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EARLY MEDIEVAL RHETORIC: EPIDEICTIC UNDERPINNINGS IN OLD ENGLISH  
HOMILIES

by

JENNIFER RANDALL

Under the Direction of Dr. George Pullman

ABSTRACT

Medieval rhetoric, as a field and as a subject, has largely been under-developed and under-emphasized within medieval and rhetorical studies for several reasons: the disconnect between Germanic, Anglo-Saxon society and the Greco-Roman tradition that defined rhetoric as an art; the problems associated with translating the Old and Middle English vernacular in light of rhetorical and, thereby, Greco-Latin precepts; and the complexities of the medieval period itself with the lack of surviving manuscripts, often indistinct and inconsistent political and legal structure, and widespread interspersed and interpolated Christian doctrine. However, it was Christianity and its governance of medieval culture that preserved classical rhetoric within the medieval period through reliance upon the classic epideictic platform, which, in turn, became the foundation for early medieval rhetoric. The role of epideictic rhetoric itself is often undervalued

within the rhetorical tradition because it appears too basic or less essential than the judicial or deliberative branches for in-depth study and analysis. Closer inspection of this branch reveals that epideictic rhetoric contains fundamental elements of human communication with the focus upon praise and blame and upon appropriate thought and behavior.

In analyzing the medieval world's heritage and knowledge of the Greco-Roman tradition, epideictic rhetoric's role within the writings and lives of Greek and Roman philosophers, and the popular Christian writings of the medieval period – such as Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, Alfred's translation of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*, Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, and the anonymously written Vercelli and Blickling homilies – an early medieval rhetoric begins to be revealed. This Old English rhetoric rests upon a blended epideictic structure based largely upon the encomium and vituperation formats of the ancient progymnasmata, with some additions from the chreia and commonplace exercises, to form a unique rhetoric of the soul that aimed to convert words into moral thought and action within the lives of every individual. Unlike its classical predecessors, medieval rhetoric did not argue, refute, or prove; it did not rely solely on either praise or blame; and it did not cultivate and rely upon words merely for intellectual, educative, or political purposes. Instead, early medieval rhetoric placed the power of words in the hands of all humanity, inspiring every individual to greater discernment of character and reality, greater spirituality, greater morality, and greater pragmatism in daily life.

INDEX WORDS: Medieval rhetoric, Epideictic rhetoric, Christian rhetoric, Classical rhetoric, Greco-Roman rhetoric, Greek rhetoric, Roman rhetoric, Philosophic rhetoric, Old English, Medieval period, Homilies, Alfred the Great, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, *Consolatio Philosophiae*, Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*, *Pastoral Rule*, Ælfric, Aelfric, *Lives of Saints*, *Catholic Homilies*, Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, *The Sermon of the Wolf to the English*, Vercelli, Blickling, Encomium, Vituperation, Commonplace, Chreia, Progymnasmata

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by

JENNIFER RANDALL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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HOMILIES

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Gregory whose flexibility and love has allowed this dream to become a reality and to the Gardner family who encouraged, strengthened, and cared for me along the way.

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## MEDIEVAL RHETORIC: CONCEPT, CONFUSION, AND SCHOLARSHIP

Though medieval rhetoric cannot be traced with certainty to the Greco-Roman classical tradition, the ancient tradition and its observations of human communication underpin medieval rhetoric's development. Too often scholars disregard Rome's connection with medieval England because of historical gaps and because of insufficient evidence to concretely assess a relationship between the Germanic, Anglo-Saxon culture and the Hellenistic, Roman society. As a result, scholars tend to distance themselves from this area of exploration or try to find medieval rhetoric within proscriptive documents written at the onset of the medieval period by such figures as Capella and Bede and by later Middle English figures such as Rabanus Maurus and Alain de Lille. While these figures and documents are important for defining medieval rhetoric, they do not tell the entire tale, and ultimately medieval rhetoric is not found in proscriptive, rhetorical handbooks or technical manuals such as those clearly produced by ancient figures from Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.

Instead, medieval rhetoric is found in the living language, tone, and moral conviction of its writers and translators evident in such influential Old English figures as Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan. The writings and translations of these men create a foundation for medieval culture and rhetoric in their reliance upon Roman Christian ideals and in their inclusion of Greco-Roman epideictic structure and amplification. Relying upon the educative Roman rhetorical elements adopted into Christian scripture and religious writing, as well as the classically defined epideictic rhetorical branch stemming from natural human desires like personal validation and social connection, the moral heartbeat of medieval culture, with its rhetorical underpinnings and subsequent unique communicative style, can be identified.

For the medieval world, there is no definitive date that marks the ending of the ancient world and the beginning of the middle ages. Henry Osborn Taylor asserts that such a transition was one of spiritual change where antique paradigms slowly died and were replaced by a preoccupation with spirituality and moral living (*The Classical* 1). This is the paradox of medieval rhetoric. Scholars, while acknowledging medieval classical elements, are hesitant to assign classical influences to England's medieval culture and literary production. The phrase "medieval rhetoric" can refer to the period from the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the early fifth century to the early modern period in the fifteen hundreds. However, the focus here will be upon early medieval England and particularly that of Old English culture, specifically the religious writings of Alfred in the ninth century to Wulfstan's sermons at the onset of the eleventh.

In regards to a medieval rhetoric, it is generally believed to be a "lore of style" (Baldwin *Medieval* ix) while discussions of medieval structure or diction aren't always addressed. Those who study medieval rhetoric assert that medieval rhetoric is defined by a concrete body of principles, usually contained in texts and teaching manuals and applied in numerous ways according to changing times and circumstances, or they state that rhetoric is always "culture-bound" and is substantially different in each time and place (Murphy and Camargo "The Middle" 58). In looking for a medieval rhetoric, researchers attempt to uncover definable precepts by looking for rhetorical references and handbooks, rhetorical rules associated with poetry, and proscriptive texts like those readily apparent in Greek and Roman societies instead of analyzing rhetorical consistency in dominant literary output, both in terms of structure and diction, to define these principles.

The assumption that rhetoric is an invention of the Greco-Roman world and not a naturally occurring communicative impulse has also resulted in current doubts regarding rhetoric's role

within the medieval world, particularly in the developing language and culture of England. Too often, understandings of rhetoric and the classical tradition has become, as Brian Vickers notes, convoluted and confused (13), creating another barrier to overcome in defining medieval rhetoric. Ultimately, there are natural rhetorical principles that humans consistently practice, such as praise and condemnation, that lead to the development of rhetoric as an art, and these forms of human communication adapt with historical, social, political, and religious changes, as demonstrated in Rome's prioritization of rhetoric as a political science. It is inevitable then that medieval rhetorical purposes would change to fit the needs of each age, although the underlying human inclinations remain the same.

The qualities that define rhetoric as an art are marked with disagreements and uncertainties from Gorgias, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian to modern scholars<sup>1</sup>. However, most scholars, such as George Kennedy, James Murphy, Charles Sears Baldwin, and Martin Camargo, adhere to Aristotle's view of rhetoric as an art of daily communication (Baldwin *Ancient* 1) and an art of persuasion (Freese 15). In addition, these scholars, as Bryant Donald details, agree that the art of rhetoric includes four main aspects: a practical purpose for daily, individual human life; a literary purpose for human expression, entertainment, and study; a philosophical purpose for scientific investigation, inquiry, and human advancement; and a political purpose for civic life, sociology, and psychology (35-36). In essence, every thought and action, every decision and goal, rests upon expression and communication and is therefore rhetorical. Furthermore, as Richard Johannesen, Rennard Strickland, and Ralph T. Eubanks note, every aspect of rhetoric is based upon human judgment and evaluating an attitude or action (Johannesen 221).

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Kenneth Burke, Richard Vatz, Chaim Perelman, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, Edwin Black, Henry Johnstone Jr., Lloyd Bitzer, Marshal McLuhan, I.A. Richards, and Stephen Toulmin

These fundamental concepts are important to consider when piecing together medieval rhetoric. The past three decades have seen a growing interest in this field, as well as a deeper appreciation for the medieval period, indicating a desire to unravel the medieval mindset and methods of communication. Such interest has resulted in the medieval period now being, as James Murphy and Martin Camargo indicate, one of the best analyzed and discussed in human history, demonstrated through numerous and varied translations and histories from Saint Augustine to Bede to even Chaucer in the Renaissance (“The Middle” 47). Anglo-Saxon and Medieval scholars<sup>2</sup> explore a variety of medieval issues that touch on rhetorical structure, logos, ethos, pathos, sophistic, technical, and philosophic rhetoric, concluding that many Anglo-Saxons were familiar with the notion of classical rhetoric and often, directly or indirectly, applied these classical tools within their writing or, at least, had little objection to such usages when it was advantageous. Despite this observation, characterizing structures and patterns of medieval communication to define a medieval rhetoric is exceedingly complex.

Academics like Marjorie Curry Woods and Martin Camargo have begun to shed light on medieval rhetoric by arguing that the shift away from an oral tradition to a written rhetoric created more pervasive forms of communication that required their own considerations, created particularly within the social and educative venues of the medieval world (“Between” 84). No matter the venue, the discipline of rhetoric is always tied to cultural concerns and, as Sarah Spence details, the mindset of the author and the theme of the literary work indicates the priorities and values of each age (xiii). As a practical art, the discipline, literature, politics, and psychology of rhetoric naturally arise from human concerns, daily life, and the desire to express and connect

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<sup>2</sup> See for example C.S. Lewis, J.R. Tolkien, Peter Baker, Michael Lapidge, Nicholas Howe, Clare Lees, Katherine O’Brien O’Keefe, R.F. Yeager, James Dean, Martin Camargo, J.A. Burrow, Russell Peck, A.J. Minnis, Carolyn Dinshaw, Barbara Hanewalt, and Paul Strohm

with others, which are all evident within the medieval period's constant concern with survival and morality as part of that survival.

Rhetorical scholars and intellectuals<sup>3</sup> have discovered interesting parallels and benefits in using a rhetorical lens to interpret Old and Middle English elements. Theologians as well as scholars like Donald Lemen Clark have noted the epideictic purpose of highlighting certain values over others like bravery and courage and the accompanying rhetorical diction within medieval homilies and religious writing (134). Dick Leith and George Myerson further discuss the rhetorical repetition, invention, arrangement, and epideictic qualities of religious sermons, which were both political and religious because certain qualities and concerns like tenacity, boldness, and compassion were highly valued and become central for a successful government (Leith 132).

The surging interest in medieval rhetoric has done much to not only redeem the medieval period from often negative and unfriendly assumptions, but to also validate medieval rhetoric as an area worthy of study. This validation comes on the heels of years dominated by a dismissive view of medieval rhetoric where prominent figures like C.S. Baldwin, Brian Vickers, J.W.H. Atkins, and Louis John Paetow previously concluded that the study of medieval rhetoric had little to offer, but these scholars were particularly searching for medieval proscriptive documents in the vein of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Cicero's *On the Ideal Orator*. Consequently, scholars such as Michael Leff believed that medieval rhetoric had little or no history in terms of a specific subject matter (23), and this sentiment lead many rhetoricians and medievalists alike to conclude that, without evidence of medieval reflection upon the art of classical rhetoric, without medieval

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<sup>3</sup> See Martin Camargo, George Kennedy, Marjorie Curry Woods, James Murphy, Noel Denholm-Young, H.G. Richardson, Wayne Booth, Ernst Kantorowicz, Richard Weaver, James Herrick, I.A. Richards, C.S. Pierce, Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Richard E. Young, A.L. Becker, James A Berlin, Jane Donaworth, Lloyd F. Bitzer, John S. Nelson, Allan Megill, Donald McCoskey, Jean Danielou, Henry Marrou, George Nolin, Kenneth Burke, and Janie Steen

practical handbooks, and without medieval educative treatise explicitly on rhetorical subject matter, it was almost impossible, or deemed pointless, to understand or define rhetorical ideals of the medieval period. In fact,

In a plenary lecture at the 1983 Fourth Biennial Conference of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, Brian Vickers argued that we should stop studying medieval rhetoric: C.S. Baldwin had been right in his condemnation of this confused and confusing field 50 years earlier. Time spent on medieval rhetoric and poetic could, according to Vickers, be spent more profitably on the history of rhetoric during other periods. (Woods 73)

Although Baldwin and Vickers devote their studies to medieval culture and literature, their pursuits lead them to conclude that rhetorical ideals found within England during the Old and Middle English periods were largely accidental or had little in common with the rhetorical traditions of the Greco-Roman, Renaissance, and Enlightenment periods that overshadow them. However, while classical rhetoric may not have been specifically or even intentionally employed, furthered, or admired, and was often condemned because it arose from the very pagan traditions that were under suspicion within Christian dogma, rhetorical epideictic structure and diction are inarguably present throughout medieval culture, from language and writing to politics, law, economics, daily living, and religion, forming a very cohesive subject matter and consistent medieval rhetorical choice in structure, content, and diction.

Despite the breadth of information that now exists on this topic, scholarly labors, as Richard McKeon notes, have created only a short and ambiguous history of rhetoric during the Middle Ages (“Rhetoric” 172). The two most popular rhetorical treatise during the medieval period were Cicero’s *De inventione* and the anonymously written, pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* (Ward 64), which was usually attributed to Cicero and often known as the *Rhetorica Secunda* (Kennedy *Classical* 97). Due to the popularity of the *Ad Herennium* within Roman culture and due to a general medieval familiarity with its passages during the medieval period, the rhetorical

figures of speech and epideictic structure defined within the pages of the *Ad Herennium* will be used throughout this study to determine the depth of rhetorical content within Old English and medieval writing.

Discussions of a medieval rhetoric are generally limited to glimpses of classical rhetorical precepts anchored in Cicero, the *Ad Herennium*, and Quintilian, where Cicero, as James Murphy notes, was the commonly recognized *magister eloquentiae* for medieval writers (“Latin” 9). Quintilian was known during the early twelfth century and for the greater part of the Middle Ages, although primarily through a fragmentary text of his *Institutio oratoria* (“Latin” 11). Richard McKeon adds that medieval writers were also familiar with Cicero’s *De Oratore* and the *Topica* (*Rhetoric* 172), and these sparse works, as George Kennedy adds, constitute the rhetorical manuals that are known within the medieval world, all addressing classical studies of arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (*Classical* 97).

As a development of antiquity, Christianity could not escape its classical heritage, as Jackson Campbell recalls (197), although this classical foundation was tailored to meet the changing needs of the medieval period, which was dictated by the Christian focus upon morality. It was the medieval conception and use of rhetoric that

departed radically from the classical tradition. Rhetoric more or less lost its status as a separate discipline and became an ancilla to a number of other arts (e.g. *dictamen* or poetry). There were no special subjects for rhetorical discourse; instead there were various forms of discourse to which rhetorical devices could be applied. Moreover, as a corollary to this first development, there was no single and stable body of doctrine that characterized medieval rhetoric as a whole. The precepts of the classical writers formed a common source, but they took shape only insofar as they were used to aid in theory construction in some other art. (Leff 23)

The main questions troubling scholars today in their search to define medieval rhetoric include: what characterizes the rhetoric of medieval England; does medieval rhetoric mirror or imitate the classical rhetoric of the past; and what works and authors demonstrate a medieval view of rheto-



ric? These questions and more can be most adequately addressed in analyzing the most influential early medieval writings of the period – Old English homilies – through a classical lens, focusing more specifically on the consistent literary strategies evident within these writings.

The rhetorical study of medieval documents is based upon three medieval genres that, as James Herrick notes, were codified within the eleventh century and firmly established by the thirteenth: letter writing, *ars dictaminis*; preaching, *ars praedicandi*; and poetry, *ars poetria* (132), which also included prose and verse along with poetry (Murphy *Latin* 9). Briefly examining each genre reveals that Christianity and the concerns of *ars praedicandi* formed an unshakable foundation for each of these rhetorical outlets. The first genre to develop was *ars dictaminis*, which, as Charles Sears Baldwin details, was actually an art of Latin antiquity (*Medieval* 208), but became an important discipline in medieval England, employed as the chief means of communication by figures such as Gregory the Great, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and Peter Abelard, although, as James Herrick further notes, the Benedictine monk, Alberic, is generally credited with the first systematic application of Ciceronian rhetoric within his letter writing in Italy in 1087 (134). Each of these figures contributed to the rhetoric of presentation and content, creating an important letter-writing niche that would be passed on to the Renaissance with a tailored “salutatory formula” indicating the political or social status both of the writer and the recipient (Witt 6).

The *ars dictaminis* is a medieval adaptation and art because it rose through medieval development and necessity and “marks a sharp break with ancient rhetorical practice” (Murphy *Rhetoric* 194, 224). A formal, rhetorical structure for letter writing developed within the ecclesiastical climate of Europe as correspondence among Church and governmental officials, as Herrick discusses, became increasingly important both socially and religiously during the Middle

Ages, and such teachers and practitioners of *ars dictaminis* were referred to as *dictators*, a title that also generally referred to a person skilled in rhetoric (134). Subsequently, *ars dictamen* became a noted profession and both a form and means of education, yielding abundant manuscript examples (Baldwin “Medieval” 208). While this art was popular and important for its own sake, it became very vital as a tool of Christian aestheticism and, as such, was typically dominated by Christian belief and exhortation. Therefore, an analysis of *ars dictaminis* largely reveals the medieval Christian mindset and particularly an epideictic rhetoric of praise and blame, even letters whose topics were not necessarily focused upon Christian principles.

For being a medieval development, there are several ancient rhetorical echoes within *ars dictaminis* that mirror, for example, Aristotle and Cicero’s discussion of invention, narration, arrangement, memory, and style and *exordium, division, narration, confirmation, refutation, and peroration* (Murphy “Rhetoric” 224). The canons of rhetoric are paralleled in the five parts of a letter, revealing the idea that *ars dictaminis* placed rhetoric at the center of its civic activity, provided a guidepost for medieval rhetorical structure, and added a “measure of grace and decorum to the harsh and difficult lives of people living in Europe” (Herrick 137). In this way, medieval letter writing became a pervasive rhetorical force, stressing the idea of proper structure and tone and acting as a model for other medieval writings. These letters could not escape epideictic expression because of their purposes to command, judge, instruct, praise, and condemn, and they forced medieval writers to imbue written communication with the same rhetorical consideration so closely aligned with the oral art.

Although medieval England, as Majorie Curry Woods discusses, was dominated by theories of philosophy and theology (76), there was still an interest in secular poetry and prose, and advances were made in both fields. Within the area of poetry, rhetoric was often employed

through poetic terminology. During the early Middle English period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, interest in written style dominated the oral tradition, and this resulted in innovative structure in poetry writing, or, as Herrick notes, in the *ars poetriae* as seen through Mathew of Vendome's *Ars Versificatoria* in 1175, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova* of 1213, and Ger-vaise of Melkey's *Ars Poetica* in the early thirteenth century (138). Existing knowledge of medi-  
eval rhetoric largely stems from the works of pre-medieval figures like Augustine and Cassiodo-  
rus as well as later medieval figures of the Middle English period such as Geoffrey of Vinsauf,  
whose works more proscriptively discussed rhetorical structure and diction, mirroring ancient  
rhetorical texts written by men such as Isocrates and Longinus. The rhetorical mindset of the Old  
English period is often left unexplored in terms of rhetorical structure and purpose, yielding in-  
comprehensive and uncertain understandings of medieval rhetoric and particularly that of an ear-  
ly medieval rhetoric.

In medieval education and construction of poetry, rhetoric was often displayed through  
the imitation of ancient *progymnasmata* educational exercises that could teach students to be-  
come accomplished orators. One of the *progymnasmata* exercises relied upon within the *ars po-  
etriae* of the Middle English period is that of encomium, what many Carolingian poets referred  
to as *panegyrica* (Prill 139). The *progymnasmata* exercise of the encomium is part of the epi-  
deictic rhetorical tradition, a tradition based upon ethical concerns (Vickers "Introduction" 19-  
20), the subject of praise (Freese 33), and the appeal to common values in order to strengthen the  
audience or listener's adherence to those values both in thought and deed (Perelman 53). The  
connection suggests that later medieval education and poetry held ties with classical rhetorical  
theory, and these encomium structures are displayed in a variety of medieval writings, even de-  
fining the parameters of medieval rhetoric. Such reliance upon epideictic within the later devel-

opment of *ars poetriae* is only possible because of Old English and Anglo-Saxon writings that also incorporated and perfected these structures.

Few rhetorical elements from classical poetry can be found clearly within the medieval period, and Charles Sears Baldwin pinpoints the rhetoric of Prudentius and his *Psychomachia*, Sedulius, and Fortunatus as examples for what the medieval period is missing and as evidence that there is a disconnect between classical rhetoric and the medieval period (*Medieval* 177), although traces of rhetorical diction and structure still exist in Old English poems such as Caedmon's *Hymn* and Cynewulf's *Juliana*, *Elene*, *Fates of the Apostles*, and *Christ II*, full of praise and censure and structured on epideictic progymnasmata. Many Old English poets, including Cynewulf, had Latin educations that offered training in grammar and rhetoric, and influential figures like Aldhelm and Alcuin wrote their verses in Latin, directly imitating, as Jackson Campbell asserts, the forms of earlier Roman and Christian poets (Campbell 189). Although these classical rhetorical connections tenuously remain within the Old English period, it is unclear what is residual from Roman culture and what comes from Germanic influences. This problem is compounded by the fact that much Old English writing has been lost.

Of heroic, Germanic, Anglo-Saxon poetry, there remains one complete Old English epic *Beowulf*, two fragments, *Finnsburg* and *Waldere*, the short poems *Widsith* and *Deor*; the *Hildebrandslied*, the medieval *Nibelungenlied*, and the Scandinavian *Elder Edda*, which was not written down before the thirteenth century (Wilson i). At the onset of the Christian era, Tacitus commented that the heroic lays were the "only annals of the Germanic people," and the poetry that remains represents only a small portion of the heroic lays known to the Germanic tribes (Wilson i). It is also interesting to note that these Germanic lays themselves contain epideictic rhetoric, which again emphasizes the fact that epideictic is based upon human impulses to ap-

prove, censure, correct, and praise present thought and behavior within any culture in any age. Another issue with Germanic, Anglo-Saxon, and Old English poetry is that much of it may have been interpolated, as was once believed to be the case with *Beowulf*, to include religious and moral judgments. Therefore, it is uncertain whether some early medieval rhetorical structures resulted from the blending of Roman and Germanic cultures or if they were the result of later Middle English and Renaissance translations that interspersed these epideictic undertones throughout previously written poetry.

It is apparent, as James Murphy intones, that medieval notions of poetry largely stem from the *Ars poetica* of the Roman poet and philosopher Horace, who was so influential that Geoffrey of Vinsauf titled his own thirteenth-century work *Poetria nova* to indicate that he was both familiar with and offered an alternative to classical consideration (*Rhetoric* 131). As the standard medieval text for poetry writing, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's work closely mirrored that of Horace's, who, in turn, not only mirrored Roman educational and rhetorical models, but that of Greek learning and education as well. Furthermore, as Paul Prill explains, the blending of rhetoric and poetry in the Carolingian age is based upon Horace's *Ars poetica*; commentaries on Horace's *Ars poetica*, the most famous written by Alcuin; and a familiarity with Latin poets such as Lucan, Ovid, Terrence, and Virgil (Prill 135). Greek and Latin poets were revered and cited often within the medieval art of poetry and were often imitated, although in the strict context or confines of Christianity.

Despite these echoes of classical writing within medieval literature, there is a danger in reading too many classical connections within medieval poetry, and when

we turn to Old English poetry with rhetoric in mind, we must avoid a number of pitfalls. Some aspects of the Germanic poetic form distinctly did not owe anything to classical Greek and Roman learning. The traditional unrimed, alliterative, four-stress line, for instance, undoubtedly

came from a tradition untouched by Mediterranean influence. Various stylistic techniques such as parallelism or variation and the peculiar type of metaphor known as the kenning also have often been claimed as ‘purely’ Germanic. (Campbell 189)

The existence of a Germanic rhetorical tradition is not known, particularly in comparison to the Greco-Roman tradition, and this is a concern for medieval scholars who are hesitant to make connections between the Greco-Roman culture with that of the Germanic culture of Old and Middle English. While a certain Roman heritage is to be expected because of the Roman domination of Britain and Germanic lands, the degree of classical learning that underpins or influences medieval expression is difficult to determine, particularly since much Greco-Roman learning was lost and because what was left was often denounced by Christian leaders or burnt in fires (Bizzell 431). Ironically, the very religious traditions that preserved and adapted classical rhetorical principles within England during the medieval period also denounced these same precepts, especially within the very medieval arts – *ars dictaminis*, *ars poetriae*, and *ars praedicandi* – that practiced them, furthering the confusion surrounding attempts to define medieval rhetoric.

Like the *ars dictaminis*, the *ars praedicandi* adapted basic rhetorical theories to the specific needs of writers and speakers and had become, as Murphy notes, standardized and theorized all over Europe within twenty years after its development (*Rhetoric* 310). The *ars dictaminis* borrowed from the *artes praedicandi* or preaching manuals in that letter writing also used relied upon such rhetorical techniques as argumentation, *exemplum*, and *allegoria* (Murphy “Rhetoric” 238), where, as R.E. Kaske describes, *exemplum*, a brief narrative or description, was used within the sermon to illustrate or support a doctrinal or moral point (88). The sermons and homilies of preaching also relied upon the rhetorical considerations of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery with an introduction, narration, and epilogue.

Of the three medieval rhetorical genres, the *ars praedicandi* is the only one that has been so completely preserved and practiced within modernity in, as Murphy notes, basically the same structure (*Rhetoric* 25). It is the *ars praedicandi*, more so than the adaptation of letter writing, poetry, or prose, that preoccupies the thoughts and communication of the medieval period and has become so ingrained within modern minds. The art of preaching led to a “homiletic revolution – a completely new rhetorical genre” (*Rhetoric* 310), and, unlike the other two arts, preaching, particularly the homily, was an invention unique to the medieval period. Donald Lemen Clark asserts that like epideictic rhetoric, homilies and sermons are ceremonial, commemorative, and create observers or onlookers of the audience (133). The homily, which, as Elizabeth Jeffrey defines, is a term meaning “dialogue,” is especially less structured and hierarchical than a sermon and more participatory in its reliance upon audience assessment and response (16). There is no argument to prove or dissect, save the analysis of Christian principles and the exhortation to moral living. Ultimately, to study medieval *ars praedicandi* is to study the heart of medieval culture. In order to obtain an accurate and fruitful picture of medieval rhetoric, it is imperative to begin with the art of preaching, and particularly the homily, that so influenced and defined medieval English lives.

Subsequently, in one sense, to study the *ars praedicandi* is to study the *ars dictaminis* as well as the essence of *ars poetriae*, since the art of letter writing borrowed much of its guidelines from the art of preaching and the art of poetry often relied upon many religious expressions and stories. It was the art of preaching that came “closest to developing a new theory in the Middle Ages” (Kennedy *Classical* 190). Preaching, homilies, and sermons arose from the Christian view that everything comes from God, that scripture explained God and godly living, and that morality on earth defined one’s eternal status. Subsequently, an analysis of the medieval art of

preaching is where the defining structure, content, and diction of early medieval rhetoric can be found.

The *ars praedicandi* most easily embodied classical references and ancient heroes like Homer and St. Augustine within the Old English period because, according to R.M. Wilson, these classical figures could be esteemed or condemned for their morality and teaching (2). The interpretation of scripture was a fundamental practice in the intellectual life of the Middle Ages, as demonstrated in the abundance of commentaries, exegetical commonplaces, the visual arts, liturgy, hymns, sermons, and homilies (Kaske 3). Although preaching created a new venue for rhetoric, it drew from ancient authorities such as Virgil, Cicero, and Augustine. This appeal to authority is an essential element of amplification – a device particularly used within epideictic rhetoric. In fact, all religious writings are epideictic in nature in their reliance upon praise, condemnation, and exhortation within ceremonial practice; focus on present action and thought; and portray ramifications, consequences, and interpretations for human and divine elements instead of simply arguing a point. However, it was the medieval period's focus, albeit often unintentionally so, upon the use of language in the moment to pronounce judgments that lead to subsequent, and even modern day, reliance and emphasis upon epideictically oriented communication.

The *ars praedicandi* often bore more weight than the other two artistic venues because preaching was closely associated with the divine, with justifications for earthly happiness and unhappiness, and with eternal security. Pagan religion had always included rhetoric, from rhetoric's rise within Greek society, though the epideictic focus was much more subtle and more focused upon worship and human difficulties than inspiring all humans to moral judgment and action. Christian teaching was likewise founded upon a tradition whose emergence coincided with popular Roman rhetoric. However, the actual writing of sermons and lessons in light of Chris-



tian principles designed to influence, encourage, and persuade an audience was a completely new genre that necessarily created its own version of rhetoric. Despite the rising popularity of writing, oral rhetoric, as Jeffrey Kittay observes, was viewed as superior in the medieval world of preaching, just as orality was for Greek and Roman societies (Kittay 211). However, as writing became more prominent, there was a paradigm shift in which oratory was replaced with a rhetoric of writing, where emphasis was given to formalizing content on the page. This shift in communication also created complexities in uncovering medieval notions of rhetoric, even as many written documents were dictated or meant to be read aloud.

This transition from oral to written communication is displayed in the history of preaching theory that, as James Murphy details, includes three phases that are seen in Christ and his teachings;: in Saint Augustine's 426 *De doctrina christiana*; and, from the mid 400's to the thirteenth century in the contributions of such men as Gregory the Great's *Cura pastoralis* written in 591, Rabanus Maurus' *De institutione clericorum* written in A.D. 819, Guibert of Nogent's *Liber quo ordine sermo fieri debeat* written around 1084, and the *De arte praedicatoria* of Alain de Lille written in the late twelfth century (*Rhetoric* 275). As the only art developed during the medieval period that is still most closely adhered to within modernity, preachings, and more specifically sermons and homilies, are rife with c(*Rhetoric* classical rhetoric and medieval cultural insights. Moreover, as with the *ars dictaminis* and the *ars poetriae*, the majority of rhetorical observation and study occurs in the early to late Middle English period, while little has been uncovered within Old English culture itself. In scrutinizing Old English homilies, the transition from classical to medieval rhetoric can be found, where the emphasis was not so much upon the intellect as it was upon the soul, and where well spoken words were the symbol of a well ordered soul and a sign of divine inspiration and communication.

By the late Middle Ages, as Francis Oakley notes, the church formed its own society that became synonymous with political and economic power (28), and literacy and learning was on the rise with the rediscovery in 1417 of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, a work that Murphy discusses was known to the Middle Ages only in fragmentary form, and the similar rediscovery in 1421 of Cicero's most philosophical work, the *De oratore* ("Latin" 24). Rhetoric had not played a major role in most medieval universities. George Kennedy discusses how rhetoric's instruction and observation was largely neglected until the thirteen hundreds with the appointment of a Paris professor to teach Ciceronian thought, Latin compositions, and the art of letter writing (*Classical* 189). This appointment and active study, in turn, lead to the flourishing grammar schools of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Bologna and Oxford where, according to Martin Camargo, verbal arts could be analyzed and practiced more freely and with greater analysis ("Between" 89) and the appointment of such rhetorical scholars as Giovanni di Bonandrea in 1292 whose rhetorical lectures on *Rhetorica ad Herennium* were very significant in reviving rhetorical practice ("Between" 91).

Medieval education was comprised of the trivium and quadrivium, the seven liberal arts of grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. Henry Osborn Taylor observes that these arts had been developed by ancient intellectuals in preparation for the study of philosophy (47), and it was the study of religion, in essence a type of philosophy in its system of beliefs, quest for truth, and investigation and inquiry into moral self-discipline, that so controlled medieval culture. Similar to the Roman progymnasmata exercises, the pedagogical procedures of the later medieval period were based upon comparable activities where, as Camargo also observes, students reworked an existing text, although classical practice involved students solving practical problems by composing the appropriate documents (88). While medie-

val instructors, even rhetoricians, of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries mirrored the concepts of their classical predecessors, they, as Paul Zumthor notes, were most concerned with amplification and the doctrine of *ornatus* (29). Ornamentation and amplification stem from the classical rhetorical genre of epideictic rhetoric, as epideictic was the precursor for the other two branches of forensic and deliberative rhetoric. In addition, while epideictic was also seen within the art of letter writing and the art of poetry, preaching offered the best platform for its use and adaptation.

It is likely that basic medieval education, which taught such skills as language acquisition, grammar, and rhetoric, followed the general Roman pattern, whether or not teachers and students acknowledged or even recognized that fact. As a result, it may be harmful to make strict delineations between medieval concepts of grammar and rhetoric because these two were often confused and complicated. Murphy adds that the survival of these classical texts had a profound influence on all those educated during the medieval period (*Latin 4*). Despite the Germanic and French influences on medieval culture, Roman education was impossible to ignore or completely discard. As a result, rather than spending time noting how medieval writers confused or interwove grammatical and other concepts with that of rhetoric, rhetorical elements should be analyzed on their own because they were often unknowingly transmitted to medieval intellectuals through classically accepted notions of grammar, education, communication, and even religion.

These rhetorical connections can be seen for example in Hugh of St. Victor's *Lore of teaching* (*Eruditio didascalica, or Didascalicon*) which is "neither a compendia nor a program; it is a concise philosophical survey of education" (Baldwin *Medieval* 153-154), and in the rhetorical ideals within Vincent of Beavais, St. Bonaventure, and Brunetto Latini, who, as Craig Smith

notes, particularly relied upon audience to dictate theory and who incorporated Augustine and Ambrose in his writings (177). Later medieval figures influential in establishing rhetorical patterns include Adalbertus Samaritanus, Canon Hugh (Murphy *Rhetoric* 213), and Alberic of Monte Cassino in Italy, who was a “pivotal figure in the history of medieval rhetoric” (207) for his writings and teaching, and who is often deemed “the father of the medieval *ars dictaminis*” (207) due to his quoting of Cicero, Sallust, Lucan, Ovid, Terence, and of course Virgil (203). In addition, Cistercian monk Alain de Lille left a significant work in 1199, *On the Preacher’s Art (De arte praedicatoria)*, where he, much like Gregory the Great, stressed the elimination of vice more than positive exhortation to virtue (304), which are both epideictic concerns especially developed within the writing of the patristic fathers and adapted to meet the needs of medieval audiences in ways that continue to resonate today.

James Murphy asserts that Alain de Lille is the first medieval writer to attempt what St. Augustine did centuries before him: establish a rhetoric of preaching (306). Although many Middle English figures stand as guideposts in the search for a unified understanding of medieval rhetoric, the core of medieval rhetoric is to be found in the religious dogma and writing of Christianity, particularly those formatted during the Old English period that laid a foundation for the later Medieval and Enlightenment periods so subsequent individuals could uncover, and further define and develop, the rhetorical tradition.

Additionally, Abelard evidences ancient rhetorical structure in his philosophical and theological arguments by, as Evelyn Vitz states, aligning himself with historical, biblical, and literary figures (25). Abelard’s writings reveal that the later Middle Ages were beginning to express and develop an interest and a recognition of classical individuals and rhetoric (26), and that because Abelard was “writing to have *impact* on his reader,” his resulting literature was “not of

expression, but of *impression*” (33). Because preaching was designed to lead listener’s to God, the emphasis was not so much on delivery or style as it was on content and the ability to leave a moral impression on the audience, two ideas emphasized by Plato himself particularly in his *Republic* and in his *Phaedrus*. Such a position was clearly established by the onset of the Middle English period, yielding a very different rhetorical focus on morality and the soul that was not found in classical rhetoric.

Rhetorical, thematic preaching and amplification can be seen in a variety of medieval scholars<sup>4</sup> and within such treatises as the *Omnis tractatio* once attributed to Saint Bonaventure (Murphy *Rhetoric* 326). Furthermore, the sermons of Ranulph Higden, Alexander of Ashby, Hugh of Sneyth, and Thomas Waleys evidence rhetorical decisions in their reliance upon a diversity of views and in the role of a preacher in relation to his audience (Jennings 124). Other religious leaders who incorporate rhetorical elements from Cicero’s structure, Quintilian’s educative aims, and Plato’s dialectic include Thierry of Chartres, John Salisbury, William of Conches (McKeon “Rhetoric 194, 195), and Thomas Chobham (Murphy and Camargo 61).

Many influential Middle English figures and works have been analyzed for rhetorical content, although James Murphy concludes that only six figures and works deserve the prescriptive title of rhetoric. These six are: “Mathew of Vendome’s *Ars versificatoria* (1175); Geoffrey of Vinsauf’s *Poetria nova* (1208-13) and *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi* (1213); Gervase of Melkley’s *Ars versificaria* (1215); John of Garland’s *De arte prosayca metrica, et rithmica*; and Eberhard the German’s *Laborintus* (after 1213, before 1280)” (Murphy *Rhetoric* 136). Of these six, only one is undoubtedly English, indicating that although

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<sup>4</sup> See Thomas of Salisbury, Richard of Thetford, Alexander of Ashby, Robert of Basevorn, Anselm of Canterbury, Richard of Thetford, Alexander of Ashby, Robert of Basevorn, Anself of Canterbury, Richard of Thetford, Jean de la Rochelle, William of Auvergne, Arnold of Podio, John of Wales, Walter of Paris, Guido Faba, Thomas of Capua, Guibert, and Thomas Salisbury

knowledge of the Middle English period and its use of rhetoric has progressed within the past two centuries, there is still much that has been lost and is not known of the medieval period.

By the year 1200, the Christian Church had produced only four writers who could possibly be called theorists of preaching and Christian rhetoric: Saint Augustine, Pope Gregory, Guibert de Nogent, and Alain de Lille (Murphy “Rhetoric” 309). From the Middle English period onward, rhetorical strands are easier to uncover and decipher, especially the works written closer to the Renaissance period. It is true that these later medieval writers used the writings before them – such as Gregory the Great’s – in their inclusion of repetition, appeal to memory, exhortation to fear of punishment, and emphasis on continued devotion to God (Murphy “Rhetoric” 313). There is a period of ambiguity spanning the rise of Christianity, the fall of the Roman Empire, and the onset of the Old English period, which is a gap of about six hundred years, roughly from the sixth to the eleventh century. Ultimately, while the role of rhetoric within the three medieval arts becomes more apparent upon close observation, all three arts are largely discussed and defined within the context of the Middle English period, leaving the Old English period shrouded in uncertainty.

Scholars like Harry Caplan, Woodburn Ross, Charles H.E. Smyth, Dorothea Roth, Thomas Marie Charland, and Joseph Miller have tried to narrow this gap and draw parallels within the Old English period. However, most scholars tend to conclude that traditional rhetoric had little impact during the years between the death of Augustine and Poggio Bracciolini’s rediscovery of Quintilian’s texts (Miller *Readings* xi), and that medieval thinkers and writers, “even the most renowned, produced little or nothing new or original to add to the corpus of material called rhetoric,” and instead concentrated on preserving the principles of the past (Miller *Readings* xi). Rather than view this preservation of documents as a lack of advancement or education,

such imitation and preservation can actually be viewed as an art in itself. What these copies indicate is that in a world of disorder and uncertainty, medieval intellectuals desired to protect and transmit the learning of the past, particularly in regards to religion and morality, for present and future societies. In doing so, medieval writers returned communication to its basic instincts: personal and social values that defined human life.

The Greeks were only able to codify rhetoric as an art after observing how humans naturally desired to express themselves to others and after studying how human thought and action could be crafted, influenced, and directed. So it was with the Romans who used words to build and maintain their hierarchy of power and to control and persuade. Within the sophistic education and rhetoric of the Greek and Roman societies, basic human notions like understanding of self and interconnectivity with society often became convoluted and overlooked in the emphasis on style and elaboration. However, medieval rhetoric returned the focus of communication back to human thought, action, and purpose in life, both on earth and in eternity, praising and condemning individuals, qualities, and actions. Subsequently, medieval rhetoric raised these epideictic concerns to the forefront and imbued the rhetorical tradition with greater emotion and practical application to all individuals within daily life, allowing rhetoric to become the foundation for Western civilization that it is today.

It is with this assessment and goal in mind that an analysis of the Old English homilies that function as precursors to the *ars praedicandi* will be discussed in the hope that a degree of clarity and unification can be reached while muddling through the topic of medieval rhetoric.

The majority

of the extant Middle English literature, more especially from the earlier part of the period, is didactic or religious in tone, as is inevitable from the conditions of survival. Before the fourteenth century, writing is in the hands of clerics or of professional scribes, and books copied by them are usually destined for one or

the other of the great monastic libraries. It is true that occasionally the extant catalogues reveal the presence of works which, theoretically, should not have been there, but on the whole secular narrative or lyrical poetry are rare, while religious and didactic works are prominent. Because of this the latter types of literature in the vernacular had a much better chance of survival; they were more likely to be written down and to find a safe and inconspicuous home in the monastic library. Yet, although it is probable that a much higher proportion of such literature has survived, even so it is certain that a good deal has been lost. (Wilson 135)

Although poetry and prose were certainly employed during the Old English period, what mainly survives are the religious and didactic works, which, as scholars from J.R. Tolkien, Joseph Strayer, George Myerson, Dick Leith, and John Burrow have determined, suggests that religious writing both dominated the period and was more valued. The works of antiquity that did survive were preserved in a religious setting due to their usefulness for defining or emphasizing religious principles. Conclusively, the religious writing created during the Old English period aimed at extolling the past for the benefit of the present and future, but it was a past beneficial to Christian teaching, which rhetoric, as scholars such as Peter Brown have noted, with its pagan roots in Greece and Rome, would not have necessarily addressed.

For several reasons, then, the first dozen centuries of Church establishment, practice, education, and writing did not produce much in the way of a coherent body of rhetorical precepts that might be called a rhetoric of preaching (Murphy *Rhetoric* 300). As diverse as the Old English period was, and with all its political and economic upheavals, the Church was doing what it could to obtain centrality and authority within the culture, beginning with individuals and their daily concerns. Such emerging doctrine and formats initially resembled proper and professional structures of communication, adhering to an ancient tradition in the focus upon praise and blame and on pinpointing what was moral and immoral, which is distinctive to epideictic rhetoric.

In fact, the Old English period can be viewed almost as an experimental phase where religious leaders “recognized that many members of the preacher’s audience would be illiterate



and generally unfamiliar with the contents of scripture. Thus, thematic preaching, as it is called, emphasized the selection of appropriate and accessible texts, as well as careful audience adaptation” (Herrick 132-133), and this concern for audience lies at the core of rhetoric, especially as it was used in court cases and legislature. Just as Cicero believed that a rhetorician must be knowledgeable and persuasive, so too did the church come to realize, and realize very quickly, that preaching “is the persuasion of many” and “unites wisdom and eloquence” (Herrick 133), although it was a wisdom and eloquence stemming from and based on scripture and divine communion with God. Each sermon or homily necessarily depends upon the diversity of an audience, even more so than letter writing or the art of poetry, and is therefore, even on the surface, sympathetic with rhetorical study.

The preacher was, in essence, an educator and teacher similar to that of the rhetorician or orator. Like the rhetorician, the preacher was to integrate emotion and passion with facts and knowledge in order to direct the actions of his audience. Additionally,

within the Church it is clear that rhetoric was part of basic education, that it was thought to contribute to an ability to interpret the Scriptures along the lines outlined by Augustine, and that it had some implications for preaching. It was chiefly taught in monastic schools, which were open to the public but were primarily intended to train those entering the life of the Church. Discussions of stasis theory and forms of argument, like the syllogism, bordered closely on dialectic and could serve as an introduction to theological disputation for those who went on to that level. The definitions of rhetoric given by Martianus, Cassiodorus, and Isidore indicate that the origins of conceptual rhetoric in civil life were not forgotten, and Isidore’s insertion of a chapter on law into his sections on rhetoric points to the same conclusion. Legal procedures of course chiefly took the form of hearings before a civil or ecclesiastical official, and both the official and the petitioner needed some knowledge of law, of public speaking, and of argumentation. Another application of rhetoric was perhaps found in the addresses of ambassadors sent back and forth between warring kings and officials of the Church. (Kennedy *Classical* 180)

Educational training was largely conducted within the monasteries, preserving strands of classical rhetorical theory within the medieval world. Rhetoric was employed in civic life from legal

hearings to public speaking, even adapted to the Old English period in speeches of war or speeches designed to maintain peace. This reliance upon rhetoric included the dialectic of philosophic rhetoric as well as the diction of sophistic rhetoric, to blend and re-establish both forms in a morally focused structure. Early medieval figures who greatly influenced the Old English climate and who are consistently referenced within the early medieval period include the Roman intellectuals Boethius and his *Consolation of Philosophy*; Flavius Cassiodorus Senator, whose *Chronica* for example includes rhetorical precepts and considerations for audience and whose various letters found within *Variae* evidence rhetorically driven concerns for daily life – even seen within the word “comitatus” (Hodgkin IV. 44, 45, 46); and Martianus Capella’s *Marriage of Philology and Mercury* that details the attributes of the trivium and quadrivium (Stahl III.64-VIII.345). In addition, the Spanish Archbishop Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologies* was one of the most authoritative handbooks for the Middle Ages.

James Murphy intones that practical Roman rhetorical doctrines were transmitted into the Middle Ages in two ways: by the copying of the *De inventione* and Ciceronian-like texts such the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and by the popular compendias written by the encyclopedists Martianus Capella (410-427), Flavius Cassiodorus Senator (490-583), and Isidore of Seville (ca. 570-636) (Murphy *Latin Rhetoric* 6). These three figures formed a triad of authority whose knowledge of antiquity was the standard for the Old English period and much of the Middle English period. Despite an absence of rhetorical handbooks, these three figures preserved prescriptive rhetorical knowledge of the Roman past. In late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, the theory of technical rhetoric was condensed in the influential works of Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore of Seville, which, together with Cicero’s technical treatise *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, were the primary sources for the teaching of rhetoric throughout the western me-

dieval period (Kennedy *Classical* 24). Because these works were so revered during the medieval period, they created an environment where rhetoric, like a puppeteer, exerted an often unseen or indirect force, all the while giving life and energy to the unfolding actions and events.

For Cassiodorus, Capella, Isidore, and Bede, the rhetorical theory, especially of tropes and figures, according to Craig Smith, was mainly useful in studying scripture (172), and Isidore's compendium names Gorgias, Aristotle, Hermagoras, and Victorinus as its intellectual sources (Brehaust II.2.I), indicating that there was no single system of rhetoric to which medieval writers adhered, and that any thought given to a medieval rhetoric was simply a discussion of classical writers (Kennedy "Attitudes" 70). It is Quintilian's idea of a "deep, natural truth" (Kennedy "Attitudes" 70) in his discussion of oratory (Rollin XII.II. 369) that so appealed to Christian readers where, by the mid-sixth to early seventh century, there was evidence of medieval knowledge of classical rhetoric within sermons persuading the audience to practice morality. Kennedy adds that this medieval knowledge of the rhetorical tradition was due, in a large part, to Cassiodorus' introduction of the liberal arts in monastic schools (*Classical* 174).

With the Carolingian renaissance and the wane of feudalism,

The work of Boethius and that of Martianus Capella led to a revival of logic. The educational curriculum of the period was the Seven Liberal Arts – the Trivium included grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the Quadrivium included geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. Scholars in the West translated into Latin a nearly complete corpus of Aristotle, preserved by the Arabs and Byzantines; in addition, the West recovered other Greek works as well as Arabic commentaries on Greek texts. This period also saw the rise of universities and the formation of guilds. After early bans on pagan teachings, the universities were allowed access to the newly translated Greek texts. Scholastic philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas confronted faith with reason, and they and rising secular thinkers paved the way for the Scientific Revolution. (Gill 132)

While much of this interest in classical learning and education occurred during the Middle English period, the groundwork was laid during the Old English period with the rise of Christianity and the concerns of a volatile age in need of stability, a stability that the church was all too happy

to supply through a synthesis of philosophic truth and content blended with an epideictic focus upon morality, consequences, and justice. Besides Boethius, Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore, Old English figures are also traced to a handful of people and works including Adhelm, Bede, particularly his *An Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Alcuin, Rabanus Maurus, King Alfred, Ælfric of Enysham, and Wulfstan.

