it is clear from reading the narrative sources, liturgical codices, and royal charters that there was a close relationship between monastic and lay lives. On a simply practical level, given the proximity of the minsters to Winchester's city centre, it would have been impossible for the monastic clergy to have been completely withdrawn from lay society. Moreover, in researching preaching, penitential, and burial practices, this thesis has shown that there were many elements of the pastoral care of the laity that the monks were directly involved in.

In regards to preaching, it has been seen that the monks were keen to promote the cult of St Swithun among a lay audience in order to secure Winchester's status as a city worthy of

²²⁸ See p.4 of this thesis, and Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and transl. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), chapter 18, pp.32-33.

pilgrimage. In order to raise awareness of the saint, the monks most probably took to sermonising his miracles at the Old Minster, and as such edified, instructed, and guided the attending laity. Æthelwold can also be seen to have regularly led Mass for lay audiences, and on occasion, these audiences were also mixed with the members of the monastic community. This would suggest that the minsters were directly involved in organising and ensuring the pastoral care of the laity, both through being a site in which the laity were preached to, and in supplying the laity with preachers.

Studying the penitential rituals at Winchester, it would seem that the monks and the laity were mutually responsible for the initiation of penitential rituals in the community of the other, as they policed each other's boundaries of acceptability. Penance was clearly a big concern of Bishop Æthelwold's, and was the subject of much attention within the monastic communities. In turn, the monks were keen to establish the minsters as having a connection with lay penitential judgement and divine forgiveness through the miracles of St Swithun. Beyond this, however, there is little evidence to be able to determine who it was that saw to the practical confessional or penitential needs of the laity. The lack of any mention of the monastic clergy managing the penitential care of the laity suggests that this may have been a matter that was outside of the remit of those within the minsters. This could be an indication as to why there was such a growth in the numbers of local churches within Winchester during the second half of the tenth century; if the minsters rescinded their responsibility over this aspect of lay pastoral care, then the demand for penitential guidance needed to be met from elsewhere within the city. It could have been that this need was met within the local churches, who were perhaps better able to see to the needs of the laity on an individualised basis.

The investigation of archaeological evidence suggests that the minsters held a monopoly over burial sites within Winchester. The lack of burial sites elsewhere in the city, as well as the large numbers of both female and male graves at the minsters, suggests that the

minsters were the primary burial site for the Winchester laity. It is not known in what capacity the monks may have been involved in the actual burial ritual, although this was clearly a time when the church was gaining an interest in burial rites. The slightly later evidence for monetary exchanges being made in return for grave-side pastoral care could indicate that the monopoly that the minsters had over burial sites at Winchester was financially motivated, which would also indicate that the monks not only established where the laity should be buried, but managed the pastoral care of those that had deceased.

The study of these three pastoral activities has given much insight into the nature of pastoral care at the minsters, and has shown that in many ways the roles of the minsters within the wider Winchester society was somewhat constant whether they contained secular or monastic clergy. Despite this, the research has also highlighted many instances in which the sources are silent. This is of interest in itself - for instance, why is there no mention of baptism, a ritual that was central to Christian life? In addition, despite the archaeological evidence of their existence, why is so little said about the local churches? They played a part in the ecclesiastical framework of the city and most probably shared the pastoral load of the minsters, but are invisible within the textual sources. As the sources only show glimpses of lay preaching, penance, and burial matters, there is a question as to who 'filled the gaps' and ensured that the pastoral care that the laity received was complete.

Undoubtedly, part of the absence of these issues being mentioned is due to the selection of the sources used within this thesis. The focus of the sources is on the monks and the minsters, and this thesis has subsequently also had the monks and the minsters as its focus. More light could be shed on these 'silences' with further excavations of the cemeteries of the minsters, and with an in depth archaeological study of the local churches. An idea of the workings of the pastoral network around Winchester could also be had with a study into the nearby rural churches and cemeteries, which would shed a light on how the minsters and the

monks related to a wider situational context. In order to understand more about the effects of the Benedictine Reform in this area, it is clear that more needs to be known about the roles of the churches in the vicinity of the minsters, and without textual sources, much of this investigation would necessarily be based on archaeological excavations.

Despite these absences of information, the text of the Worcester Chapter Library F173 manuscripts gives a tantalising glimpse into the relationship of the minsters with the local churches. If the procession around the local churches with deceased monks was practiced at Winchester during the second half of the tenth century, then it would suggest that the monks had an association with the local churches, perhaps working there as priests. If this was the case, then it would be logical to assume that one way or another, a selection of the monks were responsible for all aspects of pastoral care of the laity – whether at the minsters as their preachers and co-audience members, or at the local churches as the carers of the more individual pastoral needs. This would suggest that the Benedictine Reform did not, in fact, have many implications for the organisation of the pastoral care of the laity. Although the distributors of the care may have been different in their levels of educations, and the extent to which their practices were uniform, they were essentially still based at the minsters just as the secular clergy had been. This would bring in to question the plethora of rhetoric that exists around the Benedictine Reform: it would mean that despite the emphasis in the sources of a complete change in clergy, there was a great deal of continuation that occurred throughout the Benedictine Reform as the monks simply worked as secular clergy had in many respects. Crucially in the matter of pastoral care, this would infer that the monks regularly left the minsters and interacted with the laity, so questioning the interpretation of the term ‘monastic’ at the minsters.

This subsequently leads to questions as to the nature of Æthelwold’s reform movement. It is clear that Æthelwold desired the minsters to be central to the pastoral care of the laity –

although indeed, this does not exclude the possibility of other centres of pastoral care, such as the local churches. It is to Æthelwold that the position of monk-bishop/monk-priest can be traced, implicitly uniting the competing aims of seclusion and pastoral responsibility. This role arguably allowed the minsters to maintain control over the pastoral care of the Winchester laity during the transitional period of the Benedictine Reform. It would seem that this role particularly suited Æthelwold's desires of the reform – of establishing a more disciplined clerical community at the same time as ensuring that the territorial, spiritual, and financial rites of the city still focussed on the minsters. In creating a position that apparently undermined the central purpose of monasticism, Æthelwold may have been appreciating the distinction between ideal and reality: a monastic community living in a minster at the centre of an important city could never be isolated from the laity. However, consideration must be given to Simon MacLean's conclusions as to Æthelwold's concern with helping the monarchy avoid any sexual scandals by redefining their political images.²²⁹ This would suggest that the decisive removal of the secular clergy was more for the benefit of a political agenda than for any ideological or personal disgust at their ways of living. In trying to establish the king and queen as sexually pure, it would not have done for them to become the heads of minsters that were entertaining clergy who “married wives illicitly, divorced them, and took others”.²³⁰

The question, therefore of the extent to which the Benedictine movement at Winchester can be seen as an exercise of rhetoric or of reform, can be somewhat answered. It is clear that the rhetoric promulgated by Æthelwold, of Winchester being an especially strict and radical example of the reformation, was quite different from the ‘lived reality’ of the reform on the

²²⁹ S. MacLean, ‘Monastic reform and royal ideology in the late tenth century; Ælfthryth and Edgar in continental perspective’, in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century; Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1987-1947)* ed. D. Rollason, C. Leyser, H. Williams (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp.255-274

²³⁰ Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), ch.16, pp.30-31

ground. Although the clergy may have completely and suddenly changed from a secular to a monastic community, this did not lead to a complete withdrawal of the monks at Winchester; indeed, in many aspects Æthelwold seems to promote a unison of lay and monastic groups. It can be seen that the monks and the minsters still played a significant part in the pastoral care of the laity, and were central to the administrative and organisational aspects of religious life in the city. The silent presence of the local churches, and their growing numbers throughout the tenth and eleventh century, would suggest, however, that the rhetoric of the reform was not completely empty. It is clear that these churches served a significant purpose within the city, and that their demand grew as the Benedictine Reform gained more traction. Whether these churches were filled with clergy from the minsters or secular clergy living elsewhere remains to be seen, and would be a valuable area of further research. There may equally have been a mixture of local and private churches that were served by a mixture of monastic and secular clergy – fundamentally all within Winchester ultimately worked together in ensuring that the pastoral needs of the laity were met.

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