As Charles Sears Baldwin observes, Bede, Boniface, Paulus Diaconus, Alcuin, Loup, Remi, Gerbert, Abbo, and Ælfric adapted the teachings of such grammarians as Donatus and Priscian (*Medieval* 130), preserving classical rhetoric within their own writing. Jackson Campbell adds that the textbooks of Diomedes, Charisius, Probus, Priscian, and Donatus were used for education in the medieval period, but usually to understand sacred texts rather than to write original works imitating or explicating them (178). James Murphy notes that Cassiodorus relied upon Donatus for his grammar, Fortunatianus for his rhetoric, and Victorinus and Cicero for their discussion of oratory (*Rhetoric* 65), and because Cassiodorus became a guide for monks to study divine and secular works, he influenced Isidore, Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus. Every early encyclopedist from Cassiodorus, Isidore, Capella, and Boethius discuss and use Cicero as their primary source, which, as Murphy points out, causes later figures such as Alcuin and Anselm of Besate to continue this same interest and draw “on the rhetoric of Cicero,” even if it was a rhetoric distilled and altered through various works and time (*Rhetoric* 107). As stepping stones of classical learning, grammar, literature, and rhetoric for the medieval period, Boethius, Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore were largely influenced by the Roman traditions that helped them become so successful.

Beginning with Boethius, analyzing each of these intermediary figures will construct the platform from which to study homilies for rhetorical structure and to formulate an early medieval

rhetoric. George Kennedy echoes Lorenzo Valla's infamous characterization of Boethius as the last of the Roman intellectuals and the first medieval scholastic philosopher (*Classical* 178). Boethius was the last Roman philosopher to understand Greek, and his ideology and educative training, as James Herrick notes, functioned both as a bridge between Greek and late Roman culture and as a bridge between Roman and Christian culture in Europe (130-131). Boethius seemed to favor logic, philosophy, and dialectic, adhering to a philosophic rhetoric over poetry. Who can forget his scathing banishment of the muses within his *Consolation of Philosophy* where Boethius has Philosophy ask of the narrator, who "has allowed these harlots of the stage to approach this sick man?" (Walsh *Boethius* 4). Boethius closely relied upon philosophic rhetoric and rejected all others.

Anicius Manlius Boethius not only wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy* but also seven treatises dealing with dialectical and rhetorical subjects. His most influential rhetorical work was his *De differentiis topicis*, popularly known in the Middle Ages as *Topica Boetii*. While Boethius recognized that both dialectic and rhetoric used topics for inventing or discovering ideas, he restricted rhetoric to invention, without regard for arrangement, style, memory, or delivery. James Murphy writes that this decision was detrimental for rhetoric in medieval universities like Paris and Oxford, where dialectic was viewed as a superior method of invention, while rhetoric was deleted almost entirely from the curriculum (*Latin* 8). Interestingly enough, the complexities of tracing a medieval rhetoric do not begin with modern scholars working from the outside in, but from within the culture itself, with figures such as Boethius who ushered in, and created, confused, and often divided medieval cultural views of rhetoric.

Although not a rhetorician, Boethius composed a number of works, such as *De differentiis topicis*, that were both directly and indirectly significant in developing rhetorical theory. Jo-

seph Miller, Michael Prosser, and Thomas Benson discuss how no figure of the later Roman period “towers more completely over medieval education and culture than Boethius (c. 480-524);” in fact, “[n]early every major commentator on civilization who wrote between the sixth and the sixteenth century quotes him with a respect reminiscent of the homage paid Cicero; Rabanus Maurus, Bernard of Clairvaux, John of Salisbury, Dante – all recognize him as master” (*Readings* 69).

In his translations of Aristotle and Cicero, Boethius preserved a measure of the rhetorical tradition for the medieval period, as his commentary on Cicero’s *Topics* was widely read and reproduced, and, as Ann Gill states, were certainly the only knowledge of stoic philosophers such as Aristotle that the medieval period had until the rediscovery of Aristotle’s works in the 1200’s (42). However, not only did Boethius’s arguments imply that rhetoric was subordinate to dialectic, but Michael Leff discusses how Boethius’ arguments also promoted the idea that rhetoric could not stand alone as an art and that rhetoric could be achieved without reference to or consideration of audience (23-24). Boethius set in motion the medieval prioritization of dialectic, logic, and philosophy above that of rhetoric, carving a niche that the Middle Ages would fill, where rhetoric would break from its classical tradition and be guided by content, morality, and the search for truth.

The next influential figure within the medieval period was Martianus Capella, a classically trained rhetorician and lawyer who enjoyed mysticism but had no regard for Christianity, whose treatment of rhetoric left the impression among fifth and sixth century intellectuals that the rhetorical tradition was unsuitable for Christian purposes. Herrick details that Capella lived during the time of Augustine and in the same vicinity in North Africa, particularly the city of Carthage which was, at the time, home to the “best school of rhetoric in all of Roman North Af-

rica” (130). While St. Augustine saw merit in classical and rhetorical traditions in their implications for Christian teaching, his contemporary Capella fueled the Christian stereotype and negative view of orators and rhetoricians because of his emphasis upon form and style at the cost of content.

Capella is best known for his *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* or *The Marriage of Philosophy and Mercury* which echoes neo-Platonist views where, for example, there is a chapter on rhetoric that imbues Cicero with metaphysical properties (Stahl V.161). *The Marriage of Philosophy and Mercury* was written as training for mystics and was revived during the Carolingian renaissance (Smith 161). And, it was Capella who introduced to the medieval world the Roman concept of the Seven Liberal Arts that were divided into two groups: the “trivium of arts dealing with ‘word’ (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric), and the quadrivium of arts dealing with ‘number’ (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music),” whose “sober synopsis of the *ars rhetorica* is solidly reflective of the Roman tradition” (Murphy “Latin” 6).

Although Martianus Capella (410-427) introduced the seven liberal arts into the Middle Ages, Varro’s *Disciplinarum libri novem* suggested nine subjects for a complete Roman curriculum, although medicine and architecture had been dropped by the fifth century, leaving seven subjects which Capella offered in the subsequent order where grammar was first, dialectic was second, rhetoric was third, geometry was fourth, arithmetic was fifth, astronomy was sixth, and music was last (Stahl III.64-VIII.344). George Kennedy notes that the encyclopedias of Isidore and Cassiodorus follow this general sequence in the next century, thus firmly establishing the typical medieval pattern of trivium and quadrivium (*Classical* 44). Thanks to Capella’s writing, the medieval period was able to base much of its educational pursuits upon the classical precepts of the seven liberal arts, although rhetoric was relegated to third place while grammar and dialectic

tic vied for first. However, as has been displayed, grammar often borrowed rhetorical concepts, to the effect that when medievalists believed they were practicing grammar, they were actually using rhetoric, demonstrated through considerations of pauses, alliteration, and rhyme, which Capella himself assigns to his description of rhetoric (Stahl V.195).

It was Martianus Capella's *Marriage of Philology and Mercury* that was the uppermost authority for the liberal arts during the Middle Ages as well as a representation of the Second Sophistic concerns of style and diction where Capella gathered what he needed from classical sources and "superimposed on that material a fantastic allegory composed of pedantic humor, obscure metaphor, and ponderous verbosity" (Miller *Readings* 1-2). It was this Second Sophistic style, which Capella describes as doing "nothing quietly," "fat and swollen," and "almost hidden by its many folds" (Stahl V. 213), that came to characterize rhetoric at the fall of the Roman Empire. Martianus Capella describes the personified Rhetoric as a queen "with power over everything" because she could "drive any host of people where she wanted and draw them back from where she wanted; she could sway them to tears and whip them to frenzy, and change the countenance and senses not only of cities but of armies in battle" (V.156). Such misplaced power over others and such elaborately eloquent styles of communication practiced by the participants in the Second Sophistic movement lead church leaders like Augustine and Gregory to react so strongly against rhetoric, although the epideictic rhetoric of sophistic education formed a ceremonial and evaluative background from which medieval writers could not completely escape.

More than any other figure or work, it was Martianus Capella's encyclopedia that, as Kennedy details, made rhetoric one of the liberal arts of the medieval period (*Classical* 175). James Murphy adds that Capella's *De nuptiis*, which was written during the early fifth century A.D., is a milestone in the history of Western culture (*Rhetoric* 45-46) and, as Taylor Osborn as-



serts, it was the most extensively relied upon school book of the medieval period (49). As a neo-Platonist, Capella's quest for a higher dimension of reality would have resonated well with the religious leaders of his time, and it is incredible that his early fifth century work would be so often taught, transcribed, and discussed.

It is therefore the case that the history of medieval rhetoric begins in the fifth century (Murphy "Rhetoric" 42), and although classical writings and figures are believed to play a vital role, the works of Augustine and Capella gave rhetoric a different focus than that of the Ciceronian tradition, namely the focus upon morality and on the soul as opposed to that of a political science. It was St. Augustine, as Murphy details, who attempted to unite rhetoric and Christianity in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, while Martianus Capella used his *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* to convey the Roman concept of the liberal arts within the medieval period (42). Ultimately, classical, Ciceronian rhetoric shaped the education, society, and daily living of the Middle Ages (Herrick 125), but it was a fragmented classical tradition repurposed by the Christian Church in a variety of ways to detail eternal life and moral living.

Despite Capella's influence, he was a pagan, and

his authority would not have ensured the survival of technical rhetoric in the Middle Ages if his work had not been taken up by Cassiodorus a hundred years later. Even the great authority of Augustine would not have been enough to ensure a place for rhetoric in the training of the clergy if Cassiodorus had not created a system which made minimal intellectual demands and which was enforced by the discipline of monastic life. (Kennedy *Classical* 177)

Alone, Capella would have been ignored or rejected by church leaders if it had not been for the work of such influential figures as Augustine and Cassiodorus who endeavored to reclaim pagan or classical traditions for Christian purposes. In Capella's well known *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, he grounds his writing in grammar, rhetoric, and logic and promotes the idea that grammar, rhetoric, and logic were important fundamentals for both public service and for Church

learning and preaching (Herrick 130). Through Cassiodorus's writings, it is apparent that knowledge and use of rhetoric never completely disappeared, despite the fact that classical rhetorical precepts survived in fragments and were often placed underneath dialectic or grammar in importance. Instead, the invention, arrangement, diction, and focus upon praise and blame associated with classical rhetoric (Stahl V. 161-162) was transformed by the concerns of the age, leading to a new rhetorical synthesis of philosophy and epideictic that provided direction and answers for medieval life.

Rhetorical strategies of invention, disposition, and style were also transmitted by figures and tropes of grammar books. Gabriele Knappe writes that preliminary rhetorical exercises, *praeexercitamina*, much like progymnasmata, had entered grammatical instruction as early as the time of Quintilian, who often complained that grammatical principles often "transgressed the limits of their subject" and taught rhetorical elements like deliberative speeches or *suasoriae* (31). It is not unique to the medieval period to confuse grammatical and rhetorical precepts, as the two are similar in several areas and were often combined within Roman culture. However, with the decline of rhetoric as a distinctively practiced and analyzed art, the medieval period suffered more uncertainty than the Romans as to the proper sphere of each.

Boethius' student, Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator (c. 477-565), also transmitted rhetorical elements into medieval culture and, according to Murphy, was often viewed as the second major encyclopedist of this period after Capella ("Latin" 6). Joseph Miller, among others, particularly recounts how Capella was viewed as one of the most "distinguished scholars of his time" (*Readings* 77). In his religious writings, Cassiodorus also relied upon the demonstrative or epideictic branch of rhetoric in his praise of God (Walsh *Cassiodorus* 16), and similar to Valla's view of rhetoric and dialectic, which Isidore also emulates, Cassiodorus, in his

*Institutiones divinarum*, echoes Cicero and Quintilian when he says rhetoric ought to be concerned with “the science of speaking well in civil questions” (Halporn II.2), an idea repeated by Isidore, Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus (Murphy “Rhetoric” 173).

In addition, Cassiodorus also carried the interest and “idea of the seven arts as attested by frequent reference” (Baldwin “Medieval” 95), and he created the first Christian handbook that tried to reconcile Christian and pagan cultures, a work which would be further emphasized in the following century with Isidore’s *Etymologiae* (Miller *Readings* 77). Just as Augustine did before him, Cassiodorus integrated pagan learning within Christian teaching, and put pagan ideals such as consideration for audience and style to work for religious purposes. As a result, Cassiodorus was a foundational figure for the two medieval arts that would later become fully realized within the Middle Ages – the *ars dictaminis* and *ars praedicandi* – and he also focused the moral, rhetorical direction of medieval education.

Cassiodorus succeeded Boethius in his position under King Theodoric the Ostrogoth and influenced the *ars dictaminis* through writing twelve books worth of influential letters (Murphy *Rhetoric* 197) that imitated Cicero’s style of letter writing, although, as Murphy adds, Cassiodorus did not adhere to rigid formulas or pronounce specific theoretical principles on the technique of letter writing (199). Cassiodorus embodies the unique mindset of the medieval period in his attempt to safeguard and transmit what he knew of rhetoric and classical learning, but his discussion of rhetoric seems “flat and mechanical” and only briefly mentions parts of rhetoric like status, kinds of argument, elements of a case, parts of speech, the syllogism and the enthymeme, and the use of memory (Miller *Readings* 78). In a similar tradition to Boethius, Cassiodorus transmits basic rhetorical information often devoid of the life and energy that sustained its inception and development. Just as Boethius did not appear to value rhetorical manuals in their em-

phasis on form and rules, Cassiodorus was not clear on rhetoric's history, further reducing classically oriented views of rhetoric to a handful of guidelines and structures.

Cassiodorus' *Institutes* was merely a reading guide for the Benedictine monks at his monastery rather than an all-inclusive statement of the available rhetorical "lore" (Murphy *Latin* 7). Cassiodorus' *Institutiones* is made of two books; the first deals with "sacred" literature, divinely inspired content that needs no human "seasoning" or rhetorical elaboration (Halporn 114), while the second discusses secular learning, or the classical, pagan pursuit of earthly wisdom and knowledge inferior to religious study (Halporn 103). In both cases, Cassiodorus studies Scripture to prove that the "*artes liberales* were planted in man's culture from the beginning by God" (Miller *Readings* 77), and, in the second book, he tries to structure the rules for each of the arts – grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, comparing these seven liberal arts with the seven pillars of wisdom that were discussed in Exodus (Murphy "Latin" 6).

In this way, Cassiodorus is able to reconcile and transmit pagan culture in his assessment that these arts and areas of knowledge were originally created by God to benefit human life. For Cassiodorus, just because classical ideas were employed by those unfamiliar with Christian ideals did not mean classical ideals were necessarily evil or should be wholeheartedly dismissed. Even in Cassiodorus' political and economic letters addressing daily concerns, he integrates his Christian viewpoint along with rhetorical devices. For example, within his "King Theodoric to Boetius the Patrician" found within his *Variae*, Cassiodorus praises music; discusses the high, middle, and low tones; praises the muses and the power of poetry; rhetorically recalls pagan morality and belief by referencing such figures as the god Mercury; and, most of all, epideictically praises God the creator through such devices as amplification, repetition, and antonomasia (Hodgkin II.40). Cassiodorus' scholarship forms a fundamental foundation for medieval rhetori-

cians who believed that all communication and words came from God and that language use was both inspired by God and a means of communicating God's message to others and pointing them toward Christianity.

Similar to Cassiodorus' writings, Isidore also catalogued the learning of the ancient world. What "Augustine had been to the early fifth century, Boethius to the early sixth, and Cassiodorus to the later sixth, Isidore of Seville (560-636) was to the early seventh century: the outstanding scholar whose influence would pass from generation to generation, shaping the thoughts and cultural values of multitudes" (Miller *Readings* 79). Although Isidore is a Spanish bishop and not from England, his name is synonymous with medieval England and knowledge of England's history, literature, and culture. Isidore's *Etymologiae* or *Origines* also discusses the seven liberal arts, along with all types of fields and areas from medicine, law, history, and geography (Barney 35), becoming a "guide book of ancient tradition" ((Baldwin *Medieval* 95, 96). While it is true that Isidore did not write anything innovative or new, what he did do was just as important, if not more so. Isidore was able to further preserve events, writing, and knowledge of the past, including that of rhetoric, further preserving knowledge of rhetoric within medieval culture and exhibiting the pervasive feeling of respect and nostalgia prevalent in medieval Christian writings, although typically in terms of morality and godliness.

Isidore followed Augustine's example, and, as William Sharpe notes, incorporated pagan histories within Christian theology and teaching (7). He read both pagan and Christian writers extensively but only encouraged his monks to read the Grammarians. His reason for limiting monastic education to grammar was twofold: to ensure medieval monks would grasp the grammatical method of understanding literature and to ensure that pagan learning would not confuse or distract young monks from their moral studies (7). As Boethius and Cassiodorus had done

before him, Isidore more highly esteemed and promoted other arts like dialectic, which he defines as the art of finding “the causes of things” and as teaching how “the true and the false are separated by discussion” (Brehaust II.22.I). Isidore also placed the art of grammar over that of rhetoric because he did not have a complete understanding of the art of rhetoric. Furthermore, Isidore had difficulty separating and distinguishing between grammar and rhetoric, defining grammar as “the science of speaking correctly” and as “the source and foundation of literature” (Brehaut I.5.I), while he parroted Cassiodorus’ definition of rhetoric as “the science of speaking well in civil questions for the purpose of persuading to what is just and good” (Brehaut II.1.I-II). Isidore also places tropes such as metaphor, allegory, and irony under grammar, viewing rhetoric as studied eloquence.

Isidore’s *Etymologiae* tried to summarize the knowledge of his age and to preserve the facts that were known to him, relaying history that continued Jerome’s “chronicler’s literary historiography” (Miller *Readings* 79-80). Isidore classifies the seven arts under philosophy, and he cites Plato’s understanding of the term, which included both dialectic and rhetoric, before referencing Boethius, Porphyry’s Introduction, Aristotle’s Categories (Brehaust II.2.I), syllogisms, division and definition, and topics (Baldwin *Medieval* 98). Isidore compounded the view that rhetoric was a tool of philosophy and not an art in itself, and he proposed the idea that rhetoric was not as effective as grammar, or perhaps even dialectic. It was this view that alternately placed rhetoric behind dialectic or grammar, which prevailed in the medieval climate.

In Book II of his *Etymologiae*, Isidore discusses rhetoric and dialectic, particularly stylistic devices and terminology (Barney 79), and Murphy discusses how this work was the last major encyclopedic work of the Patristic period (*Rhetoric* 73) in which both Christian and secular materials were used to aid divine practice. Isidore’s work created a template for Christian studies.

As Murphy observes, Isidore departed from the pagan system in his view that grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic were avenues to theology and not means in themselves (*Rhetoric* 73) because grammar and dialectic are not necessarily opposite but different tools of philosophy or religion. Rhetoric ruled the trivium at the fall of Rome, but Baldwin notes that grammar was primary within the Carolingian period while dialectic was the dominant art during the high Middle Ages (*Medieval* 151). As a distinct art and field of study, rhetoric lost the prominence it once gained within Roman culture because the medieval period more highly value grammatical concerns and dialectic wisdom and learning, at least in manuals and disciplines, although rhetorical precepts themselves were naturally employed within these two areas yet often unrecognizable in terms of their classic concepts.

Amidst his discussion of rhetoric, Isidore preserved the idea that epideictic rhetoric was based upon whether “a character is shown to be praiseworthy or reprehensible” (Brehaust II.4.I); antiquity’s five part rhetorical process of invention, arrangement, diction and style, memory, and delivery; and the emphasis upon the talent, knowledge, and practice or labor of the speaker (Brehaust II.3.I). These three considerations were what came to characterize early medieval rhetoric, though Christians valued God’s divine guidance along with the speaker’s morality and scriptural learning over intellectual pursuits and literary learning or social qualifications.

Stephen Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof Bishop promote the idea that Isidore of Seville’s works were more popular in the Middle Ages than the works of Capella and Cassiodorus because Isidore superceded Cassiodorus’ teaching and used the seven liberal arts, especially the trivium, as preparation for divine studies, incorporating Donatus’ view of grammar, Aristotle, Porphyry, and Victorinus’ discussion and use of dialectic, and Cassiodorus for rhetoric (Barney 71) – again noting more similarities between grammar and rhetoric than dia-

lectic and rhetoric (Murphy *Latin* 7). In mandating grammatical studies within monastical education, Isidore not only validated classical learning but promoted it. The study of grammar often coincided with rhetoric, so Isidore's work and teaching really spurred the rhetoric revival that was to occur in the later medieval period and beyond, though his emphasis was on grammar.

Subsequently, there exists three major phases of rhetorical knowledge and implementation within the Middle Ages,

the early medieval period of the fifth to the eight centuries, in which the study of classical rhetoric survived precariously in monastic schools and the chief authorities were the encyclopedists Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore; a period from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, in which Ciceronian authority was strong, primary rhetoric found some scope, especially in Italy, and the liberal arts flourished, especially in France; and the late medieval period when practical needs brought the study of rhetoric back from the subordinate role assigned to it by scholastic philosophers. (Kennedy *Classical* 175)

The works of Boethius, Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore formed the basis for a medieval education and an understanding of rhetoric within both the Old and Middle English periods, and Cicero was both known and respected as the chief author of rhetorical precepts until the rediscovery of other rhetorical works of Aristotle and Quintilian in the later medieval period. Although these encyclopedists created a narrow venue for the transmission of ancient rhetoric, Murphy highlights the fact that their popularity within the medieval period itself indicates how influential they were and how their synthesis of classical learning constituted the knowledge of most medieval intellectuals ("Latin" 7). Each medieval and rhetorical scholar can point to these four major figures as undeniable proof that remnants of the rhetorical tradition were transmitted during the medieval period, although the scope and depth is questioned.

There is evidence of an extensive knowledge of classical learning in England as well as an adaptation of that learning to meet the needs of English life, beginning with Aldhelm in the later part of the seventh century and Bede in the early eighth (Campbell 174). Aldhelm gained



his classical knowledge from Irish sources, and while “contemporary Irish testimony is scanty, nearly all modern researchers agree that the Irish monks valued, read and copied manuscripts of Roman poets, grammarians and rhetoricians,” and it was this interest in earlier Latin writers, whether pagan or Christian that was passed on to the English students and to the later scholars they impacted (174). Aldhelm and Bede are both early medieval figures who indicate a healthy comprehension of the rhetorical art during this time of transition.

Of the influential Old English figures who mention rhetoric, Bede is one of the most prominent. Bede became one of the greatest English scholars because he wrote “the first history of England, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (An Ecclesiastical History of the English People),” and because of his more than thirty compositions dealing with a variety of topics from history, grammar, science, and theology (Miller *Readings* 96). In addition, Saint Bede’s *Liber de schematibus et tropis* was regarded as a rhetorical work, the “first written in England and the first ever written by an Englishman” (Murphy *Rhetoric* 77), and in both his *History* and in his *Lives of the Abbots*, Bede presents invaluable information about medieval monastical life, where every member of the religious community shared in work and prayer (Sherley-Price 17). Simply studying Bede reveals how deeply rooted medieval culture was in Christian thought, how interconnected religious thought and writing was with the epideictic rhetoric of judgment, and how the Old English intellectual mindset was preoccupied with reconstructing the past in order to understand, validate, and succeed in the present and future.

Just as Isidore adapted rhetoric to more contemporary uses and regarded rhetoric as a system of knowledge discovered by writers of antiquity (“Attitudes” 69), Bede also kept rhetoric at a distance, although more so. Bede charted rhetorical usage and the Greek use of tropes and figures, but his Christian mindset lead him to dismiss all influences that were not based upon scrip-

ture. One could surmise that Bede seemed to at once admire classical precepts of the past that included rhetoric, but was careful to distinguish and separate between Christian and pagan elements in order to be taken seriously within an age so driven by a Christian focus and morality. Bede himself seems to struggle to find the balance.

Mission work and preaching were prominent activities of the period, as Bede himself details in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, though, as Judith McClure and Roger Collins state, Bede often painted rhetoric and its instruction as opposite that of Christian teaching (317). It is through the Venerable Bede (c. 673-735) where “[g]limpses of the role of rhetoric in seventh-century Britain can be seen” (Kennedy “Classical” 181), despite the fact that Bede draws largely from the grammatical teachings of Donatus rather than a specific rhetorical treatise. In particular, Bede’s homilies demonstrate application of rhetorical knowledge to preaching through his narrative details and focus upon the audience.

However, only one of Bede’s works, *Concerning Tropes and Figures*, specifically discusses rhetoric and mentions Ciceronian rhetoric (Brown “A Companion to Bede” 21). Bede’s *Concerning Tropes and Figures* was designed to assist those who were studying the Bible with identifying rhetorical devices, and the illustrations Bede relies upon are unendingly biblical (Kennedy *Classical* 181). Medieval homilies written by men such as Bede demonstrate that considerations for organization and audience connection were equally as important as the Christian focus upon content and morality. In the ceremonial setting of Christian preaching, and in the concern for present action and thought, Christian communication and rhetoric is at its core epideictic. Furthermore, medieval rhetoric developed epideictic so it became a tool of communication accessible to everyone and not just the elite or well educated.

As a medieval figure, Bede intentionally limited the sphere of rhetoric to a guide for monastic education in which “the formulas of submission and devotion preserves the humble decorum appropriate in an address to secular authority” (Kendall 151). The function of rhetoric was to mediate between human life and supernatural instruction and divine command, as Calvin Kendall further addresses, calling language to a higher standard in communicating with God and pointing others to Christ’s divinity (162). There was, at once, an understanding of rhetorical etiquette used to both address God and to instruct the masses. This rhetoric seemed to be ingrained within medieval man, as it appeared early in Christian history through prayers and addresses to God where praise, recitation of deeds, acknowledgment of scripture, thanksgiving, and humble requests were the standard fare. In addition, when addressing an audience, praising God’s attributes, deeds, and scriptural words of wisdom were employed to influence, or often remedy, present action, condition, or state of being. Like no other art or form of writing, preaching and homilies evidence the employment of rhetoric for extoling moral action and behavior.

With all Bede’s historical and encyclopedic work, “[i]f Bede cannot be termed the first English rhetorician, perhaps the palm could be given to Alcuin” (735-804), author of *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*, composed about A.D. 794 at the request of the Emperor Charlemagne (Murphy “Rhetoric” 80) who made Alcuin *Magister* of the royal school (Miller *Readings* 123). Alcuin is also known as “the protector of learning” during the medieval period (123) because of his intellectual work with Charlemagne, under whose reign “the first renaissance of learning took place within the monasteries of Europe” (123). As the seat for learning and education; preservation and understanding of literature, grammar, and philosophy; and the loci of communal law and political power, the church relied upon a strict set of rhetorical rules that they themselves may not have recognized. Christianity afforded an atmosphere that could both pre-

serve a degree of classical rhetoric and understanding as well as cultivate new applications and guidelines. Alcuin's grammar books formed an educational basis for the Middle Ages, largely in his instruction to monks (Campbell 176), and, in his elucidation of grammar, Alcuin also mentioned rhetoric, two educational areas consumed by religious philosophy, terminology, and, of course, human communication.

Alcuin brought ancient learning back to the continent when he was invited by Charlemagne to take charge of the palace school at Aachen in 781, where the goal was to propel churches and monasteries to offer instruction in grammar and rhetoric so that each individual could improve verbal skills and literacy in order to read, or at least understand, scripture (Kennedy *Classical* 182). Alcuin's use of rhetoric, and his reason for using rhetoric, was to improve intellect in the hopes of improving morality, as those who could read scripture would presumably follow its precepts and stop contributing to the chaos or immorality plaguing Christian society and robbing individuals of peace and happiness.

Wilbur Samuel Howell notes that Alcuin composed the *Dialogue concerning Rhetoric and the Virtues* in 794 that, similar to the treatises of Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville, did not contribute much in the way of original insights (15), although, as Joseph Miller, Michael H. Prosser, and Thomas W. Benson observe, it went beyond the mechanical definition of terms to also include practical advice on how rhetoric and Christian virtues could positively influence and improve the daily life of all (Miller *Readings* 123). Just as Cassiodorus ascribed the seven liberal arts a divine quality, so too did Alcuin, although he takes this idea a step further in that cultivating the intellect is a virtue that will lead to other virtuous actions. The implication, then, is that learning and employing rhetoric, particularly for Christian purposes, could be seen as almost a divine or virtuous activity as it exercised the mind and increased understanding.

Alcuin's adaptation of the *De inventione* of Cicero does not prove the use of the whole ancient program. Indeed, with the changing cultural concerns of Christianity, war, and loss of manuscripts, the ancient texts themselves could not have carried classical rhetoric into the medieval world, and the type of ancient rhetoric most relied upon within medieval refashioning and adaptation of the rhetorical tradition was the *elocution* of declamations and progymnasmata that emphasized style, embellishments, and amplification (Baldwin *Medieval* 142). Of the rhetorical fragments passed on from the Greco-Roman world, the rhetoric of declamation used in Roman schools would have lingered well beyond the fall of Rome, the rise of Christian power, and the start of a new medieval culture. As it was practiced in schools, progymnasmata and declamation represented a distilled and formal use of rhetoric designed to display the intellect and please the crowd through the art of speaking and communicating well. These activities would have been subsumed by educational practices within monasteries, even by monks and priests reciting scripture. It was this impulse to teach, instruct, and share knowledge that gave rise to preaching and the homily.

Another medieval figure of great rhetorical import was Rabanus Maurus Magentius who lived from 780 to 856, was a pupil of Alcuin's, and is known as one "of the brightest lights of the Carolingian renaissance" (Miller *Readings* 125). Rabanus established an influential school and library, and his *De clericorum institutione* created a course of study for budding clerics where Augustine's works were copied (125), along with the works of Cassiodorus, Isidore, Alcuin, Gregory the Great, Cicero, and Quintilian (Murphy "Latin" 9). In the continued development of the Old English period, and with the scholarly and education pursuits of men like Alcuin, intellectuals finally began to understand what Augustine had argued for years earlier: that the pagan discoveries of the past could be adapted to the Christian needs of the present.

Unlike Capella, Cassiodorus, or Isidore, who simply transmitted information and had little interest in changing doctrines themselves, Rabanus “is willing to change whatever he needs, and to select – and reject – on the basis of what the new ecclesiastical orator requires” (Murphy “Rhetoric” 86). Rabanus marks a shift in medieval thinking from preserving past literature and works to pragmatically using ideas in a more innovative way. Rabanus is the first medieval figure to truly grasp Augustine’s promotion of classical learning and rhetoric but in terms of a Christian worldview, and his writings indicate that by the later medieval period, the integration of classical rhetoric into Christian methodology was basically complete (Murphy “Rhetoric” 82).

Although “conscious imitation of the Roman past prevailed” during the eighth and ninth centuries known as the Carolingian period (Taylor 233), Rabanus represents a turning point in the use of rhetoric within the Middle Ages, especially in the history of preaching, where rhetorical manuals and writers were no longer discussed piecemeal, but were adapted to create more successful documents and sermons. Theory was abandoned for freedom, a freedom stemming from Christian precepts and the notion that effective communication and wisdom came from God. That is not to state that formatting, tone, and figures of diction were not studied or relied upon, but they were only used as optional means of presentation and not as required formats for an art of speaking. Although the thought of balancing pagan and Christian elements was made popular by Augustine, it took years for the connection to be fully realized, despite the evidence of rhetorical precepts within all medieval works. Rabanus shares Cassiodorus’ view of rhetoric stemming from Cicero and Quintilian where rhetoric was “the science of speaking well in civil matters,” and this definition was applied in ecclesiastical disciplines (Murphy “Rhetoric” 84), though the focus was not on man, but on God or God’s divine favor and moral judgment in man.

Starting with Rabanus Maurus, writing becomes more “*perceptive*, designed to give specific advice (*praecepta*) to future writers and speakers,” mirroring the Greco-Roman manuals and handbooks on rhetoric written by such figures as Horace, Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, and Donatus that created and perpetuated the classical art of rhetoric that was only attempted by St. Augustine at the onset of the Old English period until the emergence of medieval intellectuals like Alcuin and Rabanus Maurus in the latter medieval period (Murphy *Rhetoric* 363). Eighth and ninth century figures like Alcuin and Rabanus Maurus return to a Greco-Roman mindset where the communication process could be analyzed in order to improve communication and formulate procedures for other’s use, which is the ultimate basis and sphere of rhetoric.

In summation of the current state of medieval rhetoric, prominent scholars including James Murphy, George Kennedy, Charles Sears Baldwin, and Richard McKeon tend to divide findings and uses of rhetoric during the Middle Ages into four historical periods:

a first stage extending to about the end of the tenth century, when the chief authorities were the pseudo-Augustine, Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore; a second period extending through the eleventh and the first half of the twelfth century, dominated by Cicero, Boethius, and the Old Logic; a third period comprising the latter part of the twelfth century and the greater part of the thirteenth century, in which the New Logic became to some degree effective and was applied after a manner in the interpretation of the Aristotelian corpus; and, finally, the fourteenth century and the Renaissance, in which Aristotle and the Greek rhetoricians, Cicero, Quintilian, and Boethius all had increasing influence. (McKeon 187)

Although Roman writers and works were admired at the onset of the medieval period due to the writings of men like Augustine, Capella, Cassiodorus, and Isidore, the conflicts arising from Christian belief and the social turmoil of the day left little room for rhetorical manuals or time to analyze, teach, or create rhetorical principles. Logic and grammar came to dominate the sphere

of education, and intellectuals relied upon Ciceronian snippets to inform them of the rhetorical vein and formalize their content.

At the close of the medieval period, the works of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian had been re-discovered, commented upon, and translated, resulting in a continuation of ancient rhetorical precepts that were carried forward into modernity. While the medieval period's connection with rhetoric has certainly become clearer within the past two hundred years, there is still a void after Boethius in the sixth century until the preachers, poets, and letter writers of the late eleventh. Focusing upon the Christian preaching, homilies, and concerns of the early medieval period will piece this tradition together because, as rhetoric developed within the Middle Ages, it was shaped by three factors, according to Joseph Miller and Michael Prosser's assessment: the hostile view of Christian scholars toward a Roman art they viewed as immoral and pagan; the rapid spread of monasticism after the fifth century with the establishment and spread of monasteries, abbeys, and priories; and the tendency to view rhetoric as an administrative tool and procedure that developed from monastic life where laws replaced persuasion in influencing the behavior and thoughts of others (*Readings* xiv).

Rhetorical uses became more visible as Christianity became more firmly established and central within the medieval period. In the desire to spread and encourage Christian precepts, Christians relied upon rhetorical tools, often even unintentionally and unconsciously, in their writing, exegesis, sermons – a term referring to a more general and generic ecclesiastical address, and homilies – an ecclesiastical address originally characterized by greater interaction and intimacy – though both terms are often used interchangeably (Kaske 80). The public discourse most prevalent in Old English culture is the sermon or homily, due to its vast quantity and scope (Campbell 178), and, within the medieval period, “preaching is the characteristic form of orato-



ry. Political oratory being in abeyance, legal oratory having little scope, preaching practically monopolizes the third field distinguished by Aristotle, occasional oratory, the oratory of here and now” (Baldwin *Medieval* 230). Oratory did not have the power it once did, certainly not in political and social arenas, and was largely diluted within the only area it was really employed: missionary preaching and religious sermons and homilies. Teaching was an essential part of a sermon’s function, and to teach meant to employ a degree of occasional oratory, or, as more classically known, that of epideictic rhetoric, where a speaker or writer judges actions, thoughts, individuals, locations, and a variety of other concerns through condemnation or praise.

Therefore, because the scope and nature of rhetorical interest in each period serves to identify and characterize established intellectual attitudes (Ward 41), an analysis of Christian writing will most fruitfully reveal early medieval uses and views of rhetoric, whether consciously or subconsciously employed. Christian rhetoric is the core of medieval rhetoric, designed for all men, not just the educated or the elite, though medieval rhetoric is not restricted solely to Christian writings and covers a variety of topics. Christian rhetoric focused upon man’s communication with God and man’s reliance upon God to communicate to other humans in both word and deed, with the constant focus upon the eternal consequences for the soul. In essence, Christian rhetoric is epideictic, for it stresses what is both moral and immoral and encourages the audience to live moral lives now in order to receive eternal reward.

Thankfully there are such rhetorical guideposts as Cassiodorus, Capella, Isidore, Boethius, St. Augustine, Bede, Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus to ease the transition into the medieval period and to indicate rhetoric’s evolution and adaptation with subsequent religious works. However, looking closer at Old English figures and works that characterize the period from Alfred the Great’s translations of Boethius’ *Consolation and Philosophy* and Gregory the Great’s *Pastoral*

*Care*, Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* and *Lives of Saints*, Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* along with some of his eschatological sermons and, finally, anonymously written homilies found in such collections as the Vercelli and Blickling books, will further reveal the medieval rhetorical mindset and the type of classical, epideictic structure and tropes that came to characterize the art of early medieval communication.

Subsequently, chapter two will briefly recall England's formation and rhetoric's development as an art within Greek, Roman, and Christian culture, emphasizing epideictic's essential role in both human life and communication and how such an epideictic foundation led to a unique medieval rhetoric. Chapter three will then analyze these epideictic underpinnings within Alfred's translations of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, a very important and influential philosophical and rhetorical work within the Middle Ages, as well as Alfred's translation of Gregory the Great's Latin preaching manual, *Pastoral Care*, which incorporated important rhetorical precepts in the instruction of the clergy and in the formulation of homilies and religious orations.

King Alfred, for example, translated Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* partly to describe and define earthly suffering and its ramifications, while pointing to divine understanding that could lead to eternal happiness. Alfred also translated into English Pope Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*, published in 591, that discussed grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic in terms of ecclesiastical administration. Alfred's translation of Gregory's work was cited widely and consistently throughout medieval England (Murphy "Rhetoric" 292), becoming a guide for Christian thinking as well as rhetorical structure. King Alfred the Great's purpose in translating Latin texts into Old English was to make these texts available to Christian study (Knappe 9) and to instruct, win, and move his audience according to the rhetorical tradition.

Chapter four will further define rhetorical structures and figures of diction true to the ceremonial and entertainment purposes of epideictic by dissecting Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* and *Catholic Homilies*, homilies that would have transmitted rhetorical considerations and structure to the daily conversations and interactions of listening audiences. Although interest in rhetoric seemed to decline after Bede, and Christian distrust of pagan learning and lore associated with Greco-Roman rhetoric was particularly prominent during Ælfric's lifetime due to the "austere discipline of Benedictine monks" (Kennedy *Classical* 182), Ælfric and others incorporated rhetorical concerns through a reliance upon philosophic and epideictic rhetoric. Scholars like Luke M. Reinsma and Gabriele Knappe have noted Ælfric's reliance upon both middle and low styles of communication, vivid imagery, repetition, and figures of diction like expansion, parallelism, and enumeration, concluding that Ælfric's rhetorical techniques were classically based in their emphasis on the preacher's art of teaching (*docere*) and on pedagogical considerations (Knappe 7).

Finally, chapter five will likewise investigate characteristics of early medieval rhetoric through an analysis of Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* and the anonymously written homilies from the Vercelli and Blickling books, as well as other twelfth and thirteenth century homilies that serve to further clarify medieval rhetorical findings. While an epideictic impulse and inclusion of classical figures of diction underlie Ælfric's homilies as well as Alfred's writings, the same rhetorical observations are true of the preacher Wulfstan of York, although he is typically not given as prominent a position within ecclesiastical histories (Whitelock 25). Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* depicts the deplorable conditions in England at that time and Wulfstan's unhappiness with the state of daily life. Studying the homilies of Wulfstan, along with Ælfric and Alfred the Great's commissioned translations, and placing these works in the context of oth-

er, although anonymously written, early medieval homilies, such as those found within the Vercelli and Blickling homilies, can reveal consistent rhetorical strategies that both stem from antiquity and were blended within the unique Christian climate of Old English culture that lead to the rhetorical revival in the later Middle Ages.

These early medieval writings and homilies suggest that early medieval rhetoric is philosophic in its emphasis upon content and plain, direct language; that medieval rhetoric is epideictic in its format and diction, ceremonial usage, concern for the present, and its moral use of praise and blame; and that medieval rhetoric is intuitive and individual as well as social in its emphasis upon communication with God and reliance upon God's words to appeal to the emotions and souls of audiences instead of human intellect. In this way, eloquence became a sign of a morally cultivated soul rather than intellectual study. Finally, medieval rhetoric redeemed the rhetorical tradition from the shallow constructs to which it had been chained by antiquity's classifications; medieval rhetoric returned rhetorical practice to the people and to the freedom of expression and natural, human behavior that created it. Medieval rhetoric is a rhetoric of the common man, written in the vernacular and for the purpose of awakening redemption, higher morality, and the supernatural in everyone. In this way, medieval rhetoric, and specifically the medieval rhetoric of the Old English period, imbued the rhetorical tradition with individuality, with freedom of expression, with the inclusivity of all humanity, with spiritual significance and moral purpose, and with greater pragmatism in daily life.

## EPIDEICTIC SYNTHESIS AND DEVELOPMENT IN GREEK, ROMAN, AND CHRISTIAN RHETORIC

The complexities associated with establishing medieval rhetoric can begin to be simplified by looking at the formation of England, its educative and religious heritage, and its melding of cultures. It is the ancient epideictic qualities found within medieval education and religious and ceremonial communication, such as those demonstrated within Christian preaching, that can be used as a key to unlock early medieval notions and utilizations of rhetoric. Epideictic rhetoric is particularly demonstrated in Roman progymnasmatic activities that include the *chreia* – an anecdote, pithy expression, saying, or action that edified a person; the commonplace – which involved either general praise or condemnation; the encomium or panegyric – which focused on praise; and the vituperation or invective – which condemned or blamed (Kallendorf 9-10). All four of these progymnasmatic forms are evident in Old English homilies and are usually blended together underneath the umbrella of the encomium structure.

The encomium is the most distinctive characteristic of this branch of literature (Burgess 113) in its praise and emphasis of virtue, and it was one of the main “elementary exercises of the progymnasmata” that was evident in both deliberative and judicial oratory, so that even when other exercises and declamations were being practiced, students “had continuing practice in epideictic oratory” (Clark 214) because epideictic, with its judgmental focus on right and wrong, typically formed the backdrop for most exercises and forms of communication. The typical epideictic format used within progymnasmata was the encomium, which was the foundation for eulogies and panegyrics. However, what medieval rhetoric did was to combine a variety of all four epideictic structures and purposes within medieval homilies, sermons, and religious writings to

achieve more influence in communication and to have a more extensive effect on the audience. Old English homilies tended to recall an anecdote, discuss a general principle, and explicate a specific topic through both praise and blame in the same passage – using virtue to denounce vice and vice to extol virtue. This practice of consistently incorporating a discussion of both virtue and vice together in the same message is truly unique to medieval rhetoric and will be more fully detailed in the next three chapters.

However, it is first necessary to briefly rehearse the contributing factors that lead to England's development and the lingering cultural influences of the Celts, Greeks, Romans, and Germans that came to define the Old English period. The first inhabitants of present day England were the Celts, who inhabited Britain "several centuries before the birth of Christ" (Millward 76), and whose invasion of Britain was very slow and thorough (Rhys "Celtic" 3). Daithi Ho-gain recounts how the Celts were druids who, like the Greek, Roman, and Germanic cultures, worshiped nature and, like the Greeks and Romans, had a love of learning in philosophy, law, science, astronomy, medicine, and math, though all learning was dictated by religious, Druid leaders (24, 26). Because Celtic education and literature was largely oral, it is difficult to fully understand their use of rhetoric, though Celtic orations were certainly epideictic in nature in their reliance upon religious and ceremonial structures.

The history of the Celts in both Europe and on the British Island is largely known from often hostile Greek and Roman writings, and even Aristotle's *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* and Plato's *Republic* depict Celtic culture as inferior to Greek learning and society. Aristotle, for example, criticizes the Celts for their homosexual love (Jowett 38) and questions their "barbarian" practices that prepare children for battle (179). Though the Celts were frequently at odds and at war with the Greek and later Roman culture, they often interacted with Greek society and

merchants, indicated for example by the archaeological evidence that Greek bronze armor was in high demand by the Celtic people of Europe (Hogain 4). Subsequently, the Celtic culture that permeated the island of Britain for over seven hundred years before the Roman invasion contained at least an elementary knowledge of Greek culture and learning, and Celtic history has passed to modern society through the rhetorical writings of Greece and Rome. Both of these factors further complicate a lucid understanding of Anglo-Saxon, Old English rhetoric, though it is enough to note the similarities and differences between the Celtic culture and its contemporary Greek power. While medieval rhetoric's link to Celtic and ancient rhetoric is often indeterminate and not the main focus of this study, these connections are worth a brief mention in piecing together how and why epideictic rhetoric forms the underpinning of much early medieval writing and to what extent classical terminology and rhetorical understanding is evidenced within Old English writings, though the present account will be centered upon the Greco-Roman and Christian cultural dominance of medieval England and recast in light of classic epideictic development and structure.

Around 43 A.D., the Romans, led by Emperor Claudius, conquered the isle of Britain, and, for the next four hundred years, "thoroughly Romanized" Britain's culture (Millward 76) so that by the end of the sixth century, Celtic culture had been replaced by Latin (Hogain 222). However, Celtic influences never completely faded. Even when the Romans brought their technology, agriculture, government, philosophy, religion, and learning with them and were able to so completely Romanize Britain, Celtic influences never died, though Latin education and government reigned supreme. Britain, in fact, became so Latinized that when the Romans were forced to abandon the island in 410 A D, due to internal dissension and war as well as invasion and external war (Millward 76), the British people were lost without them.

However, the Germanic culture soon filled the void as Scandinavians and West Germanic people (Thomas 3), specifically the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, began invading around 449 A.D. (Millward 76), opening the fifth century with “uncontrolled settlement by masses of Anglo-Saxons, who must have been mainly peasant farmers” (Mayr-Harting 14). As the German culture took root in Britain, and with the Viking attacks beginning in 787 (Millward 81), the Roman culture became a distant memory, although Christian evangelism and study never allowed Roman ideals to completely disappear from England. Once again, England returned to more Celtic roots, as historians like James Logan have discussed the fact that many Germans were of Celtic descent (31).

It is also likely that the Germanic invaders, interacting with various cultures, as Tacitus’ *Germania* written in A.D. 98, notes (Opland 40-41), had themselves been Romanized to some extent during the domination of the Roman Republic, which, as Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller detail, lasted from 510 BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (15). The Roman Republic was followed by the Roman Empire, lasting another five hundred years from 27 BC to 476 AD and spreading to such areas as Germany, Denmark, and England (Garnsey 51). Therefore, it is conceivable that the invading Germans, while mainly illiterate in Latin, may have carried Roman concepts of community and communication with them as part of their cultural foundation in the conquest of Britain. Certainly, the archaeological and lexical evidence indicates that the Celts and Romans, as well as Germanic and Roman civilizations, maintained contact through both trade and war.

The connection between the ancient Greco-Roman world and that of the Celtic, Germanic, and Old English period is tenable, although the influence of the Roman Republic and the subsequent Roman Empire was tremendous, infiltrating even the remotest lands. It is not inconceivable and, in fact, is highly probable, that the customs and culture of the Greeks and Romans were



embedded, at least to some degree, in the foundational beliefs of the Old English period as represented in areas such as Switzerland, Britain, Germany, and Denmark. Roman “cultural penetration of the countryside was inevitable,” as peasants were “brought into contact with Roman influence through taxation, conscription, money, cults, rural markets, customs stations, and itinerant soldiers and civilian officials” (Garnsey 193), and the “Roman Christianity of Britain was not expunged by the arrival and assaults of several thousand pagan Germans – any more than spoken British Latin, or the British people themselves, in their hundreds of thousands” (Thomas *Christianity* 347).

Despite the often intangible connection between Anglo-Saxon and Greco-Roman culture, classic rhetorical terminology and practice can be used to unravel the mysteries surrounding medieval rhetoric. It is particularly the Latin based principles of Christianity, education, and preaching that dominated the medieval period and can best be analyzed to pinpoint and define early medieval rhetoric. Because the area of maximum rhetorical expression in the Middle Ages and Renaissance was preaching, technical handbooks “were eventually developed in most of these areas, but were slow in coming” and would not be seen until the Middle English period (Kennedy *Classical* 24). This gap in proscriptive rhetorical handbooks lead many scholars to overlook the specific rhetorical contributions of the Old English period within the field of medieval rhetoric, though recently medieval and rhetorical scholars are now focused instead on finding rhetoric within medieval literary output.

While scholars such as Gabriele Knappe, A.P. Church, and Robert E Bjork have pinpointed rhetorical elements and even progymnastic qualities of confirmation, refutation, and commonplace within early medieval works, a consistent pattern for medieval rhetoric has previously not emerged. Such Old English progymnastic qualities can be seen for example in *Be-*

*owulf*, in the words of Unferth or Hunferth in the flyting scene and in the speeches of Beowulf and Hrothgar that define character, implore God and the gods, and praise or blame. Other scholars such as Angela Carson, R. Barton Palmer, and Neil Cartlidge have noted rhetorical techniques within later medieval works like *The Owl and the Nightingale* full of debate filled dialogue and aspects of deliberative, forensic, and epideictic rhetoric that amplify, refute, and praise and blame. For the medieval period, epideictic rhetoric is the solution to the problem of piecing together medieval communication in an age where Christian thinking blended and re-defined classical and medieval concepts.

Christianity offered hope and a spiritual philosophy and rhetoric for an unstable age, and Christianity did not need to prove the validity of its message or the belief that Christ was God. While Christians did use words to defend Christianity and convince others of the truth of their religion, their instruction ultimately did not rest upon argumentation but upon the simple conviction of human emotion and judgment, which is epideictic, though an epideictic tailored to the medieval, Christian emphasis upon the individual and upon personal morality as a means of social reform. It is epideictic that energizes and exhorts and demoralizes and incapacitates, and in the “pluralistic society” of medieval England, it was epideictic that most easily established and maintained communal values, virtues, and morals (Ochs 7).

Epideictic rhetoric was originally classified as such within Greek society because the Greeks observed human communication and desired to perfect it in writing, speaking, and gesture. As George Kennedy also observes, the basic function of rhetoric is to communicate and to create stories, mythologies, and literature that define humanity and human culture, both orally with public and private address and in writing, education, and literacy (*Aristotle* 7), and, over

time, rhetorical principles evolved into a distinct discipline, particularly in the development of civic life in Greece.

Rhetorical techniques were first pinpointed in Homeric oral literature, which, as Kennedy discusses, echoed various bards' lines, phrases, and words as well as imitated the natural inspiration and expression that arose from daily life (*Classical* 9), where, just as Achilles in the *Iliad* was taught by Pheonix to be a speaker of words (Buckley 380) and a doer of deeds (Buckley 163), the Homeric hero stood as an example of how public speaking was learned by imitation where the most eloquent had a gift for speech and attained inspiration from the gods (Kennedy *Classical* 10), an inspiration that was to be cultivated and codified. Such an emphasis upon speaking and action and being inspired by the gods was easily transferred to Christian culture when the emphasis was placed upon speaking God's word and living a moral, Christian life.

The cultivation of both speech and action became central to Greek education, was even more emphasized within Roman society, and is even displayed in the notions of bravery and courage retold in stories from the pre- and early medieval period full of Scandinavian, Celtic, and Germanic influences that produced works from *Beowulf*, the *Gesta Danorum*, the *Grettis Saga* within the *Icelandic Sagas*, the Norse family sagas, the poetic Edda (Lapidge "The Comparative" 23), and the *Gesta Romanorum*, with its purpose for directing and instructing religious leaders. Not only did Greek citizens make Homeric rhetoric central to their developing political and private lives, but "Homer was the Bible for everything that was considered characteristic of genuinely Greek social life" (Stowers 55). Homeric poems became the textbook that Greeks, and later the Romans, learned to read, and Kennedy notes that it was the attitude toward speech in the *Iliad* that greatly affected the notion of the orator in Greco-Roman civilization (*Classical* 10).

The Greek literary tradition, arising from the impulse to communicate with others, is itself a branch of rhetoric and is usually traced to Homer and the Greeks. Michael Lapidge asserts that even medieval writing, sermons, and homilies, as demonstrated by men such as Ælfric and Wulfstan, referenced Homer and other popular Greek and Roman literature so that Old Norse, Old English, and Greek and Roman writings appeared to be part of a continuous literary tradition with a similar strategy and order (“The Comparative” 24). Just as the Greeks, and later the Romans, highly esteemed literature, so too did the medieval period, although medieval intellectuals typically condemned what was pagan and most highly esteemed the Bible, thanks to the pervasive influence of Christian culture. Such a respect and reverence for literature fostered the recognition of rhetoric as an art, although this art was often placed under dialectic and grammar.

In discussing the actual study and practice of rhetoric itself, the invention of rhetoric is traditionally traced to Corax of Syracuse who lived in 476 B.C. and his pupil Tisias (Murphy *Rhetoric* 3), whose development of rhetoric as an art originated in Sicily (Gagarin 46). At its inception, rhetoric was a cycle. Homer employed rhetoric in his literature, but his literature also inspired the study and perfection of speech as it was discussed in the rhetorical manuals of Corax and Tisias. While the early medieval period may not have created actual manuals on rhetoric, the preservation of, allusion to, and respect for literature and classical writings certainly kept rhetorical concerns, figures of speech, and structures very much alive.

The notes of Corax and Tisias on rhetorical techniques or *techne*, art, for “effective presentation in the law courts” (Kennedy *Classical*), were originally oral but then copied and sold as handbooks on rhetoric (Gagarin 46). These handbooks contained the three basic tenets of rhetoric – convincing, instructing, and motivating - that would later become so important to Augustine and subsequent Christian thinkers of the medieval period in the use of persuasion or

*pisteis* (Kennedy *Aristotle* 8), where, as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca ascertain, the communication employed depended upon an audience and who the speaker or author wished to influence with their message and presentation (19).

Greek, and later Latin, rhetorical study, literature, and literary criticism was interpreted primarily through an epideictic vein, seen for example, as Brian Vickers' discusses, in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*; in the poetry of Pindar, Homer, and Virgil; and in the later classical and medieval commentators on Virgil, such as Donatus "who described the *Aeneid* as an epideictic work designed to praise and glorify Aeneas' virtues" ("Introduction" 20). According to Daithi Hogain, Virgil even spent time discussing Celtic appearance and culture in his *Aeneid*, again indicating a familiarity between the two cultures (20). True to epideictic rhetoric, Celtic, Greek, Roman, and Germanic authors and poets all created or retold stories, whether written or oral, usually in order to exalt virtuous action and condemn vice; lessons that were learned through both comedy and tragedy. Subsequent poets, writers, and rhetoricians such as the Arab philosopher Averroes, who paraphrased Aristotle's *Poetics* by writing "every poem and all poetic discourse is blame or praise," to Petrarch and Dryden, owe a debt to classical rhetoric in the way they use language to "impel men to virtuous actions and repel them from vicious ones" (Vickers "Introduction" 20). The rhetorical assumption is that praise and eloquent exaltation of virtue will lead to imitation, which is an ancient, yet innate, human notion that Christianity adopted for its own purposes, becoming the motivation for much early medieval writing.

In its most basic form, the judgment between right and wrong and the tendency to praise and blame inherent in epideictic rhetoric always existed; it was merely codified by the Greeks and later refined by the Romans. Richard Johannesen discusses how "stable laws require a stable vocabulary" (54-55), which explains why the art of rhetoric took on a more central role within

Greek culture and was therefore based upon argumentation and politics at the onset of the rhetorical tradition, leading the other two rhetorical branches and uses of rhetoric –judicial and deliberative – to become more highly valued and emphasized. These two branches, particularly the judicial branch, maintained their rule over epideictic as long as social and political concerns were most prominent.

Kennedy writes that by the end of the fifth century BCE, a unified rhetorical handbook existed containing the basic rules of public speaking (*Classical* 19), and James Kinneavy underscores the idea that Homeric rhetoric dictated the education of the body and the mind, so that gymnasiums arose which “culminated in the initiation into political manhood” (65), where Greek way of life was taught through military training, police duty, education, and sports (Kinneavy 77). Rhetoric was just one of many skills taught by the Greek schools in their creation of ideal citizens. It was upon this pattern of Greek education, later refined by the Romans, that medieval Christian institutions would loosely base their education, particularly as reading was learned through imitation and memorization and works were analyzed and translated through the Biblical lens, as Rafaela Criore mentions (177).

The largest contribution to the dissemination of rhetoric and its establishment as an art was by those who studied rhetoric, which, as Michael Gagarin states, was the primary interest of the sophists, who publicized their skills to men who wanted to make a name for themselves in the world of the democratic Greek polis, particularly at Athens (46). Higher education came to be defined as taking lessons from a rhetor or a philosopher in the form of a public lecture (Kinneavy 77-78). Greek leaders noted the successful effects of literature and rhetorical handbooks on political life, and the teaching of Sophists also brought rhetorical ideals to the forefront of Greek culture where subsequent writing and speaking mirrored rhetorical techniques. It was so-

phistic education and rhetorical techniques that developed the structure and means of using epideictic rhetoric, which became so important to medieval Christian leaders trying to establish order within a world of chaos.

The sophists, a term Kennedy particularly details as deriving from the Greek word *sophos* meaning wise, were self-appointed professors, and the sophists like Gorgias taught their pupils how to use words “to succeed in the civic life of the Greek states” (*Classical* 25). Because sophistic educators could most easily make a living teaching rhetoric, they quickly became synonymous with the study and use of rhetoric. The term sophistic was initially used to refer to any man who was thought learned, educated, and wise, and this label was originally used without any negative or “unfavorable connotations” (Hunt 71). The declamations of sophistic education, according to Graham Anderson’s analysis, involved refutations, assertions, comparisons and contrasts, judicial considerations, the invocation of authority and quotes from authors, dead or living, and theoretical questions in which “the rhetor’s activity converges with that of the philosopher, or of the original fifth century conception of a sophist” (50-52).

At first, it was an honor to be called a sophist, as seen by the fact that the seven sages of Greece were labeled as such. However, as Everett Lee Hunt delineates, the word held more of a derogatory meaning by Plato’s lifetime (71) because Sophists were more concerned with fame and money and with using words to display their rhetorical skill rather than finding or emphasizing content, justice, or morality. Subsequently, the negative view of sophistic rhetoric that began in Greece was further condemned in Rome and remained a negative concept within medieval England’s resistance to sophistic education and rhetorical training, rejected by figures such as Tertullian, Gregory the Great, and Archbishop Cuthbert, although much medieval writing relied

upon the precepts of Greek declamation demonstrated through Christian assertion, comparisons and contrasts, and invocation of authority, especially from scripture.

There is no specific branch of sophistic rhetoric because the sophists focused on all three branches and purposes of communication, although, as Anderson details, their instruction was largely ornamental and for audience entertainment (16) and students were instructed in a setting removed from the public eye. In this way, sophists relied heavily upon epideictic rhetoric. It is a great irony in the study of medieval rhetoric to realize that the very “ornamental” tradition that early Christian and medieval writers despised in the sophists’ use of epideictic rhetoric was a part of a structure and purpose they would largely imitate. While the sophists adapted epideictic rhetoric so that ornament and entertainment were at the forefront, Christian leaders and writers returned epideictic to its original pragmatic focus upon right and wrong, continually emphasizing and defining virtuous qualities and condemning and censuring vice.

In further charting classical rhetoric’s development and reliance upon epideictic in order to clarify medieval rhetoric’s structure and aim, it is necessary to briefly discuss the sophists who so heavily relied upon epideictic within their instruction. Among the sophists, Murphy states, it was particularly Gorgias who introduced sophistic teaching to Greece around 428 B.C. and whose ideas were quickly adopted and dissected by Protagoras, Antiphon, Lysias, Isocrates, and Plato (*Rhetoric* 4). Gorgias of Leontini is known as the “founder of the art of prose,” and was later condemned by Aristotle for placing too much emphasis upon memorization and declamation (Hunt 78). Gorgias was very philosophical in his view of rhetoric, and Susan Miller notes his constant discussion of epistemological and ontological themes (*Trust* 1), viewing rhetoric as a neutral tool that could be used for both good and evil and, as Steve Johnson contends, supporting the view that sophists should not be blamed when the tool of rhetoric was misused (204).



Gorgias' also based much of his writing upon epideictic rhetoric. His surviving *Encomium of Helen* and his *Defense of Palamedes* both revolve around epideictic rhetoric; his *Encomium* praises Helen and absolves her of wrongdoing (Wardy 26), and, in his *Defense*, Gorgias defends Palamedes and his morality and logic (Jarret 59). Consequently, Gorgias is often regarded as the "originator of *epideictic* oratory, the oratory of occasional and ceremonial, which took its cue from the public recitations of Homer's poems" (Roberts 38), although Aristotle was the first to truly classify this type of oratory. Instead of relegating epideictic to an occasional or merely ceremonial form of communication, Christian intellectuals' reliance upon epideictic within the medieval period created a medieval rhetoric that solely focused upon epideictic praise and blame as if it were the only worthwhile method for communication to be employed not just by religious preachers but by the laymen in their daily life, particularly in the search for eternal happiness and in the persuasion of others to live a committed Christian life on earth.

Besides Gorgias, other influential Greek sophists and figures who evidence epideictic underpinnings in their writings, as Everret Lee Hunt discusses, include the philosopher and grammarian Prodicus of Ceos who clarified literary style (73-74); Hippias of Elis whose developments in memory, art, and law lead to a doctrine of natural rights (74-75); the influential instructors Alcidas, Polycrates, Antisthenes, Aeschines, and Nausiphanes, as Stanley Wilcox notes (172); and Protagoras, who trained his students to argue both sides of an issue or theme, who was the first to incorporate grammar into his curriculum of study, and who encouraged the creation of epideictic speeches praising and blaming human qualities (Hunt 76-77). For these sophists, words were chosen for their prestigious or distasteful qualities with the goal of persuading or dissuading an audience (Johannesen 144), which easily lead to the condemnation of sophistic

training by philosophers because of the sophists' overemphasis on style and preoccupation with form at the cost of logic or truth (Duhamel 40).

In addition, the well known writings of Socrates, Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle also evidence epideictic rhetoric, although it was a more "philosophic rhetoric" than that associated with the sophistic movement, where, beginning with and particularly for Socrates, there was a preference for "the question and answer method of dialectic rather than lecturers or speeches to expound his views" (Kennedy *Classical* 41). These prominent Greek intellectuals pinpointed the flaws in sophistic education and its obsession with style; however, the sophistic movement was initially closely related to philosophy in the search for truth and the improvement of the intellect. It is a noteworthy observation that Christianity sided, and coincides, with more philosophic concerns of the Greco-Roman period than with sophistic concerns, although the writings, sermons, and homilies of the medieval period could never quite escape the sophistic use of epideictic rhetoric because epideictic rhetoric's structured and amplified judgment of human action, thought, and values was a natural human impulse as well as a natural platform for Christian faith.

While Christian culture most emphatically emphasized the tension between pagan concepts of rhetoric and Christian theology, such a hostile view of rhetoric existed long before Christianity's inception. Socrates was the first major philosopher to begin separating himself from sophistic education and communication. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates writes, "to educate was to be committed to the moral improvement of one's students, to bring them into the light of the knowledge of what is right and good" (Johnson 204-205). Like Gorgias, Socrates viewed rhetoric as a neutral tool, and he believed rhetoric was beneficial for instilling appropriate thought and action and for discovering justice. The purpose Socrates describes here is epideictic. Furthermore, in Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates sketches a higher rhetoric, one that is concerned with true

knowledge, human reason and character, and notions of right and wrong. Given such a rhetoric, the soul can be, in the best sense, ‘won by arguments’” (Roberts 6). It is Socrates’ more logical view of rhetoric that was further perpetuated by Plato, carried into Roman society, emphasized by Cicero and Quintilian, and represented in medieval homilies that focused upon religion and morality. Socrates wanted rhetoric to be used most positively where words could benefit and direct the soul, and medieval writing also encapsulated this view.

Socrates’ student Plato was perhaps the greatest critic of rhetoric and its “educational indulgences,” and, as “the greatest Greek prose writer, a master of structure, characterization, and style, as well as one of the greatest thinkers of all time” (Kennedy *Classical* 42), his influence is immense. In his *Gorgias*, Plato is clear to distinguish his “ideas from that of the sophists,” perhaps inventing and using the term *rhetorike* for the first time, as Michael Gagarin asserts (48). Plato defines rhetoric in his *Gorgias* as a practice that relied upon little or no facts in its persuasion, causing the “unknowing to seem to know more than the knowing” (Kennedy *Classical* 48). As a philosopher, Plato was very conscious of justice and the common good, and his objections to rhetoric, in the vein of Socrates, pinpointed rhetoric’s corruption of knowledge, justice, and truth. Christian intellectuals would return to Plato’s same distrust of rhetoric, concerned with how rhetorical structure, diction, and adornments could be used to confuse the truth and replace it with false information that would lead society to earthly unhappiness and eternal damnation.

Plato creates a distinction between dialectic and rhetoric, although he hoped that rhetoric and dialectic would once again align, and Plato’s answer to the negative aspects of sophistic rhetoric and instruction was to create his own version of rhetoric, thereafter known as philosophic rhetoric (Welch 109). Exhorting dialect over rhetoric, Plato even states in his *Cratylus* that dialectic “comes to our aid as a method by which, after our assumptions have been made, we can

put our house in order” (Johannesen 54). Ultimately, rhetoric will include dialectic, although Plato believed rhetoric was often based on opinion while dialectic sought after truth and facts. The rivalry between these two arts can be traced to the time of Socrates, although Plato was its strongest proponent.

Due to this rising enmity between philosophy and rhetoric, the arts of dialectic and rhetoric, according to scholars such as Michael Leff, would remain at odds until the end of the sixteenth century (15), running like a “leitmotiv throughout the history of ancient civilization” (Jaeger 84). This same confusion and hostility between dialectic and rhetoric is seen in Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory, and Augustine’s conflicted views of rhetoric and in the fragmented discussion and reliance upon rhetoric within works such as Boethius, Cassiodorus, Capella, and Isidore. The medieval period’s tension between logic and reason with the style and presentation of communication and language links them with the ancient cultures of Greece and Rome, with the concern that ornamentation would dominate content and truth.

For Plato, the fact that sophists accepted money for their instruction was enough to “condemn rhetorician and sophist alike in his eyes; and here he had Greek feeling with him” (Roberts 41). Plato states in his *Phaedrus* that rhetoric could corrupt the soul (Johannesen 61). Plato believed rhetoric moved the soul toward corruption, and he, unlike Socrates, condemned both the sophists and the practice of rhetoric, a tension reflected in Roman intellectuals and educators from Cicero, Livy, Pliny the Younger, Lucian’s *Professor of Public Speaking*, Seneca the Elder, and Quintilian. Because monetary gain often dictated rhetorical education, Greek leaders were quick to agree with Plato’s comments in his *Phaedrus* that rhetoric was “deceitful and untrue” and even “immoral” (Kennedy *Classical* 54). Although Plato is more condemning and harsh in his judgment of rhetoric, he, like Gorgias and Socrates before him, engages in rhetorical vituper-

ative techniques in his condemnation of rhetoric, and his writing clearly follows an epideictic pattern in his praise of philosophy and logic and his blaming of the sophistic tradition for defiling society and the soul.

Because epideictic could be applied to Plato's own ethical system, he made an exception for epideictic. While Plato banished the poets from his republic, he validates the poetry of praise, hymns to the gods, and encomia to moral men. In his *Laws*, Plato approves of communal celebrations and songs of praise to the gods and to deceased citizens who were virtuous, and, in his *Protagoras*, Plato links "encomium with the incitement to virtue in the youth" (Vickers "Introduction" 19-20). Furthermore, as Kennedy notes, although the first half of the *Phaedrus* exemplifies Homeric, poetic forms of rhetoric, even utilizing examples of sophistic oratory and the tradition of composition (*Classical* 55), the second half defines the appropriate sphere and content of rhetorical handbooks (Johannesen 58). This again indicates the judgment of praise and blame inherent in epideictic.

Plato's contribution then, as indicated in his *Republic* and in the opening lines of the *Apology* that demonstrate the necessity of truth and logic in rhetorical practice (Kennedy *Classical* 43), is one of philosophical rhetoric, "an ideal, beyond the possibilities of the Greek city," (Kennedy *Classical* 52). For rhetoric to remain effective in Greek politics and remain vibrant within Greek society, it needed the stylistic devices Plato condemned. However, Plato's more philosophically minded form of rhetoric, the search for definition and process, remained popular throughout Greek society and was later relied upon within the medieval period to justify the use of rhetorical principles. In fact, rhetorical ideals could not help but be employed through the dissemination of Christian faith, where Plato's notion that rhetoric "is the public demonstration of truths already privately determined" (Kennedy *Classical* 64) perfectly fit the bill. In addition,

Plato's concern that rhetoric would corrupt the soul was the same concern for Christians who believed rhetoric should only be used as a means of awakening virtue in the soul and guiding it to its eternal path.

In reaction to Plato's "morally austere view of rhetoric" (Kennedy *Classical* 33), Isocrates, "the most influential teacher of rhetoric in Aristotle's time" (436-338 BC), and a student of Plato, "sought to condition students' behavior so that they would think and speak noble, virtuous ideas and implement them in civic policy" (Kennedy *Classical* 11). Like Plato, Isocrates was also concerned with morality, justice, and the communal ideal. Unlike Plato, Isocrates believed rhetoric was an art in and of itself, and he could separate sophistic instruction from rhetoric. Isocrates still upheld the original notions of a sophist as referring to individuals who professed wisdom and had the ability to transmit this wisdom to their students. However, by the time of Isocrates, the term sophist and sophistic education had "suffered a semantic shift for the worse" (Clark 6).

This negative view is seen in Isocrates' *Against the Sophists* which was written in response to a quarrel Isocrates had with another sophist named Alcidams whose style had become overly ornamental. *Against the Sophists* follows the vituperation style of epideictic rhetoric, and ironically relies upon epideictic practices while condemning sophistic uses of them. Furthermore, in his *Antidosis*, Isocrates notes that "the art of persuasion can train to virtue and practical success in life" (Kinneavy 36), and this blending of ideal virtue with practicality and persuasion lies at the heart of antiquity's notion of higher education. In contrast, medieval rhetoric did not involve the argumentation and persuasion of the mind, but, rather, relied upon divine inspiration and persuasion of the heart and soul by continually focusing upon noble and moral behavior.

Epideictic rhetoric is pervasive within Isocrates' writings and can also be seen in his *Encomium of Helen* and in his *Evagoras*, both of which, as Brian Vickers points out, created a formulaic educative function of epideictic where Isocrates believed he had created a new kind of oratory that used prose to eulogized man's virtue and the ability to inspire imitation of that virtue in others ("Introduction" 20). One reason Isocrates wrote his *Encomium of Helen* was to demonstrate that "Gorgias had not treated the subject properly" and to further equate philosophy with rhetoric within the epideictic vein because he believed both had "universal validity" (Kennedy "Attitudes" 67), an idea, as Werner Jaeger asserts, that had profound developments for the epideictic branch of rhetoric (104). Isocrates concluded that sophistic rhetoric had become too mechanical. He postulated that science, philosophy, and rhetorical arts would be successful through *kairos*, when the communication of rhetorical instruction was "fit for the occasion," adhered to its subjects, and showed "a certain originality of treatment" (Barilli 6). Isocrates reintegrated morality and justice into the educational system, highlighting and validating epideictic rhetoric for its own sake, and he also managed to distance rhetorical education from the sophistic sphere that had attained such a tainted reputation.

It is Aristotle, particularly in his *Rhetoric*, as Charles Sears Baldwin details, that answers "Plato's challenge," where Aristotle "amply vindicated rhetoric by defining its place among studies" and "settled the question of rhetoric philosophically. He established its theory. But this theory was oftener accepted than followed" (*Medieval* 3). Aristotle speaks of rhetoric's growth and advancement in both his *Sophistic Elenchi* and his *Politics*, and in his *Ethics* he ranks rhetoric among the "most highly esteemed of capacities" (Roberts 33). Within Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the "oldest extant textbook on the subject," Aristotle defines rhetoric as the art or study of the available means of persuasion (Roberts *Rhetoric* v), divides persuasion into three kinds: *logos*,

ethos, and pathos, and classifies the three types of speeches or arguments, as James Murphy so eloquently mentions, as forensic (judicial), deliberative (political), and epideictic (occasional) (*Rhetoric* 4). Aristotle used philosophical logic and science to re-define rhetoric, but he based his theory solely upon human observation and understanding. Medieval rhetoric would re-code this reliance upon human understanding so that it was a reliance upon faith and divine inspiration.

Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric is "unique, in that it is a properly scientific consideration of the subject" and Aristotle speaks as a logician (Crem 53). It was Aristotle's divisions that were furthered and relied upon by every successive rhetorician and orator, particularly preserved by Cicero. Thanks to Aristotle, and in Kennedy's assessment, rhetoric attained its place in the trivium and quadrivium of education (*Classical* 62) that was subsequently passed on and discussed within the Middle Ages to shape medieval rhetorical views. However, medieval rhetoric was not scientific or systematic, and had no theory other than to transmit and explain scripture and exhort morality and condemn vice, using words to awaken divine understanding in the heart, the mind, and the soul.

Aristotle further discusses and classifies the three genres of oratory in his *Metaphysics*, which contains the famous passage where Aristotle discusses humanity's curiosity, "[b]y nature all men long to know" (Lawson-Tancred 4) using this idea as the basis for, as Kennedy also notes, his discussion of the three branches of oratory: deliberative (*symboleutikon*), which involves either exhortation and dissuasion in future action; judicial (*dikanikon*), which involves either accusation or defense of the past; and epideictic or demonstrative (*epideiktikon*), which involves praise or blame and emphasizes the present (*Aristotle* 48). Aristotle observes that an impulse to use rhetoric stems from these three motivations that have their own spheres and con-



siderations, although each genre borrows elements from the other, where, for example, epideictic can be used for deliberative purposes by applying the epideictic praise and blame to advice for future action and could also be used for judicial practices in praising or condemning actions of the past (*Aristotle* 78). Ultimately, epideictic concerns form the basis of both deliberative and judicial branches, for it is impossible to decide upon a future plan for action without knowing what is most fitting and right, and it is likewise impossible to defend or prosecute an individual without knowing how to judge their behavior and what constitutes justice and sound practice. Later Roman rhetoricians and works, as Stanley Stowers pinpoints, such as Cicero's *Ideal Orator* and Quintilian's *Education of the Orator* discuss how these three categories overlapped and were often unnecessarily divisive (51), although each genre was useful in their distinctive aims and for achieving desired results.

While Aristotle was the first to succinctly categorize these genres, these three branches were employed before Aristotle. The "founder of artistic prose," Gorgias relied upon each of these styles, but particularly epideictic. In addition, Gorgias' writings taught Isocrates, who was the "epideictic orator *par excellence*, and the two furnish the model for later literature of this class" (Burgess 102) in which "[m]ost of the masterpieces of academic eloquence, the eulogies and panegyrics of a Gorgias or an Isocrates, show-pieces famous throughout Greece, were speeches of the epideictic kind" that did not focus upon a contest or debate like deliberative or forensic rhetoric did in political and legal settings (Perelman 47-48).

Deliberative and judicial rhetoric relied upon economic and political considerations as well as a strong social structure and the availability of leisure time to be successful. When a stable social and political structure and leisure time were less apparent and available, as was the case within medieval England, the communication most relied upon was the communication of

the masses and of daily life where words were used to express individual thought, form human bonds, solidify relationships, and to conduct vital practices related to daily survival – all aspects revolving around human judgment and concern for the present. These impulses were classified and developed within the epideictic branch of rhetoric within Greek society, where human communication was more instinctual and basic. Medieval rhetoric also relied upon these epideictic qualities as a basic and instinctual form of communication, adapting classical structure and amplification for its own moral purposes.

Isocrates's writings, particularly in his *Euagoras*, point to epideictic and, according to Theodore Burgess, often placed deliberative rhetoric under epideictic (92). Therefore, in epideictic's earliest theoretical treatment, its "practice was always wider than its theory" as demonstrated even by Socrates in his "almost endless variety in theme and treatment" (96) and by Plato who was noted as the "perfect example of an epideictic writer in prose" (93). For all the disagreement, suggestions, and condemnation of rhetoric, Gorgias, Socrates, Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle strongly upheld the epideictic tradition, whether consciously or not, in their own praising and blaming of rhetorical and philosophical ideals. Despite Aristotle's desire to scientifically classify epideictic, epideictic particularly proved that it could not be contained by a set structure, for epideictic communication is the most basic to human life and was constantly adapting to the needs of each age, which is demonstrated in medieval rhetoric and in the analysis of Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan's writings in the next three chapters.

Not only did philosophers and prose writers heavily rely upon epideictic rhetoric, but poetry was intricately linked with this field as well. Theodore Burgess notes how epideictic was much cultivated by Greek poets and writers from Himerius, Themistius, Dion Chrysostomus, and Choricus, who all amazed their audiences with their speaking abilities (97). Poetry was full of

epideictic praise, or encomiums, of even mythical characters such as Achilles and Busiris that were composed by Simonides, Pindar, Bacchylides, and other early Greek poets (114-115). And, according to Hermogenes, Homer was also believed to be an epideictic poet (93). Ultimately, the epideictic “genre of oratory thus seemed to have more connection with literature than with argumentation. One result is that the division into oratorical genres helped to bring about the later disintegration of rhetoric, as the first two genres were appropriated by philosophy and dialectics, while the third was included in literary prose” (Perelman 48-49). Although epideictic later became a catch all phrase for rhetorical structures and ideas not necessary for legal and social speeches in Rome, it never lost its importance because it was so closely aligned with literature, writing, and education, while the deliberative and judicial focused more upon political necessity and legal address. When medieval writers returned the focus to writing and content, epideictic rhetoric would naturally shine once more.

The history of rhetoric as an art within Greek society, then, as John Ward notes, began as an imitation of human life in the creation of literature at the same time it developed for political and deliberative purposes due to practicality, demonstrated by the deposition of the tyrants in Syracuse during the fifth century B.C. brought about by effective political rhetoric and the demand for social justice (“From” 41). Burgess adds that there are three Greek rhetorical developments: the fifth and fourth B.C. imitation and implementation of rhetoric in literature and education demonstrated by Gorgias, Hippias, Isocrates, Alcidamas, Polycrates that lead to tension with philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates; the fourth century B.C. production of proscriptively rhetorical manuals and speeches by orators such as Libanius, Themistius, Himerius, and Choricus; and, lastly, a large literary output by Aristides, Dion Chrysostomus,

and Polemon within the third and second century A.D. that preserved the rhetorical tradition not only for political purposes but literary purposes as well (103).

These Greek movements evidence three distinct views of rhetoric as George Kennedy observes: Technical rhetoric, or theory and handbooks created from the “needs of the democracies in Sicily and Greece-Athens” that was pragmatic, civic, and was often reduced to “guides of composition and style,” as also seen in Roman society with Cicero’s *De inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*; Sophistic rhetoric, demonstrated most clearly by Gorgias and Isocrates that involved “amplification, elaborate conceits, stylistic refinement,” was often displayed in literature, emphasized the speaker above the speech or audience, created notions of “an ideal orator leading society to noble fulfillment of national ideals,” and was “often ceremonial and cultural, rather than active and civic”; and, finally, Philosophic rhetoric, which “stressed the validity of the message and its effects on the audience” over that of the speaker, had “close ties with dialectic or logic,” was more psychological in its “deliberation about the best interests of the audience-spectators or judges,” and was mirrored in religious movements like Judaism and Christianity (*Classical* 16-17).

Philosophic rhetoric typically condemned sophistic, epideictic practices because these practices obscured the message by perfecting form and style. Ironically, however, epideictic rhetoric was still preserved and furthered within this field because philosophers like Plato often criticized and blamed certain actions and words they saw as harmful while praising what they believed was just or good for society and the soul. Whether or not medieval rhetoric can be linked directly to its Greek ancestry, the rhetorical view that reigned supreme within the medieval period was an epideictic rhetoric of praise and blame blended with a philosophical rhetoric based on the emphasis upon content and truth, as will be discussed later in this chapter and in the

next three chapters. Subsequently, medieval Christian writers were able to do what Isocrates and Aristotle could not: align the search for truth and the emphasis upon content with rhetorical structure and figures of speech, and mainly for the purposes of moral instruction. However, instead of focusing upon civic duty and the communal good, as was the case in Greece, medieval writers focused upon the good of the individual soul, again giving rise to more mainstream, pragmatic, and individualized uses for epideictic rhetoric.

The divisions and tensions within rhetoric and between rhetoric and philosophy were further exacerbated within Rome where the style and evocative power of words became the chief concern, and where the wealthy and privileged used rhetoric and education for their own purposes. Further detailing epideictic rhetoric's development within Roman culture will allow early medieval rhetoric to continue to come into focus, as Roman culture so permeated England and so closely adopted Greek education. Herman John Randall discusses that, after the death of Aristotle in 322 B.C. and even the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., Roman rule proved to be dominant and far-reaching, ending "the age of Greek empires" (1-3) where the next three centuries were known as the Hellenistic Ages (Kennedy *Classical* 86).

However, Rome's rise to power and Greek social decline was a slow transition that happened, as Herman Randall details, in three stages: from 323 to 146 B.C., marking the final conquest of the Greek East by the legions of Rome; from 146 B.C. to the organization of the Roman Principate of Augustus in 30 B.C.; and, with the final stage, from 30 B.C. until the closing of the philosophic schools in Athens by Justinian in 529 A.D. in which there was a "gradual revival of Hellenism under the Roman Empire, after it managed to achieve a working form of government for the Mediterranean world and the synthesis of that Hellenism with Oriental values" (3). As a

result of Greece's slow decline, Richard Enos notes that rhetoric, like most Greek creations, was completely adapted into Roman society, particularly introduced by Western Greece (37)

While the Greeks formulated the basic principles of rhetoric, the Romans and Greco-Romans, as Ann Gill discusses, borrowed and adapted this theory (41) because Roman students were highly skilled and their "penchant for organization and refinement of traditional lore asserted itself in their treatment of speechcraft. They may not have added much that was new, but they elaborated upon the previously determined tenets and placed them in patterns of somewhat sharper outline" (Thonssen 137). For the Romans, rhetoric was a political science. It was this concept of communication that drove Christians to reject rhetorical training, for Christians were to spend their days in prayer and in contemplating eternal truths.

Rhetorical, political, and civil ideals were polished by Roman writers and rhetoricians, and each rhetorical ideal had roots within Greek culture. For example, Aelius Donatus relied upon Horace's *Ars poetica* and added "vitality to the grammatical art" through his *Ars Minor*, *Ars Grammatica* (Kennedy *Classical* 106), and his *Barbarismus* (Murphy *Rhetoric* 29). Indeed, Donatus' reliance and discussion of figures and tropes had "great authority and is substantially repeated by later writers like the Venerable Bede," and Donatus' textbook on grammar was very important for medieval rhetoric because the medieval period relied upon Donatus for their knowledge of grammar, emphasizing grammar over rhetoric, although these two arts were often confused in terms of figures of diction, ornaments of style, and organization (Kennedy *Classical* 106). In point of fact, when many preachers thought they were relying upon grammatical tools to write their sermons, they were really employing rhetorical devices such as epanaphora, disjunction, hyperbaton, and transplacement.

Other important Hellenistic writers include Theophrastus, Hermogenes, Plotinus, and Porphyry. Kennedy recounts that Theophrastus was Aristotle's successor as head of the Peripatetic School and also relied upon epideictic rhetoric in creating the four virtues of good prose: correctness, clarity, ornamentation, and propriety (*Classical* 87). Hermogenes was a sophistic prodigy who believed that every type of communication had "an ideal form of style, made up of various qualities or virtues combined in different ways" when considering the grand, middle, and plain styles of communication (*Classical* 103-104) and perfected the idea of *stasis theory* (Kennedy *The Art* 117), later expounded by Cicero (Hohmann 197). Plotinus and his student Porphyry's Neo-Platonist ideas expounded philosophic rhetoric (Harris 232-304) and were also found in the scriptural writings of John and Paul, in the work of Dionysius the Areopagite (Inge 329), and in the third and fourth century Roman African rhetorician, Marius Victorinus (Bruce 139), who influenced such patristic fathers as Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine – the chief authorities for medieval communication and concerns.

Rhetoric quickly and effortlessly came to dominate the art of philosophy within Roman society because of philosophy's ever increasing divisions, internal tensions, and increasing focus upon inner contemplation and because of its opposition with rhetoric's close political ties and educational uses in training the elite. Among the Roman rhetorical greats from M. Porcius Cato, Laelius, Scipio, Sulpicius Galba, Fronto, Pliny the younger, Domitian, Trajan, Tacitus, Gnaeus Domitius Afer (Kennedy *The Art* 38, 72, 442), and Longinus (Roberts 123-140), it is Cicero, the pseudo-Ciceronian *ad Herennium*, and Quintilian that most personify Roman rhetoric. While other figures contributed to rhetoric's development, no rhetorician has exerted such breadth of influence as Cicero. It was Plato who "argued that rhetoric was no art, Aristotle that it was an art but a bad art, while Cicero contends, against both, that it is a good art" (McKeon 192). While

Cicero remains synonymous with rhetoric and is the most recognizable and influential figure in Rome's development of rhetoric, his writings, as Kennedy details, were initially not viewed as authoritative as they are today ("Attitudes" 68) because Cicero attacked the verbal excesses that helped Roman rule remain so rhetorically successful.

Anthony Everitt observes that Cicero's life encompassed the first two thirds of the first century BC (9), from 106 to 43 B.C., and Kennedy states of Cicero that he is "the most important Latin writer on rhetoric" (*Classical* 91). Although all of Cicero's writings were influential, from his *On the Ideal Orator*, (*De Oratore*), *On Law* (*De legibus*), *Fortelling the Future* (*De divinatione*), *Destiny* (*De fato*), and *Duties* (*De officiis*) (Everitt xiii-xv), his most famous and often read work for the "next fifteen hundred years was *De Inventione*" (Kennedy *Classical* 91), which was written when Cicero was seventeen (May 3). It is the *De inventione* or *On Rhetorical Invention*, as it is more commonly known, that was available to medieval writers such as Martianus Capella and Alcuin (Ward "Cicero" 15) and influenced the medieval use and conception of language as a means of appealing to morals, logic, and emotions and in such discussions as invention, arrangement, stasis theory, definitions of an effective speaker, and figures of diction.

In his *De Inventione*, Cicero defines rhetoric as a part of political science, and James Murphy highlights that this political science was founded upon eloquence and the rules of art (*Rhetoric* 9). Aristotle presents many ideas in his *De Inventione* that he more fully develops in *De oratore* such as attacking the "superficiality in rhetoric" (Kennedy *The Art* 229); expounding the ideas of plain, moderate, and grand styles of rhetorical communication (Thonssen 140); describing the six parts of speech – exordium, narration, partition, confirmation, refutation, and conclusion or peroration (Kennedy *Classical* 92-94); and his further delineation of Aristotle's division of rhetoric into the five areas of invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and delivery



(Thonssen 139), which Cicero believed prepared the speaker for the three types of orations first defined by Aristotle that James Murphy also expounds: deliberative, demonstrated in political assemblies; forensic, seen in law courts; and epideictic or demonstrative, evidenced on other occasions where praise or blame was the focus (*Latin 2*). Cicero himself relies upon epideictic rhetoric in his writings to demonstrate the proper considerations and sphere of rhetoric, and although he favored deliberative and judicial rhetoric in his political career, he recognized the epideictic strands running throughout these other branches.

In Cicero's *De partitione oratoria*, he states of epideictic rhetoric that "there is no kind of rhetoric which can produce more copious oratory or can do more service for the state or can afford the speaker better opportunities to discourse on virtues and vices" and that the "principles which guide us in praising or dispraising are valuable, not only for good public speaking, but also for honorable living" (Clark 136). Like Greek intellectuals before him, Cicero viewed epideictic rhetoric as support for the other two rhetorical branches and observed epideictic strands running throughout Greek and Roman society. Additionally, Cicero's *De oratore* also defines the duty of an orator: to prove (*probare*), to delight (*delectare*), and to stir (*flectere*) that he also identifies with the three styles of "plain for proof, middle for pleasure, and grand for emotion" (Kennedy *Classical* 100), which correspond to the logos, ethos, and pathos of Aristotle. These three duties are later exhorted and redeemed into Christian writing and theology by Augustine who stressed these three qualities in his discussion of Christian eloquence within the fourth book of *De Doctrina Christiana*, although Augustine believed a simple, direct style was best.

It was largely due to Cicero that the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* gained prestige both in Roman culture and within the medieval period because many believed this handbook was written by Cicero (Caplan viii), although neither the *ad Herennium* nor Cicero's *De inventione* were rhe-

torically original, providing “summaries and renderings” of Greek terms into Latin (Barilli 24). These summaries turned out to be very advantageous however, “because it is through these two texts that in the Middle Ages, for over one thousand years, Western culture could have access to classical rhetoric” (Barilli 24). The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, published about 86 B.C., echoes Cicero’s teachings, creating “a pattern of the rhetorical system taught at Rome during the early days of Cicero” (Thonssen 138). The *Ad Herennium*’s greatest triumph was its solidification and validation of Cicero’s rhetorical teachings. The popularity of the *Ad Herennium* is displayed as Ruth Taylor-Briggs notes, by the survival of over six hundred manuscripts that surfaced from the ninth century onwards (77), and this handbook most effectively disseminated Greco-Roman rhetoric within the Middle Ages.

The *Ad Herennium* discusses, as Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird also detail, the five parts of rhetoric that were acquired through art, imitation, and practice, as well as the three branches of rhetoric (138), although it particularly made inroads within epideictic understanding where praise or blame was used for external affairs that included such considerations as descent, education, wealth, power, titles, citizenship, and friendships; physique, such as agility, strength, and beauty; and character where traits like wisdom, justice, courage, and modesty were praised (Rees 162). Ultimately, the *Ad Herennium* follows Cicero’s distinction within his *De Inventione* between the three areas of mind, body, and external qualities that are to be praised or condemned (Rees 162), although the *Ad Herennium* more fully expounds and deliberates upon these qualities and upon their accompanying figures of diction. In the Christian mindset, each of these three areas lead back to God and were to be praised as gifts given by God to better human life. In many cases, medieval sermons tended to bestow honor or praise following this tri-part pattern, which certainly evidences a link with Cicero and *Ad Herennium*’s discussion of epideictic rhetor-

ric and how to praise and blame. Because the *Ad Herennium* incorporated Greek rhetorical ideals, is a product of Roman thought and revision, and was well known within the medieval period, it will be used in the next three chapters to describe epideictic structure and diction within the Old English translations and writings of Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan.

Unlike Cicero and the Ciceronian *ad Herennium*, Renato Barilli contends that it was Quintilian's theoretical and educational writings that both preserved and ameliorated Cicero's legacy as an orator and politician (34) and, as Kennedy further notes, solidified rhetorical tenets such as the theories of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (*Classical* 100). Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (A.D 40-95) is "the author of the largest Latin rhetorical treatise which survives from antiquity, *Institutio Oratoria*, or *Education of the Orator* in twelve books," and his *Institutio* "is primarily a treatise on technical rhetoric (*Classical* 100) that directed the function, method, and scope of rhetoric, stating it was the "art of giving effectiveness to truth" and it was "the art of giving effectiveness to the speaker" (Baldwin *Ancient* 5). Instead of adhering to Aristotle's notion of persuasive speech, Quintilian believes, as Kennedy also observes, rhetoric is the art or "knowledge of speaking well" (*Classical* 101), and he adheres to Cicero's notion that the successful or ideal orator should be knowledgeable in all areas, particularly in ethics.

In fact, it is Quintilian's conception of grammar, along with Donatus', that is relied upon within medieval England. Quintilian established a close connection between grammar and rhetoric, although he believed they fulfilled different duties where *literatura*, the Latin word for grammar, was defined as "speaking and writing correctly" and "the art of interpreting the poets" (Murphy *Rhetoric* 24-25). In looking at Quintilian's desire for distinction between the two fields, it is evident that there was "a blurring of boundaries between the two arts" (Murphy *Rhet-*

oric 24) that only intensified during the Middle Ages, where Quintilian's understanding of grammar often incorporated rhetorical strategies.

As his predecessors did, Quintilian also relies upon and further defines epideictic rhetoric. In Quintilian's *De Oratore*, he promotes the view that a teacher and practitioner of rhetoric must be "practical, sensible, positive, and moral" (Kennedy *The Art* 491), and that epideictic subject matter should be discussed chronologically to most effectively praise or blame a subject (Rees 162). Quintilian saw great uses for the epideictic praise of men and actions, particularly for funeral orations (Kennedy *The Art* 510), which is where Roman rhetoric usually relegated epideictic rhetoric outside of the classroom. In education too, Quintilian believed declamation was "only part of an educational process" (Winterbottom 16), critiquing the deliberative and judicial declamations that dominated Roman education.

The Romans were a very systematic people, and their school system and education was equally as systematic (Murphy *Quintilian* x), although all schools were privately operated because the government did not financially support education (Kennedy *The Art* 318). As a result, Roman schoolboys were, as Michael Winterbottom discusses, a "privileged minority" and educated in stages where they first learned to read and write, then they attended the school of the *Grammaticus* where they analyzed art and the poets, and then they finished their education in the school of rhetoric whose rhetors prepared them to think on their feet and "aspire to persuade law courts and political gatherings" (v).

Subsequently, rhetoric "dominated the education of the elite," shaped the development of Roman literature, and was the backbone for political debate and the administration of law courts, forming "one of the most significant modes of acculturation for the Roman aristocratic teenager" (Hall 3). Roman rhetoric achieved a more aristocratic status than Greek rhetoric because it was

encoded within a higher educational system only available to the wealthy. To demonstrate rhetoric became a symbol of one's economic status and a way to obtain or display one's wealth and fame. This shift is significant for medieval rhetoric because Roman rhetoric had become even further removed from its humble poetic beginnings and used as a political tool of elitist power and domination full of strict regulations, structures, and empty practices.

Roman rhetoricians, philosophers, and grammarians developed programs of education or *paideia* that included instruction in grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (Gill 41). Within Roman culture, Greek political "ties and associations gave way to the social bond of friendship, and to the brotherhood of schools and sects" (Randall 11). Within the system of *paideia*, it was, as Peter Brown assesses, power, not persuasion that was "the most striking characteristic of the later Roman Empire in all its regions" (7) where *paideia* indicated social distance and referred to an education that lead to 'unstructured' social mobility" (39). The educational system was a way to unite segments of the governing class and to maintain cultural homogeneity, no matter the geographical distances, which was an extremely important consideration for an ever expanding Roman society. Such a brotherhood of the elite would be replaced by a brotherhood of all man with the rise of Christian doctrine and medieval rhetoric.

Brenda Dean Schildgen intones that this concept of *paideia* was "the common ground among all members of the upper classes" that "provided codes of civic behavior and self-control to support a generous and cultivated exercise of authority" (151), and, as Bahadir Yildirim observes, membership within the *paideia* was vital to Roman politics, society, and culture (41), without which it was impossible to be respected within Roman society. In addition, an epideictic undertone overshadows the system of *paideia* because members of this elite educational system

were praised, promoted, and recommended by other members and also, in turn, praised such a system that secured their wealth and prestige (Yildirim 41).

What often characterized the education of *paideia* were Roman educational exercises, known as *progymnasmata*, or preliminary exercises (Winterbottom v) that were then compiled into unified speeches presented aloud through declamations in the vein of the Greek, sophistic, rhetorical tradition. Within the realm of higher education, declamation was “training in speaking as an advocate” (Bloomer 300) and was the “first major literary movement of the Roman empire. The generation that first read Horace and Vergil in school was also the first to cap their rhetorical and prose training with performance of declamatory speeches” (Bloomer 297). According to James Murphy, Roman *progymnasmata* was based upon the second century rhetorician Hermogenes’ *Progymnasmata* as well as Athonius’ *Progymnasmata* where the far reaching aims and uses of rhetoric were reduced to the narrow field of practical exercises and *declamation*, emphasizing “fixed rules and stereotyped methods” (*Rhetoric* 41). This narrowing of the rhetorical tradition to the elite system of *paideia* and to progymnasmatic exercises and educative aims within such a system was significant for Christian education and development, where Catholicism later formed its own system of brotherhood, terminology, and education.

Sophistic rhetorical education became so popular within Roman culture that its formal practice was prohibited by law in 161 BCE, and Latin became the official and enforced language of education (Enos 37). During this time, Roman education refined the practice of progymnasmata and particularly declamations where “a declaimer addressed himself to speak on a fictitious theme: a legal case (*controversia*) or a deliberative issue (*suasoria*). And if declamation came to be an adult’s recreation as well as a pupil’s burden, it was never seriously felt to have lost its essential point” (Winterbottom v). Although these declamations were based upon judicial and de-

liberative rhetoric, they became epideictic because they were practiced and rehearsed ceremoniously for the special occasion of education and for perfecting the present understanding and employment of format. In addition, these declamations and progymnasmata were critiqued for blame or praiseworthy elements in terms of rhetorical technique, human qualities, events, actions, places, ideas, and works, again fostering the epideictic view.

Along with these progymnasmata exercises, declamations were sustained by the Roman Second Sophistic movement which revisited the sophistic tradition developed in ancient Greece, “characterized by exaggerated interest in oratorical declamation” and spanning Roman culture from 50 to 400 A.D. (Murphy *Rhetoric* 35). Kennedy adds that the Second Sophistic movement began in the first century A.D. with Philostratus, who taught students theory and emphasized declamation, and with Dio Chrysostom, whose rhetoric “became popular as a form of entertainment” and who “traveled and spoke on civic occasions” (*Classical* 38). This Second Sophistic movement was, as Graham Anderson observes, a “return to the Golden Age of Athens in the fifth century BC” and gained steady prominence from the first until the third century by challenging civic and religious values (13). Declamations were highly effective in imparting rhetorical techniques to elite intellectuals, and Donald Lemen Clark suggests that the effectiveness of declamations is demonstrated in their use to train such successful communicators as Basil, Augustine, and Jerome and in their maintenance and revival in the Renaissance with Erasmus and Thomas More (251).

The Second Sophistic movement’s reliance upon progymnasmata and declamations was also established by the fourth century figure Libanius (Kennedy *Classical* 38), who Campbell Bonner recalls was the most prominent orator of Antioch in Syria and whose pupils included Basil the Great and John Chrysostom (35), two religious figures who influenced the climate and

conception of rhetoric for the Middle Ages and beyond. It was the rhetoric conceived by the Second Sophistic movement which medieval figures rejected, although they embraced the philosophic rhetoric validated by Neo-Platonist and Christian beliefs. While epideictic was typical of the sophist and second sophistic use of rhetoric, it often framed, and became the platform for, the rhetoric of the other two branches, as demonstrated with panegyrics, speeches praising a person or thing. As a result, epideictic rhetoric continued to lose the narrow definitions assigned to it in Greek and Roman societies so that it was able to blend with philosophic, Christian concerns of medieval England.

However, Roman schools continued to train Romans in the art of skillful speaking in the three rhetorical branches, “but since forensic oratory was restricted more and more to legal specialists, and deliberative oratory was forbidden by the autocratic Caesars, the energies of Roman speakers turned to the elaborate development of epideictic or demonstrative oratory” in which schoolroom “exercises became public speeches, and the necessity of entertaining audiences placed a premium upon methods of amplification” (Murphy *Rhetoric* 36-37). As the Roman Empire began to lose its control on the world, the use of rhetoric in politics began to lose its position of prominence, relegating rhetoric to educational training in communication and to entertainment. Therefore, these progymnasmata, eulogies, and panegyrics that became so popular within education and for entertainment purposes formed the backdrop for the emerging Christian religion, although containing more similarities with philosophic rhetoric’s use of words in search of truth than the sophistic notion of rhetoric that was often superficial and more concerned with structure and form.

In summation, the Roman period witnessed more stringent, yet diverse developments in education, philosophy, rhetoric, and grammar where the end of the Roman, classical period “saw



a wholesale turning to epideictic oratory or panegyric” (Duhamel 45). Whether giving a “funeral eulogy, the eulogy of a city for the benefit of its inhabitants, or a speech on some subject devoid of current interest, such as the praise of a virtue or of a god, the audience, according to the theoreticians, merely played the part of spectators. After listening to the speaker, they merely applauded and went away” (Perelman 48). With the dominance of the second Sophistic movement within education and therefore in rhetoric and oratory, rhetoric became preoccupied with pleasing the audience and with demonstrating the speakers’ skill. By the end of the Roman Empire, rhetoric was reduced to a type of attraction or demonstration whose more practical applications was left to the study of grammarians.

As Murphy notes, there were subsequently two schools of rhetoric at the end of Roman cultural dominance: the Aristotelian rhetoric more closely aligned with logic and with philosophical ideals such as Neo-Platonism, and the Ciceronian, political and educative rhetoric that had been reduced to Second Sophistic declamations and progymnasmata despite the more pragmatic and moral tone of Cicero, the pseudo-Cicero *ad Herennium*, and Quintilian (*Rhetoric* 42). For Aristotle, rhetoric was “the art of giving effectiveness to truth,” although later sophists and their successors all the way to Cicero and Quintilian, believed rhetoric was “the art of giving effectiveness to the speaker” (Baldwin *Medieval* 3). The two views can coincide in which both the message and the speaker could be effective and successful, but with the ever widening gap between philosophy and rhetoric and with the changing educational views, these two views “become practically incompatible” (Baldwin *Medieval* 3) where either the message or the speaker would win the crowd. Christianity, of course, focused on content above style, and this tension is at the core of medieval rhetoric and is why many medieval Christian intellectuals refused to specifically discuss, expand, or disseminate rhetorical ideals. Instead, Christians relied upon the

power of God's word and on God's divine inspiration to communicate most effectively to their listener's hearts and souls.

Even these two schools of thought were often diluted and confused, demonstrating an overall "crisis of communication: between king and adviser, between opposed political or religious parties or factions, between personal enemies, between educationalists with conflicting views, between conflicting professional classes and social groups" (Ward "The Medieval" 65). The interests of so many different individuals and parties pulled Roman education and rhetorical precepts in too many directions for rhetoric to remain dominant and equally vital in each genre. While advice and intellectual advancements were abundant from figures such as Horace, whose *Ars poetica* aided writers of poetry, and Donatus, whose *Ars grammatici* attempted to distinguish grammatical concerns, although, as Murphy emphasizes, he mistakenly added rhetorical ideals of *schemata* and *tropi* under the art of grammar (*Rhetoric* 42), the art of rhetoric became a fractured shell of its former glory. However, it was inevitable that the epideictic branch would remain, as it was allowed to develop and grow with the changing periods and with the focus upon education as well as entertainment, and that philosophic rhetoric, transmitted largely through the Neo-Platonist ideals adopted and revisited by Christianity, would carry any trace of classical rhetoric into the medieval period.

While economic, civil, and external conflicts are pinpointed as the reasons for Rome's fall, the driving, dominant force of Christianity that arose within the Hellenistic, Roman world, as discussed by Edward Gibbon, is often cited as a main reason for the fall of the Roman Empire (523), with its "pacifist ideologies sapping the fighting spirit of the Roman army and its theology spreading a superstition which undermined the rationality of classical culture" (Heather 14). Tacitus, a Roman historian, writing in the second century A.D, called Christianity "a noxious

superstition,” and he charts Christianity as beginning in Palestine during the reign of Tiberius who lived from 14 to 37AD, and during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, from 26 to 36 AD (Bainton 9), where only about one hundred and twenty Christians existed immediately following the crucifixion of Christ (Stark 5). Christianity formed less than a hundred years after Cicero’s death, emerging during conflicted views of sophistic rhetoric in Rome. With the teachings, and sacrificial death around 30 AD of Christ, the belief in Christ as God incarnate was firmly established by the 60’s, where “Christianity had emerged as a new religion in the Roman Empire” (Bainton 20).

In fact, it was during the Augustan Roman empire in the first century A.D. in which “the four Christian Gospels were drafted and the new religion, with its blend of Judaic and Platonic ideas, spread rapidly throughout Asia Minor, Egypt, Greece, and Rome” (Gill 130). Then, toward the end of the first century A.D. and into the beginning of the second century, Clement of Alexandria and Origen “became the founders of Christian philosophy” (Jaeger *Early* 46). Because Christianity developed within a culture which was undeniably rhetorical (McKeon 185), scriptural and Christian writing and passages were based upon the rhetoric of Rome, although Christians distrusted the ornamentation and entertainment that rhetoric had been reduced to, as did many Roman citizens and intellectuals.

It was early Christianity, as “the assembly of the new city of God,” that continued the ancient education, *paideia*, of the Greeks and Romans (Kinneavy 149), preserving snippets of Roman order and thought even within the medieval period because of the dominance of Christianity. Just as Greek *paideia* “consisted of the entire corpus of Greek literature, so the Christian *paideia* is the Bible” (Jaeger *Early* 92). As a type of religious brotherhood forming an educational bond, Christian principles, education, and members became, as Susan Miller intones, a

substitute for the elites who made up Greco-Roman *paideia*, sharing “love and compassion” (*Trust* 27). The later writings of Christian leaders, such as Gregory the Great, discuss Christianity in terms of *paideia*, indicating both a “continuation of the classical Greek *paideia*,” and therefore classical connections, as well as a replacement of this classical concept where, as Werner Jaeger describes, Christ became the new focus for education, politics, and community (*Early* 12). In its similarities with, and ultimate replacement of, classical philosophic notions and educational and literary pursuits, Christianity both encompassed and adapted classical notions of rhetoric, creating a venue where rhetorical notions could be preserved for medieval consideration and use.

James Kinneavy details how authoritative Christian documents mirrored the rhetoric and structure of the Jewish education systems that were themselves based upon the Greco-Roman tradition and featured an elementary education in reading, a secondary education in interpreting the Torah, and a higher education for scholars and leaders (80). Although the Jewish educational system is not the focus of this study, it is important to note that Greco-Roman traditions like education and rhetoric influenced Jewish religion and law, particularly the *ephebia* and the *gymnasium*, which in turn influenced the Christian principles and writing that came to dominate the Anglo-Saxon medieval world due to proselytization, conversion, and Christian study and writing. Hellenistic rhetorical methods were adopted by Rabbinic methods of interpretation, so that “the Rabbinic system of hermeneutics is a product of the Hellenistic civilization then dominating the entire Mediterranean world” (85). These Hellenic principles are even encoded into the “Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, because it was supposedly executed by a committee of seventy men,” that became the Jewish Bible, and this was the Bible of Paul and other religious figures who wrote the New Testament (Bainton 19), subsequently becoming the foundation for the Christian Church.

What is essentially rhetorical about the Old Testament is its “assertion of authority,” which is “analogous to ethos in classical rhetoric, but at a different metaphysical level. It is bolstered by something like pathos in the remembrance of the past suffering of people and by their fears of future punishment or hopes of future reward” (Kennedy *Classical* 121). Dominated by belief, emotion, and moral logic, Judaism and Christianity are similar to philosophic rhetoric in the “simple enunciation of God’s truth, uncontaminated by adornment, flattery, or sophistic argument,” although these religions differ “from philosophic rhetoric in that this truth is known from revelation or established by signs sent from God, not discovered by dialectic through man’s efforts” (*Classical* 121).

At its onset, the Judeo-Christian religion adapted philosophic rhetoric, although relying upon the praise and blame of epideictic, which was the only strand practiced and condoned within the medieval period, leaving technical and sophistic rhetoric behind. However, instead of emphasizing the speaker and the human intellect, Christianity shifted the focus entirely to content, as seen with philosophic rhetoric, and to epideictically interpreting and understanding the teachings and symbolism of Christ, particularly in regards to moral living.

While juxtaposing Greek and Roman rhetoric with Judaism and Christian faith “may seem a trifle bizarre, maybe even irreverent” (Kinneavy 3), both the persuasion of rhetoric and the belief of faith derive from the same word. Persuasion “is a process (persuading) and the product (being persuaded). From the standpoint of the person doing the persuading, the *process* entails the techniques of persuading; from the standpoint of the person being persuaded, the *process* embodies the motivations for belief” (22). The rhetorical shift brought about through Judaism and Christianity moved away from the speaker, who was doing the persuading, to the audience and recipients, who were being persuaded, convinced, and presented with proof of a belief.

Therefore, the message had to be as simple and direct as possible in order to resonate in the mind and heart of the listener. Persuasion was both “a technique that effects a change of mind” and “the resulting mental state of conviction. In the first case, persuasion is the cause; in the second case, persuasion is the effect” (33). Christianity focused upon the effect, upon the conviction that Christ and his teachings were the only way to attain salvation. Because the truth of Christianity was not doubted and because morality did not have to be proven in a deliberative or judicial sense, effort was made instead to instruct individuals of scriptural truths and to judge the validity and praiseworthy nature of God, saints, people, objects, beliefs, and actions. Medieval rhetoric was not a rhetoric of argumentation, so often defined by dialectic and human eloquence in speaking, but a rhetoric of divine inspiration, moral impression, and personal religious awakening in the reader.

Rhetorical structure and figures of speech used within Biblical passages have been found by a variety of theologians and medievalists such as Amos Wilder, and, again, is not the focus of this study, although it is important to note that the Bible is rife with such rhetorical figures as allegory, narration, parables and stories, oracles, chants, hymns, songs, dialogue, symbols, metaphors, tropes, paradox, hyperbole, voices and proclamations, summons and invitations, accusations and acquittals, blessings and cursings, humor, consolation, tragedy, anathemas and doxologies, reduplication, epanaphora, refining, and disjunction (52-53). The early Church “relayed the words and deeds of Jesus not by a mere anachronistic repetition but by a combination of his words and imagery with new variations and new resources of all kinds” (20). Such a rhetoric of faith was characterized by philosophy’s emphasis on content and truth, philosophy’s use of dialectic and the questioning strategy, and by the epideictic praise and condemnation of individuals, society, action, and thought.

George Kennedy surmises that during the course of the fourth century, “the legal standing of the Church changed from one of persecution, to toleration, to official status, and finally to a position of exclusive religious authority when Theodosius prohibited pagan worship in A.D. 392” (*Classical* 133). The church had so subsumed classical ideals that the writings of Cappadocian fathers like Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea (330-379), and Gregory of Nyssa (335-395) were, as Kennedy continues, functioning as models for students of Hellenic rhetoric by the mid-fifth century and even as far away as Gaul (133). Despite, and perhaps because of, persecution, Christianity continued to gain momentum and became the most authoritative religion and political and economic force of the waning Roman Empire. Brenda Schildgen emphasizes the fact that of the eight most prominent Latin fathers of the Church, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, and Augustine were classically skilled rhetoricians before they converted to Christianity, and Ambrose, Jerome, and Hilary were also trained in the rhetorical schools (151). The majority, if not all, of the early Christian leaders were also leading intellectuals of the Roman empire who had been educated in the traditional structure of rhetoric, and particularly that of sophistic instruction with its inclusion of progymnasmata and declamations.

Subsequently, as Kennedy asserts, a type of Christian sophistry was created by Church Fathers (*Classical* 39), from Gregory of Nazianzus, his friend Basil the Great and Basil’s younger brother, and Gregory of Nyssa that were all “intimately familiar with classical Greek writers, especially Plato” (143) and who excelled in writing “panegyric sermons for the great feasts of the Christian year or for funerals” (39). Just as the Romans tradition created an elite system that controlled intellectual pursuits, jobs, politics, and the economy, so too did Catholicism become dominant and far-reaching. Christian epideictic or panegyric sermons and homilies were “a development of the fourth century, when Christianity and public life came together,” and Eusebius

(260-340AD) is an early figure whose *Church History* is filled with such speeches (141-142).

These third and fourth century Christian writers attempted to reconcile sophistic education with Christian theology, demonstrated particularly by Eusebius, who, as Charles Thomas notes, is known as the “Father of Church History” and whose *Church History* served as a later model for Bede (*Christianity* 43-44). Once Christianity dominated the British island, such conversations and religious writings were sure to capture the interest of medieval intellectuals and rulers in Britain, as in the case with Bede. The Greco-Roman communicative methods for praising and blaming were transmitted to England through such Christian writings that praised Christ, Christian leaders, the Bible, and morality while condemning vice and fleshly pursuits. Therefore, Old and Middle English sermons and homilies contain similarities to classical rhetoric in that they are largely based upon such epideictic underpinnings.

The strength of the Christian educational movement in the vein of the Roman second sophistic movement was evidenced, according to Graham Anderson, by Julian’s attempt to ban these Christian rhetoricians (44), and although Church leaders blended Christian principles with classic education and rhetoric, the focus was not so much on the speaker and the use of language, but on the message and its impact on the audience. Despite the Christian rhetorical emphasis on plain, direct language, fourth and fifth century writers such as John Chrysostom, “John of the Golden Tongue,” who was a student of Libanius and the “finest Christian orator in Greek,” could not “resist flamboyant comparisons, jingles, and parallelism” (Kennedy *Classical* 145). Just as the Old and New Testament both relied on rhetorical techniques, so too did early Christian writers, to the effect that Christianity had an unshaken foundation in classical rhetoric that may not have been clear to all converts and all countries, but was undeniably present and even imitated by writes of any country whose dominant religion became Christianity.



While the four Great Doctors of the Eastern Church, John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Athanasius of Alexandria did much for Christian concepts of rhetoric, the Doctors of the Western Church, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, and Pope Gregory I most clearly influenced medieval and Old English society. Beginning with Ambrose of Milan in the middle and end of the fourth century, who had been “educated in the liberal studies at Rome” (McLynn 31), each of these pre-medieval, Patristic fathers hold a clear connection with Cicero and with Roman rhetoric. For example, James Gaffney notes how Ambrose used Cicero’s *De Officiis* as a model for his own *De Officiis Ministrorum*, which demonstrates how Christian moralists adopted and modified philosophy such as Stoic ethics as well as classical, rhetorical notions (35).

In addition, Jerome, who lived from 345-420 A.D (Evans 15), was also taught Roman rhetoric from the Christian rhetor Marius Victorinus, Victorinus’ commentary on Cicero’s dialogues (Hagendahl 222), and from the famed *Grammaticus* Aelius Donatus (Wiesen 7). In his famous *Letter XXII. To Eustochium*, Jerome writes of his struggles to cast aside Ciceronian rhetoric in favor of Biblical writings and Christian preoccupation. Jerome confesses, “And so, miserable man that I was, I would fast only that I might afterwards read Cicero. After many nights spent in vigil, after floods of tears called from my inmost heart, after the recollection of my past sins, I would once more take up Plautus. And when at times I returned to my right mind, and began to read the prophets, their style seemed rude and repellent” (Schaff 1. 30). Then, in a dream, Jerome hears a voice that defines him as “a follower of Cicero and not of Christ” (Schaff 1.30), for *ubi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum* (Wiesen 10), ‘where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also’” (Schaff 1.30). Having obtained a classical education built upon the Roman concepts of rhetoric, pedagogy, and philosophy, Jerome deeply admired the works of Virgil and Cicero. In

fact, Jerome's use of satire and his "literary means of attacking men and morals" (Wiesen 3) was epideictic in nature as it praised, pretended to praise, and condemned human behavior. Consequently, Jerome, like Ambrose, encouraged, consciously or not, the use of rhetorical ideals such as amplification, repetition, and logos, pathos, and ethos within Christian teaching, further solidifying classical rhetoric within Christian conventions.

Jerome's translation and supervision of the Gospels and the Old Testament from Hebrew into Latin and of the New Testament from Greek into Latin, resulting in an edition of the Bible known as the Vulgate, "perhaps Jerome's most important legacy" (Evans 18-19). The Vulgate became the foremost Scriptural authority in the West (Evans 20), reaching Britain before 450 (Thomas *Christianity* 83). As numerous scholars such as Dennis Brown, Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, Tkacz Brown, and Stefan Rebenich have observed, Jerome included, as well as intertwined, the tension between pagan and Christian elements into his translation of scripture and his creation of the Vulgate. Jerome's translation of the Bible created the most influential work evidencing classical rhetoric and was immeasurably pervasive, both within the Old and Middle English periods.

However, the man who "summed up antiquity and anticipated the Middle Ages" (Bainton 76), the man who, even during the medieval period, became "every writer's point of reference, helping set the agenda for debate on almost every theological topic until the sixteenth century" (Evans 1), the man that "nearly every Christian scholar of these centuries, especially those who preceded the establishment of the great universities in the thirteenth century" relied upon, and the man who baptized classical works into respectability (Miller *Readings* xiii) was St. Augustine. As a contemporary of Jerome and a professor of pagan rhetoric in the capital of Milan, home of "the West's most powerful churchman, Bishop Ambrose" (Rubenstein 32), Augustine also ap-

preciated classical rhetoric, philosophy, literature, and pedagogy, and included these elements within his assimilation of Christian principles.

Like the patristic fathers before him, Augustine too “had been brought up on sophistic. Nor could he escape it. Again and again his style rings with its tradition. Not only had he learned it for good; he had taught it” (Baldwin 158). Augustine’s teaching style and analysis echoes epideictic rhetoric in his praise and condemnation, and he adheres to the format of educative declamations. In addition, Augustine was faced with the impending fall of Rome, particularly the “sack of Rome in the year 411 by Alaric” (Bainton 77), which forced him to use his education, pedagogy, and Christian principles to explain, even justify, both the fall of Rome and the barbaric invasions.

In his *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine states that rhetoric should effectively reach every individual with the wisdom of Christian knowledge and morality (Shaw I.37.77) and “move the illiterate and unlearned or the sophisticated and erudite” (Kennedy *Classical* 159). Augustine makes the point that “every good and true Christian should understand that wherever he may find truth, it is his Lord’s” (Robertson 54). In books four and five of his *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine defends rhetoric and states that wisdom, morality, and eloquence need to be intertwined (Shaw V.1.79). What Augustine concludes is that “Christian literature *is* rhetorical, in a way which takes up the best of classical practice but which is not subject to its failings” (Harrison 72). It took centuries before medieval intellectuals fully realized just how rhetorical Christian writing was and to recognize the rhetoric they had created in blending and repurposing classical rhetorical intellectual and humanistic aims for moral purposes. The “*De Doctrina Christiana* is thus to rhetorical theory in the West what the panegyric orations of the Cappadocian Fathers

are to rhetorical practice in the East, a synthesis of rhetoric and Christianity” (Kennedy *Classical* 160).

Augustine used Cicero’s *De inventione* and *Orator* in his analysis of Paul’s letters in book four of his *De Doctrina Christiana*, just like the “eight-century British monk the Venerable Bede analyzed figures and tropes in both the Old and New Testaments in his *De schematibus et tropis*” (Watson 42). Without Augustine’s influential writings, the work of encyclopedists like Isidore and Cassiodorus, who transmitted Greco-Roman culture into the middle ages, would not have been as accepted or popular (Murphy *Rhetoric* 56). It is Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana* that “begins rhetoric anew” by ignoring the ornamental display of sophistic rhetoric and returning to the “ancient idea of moving men to truth” (Baldwin “St. Augustine” 158), as seen within philosophic rhetoric.

Augustine upheld the view that the truth should be taught simply, without verbal ornament, and that such ornamentation transgressed “the bounds of responsibility to subject matter (*gravitas*)” (Baldwin “St. Augustine” 158, 159). Ultimately, Augustine believed that Christian preaching and rhetoric should curb sophistic ornamentation, would be learned best from Christian preachers and not classical sources, that rhetorical subdivisions and classifications should be sacrificed for the good of the message, and that the “rhetoric vital to homiletic” was the “instruct, win, move” of Cicero’s *De Oratore*, use of the plain (*tenue*), direct style (McKeon 178), and the reliance upon *Inventio* (discovery of points) and *Elocutio* (style) from the fivefold rhetorical invention (Baldwin “St. Augustine” 160). Augustine defined Christian rhetoric with these few elements, emulating the technical, proscriptive rhetorical handbooks of Greece. While he does reject sophistic rhetoric, Augustine could not discard the praise and blame of epideictic rhetoric arising from human expression and impulse, producing an epideictically oriented rhetorical man-

ual for Christian teaching, although this proscriptive writing would not progress until the later medieval period.

It is specifically Book IV of St. Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* that is "usually seen as the *Magna Carta* of medieval rhetoric," suggesting Christians can not be made eloquent by teaching them the rules of eloquence, but by having them read and hear the expressions of the eloquent, and by imitating them (Ward "The Medieval" 27). Here Augustine echoes Quintilian who believed successful rhetoricians had natural talent and learned best from imitation. Augustine, then, "disparages both the formal study of rhetoric and the textbooks inculcating it" (Ward "The Medieval" 27), although his writings obviously created a type of handbook for the use of rhetoric within Christianity, the most prestigious Christian manual of its kind.

In Augustine's *Confessions*, Augustine demonstrates an interest in both philosophy and rhetoric and a desire to re-align the two arts. Augustine's conversion to Christianity occurs only after he had "read some books of the Platonists, which had been translated into Latin by Victorinus" (Chadwick 135). Augustine was first attracted to philosophy after reading "Cicero's *Hortensius*, which he encountered in the course of his rhetorical studies" (McKeon 178). It is little wonder that Augustine was converted to Christianity after reading Plato and Victorinus' Neo-Platonist translations of Plotinus' *Enneads* (Bruce 138) (Gregory 177), with the Neo-Platonist focus on "the reality of immaterial things" and Plato's definition of evil "as an absence of good – not something created by God, but a 'privation of being,' a sort of ethical black hole brought into the universe by man's misuse of his free will" (Rubenstein 55). Furthermore, it was to Plato that Augustine turned in his *The City of God* to explain his metaphor of a Christian city, and it is Plato's philosophy that Augustine echoes in his *Confessions* when he wrestles with the philosophic

and moral implications of human communication and language where “all words are signs. Signs, in turn, ‘are either literal or figurative’” (Kendall 163).

It makes sense that Platonic introspection and philosophic emphasis upon truth and content would again flourish toward the end of the Roman Empire and in the Old English period because Platonic eras “are filled with discomfort and longing” and are “dramatized by personal and social conflicts that seem all but unresolvable. Society is fractured, its potential integrity disrupted by violent strife, and this brokenness is mirrored in the souls of individuals” (Rubenstein 50). In contrast, and with the rediscovery of Aristotelian writings in the twelfth century, the later medieval period and the subsequent Renaissance and Enlightenment experienced quite a different cultural atmosphere characteristic of “Aristotelian epochs” where there is “economic growth, political expansion, and cultural optimism” and where people “feel connected to each other and to the natural world. Confident that they can direct their emotions instead of being dominated by them, they are generally comfortable with their humanity” (Rubenstein 49-50). One reason Christianity became so powerful was because it offered hope and stability in a time of chaos and uncertainty. Once English society and the Christian religion were more fully established within the later medieval period, leisure time and preoccupation with learning was available, and past writings sparked current and future discoveries and innovations.

While Augustine was and still is the main source for Christian and Old English ideology, he was a Roman Christian and not medieval, and it was Gregory the Great (590-604) (Mayr-Harting 51), one hundred and fifty years later, who is the first true medieval figure of the Church Fathers and Roman writers, although he “is partly Roman still” (Taylor 3). As Solomon Katz notes, Gregory the Great became the pope in 590 (119), and, as Frederick Dudden observes, Gregory did more to shape the development of the Catholic Church in medieval Europe than any

other individual during that time. Gregory's *Pastoral Care* is one of the most important handbooks on the Episcopal office addressing how a bishop should teach (230), and it was relied upon within medieval England in the formation of teaching and in the duties of religious leaders. For Gregory, it was the Roman, Imperial law (Katz 114) that was stressed within his religious dealings and writings so that even toward the Ostrogoths and Jews under Theodoric, Gregory continued to apply the rule of Roman law (Katz 115). With this Roman mindset and education, Gregory introduced "Christianity among the English" and renewed "the broken communications between Britain and the Roman world" (Dudden vi).

It was largely due to Pope Gregory the Great's mission of evangelism to England that Christianity came to dominate medieval culture, although it cannot be assumed that the "British countryside was totally Christianized in the fifth century" (Mayr-Harting 28) because "it took nearly 90 years to convert just the kings and the greater part of their aristocracy, not to speak of the country-side which was a question of centuries" (29). Moreover, while the Roman Church exerted a significantly large influence on the developing Old English culture and its Christian tradition, it was also the Irish missionaries who had an "overwhelming impact" (69) on Anglo-Saxon Christianity in its monastic life, as St. Patrick, a Roman Briton, established in Ireland the church organization based on bishops and dioceses that was also adopted in England (78).

Not only had Britain been settled and invaded by the Romans and then evangelized by Roman missionaries after the German invasions, but they had also been evangelized by Irish missionaries who had themselves been Romanized and contributed to the spread of Roman notions within medieval England. Due to Roman and Irish missionaries, Britain, and particularly the Old English culture, was again connected with its Roman foundation. Roman law was transmitted to the Middle Ages because, even after Germanic kingdoms were established, "the

clergy continued to live under Roman law as their personal law” (Setton xvii) and transmitted this law to the laypeople.

From the influence of Greek culture and inception of rhetoric as literature, education, and philosophy, to rhetoric’s adoption, perfection, and practice within Roman education, ceremony, and the political landscape, and finally to Christianity’s inclusion of this rhetorical tradition, three rhetorical influences remained for medieval England. The first was based upon the works of Cicero and Quintilian; the second came from the traditions “of philosophers and theologians who found in Augustine a Platonism reconstructed from the Academic and Neo-Platonic philosophies” that were “refurbished and simplified from Cicero’s rhetorical distinctions”; and the third stemmed from “the tradition of logic, which passed as ‘Aristotelian,’ yet which followed Aristotle only in the treatment of terms and propositions and resorted to Cicero in the treatment of definitions and principles” (McKeon 173). Cicero was the rhetorical point of reference for the medieval period, as he is today, although his ideas would not have been promoted within medieval society it weren’t for St. Augustine. While Bede’s *De schematis et tropis* recalls thirteen tropes and seventeen figures of speech from Donatus’ *Ars Grammatica*, which was itself based upon Cicero’s writings (Fraser 51), no writer was more authoritative or dominated the thinking of the medieval period than Augustine, who admits to relying upon the rhetoric of Cicero as well as the philosophy that Cicero’ reconstructed in his theological writings.

Ultimately, “Cicero’s choices and emphasis fixed the influence and oriented the interpretation of ancient thought, Greek as well as Latin, at the beginning of the Middle Ages and again in the Renaissance,” and medieval society, just like modern society, could not escape the consequences of rhetoric’s long tradition of “scholarship, criticism, or taste” (McKeon 173). Greek notions of rhetoric culminated with Aristotle, while Roman understandings of rhetoric culminat-



ed with Cicero, and, at the fall of the Roman Empire, Greek and Roman philosophic rhetoric coincided with Christian belief, culminating in Augustine's intent to reclaim the rhetorical tradition for Christian purposes. Traces of Greek and Aristotelian rhetoric, through philosophic classifications and poetic elements, and Roman and Ciceronian rhetoric – with the view of an effective orator and inclusion of amplifications and ornamentations such as allegory, repetition, and metaphor – are found throughout scripture and Christian writing.

Christianity's adaption of classical epideictic rhetoric became the foundation for the Old English homily with its emphasis on the present, its dichotic meanings, and its literary and ceremonial leanings. The all encompassing role that Christianity played in early medieval society and the connection to eloquence and rhetoric is itself indicated by the fact that the concept of oratory, according to the second edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, was a term used to refer to a place of worship or prayer at the onset of the thirteenth century. Due to the early medieval period's usage of rhetoric and oratory, eloquence and rhetorical figures and considerations became closely linked with Christianity within the Middle Ages, again indicating how dominant Christianity was in the formation of the medieval period.

Turning now to a dissection of epideictic rhetoric's components – purpose, structure, commonplaces, and figures of speech – will create a Greco-Roman benchmark from which to measure classical connections in medieval writings. Teachers of Roman, Second Sophistic rhetoric relied upon a variety of exercises or progymnasmata to instruct students in the art of using rhetoric. Some of these exercises include the fable, the narrative, the anecdote, the proverb, the refutation, the thesis, the chreia, the commonplace, the encomium or panegyric, and the vituperation or invective, and each of these exercises were “worked through with extraordinary attention to detail and form” (Fleming 110, 111). Because practicing these forms was part of a well

rounded Roman educational regimen, these structures, particularly the encomium, lingered on within the minds of the educated long after the Roman Empire faded.

Of the four exercises associated with epideictic, the structure of the chreia begins by offering a brief exposition of what a person said or did, incorporating an encomium or praise of that person at the very onset. The chreia next paraphrases what the person said or did before offering proof that the deed(s) or words were praiseworthy by creating a contrast and a comparison. Next, the chreia then gives an example or illustration of the meaning, then incorporates and relies upon the testimony or authority of others, and ends with a brief epilogue (Clark 188). The chreia often rests on a proverb or sententia, and its purpose was to edify, to educate, and to instruct, the audience.

A second epideictic exercise, the commonplace exercise – not to be confused with a list of common topics or “commonplaces” associated with rhetorical discovery and usage, condemned vices or extolled virtues, although it generally amplified vices, and never did both at the same time. The commonplace began with a contradiction, then made a comparison, introduced a proverb or principle, included a digression that typically discussed the past, and ended by enunciating whether the quality, person, thing, or action evidenced virtue or vice (Clark 192). Usually the commonplace amplified more general evils and vices inherent in something like adultery, drinking, or pride and argued against or condemned people, towns, and countries that exhibited such vices. The overall topics involve general notions like decency, justice, or prudence.

However, the more popular epideictic exercises, the encomium and the vituperation, were different from the chreia and commonplace because these two exercises focused on a specific topic such as a king or god, a virtue like moderation, or a vice such as greed. The structure of the encomium and the vituperation exercises are the same, except that the encomium’s intent is to

praise, while the content of the vituperation is full of criticism and reproach. As the *Ad Herennium* describes, epideictic rhetoric praises or condemns external circumstances such as fortune, descent, education, citizenship and friendship; physical attributes like strength, agility, appearance, and intellect; and qualities of character such as wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance – these three qualities were the subject or “proof and refutation” (Caplan III.VI.10). Medieval rhetoric mainly relied upon both encomium and vituperation and less upon the general topics of commonplaces and the anecdotes and sententia of chreias, though all four are used in various ways to achieve an intended purpose. These classical exercises are reflected in the structure and subject of Old English religious writings and homilies from Alfred and Ælfric’s translations, Wulfstan’s sermons, and the anonymously written Vercelli and Blickling homilies that will be further dissected in the next three chapters.

In addition, the epideictic rhetoric displayed by encomiums and vituperations has a very clear structure of *invention* and *arrangement* that was closely followed. Both the encomium and the vituperation began with an introduction drawn from the speaker’s life, an authoritative figure, or the subject matter that let the reader know whether the topic or cause would be praised or condemned, or both. Typically, the encomium or the vituperation opens with a description and exposition of a person, thing, or idea’s origin such as family, country, and ancestors or lineage. Next, there is a description or exposition of a person’s education, training, instruction, or the development of an idea or object. This is followed by a description of a person, object, or idea’s virtuous or immoral behavior, thoughts, and qualities.

Here there is usually some type of comparison or contrast to amplify either the virtue or the vice being discussed. Finally, an epilogue concludes these epideictic formats, usually exhorting the hearers to emulate or avoid what has been discussed or relying upon a final prayer to

bring the discussion to a close (III.VI.11-VII.15). Each step within these epideictic formats can be found within Old English homilies. Although the strict adherence to one exercise over the other may be a bit loose at times, the blending of each of these components creates a cohesive, inclusive affect that freed rhetoric and communication to develop as it saw fit and to attach itself to the dialogue of daily life. This metamorphosis also served to create an effective form of communication designed to instruct, win, and move the audience, according to Cicero's aims that were later repurposed by Augustine.

Furthermore, the epideictic chreia, commonplace, encomium, and vituperation could not be effective without reliance upon amplification and upon rhetorical figures of speech to amplify and embellish their subject matter (VII.15). These embellishments included such tropes as similes, examples, amplifications, previous judgments, and other means to "expand and enrich the argument" that were usually given when proving a point and in the conclusion (II. XXIX 46 141). In the *On the Ideal Orator*, Cicero states that "the highest excellence of eloquence consists in amplifying something by imparting distinction to it. This serves not only to magnify things and raise them to a higher level in your speech, but also to minimize and lower them" (Wisse 3.104), which was an essential tool for epideictic rhetoric. Amplification has two main tones: either the Hortatory or the Pathetic where the Hortatory, "by amplifying some fault, incites the hearer to indignation" while the Pathetic, "by amplifying misfortunes, wins the hearer over to pity" (Caplan III. XIII. 24). Old English homilies rely upon both tones, but particularly combined the two emotions of sadness and pity with indignation and a sense of injustice to move audiences to emotional responses and spur them to moral action.

Of all the topics and tropes common to rhetorical arguments, "amplification is most suitable for epideictic speakers, whose subject is actions which are not disputed, so that all that re-

mains to be done is to attribute beauty and importance to them” (Freese 105). Because epideictic “establishes the honorable and the base in human activity” (Kaplan 78), commonly accepted moral principles must be amplified and embellished in order to instruct and move the audience. While epideictic can either “wear a mask of virtuoso display, parading with garlands of rhetorical figures and tropes” or be “clothed in simple and plain language” (Ochs 2), a combination of both exists in medieval rhetoric, and the object is still to judge circumstances and qualities of morality. More specifically, what is being judged is the application of moral judgment to a particular topic, subject, person, or thing, and the “audience judges the speaker’s ability to make this application in the most complete way” (Kaplan 78). Within medieval rhetoric, the authors and speakers were certain to rely upon figures of authority and to use scripture, praise of God, and prayer to display their own ethos, moral quality, and ability to apply moral judgments to a variety of situations.

Moreover, as a means of stirring the audience, amplification relies upon ten different formulas (Caplan II. XXX. 47-49): appealing to the authority of others such as ancestors, gods, authors, whether dead or not; discussing who or what is affected by acts of virtue or vice; creating a universal treatment and showing how indifference furthers this vice or hampers virtue; displaying how the indulged man or vice emboldens others to commit crimes or indulge in vice; showing that nothing can change or amend a mistake or sin; displaying that there is no excuse for sin or vice; demonstrating how a crime or vice can lead to war or life and death struggles; showing how a vice or crime must be promptly avenged or handled; comparing wrong doings; and by examining the deeds and recalling them as if they were taking place before the audience’s eyes (II. XXX. 47-49). Many of these formulas are similar, and were often blended together, and this is true even within medieval homilies. Old English homilies use all ten formulas at various times

throughout their duration in order to stir the audience's emotion, including righteous indignation, and to effectively prove their subject in regards to praise or blame, but the type of amplification used most was the appeal to authority, whether past religious leaders, God, scripture, or saints.

Ultimately, epideictic cannot instruct or stir the audience and listeners without employing techniques of amplification that rely upon repetition and comparison (II. XXIX 46 141) demonstrated through such rhetorical tropes as epanaphora, antistrophe, interlacement, transplacement, antithesis, apostrophe, reasoning by question and answer, maxim, reasoning by contraries, hypophora, climax, definition, transition, disjunction, reduplication, synonymy or interpretation, reciprocal change, surrender, asyndeton, conclusion, antonomasia or pronomination, metonymy, periphrasis, hyperbole, synecdoche, catechresis, comparisons, metaphor, simile, allegory, vivid description, accumulation, refining, dialogue, character delineation, portrayal, personification, and conciseness. These twenty-eight rhetorical tools represent a small portion of rhetorical commonplaces, but are the most employed and most vital for epideictic.

Therefore, these twenty-eight will be analyzed within Old English homilies in the assessment of medieval rhetoric and medieval adherence to any classic, rhetorical tradition and structure. The Greek Sophist Gorgias' famous *Encomium of Helen* will serve to elucidate these requirements. In his *Encomium*, Gorgias lists four reasons why Helen of Troy cannot be blamed for the Trojan War. True to encomiastic form, Gorgias first begins with an introduction that praises, letting the readers know this is his purpose. His opening line states, "What is becoming to a city is manpower, to a body beauty, to a soul wisdom, to an action virtue, to a speech truth, and the opposites of these are unbecoming" (Bizzel 1.44). This passage relies upon the rhetorical figures of speech known as asyndeton, presentation in separate parts where the conjunction is

suppressed (Caplan IV.XXIX.41), as well as definition, which, in a “clear-cut fashion,” “grasps the characteristic qualities of a thing” (IV.XXV.35).

Gorgias also relies upon transplacement, frequently reintroducing the same word (IV.XIII.20) and reduplication, “the repetition of one or more words for the purpose of Amplification or Appeal to Pity” (IV.XXVIII.38) in the repetition of words such as praise, not only in this introduction but throughout this work. Gorgias ends his introduction by letting the reader know that he wishes to “free the accused of blame” (Gorgias 2.44), a lucid example of epideictic communication.

The next step is the description or exposition of a person’s origins through discussing country, ancestors, or parents. Gorgias adheres to this step by discussing Helen’s mother Leda and her father, Zeus, although “allegedly a mortal, Tyndareus,” and that this union gave Helen “godlike beauty” (3-4.44). Then, an encomium typically describes the person’s education or interests, including any instruction or training received. Here Gorgias simply mentions Helen’s natural skill and qualities of bringing men together and inspiring greatness:

In many did she work much desire for her love, and her one body was the cause of bringing together many bodies of men thinking great thoughts of great goals, of whom some had greatness of wealth, some the glory of ancient nobility, some the vigor of personal agility, some command of acquired knowledge. And all came because of a passion which loved to conquer and a love of honor which was unconquered. (4.44-45)

As the child of a god, Helen was naturally gifted not only with beauty but the ability to spur men to improvement and betterment and to encourage them to succeed. This encapsulates her interest and divine instruction. Gorgias’ passage here once again relies upon transplacement in the repetition of the words “greatness” and “conquer.” This passage also rests upon epanaphora, when “one and the same word forms successive beginnings for phrases expressing like and different ideas” (Caplan IV.XIII.19), as demonstrated in the repetition of phrases beginning with the word

“some.” Finally, the last line evidences, with its clever play on the words conquered and unconquered, the figure of speech known as antithesis, style or expression built upon contraries (IV.XV.21), as well as reciprocal change, where two different or “discrepant thoughts are so expressed by transposition that the latter follows from the former although contradictory to it” (IV.XXVIII.38).

The next step of the encomium creates the main content of the piece – the discussion of a person’s achievements, virtue, and praise (or blameworthy) actions. Gorgias focuses upon Helen’s blameless qualities and how she was a victim of fate and the “decision of the gods” which would “free Helen from disgrace”; how she “was raped by violence and illegally assaulted and unjustly insulted” and a victim of force; and how she fell victim to “speech which persuaded her and deceived her heart,” whereupon Gorgias goes on a tangent discussing how speech “is a powerful lord” (Gorgias 6-8.45).

According to the encomium structure, during such discussion of praise or blameworthy qualities and actions, usually a comparison or contrast is made to escalate praise or blame, and not only does Gorgias compare these different scenarios to each other, but he also creates a comparison to the divinity or magic of language, the power of poetry, and the incantations of songs to conclude, “What cause then prevents the conclusion that Helen similarly, against her will, might have come under the influence of speech, just as if ravished by the force of the mighty?” (8-12.45). This concluding remark is an example of reasoning by question and answer, where assumptions and statements are questioned and meaning is sought through “successive affirmation” (Caplan XVI.XVI.23). This passage also relies upon refining, “dwelling on the same topic yet seeming to say something ever new” accomplished by repeating the same idea or by “des-



canting upon it” (IV.XLI.54). The use of refining is particularly demonstrated in Old English homilies, as the next three chapters will detail.

Gorgias goes on to present his last defense and justification for Helen’s actions before concluding his work. His fourth cause is love, which he compares to war in order to amplify the qualities of love and ultimately Helen’s blamelessness where it “has happened that people, after having seen frightening sights, have also lost presence of mind for the present moment” just as love and desire are a human “disease” or “affliction” that constrain the mind (Gorgias 15-19.46). Here Gorgias uses the strategy of comparison, more specifically, analogy, to justify and defend Helen, and he engages in vivid detail as well in his portrayal of this ending justification.

Finally, the encomium concludes with an epilogue that either offers a prayer or exhorts the audience to emulate this person or these traits. Gorgias ends with a question and an exhortation to the reader, again relying upon reasoning through question and answer:

How then can one regard blame of Helen as just, since she is utterly acquitted of all charge whether she did what she did through falling in love or persuaded by speech or ravished by force or constrained by divine constraint? I have by means of speech removed disgrace from a woman; I have observed the procedure which I set up at the beginning of the speech; I have tried to end the injustice of blame and the ignorance of opinion; I wished to write a speech which would be a praise of Helen and a diversion to myself. (20-21.46)

This passage draws attention to the epideictic structure, to the fact that this speech may have been an exercise for educational or personal entertainment purposes, and to the speaker’s skill and goal in writing. The use of epanaphora within the last few lines reiterates and repeats Gorgias’ aim as well as allows his character and actions to also be judged along with the actions and qualities of Helen.

Old English homilies relied upon the authority of God and scripture, two strategies of epideictic rhetoric and specifically a tool of amplification. Gorgias’ *Encomium of Helen* is an apt example of epideictic rhetoric, of the encomium exercise within epideictic that was immensely

popular, and of the rhetorical figures, embellishment, and amplification that were vital to epideictic rhetoric's success. Greek and Roman philosophers, rhetoricians, and sophists perfected and defined these epideictic structures and figures of speech, but the medieval period's focus upon Christian dogma allowed epideictic judgments and rhetorical decisions to rise to the forefront of daily life, and medieval homilies treated epideictic considerations and the constant focus on vice and virtue as the only rewarding method of earthly communication.

For Christian intellectuals and writers, censoring human thought and action was a matter of life and death, not only in terms of earthly happiness but for the eternal destination of the soul. Therefore, the epideictic rhetoric of judgment became a natural platform for Christian expression and literature where even Biblical translations and scriptural passages relied upon rhetorical tools in order to reach the widest audience possible. While a Greco-Roman connection to Celtic, Germanic, and medieval cultures remains tenuous, the rising dominance of the Catholic religion during the waning Roman Empire and at the formation of Anglo-Saxon culture allowed for Latin based rhetorical tools, such as those detailed within the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, to be transmitted within the medieval world, and it was the invention of the medieval art of preaching that preserved and further adapted epideictic rhetoric, as the analysis of Alfred's translations, Ælfric and Wulfstan's homilies, and Blickling, Vercelli, and anonymously written homilies in the next few chapters will detail.

EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC AND STRUCTURE IN ALFRED'S TRANSLATIONS OF  
BOETHIUS' *CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY* AND GREGORY'S *PASTORAL CARE*

In coming to terms with Old English literature and culture, it is important to remember, as Angus Cameron asserts, that practically nothing existed before the reign of King Alfred (35). Old English literature was “conditioned by two potent influences – a state of war which was almost normal owing to internal dissensions and the attacks of the Danes; and the conversion of the nation to Christianity, which had a tendency to divert all intellectual energy into religious channels” (Snell 3). In addition, because the medieval period left very little proscriptive writing and reflection upon the art of rhetoric, the term “rhetoric” itself is rarely used. When the art, vein, or nuance of rhetoric is referenced, a variation of the Old English terms *getyngelic/getynglic* or *gearowyrde/gearowyrdig* (fluent in speech) and their Middle English counterparts *rettorike*, *rethorik*, *retoryke*, or *rethorique* are used, based upon the Greek concept of “word,” *rhema*, and the Latin *rhetoricus*. The Old English word “to speak,” *specan/sprecan* or *spæc*, is also used in reference to rhetorical activities and orations, as is “to meet” with *mæpelian* or *mæpel*, evident in *Beowulf*, and derived from the Greek *metan*. Other often used Old English terms associated with rhetorical communication are *bíspell*, referring to an allegory, example, or story; *bisen/bisene*, example, parable, rule, precept, or pattern; *spell*, an account, narrative, speech, or language of prose, and *secgan*, a discourse.

While Alfred uses *bigspell* and its derivatives, the terminology he chooses to specifically reference rhetoric within his translation of Boethius' *Consolation*, is *racu* and *reccere*, two words that indicate the reasoning and explanation associated with leadership, instruction, rule, and direction – again, pagan or classical connotations that were easily connected with Christiani-

ty and the Christian mindset of supernatural, moral instruction and communication. As a religious leader and, moreover, as the “best beloved of English kings” (Jane x), Alfred the Great was well known and influential, and he understood the importance of persuading and reaching an audience.

Unlike the majority of Greek and Roman discourses where audiences were present, more directly influential, and able to visibly interact with the message, Alfred was faced with the task of capturing the interest of an imagined medieval audience whose interests were exceptionally diverse. He did this through the use of such rhetorical tools as anecdotes, analogies, reduplication, and amplification conveyed through the judgment of epideictic rhetoric, albeit focused upon the morality of Christian precepts. Alfred’s consideration for audience was no doubt encouraged by similar concerns in the writings of Boethius and St. Gregory the Great, whose pre-medieval works were colored by Greco-Roman rhetorical considerations like arrangement and style. However, what the medieval period created, as Alfred’s translations indicate, was an epideictic structure where vice was used to condemn virtue and virtue was used to condemn vice, deconstructing the strict delineations of epideictic encomiums and vituperations practiced within Greece and Rome. In addition, both the message and, particularly, the audience became that much more important as the impetus and purpose for communication attained a moral focus.

Frederic Harrison states that Alfred “was indeed one of those rare rulers of men who trust to the book as much as to the sword, who value the school more than the court, who believe in no force but the force of thought and of truth” (3), and it is Alfred, as Allen Frantzen discusses, who is the major figure of Anglo-Saxon literature in the ninth century (849-899). Alfred enlisted the aid of trained assistants like Waeferth, Æthelestan, and Werwulf from Mercia (5) to help him translate Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*, “the most original and important of all Alfred’s

writings”; the *Dialogues*, a “collection of popular tales”; St. Augustine’s *Soliloques*; and Gregory the Great’s *Pastoral Care*, “the accepted manual for training to the priestly office” (Harrison 7). It is the *Consolation of Philosophy* and the *Pastoral Care* that were both immensely popular works in the early Middle Ages and beyond, although often transmitted through incomplete or corrupted copies (Frantzen 9). Nevertheless, as a result of Alfred’s stature, his works were copied and imitated, and therefore any rhetorical connections within his work that were both translated from the original Latin and incorporated by his scribes would also have been emulated by medieval writers.

The popularity of Alfred’s versions from the sixth century until the fourteen, according to B.B. Price, resulted from a new image of the Christian model where monasticism drew strength and pride from its differences with secular society (21) and where Christian education and living formed its own type of *paideia*, a Christian *paideia* that William Brown notes “could do no less than its pagan counterpart. It too was the means for re-creating in every generation the *civitas Dei* of the monastery, ‘the servants of Christ,’ as it were” (*A Syntax* 44). Through the vehicle of Christianity and through his concern over the lack of education, Alfred’s commissioned translations were able to preserve snippets of a classical rhetorical tradition that seemed to have disappeared, namely that of epideictic amplification. At the same time, Alfred adapted his translations to most effectively capture the attention of his medieval audience, appealing specifically to their fear of spiritual judgment and retribution.

Some scholars label Alfred as the “father of English prose” (Harrison 29) while others believe Alfred’s translations would not have “achieved renown on the strength of his translations alone. But Alfred was a king and a soldier, and, secure in his exalted station and the peace he had won...” (Snell 6). In addition, Alfred fought not only for the peace of the state, but also for

the values of the church (209), and it was Alfred's encouragement of learning that indirectly caused him to be "the cause of the recovery of Old English prose from the decadence to which it had sunk through political disorders" (6). While Alfred most likely had little to no knowledge or understanding of the rhetorical tradition, his inclusion of rhetorical tropes and reliance upon the epideictic structure was absorbed through his reliance upon Christian guidelines.

In turning to Old English writing, beginning with Alfred's commissioned translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, these epideictic patterns begin to emerge. Although not a religious piece of writing or a homily, Alfred interpolates religious themes in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and further dwells upon the rhetorical devices found within Boethius' writings. It is significant to note that Boethius also delivered panegyrics at court (Kennedy *Classical* 178), adhering to epideictic rhetoric, and that his *Consolation* is based upon an epideictic format that Alfred himself copies and imitates. As John Marenbon points out, Boethius carefully followed the logical, ethical, and scientific ideas of Aristotle in his *Consolation* (35), and Alfred preserves many of these references to Aristotle and Aristotle's *Physica* within his translation (Sedgefield 1968 XL.6,8-16). Boethius also relied upon the tropes defined by Cicero and the *Ad Herennium*, basing his *Consolation*, for example upon allegory, parable, and the personification of philosophy (Barilli 43), three very popular rhetorical devices found also within scripture.

However, as Bernard Huppé states, Alfred includes his own set of rhetorical devices in elaborating on Boethius' *Consolation* that consist of such tropes as "repetition, variation, balance, along with paronomasia to enforce the concluding exhortation" (125), as well as imagery and ethopoeia: characterization of speech, action, and gestures (129). A variety of notable scholars such as Malcolm Godden have also discussed and pinpointed rhetorical devices within Alfred's translations, and Godden observes that Alfred often relied upon "word-pairing techniques"

and “explanatory images, perceptible especially in the *Boethius*” (“Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition” 110) to help him amplify and most fully discuss his subjects on godliness, vice, and virtue. Although scholars have previously noted these rhetorical figures, they have not discussed them in terms of a specific rhetorical structure, to find a continuation of a classical rhetorical tradition, or to reach a concise understanding of medieval rhetoric.

Boethius’ *Consolation* was also easily subsumed by Christian culture because Boethius, as Michael Leff discusses, promoted the reordering of rhetoric beneath dialectic and was much more concerned with content than with the speaker or with ornamentation (15), as was the Catholic Church. It wasn’t to the intellectual comforts of Aristotle that the medieval world turned but to the inner contemplation and supernatural preoccupations that were more consistent with Plato’s philosophy. Boethius also echoes Plato, as Anne Payne asserts, particularly when he discusses how the world and time exist concurrently and in the mind of God (23). However, it is apparent that Alfred, just like the majority of medieval Christian culture as Eleanor Shipley Duckett intones, was not skilled in the reasoning of classical philosophy and that much of Boethius’ argument “eluded his grasp” (172), although he tailored these philosophic views to Christian dogma. While Christianity was Platonically structured, it ultimately rejected Plato’s paradigm and believed instead that life was structured by God and was a result of a plan carried out by God where God was the ultimate ruler (Payne 23). However, for the medieval world, Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* was the chief, if not the sole, representation of ancient philosophy, ethics, and religious aspirations (Bowker 178) and was therefore quite valuable for Christian moral lessons.

Alfred’s translation of Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* begins with a preface and introduction that condemns the Goths and, more specifically King Theodoric, who made war

against the Romans while at the same time praising Boethius' blamelessness, knowledge, and steadfast character. In this way, Alfred's translation mirrors the epideictic rhetoric of an encomium as well as the vituperation since he both blames and praise in the invention stage of explanation, where origin and background information is given and is steeped in the classification of actions as good or evil. Alfred's *Preface* is both

deceptively simple and stylistically refined. It is a remarkably successful first venture in the creation of an intellectual prose style in English which would be a match for Latin and which would employ the principles of Latin rhetoric, but in a thoroughly English manner, making use particularly of the devices of repetition, of word play, and of dramatization, the mainstays of the Old English poetic style. (Huppé 131)

The question is not whether these rhetorical tropes exist within medieval literature and writing, but to what purpose. Here rhetorical devices found within Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* are consistent with the nature of epideictic rhetoric and indicate the fact that, consciously or not, the medieval period preserved the classic rhetorical tradition because it was based upon the natural human desire to communicate and share ideas with others. Because Alfred adds his own unique introduction that discusses his Christianized view of the world and the impetus for his revision, he demonstrates a clear consideration for audience, largely imagined, and for the preservative qualities of literature.

In chapter one, Alfred makes the distinction that Boethius "was in book learning and in worldly affairs the most wise" (Giles I. 426), or, as Godden and Irvine note in their modern translation of Alfred's B text, "the most righteous of men in book-learning and wordly virtues" (Godden and Irvine Vol II. II.4): "wæs gehaten, se wæs in boccræftum and on woruldþeawum se rihtwisesta" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. I.12-13). At the onset, Boethius is established as an exemplary character, and this is something that both Boethius and Alfred are certain to highlight. Alfred goes on to translate, "se þa ongeat þa manigfealdan yfel þe se cyning ðeodric wið þā cris-



tenandome 7 wið þā romaniscū wítum dyde” (Giles and Irvine Vol I. I.12-15) or “observed the manifold evil which the king Theodoric did against Christendom, and against the Roman senators” (Giles I. 426). There is a clear contrast here between Boethius, full of learning and wisdom, and Theodoric, who was an evil tyrant. Boethius is clearly praised while Theodoric is condemned. Again, this is an epideictic strategy that both Alfred and Boethius use. Alfred’s translation goes on to amplify and define king Theodoric as “cruel” or “wælhreowa” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. I.23) and Boethius as “arwyrða” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. I.25), which has been translated to mean “venerable” (Giles I. 427), “worthy” (Godden and Irvine Vol II. I.5), or “good” (Sedgefield 1900 2), further using language to condemn and praise these specific men and their qualities and actions. This contrast is expected within the encomium structure although the amplification of both praise and censure is not. Boethius focuses upon praise, upon encouragement, and upon consolation, and his rhetoric is more encomiastic.

Alfred’s revision of Boethius’ *Consolation* is a perfect example of epideictic rhetoric and particularly the encomium and vituperation progymnasmata because epideictic relies upon amplification, and Boethius’ circumstances are amplified here through the pathos of the “pathetic” that amplifies “misfortunes” and “wins the hearer over to pity” (Caplan III. XIII. 24). Unlike Boethius who begins his *Consolation* with a poem lamenting present circumstances in comparison with past happiness (Slavitt 1-4), Alfred’s Old English translation amplifies Boethius’ situation through the encomium formula that praises, as well as the vituperative exercise that condemns. Both epideictic exercises are blended together to form a pattern of communication that, as will become even more clear, created the standard rhetorical pattern for much early medieval writing, and particularly religious writing. In addition, Alfred begins his translation of Boethius’ *Consolation* by discussing a crime that must be avenged, which is one of the typical introduc-

tions for an effective presentation as defined in the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* (Caplan II. XXX 49 151), and, in this case, is Theodoric's unjust imprisonment of Boethius.

Boethius states in chapter two, “ac ic nu wepende and gisciende [oft] geradra worda misfo. Me ablendan þas ungetreowan woruldsælþa, and me þa forletan swa blindne on þis dimme hol” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. II.3-10) or “but I must now, weeping and sobbing, often fail to find fitting words. These faithless wordly felicities have blinded me, and left me thus blind in this dark hole” (Godden and Irvine Vol II. II.5). In contrast to “worldly felicities,” Giles translates “woruldsælþa” as “worldly riches” (Giles II. 427), which is a more specific connotation that immediately invokes Christian ethos, which is what Alfred certainly meant to do in this passage. The external circumstance of wealth is a common topic of epideictic rhetoric, and this passage uses the metaphor of blindness for lack of understanding, as well as the strategy of interlacement where “both the first word and the last in a succession of phrases” are repeated (Caplan IV.XIII.20), seen with the varying uses of “blindness” in this example. The repetition here is also an example of reduplication, where one word is repeated to amplify the issue and appeal to the audience's emotions, like pity (IV.XXVIII38).

And, of course, the character of wisdom is a personification, “Ða eode se Wisdom near, cwæð Boetius, minum hreowsiendū geþohte” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. III.9-10) or “Then Wisdom came nearer, said Boethius, to my grieving thought” (Vol II. III.5). The use of personification demonstrates the praiseworthy characteristic of wisdom or prudence that was often also praised by the Greeks and even Romans within their epideictic speeches, as demonstrated in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. There are also various examples of personification throughout such as “adrigde þa mines modes eagan” (Vol I. III.11) or “dried my mind's eyes” (Vol II. III. 6), which also happens to be a hyperbole in its exaggeration of a crying mind. All of these figures of dic-

tion are designed to move the audience's emotions, and, for Alfred, these rhetorical devices are aimed at awakening the spiritual intuition of the soul, where individuals would not rely upon their own strength and intellect but upon the divinity of God and the moral instruction placed in their soul through the faith of divine communication and instruction.

While Boethius recognized, as B.B. Price contends, that "the guidance of philosophy might well be necessary for the happy life" (63), Alfred believed true happiness could only come from God and, therefore, changed Lady Philosophy to "Gesceadwisness" or reason and wisdom, creating a new structure, "a dialogue between the mind (Mod) and Wisdom (or reason), a power of the mind. Alfred's translation is not a lecture delivered by a wise figure who appears in a dream" (Slavitt 2-3), but a debate between the Mind and its own capabilities, "the powers which can guide Mod to happiness" (Frantzen 49). This change is significant because it establishes another contrast and epideictic duality where the mind is capable of vice but where divine wisdom is forever virtuous and always to be praised.

In making the mind or Mod responsible for his own downfall rather than a victim of fate,

Alfred was able to introduce a radically new theme central to his translation: man cannot merely resign himself to his fate, as the Latin text teaches, but must take responsibility for his ill fortune and find within himself the power to correct it. Alfred argues that man can determine his fate, not by controlling events outside his realm, but by directing his own will to the good and by performing good acts. Alfred thereby contradicts Boethius's central assumption about the mysterious nature of fate: for Alfred, God's ways may be unknown to man, but they are not mysterious manifestations of a plan beyond man's comprehension. (Frantzen 50)

Alfred omits the wheel of fortune motif in order to show that the prisoner's loss of fame, material goods, and happiness resulted from improper thought and action, namely the pursuit of earthly reward and pleasure, creating a duality that is indicative of epideictic communication. This was Alfred's solution for explaining suffering while adhering to a Christian worldview that praised virtuous behaviour and particularly eternal pursuits. Alfred calls upon his readers to "act right-

ously and to believe in God. His version of the *Consolation* makes a sustained appeal to the pursuit of wisdom and righteous action” (Frantzen 60), with an emphasis upon proper conduct in a world of politics, power, immorality, and corruption.

As a result, Alfred doesn’t completely eliminate the Neoplatonic elements found within Boethius’ original text because many of these philosophic elements compliment his purpose, although he does eliminate “most of the classical philosophy; expands and explains the mythological and poetic allusions; and changes the Platonic theism of Boethius into Biblical and Christian divinity” (Harrison 15). The three subjects of the liberal arts trivium are based upon both Plato and Aristotle, and just as Boethius was able to find harmony and balance in integrating Plato and Aristotle’s philosophy together (Price 64), Alfred was able to integrate these classical ideals into his Christian theology.

In chapter three for example, Alfred writes of Plato’s expression that “nan anweald nære riht butan rihtum þeawum” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. III.35) or “no power would be right without right virtues” (Vol II. III. 6), emphasizing the similarities between Plato’s ideals with Christian precepts. Plato’s expression is used as a maxim, or “a saying drawn from life, which shows concisely what happens or ought to happen” (Caplan IV.XVI. 24) and is also an appeal to authority. In epideictic fashion, Alfred laments the fact that “the virtuous are hated and afflicted” (Godden and Irvine Vol II. III.6) or “rihtwisan sint laðe and forþrycte” (Vol I. III.36) while “þa unryhtwisan seondan up ahafene þurh heora won dæda and þurh heora selflice” (Vol I. III.37-38) or “the wicked are exalted through their crimes, and through their self-love” (Giles III.4.428). Here again is a contrast between virtue and vice, and Plato’s quotation serves as a point of comparison. Alfred adapts Plato’s teaching to serve as a Christian moral lesson on the consequences for seeking earthly pleasure and indulging in unrighteous behavior. In his fashioning of a truly

orthodox Christian exposition, Alfred blends philosophy, mythology, and rhetoric within a Christian viewpoint that epideictically condemns worldly wealth, power, and fame.

Alfred plants his text clearly in “an ancient and partly mythological past. At the same time, he used the translation as a vehicle for his own commentaries on government and righteous living, thus giving it an idiosyncratic flavor and a relevance to his own world” (Frantzen 48). Boethius admired Cicero and tried to reconcile Platonic and Aristotelian thought just as Cicero did. In addition, Boethius also believed that the art of rhetoric was important for inspiring clear thinking in the audience as well as demonstrating the orator’s clarity of thought, as Cicero also stated in his *Ideal Orator* (May 69 I.47-49), although Boethius made rhetoric a tool of philosophy instead of its own art. Alfred’s rendition merely recognizes the fact that Boethius highly admired Cicero, philosophy, and rhetoric, without going into any philosophical or rhetorical discussion apart from what was theologically sound or what could easily be adapted for or based upon scriptural truths.

As the *Consolation* continues, chapter four begins with a prayer to God, much like the majority of Old English homilies, “Eala þu scippend heofones and eorþan” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. IV.1), or “O Creator of heaven and earth” (Vol II. IV. 6). This prayer is also known as an appeal to authority and an apostrophe in that grief or indignation is expressed through addressing a certain person or entity (Caplan IV.XV 21). Apostrophe is used frequently throughout the *Consolation*, and another example is seen in chapter seven when Wisdom asks, “Eala mod hwæt bewearp þe on [þas] care on þas gnornunga?” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. VII.21) or “O Mind, what has cast you into anxiety and grief?” (Vol II. VII. 10). Again, this apostrophe is used to focus the dialogue and attention of the audience and to stir the noble emotions of the soul. In addition, Alfred’s prayer to God in chapter four evidences the figure of speech known as surrender

where the matter is given over to another's will (Caplan IV.XXVIII 39), which, in this case, as in the case of all homilies and the majority of early medieval writing, is God. Because Alfred begins chapter four with a prayer to God, he is in essence surrendering his will, work, and instruction to be used by God and as a sign of his faith.

Furthermore, Alfred's reliance upon dialogue as a rhetorical tool carries much of the meaning and action of the *Consolation*, and it is the question and answer structure between the figure of Wisdom and Boethius' mind, much like the dialectic structure of Greek philosopher's lessons, that offers the audience instruction. This question and answer structure is a rhetorical tool emphasized in the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* designed to hold the audience's attention and remind them of the issue at hand (I.XVI.26). One example lies in chapter five where Wisdom questions Boethius' claim of innocence and his view of the world. Boethius answers,

Hit þa andwyrde and cwæð: Ic wat þæt ic on libbendum men and on gesceadwisum eom and þeah on deadlicum. þa andwyrde se Wisdom and cwæð: Wast þu aht oðres bi ðe selfum to secganne buton þæt þu nu sædest? Þaa cwæð þæt mod. Nat ic nauht oðres. Ða cwæð se Wisdom. Nu ic hæbbe ongiten þine ormodnesse nu þu self nast hwæt þu self eart.... (Godden and Irvine Vol I. V.71-77)

'I know that I am in a living and rational but mortal man.' Then Wisdom answered and said; 'Do you know anything else to say about yourself apart from what you just said?' Then the Mind said: 'I do not know anything else.' Then Wisdom said: 'Now I have understood your despair, now that you yourself do not know what you yourself are'. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. V.8-9)

Here Alfred's translation makes it clear that the blame for Boethius' misfortunes lies with Boethius and his lack of self-knowledge, which is an idea asserted by Boethius himself. However, David Slavitt notes that Boethius' *Consolation* relies upon the comforts of the intellect with only small portions of his work devoted to moral judgment (609). In contrast, this passage indicates the futility of relying upon human logic and human capabilities for happiness. Alfred is more concerned with the introspection of the soul and morality than with human wisdom. For the

Greeks and Romans, wisdom constituted the pursuit of human logic and knowledge and the demonstration of civically minded action. For Alfred, wisdom is the understanding that human logic and civic action are nothing without God, and Alfred's medieval view of wisdom is the pursuit of a divine and eternal relationship. While Alfred adheres to Boethius' rhetorical question and answer structure designed to reveal truth, Alfred's translation represents a unique medieval perspective in that he condemns Boethius' lack of divine and moral knowledge in true epideictic form. Through this passage, and throughout Alfred's version, Alfred indicates that early medieval rhetoric was concerned with enlivening the human mind and soul through divine knowledge so audiences would realize the eternal ramifications for certain thoughts and actions. In this way, early medieval rhetoric became more individual and inclusive than Greek or Roman rhetoric, using words to affect everyone and to transmit concern for all men.

Alfred's translation also employs hypophora, where a question is asked of the self or the audience to see what could be said in explanation (Caplan IV.XXIII.33). Of his unhappy situation, Boethius asks "To hwon sceoldan la mine friend seggan þæt ic gesælig mon wære? Hu mæg se beon gesælig se þe on þam gesælþum þurhwunian ne mot?" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. II.7-9) or "Why should my friends say that I was a happy man? How can he be happy who is not allowed to continue in those felicities?" (Vol II. II.5). The emotion here is one of desperation, and this technique serves to amplify Boethius' situation and the praise of his virtues and condemnation of life's injustices.

In addition, there are several comparisons and analogies that carry "over an element of likeness from one thing to a different thing" (Caplan IV.XLV.59) that are designed to amplify and clarify Boethius' discussion of suffering, evil, and injustice. In chapter six, Wisdom states,

Loca nu be þære sunnan andeac be oðrum tunglum þonne sweartan wolcnu him  
beforan gað; ne mahon hi þonne heora leoht sellan. Swa eac se suðerna wind

hwilum mid miclum storme gedrefeð þa sæ þe ær wæs smylte wedere glæshlutru on to seonne. Þon heo þonne swa gemenged wyrð mid ðan yþum, þon wyrð heo swiðe hraðe ungladu þeah heo ær gladu wære on to locienne. Hwæt eac se broc þeah [fleowð rihte of þam heahum muntum, irnð he] swiðe of his rihtryne ðonne þær micel stan wealwiende of þam heohan munte oninnan fealð and hine todæld and him his rihtrynes wiðstent. Swa doð nu ða þeostro þinre gedrefednlesse wiðstandan minum leohtum larum. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. VI.1011)

Look now at the sun and also at other stars when dark clouds pass in front of them; they cannot then give their light. So too the southern wind sometimes disturbs with a great storm the sea which before was as clear as glass to look at, in the smooth weather. When it is stirred up in this way with the waves, it becomes very quickly dull though it was pleasant to look at before. So too the stream, though it flows directly from the high mountains, yet it turns sharply from its direct course when a great rock rolling from the high mountain falls into it and splits it and prevents its direct course. So no do the darknesses of your disturbance resist my bright teaching. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. VI. 9)

Here Wisdom uses these analogies to show the reader and Boethius that Boethius' suffering and self-pity have blinded him to true wisdom and understanding and that his lack of spiritual insight has led to his current unhappiness. Ultimately, such a message is not meant just for Boethius, but for all the English people who lack true understanding and knowledge, particularly in regards to supernatural principles and moral truths. Alfred's sense of audience is very clear. His inclusion of these analogies not only indicate an adherence, no matter how loosely, to the classic rhetorical tradition relied upon by such influential figures as Boethius but an understanding of how to most vividly connect with and instruct a wide medieval audience.

Another analogy as well as a metaphor that demonstrates audience consideration is evident when Wisdom states, "Swa swa oferdruncen man wat þæt he sceolde to his huse and to his ræste and ne mæg þeah ðider aredian, swa bið eac þam mode þonne hit bið ahefigad mid þam ymhogum þisse worulde. Hit bið mid þam hwilum oferdrenched and gedwelod to þam þæt hit ne mæge full rihte aredian to Gode" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXIV. 89-93) or "As an excessively drunk man knows that he ought to his home and to his bed and yet cannot find his way there, so is it for the mind when it is burdened with the cares of this world. It is sometimes excessively



drunk with those and lead astray so that it cannot find the direct way to God” (Vol II. XXIV.36). Alfred uses this passage to entertain and instruct his audience on the deceptive and fleeting pleasures of earthly life in comparison with eternity.

In analyzing epideictic structures that methodically praise or condemn and the tropes that define epideictic exercises, it becomes apparent that Christian rhetoric is epideictic in nature, though simultaneously extoling certain qualities, actions, and thoughts while condemning others in order to highlight the dual nature of life. Early medieval rhetoric is largely based upon this Christian rhetoric, though it is not limited to religious writings, as evident by Alfred’s desire to translate and preserve Boethius’ more philosophical *Consolation of Philosophy*. Additionally, as Alfred’s version displays, early medieval rhetoric contained greater textual liberalities and anecdotal digressions full of detail, narration, and repetition. This difference indicates a more emphatic concern for audience and individual souls than had previously been displayed within the rhetorical tradition.

As further proof, similes also abound within Alfred’s rendition, and, at one point, Alfred refers to the covetousness of men as the burning of fire in hell, “which is on the mountain that is called Etna, on the island that is called Sicily” (Vol II.XV.22), or “Ac nu manna gitsung is swa byrnende swa þæt fyr on þære helle seo is on þam munte þe Ætna hatte, on þam ieglande þe Sicilia hatte” (Vol I. XV.18-19). Alfred also compares earthly life to a shadow (Vol II. XXVII.41), or “ðis andwearde lif is swiðe anlic sceade, and on þære sceade nan mon ne mæg begitan þa soðan gesælda” (Vol I. XXVII.64-66), and compares the soul’s lust to a bee that dies after it stings (Vol II. XXXI.46), or “Swa swa seo beo sceal losian þonne heo hwæt irringa stingð, swa sceal ælc sawl forweorðan æfter þam unrihtæmede buton se mon hweorfe to gode” (Vol I. XXXI.32-35). These rhetorical comparisons also exist as important elements in scripture and re-

ligious writing, and, because they were foundational to Biblical stories, they were further developed and detailed within early medieval writing, allowing medieval audiences to more quickly grasp supernatural principles or lessons.

In the blending of the encomium and vituperation forms that both praise and condemn, chapter seven condemns the “covetousness of worldly men” or “ungefylledan gitsunge woruldmon” and “pride” “wlencum” while praising “wealth and dignity” or “wela and weorðscipe” and “humility” or “eadmodnesse” as part of “wisdom and virtues” (Vol II. VII.11-12) “wisdomas and cræftas” (Vol I. VII). Furthermore, in chapter eight, Wisdom comes out and blames Boethius by stating, “þæt is nu giet þinre unrihtwisnesse þæt þu eart fullneah forþoht. Ac ic nolde þæt þu þe forþohtest. Ac ic wolde þæt þe sceamode swelces gedwolan, forðam se se ðe hine forþencð se bið ormod, ac se se þe hine sceamað se bið on hreowsunga” (Vol I. VIII.3-7) or “that is still part of your wrongfulness that you are almost completely in despair. But I did not want you to despair. But I wanted you to be ashamed of such folly, because one who despairs is dispirited, but one who is ashamed is penitent” (Vol II. VIII.13). The need for repentance is highlighted as a means of cleansing the soul, heart, and mind and is a horatory emotion of classical rhetoric transformed here in Alfred’s revision to exhort audiences to cleanse themselves from earthly concerns and to enact pure, moral ideals based on Christian instruction and doctrine.

Alfred’s translation places a strong emphasis upon feeling ashamed as it represents repentance and penitence, and this is the quality that Alfred most praises and condones because it leads to godly Christian thought and action. In fact, Alfred’s entire translation hinges on this idea of recognizing sin or error, repenting, and turning to and trusting in God, whereas Boethius’ *Consolation* is less theological and places more emphasis upon inner consolation arising from human intellect and reason. For Alfred, there is no human reason without God’s divine inspira-

tion, and earthly happiness is fleeting. Therefore, earthly concerns are not real, while spiritual understanding and happiness are eternal. In this sense, early medieval rhetoric is also characterized by the continual deemphasis of earthly living and human desire in favor of spiritual and eternal truths. This didactic view of life is the core of epideictic rhetoric, which is at the core of Christian rhetoric, which, in turn, encapsulates early medieval rhetoric.

Wisdom also goes to great lengths to define ideas, actions, and behaviors throughout Alfred's *Consolation* where the figure of speech known as definition "in brief and clear-cut fashion grasps the characteristic qualities of a thing" (Caplan IV.XXV.35). Wisdom states, "Very narrow and very worthless are human enjoyments; for either they never come to a man, or they never constantly remain there such as they first came" (Giles XI.1.439) or "Swiðe nearewe sent and swiðe heanlice þa menniscan gesælþa forþam oþer twega oððe hie næfre to nanum men ne becumaþ oððe hi ðær næfre fæstlice ne ðurhwuniað swelca swelce hi ær to coman" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XI.9-12). In an interesting definition of God, Wisdom states that power (anwald), abundance (genyht), glory (foremærnes), dignity (weorðscipe), and bliss (blis) (Sedgefield 1968 XXXIII.1.3), "when they are all collected together, then, that is God" (Giles XXXIII.1.479) or "þonne bið hit eall an þing, 7 þ an ðing bið God" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXIII.1.9). Moreover, all humans must contain "wela and anweald and weorðscipe and foremærnes and willa" (Vol I. XXXIII.88-89) or "the five felicities, that is wealth and power and honour and fame and desire" (Vol II. XXXIII.50) in order to have the "hehste good habban and þa fullan gesælda" (Vol I. XXXII. 96-97) or "highest good and full happiness" (Giles XXXIII.2.481). Here again, Alfred's character of wisdom, and that based upon divine wisdom, uses the rhetorical trope of definition to disseminate an epideictically oriented message of morality.

However, all principles or felicities are based on earthly preoccupations and don't lead to "hehste good ne þa selestan gesælda, forþam hi ne beoð ece" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXIII.102-103) or "the supreme good, nor the best happiness, because they are not eternal" (Giles XXXIII.2.481). Ultimately, man must trust and follow after scripture and God's commands, but these five qualities mirror the qualities of character and physical attributes that formed the basis of classical epideictic rhetorical speeches. These Greco-Roman principles include wisdom, justice, courage, temperance, agility, strength, beauty, and health (Caplan III.10-18). Although life on earth is ultimately fleeting, personal character and physical traits should be cultivated to mirror Christ. Just as pagans spent time communicating ideas and actions they believed to be right and wrong to better society, government, and personal life, early medieval rhetoric did the same and believed that Christians should wholeheartedly adopt such principles in order to teach and emulate spiritual principles on earth.

Definition and epideictic praising and blaming are further evidenced when Wisdom states, "wyrd nauþer ne mæg þam men don ne fultum ne eac nænne dem. Forþam heo nis nanes lofes wyrde, forþam heo hire self gecyð þæt heo nanwuht ne bið" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XX.4-6) or "deceiving fate can cause man neither help nor harm. It deserves no praise, for fate itself testifies that it is nothing, but reveals its source when it shows its habits" (Vol II. XX.30). For Alfred, as for many early medieval writers, fate did not exist in the classical sense, but was a result of moral or immoral behavior or spiritual testing. God alone controlled the destiny of men, yielding fate a powerless notion. Boethius views fate as a viable and unexplainable force, but Alfred dismisses fate's role in human life, pointing instead to God and how God alone is worthy of praise.

This narrowed view and use of epideictic communication is continually refined throughout the *Consolation*, and Wisdom goes on to further define, condemn, and praise by stating,

seo wíðerwearde wyrd bið ælcum men nytwyrdre þonne seo orsorge, forþam seo orsorge simle lihð and licet þæt mon scyle wenan þæt heo seo sio soðe gesæld, ac sio wíðerwearde is sio soðe gesælþ, ðeah hwam swa ne þynce, forþam heo is fæstræd and gehæt simle þætte soð bið. Sio oðer is leas and beswicð ealle hiere geferan, forþam hio gecyð self mid hire hwurfulnessse þæt hio bið swiðe wancol, ac seo wíðerwearde gebet and gelæred ælcne þara þe hio hi to geðiet. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XX.10-17)

that adverse fate is for everyone more useful than the favourable, for the favourable always lies and flatters so that a man must think that it is the true felicity, but the adverse is the true felicity, though it may not seem so to some, for it is stable and promises always what is true. The other is false and deceives all its companions for it shows itself with its fickleness that it associates itself with. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XX.31)

Within both of these passages, Alfred highlights the fact that earthly treasure and happiness are illusory and that true happiness lies in moral goodness stemming from God. Again, Christian communication tried to reclaim oratorical strategies for the praise of God and godlike qualities, endeavoring to use words to bridge the gap between the earthly and the supernatural.

In Alfred's translation, Wisdom spends most of the time praising God in general. In chapter twenty-one, he says, or "An sceppend is buton ælcum tweon and se is eac wealdend heofones and eorðan and ealra gesceafta gesewenlicra and eac ungesewenlicra, þæt is God ælmihtig" (Vol I. XXI. 1-4), or "There is one creator, without any doubt, and he is also ruler of heaven and earth and of all creatures, visible and also invisible; that is God Almighty" (Vol I. XXI. 31). Such lavish praise was certainly perfected by Christian leaders within Roman and medieval eras and has been passed on and preserved today in a variety of religions, but particularly Christianity. This epideictic praise of God serves as an appeal to authority as well as surrender where the issue is given fully to God.

Using the strategy of definition and analogy, the notion of rhetoric or presenting words is even explored,

Swa geded eac se dreamcraeft þæt se mon bið dreamere and se læcecraeft þæt he bið læce, and seo racu ded þæt he bið reccere. Swa ded eac se gecynda craeft ælcum men þæt þæt god ne mæg beon wið þæt yfel gemenged ne þæt yfel wið þæt god. Þeah hie buta on anum men sen, þeah bið ægþer him onsundran. Þæt gecynd nyle næfre nanwuht wiðerweardes lætan gemengan, forþam heora ægðer onscunað oðer and ægðer wile beon þæt þæt hit bið. (Vol I. XVI. 108-115)

the art of musick causes the man to be a musician, and medical knowledge to be a physician, and rhetoric causes him to be a rhetorician. In like manner also the nature of things causes to every man, that good cannot be mixed with evil, nor evil with good. Though they ae both in one man, yet is each in him separately. Nature will never suffer anything contrary to mix, for each of them rejects the other, and each will be what it is. (Giles XVI.3.450)

The words “racu” and “reccere” not only suggest that Alfred understood the importance of proper and effective speech and communication, but also refer to the practice, study, and knowledge of rhetoric in terms of political power. While critics such as J. A. Giles translate these words to mean “rhetoric” and “rhetorician,” Goddan and Irvine choose the terms, “exposition” and “expositor” to emphasize the role of the speaker and communicator and de-emphasize the connotations associated with the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition (Godan and Irvine Vol II.XVI.25). Nevertheless, the emphasis upon discipline remains the same. Christian leaders such as Alfred endeavored to use their words to eliminate the evil, fleshly desires in men and to encourage and intensify moral, virtuous action defined by Biblical teaching. This was done through praise and censure, and through use of rhetorical devices associated with such epideictic concerns.

It is interesting that Alfred chose to keep Boethius’ references to rhetoric, rhetoricians, and oratorical speech within this passage, using *racu*, which, as Nicole Guenther Discenza observes, is closest to *ratio* or reasoning and speech, instead of *spell*, *bispell*, or *bisn*, in order to indicate “turns in a conversation” rather than guideposts of “logical steps” (70). For Alfred, *reccere* “means both rhetorician and ruler” where the idea of a political ruler is linked with “reli-

gious and rhetorical authority” so that in “Alfred’s hands, the illustration proposes a connection between ruling and learning” (21) as well as linking power, education, and speech. This passage demonstrates that Alfred had an idea of what verbal instruction and presentation required, further revealing that his translation is based upon epideictic rhetoric where evaluating right, correct, lasting, and just behavior and thought is juxtaposed against wrong, immoral, illusionary or unjust words and deeds.

Using metaphors and extended analogies to further condemn immoral action – and in a similar vein to Greek philosophers like Aristotle who believed that humans lost their humanity if they engaged in debased behavior harmful to the soul – Alfred’s translation further states,

Forþam gif þu swa gewlætne mon metst þæt he bið ahwerfed from gode to yfele, ne miht þu hine na mid ryhte nemnan man ac neat. Gif þu on hwilcum men ongitst þæt he bið gitsere and reafere, ne scealt þu hine hatan man ac wulf; and þone reðan þe bið þweorteme ðu scealt hatan hund nalles mann; and þone leasan lytegan þu scealt hatan fox næs mann; and þone ungemetlice modegan and irsiende þe to micelne andan hæfð þu scealt hatan lio næs man; and þone sænan þe bið to slaw þu scealt hatan assa ma þonne man; and þone ungemetlice eargan þe him ondræt mare þonne he þurfe þu miht hatan hara ma þonne man; and ðam ungestæððegan and þam galan þu miht secgan þæt he bið winde gelicra oððe unstillum fugelum þonne gemetfæstum monnum; and þam ðe þu ongitst þæt he lið on his lichaman lustum, þæt he bið anlicost fettum swinūum þe simle [willað] licgan on fulum solum, and hi nyllað aswyligan on hluttrum wæterum; ac þeah hi seldum hwonne beswemde weorðon, þonne sleað hi eft on þa solu and bewealwiað þæron. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXVII.100-116).

For if you meet a man so debased that he is turned from good to evil, you cannot rightly name him man but beast. If you see in some man that he is greedy and a robber, you must not call him a man but a wolf; and the fierce man who is quarrelsome you must call a dog not a man and the false deceiver you must call a fox not a man; and the excessively proud and angry person who has too much malice, you must call a lion not a man; and the sluggish who is too slow you must call donkey rather than man; and the excessively fearful who is more frightened than he needs to be, you can call hare rather than man; and of the unstable and frivolous man you can say that he is more like the wind or restless birds than sober men; and of one who, you see, lies in bodily pleasures, that he is most like fat pigs who always want to lie in foul mud, and they will not wash themselves in pure waters; but even if they are occasionally washed, then they throw themselves again into the mud and wallow in it. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XXXVII. 74)

This passage condemns men who follow after their fleshly desires, a misstep that causes them to become more beast than man. Here Boethius and Alfred compare the sinful man to a wolf, a fox, a hound, a lion, an ass, a hare, a bird, and a fat swine, depending upon the sin. These qualities of lust, gratuitous violence, deceit, immoderation, pride, anger, lack of knowledge and wisdom, timidity, inconsistency, and laziness are clearly being condemned and described in such a negative way to encourage the audience to avoid these traits and behaviors. The symbolic and personified use of animals is a common theme within a variety of other homilies as well, further demonstrated for example in the Vercelli homilies that will be analyzed in chapter five, and also evident in many Anglo-Saxon and medieval works. This rhetorical strategy calls to mind other medieval works from bestiary tales, to beast of battle motifs with poems such as *Dream of the Rood* and *The Wanderer*, to animal symbolism and mythology, and Middle English alliterative romances in such works as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* where, for example, the hunting of the deer, boar, and fox mirror Gawain's battle between virtue and vice when Lady Bertilak tries to seduce him.

In analyzing Alfred's imitation of Boethius' epideictic rhetoric and Alfred's departure from Boethius' tale, the use of rhetoric as a moral tool begins to come into focus, influencing subsequent notions of early medieval rhetoric. For the medieval period, rhetoric entailed repetition, interpretation, and belief instead of originality, argumentation, and discovery. Truth just needed to be awakened, not found. Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation* becomes less forceful and argumentatively structured, revolving instead around the circular stories and repetitive ideas characterizing a Christian rhetoric.

This repetition is founded upon parable and allegory, which are both pervasive in Alfred's translation in contrast with Boethius'. For example, Wisdom often relays a message by



telling a story or comparing an idea with a concrete description or truth. In chapter twelve, Wisdom states,

Se þe wille fæst hus timbrian ne sceal he hit no settan upon ðone hehstan cnoll, and se ðe wille godcundne wisdom secan ne mæg he hine wið ofermetta [gemengan]. And eft se þe wille fæst hus timbrian ne sette he hit on sondbeor. Swa eac gif þu wisdom timbrian wille ne sete þu hine onuppan þa gitsung, forþam swa swa sigende sond þone ren swylgð, swa swylgð seo gitsung þa dreosendan welan þisses middangeardes, forþam hio hiora simle bið þurstegu. (Vol I. XII.2-9)

He who wishes to build a secure house must not place it upon the highest hill, and he who wishes to seek divine wisdom cannot mingle it with pride. And again, he who wishes to build a secure house should not place it on sand-dunes; so too if you wish to build wisdom do not place it on top of avarice, for just as the shifting sand swallows the rain, so avarice swallows the fleeting riches of this world [middle earth], for it is always thirsty for them. (Vol II. XII. 17-18)

This also resembles the scriptural passage and parable where humanity is cautioned against foolishly disregarding God's word like a man who builds his house upon the sand (Mathew 7:26).

Another allegory, parable, and analogy based upon epideictic praising and blaming is,

gif twegen men fundiað to anre stowe and habbað emmicelne willan to to cumenne, and oðer hæfð his fota anweald þæt he mæg gan, swa swa eallum monnum gecynde wære þæt hi mihton, oðer næfð his fota geweald þæt he mæge gan, and wilnað þeah to feranne, and onginð crypan on þone ilcan weg, hwæper þara twegra þincð ðe mihtigra? Ða cwæð ic. Nis þæt gelic. Se bið mehtigra se ðe gæð þonne se ðe crypð, forþam he mæg cuman eð þider þe he wile þonne se oðer. Segað elles þæt ðu wille, þæt wat ælc mon. Ða cwæð he. Swa gelice beoð þam godum and þam yfelum. Ægþer hiora wilnað for gecynde þæt he cume to þam hehstan gode. Ac se goda mæg cuman þider he wilnað, forðam he his on riht wilnað, and se yfela ne mæg cuman to þam þe he wilnoð, forþam he hit on woh secð. (Vol I. XXXVI.107-119)

if two men set out for the same place and have an equal desire to come to it, and one has control of his feet so that he can walk, as it is natural for all men that they can, and the other does not have control of his feet so that he could walk, and nevertheless wants to journey and begins to creep along the same way, which of the two seems to you the stronger? Then I said: 'There is no similarity. He who walks is stronger than the one who crawls, since he can more easily come to where he wants than the other. Say whatever you like, everyone knows that.' Then he said: 'It is similar with the good and the evil. Each of them desires by nature to come to the highest good. But the good man can come to where he wants, because he seeks it rightly, and the evil cannot come to what he wants, because he seeks it wrongly. (Vol II. XXXVI.69)

While this analogy and parable closely mirrors Boethius' position that the base man can never reach the highest good or happiness because he seeks this good through following selfishly after personal pleasure, Alfred re-interprets this passage through contrasting spiritual forces of good and evil. A moral person, though experiencing suffering on earth, will receive the highest good in eternity. In a sense, Alfred is able to "baptize" Boethius' use of sophistic, epideictic judgment into respectability by promoting a dualistic view of life where thoughts, actions, and individuals were either moral or immoral and where relaying the message and reaching the audience became the focus of meaningful communication rather than intellectual adornment or polished eloquence.

As such, Alfred's translation also engages in reasoning through contraries where two opposite statements are introduced "neatly and directly to prove the other" (Caplan IV.XVII.25), as well as antithetical figures of speech where "the style is built upon contraries" (Caplan IV.XV.21). In chapter eleven, Wisdom states,

Sume beoð swiðe æþele and widcuðe on heora gebyrdum, ac hi beoþ mid wædle and mid hende ofþrycte 7geunrotsode, þæt hi beoþ mid wædle and mid hende ofþrycte and geunrotsode, þæt him wære leofre þæt hie wæran unæþele þonne swa earne gif hit on heora anwealde wære. Manege beoð þeah ægðer ge full æðele ge full welige and beoð þeah full unrote þonne hi oðer twega oððe wif [nabbaðh oððe] him gemæc oððe him gemedede nabbað. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XI.15-21)

Some are very noble and famous in their birth but they are afflicted and saddened with poverty and ignominy, so that they would rather that they were of low rank than so poor, if it was in their power. Many are however both very noble and very rich and yet are very miserable when they either have no wife or do not have one who is suitable and agreeable. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XI.15-16)

Here Alfred asserts that wealth and fame do not equal morality or happiness, a key theme found within Anglo-Saxon poetry. Another example of reasoning through contraries and antithetical speech that serve to amplify a passage includes Wisdom's discussion where,

Hwi ne miht þu geþencan, gif nanwuht full nære, þonne nære nanwuht wana and gif nanwuht wana nære, þonne nære nanwuht full? Forþy bið ænig þing full þe sum bið wana, and forþy bið ænig þing wana þe sum bið full; ælc þing bið fulllost on his agenum earda. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXIV. 19-23).

Can you not perceive that if nothing was complete, then nothing would be deficient, and if nothing was deficient then nothing would be complete? The reason why something is complete is that something is deficient, and the reason why anything is deficient is that something is complete; each thing is most complete in its own territory. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XXXIV.54)

Both of these examples display the success of relying upon questions to amplify an issue, and not just questions but questions built upon opposite ideas and thought. This rhetorical device closely mirrors that of dialectic in using logic and questions and answers to find or present the truth. However, while early medieval rhetoric included such dialectic strategies as a rhetorical tool, it did not rely on this strategy to find the truth, but to awaken truth in the audience, for God's divinity was never questioned and was never the subject of argumentation or proof.

The purpose of amplification and exhortation is further evidenced through the use of reciprocal change, where "two discrepant thoughts are so expressed by transposition that the latter follows from the former although contradictory to it" (Caplan XXVIII.39-42). For example, "Forþam þe se anwald næfre ne bið god buton se god sie þe hine hæbbe. Þe hit bið þæs monnes god næs þæs anwealdes gif se anweald god bið" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XVI. 26-28), or "For power is never good, unless he who has it is good. Therefore, it is the man's goodness not the power's if the power is good" (Vol II. XVI.23). Another example is, "Forþam hit bið þætte nan man for his rice ne cymð to cræftum and to medemnesse, ac for his cræftum and for his medumnesse he cymð to rice and anwealde" (Vol I. XVI.I.28-31), or "And so it is that no man comes to virtues and to excellence because of his authority, but because of his virtues and excel-

lence he comes to authority and power” (Vol II. XVI.23). Again, this rhetorical ploy is used to amplify and discuss such vices as love of power and such virtues as benevolence.

In conveying these Christian lessons, the rhetorical trope synecdoche is also used within *The Consolation*, where “the whole is known from a small part or a part from the whole” (Caplan IV.44). In discussing the temporal nature of earthly life, Wisdom states, “Tele nu þa lenge þære hwile þe þu ðin eage on beprewan mæge wið ten þusend wintra” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XVIII.3.89-90), or “Count now the length of the time that you can wink your eye against ten thousand years” (Vol II. XVIII.29). Here the blink of an eye is compared to the passing of time and its effects on the human body, which is a comparison that is also made in scripture (2 Peter 3:9). This lamentation of the transitory nature of earthly life is also apparent in Anglo-Saxon poetry and writing from *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* to the *Battle of Maldon* and *Dream of the Rood*. In this way, Christian rhetoric succeeded in promoting the view that life on earth needed to be cultivated through the nobility of the mind, the heart, and the morality of the soul because all that mattered was human interconnectivity and an individual’s eternal home. Again, the message and its implications were stressed above all, as was the importance of implementing the message into daily life.

Another example of synecdoche states, “Forþam hit nis no to metanne, þæt geendodlice wið þæt ungeendodlice. Þeah þu nu telle from þises middaneardes fruman oð ðone ende, and mete þonne þa gear wið þæt þe nanne ende næfð, þonne ne bið þær nauht anlices” (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XVIII.3.95-99), or “for they are not to be compared, the finite [ending] with the infinite [unending]. Though you should now reckon from the beginning of this world [middle earth] to the end, and compare then those years with that which has no end, then there is nothing in common” (Vol II. XVIII. 29). In this second example, the ending refers to earthly life, which

is being condemned, while the never-ending indicates the spiritual realm or heaven, which is being extolled. Early medieval rhetoric truly imbued words with a spiritual quality that at once explained yet further mystified supernatural aspects of life. For medieval writers, the proper role of communication did not lie in sophistic style or embellishment but in divine inspiration and truth of content and in affecting a moral change in the audience, although amplification and adornment aided this process.

Ultimately, within the *Consolation*, repetition of ideas and a variety of comparisons are the rhetorical devices to which Alfred's translation consistently returns. This leads to a rhetorical strategy known as antistrophe, "repeating the last word or line of a phrase" (Caplan IV.XIII. 19) along with transplacement "repeating one word over and over" (IV.XIII 20) that gleam throughout the pages of the work. In chapter fourteen specifically, Wisdom is also using definition to define humanity and human happiness, amplifying the issue of placing trust in external riches to judge what is and is not real by repeating key terms and phrases:

Þæs menniscan lifes gecynd is þæt hi þy anan seon beforan eallum oðrum gesceaftum þy hi hie selfe ongiton hwæt hie send and hwonan hi send; and þi hi send wursan þonne nytenu þy hi nellað witan hwæt hi sint oððe hwonan hi sint. Þam neatum is gecynde þæt hi nyton hwæt hi send, ac þæt is þara monna undeaw þæt hi nyton hwæt hie sen.... (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XIV.91-96)

The nature of human life is that men are above all other creatures only in so far as they themselves know what they are and whence they are; and they are worse than animals in so far as they do not wish to know what they are and whence they are. For animals it is natural that they do not know what they are, but it is a vice for men that they do not know what they are. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XIV. 21)

Again the theme of vice turning men into beasts resurfaces here, and this passage even relegates sinful men to a position lower than that of animals, an idea promoted by Plato and Aristotle.

Without following after God or engaging in moral behavior, men do not know who they are or why they exist, and this condemnation is felt loud and clear. Subsequently, Christian and medie-

val communication is used to awaken the audience's purpose in life: to live morally for God on earth in order to praise God forever in eternity.

Alfred's translation also spends a good bit of time repeating what has already been said and reiterating points so the audience knows exactly what the main ideas are. Subsequently, the work also engages in transition, recalling what has been said and discussing what is to come (Caplan IV.XXV.35), and refining, dwelling on the same topic but seeming to say something new (IV.XLII.54). In chapter nineteen, Wisdom returns to all his previous themes by stating,

Swa hwa swa wilnige to habbenne þone idelan hlisan and þone unnyttan gilp, be-healde he on feower healfe his hu widgille þæs heofones hwealfa bið, and hu neara þære eorðan stede is, þeah heo us rum ðince. Þonne mæg hine scamigan þære brædinge his hlisan, forþam he hine ne mæg furðum tobrædan ofer þa nearwan eorðan ane. (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XIX.2-7)

Whosoever seeks to have vain fame and useless glory, let him view to the four sides of him how spacious the heaven's arches are and how narrow the place of the earth is, though it seems spacious to us. Then he can feel ashamed at the extent of his fame, because he cannot extend it even over the narrow earth alone. (Godden and Irvine Vol II. XIX. 30)

The futility of man's life on earth is underscored in this passage, along with the desire for fame and glory, which are condemned. All that matters is moral living and following God, for such endeavors will lead to eternal happiness. In his condemnation of the superficiality and short-lived nature of fame and in his condemnation of ignorance, Alfred's translation adheres to Boethius' *Consolation* in referring to Cicero and the fame and power of Rome where:

Hwæt þu wast hu micel Romana rice wæs on Marcuses dagum þæs heretogan, se wæs oðre naman haten Tullius and þridan Cicero. Hwæt he cyððe on sumre his boca þæt þa get Romane nama ne come ofer þa muntas þe we hatað Caucaseas, ne þa Sciddæas þe on oðre healfe þara munta bugiað furðum þære burge naman ne þæs folces ne geherdon. (Vol I. XVIII.53-58)

Indeed, you (Boethius) know how large the empire of the Romans was in the days of Marcus the consul, whose second name was Tullius and third Cicero. He testified in one of his books that the name of the Romans had not yet come over the mountains which we call Caucasus, nor had the Scythians who live on the other

side of the mountains heard of even the name of the city or of the people. (Vol II. XVIII. 28)

While Alfred's translation bathed classical precepts in Christianity, often eliminating and adding from the classical text at will, Alfred's decision to preserve Boethius' reference to Cicero (Slavitt XVI. 53) is a clear rhetorical choice indicating a measure of acceptance, perhaps even approval and familiarity, with classical learning. This is also an interesting passage because Cicero himself, in his *Ideal Orator*, notes the fleeting quality of fame and laments the lack of pervasive knowledge within his lifetime (May 125 II.1-2, 217 II.340b-346). Therefore, quoting from Cicero is a reference to authority as well as an indication that Alfred at least had a cursory knowledge of Cicero and his contribution to the art of rhetoric.

Finally, Alfred consistently returns to praising God, "Eala dryhten hu micel and hu wunderlic þu eart, þu ðe ealle þine gesceafta gesewenlice and eac ungesewenlice wunderlice gesceoþe and gesceadwislice heora weltst" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXIII.142-144), or "O Lord, how great and wonderful you are, you who wonderfully created all your creatures, visible and invisible, and who rules them rationally" (Vol II. XXXIII.51). Here God is praised for his creative power, his justice, and his rationality. In epideictic fashion, the passage goes on to praise God for his goodness (godnes), his might (mihtigra), his immoveable and unchangeable qualities (stille and unawendedlic), his power (anwealde), his lack of envy (nanne andan to nanum þinge), and his wise counsel (forþam ðu ealle god mid ðines anes geþeahte geþohtest and geworhtest) (Vol I.XXXIII). While ancient Greeks and Romans used epideictic to offer praise to their deities, they did not turn praise into a lifestyle. Christianity did. Christian rhetoric relied upon the praise of God for communication between God and man and in the exhortation of others to follow godly principles in every aspect of life.

For medieval writers, praising and blaming were activities sanctioned by God where what was good was of God whereas what was immoral was of the devil and of the flesh and needed to be censured, reproached, and disciplined. Alfred's translation states, "God is full ælcere fullfremednesse and ælces godes and ælcere gesældē" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XXXIV.49-50), or "God is full of every perfection and every good and every felicity" (Vol II. XXXIV.54-55). On some level, to praise and condemn human action was to strive to be God-like and placed one on the path to righteousness. Therefore, such a rhetorical action of using words to praise and blame to connect with and move an audience was sanctioned by religion and was certainly codified within Christian teaching, preaching, and writing, becoming the basis for early medieval rhetoric.

In Boethian fashion, Alfred discusses ignorance and the nature of good and evil (Vol II. XXXVI) or "nanwuht nære wyrse þonne ungesceadwisnes" (Vol I. XXXVI.20-21), particularly in regard to moral Christian action and thought. The passage goes on to assert, "swa hwa swa þonne cræftig bið, he bið wis, and se þe wis bið he bið god. Se þe þonne god bið, se bið gesælig, and se þe gesælig bið, se bið eadig" (Vol I. XXXVI. 171-173), or "Whosoever then is virtuous is wise, and he who is wise is good. Then he who is good is felicitous, and he who is felicitous is blessed" (Vol II. XXXVI.70). The connection is clear: moral actions and thoughts are to be praised and condoned because they lead to and indicate wisdom, goodness, happiness, and blessing, while immoral actions are to be condemned because they do not lead to God or god-like qualities and perpetuate spiritual, moral, and intellectual ignorance. Not only does Alfred adhere to this didactic and epideictic teaching, but he promotes these lessons epideictically, praising and blaming qualities and actions in the same sentence and relying upon classic rhetorical tropes, especially associated with amplification, to accomplish his purpose.



Alfred's translation ends with praising God and giving the matter over to him using the rhetorical device of surrender, where the entire subject matter and work is yielded and submitted to another's will (Caplan IV.XXVIII. 39). Alfred's translation of the *Consolation* begins to conclude with, "Simle he bið ælmihtig forðæm he simle wile god and næfre nan yfel" (Godden and Irvine Vol I. XLII.33-34), or "He is always almighty because he always desires good and never any evil" (Vol II. XLII.95), before stating, "Hatiað yfel and fleoð swa ge swiðost magon. Lufiað cræftas and folgiað þam. Ge habbað micle þearfe þæt ge simle wel don forþam ge simle beforan þam ecan and þam ælmihtgan Gode doð eall þæt þæt ge doð. Eall he hit gesihð and eall he hit forgilt. AMEN. FINIT" (Vol I. XXII. 51-55), or "Hate, evil and flee it as much as *you* can. Love virtues and follow them. *You* men have great need that *you* always do well for *you* always do all that *you* do in the presence of the eternal and almighty God. He sees all and he repays it all" (Vol II. XLII.96).

This epilogue or conclusion follows the structure of the encomium or vituperation, which typically ends with an exordium to the audience or a prayer. Boethius certainly praises God's qualities and discusses the need to pray to God and act virtuously (Slavitt 174-175), following the epideictic format with his consolation, but Alfred, writing from the early medieval perspective, appeals to faith, belief, and emotion rather than logic or reason. In Alfred's translation of the *Consolation of Boethius*, there is both an exordium to the audience to hate evil and love virtues and a prayer of surrender and praise to God. Although Boethius' *Consolation* is not a religious piece of writing per se, Alfred's translation becomes so, incorporating numerous religious sentiments and passages. Alfred's rendition is an apt example of early medieval rhetoric for it displays a melding of classical epideictic precepts and commonplace strategies with the religious

tone and moral conviction of the period. As such, both the praise of the encomium and the blame of the vituperation are blended together to amplify the message.

As B.B. Price discusses, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* is filled with tension between the "Roman and post-Roman emerging medieval cultural," between "preserving and rendering Christian the traditional pagan liberal arts education" (61), and Boethius' *Consolation* proved to be one of the "pedagogical milestones" that "formed the core of the liberal arts curriculum well through the twelfth century" (64), influencing such scholars as Abo of Fleury, Anselm of Canterbury, John of Salisbury, and Peter Abelard. Alfred's translation was based upon his Christian theology and, as Allen Frantzen notes, his "practical experience" as a king, and although Alfred denounced such vices as covetousness, pride, and the abuse of power, he did not renounce power itself (65) and praised moderation and the use of earthly resources for Christian, moral purposes. Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* was immensely popular within the Middle Ages, as demonstrated by the estimated four hundred copies in existence, although King Alfred was the first to translate the entire text into the vernacular (43). A century after Alfred's death, Ælfric relies upon Alfred's translation in his homilies, and "we may assume that others did also" (44). In fact, Boethius' *Consolation* was not translated again until Chaucer's time (45), so the rhetorical tropes and structures found within Alfred's Old English version served to maintain strands of an ancient rhetorical tradition within Old English culture.

In contrast to the *Consolation*, Alfred's version of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care* is clearly a religious piece of writing created to exhort religious leaders, although Alfred's aim in translating this work is the same as with the *Consolation*, to "set all young freeborn people to learning" (Bately 45). The *Pastoral Care* of St. Gregory the Great, or the *Liber Regulae Pastoralis* (Frantzen 22), was an extremely popular work during the Middle Ages (Snell 188) and is

“not only Alfred’s earliest surviving translation but also that closest to its Latin original” (Brown *A Syntax* 11). Unlike the *Consolation*, Alfred was careful to translate the *Pastoral Care* largely word for word, although there are several places where he summarizes.

The reason for such precision is because the *Pastoral Care*, as William Brown notes, was “a handbook for priests” (*A Syntax* 11) and, as Allen Frantzen intones, was a “guide for pastors, a guide modeled on rules for the religious life of monastics and for the secular clergy” (22). As a specifically religious instructional work, the *Pastoral Care* needed no Christian interpretation or additions to make it more suitable for a Christian aesthetic, while Boethius’ *Consolation* was the opposite and not a clear Christian treatise. In both works however, Alfred preserves the classical epideictic structure, while blending the different focuses of praise and blame and adding epideictic elements and figures of repetition and comparison of his own.

The *Pastoral Care* was often copied and emulated, and any rhetorical strategies employed in Gregory’s text would also have translated into Alfred’s work as well as into the speaking and writing of medieval monks and religious figures, whether or not they specifically realized these rhetorical principles for what they were. In reality, the effects of the *Pastoral Care* would have extended far beyond religious leaders in terms of both moral living and fragmented rhetorical usages because through “the agency of the pastors Alfred was ministering to the spiritual needs of the entire nation” (Snell 188). In instructing the religious leaders who instructed the people, the *Pastoral Care* was, in essence, instructing everyone.

In the introduction to his translation of Gregory’s *Pastoral Care*, Alfred greets Waerferth, who is probably translating Gregory’s work here, and he laments the fact that the learning and morality of past ages has diminished and seems almost nonexistent in the present age. Alfred’s translation states, “hwelce wiotan iu wæron giond Angelcynn, ægðer ge godcundra had age

worul[d]cundra; & hu gesæliglica tida ða wæron giond Angelcynn; hu ða kyningas ðe ðone ón-wald hæfdon ðæs folces [on ðam dagum] Gode & his ærendwrecum hersumedon” (Sweet 2.3-6), or “what wise men formerly were throughout the English race, both of the spiritual and of the secular condition, and how happy the times then were through the English race, and how the kings, who then had the government of this folk, obeyed God and his messengers...” (Giles 64). Repeating the word, “Angelcynn” is evidence of interlacement and reduplication, both rhetorical tools that appeal to emotion and particularly pity or sadness, as in this case. Alfred’s translation also begins with a condemnation for the present world and society while praising the morality and learning of the past. Right away, Alfred’s translation of the *Pastoral Care* follows the encomium/vituperation structure, and Alfred’s desire to create this translation is also presented epideictically as he praises learning and condemns ignorance, wishing to place “the great books of the world into the mother-tongue of his people” (Harrison 4).

Alfred continues praising the men of the past for their godliness and learning, while simultaneously highlighting the current situation in England as less than ideal by stating, “Swæ clæne hio wæs oðfeallenu ón Angelcynne ðæt swiðe feawa wæron behionan Humbre ðe hiora ðeninga cuðen understondan ón Englisc, oððe furðum án ærendgewrit óf Lædene ón Englisc areccean; ic wene ðæt[te] noht monige begiondan Humbre næren” (Sweet 2. 13-16), or “So clean was it [learning] now fallen off among the English race that there were very few on this side of the Humber that were able to understand their service in English, or even to turn a sent writing (an epistle) from Latin into English; and I think that there were not many beyond the Humber” (Giles 65). Alfred is careful to really amplify the deplorable conditions of England, which he believes are due to a lack of righteousness and a lack of education, specifically spiritual knowledge. This punishment or consequence for unjust behavior is certainly not part of Grego-

ry's Latin original, and Alfred's prologue evidences clear eligeic themes of lamentation that are, again, part of epideictic communication and a consistent theme within Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Alfred continues, "Geðene hwelc witu ús ða becomon for ðisse worulde, ða ða we hit nohwæðer ne selfe ne lufodon ne eac oðrum monnum ne lefdon: ðone naman anne we lufodon ðæt[te] we Cristne wæren, & swiðe feawe ða ðeawas" (Sweet 5.5-8), or "Think what punishment shall come upon us for this world, when we have not ourselves loved it in the least degree, and also have not left it to other men to do so. We have had the name alone that we were Christians and very few the virtues" (Giles 65). This passage relies upon apostrophe in addressing the reader and moving their emotions. Alfred holds up the past, just like an encomium or eulogy, to be admired and followed in current life, and his concern is for the present actions of men and the present state of affairs. Similarly, medieval rhetoric was very conscious of the present moment, and used any discussion of the past or future to positively influence present concerns, thought, and action. Because it was based upon the present, medieval rhetoric is a rhetoric of change, endeavoring to alter current action and thought in terms of spiritual morality and eternity.

Alfred states that his present society has lost both the wealth and the wisdom of the past ages because current society would not follow the example of the past, "forðæm we habbað nú ægðer forlæten ge ðone welan ge ðone wisdom, forðæmðe we noldon to ðæm spore mid ure mode ðnlutan" (Sweet 5.16-18). Alfred also justifies this transformation of Gregory's Latin into the vernacular when he discusses the translations of scripture from Hebrew to Greek to Latin. The qualities of character that Alfred is most condemning, from the beginning of his translation, are laziness and ignorance in academic study and the failure to follow and learn from the traditions of the past – both mentally and morally. Once more, Alfred indicates that the communica-

tion and rhetoric of the medieval period relied upon praise to emphasize blame and blame to amplify praise, and this is a strategy that ancient rhetoric did not practice.

In comparing St. Gregory's *Pastoral Care* with Alfred's translation, there are quite a few differences in style and communication. Though these differences may be slight, they are significant for mapping an early medieval and Old English rhetorical pattern. Where Gregory's writing is dry, straightforward, and more reserved, Alfred's translation is much more lively in word choice and structure, and he engages in amplification through such rhetorical tools as dialogue, detail, antonomasia, repetition, narrative, and ocular demonstration. For example, in the introduction before chapter one, Gregory writes of the scripturally unlearned and undisciplined, "they seek to reach the eminence of a teacher, they must be deterred from the precipitate venture at the very threshold of this our discourse" (Davis I.1.21), stressing the importance of scriptural and moral instruction for preachers and religious leaders.

However, Alfred translates this passage as, "From the door itself of this book, that is, from the beginning of this treatise, are driven away and upbraided the unwary, who appropriate to themselves the craft of teaching which they have not learned" (Giles 68) or "From ðære dura selfre ðisse béc, ðæt is from onginne ðisse spræce, sint adrifene & getælde ða únwaran, ðe him agniat ðone cræft ðæs lareowdomes ðe hi na ne geleornodon" (Sweet 24). Alfred's passage contains rich imagery, antonomasia, and repetition and reduplication. While Gregory, as part of a Christian rhetoric, certainly praises and condemns, he does not engage in the same play of words, detail, and rhetorical strategies that Alfred and his medieval contemporaries do, again indicating that early medieval rhetoric relied upon classically defined epideictic expressions validated by Christian rhetoric.

Furthermore, Alfred does not hesitate in enlivening Gregory's writing to most effectively reach his medieval audience, as demonstrated particularly in chapter one through Alfred's addition of dialogue, ethos, drama, character delineation, and ocular demonstration in changing Gregory's passage from "as the Truth attests" (Davis I.1.22) to "Of them Christ himself cried out..." (Giles I.69) or "Be ðam Crisð selfa cleopode..." (Sweet I.27). Alfred's writings certainly indicate a greater awareness of audience and a desire to reach each individual with moral instruction, from monks and the learned to the common man.

As Allen Frantzen observes, throughout books one and two of the *Pastoral Care*, both Gregory and Alfred warn rulers and religious teachers against pursuing "any objective without moderation," and this strategy "also creates the dialectical method of Gregory's argument, in which two alternatives are juxtaposed and the pastor is exhorted to avoid the extremes of either and to seek a middle ground" (31). Here again is evidence of epideictic rhetoric in the establishment of a didactic condemnation of excesses and vices in favor of praise for virtues like moderation.

In fact, as with Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, the "concept of the rightful use of power, introduced in Book I, unifies the entire *Pastoral Care*" and also unifies the later discussions on how a pastor should conduct himself enumerated in book two (32). An effective leader, ruler, or preacher should rely upon virtue and shun vice in order to inspire and influence others, and this idea echoes Cicero and Quintilian's notion that an orator should be ethical. However, while these ancient rhetoricians believed that successful orators and leaders also needed to be well versed and well rounded in all arts, Alfred adheres to Gregory's belief where all that was needed for success was to accept and follow God and godly principles. Gone was the emphasis upon human learning and intellect as the basis for eloquence and persuasion,

and this was replaced by faith and reliance upon, and knowledge and study of, God's word and his divine inspiration to awaken moral qualities of heart and soul.

Furthermore, the teacher and the pastor are praised for their learning and important roles, while Alfred condemns those who view the duty of teaching as easy, or even insignificant, and treat this important subject with frivolity. Alfred even translates, "Forðonðe nan cræft nis to læranne ðæm ðe hine ær geonlice ne leornode, forhwon beoð æfre suæ ðriste ða ungelæredan ðæt hi underfón ða heorde ðæs lariowdomes, ðonne se cræft ðæs lareowdomes bið cræft ealra cræfta?" (Sweet 25.I.15-18), or "Why are the unlearned ever so daring as to undertake the charge of the teacher's office, when craft in teaching is the craft of all crafts?" (Giles 68.1). Alfred adds the rhetorical trope of reduplication with repeating the word "cræft," which can mean physical strength, courage, talent, ability, art, skill, virtue, or even trick, and is used to amplify the issue. Here it underscores the sacred dedication of teaching – the role religious leaders must fulfill with sobriety and care – a theme both Gregory and Alfred develop, though Alfred does so with more rhetorical flair.

The text also creates an analogy of teachers to physicians because both can heal. Teachers heal the mind and soul, while physicians heal the body. Both Gregory and Alfred place the teachers above the physicians, particularly spiritual teachers, because physicians do not know how "to begin to heal the wounds which they cannot see" (I.68) or "ðeah ða woroldlecan læcas scomað ðæt hi ong[i]nnen ða wunda lacnian ðe hi gesion ne magon" (Sweet 25.I.19-22). Just as Gregory does, Alfred "stresses self-knowledge and self-examination as requisites to leadership," yet he more skillfully creates these medical metaphors and allegories that link physical illness and deformity to moral depravity, comparing the "cure of sickness to contrition, confession, and



penance” (Frantzen 33). Another analogy is also created where false teachers corrupt the “water” of the people because of their uncleanness,

Ge fortrædon Godes sceapa gærs ge gedrefdon hiora wæter mid iowrum fotum,  
 ðeah ge hit ær undrefed drunken. Sua ða lareowas hi drincað suiðe hluter wæter,  
 ðonne hi ðone godcundan wisdom leorniað, & eac ðonne hie hiene lærað; ac hie  
 hit gedrefað mid hira agnum undeawum, ðonne ðæt folc bisenað on hira undeawum,  
 nals on hira lare. ðeah ðæt folc ðyrste ðære lare, hie hie ne magon drincan,  
 ac hio bið gedrefed middamðe ða lareowas oðer dóð oðer hie lærað (Sweet  
 31.II.1-8).

This rhetorical trope of analogy is often used within medieval writings, as has been noted by a variety of medieval scholars like George Kennedy and James Herric, and here it is used for the sole purpose of more effectively censuring activity viewed as immoral or unacceptable.

At the same time, Alfred/Gregory is attacking the qualities of presumption, arrogance, and pride that would lead any individual to think they could teach spiritual truths without study, divine inspiration, or ability. Alfred’s passages states, “Forðon hie sua ón ofermettum & mid [up]áhæfennesse becomað to ðære áre ðære hirdelecan giemenne, hi ne magon medomlice ðenian þa ðenunga, & ðære eadmodnesse lareowas bion; ac sio tunge bið gescinded on ðam lar-iowdome ðonne hio oðer lærað, oðer hio liornode” (Sweet 27.I.8-12). The expression “hirdelecan giemenne,” or pastoral care, is a key phrase repeated continually throughout the work, and Alfred notes that a pastor can not be affective if their teaching is based upon pride (ofermettum) or vainglory (upahæfennesse), a sentiment mirroring sophistic rhetoric where the speaker’s morality is also judged as a means of further punctuating the content’s message. Similarly, Alfred and Gregory both praise the quality of humility or “low-mindedness” (Giles 69) as both a vital quality of the speaker and an invaluable subject to be taught. Again, the emphasis is on distinguishing vice from virtue in order to reprove those who do wrong and exhort the audience to meditate on godly law and action (Frantzen 34).

Alfred also uses more detailed metaphor than Gregory in order to fulfill this purpose where “Soðlice ða Eagan ðæt beoð ða lareowas, & se hryge ðæt sint ða hieremenn; foðan ða Eagan bioð on ðam lichoman foreweardum & ufewardum, & se hryeg færð æfer ælcra wuhte; sua gað ða lareowas beforan ðæm folce, & ðæt fole æfter” (Sweet 29.I.12-15) or “the eyes are the teachers, and the back is the hearers; for the eyes are in the forward and upward part of the body, and the back goes after everything: so the teachers go before the folk, and the folk go after” (Giles 69-70). In contrast, Gregory simply states, “When, then, the eyes are blinded, the back is bent, for when those who go before lose light of knowledge, certainly those who follow are bowed down in carrying the burden of their sins” (Davis I.1.23). Once more, Alfred’s writing is much more vivid, detailed, and explanatory than Gregory’s, displaying clear and significant differences in writing style, communication, and consideration for audience. Alfred is more imaginative and amplificatory in his adherence to epideictic themes and strategies, and he more fully considers the complexities of his audiences.

There are metaphors that both Gregory and Alfred discuss in the same manner, such as a religious teacher and leader being compared to a shepherd and the people or congregation as sheep. The reason both translations incorporate this metaphor is because it comes from scripture and serves as an appeal to authority. Alfred’s translation states, “Oft ðonne se hirde gæð on frecne wegas, sio hiord ðe unwærre bið, gehrist” (Sweet 29-II.3-31.II.4). If the preacher is not motivated by proper thought and action, the people too will be lead astray and ruled by the same character flaws. For this reason, Gregory and Alfred spend so much time condemning and cautioning against vices and praising virtuous qualities, though Alfred amplifies both praise and condemnation together through rhetorical figures and epideictic structure so both topics become the focus.

Another example of a minor, yet significant difference between Gregory and Alfred's texts is that, in chapter ten, Gregory warns worldly and wicked men against governing and becoming like the Pharisees (Davis I.9.38), while Alfred turns this warning into a simile where, "Ða ðonne [ðe] idle beoð swelera giefra, & ðeah wilniað ðæs ealdordomes, healden hie ðæt hie mid hiera unryhtum bisenum ða ne screncen ða ðe gað on ryhtne weg toward ðæs hefonrices, swa dydon Fariseos: naðer ne hie selfe on ryhtne wég gan noldon, ne oðrum geðafigean," (Sweet 59. IX.17-21), or "Let those devoid of such gifts, and yet wish for supremacy, beware lest they seduce with their bad example those who are going the right way to the kingdom of heaven, as the Pharisees did: they neither cared to go the right way themselves, nor to suffer others" (Giles IX.2.80). Though a small change, the result is powerful. While Gregory warns would-be clergy of becoming like the Pharisees, Alfred blatantly calls such men who wickedly desire power Pharisees, creating a more immediate warning and admonition for the listening audience. This apostrophe addressed to the audience inspires grief, indignation, and repentance, and Alfred's words are meant to divide and persuade the audience more directly, where the reader is meant to feel indignant over false or immoral teachers who care only for their own self interests – just as the sophists and second sophistic educators were accused of doing, leading to Christianity's condemnation of the rhetorical art.

The use of apostrophe, addressing a certain person, city, place, or object in order to stir grief or indignation (Caplan IV. XV. 22), is an effective tool of rhetoric and is often seen throughout this work when Gregory/Alfred address Israel, the priests, and the people of God to inspire them to proper action and thought. Examples include the instruction to the people to "Ne untreowsige ge no eow on unryht hæmen," or "Defraud not one another" (Sweet 99.XVI.14-15) and "sio æ sceal beon soht on ðæs sacerdes muðe" or "the law must be sought in the mouth of

the priest” (91. XV.16-17), along with an admonition to the priests, “let thy priests be clad with righteousness” or “sien ðine sacerdas gegierede mid ryhtwisnesse” (XV.93.14). Apostrophe is also used when the passage addresses God specifically and invokes his name as a prayer and an admonition of help, which is also the rhetorical tool of surrender, giving the issue or matter over to another’s will. These classical figures of speech like apostrophe and surrender were easily subsumed by Christian communicative purposes and adopted within the early medieval communication of men such as Alfred.

The rhetorical trope of definition, a concise technique that grasps the qualities of a thing (Caplan IV.XXV.34), also aids the epideictic structure of Alfred’s translation and is specifically used in chapter ten to discuss what kind of person should teach or even rule, “Ac ðon[e] monn scyle ealle mægene to bisscephade teon, ðe on monigum ðrowungum his lichoman cwilmð, & gæstlice liofað, & ðisses middangeardes orsorgnesse ne gimð, ne him nane wiðerweardnesse ne andræt ðisse worolde, ac Godes anne willan lufað,” or “But every effort is to be made to induce him to undertake the office of bishop who mortifies his body with many hardships, and lives spiritually, and regards not the pleasures of this world, nor dreads any worldly trouble, but loves the will of God alone” (Sweet. 61.X.6-9). This passage does not exist in Gregory’s text and is clearly epideictic in nature because specific qualities are highlighted for praise.

As with all of the *Pastoral Care*, and particularly Alfred’s translation, communication is based upon the present moment and upon evaluating what is and is not correct. Words are not used to evaluate past action, although the past is certainly discussed in order to lend credibility, nor is the future or future action and decision contemplated as the rhetorical subjects. Instead, the emphasis is upon the present moment. Words were strategically chosen to inspire individuals to practice moral and acceptable behavior while avoiding and condemning what was immoral or

unacceptable. This is the defining trait of early medieval rhetoric built upon a classical concept that was at once fragmented yet more fully realized through the moral instruction and divine inspiration of Christianity, forming a rhetoric that validated individual judgment and made the art of communication accessible to all men.

As Alfred does in his translation of Boethius' *Consolation*, he also relies upon metonymy, which uses a similar figure or object to express an object meant (Caplan IV.XXXI.42), mostly in reference to praising Christ and morality and in condemning foolish or un-Christlike behavior. In chapter three, Alfred's translation alludes to God as "Se se ðe ealne ðon[e] wisdom ðara uferrenna gæsta oferstigd & æt worolde ricsode on hefenum, hit is awriten on ðæm godspelle, Iudeas common & woldon hine dón niedenga to cyninge" (Sweet 33.III.12-14). In referring to God as higher than "all the wisdom of the upper spirits" and existing "before the world's ages reigned in heavens" (Giles 71.III), these expressions suggest the object meant, which, in this case, is God, without mentioning God's name. Similarly, synecdoche, where the whole is known from a part, also plays a role in amplifying the subject so certain traits can be praised or condemned. In chapter thirteen, for example, the passage references the "priest's robe" or "hrægl is gehaten" as indication of a priest's duties and the priest's judgment (Sweet 77.XIII.23-24).

In addition, the rhetorical strategy of appealing to authority is so pervasive that it becomes its own type of character within Christian and early medieval works from Christ's words and teaching to specific stories from the Bible. Both Gregory and Alfred's *Pastoral Care* discuss for example King Saul, King David, and Samuel, all in reference to rejecting earthly wealth, fame, and happiness that can dilute spiritual concerns (35.III.14-24). The wisdom of Solomon is upheld in the admonition to obtain unity and peace of mind (37.IV.16-23), and the stories of King Hezekiah and the king of Babylon are examined in order to display how harmful pride can

be (39.IV.2-9, IV.13-24). Each of these biblical allusions appeal to authority, are also relied upon by Gregory, and are done for an epideictic purpose, to teach what actions and thoughts are and are not acceptable in the attainment of divine and ultimate happiness.

Both Gregory and Alfred also reference Mathew 7:23 when Christ says of false teachers “Gewitað from me ge unryhtwyrhtan; nat ic hwæt ge sint,” or “Depart from me, I knew you not” (27.I.23), and Mathew 15:14 discussing “Gif se blinda ðone blindan læt, hi feallað begun on ænne pytt,” or “the blind leading the blind” (29.I.7-8). Such Biblical dialogue and appeal to authority through use of scripture also functions as a type of maxim or saying drawn from life (Caplan IV.XVI. 24) that indicates a degree of wisdom in thought or action. These maxims were also known as *sententiae* within Greek learning, a strategy that both Gregory and Alfred heavily employed and repurposed for Christian instruction.

Two further examples that appeal to the authority of scripture and function as types of maxims or *sententias* are “Ge sint acoren kynn Gode kynelices preosthades,” or “Ye are a race chosen for God of royal priesthood” and “Ða ðe hine onfengon he salde him anwald ðæt hie meahon beon Godes bearn,” or “To those who received him he gave power of being God’s children” (Sweet 85.XIV. 18-19, 21-22). By quoting from the Bible, sermons and homilies not only use “language familiar to many of the congregation” but they draw on an “authority that is ultimately beyond what is commonly considered argument, one based on faith and belief (Leith 20). In this way, the Christian communication demonstrated in sermons and medieval literature is unlike the classical lecture or ancient methods of communication and instruction for “the preacher does not tell the congregation anything new; he or she will be *reminding* it about what it is already supposed to know, and reactivating the thoughts and feelings appropriate to the faith” (20). In addition, medieval rhetoric relied upon the classical trappings of epideictic progymnasmata,

although it merged these forms together in repurposing communication and instruction for religious aims.

Alfred embellishes and uniquely reiterates many maxims that Gregory includes to the effect that Alfred's instruction is more relevant to the sayings and understandings of his period and more pertinent for his audience. For example, where Gregory refers to pomegranates being attached to a priest's robe as a symbol of faith (Davis II.4.54), Alfred changes this fruit to a red apple as the symbol for faith and righteous belief (Sweet XV.94). The alteration is small, yet it demonstrates Alfred's rhetorical concern for audience.

In his maxims and appeals to authority, Alfred often also relies upon other rhetorical devices like concision (Caplan IV.LIV.67); periphrasis, where a simple idea is expressed through circumlocution (IV.XXXII. 43); and reciprocal change, where a saying is easily reversed (IV.XXVIII. 38). One example that Alfred incorporates from Gregory's passage is a quoted rebuke from God where "Dumbe hundas ne magon beorcan" or "Dumb dogs cannot bark" (Sweet 89.XV.17), where Gregory states instead, "They are dumb dogs, not able to bark" (Davis II.4.52). Both Gregory and Alfred rely upon such maxims, though Alfred's were typically more concise and rhythmical and engaged in circular reasoning, conciseness, and reciprocal change in their emphasis upon virtue and carefully choosing one's words. Furthermore, this passage recalls the chreia progymnasmata exercise that centered upon a well known expression or phrase so the audience would more easily remember the point of the message, apply their learning to daily life, and even spread this message most effectively to others, usually even more effectively than the homily itself did through communal and individual recitation.

With these examples, Alfred's translation incorporates, just as Gregory's does, the function of the chreia epideictic exercise that presents an anecdote of a person or saying or both to

offer moral as well as educative instruction (Hock 11). Not only do Gregory and Alfred rely upon the praise of encomium and the condemnation of vituperation, but their Christian rhetoric also engages in the chreia's purpose and structure to further amplify their points. Alfred especially amplified these lessons through such rhetorical devices as repetition and narrative detail, though both Gregory and Alfred typically began their passages by praising God, scriptural sayings, and moral dialogue before discussing and analyzing themes and expressions. These expressions were then contrasted and compared before the meaning was next discussed. While the structure is similar to the encomium and vituperation, the difference lies in the actual quoting of the dialogue and in the use of anecdotal expressions to edify the audience.

Consequently, Christian as well as early medieval rhetoric relied upon an epideictic structure that was based upon the encomium, vituperation, and the chreia format where all three purposes were integrated into one overarching message of divine purpose, instruction, and morality. The aim was to use words that would influence the heart and the soul and reawaken the spiritual truths that connected each individual, and both Christian and medieval rhetoric could not do so without reliance upon the repetition, dialogue, appeal to authority, and praise and blame that both amplified and edified the audience through the platform of epideictic rhetorical communication. Ultimately, Christian and early medieval rhetoric endeavored to evoke long-lasting and eternal change within the audience, unlike the classical tradition that desired to educate, impress, dominate, or entertain.

Gregory and, subsequently, Alfred even caution against the improper use of words and rhetoric by stating,

Se lareow sceal mid geornful[li]ce ingehygde foreðencean na ðæt an ðætte [he]  
 ðurh hine nan who ne bodige, ac eac ðæt he nane ðinga ðæt ryht to suiðe & to  
 ungemetlice & to unaberenlice ne bodige, forðæm oft ðæt mægen ðære lara  
 wierð forlora, ðonne mon mid ungedafenlicre & unwærlicre oferspræce ða heor-



tan & ðæt andgiet gedweleð ðara ðe ðærto hlystað, ond eac se lariov bið gescind-  
ed nid ðære oferspræce, ðonne he ne conn gedencean hu he nyttwyrðlicost læran  
mæge ða ðe ðærto hlystan willað. (Sweet 95.XV.15-23)

The teacher must consider beforehand with careful meditation not only how to avoid himself preaching bad doctrine, but also how he is not to preach what is right too excessively or too immoderately or too severely; for often virtue of doctrine is lost when the heart and understanding of the hearers are led into error with unseemly and imprudent loquacity, and the teacher also is disgraced by his loquacity, when he cannot think how he may most usefully teach those who wish to hear it. (Sweet 95.XV.15-23)

This passage indicates an understanding of rhetoric, not only within the Latin roots of Gregory's culture, but in the Old English period as well. The Old English term "oferspræce" refers to over-talking or talking too much, and indicates the Old English conception that words can both be underused as well as overused. Both instances lead to ineffectual communication, which was of chief concern for religious leaders and preachers whose duty was to ensure their message and instruction effectively reached their audience, typically in hopes of converting or moralizing them for Christ.

Such advice to choose one's words carefully and to pay attention to rhetorical concerns is also given through a metaphor where "Sua eac ða word ðære lare beoð sæd, & hi gefeallað on ða [h]eortan ðe hiera hlyst," or "the words of instruction are seed, and they fall on the heart of the hearer" (95.XV.25-97.XV.1). Gregory is not nearly as concise or clear in his metaphor as Alfred is, stating "The man that hath an issue of seed shall be unclean" and that "in the mind of the hearers the seed of their subsequent thought depends on the nature of what they have heard, since with the reception of speech through the medium of hearing the thought is begotten in the mind" (Davis II.4.55). Such a metaphor is also in the Bible, and is therefore a reference to authority and a Biblical allusion, though, once more, Alfred indicates greater concern for and knowledge of his audience.

In terms of skill in rhetoric, the use of rhetoric itself is not condemned within Alfred's translation because

Ac ðonne grewð ðæt sæd suiðe wel ðara worda, ðonne sio mildheortnes ðæs lareowes geðwænd & gelecð ða breost ðæs [ge]hierendes. Forðæm is niedðearf ðæm reccere ðæt he mæge & cunne oðerra monna inngedone giendgeotan & gewæterian, & hie eac on hiera oðerra monna inngedonc giendgeotan & gewæterian, & hie eac on hiera niedðearfum utane besio. (Sweet 137.XVIII.7-11)

the seed of words grows very well when the humanity of the teacher softens and moistens the breast of the hearer. Therefore it is necessary for the ruler to be able and know how to irrigate and water the minds of others, and also to provide for their outer wants. (Sweet 137.XVIII.7-11)

The author or speaker's moral quality is called into question and remains a vital key to the success of epideictic rhetoric, for if the author or speaker does not evidence or follow the advice of his message, then the words are ineffectual in teaching and directing the audience. Words are a preacher's building blocks and evidence of divine communication with God as well as a personal, moral conviction. Although the emphasis of early medieval rhetoric was on the content and the audience, the character of the speaker could not be neglected, and all three components indicate a rhetorical art.

The careful arrangement of words and careful presentation of the moral character of the speaker are both vital considerations in trying to reach others for Christ or to encourage believers in moral action, although the emphasis was not on the speaker or author's skill as much as on the message itself and how to craft that message so Christian morality would be more closely followed. For medieval orators and rhetoricians, carefully arranged words were seen as a sign of a carefully arranged soul, and it was essential for these speakers and writers to also indicate their morality and understanding. While study was condoned, the ultimate success of a message rested with God and his divine inspiration, leading, and guidance that influenced the hearts and souls of the audience.

Gregory and Alfred continue by discussing how important it is to choose one's words carefully in trying to reach others through the message of Christ, and they both state that not only is it a sin to speak in anger, but it is also a sin to overindulge in rhetoric, and this pitfall is condemned right along with arrogance and anger. For example, Alfred's chapter twenty one states,

Forðæm ðonne ðæs recceres mod wyrð to reðe on ðære ðreaunga, ðonne abiersð ðær hwilum hwæthwugu ut ðæs ðe he sugian sceolde. Ond oft eac gelimpeð, ðonne he to suide & to ðearlice ðreapian wile his hieremenn, ðæt his word beoð gehwyrfedo to unnyttre oferspræce. ðonne sio ðreanung bið ungemetgad, ðonne bið ðæt mod ðæs agyltendan mid ormódnese geðryscead. Forðæm is micel ðearf, ðonne se reða reccere ongiett ðæt he his hieremonna mód suidur gedrefed hæfð ðonne he scolde, ðæt he sona forðæm hreowsige. (Sweet 165. XXI.14-21)

when the ruler's spirit is too severe in reproof, something sometimes breaks forth which he ought to keep silent. And it also often happens that, when he reproves his subjects too severely, his words become perverted to useless loquacity. When the reproof is excessive, the mind of the sinner is driven to despair. Therefore it is very necessary, when the severe ruler perceives that he has afflicted the minds of his subjects more than he ought, for him to repent at once. (Sweet 165. XXI.14-21)

In translating these passages so closely, Alfred displays a firm grasp of the qualities and inner workings of human communication, although there is no evidence as of yet to indicate that he fully understood the rhetorical tradition or commonplaces. However, Alfred is careful to discuss how words need to be tailored to their audiences and arranged in order to instruct and entertain, and the minor differences between his text and Gregory's display that Alfred understood this message very well and implemented its precepts.

Alfred reiterates a Biblical allegory that Gregory also uses to punctuate the proper use of words where one who uses words too severely and too often is like the man in the Bible who accidentally kills his friend with an axe: "Sio æcs wient of ðæm hielfe, ðonne of ðære ðreatunga gað to stidword, & mid ðam his freond gewundað, oððe ofsliehð, ðonne he hine [on] unrotnesse oðð[e] on ormodnesse gebringð mid his edqwite, ðeah he hit for lufum dó, ðæt he geopenige his úndeawas," or "The axe slips from the handle, when too severe words proceed from the reproof,

with which one's friend is wounded or slain, when he is brought to sadness or despair by reproaches, although it is done out of love, to show his faults" (167.XXI.9-13). Obviously the caution is against abusing words and rhetoric, and the exhortation is to use rhetoric in the spirit of hope (tohopa), faith (geleafe), and love (lufu) (167. XXI. 25), a unique Christian creation that found rest in medieval synthesis. Like Christian rhetoric, early medieval rhetoric used words to inspire hope in humanity and hope for eternity, but was consistently focused upon the present moment. For the medieval period, communication involved emotions expressed through actions to unite and better the world.

Furthermore, both Gregory and Alfred rely upon an extended metaphor, allegory, and analogy to further appeal to the audience through imagination and memory. This passage also relies upon the rhetorical devices of vivid imagery as well as periphrasis because the simple idea of humility is expressed through the circumlocution of these definitions and examples, all of which hinge upon Greco-Roman rhetorical devices. Alfred's translation states,

Swiðe eaðe mæg on smyltre sæ ungelæred scipstiera genoh ryhte stieran, ac se gelæreda him [ne] getruwað on ðære hreon sæ & on ðæm miclan stormum. Hwæt is ðonne ðæt rice & se ealdordoom butan ðæs modes storm, se simle bið cnyssende ðæt scip ðære heortan mid ðara geðohta ystum, & bið drifen hider & ðider on swiðe nearwe bygeas worda & weorca, swelce hit sie ongemong miclum & monigum stancludum tobrocen? (Sweet 59.IX.1-7)

An untaught steersman can very easily steer straight enough on a smooth sea, but the skilled steersman does not trust him on a rough sea and in great storms. And what is sovereignty and rule but the mind's storms, which ever tosses the ship of the heart with the waves of thoughts, and is driven hither and thither in very narrow straits of words and works, as if it were wrecked amongst great and many rocks? (Sweet 59.IX.1-7)

What a lovely passage, and so evocative. Such an example of an extended analogy and allegory represents the rhetorical tropes that came to define Christian as well as early medieval writing, and these allegories and analogies truly indicate consideration for audience, word choice, and

word placement, all of which are classic rhetorical issues inherited, preserved, and carried into the medieval world.

In terms of individuals functioning correctly as one body, Gregory and Alfred discuss St. Paul and admonish through another analogy, “Ðonne is sio lytle nosu ðæt mon ne sie gescadwis; forðæm mid ðære nose we toscadað ða stencas, forðam is sio nosu gereah to [ge]sceadwisnes[se]. Ðurh ða gesc[e]adwisnesse we tocnawað good & yfel, & geceosað ðæt gód, & aweorpað ðæt yfel,” or “the little nose is want of sagacity; for with the nose we distinguish odours, therefore the nose is put for sagacity. By sagacity we distinguish between good and bad, and choose the good and reject the bad” (65.XI.19-23). Not only do allegory and the repetition of transplacement and antistrophe, repetition of the last word in successive phrases (Caplan IV.XIII.19), occur, but the purpose of Christian and early medieval epideictic rhetoric is defined. It is through divine wisdom and intelligence that the position and duty of every person is established, and it is through wise words that appropriate thought and action is characterized and upheld so the good can be followed and the bad shunned.

In chapter five, Alfred reiterates the same virtues that Gregory and Christian teaching emphasized, specifically mentioning qualities or gifts that an effective teacher must possess:

Ðæt is ðæt hie gehealdað hir[a] lichoman firenlusta clæn[n]e; oðer is ðæt hi beoð on færhæfdnesse strenge strange; ðridde is ðæt hie beoð mid lara suetmettum gefylde; feor(ðe) is ðæt hi beoð on ælengum ðingum & ælcra longunge geðyldige, & on forebyrde eaðmode; fifte is ðæt hie habbað ða árodnesse & ða bieldo ðæt hie magon anweald habban; siexte is ðæt hi beoð fremsume; siofoðe is ðæt hi beoð reðe & stræce for ryhtwisnesse. (Sweet 41.V.13-19)

These eight traits of keeping the body pure from lusts, strictly abstaining from earthly pleasure, possessing a delight in learning, having patience in every day life despite tedious chores, demonstrating true humility, boldness, kindness and graciousness, and displaying a passion for the cause of righteousness perfectly mirror the qualities of character and physical attributes like

strength, wisdom, courage, and temperance defined in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as part of epideictic focused rhetoric, and are highly praised within this passage as a means of exhorting the audience to act virtuously in this present life to try and redeem fallen, earthly society.

This message is further relayed through interlacement, repeating both the first and last word in a succession of phrases (Caplan IV.XIII. 20), which occurs at the beginning of chapter seven where “Ðætte oft ðæs larewdomes ðenung bið swiðe untælwyrðlice gewilnad, & eac swiðe untælwierðlice monige beoð to geniedde” (Sweet 47.VII.1-3), or “often the teacher’s office is very blamelessly wished for, and also many are very blamelessly driven to it” (Giles 76.VII). While Gregory’s version contains the same rhetorical balance, it is not as concise or poetic, and Gregory states, “there are those who laudably desire the office of preaching, whereas others no less laudably are driven to it by compulsion” (Davis I.7.32). Interlacement exists in both Gregory and Alfred’s passage, but Alfred’s is more memorable.

The idea of blamelessness or having a laudable character is repeated numerous times throughout this chapter, as is humility (eaðmetto or eaðmodnesse), and both are reoccurring themes. In fact, chapter seven ends with questioning the motivation for helping others, and suggests that if a person is so burdened by their own issues that they should not shoulder other’s problems, “He ne mæg his agne áberan, wolde ðeah maran habban” (Sweet 53.VII.1-2). Ultimately, the idea of altruism is being questioned, and it is done so rhetorically through amplification, repetition, and allegory in order to display that humility and blamelessness are essential qualities for teaching and helping others. While it is natural to want to condone and condemn behavior, Alfred’s version of Gregory’s manual is the result of careful study of human behavior and language. Alfred’s straightforward writing is particularly deceptive because the rhetoric is skillfully downplayed, although it is just as potent.

Moreover, epanaphora and transplacement can be seen in several passages, particularly in Alfred's translation, for example in "Be ðæm geðence se sacred, ðonne he oðre mén healice lærd, ðæt he eac on him selfum healice ofðrysce ða lustas his undeawa, forðæmðe he kynelic hrægl [h]æfd, ðæt he eac sie kyning ofer his agne undeawas," or "let the priest remember, when he loftily teaches other men, loftily to destroy his vicious desires, since he has a royal robe that he may also be king over his own faults and royally vanquish them" (85. XIV. 11-14). The word "loftily" or "healice" is repeated through epanaphora to amplify and expound upon the teaching, and the word "royal" or "kynelic/keening" is transplaced to function as both an adjective and an adverb, indicating the sacred office of the priest and teacher.

In addition, the mention of the royal robe functions as a synecdoche to represent the role of power and prestige. Gregory's passage displays neither one of these rhetorical devices and states that the preacher should repress vice and "with kingly power reject them, ever setting his gaze on the nobility of his interior regeneration and safeguarding by his way of living his right to the heavenly kingdom" (Davis II.3.50). Alfred's passage is more evocative, detailed, and vivid in its epideictic lesson for the education of all men, indicating the difference between early medieval rhetoric and that of Christian rhetoric, which was a more focused reliance upon rhetorical structures and an elevated awareness of audience.

Alfred also relies upon reasoning through contraries, reasoning through question and answer, as well as reduplication of phrases to amplify the issue and appeal to emotion or pity, particularly demonstrated in chapter nine where Alfred asks of a self-serving teacher, "Hu mæg he ðonne ðæt lóf & ðone gilp fleon ðonne [he] on[a]hæfen bið, se his ær wilnode ða he butan wæs? Hu mæg he ðonne beon butan gitsunge, ðonne he sceal ymb monigra monna are ðencan, gif he nolde ða ða he moste ymb his anes?" or "How can he avoid praise and vainglory when he is ex-

alted, who formerly desired them when he was without power? How can he be without covetousness when he has to consult the interests of many, if formerly he would not avoid it when he had to consult his own interests alone?" (Sweet 57.IX.18-21).

In contrast, Gregory simply states, "He does not know how to flee from praise when it abounds, if he yearned for it when it was absent. He certainly cannot conquer his cupidity when he is advanced to the sustaining of many, if his own resources did not suffice to sustain himself alone" (Davis I.9.37). Alfred turns this passage into a set of questions to logically underscore the point that vices are appealing and only exacerbated with power. The repetition of beginning phrases or the use of epanaphora serves to emphasize and amplify the issue, and the emotional response sought from the audience is one of concern, outrage, and ultimate agreement that humility is the only motive that should spur one to teach.

With every chapter, there is the introduction of the issue; a discussion of a scriptural figure or passage; an explication of the passage usually through amplification, repetition, and analogy; and then an ending emphasizing God and mirroring the Greco-Roman trope of surrender. An example of surrender within Gregory and Alfred's translation is an ending admonition from St. Paul that functions as a mini-epilogue and follows the encomium structure. Gregory writes, "I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by His coming and His Kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season, out of season" (II.4.55). In contrast, Alfred translates,

Ic ðe bebeode beforan Gode & ðam hælendum Criste, se ðe demende is cucum & deadum, & ic ðe beode ðurh his tocyme & ðurh his rice, ðæt ðu stande on ðissum wordum, & ie lære ægðer ge gedæftlice ge [eac] ungedæftlice. Ðeah he cuæde un[ge]dæftelice, he cuæð ðeah ær gedæftelice, forðæm sio ofersmeung mirð ða unwisan ðe hit gecnawan ne magon, & geded ða spræce unnytte ðam to[h]lystendum ðonne sio ungedæftnes hit ne cann eft gedæftan. (Sweet 97. XV.13-19)



I command thee before God and the Saviour Christ, who is to judge the living and the dead, and I charge thee by his coming and kingdom to abide by these words and teach them both seasonably and unseasonably, again discussing how excessive argument can injure the unwise or unlearned and cause the discourse to be ineffective for the hearers. (Sweet 97. XV.13-19)

Alfred's passage is more detailed, and he creatively returns this passage to an instruction on speaking and communication, indicating the topic that also affected and preoccupied him: creating effective discourse for his hearers. This style of exhortation ends every chapter, and, in this passage, Alfred focuses upon the proper role of words – again displaying epideictic rhetoric in condemning immoderate, angry, and argumentative instruction and communication while praising moderate, thoughtful, and sincere speech.

Each chapter also relies upon a “practical narrative” in which a legendary, historical, or realistic event or trait is discussed, and Cicero indicates in his *Ideal Orator* that this type of narrative is most common within epideictic rhetoric. The entire *Pastoral Care* is built upon reduplication, the repetition of one or more words for the purpose of amplification and the appeal to emotions like pity (Caplan IV.XXVIII.38), where the idea or analogy of being a good shepherd is consistently emphasized, usually in order to appeal to emotions such as pity, but in varying degrees of quality of character. For example, in chapter twelve, the shepherd or teacher is again admonished to be bound to righteousness (ryhtwiesnesse) and to be “Hwæt ðæm hierde ðonne wel gerisð ðæt he sie healic on his weorcum, & his word sien nyttwyrðu, & on his suigean he sie gescadwís,” or “lofty in works, profitable in words, and discreet in silence” and that “for eaðmodnesse hira gefera ælces ðara ðe wel doo,” or “through humility he must be the equal of all well-doers” (Sweet 75. XII.7-9, 12). Here the audience is to appreciate the sacrifice of the teacher and feel admiration, sadness, and appreciation for the speaker's divine inspiration to speak and for the morality of the message itself.

In the last few chapters, and through Alfred's particular reliance upon epanaphora, antitrophe, interlacement, and transplacement with the words "admonish" or "sint to monianne/manienne" and "other" or "odre," the *Pastoral Care* goes on to discuss how to teach and use words to influence different types of people, such as how men should be admonished more severely and seriously than women, that women should be admonished more lightly and through flattery, that the young require zealous admonition, the elderly should be admonished with mild intreaties, the poor are to be consoled and cheered, and the rich should be rebuked (Sweet 179-181. XXIV-XXVI). While these are only a few of the categories listed in the *Pastoral Care*, the way these audiences are presented and the way teachers are instructed to tailor their words and presentation for their audiences mirrors the proscriptive rhetorical doctrines of Greece and Rome as well as Alfred's own personal concerns and goals for his age.

Every piece of advice on how to use words is summed up with a quotation from St. Paul on remembering the examples and words from faithful men of the past in order to "he ða lotwrenceas oferwunne & oferreahte; & eac ða medwiisan to maran angienne mid ðære liðelican bisnunga gespone," or "overcome and confute their guiles; and also to encourage the simple to greater enterprise, with the gentle example" (205.XXX.16-18). For Christian leaders, words were important, but proper actions and examples were vital in order to propogate Christian faith and proper decorum. However, word and deed must harmonize, which is why Gregory, and particularly Alfred, takes the time to discuss proper word choice and appropriate rhetorical approaches for different audiences.

Without a doubt, the *Pastoral Care* is a "scrupulous examination of human behavior" that is more "richly theoretical than most of its readers have realized" (Frantzen 22). The importance of Gregory's *Pastoral Care* to the Middle Ages cannot be emphasized enough. The English

church revered Gregory's writings, and the *Pastoral Care* was referenced by such influential figures and writers as Bede, Alcuin, Ælfric, and Wulfstan (41), who were responsible for shaping and defining medieval thought. Additionally, Alfred's translation was important in its connection to the Carolingian reforms, and subsequent bishops and religious leaders incorporated whole sections into their texts and sermons (25). Alfred's acquaintance and perpetuation of the rhetorical tradition, along with his own rhetorical choices, were not lost on religious leaders, writers, and audiences and preserved rhetoric in a time where many scholars believe rhetoric was lost. However, in the clear adherence to epideictic structure and the rhetorical tropes that are vital to epideictic's success, Alfred's translations decidedly prove otherwise.

EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC AND STRUCTURE IN EXCERPTS FROM ÆLFRIC'S  
*LIVES OF SAINTS AND CATHOLIC HOMILIES*

Medieval figures, intellectuals, and writers do not necessarily need to be coined rhetoricians or orators in order for them to evidence aspects of the rhetorical tradition in their writing or in order to define an early medieval rhetoric. In turning to a discussion of Ælfric, it may be, as Luke Reinsma's pivotal article asserts, that Ælfric cannot be termed a rhetorician per se or that his "debt to the medieval rhetorical tradition" is "less extensive and less clear than students of his work have concluded" (342) because Ælfric was never trained in the art of rhetoric nor did he have access to the myriad of teachings on this classical tradition (343). However, Ælfric's imitation and reliance upon religious writing would have afforded him all the experience he would need in relying upon similar rhetorical precepts such as amplification, repetition, and analogy. Reinsma even notes that Ælfric's reliance upon, study, and adoption of patristic sources lead to his "stylistic and rhetorical habits" (357). Moreover, Ælfric is consistently conscious of how his content and organization will affect his audience, endeavoring, even as Reinsma himself concedes, to instruct them "clearly and simply" as an "author, diplomat, psychologist, grammarian, and administrator" skilled in various methods of communication (342). This concern for audience, along with a deliberately chosen structure and diction, places Ælfric firmly within an emerging medieval rhetoric.

While Alfred is often referred to as the father of English prose, Ælfric is known as the "greatest prose writer of the Anglo-Saxon period," as Christopher Jones notes (2), or even, as Carmen Acevedo Butcher intones, the "most prolific writer of the Anglo-Saxon period" (1) because he was the first to collect and write exegetical commentaries and sermons in the vernacular

(McC Gatch 60). Born sometime in the late 950's (Blake 5), almost fifty years after Alfred's rule, Ælfric is writing from the perspective of a Benedictine monk interested in Christian learning to save souls (Butcher 1), while Alfred's viewpoint was of a king trying to unite his kingdom and encourage all types of learning and knowledge, though focusing particularly on Christian learning. Ælfric rejected the pursuit of knowledge purely for human satisfaction, and he believed knowledge must serve a divine purpose, namely, as Martin Blake asserts, bringing an individual closer to the knowledge of God (50). For Ælfric, education and knowledge were only important if they centered upon and furthered Christian principles, and, while his purpose in writing was a bit different than Alfred's, both men follow the epideictic structure and rely upon rhetorical tropes to do so.

A variety of scholars have noted Ælfric's abundant use of figurative language stemming from a variety of classical sources. Johnie Dunn has discussed Ælfric's incorporation of numerous analogies, extended metaphors, and similes on the topic of the Trinity (33). Carmen Acevedo Butcher has observed Ælfric's "penchant for ellipsis and hypotaxis, that is, his use of subordinating connectives to stack clause on clause or phrase upon phrase (25). Malcom Godden has examined how Ælfric preferred a "more restrained, elegant style, understated rather than overstated, using a precise syntax to create an appearance of simple matter-of-fact statement" ("Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition" 110). John Pope has analyzed Ælfric's use of repetition as "a means of promoting coherence and securing emphasis" (110) and discusses Ælfric's alliteration, as well as his distinct usage of "diction, rhetoric, and tone" that was "mildly ornamental" (105). Whether or not Ælfric had specific knowledge of the rhetorical tradition, he could not help but rely upon rhetorical practices that made communication, and especially Christian communication, so appealing to medieval audiences.

In addition, R.W. Chambers has noted the rhythmical qualities of Ælfric's writing and how Ælfric relies upon alliteration and engages in "more rambling half-lines" (121). Caroline Louisa White also expounds on the Old English love of alliteration, how Ælfric introduced this "popular metrical discourse into his homilies," and how Ælfric "appropriated the universally favorite form in order that the proclamation of salvation might take hold upon hearts with the power of the song of the old heroes, who had been hitherto the moral exemplars of that which was noblest" (80). Ruth Waterhouse has studied Ælfric's syntactical structure built upon the repetition and reversal of clause order in order to condemn unrighteousness and praise morality (4). Lastly, Robert Stanton has pointed out Ælfric's consistent reliance upon three rhetorical formulas – modesty, tedium, and credentials – within his prefaces (136), as well as Ælfric's work with translations as a specific medieval rhetorical invention (139), indicating the tension between the preservation, reshaping, and recreation of texts (146).

Scholars have certainly noted and validated the evidence of rhetorical figures and strategies within Ælfric's homilies, but these have never fully been analyzed in terms of a worldview that naturally relied upon and altered the tradition. Ælfric's homilies indicate ties with the ancient world and the art of rhetoric in their encomium structure that again blends the focus and styles of the chreia, commonplace, encomium, and vituperation. Ælfric's writings and translations also serve to demonstrate how amplification and the figures of diction commonly associated with sophistic, epideictic rhetoric were also the embellishments of medieval rhetoric, though used in a less ostentatious and dramatic fashion.

Ælfric's writing style is famous, and has often been praised, for its "brevity, clarity, and simplicity – the very qualities that readers of his Old English homilies would be prone to detect" (Jones 52). Ælfric's homilies display a conscious consideration for audience, and Ælfric chooses

his words with care in order, as Martin Blake states, to both exhort his audience to morality as well as dispel any heretical notions or unhealthy speculations of the supernatural (43). Ælfric wrote simply and in a direct manner in order to “bring before the widest possible audience the fruits of his learning” (52). Rhetoric requires three basic components: a speaker or writer, a message, and an audience. If all three are present, rhetoric is present; what is left to define are the types of strategies and structures that are being used, whether classical, a combination, or something truly unique. As was seen with Alfred, Ælfric also relies upon a hybrid form of epideictic rhetoric developed within the early medieval world. This unique medieval structure was created from a merging of ancient rhetorical structures, exercise, figures of speech, and rhetorical tropes that adhered to the encomium or vituperation structure with the Christian focus upon both praise and blame. The result was a blending of every epideictic exercise together into the encomium and vituperation exercise, a more serious philosophic focus upon content and truth, and more universal and pragmatic concepts of audience.

In his rejection of “exotic vocabulary, overly long sentences and convoluted word order” (51), Ælfric evidences clear rhetorical decisions in his choice of style and arrangement. While it is highly unlikely that Ælfric “ever enjoyed a court-training or travelled in foreign lands,” he was educated on the trivium and the quadrivium of the monastic schools, studying the grammar and rhetoric available to him “with a keen interest, and all the knowledge of these subjects that he was able to obtain, he transmuted into sap and blood. This is shown by his clear, vigorous, consistent use of language, both English and Latin, and by the flexibility and force of his rhetorical movement in the homilies” (White 71-72). Ælfric’s training in the trivium would have offered him insight into classic rhetorical considerations such as style, arrangement, and figurative speech that are displayed in his homilies. However, and more importantly, Ælfric’s encounter

with religious teachings and writings would have provided him a solid background in Christianized rhetorical figures and tropes such as the appeal to authority, surrendering the matter to another's will, and relying upon allegory. It is inconsequential whether Ælfric can be termed a rhetorician in the traditional sense or not (Reinsma 342), for Ælfric demonstrates that he is capable of instructing and moving an audience with his words, or, as in the case of early medieval rhetoric, using words to enliven the soul and stimulate spiritual truths. It is accurate, as Reinsma portrays, that Ælfric was part of an "anti-rhetorical tradition" in his rejection of ornamental style and his emphasis upon "the plainly told truth" (356, 357). This is the defining element of early medieval rhetoric: moral judgment conveyed through epideictic diction where the focus is on clarity of content and audience understanding. Moreover, it is the early medieval emphasis of the individual and of each individual's comprehension and subsequent actions that allowed the tools of the rhetorical traditional to become accessible to all humanity.

Although many medieval citizens objected to being ruled by the clergy, pastors, and religious leaders, they were certainly influenced by rhetorical moral lessons to the extent that the "values propounded so eloquently by Ælfric may have been disseminated relatively widely, and no church-builder is likely to have been oblivious to the norms of proper behavior set out in the prescriptive sources" (Blair 489). In Ælfric's concern over the lack of learning and Christian knowledge, he was careful to write his homilies so they would appeal to a variety of audiences in order to exhort each individual to follow God and behave morally. Like many religious leaders of his day, Ælfric believed that "the end of the world was near at hand. But instead of making this an excuse for inaction, he found it an incentive to labor" (White 55), trying to convert as many souls to heaven as possible and to present his education and learning to others in a world of illiteracy and indifference brought about through, as Carolina Louisa White recounts, the de-



struction of libraries, the absence of schools, and a lack of teachers and educational centers (19). For Ælfric, communication was an important and sombering task that should constantly focus upon sharing the gospel, encouraging morality, and condemning vice. In fact, only epideictic communication was validated within the Christian cosmology, as life on earth became a matter of great spiritual significance where one's morals, actions, and beliefs had eternal ramifications.

Although Ælfric's primary audience members were priests and religious leaders, his target audience was really individuals living within English society, and, as John Godfrey asserts, by writing to country priests, Ælfric was writing to their congregations (334), influencing them through their leaders. However, in order to influence religious leaders effectively so these leaders could, in turn, influence the laity, correcting doctrinal errors and exhorting godliness, Ælfric recognized the importance of relying upon church fathers such as Gregory, Bede, and Augustine of Hippo (Godfrey 334), upon the power and authority of the Benedictine Reform, upon the Rule of Benedict of Nursia, upon the *Regularis Concordis* (Dunn 11), and upon passages from King Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (Godden "Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition" 104). This strategy of appealing to authority is an often used Christian rhetorical tactic employed to augment a topic in order to praise or blame. Ælfric makes certain to appeal to authority in every homily as part of his condemnation of sin and vice such as gluttony, drunkenness, and imbalance, while carefully expounding upon the nature of God (Godfrey 336) and praising virtuous qualities like discipline, humility, and chastity.

What is "particularly important about Ælfric's use of this theological, historical, and biblical learning is the form in which it was communicated" (Godden "Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition 109), and the rhetorical considerations that gave his translations life, where each homily contained a theological discussion, Old Testament story and commentary, lives of saints,

and a reference to other important church stories (“Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition 109). In discussing the origins of a person, idea, or object; in epideictically amplifying praise and blameworthy qualities; and in creating points of comparison by referencing authoritative figures or rhetorical examples and allegories, Ælfric was able to create his own form of rhetoric that “moved away from the Latin homiliaries of Paul the Deacon, Haymo of Auxerre, and Smaragdus, and the forty homilies on the Gospels by Gregory the Great, which were probably his main models” (Godden “Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition 109). For example, unlike Gregory the Great’s more Roman based view of rhetoric full of austere and succinct yet elevated and exclusive elements, Ælfric relies upon a style that is all inclusive.

Ælfric’s more humble prose is filled with anecdotes from daily, medieval life; filled with narrative details to capture the audience’s imagination; and filled with repetition to make his lessons more engaging and exciting for medieval listeners. Christian and medieval writers and orators, unlike Greco-Roman communicators, endeavored to embrace and teach all individuals concrete principles for life and not just for a future moment in time or to defend or prosecute. Early medieval rhetoric, like Christian rhetoric, is for no one and everyone; it is inspired by God, not man, and it is for all humans, not just the educated or elite.

This mindset and pattern is displayed in Ælfric’s *Lives of Saints*, full of alliterative half-line verses that were “not associated so strictly with the syllables bearing the main stress” like classical poetry was (Chambers 113), were more metrical than his *Catholic Homilies* (White 126), and were focused more upon the general character of humanity (126). Ælfric’s *Lives of Saints* was “written for a more select audience than the *Catholic Homilies*” because, as Butcher observes, Ælfric did not want the stories of saint’s lives to become commonplace and disrespected (9). Nevertheless, Ælfric still creates a more approachable method for instruction than previ-

ously found within Greek, Roman, or Christian writing. Within his preface to the *Lives of Saints*, Ælfric reiterates the fact that his work is a translation, although he lets the audience know that he has not “always translated word for word, but sometimes sense for sense,” treating his authorities and sources with such freedom that his writing can almost be termed an original composition, not just in style, but in content (Pope 150). In fact, those who “study the sources of the homilies discover how little in them beyond the Biblical passages is closely translated, how often Ælfric omits, condenses, expands, rearranges, synthesizes two or more interpretations, rejects one in favour of another, imports examples or parallel texts, reminds us of something he has dealt with more extensively elsewhere” (150). Therefore, while Ælfric certainly imitates and records the rhetorical devices and structure he finds within the Latin works he is translating, he also takes liberties with his translations and weaves together figures of speech in such a way as to indicate that he understood rhetorical principles and considerations.

Within his *Lives of Saints*, Ælfric presents his theme that the “instruction of the layman should not be neglected” (Dunn 1), approaching the task of teaching seriously where the goal was to teach “for man’s salvation” (2). For Ælfric as it was for Alfred and, as will be discussed in the next chapter, for Wulfstan and other medieval writers, rhetoric was not to be used for shallow, fleeting, or purely earthly concerns and was a venue for serious and weighty topics of morality and eternity. Early medieval writing imbued rhetoric with more philosophical considerations added by the philosophy and rhetoric of Christianity, but it did so with an eye toward fully engaging the audience. As evidence, Ælfric’s *Saints Lives* are particularly “saturated with belief in the miraculous,” relayed in the most detailed and epideictic amplificatory terms (Godfrey 337), seen through the use of words and deeds to lead others to Christ and inspire moral living. Because the lives of the saints were read publicly as part of the Church service (Snell 232), Æl-

fric would certainly have understood the importance of captivating his audience, which is why he includes so many figures of speech and why he structures his homilies upon an epideictic structure, so that, at times, it is almost as if vices and virtues were on trial and needed serious evaluation and spiritual explanation in order to save the future of humanity.

Another difference between Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* and his *Lives of Saints* is that *Lives of Saints* is full of much more condemnation than praise, leaning toward more of a vituperation structure, although still engaging in praise. This change is significant because it indicates that while much of the literature of the early medieval period, consciously or unconsciously, relied upon an epideictic underpinning and structure, it is a structure that is not purely classical in either encomium or vituperation but included a combination and comparison of the two, along with the chreia and the commonplace. Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* certainly rely upon praise and blame within the same passage, but the emphasis upon condemnation is much clearer and continually in the forefront of the homilies found within *Lives of Saints* as indicated by such alliterative homilies as *The Deposition of St. Cuthberht*, *Midlent Sunday*, *De Passione Domini*, *Saints Alexander*, *Eventius*, *Theodulus*, *On the Greater Litany*, and *St. Martin*.

As a specific example, XXIV: *Abdon and Sennes, Kings* is written as a poem and opens with a clear use of alliteration, "On Decies Dagym Ðæs Deoflican Caseres" (Skeat XXIV. 1). This homily seems to follow the vituperation format by amplifying a vice and making a comparison. Here Ælfric condemns the devilish or diabolical ruler, while creating the contrast that Abdon and Sennes who "on crist gelyfed...mid soðum geleafan" (XXIV.2, 3), believed in Christ with true faith. The entire work discusses Decies' evil and sinful ways and how Abdon and Sennes remain godly even while being tortured and then beheaded. Then, Ælfric specifically addresses his audience by stating, "Nu we spræcon be cynegum we willað þysne cwyde

gelencgan/ and be sumum cynincge eow cyðan git/ Abgarus wæs geciged/ sum gesælig cynincg on Syrian lande” or “Now we are speaking about kings, we will lengthen this discourse, and tell you yet about a certain king, who was named Abgarus, a certain blessed king in the Syrian land” (XXIV.81-83). This digression offers a virtuous comparison to the previously condemned and immoral figure of Decies, and both examples are amplified to teach Christian views of virtue and vice.

With king Abgarus as a platform, Ælfric next emphasizes and praises the principle of following God’s command no matter the circumstances and relies upon repetition throughout the work to make his point. One example is demonstrated through epanaphora where Abgarus is reminded, “ic sceal ærest afyllan þa þincg þe ic fore asend eom/and ic sceal beon eft genumen to þam ylcan ðe me asende/And ic asende to ðe syððan ic genumen beo,” or “I must first fulfil the things for which I am sent,/ and I must afterward be taken to the same who sent Me;/ and I will send to thee after I am taken up...” (XXIV.119-121). Therefore, within this homily, Ælfric discusses these past actions in order to both condemn the sinful deeds while praising godliness. The purpose is neither to praise or to condemn, but, rather, to do both simultaneously.

Then, Ælfric ends with the standard epideictic epilogue of prayer stating, “þær wunode á syððan/ se soða geleafa on þære landleode/ þam hælende to lofe þe leofað á on ecnysse. Amen,” or “the true faith/ ever continued in that nation,/to the praise of the Saviour who liveth ever in eternity. Amen” (XXIV. 189-191). As with all of Ælfric’s homilies, this homily indicates that early medieval rhetoric is a rhetoric of the people and a rhetoric of character. The focus is not on future decisions and actions, although those are included, or on defending a person, idea, or claim, but on highlighting present actions that lead to either joy or suffering. Early medieval

rhetoric endeavored to add solidarity to words and messages just as Christianity added direction and significance to the soul's interactions on earth by discussing their eternal ramifications.

In a similar vein, *XXV: The Maccabees* is again written like a poem, opening with a discussion of Alexander, “se egefulla cyning” (XXV. 1) who divided his land among other evil kings, one of which was the worst of all, irreverent and proud, named Antiochus, “An ðæra cyn- inga wæs heora eallra for-cuðost/ arleas and upp-ahafen Antiochus gehaten” (XXV. 6-7). Using the epideictically blended structure of encomium and vituperation, Ælfric amplifies and condemns evil action and thought before creating a comparison of virtue or righteousness. Ælfric goes on to discuss how Antiochus defiled and despoiled God's temple in Jerusalem, “be-reafode godes templ goldes and seolfres” (XXV.10), and that he killed many people of the town, “ofsloh þæs folces fela on ðære byrig” (XXV. 13).

After condemning these wicked actions, Ælfric introduces a comparative figure and foil, a faithful scribe, “geleafful bocere,” named Eleazar who was “har-wencge and eald” (XXV.32,33) and refused to swallow unclean food, “Þa wolde eleazarus werlice sweltan/ ærðan þe he godes æ forgegan wolde/and nolde forselgan ðas spices snæd/ þe hi him on muð bestungon forðan þe moyses for-bead/ swyn to etenne,” or “Then would Eleazar manfully die/ rather than he would transgress God's law,/ and would not swallow the bit of the bacon/ which they stuck in his mouth, because Moses forbade [them]/ to eat swine” (XXV. 85-89). Eleazar is killed for his faith, and Ælfric describes how other believers are also tortured and killed. Ælfric praises the faith of these martyrs. Only now does Ælfric introduce Judas Machabeus who fought against this injustice and was a champion of Christian faith, raising an army and killing and routing the heathen, “hæðenan” (XXV. 385). Judas is used as a principle or example for how those who lead a

righteous life attain God's power and favor, and serves as another point of comparison to augment and amplify the topic.

Next, Ælfric amplifies the past actions of Antiochus and Judas before proving that God is a God of justice,

Betwux þysum ferde se fore-sæda Antiochus/ to persiscre þeode mid micclum þrymme/ wolde þær ofer-winnan sume welige burh/ ac he wearð þanon afliged and fracodlice ætbærst/and mid micelre angsumnysse of þam eared gewende/to babilonian werd and him wearð þa gecydd/ hu iudas ofer-feaht his fynd mind wæpnum/and hu he geclænsod hæfde þæt halige godes teml/fram eallum þam fylðum þe he fyrnlice þær arærde/ wearð þa geang sumod and eac ge-untrumod/ forðam ðe him god gram wæs and he grimetode egeslice/ secgende and seðende þæt him swa gelumpen wæs/ forðan ðe he godes templ tawode to bysmore/and ða geleaffullan wolde of heora lande adylegian/ Him weollon þa wurmas of ðam [gewitnodan] lichaman/and he stanc swa fule þæt man hine ferian ne mihte/and he ða yfel and earmlice ge-endode. (XXV.530-546)

About this time went the foresaid Antiochus/ to the Persian people with great strength;/ he would there overcome a wealthy city;/ but he was chased thence and shamefully escaped,/ and with much anxiety out of the country turned/towards Babylon; and it was there told him/how Judas overcame his enemies with weapons,/ and now he had cleansed the holy temple of God/ from all the abominations that he formerly set up there./ He was then vexed, and eke afflicted with sickness,/because God was angry with him, and he raged terribly,/ saying and affirming that it had so happened to him,/ because he treated God's temple reproachfully,/ and would destroy the faithful ones out of their land./ Then worms rose out of him, out of his afflicted body,/ and he stank so foully that no one could carry him,/ and he then evilly and miserably ended (his life). (XXV.530-546)

This passage displays narration as well as climax in its depiction of how the evil receive their just end, and it serves as a warning for those who would reject the morality of Christ and his servants.

True to epideictic form, Ælfric creates a background by recounting how the same pattern of events occurred with Antiochus' son, Eupator, who, along with his priest Alcimus, tried to kill Judas. Ælfric also mentions the many evil men Judas and his army overcame before Judas was himself killed. Ælfric then praises just or *justum* war,

and we sceolon winnan wið þa wælhreowan fynd/þæt synd ða ungesewenlican  
 and þa swicolan deofla/þe willað ofslean ure sawla mid leahtrum/wið ða we sceo-  
 lon winnan mid gastlicum wæpnum/and biddan us gescyldnysse simle æt  
 criste/þæt we moton ofer-winnan þa wælhreowan leahtras/and þæs deofles ti-  
 htunge þæt he us derian ne mæge/þonne beoð we godes cempan on ðam gastlican  
 gefeohte/gif we ðone deofel forseoþ þurh soðne geleafan/and þa heafod-leahtras  
 þurh gehealtsumnysse/and gif we godes willan mid weorcum gefremmað/þæt  
 ealde godes folc sceolde feohtan þa mid wæpnum/ and heora gewinn hæfde hali-  
 gra manna getacnunge/þe to-dræfað þa leahtras and deofla heom fram.  
 (XXV.690-703)

we ought to strive against the cruel enemies,/that is, the invisible ones, and the  
 deceitful devils,/that wish to slay our souls with vices./Against them we should  
 fight with ghostly weapons,/and pray for protection for us, continually, of  
 Christ;/that we may overcome the cruel iniquities,/and the devil's enticement, that  
 he may not harm us;/Then shall we be God's champions in the spiritual battle,/if  
 we despise the devil, through true belief,/and the chief vices [cardinal sins],  
 through self-control,/and if we perform God's will with our works/The ancient  
 people of God had to fight then with weapons,/and their contest had the signifi-  
 cation of holy men/who drive away vices and devils from them. (XXV.690-703)

With this passage, Ælfric creates an analogy where the battle is no longer an earthly one but a  
 spiritual, invisible war waged through morality, prayer, and praise. Ælfric uses antonomasia in  
 referring to the enemies as invisible ones or “ungesewenlican,” and establishes a very dualistic  
 worldview where those who are moral continually wage a spiritual battle against the immoral in  
 trying to do good deeds on earth and convert others to Christianity.

As the homily concludes, Jonathan, the priest Onias, and king Seleucus are also praised  
 for helping the poor while Apollonius is condemned for being greedy and a liar. Ælfric ends his  
 homily with, “Oft is geswutelod hu god gescylde þæt folc/wið heora wiþer-sacan gif hi wurðo-  
 don hine/and swa oft swa hi gescynde and swyðe gewitnode/Sy wuldor and lof þam wel-  
 willendan gode/á on ecnysse we cwepað,” or “Oft is it manifested how God protected the peo-  
 ple/against their opponents, if they worshipped him;/and as often as they bent aside from His  
 worship in any wise,/then were they put to shame, and greatly punished/Be glory and praise to  
 the benevolent God,/ever to eternity; we will say –Amen” (XXV.806-811). As part of the homi-



lietic structure, the epilogue exhorts the audience to morality and prayer and ends with a prayer of praise and surrender to God, emphasizing the fact that God should continually be praised for his qualities and that humanity should strive to emulate Him. In essence, life should be lived epideictically with God at the center.

Correspondingly, *XXVI: St. Oswald, King and Martyr* begins by praising King Oswald who believed greatly in God, “gelyfed swyþe on god” (XXVI. 3) and was baptized, “gefullod” (Skeat XXVI.5), comparing, in epideictic format, Oswald to King Cadwalla who “sloh and to sceame tuode/ þa nordhymbran leode æfter heora hlafordes fylle/ oþ þæt oswold se eadiga his yfelnysse adwæscte,” or “slew and shamefully ill-treated the Northumbrian people after their lord’s fall, until Oswald the blessed extinguished his wickedness” (XXVI.11-13). This homily’s focus is on praising Oswald for his moral deeds and virtue, and the comparison to evil Cadwalla is meant to amplify Oswald’s virtuous deeds. Ælfric also discusses how Oswald was able to convert the kings and peoples of Scotland including the “peohtas and bryttas Scottas and angle” or Picts, Britons, Scots, and Angles (XXVI.106) before he was slain by the Mercian King Penda who “ne cuðe be criste nan þing” or knew nothing of Christ (XXVI.153). Oswald’s right hand remained whole, enshrined in a Church, and many were healed by its holy merits, “and þær wurdon gehælede þurh his halgan gearnunge” (XXVI.190-192), including a paralyzed maiden. The message becomes clear: a moral life will be rewarded in heaven and on earth, even after death. Ælfric’s defense of moral living almost resembles a trial, and virtue is found to always be rewarding and worthwhile.

Ælfric ends by appealing to the authority of Bede, “Nu cwæð se halga beda þe ðas boc gedihte/ þæt hit nan wundor nys þæt se halga cynincg/ untrummysse gehæle nu he on heofonum leofað/ for ðan þe he wolde gehelpan þa þa he her on life wæs/ þearfum and wannhalum and him

bigwiste syllan,” or “Now saith the holy Bede who indited this book, it is no wonder that the holy king should heal sickness, now that he liveth in heaven, because he desired to help, when he was here on earth, the poor and the weak, and to give them sustenance” (XXVI. 272-276) and with a prayer of surrender and thanks for the miraculous deeds performed by Oswald’s bones in Mercia and Gloucester, “Sy þæs wuldor þam ælmihtigan gode/ ðe on ecnysse rixað a to worulde. Amen,” or “For this be glory to the Almighty God,/ who reigneth in eternity for ever and ever. Amen” (XXVI.287-288). The ending prayer of surrender leaves little room for argument because, as has been discussed, addressing the supernatural at the end of a message was seen as imbuing the message itself with supernatural power and validity. Ælfric not only uses this epilogue style as an appeal to authority and because it became standard Christian fare, but he continually relies upon this type of conclusion because he realizes how successfully it punctuates his message and affects his audience.

As proof that epideictic rhetoric can also be used to focus on and praise an object, *XXVII: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross* begins with a song of praise to the “halgan rode” (XXVI.3) and is an encomium highlighting the power of the cross. The homily discusses how a portion of the cross left in Jerusalem was captured by “an impious king called Cosdrue” or “and sum arleas cynincg cosdrue gehaten” (XXVI.22). Then a Christian emperor named Eraclius defeated Cosdrue’s son, baptized the people, and beheaded Cosdrue for his unbelief, returning the rood to Jerusalem. True to an encomium format, the homily begins with a description of the rood, its discovery, and its division into parts. Then a favorable comparison is made to Eraclius, and the audience is exhorted to be “biddende forgifennysse mid wope and heofunge,” or praying for forgiveness with weeping and lamentation (XXVI.212) before the homily ends with an epilogue of prayer, “Sy wuldor and lof þam wel-willendan gode/ se ðe æfre roxað on ecnysse. Amen,” or

“Glory and praise be to the benevolent God, who reigneth ever eternally. Amen” (XXVIII.218-219). This homily relies upon personification and reduplication in its epideictic structure, displaying how the cross was made holy because it was willingly used by Christ, again a moral lesson of instruction to Ælfric’s audience.

As further proof that Ælfric’s homilies within his *Lives of Saints* tend to discuss and condemn vice before introducing virtue and then comparing the two by merging the encomium and vituperation styles, *XXVIII: St. Maurice and his Companions (The Thebæan Legion)* contains an introduction specifically condemning the Emperor Maximian for being a heathen,

Maximianus hatte sum hæden casere/ se ferde to franc-lande mid mycelre fyr-  
dinge/ wolde gewyldan mid wige þa leoda/ þe wiþer-ræde wæron and his rice for-  
sawon/ se casere wæs cene and reðe/ and deofol-gild be-eode and dwollice lib-  
bende/ and acwealde godes men mid micelre reðnysse. (XXVIII.1-7)

There was a certain heathen Emperor hight Maximian,/ who fared with a great  
force to the Frankish land [Gaul],/ desiring to subdue by war the tribes/ who were  
rebellious and had renounced his rule./ The Emperor was keen and cruel,/and prac-  
ticed idolatry, living as a heretic/ and killed God’s servants with great cruelty.  
(XXVIII.1-7).

Although this homily begins by condemning vices, its purpose is to praise virtue and martyrdom. Again, early medieval rhetoric often melded the two purposes of vituperation and encomium together, which was easily done because their structures and considerations were the same. As with the encomium structure, this epideictically based homily begins with description of history and deeds, and, in this case, it condemns and criticizes immorality and vices such as cruelty and idolatry.

Then, the homily quickly introduces a comparison to immorality with men of virtue worthy of praise, “Þa wæron on þære fyrde fela cristene menn/ and an synder-lic eorod of easternum leodum,” or “There were in the army many Christian men/ and on especial Legion from Eastern nations” (XXVIII.8-9) where “On þam floccce wæron þa fyrmestan menn/ mauricius ærest and

exuperius/candidus and uitalis and fela oþre to him/ and hi wæron gefeþlæhte on fæstum geleafan,” or “In this flock the foremost men/ were Maurice the chief, and Exuperius, Candidus and Vitalis, and many others besides them, and they were associated in steadfast faith” (XXVIII. 17-20). Each of these men were martyred, “and þa godes þægnes mid glædnysse eþston/astræhton heora swuran to slæge for criste/ and noldon mid wæpnum swa winnan him togeanes/ ac eþstan to geflites to þam anþræcum swurdum,” or “and the servants of God hastened with gladness,/ stretched out their necks to the death for Christ,/ and would not with their weapons strive against them,/ but hastened with emulation to the terrible swords” (XXVIII.70-73). The actions here are relayed through hyperbole and as an example to the audience how praiseworthy and rewarding it is to be martyred on earth in order to have eternal reward in heaven.

Lastly, in probably one of the longest instructional epilogues of all his homilies, Ælfric makes the point of the homily apparent:

ac uton þencan georne þonne we þyllic gehyrað/ þæt we þe beteran beon þurh þa boclican lare/ We sceolon swincan and ofer-swyðan unþeawas/ mid godre drohtnunga godes rice ge-earnian/þæt we mid þam halgum þe we heriað nu/ blissian moton þeah we martyras ne beon/ We sceolon geþencan hug e-þyldige hi wæron/ þa þe for cristes naman ge-cwylmede wæron/ hi man swang mid swipum and on sæ adrincte/ oððe on fyre forbærnde oþþe forðwyrftum limum/to wæfersyne tucode mid gehwilmum witum/ and on ælcum wawan hi wæron geþyldige/ and ælcne hosp hi for-bæron for þæs hælendes naman/ Nu synd we swa asolcene þæt we swincan nellað/ nan þincg fornean ne urum lustum wiðcweþan/ wið þam þæt we moton þa micclan geþincða/ habban on heofonum mid þam halgum martyrum/ne we nellað forberan an bysmorlic word/ for ures drihtnes naman swa swa we dón sceoldon/ ac butan ge-þylde and þeawfæstnysse we yrsiað/ swa swa leo and lythwon þencað hu we earmingas sceolon/ æt þam ælmihtigan gode ænige miltsunge begitan/ nu we swa recelease syndon and swa reþe us betwynan (XXVIII.119-141)

But let us think earnestly, when we hear the like,/ that we may be the better by means of bookish lore./ We have to toil, and overcome evil habits/ by a good service, to earn God’s kingdom;/ that we may rejoice with the saints/whom now we praise, though we be not martyrs./ We must consider how patient they were/ those who for Christ’s name were killed;/ men scourged them with whips and drowned them in the sea,/or burned them in the fire, or with tortured limbs/ tormented them

for a spectacle with every punishment;/ and in every woe they were patient,/and bore every contumely for the Savior's name./ Now we are so slothful that we will not labour/in hardly anything, nor deny our lusts/ in order that we may have in exchange those great dignities/in heaven, together with the holy martyrs;/ neither will we bear one contemptuous word/ for our Lord's name, as we ought to do,/ but without patience and constancy we grow angry/ as a lion, and scarcely consider how we, miserable men/are to obtain any mercy from Almighty God,/ now that we are so reckless and so fierce amongst ourselves. (XXVIII.119-141)

This conclusion exhorts the audience to seek after book knowledge, using the rhetorical trope of definition to define what it takes to enter God's kingdom – namely faith, good works, and the pursuit of godly knowledge. This passage also engages in evocative language with detailed descriptions of tortured martyrs and employs reduplication in its repetition of words and phrases to emphasize the overall theme of morality and godliness and stir the reader's emotions.

Ælfric also condemns those who grow angry and impatient like a lion, using the simile to amplify his condemnation. And, once more, the homily ends with a prayer, “Uton forþy awendan urne willan to gode/ and to þam ecan life ure smeagunge nu/ þæt we eft moton þær æfre wunian/ swa swa crist sylf behet þam þe hine lufiað/ þam is wuldor and wurdmynt á to worulde Amen,” or “Let us therefore now turn our wills to God,/ and our contemplation of the eternal life,/ that we afterward may dwell there for ever;/even as Christ Himself promised to them that love Him./ To whom is glory and worship for ever and ever. Amen” or (XXVIII.174-178). This specific request for action is accomplished by addressing the audience and relying upon apostrophe.

Another homily where the encomium structure is evident is XXX: *Passion of St. Eustace and His Companions* that is written in prose and praises the faith and steadfastness of Eustace. The homily opens with a scene from Trajan's reign, discussing Placidus, a military tribune who was a worshipper of idols (XXX.1-4) but “Wæs he soðlice on ri-

htwisnyse weorcum and on eallum godum weorcum” or adorned with righteous and good works (XXX4-5). Ælfric details how Placidus was lead to Christ through a personified, speaking hart or deer and then lead his family to Christ and repented of idolatry, becoming known as Placidus Eustachius.

What follows is a detailed discussion of Eustachius’ torment and suffering on earth – much like Job – where Eustochius loses his servants to disease, his wealth to thieves, his wife to another man, and his two children seemingly to wild beasts: a lion and a wolf. However, all the suffering is ended when Eustachius’ wife becomes an heir to fortune, his two sons show up as knights alive at her doorstep, and Eustachius travels to the town as the commander of soldiers. Such a narrative structure is filled with detail and dialogue that creates the illusion that these events are happening before the audience, using ocular demonstration – when “an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass vividly before our eyes” (Caplan IV. LV 68). As the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* teaches, this rhetorical tool effectively sways the audience through imagery and narration, appealing to imaginative sensibilities and affecting, even if unconsciously, the audience’s emotions and logic. Within his homilies, Ælfric relies upon ocular demonstration for its emotional appeal and to awaken spiritual passion and truth in his audience.

Although Eustace and his family are captured and tortured, the message remains, “Witodlice ealle þa ðe gearniað and mærsiað heora gemynd and hi gecigað to fultume hi begitað þa god þe þam halgum behatene synd þurh ða gife ures drihtnes hælendes cristes. Ðam sy wuldor and miht on worulda woruld á on ecnyse. Amen,” or “Verily all those who are worthy, and glorify their memory, and call them to their assistance, such men

shall obtain the good things which are promised to the Saints through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory and power to ages of ages, ever in eternity. AMEN” or (Skeat XXX. 469-473). The exordium to right action and morality is, once again, the focus, and Eustace was blessed because of his faith and steadfast morality. The homily ends with a prayer of surrender and praise to God, which, as has become evident, lends the homily the necessary supernatural direction and weight.

As further evidence of a unique rhetorical pattern within Ælfric’s homilies, *XXXI: St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor* opens with an introduction that discusses history where a “writere” named Sulpicius recorded the miracles and deeds of St. Martin (XXXI.1). This homily closely follows the encomium pattern as it describes Martin’s origin and upbringing with country and parents,

Martinys se mara bisceip wæs geboren on þam fæstene/ sabaria gehaten pan-  
noniscra scire/ and on ticinis he wæs afed italian lands/ He com of hæðenum  
magum æþelborenum swaðeah/ of wurdfulre mægðe æfter woruld-þingum/ his  
fæder wæs ærest cempa and eft ecpena ealdor. (XXXI.10-15)

Martin the great bishop, was born in the fortified town/ called Sabaria, in the  
province of Pannonia,/ and was brought up in Ticinum (Pavia) in the Italian land/  
He came of heathen parents, but nevertheless was noble,/ of honourable kindred  
in worldly things;/his father was first a soldier and afterward a captain of soldiers.  
(XXXI.10-15)

It is also interesting that this passage sets up a contrast where Martin’s family were heathens, although Martin himself was not, which is a comparison and contradiction that further serves to underscore Martin’s morality and praiseworthy attributes.

The next step in the encomium structure is a description of the person’s education and interest,

and martinus wæs gewenod to wæpnum fram cild-hade/ and camp-dome fyligde  
betwux larlicum gefylcum/ ærest under Constantine þam æþelan casere/ and eft  
under iuliane þam arleasan wiðer-sacan/ na swaþeah sylf-willes forþan þe he fram

cild-hade wæs swyðor/ onbryrd þurh god to godcundlicum þeow-dome/ þonne to woruldlicum campdome swa swa he cydde syððan. (XXXI.16-22)

and Martin was accustomed to weapons from childhood,/ and followed war amongst the soldiers in training;/ first under Constantine the noble emperor/ and again under Julian the wicked apostate;/ nevertheless, not of his own will, because that from childhood/ he was rather/ instigated by God to divine service/ than to worldly warfare, even as he afterward shewed. (XXXI.16-22)

Martin was trained in warfare, although his interests lead him to divine service. And, when he turned ten, he was anointed into God's service and trained and educated in monasteries and churches, as Ælfric writes,

þa ða he wæs tyn wyntra þa weard he gecristnod/ his maga unþances and on wundorlicum gamete/ sona to godes þeowdome he wæs eall gehwyrfed/ and þa þe he wæs twelf wintra he ge-wilnode to westene/ and he hit eac gefremode gif he þa ylde hæfde/ His mod wæs swa-þeah æfre embe mynstru smeagende/ oþþe embe cyrcan and godes gesetnyssum/ he smeade þa on cild-hade þæt he siððan gefremode. (XXXI.23-30)

The rest of the homily is about Martin's decisions, deeds, and miracles, such as healing the infirmed and dead and surviving countless mishaps and attacks, even fire. These are just incredibly fanciful and detailed events that demonstrate the utmost respect for and trust in Martin the saint. This homily again reveals that early medieval rhetoric is a rhetoric of exhortation and amplification designed to inspire spiritual truth and godly living in every individual.

At this point, a comparison is usually made to amplify the virtues of the person being described. In this case, it is a variety of comparisons: Martin's father, who denounces him because of envy, "martinus þa weard ameldod fram his fæder/ þe on his weorcum andode" (XXXI. 34-35); an angry emperor Julian who leaves Martin armorless and weaponless, "wæpn-læs" (XXXI.117), among the heathen, "hæðenum" (XXXI. 117), although Martin was granted victory; a demon he meets in human form, "ænne deofol/ on menniscum híwe" (XXXI.170-171); and a variety of other moral and immoral leaders, priests, and people. Martin eventually dies of an illness, although "His lic weard ge-sween sona on wuldre/ beorhtre þonne glæs hwittre þonne



meolc/ and his andwlita scean swiþor þonne leoht/ þa iu ge-wuldrod to þam to-werdan æriste,” or “His body forthwith appeared in glory,/ brighter than glass, whiter than milk,/ and his countenance shone more than light,/ then already glorified for the future resurrection” (XXXI.1377-1381). The comparison made through analogy and asendyton, repetition of similar ideas, serve to amplify the eternal reward Martin’s body received on earth for his good deeds. Of course, Martin’s miraculous deeds are recorded even after his death, and he reportedly even appeared to Bishop Ambrose in a dream.

Finally, the homily ends with an epilogue or exordium that is, not surprisingly, a prayer of surrender to God, “Sy wuldor and lof þam wel-willendan scyppende/ þe his halgan sacred swa geglengde mid wundrum/ se þe on ecnysse rixaþ ælmihtig wealdend. Amen,” or “Be glory and praise to the benign Creator/ Who so adorned His holy priest with miracles;/ Who reigneth in eternity, Almighty Ruler. Amen” (XXXI.1493-1495). Martin’s life stands as an example of praiseworthy conduct and is a type of encomium full of narration and rhetorical tropes where human observation and words attempt to present and explain spiritual principles. While presenting the consequence for disobedience and disbelief, early medieval rhetoric also exhorted the audience to belief and faith and was therefore more emotional and individualized than classical rhetoric. This is also displayed in the last line where God is ever praised for his mercy and love, despite earthly confusion or hardship.

Another significant *Lives of Saints* homily that solidifies early medieval usage of a classically designated rhetorical pattern is XXXII: *Passion of St Edmund, King and Martyr* that begins with the tale of how saint Edmund’s life and miracles were recorded and turned into English before discussing Edmund’s origins – country and family – “se eadiga eastengla cynincg” (XXXII. 13), king of the East Angles; his monastic education; and his virtuous qualities: he was “ead-

mod and geþungent,” (XXXII. 16), humble and devout as well as “cystig wædlum and wydewum swa swa fæder,” or “bountiful to the poor and to the widows even like a father” (XXXII.22). Next is the comparison or contrast to someone else to amplify these virtues, and, in this homily, it is Hingwar and Hubba, who are labeled as evil, “geanlæhte þurh deofol” (XXXII.30) and who “hí on norð-hymbra-lande gelendon mid æscum/ and aweston þæt land and þa leoda ofslogon,” or “landed in Northumbria with their ships,/ and wasted the land and slew the people” (XXXII.31-32). All of this occurred during the time of Ælfred’s rule where brave, “ful cene” (XXXII. 73), Edmund fought against such evil destruction and refused to bow before anyone but Christ, “ne abihð næfre eadmund hingware on life/ hæþenum here-togan buton he to hælende criste/ ærest mid ge-leafan on þysum lande gebuge” (XXXII.91-94).

Ælfric describes Edmund’s capture and torture where he was tied to a tree, clubbed, whipped, and shot with javelins, “gafelucum” (XXXII.117), where “he eall wæs besæt mid heora scotungum/ swilce igles byrsta,” or “he was all beset with their shots/ as with a porcupine’s bristles” (XXXII.117-118). This analogy is extremely vivid and an apt rhetorical device to display the immorality of the soldiers and the morality of Edmund. Though Edmund was beheaded, a seaman hid his head in the “þiccum bremelum,” or thick brambles, and a wolf was sent by God to guard the head, “þæt an wulf wearð asend /þurh godes wissunge to bewerigenne þæt heafod” (XXXII.145-146). Once godly men went to find the head, the head, though severed, answered and lead the moral man to it, always answering “hér hér hér” (XXXII.151). Edmund’s severed head also rendered miracles like stopping thieves from taking the church’s treasures. These miraculous tales served to emphasize the fact that Anglo-Saxons accepted the mystical and unexplainable and delighted in imagining these moments. Christian culture fed this interest, shaping

such lore through the plans and purposes of Christ where supernatural events were the result of either God's reward for godly, moral behavior or God's punishment for evil, immoral action.

The epilogue states, “crist geswutelad̄ mannum hwær se soða geleafa is/ þonne he swylce wundra wyrceð þurh his halgan/ wide geond þas eorðan þæs him sy wuldor/ á mid his heofonlican fæder and þam halgan gaste (a buton ende). Amen,” or “Christ manifesteth to men where the true faith is,/ since He worketh such miracles by His saints/ widely throughout the earth; wherefore to Him be Glory/ ever with His Heavenly Father, and with the Holy Ghost, for/ ever and ever. Amen” (XXXII.273-276). The conclusion exhorts the audience to live for God so their earthly lives and bodies may lead others to Christ, even after their death, and so they will gain true happiness and eternal reward.

All of the homilies in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* follow these epideictic, encomium patterns, though some homilies adhere to these structures more precisely than others. XXXVII *The Martyrdom of St Vincent* follows the same encomium type pattern as does I *The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ*; II *St. Eugenia, Virgin*; III *St. Basilius, Bishop*; IV *St. Julian and his wife Basilissa*; to XI *The Forty Soldiers, Martyrs*; XIII *The Prayer of Moses*; XVI *Memory of the Saints*; and XXIII *The Seven Sleepers*. One final specific *Lives of Saints* example is XXXIII: *St. Eufrosia (Or Euphrosyne), Virgin* that is written in prose and opens by praising Paphnutius who was “Se wæs eallum mannum leof and wurð and godes beboda geornlice healdende,” or “beloved and honored of all men, diligently keeping God's commandments” (XXXIII 1-2).

After many prayers, Paphnutius finally had a child, a daughter, and named her Euphrosyne. In true encomium style, Euphrosyne's origin – parents and country– is discussed first, then her education and interests,

se fæder þa gelærde þæt mæden mid halgum gewritum and godcundum rædingum  
and mid eallum woruldlicum wis-dome and hio þa lare to þam deoplice under-

nam þæt hire fæder þæs micclum wundrode þa asprang hire hlisa and wisdom and gelærednys geond ealle þa ceastre for-þam heo wæs on þeawum gefrætwod and manige wurdon atihte þæt hi gyrndan hire to rihtan gesynscipe. (XXXIII.26-31)

the father instructed the maiden in holy writings and godly readings, and in all wordly wisdom; and she so deeply received the lore that her father greatly wondered thereat. Then sprang her fame and wisdom and learning throughout all the town, because she was adorned with virtues, and many were attracted so that they desired her in honourable marriage. (XXXIII.26-31)

Here Ælfric praises Euphrosyne for her studies and knowledge, and her love of learning, which leads to her virtuous action and praiseworthy conduct in life. Euphrosyne was also instructed in a monastery and decided to devote herself to God instead of follow her father's wishes to be married so she could live a life of purity. In order to hide, she disguises herself as a male eunuch and lives in a monastery, even becoming a priest for her own father. These extreme measures are amplified by Ælfric and extolled as an example for others to follow because Euphrosyne relinquished all earthly ties to focus upon quiet contemplation, prayer, and good deeds.

Before she dies, Euphrosyne reveals her identity to her father, who, while sad, also praises his daughter for her desire for purity. The homily ends with the expected prayer of surrender, “god fæder to wuldre and his ancennedan sun aurum drihtne hælendum criste samod mid þam halgan gaste þam sy wuldor and wurðmynt on eallra worulda woruld. Amen,” or “to the glory of God the Father and His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost; to Whom be glory and worship for ever and ever. Amen” or (XXXIII.331-334). The bottom line in each of these homilies becomes abundantly apparent, not just in analyzing this one homily but in discussing the similarities between each homily within Ælfrics *Lives of Saints*. According to the events of his time, Ælfric felt that true believers would suffer while on earth, and his goal was to help them embrace this suffering and self-sacrifice and encourage them in their faith. Subsequently, medieval writers like Ælfric cultivated the notion that human communication should constantly be focused upon spiritual and eternal elements and that all other motives and

methods of communicating were flawed, inconsequential, and extemporaneous. As with the story of Euphrosyne, Ælfric believed greater morality could be attained through personal sacrifice and study of the written word, which itself was often imbued with mystical qualities, and through hearing stories from scripture. Consequently, Ælfric wanted to both instruct and engage his audience according to the principles of Christian morality, and he relays these stories and lessons in a very detailed, dualistic, and epideictic method using vice to extol virtue and virtue to condemn vice.

Turning now to Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, there is a slight variation in style. None of the *Catholic Homilies* are written in verse, and each homily brims with figurative language, much more so than Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*. This difference is understandable when considering that Ælfric wrote the *Catholic Homilies* for a much wider audience than his *Lives of Saints*, and for "the uneducated laity and their poorly educated preachers who could deliver the *Catholic Homilies* in lieu of understanding Latin themselves," although many of his references are directed at "concerns for monks, the educated clergy, and the more learned laity" (Butcher 6). Such a wide audience reveals Ælfric's desire to influence and exhort all types of people, from the educated to the uneducated, and supply them with vital Christian knowledge of human nature and eternal life.

*Ælfric's Catholic Homilies* is a collection regarded as Ælfric's "first and most important writing" designed for Sunday sermons and general "feast days of the year" (White 10) and to be typically recited "in the course of the Mass, after the deacon has read the Gospel passage appointed for the day" (Godden xxii). Consequently, not only would Ælfric need to incorporate rhetorical strategies that would captivate and hold his audience's attention, but he would need to rely upon such strategies that would be familiar and well regarded by medieval listeners. Ælfric's

homilies are so effective because he “had an unusual ability of putting himself in the place of others. He was always feeling his way carefully so as to meet the exact needs of his readers” (White 64), and his works differ from other Old English homilies and sermons because Ælfric is constantly affirming God’s mercy and kindness (Butcher 20) as a means of persuading his audience to repentance and moral action. As a representative of early medieval rhetoric, Ælfric’s writing, as scholars such as Reinsma and White have noted, contains a deep emotional connection and concern for his audience as well as a deep emotional connection to God. Ælfric’s words function as a type of channel for the supernatural teachings of Christ, and, as such, he does not have to rely upon the strength of his rhetoric but the strength he finds in God’s divine inspiration.

Nevertheless, in speaking as in writing, Ælfric carefully considers and arranges his content dividing his collection into two parts, each “one of which has a Latin preface addressed to Archbishop Sigeric, and an English preface on the origin and plan of the work” (White 101). The only difference between the two volumes is that the first volume is filled with more scriptural and exegetical content, while the second focuses more upon legend and history and upon “ecclesiology and the means of grace through the church” (103). Both volumes function as an indication of Ælfric’s concern with arrangement and delivery. While Ælfric’s rhetorical decisions and tone have been aptly dissected and addressed to the point that many scholars believe there is “little left” to say about Ælfric (Blake ix), Ælfric’s adherence to the epideictic structure of classical rhetoric has been little addressed and his unique contribution to an early medieval rhetoric little explored.

Ælfric’s eighty sermon, two volume collection includes “Christianity’s major doctrines, provides his audience commentary on them, and highlights Christ’s crucial sacrifice as the sole way to salvation. The largest extant Old English prose text, these two volumes well represent the

spirit of late Anglo-Saxon times” (Butcher 5). None of Ælfric’s homilies are a “mere translation from any one given Latin original, but rather a compilation from several” and express language that is “a pure specimen of our noble, old, Germanic mother-tongue” (Thorpe “Preface” vi).

While Ælfric relied upon authoritative figures for rhetorical purposes, just as he did within his *Lives of Saints*, he took more liberties with the text by emphasizing and reiterating certain ideas and phrases that were clearly important to him and his message, again suggesting that he understood how to craft and rely upon rhetorical tropes and structures.

In the first volume of Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* edited by Benjamin Thorpe, Ælfric includes a Latin preface in which he names six authors as sources of his work: Augustine, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus and Haymo (Blake 47), although he “took most of his information from Gegory’s homilies” (White 104). It is clear that Ælfric chose these sources with care because he states that “their authority is willingly accepted by all the orthodox,” creating a contrast where the ideas and beliefs of these six figures are true unlike “the opposite extreme of *gedwyld*, folly or heresy” (Godden xxxviii). By his own admonition, Ælfric’s writings rely upon the rhetorical strategy of claiming a higher authority, and he does this in order to emphasize the importance of his message to his audience.

Ælfric next creates a preface to his work as a means of introduction that follows the epideictic rhetorical pattern of communication. Within his preface, Ælfric discusses his idea to translate Latin homilies into English because he has

ic geseach and gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum Engliscum bocum, þe ungelærede men þurh heora bilewitnyse to micclum wisdom tealdon; and me of hreow þæt hí ne cuþon ne næfdon þu godspellican lare on heora gewritum, buton þam mannum anum ðe þæt Leden cuþon, and buton þam bocum ðe Ælfred hæbbenne. For þisum antimbre ic gedyrstlæ, on Gode truwiende, þæt ic ðas getnyse undergann, and eac forðam þe men behofiað godre lare swiðost on þisum timan þe is geendung þyssere worulde, and beoð fela frecednyssa on mancynne ærðan þe se ende become. (Thorpe “Preface” 2-3)

seen and heard of much error in many English books, which unlearned men, through their simplicity, have esteemed as great wisdom: and I regretted that they knew not nor had not the evangelical doctrines among their writings, those men only excepted who knew Latin, and those books excepted which king Ælfred wisely turned from Latin into English, which are to be had. For this cause I presumed, trusting in God, to undertake this task, and also because men have need of good instruction, especially at this time, which is the ending of this world, and there will be many calamities among mankind before the end cometh. (Thorpe “Preface” 2-3)

At the very beginning of his work, Ælfric relies upon epideictic rhetoric in his praise of wise men and condemnation of unlearned or simple men. This epideictic writing rests, not surprisingly, upon repetition and reduplication, as seen through transplacement with the phrase “buton þam,” for example, and is also furthered through the rhetorical trope of definition, particularly defining unlearned men in comparison with those who are wise, learned, and godly. Alfred goes on to discuss the outcome for those who do and do not trust in God, detailing the spiritual battle that will one day ensue to focus the audience’s attention upon the importance of present morality and proper learning. Therefore, before analyzing Ælfric’s homilies for rhetorical patterns and figures of speech, Ælfric’s preface alone is enough to demonstrate how Ælfric, like other early medieval leaders and writers such as Alfred, had absorbed classical rhetorical elements, with or without a complete understanding of the classical tradition or rhetorical figures. It is enough to simply note these rhetorical patterns and how they were consistently and uniquely adapted within Ælfric’s writing to prove that the early medieval period wasn’t quite as rhetorically dark as is so often assumed.

All of Ælfric’s homilies contain an epideictic structure although some are much more clear and concise than others. The *Sermon on the Beginning of Creation, to the People, Whenever you Will* actually adheres to more of the commonplace purpose in its general statements and amplification of the evils inherent in humanity, though its format is blended with that of the en-



comium and vituperation. The *Sermon on the Beginning of Creation, to the People, Whenever you Will* begins with a commonplace introduction, which opens with a contradiction and then relies upon contrasts to amplify the topic. In this case, God's positive view and purpose for humanity and humanity's origin is contrasted with the self-centered and negative developments of humanity that lead to personal, social, and global unhappiness.

The homily then emphasizes this comparison by using scriptural lessons to discuss the qualities of mankind. At the same time, the homily discusses the origin, development, and qualities of humanity – three steps that follow the encomium structure and are a clear indication of a rhetorical pattern. The homily consists of an introduction that begins with repetition, specifically interlacement, in its praise of God because he “He is ordfruma and ende: he is ordfruma, forđi þe he wæs æfre; he is ende butan ælcere geendunge, forđan þe he biđ æfre ungeendod,” or “is beginning and end: he is beginning, because he was ever; he is end without any ending, because he is ever unended” (Thorpe 8-9). Another contradiction is established within this passage that functions as a comparison for the life of man, where God is unending and human life is transitory.

Next, the homily continues to praise God according to the encomium structure by defining his attributes and by using the rhetorical device of disjunction, where subsequent clauses end with special verbs (Caplan IV.XXVIII.38). In this case, “He hylt mid his mihte heofanas and eorđan, and ealle gesceafta butan gewince, and he besceawađ þa niwelnyssa þe under þyssere eorđan sind. He awecđ ealle duna mid anre handa...” or “He holdeth with his might heavens, and earth, and all creatures, without toil, and he beholdeth the depths which are under this earth. He weigheth all hills with one hand...” (Thorpe 8-10). The verbs “created,” “gesceop,” and “wrought,” “geworhte,” are particularly repeated numerous times as the homily continues to further define and praise God and discuss the story of creation and how Lucifer, the angel known as

“Leohtberend,” was cast out of heaven because of pride, “modignysse” or “modigenne,” and his desire for more power, “mihte” (10-11). While comparisons are made within the encomium structure, this entire homily relies upon contradictions and comparisons, typical of the commonplace progymnasmata.

Lucifer and his angels are referred to as wicked, “forcuþran,” because of their pride, another clear indication of epideictic communication where certain actions and traits are condemned while others are praised. In addition, this infamous contrast between God and Satan, light and darkness, serves to amplify the homily and function as the next step within an encomium structure that presents background information. This passage also relies upon a digression into the past and therefore evidences the commonplace format where the beginning of humanity’s trials started with Lucifer’s pride and fall from heaven, emphasized by the discussion and condemnation of his vices, such as pride. Not only are God and Satan being contrasted, but God and man as well. Early medieval rhetoric truly relied upon these didactic qualities. Greco-Roman communication delineated virtue or vice, but early medieval rhetoric painted a more holistic picture of human life and eternity through a consistent demonstration of the struggle between virtue and vice as the ultimate tension in each human soul and the ultimate battle on earth as well as in the spiritual realm – a struggle that often lead to war, desolation, hardship, and turmoil when ignorance and vice prevailed.

As the story of man’s creation is given, Ælfric uses hypophora where the self or the audience is asked why something occurs or what could be done (Caplan IV.XXIII.33). In regards to not eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Ælfric writes, “Hwí wolde God swa lytles þinges him forwyrnan, þe him swa miccle oðre þing betæhte? Gyse hu mihte Adám towan hwaet hé wære, buton hé wære gehyrsum on sumum þince his Hlaforde,” or “Why would

God forbid him so little a thing, when he had committed to him other things so great? But how could Adam know what he was, unless he were obedient in some thing to his Lord?” (Thorpe 14-15). As an indication of religious writings that focus on right and wrong, a sentiment that comes directly from Biblical passages full of moral instruction, Ælfric’s homilies, indicated in this first homily, again suggest that strategies and patterns were employed within early medieval writing, maintaining the rhetorical tradition for later generations. The preservation and adaptation of a rhetorical tradition within early medieval writing is both a result of the human desire to communicate and the emulation of ancient rhetorical underpinnings found throughout scripture and religious writing.

Detail, imagery, and narrative (Caplan IV.XXXVIII.51) abound and are rhetorical devices used to pique and hold the interest of the audience. God’s actions are ever praised, and Satan and man’s actions are typically condemned, particularly once man is expelled from the garden. Ælfric takes time to discuss man’s free will and choice, “agene cyre,” and how merciful, “gemiltsian,” God is. Ælfric especially adheres to an epideictic purpose and format when he consistently praises God because he does not want any of his audience members, Christians or possible converts, to question or condemn God (Thorpe 18-19). Ælfric’s focus is always on his audience.

Discussing heaven, hell, and the soul, “sawle,” Ælfric engages in reasoning by question and answer through summing up an argument and presenting his ultimate point (Caplan IV.XVII 25). When discussing Adam’s soul, Ælfric asks,

hwanon him come sawul? hwæper ðe of þam fæder, þe of þære meder? We cwedað of heora naðrum; ac se ylca God þe gesceop Adam mid his handum, he gescypð ælces mannes lichaman on his modor innode; and se ylca seðe ableow on Adames lichaman, and him forgeaf sawle, se ylca forgyfð cildum sawle and lif on heora modor innode; þonne hi gesceapene beoð; and he lætt hi habban agene cyre, þonne hi geweaxene beoð, swa swa Adam hæfde. (Thorpe 20-21)

whence came his soul? Whether from father or from the mother? We say, from neither of them; but the same God who created Adam with his hands, createth every man's body in his mother's womb: and the same who blew into Adam's body, and gave him a soul, that same giveth a soul and life to children in their mother's womb, when they are created; and he letteht them have their own will, when they are grown up, as Adam had. (Thorpe 20-21)

Ælfric uses his words to praise moral choices and to condemn immoral ones, and he does this by demonstrating how choices made on earth are eternal, just like the soul. Ælfric's passage further displays how an early medieval rhetoric formed a culture where, instead of focusing upon earthly concerns, words were chosen for their supernatural aspects and their ability to instruct and guide individual souls.

In continuing his discussion of creation, Ælfric recalls the flood, condemning the crimes and fornication man committed, "mid mislicum leahtrum, and swiðost mid forligere" (Thorpe 20-21) that caused God to send the flood. Ælfric then discusses Noah's lineage to Mary who gave birth to Jesus, praising the fact that Mary was a "clænan mædene," a pure virgin or maiden (24-25). After detailing a few of Christ's miracles and his time on earth, Ælfric then juxtaposes God's "rihtwisnyse and soðfæstnyse," righteousness and truth," with that of the Jewish people's "andan," anger, malice, or envy, that lead to the "slaying of Christ," "Cristes slege" (26-27). Here is another comparison created to emphasize and amplify a topic so virtues and vices can be more easily seen and agreed upon by the audience.

In the concluding lines, Ælfric engages in transition where he recalls what has been said, summing up the sin of Adam and Eve, and then mentioning what is to come with the return of Christ on earth (Caplan IV.XXV.35). Ælfric writes,

he cymð on ende þyssere worulde mid micclum mægenþrymme on wolcnum, and ealle ða ðe æfre sawle underfengon arisað of deaðe him togeanes; and he ðonne ða manfullan deofle betæcð into ðam ecan fyre helle susle; þa rihtwisan he læt mid him into heofonan rice, on þam hi rixiað a on ecnyse. (Thorpe 28-29)

he shall come at the end of this world with great majesty in clouds and all those who have ever received a soul shall arise from death towards him; and he will then deliver the wicked to the devil, into the eternal fire of hell-torment; the righteous he will lead with him into the kingdom of heaven, in which they shall rule to all eternity. (Thorpe 28-29)

The emphasis is again on moral and righteous behavior in contrast with immoral and evil action with very clear dogma separating each. Ælfric's passage, particularly demonstrated through his word choices such as "lead" and "rule," epideictically offer hope, comfort, consolation, and escape for Christian believers, encouraging all humans to live for eternity.

It is the end of the homily however that indicates the clearest sense of classical rhetoric because Ælfric then turns to his audience and addresses them specifically, just as the rhetoricians and orators of Greco-Roman society were want to do. Ælfric writes, "Men ða leofestan, smeagað þysne cwyde, and mid micelre gymene forbugað unrihtwysnyse, and gearniað mid godum weorcum þæt ece lif mid Gode seðe ana on ecnyse rixað. Amen," or "Men most beloved, consider this discourse, and with great care eschew unrighteousness, and merit with good works the eternal life with God, who alone ruleth to eternity. Amen" (Thorpe 28-29). Not only does Ælfric engage in the rhetorical tool of surrender here by giving the matter over to the audience to practice the moral behavior he has been praising (Caplan IV.XXVIII 39), but he also relies upon apostrophe in calling the audience by name and appealing to their emotion, usually pity or sympathy as seen here, to move them to proper thought and action (IV.XV.21). Such an epilogue full of exhortation and prayer constitutes the standard ending for an encomium.

Each of Ælfric's homilies follow this pattern. There is an introduction; a discussion of the history, origin, parentage, development, education, and qualities of a person, concept, or thing; a comparison or contrast, further discussing qualities through rhetorical figures of speech; and an ending epilogue that addresses and exhorts readers toward virtue and away from vice, typically ending with a prayer of surrender and praise to God. In the *Sermon on the Nativity of*

*our Lord*, Ælfric begins with a structured introduction discussing Christ's humanity, "We wyllað to trymminge eowres geleafan eow gereccan þæs Hælendes acennednysse be ðære godspellican endebyrdnysse," or "We will, for the confirmation of your faith, relate to you the nativity of our Saviour, according to the order of the gospel" (Thorpe 28-29) that, once again, follows the rhetorical pattern of Greece and Rome by specifically addressing an audience and laying a case or speech before them.

As typical of a homily, Ælfric includes several Biblical allusions and scriptural references to authority, both strategies of a rhetorical speech, although tailored here for Christian purposes. Ælfric recounts Christ's birth from the book of Luke, introducing characters and describing events with great gusto. Then, once again, Ælfric pauses to address his audience specifically by stating, "Mine gebroðra þa leofostan, ure Hælend, Godes Sunu, euen-ece and gelic his Fæder, seðe mid him wæs æfre buton anginne, gemedemode hine sylfne þæt he wolde on ðisum dægðerlicum dæge, for middangeardes alysednysse beon lichamlice acenned of þam mædene Marian," or "My dearest brethren, our Saviour, the Son of God, coeternal with, and equal to his Father, who was ever with him without beginning, vouchsafed tht he would on this present day, for the redemption of the world, be corporally born of the Virgin Mary" (32). This rhetorical tool of apostrophe is employed to stir emotion and help the audience feel Christ's passion for them as well as feel grateful for his sacrifice and love. In addition, terms of endearment such as dearest brethren, dearly beloved, and loved of God, are examples of an address and apostrophe that are used within each homily and usually repeated several times in order to reduplicate and amplify the issue, stirring the audience's emotions and capturing their attention as Ælfric discusses, tests, and defines what is right and wrong. Such repetition created Christian notions and adaptations of

*paideia*, as Peter Brown and Denise Kimber Buell have discussed, that formed a Christian brotherhood and lead to a “rhetoric of Christian unity” (Buell 129).

Ælfric goes on to praise God as the “Author of all things good and of peace” or “Scyppend ealra godnyssa and sibbe” (Thorpe 32-33), a Biblical reference that, used in this case, both epideictically displays the qualities that humans themselves should exemplify as well as memorializing and highlighting Christ’s perfection. In discussing the day Christ was born, Ælfric uses a simile to state that “Crist is se soða dæg, seðe todræfde mid his to-cyme ealle nyttenysse þære ealdan nihte, and ealne middangeard mid his gife onlihte,” or “Christ is the true day who scattered with his advent all the ignorance of the ancient night, and illuminated all the world with his grace” (36-37), praising God’s attributes while condemning both ignorance and the pagan practices of the ancient world.

In depicting how angels worship God and how they reject sin, Ælfric uses an apostrophe once more to address his audience by stating, “Nu we sind getealde Godes ceaster-gewaran, and englum gelice; uton forði hogian þæt leahtras us ne totwæmon fram ðisum micclum wurdmynte,” or “Now we are accounted citizens of God, and like to angels; let us, therefore, take care that sins do not separate us from this great dignity” (38-40). This address is presented in this fashion to inspire zeal and firm belief in the audience so that they too can work to lead moral lives and so nothing will separate them from eternal life with God.

Ælfric creates a clever comparison to discuss how divine and human natures are together, yet separate, by employing the use of analogy, “We mihton eow secgan ane lytle bysne, gif hit to waclic nære; Sceawa nu on anum æge, hu þæt white ne bið gemenged to ðam geolcan, and bið hwæðere an æg. Nis eac Cristes godcundnys gerunnen to ðære menniscnysse, ac he þurhwunad þeah á on ecnysse on anum hade untotwæmed” (40-41). Here Ælfric specifically states that he is

making this comparison to prove his point, further indicating his conscious decision and at least partial understanding of rhetorical tropes to aid in his communication. By discussing how the white of the egg does not mingle with the yoke, yet calling attention to both parts as defining an egg, Ælfric is able to successfully instruct his audience on the fact that Christ has many aspects and persons but continues forever in one person undivided. Examples of allegories such as this display why Ælfric was “known for his use of the commonplace to teach the spiritual extraordinary” (Butcher 12), again hoping to reach the largest audience possible. While he may not be a rhetorician in the classical sense Ælfric had a very clear understanding of effective communication, certainly in terms of figures of diction and consideration for audience.

Toward the end of the homily, Ælfric interjects his own thoughts into his tale of the birth of Christ where, “Nis nan eadignys butan Godes oncnawennesses, swa swa Crist sylf cwæð...” or “There is no happiness without knowledge of God, as Christ himself said...” (Thorpe 42-43).

Then, Ælfric ends with an epideictic exhortation to his audience,

We sceolon geefenlæcan þysum hyrdum, and wuldrian and herian urne Drihten on eallum ðam ðingum þe he for ure lufe gefremode, us to alysednysse and to ecere blisse, ðam sy wuldor and lof mid ðam Ælmihtigum Fæder, on annysse þæs Halgan Gastes, on ealra worulda woruld. Amen. (44-45)

We should imitate these shepherds, and glorify and praise our Lord for all those things which he hath done for love of us, for our redemption and eternal bliss, to whom be glory and praise with the Almighty Father, in unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen. (44-45)

This passage even discusses the need to praise God in both word and deed, underscoring the epideictic undertone. As with ancient rhetorical practice, there is a clear conclusion that emphasizes the homily’s point and instruction to follow Christ, exhorting the audience to moral action and ending with a prayer in true encomium form.

In another homily designed to move the emotions and minds of the audience, *The Nativity of the Innocents* begins with a brief introduction that discusses and explains church festivals,



particularly Herod's slaughter of innocent babies. The word "efne" or "lo" is continually repeated, just as it is in the Bible, and is an example of transplacement and epanaphora. Ælfric explains these tragic deaths in a positive light, still managing to praise Christ and a life of martyrdom where

Ne forseah Crist his geongan cempan, ðeah ðe he lichamlice on heora slege andwerd nære; ac hé asende hí fram þisum wræcfullum life to his ecan rice. Gesælige hí wurdon geborene þæt hi moston for his intingan, deað þrowian. Eadig is heora yld, seoðe þa gyt ne mihte Crist andettan, and moste for Criste þrowian. Hí wæron þæs Hælendes gewitan, ðeah ðe hí hine ða gyt ne cuðon. Næron hí gerípode to slege, ac hi gesæliglice þeah swulton to life. Gesælig wæs heora acennednys, forðan ðe hí gemetton þæt ece lif on instæpe þæs andweardan lifes. (82-85)

Christ despised not his young champions, though he was not bodily present at their slaughter; but he sent them from this miserable life to his eternal kingdom. Blessed they were born that they might for his sake suffer death. Happy is their age, which could not yet acknowledge Christ, and might for Christ suffer. They were witnesses of Jesus, though they yet knew him not. Blessed was their birth, because they found everlasting life at the entrance of this present life. (82-85)

By also repeating the term blessed, "gesælig," Ælfric again displays the epideictic nature of this homily, and his repetition serves to re-order the thinking of his audience where suffering for Christ is viewed in a positive light and as a privilege. Ælfric uses Christian theology to justify and explain these tragic deaths, then goes on to state that Herod "most æfter forðsiðe ecelice cwylmian," or "must after death eternally suffer," displaying how moral and virtuous action should always be practiced because unethical or immoral judgment and action on earth will be punished. Within this homily and others, Ælfric seems unable to completely characterize and define virtue without discussing vice or vice without discussing virtue, blending these two criteria together under one unique structure that continually seeks divine perfection at the cost of earthly contentment.

As he concludes his homily, Ælfric makes a conscious appeal to the audience by stating, "Nelle we ðas race na leng teon, þyles ðe hit eow æðryt þince; ac biddað eow þingunge æ þisum

unscæddigum martyrum,” or “We will not longer extend this narrative, lest it may seem tedious to you, but will pray for the intercession of these innocent martyrs for you” (88-89). Here there is an epilogue typical of the encomium structure that exhorts the audience to follow after Christ no matter the hardship. The address to the audience is a clever apostrophe designed to evoke sympathy and resolve. For Ælfric, compared to suffering and dying for Christ, listening to the same scriptural message or story and implementing the message in daily life should not be viewed as a trial or difficulty, but as the means for obtaining redemption. This type of appeal is a rhetorical ploy designed to convince the audience of the truth and accuracy of a message and action, in this case to live a virtuous, Christian life.

A further homily that characterizes Ælfric’s reliance upon epideictic rhetoric and its figures and strategies is *Midlent Sunday*. Ælfric begins the homily by discussing the story of Jesus’ miracle with the loaves and fish, dwelling upon the sea as an analogy for the world, or “þas andweardan woruld” that Christ passed through like human life and death, where

Rihtlice is seo sæ wiðmeten þisre worulde, forðon ðe heo is hwiltidum smylte and myrige ón to rowenne, hwilon eac swiðe hreoh and egeful on to beonne. Swa is þeos woruld; hwiltidum heo is gesundful and myrige on to wunigenne, hwilon he is eac swiðe styrnlic, and mislicum þingum gemenged. (182-184)

Rightly is the sea compared to this world, for it is sometimes serene and pleasant to navigate on, sometimes also very rough and terrible to be on. So is this world; sometimes it is desirable and pleasant to dwell in, sometimes also it is very rugged, and mingled with divers things. (182-184)

The repetition here, with “hwiltidum” and “hwilon,” is based upon reduplication in order to amplify, instruct, praise, and condemn. Here, earthly happiness is condemned, while living for eternity is praised.

Ælfric also chooses to amplify and explain this miracle by using the tool of reasoning through question and answer where he asks, for example, “Hwa sylð nu wæstm urum æcerum, and gemenigfylt þæt gerip of feawum cornum, buton se ðe ða gemænigfylde ð fif hlafas?” or

“Who now gives fruit to our fields, and multiplies the harvest from a few grains of corn, but he who multiplied the five loaves?” (184-185). Here Ælfric discusses how, just as Christ provided for the multitude, Christ also provides for humanity’s physical needs. Ælfric’s point is made clear through his use of such rhetorical strategies as amplification and question and answer where the audience is engaged in the message and is encouraged to fully embody and figuratively enact the rhetoric of the message – picking up where the words ended.

Ælfric then adds another interpretation by stating that the five loaves, “fif hlafas,” represent “five books which the leader Moses appointed in the old law” or “getacniad þa fif bec ðe Moyses se heretoga sette on ðære ealdan æ” (186-187), discussing how God has provided for humanity’s spiritual needs. Ælfric continues to interpret this miracle, even down to the fact the loaves were made of barley, “berene” and, just as barley is difficult to prepare, “Bere is swiðe earfoðe to gearcigenne,” so too is “the old law very difficult and obscure to understand” or “Swa wæs seo ealde æ swiðe earfoðe and digle to understandenne” (188-189). As has been previously recognized by numerous scholars from John Keble, Benjamin Thorpe, Richard J Kelly, and Richard Morris, homilies interpreted Biblical passages and allegories in order to teach proper, moral living and thought and to awaken such recognition in the mind, heart, and soul of the listeners. *Midlent Sunday* is a perfect illustration of the purpose and content of a typical homily, and it characterizes early medieval rhetoric’s reliance upon epideictic precepts.

Another connection to the rhetorical tradition that Ælfric displays is his reflection on the writing and creative process itself, from stories in the Bible to everyday anecdotes. Ælfric writes,

Oft gehwa gesihð fægre stafas awriten, þonne herað he ðone writere and þa stafas, and nat hwæt hi mænað. Se ðe cann ðæra stafa gescead, he herað heora fægernysse, and ræd þa stafas, and understent hwæt hí gemænað. On oðre wissan we sceawiað metinge, and on oðre wisan stafas. Ne gæð na mare to metinge buton þæt þu hit geseo and herige: nis na genóh þæt þu stafas sceawige, buton ðu hí eac ræde, and þæt andgit understand. Swa is eac on ðam wundre þe God worhte mid

þam fif hlafum: ne bið na genóh þæt we þæs tacnes wundrian, oþþe þurh þæt God herian, buton we eac þæt gastlice andgit understandon. (186-187)

Often some one sees fair characters written, then praises he the writer and the characters, but knows not what they mean. He who understands the art of writing praises their fairness, and reads the characters, and comprehends their meaning. In one way we look at a picture, and in another at characters. Nothing more is necessary for a picture than that you see and praise it: but it is not enough to look at characters without, at the same time, reading them, and understanding their signification. So also it is with regard to the miracle which God wrought with the five loaves: it is not enough that we wonder at the miracle, or praise God on account of it, without also understanding its spiritual sense. (186-187)

This passage is quite significant because Ælfric displays a very profound understanding of rhetoric and human communication, demonstrated in his assessment of writing and painting. Not only does Ælfric understand and further the use of epideictic rhetoric within communication – viewing it as the fundamental basis for writing and the creative process – although never calling it by name – but he indicates that for early medieval writers, communication is not effective without meaning or depth, which are both created using rhetorical tools like repetition, analogy, and allegory that amplify and explain the epideictic nature and meaning of a written or spoken passage. Despite the lack of medieval rhetorical manuals and the specific focus upon the rhetorical tradition, Ælfric’s passage here particularly indicates that medieval writers and intellectuals viewed communication as ineffective if it did not contain basic rhetorical devices to add meaning and judgment, devices that amplified content for praise or censure. While epideictic rhetoric does not specifically focus upon the past and future, what it does is pull past and future events and issues into the present moment to be judged, interpreted, evaluated, and synthesized, as these homilies portray.

Ælfric’s next several homilies rely upon these same figures of speech in creating a successful epideictic structure. *The Octaves and Circumcision of our Lord* references the scriptural authority of Luke in the introduction; praises Abraham’s sacrifice as the first to be circumcised,

“ærest manna ymbsniden, be Godes hæse” (90-91); relies upon analogy with the idea of spiritual circumcision, “he ða ymbsnidennysse on gastlicum ðeawum gehealde” (Thorpe 94); and uses the trope of reasoning by question and answer to condemn vices, “Hwæ getacnað þæs fylmenes of-cyrf on ðam gesceape, buton galnysse wanunge?” or “What does the amputation of the foreskin betoken but decrease of lust?” (94-95). These questions also reflect the dialectic structure of philosophy, designed to find the truth. Here these questions are used as rhetorical devices to invite the reader’s attention and thought.

Similarly, *The Epiphany of the Lord* begins with an often employed introduction and an apostrophe, ““Men ða leofostan” (104); uses metonymy to discuss “geleaffullum heortum,” or “believing hearts” instead of saying Christians or believers (110); and relies upon personification and epanaphora, successive beginnings and repetition of “oncneowon,” or the acknowledgement of God by inanimate objects, to fully condemn the hard-hearted disbelief of the Jews where the heavens, sea, sun, stone, earth, and hell all acknowledge Christ:

Ealle gesceafta oncneowon heora Scyppendes to-cynne, buton ðam arleasum Iudeiscum anum. Heofonas oncneowon heora Scyppend, ða ða hi on his acennednysse niwne steorran æteowdon. Sæ oncneow ða ða Crist mid drium fot-wylmum ofter hyre yða mihtelice eode. Sunne oncneow, þa þa heo on his ðrowunge hire leoman fram mid-dæge oð non behyde. Stanas oncneowon, ða ða hi on his forðside sticmælcum toburston. Seo eorðe oncneow, ða ða heo on his æriste eall byfode. Hell oncneow, ða ða heo hire hæftlingas unðances forlet. And ðeah þa heard-heortan Iudei noldon for eallum ðam tacnum þone soðan Scyppend tocnawan, þe þa dumban gesceafta undergeaton, and mid gebicnungum geswutolod. (108-109)

All creatures acknowledged their Creator’s advent, save only the impious Jews. The heavens acknowledged their Creator, when they at his nativity displayed a new star. The sea acknowledged him, when Christ in his might with dry footsteps passed over its waves. The sun acknowledged him, when at his passion he hid his beams from mid-day till the ninth hour. The stones acknowledged him, when at his death they burst in pieces. The earth acknowledged him, when it all trembled at his resurrection. Hell acknowledged him, when it unwillingly released its captives. And yet the hardhearted Jews would not for all those signs acknowledge the true Creator, whom the dumb creation knew, and by tokens manifested. (108-109)

For Ælfric, ignorance is vice, particularly ignorance of the supernatural world and Christian principles. As such, his instruction on Christian precepts was taught epideictically through both praise and censure and, in turn, promoted epideictic discussion and communication within the audience, equipping the listeners to share their own judgments that adhered to Christian belief. Additionally, each of these homilies ends with an exhortation to follow God and engage in virtuous action, using the tool of surrender to close with a unifying prayer, to imbue each homily with supernatural force, and to most directly invoke the interest and participation of the audience.

Thus far, Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* have discussed the subject of Christ, human creation, and specific vices and virtues, but there are quite a few homilies that specifically praise a saint or Biblical figure and adhere to a more precise encomium structure that also mirrors that chreia such as *For Palm Sunday*, *The Second Sunday After Pentecost*, *The Passion of the Blessed Martyr Lawrence*, *The Passion of St. Bartholomew the Apostle*, *The Decollation of St. John the Baptist*, *Dedication of the Church of St. Michael the Archangel*, *The Nativity of St. Clement the Martyr*, and *The Nativity of St. Andrew the Apostle*, *St. Benedict, Abbot*, and *The Deposition of St. Cuthberht, Bishop*.

One example of a medieval encomium is *The Passion of the Blessed Stephen, Protomartyr*. Ælfric begins *The Passion of the Blessed Stephen, Protomartyr* by recalling the book of Acts and particularly the contributions of Stephen, praising him because he had "great faith" and was "He wæs swiðe geleafful, and mid þam Halgum Gaste afylled," or "filled with the Holy Ghost" (44-45). After discussing the origin of Stephen's sainthood: his stoning, Ælfric then begins to explain this incident by referring to the authority of St. Augustine, "Se wisa Augustinus spræc ymbe ðas rædinge, and smeade hwi se halga cyðdere Stephanus cwæde þæt he gesawe mannes bearn standan æt Godes swyðran, and nolde cwedþan Godes bearn..." (48-49). In refer-

encing Augustine's teaching and giving his own reflection, Ælfric concludes, "þæt se is healicost seðe ðone martyrdom æfter Gode astealde," or "he is the most exalted who suffered martyrdom next to God" (48-51). This reference to authority and point of comparison serves to further amplify Ælfric's message through the epideictic structure of the encomium.

Ælfric next addresses his audience specifically through an apostrophe, "Understandað nu, mine gebroðra, þa micclan lufe þæs eadigan weres," or "Understand now, my brethren, the great love of this blessed man" (50-51), Ælfric praises the fact that Stephen prayed for Saul, even though Stephen was being stoned to death, and, because of this, Saul was saved, which "On ðyssere dæde is geswutelod hu micclum fremige þíre soðan lufe gebed," or "By this deed is shown how greatly avails the prayer of true love" (50-53). It is through recounting Stephen's example that Ælfric not only praises Stephen's morality but is able to relay his ultimate message: how "Eornostlice seo soðe lufu is wylspring and ordfruma ealra godnyssa and æðele trumnys, ans se weg þe læt to heofonum," or "true love is the fountain and origin of all goodness, and noble fortitude, and the way that leads to heaven" (52-53). While Ælfric is praising morality, he is also instructing his audience that true morality and goodness can only come from true love, which, in turn, can only come from heaven. Therefore, men cannot truly act virtuously unless they follow God, and this theme is epideictically and cyclically rendered not only within this homily, but within Ælfric's numerous other homilies such as *The Second Sunday in the Lord's Advent*, *The Nativity of All Saints*, *For the Holy Days of Pentecost*, *Sermon on the Lord's Ascension*, *Of the Catholic Faith*, *On the Greater Litany*, *Easter Sunday*, *The First Sunday in Lent*, *Shrove Sunday*, *Sermon on the Lord's Epiphany*, *Septuagesima Sunday*, *The Second Sunday in Lent*, *Midlent Sunday*, *The Apostles Philip and James*, *The Seven Holy Sleepers*, *The Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost*, and *The Third Sunday after the Lord's Epiphany*.

Ælfric again specifically addresses his audience through apostrophe, relying upon reduplication of “mine gebroðra” or “my brethren,” to stir emotions and make his message relevant to the audience. Ælfric writes, “Mine gebroðra, uton geefenlæcan be sumum dæle swa miccles lareowes geleafan, and swa mæres cyðeres lufe. Uton lufian ure gebroðra on Goes gelaðunge mid swilcum mode swa swa ðes cyðere þa lufode his fynd,” or “My brethren, let us in some degree imitate so great a teacher’s faith, and so great a martyr’s love. Let us love our brothers in God’s church with such affection as that with which this martyr loved his foes” (52-53). Subsequently, Ælfric’s homily perfectly resembles a eulogy in its remembrance of the past, noble actions of an individual, yet it highlights and praises these virtuous actions as an example for others in the present moment.

The homily concludes with, “Cristes lufe us neadað þæt we simle þa godan tihton, þæt hi on godnyse þurhwunion; and ða yfelan we mynegiað, þæt hi fram heora yfeluessum hrædllice gecyrron. Ne beo se rihtwisa gymeleas on his anginne, ne se yfela ortruwige ðurh his unrihtwisnyse. Ondræde se goda þæt he fealle; hogige se yfela þæt he astande,” or “Love of Christ compels us ever to stimulate the good, that they continue in goodness; and we admonish the wicked that they may quickly turn from their wickedness. Let not the righteous be heedless at his beginning, nor the wicked despair through his unrighteousness. Let the good man dread lest he fall; the wicked take care that he stand” (56-57). The homily then reiterates Stephen’s contribution and example before exhorting the audience to follow God and before surrendering the matter to the the audience with “mine gebroðra” (56-57), which emplores individuals to apply these principles in their own lives and share these precepts with others.

Ælfric’s homilies continue a patristic pattern of exhortation often demonstrated, as Ann Eljenholm Nichols discusses, in the writings of St. Augustine (161), though Ælfric’s style of



writing is even more straightforward than Augustine's and he would often delete material that Augustine emphasized, rearrange information to best fit his ideals and audience, and splice ideas from one sentence or section into another (165). Ælfric took these liberties because he was, first and foremost, functioning as an educator and endeavoring to instruct his audience. Like the religious figures before him, Ælfric is able to instruct and move his audience by adhering to a very loosely based epideictic structure that had been adopted piecemeal from antiquity. Ælfric is not concerned with earthly politics or with deliberation and debate. Instead, he focuses upon the thoughts and actions that detail the condition of the heart and soul and stresses the positive result of an individual's relationship with God. This Christianization of classical rhetoric's encomium and vituperation structures created a form of communication that can best be described as comparative and wholistic, but in terms of a Christian worldview.

A further example of how Ælfric's homilies closely adhere to the epideictic encomium structure is seen in *St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome*. This homily begins with an introduction that lists Gregory's titles before discussing his origin, birth, and country, "Þes eadiga papa Gregorius wæs of æðelborenre mægðe and eawfæstre acenned; Romanisce witan wæron his magas; his fæder hatte Gordianus, and Felix, se eawfæsta papa, wæs his fifta fæder," or "This blessed pope Gregory was born of a noble and pious family; his relations were Roman senators; his father was called Gordianus, and Felix, the pious pope, was his fifth father" (Thorpe Vol II 118-119). Ælfric even discusses the meaning of Gregory's name, which is watchful, "Wacolre," and states that Gregory was watchful of God's commandments, "He wæs swiðe wacol on Godes bebodum, ðaða he sylf herigendlice leofode, and hé wacollice ymbe manegra ðeoda þearfe hógode, and him lífes weig geswutelode" (Vol II 118). This discussion of origin was a major staple in rhetorical speeches and in forensic and deliberative rhetoric as well because it brilliantly

allowed the audience to judge the person being discussed and was a seamless way of immediately establishing a comparison or contrast.

The next step in the encomium structure is to discuss the person's education, and Ælfric does so, "Hé gecneordlæhte æfter wísra láreowa gebisnungum, and næs forgyttol, ac gefæstnode his láre on fæstháfelum gemynde," or "He was studious of the examples of wise teachers, and was not forgetful, but fastened his learning in a retentive memory" (Thorpe 118-119). After spending several lines discussing Gregory's education and appointments, Ælfric then moves to the next step: discussing a person's deeds and virtues, beginning with the well known story of Gregory's interest in the English, "Þa geseah he betwux ðam warum cype-cnihtas gesette, þa wæron whites lichaman and fægeres andwlitan menn, and æðellice gefexode," or "He then saw among their wares youths placed for sale; they were men white of body and of comely countenance, with noble heads of hair" (Thorpe Vol II 120-121). As a result of this meeting, Gregory began the mission of proselytizing to the English.

The succeeding section of an encomium makes a favorable or contrasting comparison. Here, many other virtuous figures are introduced and discussed as a means of amplifying Gregory's virtues: pope Pelagius, emperor Mauricius, Augustine, and Frankish king Æthelbyrht who was converted to Christ. Then, the epilogue concludes with the praise of Gregory and a prayer of praise and surrender to God,

Se eadiga Gregorius gedihte manega halige traht-béc, and mid micelre gecnyrdnyse Godes folc to ðam ecan life gewissode, and fela wundra on his life geweold ðreotytne gear, and six monðas, and tyn dagas, and siððan on ðisum dæge gewát to ðam ecan setle heofenan rices, on ðam he leofað mid Gode Ælmihtigum á on ecnyse. Amen. (Vol II 132-133)

The blessed Gregory composed many holy treatises, and with great diligence directed God's people to everlasting life, and wrought many miracles in his life, and gloriously ruled the papal seat thirteen years, and six months, and ten days, and then on this day departed to the eternal seat of heaven's kingdom, in which he liveth with God Almighty ever to eternity. Amen. (Vol II 132-133)

This entire homily is also an appeal to authority because Gregory was so highly revered as a Christian intellectual and writer, and Ælfric would have been very conscious to create a tight, polished structure from which to honor and praise Gregory's memory.

In similar manner, *The Assumption of Saint John the Apostle* begins by discussing John, "Cristes dyrling," for the "purity of his uncorrupted chastity" or "for ðære clænnysse his ansundan mægðhades" (58-59). In recounting the life and qualities of John, the homily relies upon the praise of encomium, and through John's actions, we learn, "Dyslic bið þæt hwa woruldlice speda forhogige for manna herunge, and beo on Godes dome geniðerod. Ydel bið se læcedom þe ne mæg ðone untruman gehælan; swa bið eac ydel seo lar ðe ne gehæld sawle leahtras and unðeawas," or "It is foolish that any one should despise worldly riches for praise of men, and be condemned at God's doom. Vain is the medicine that cannot heal the sick; as also is vain the doctrine that healeth not the sins and vices of the soul" (60-61). At the onset, this homily creates a distinction between moral actions like chastity that are to be praised and immoral qualities like vanity that are to be condemned and shunned. These qualities are epideictically presented in their evaluation of Saint John's life where virtue was used to amplify vice and vice was used to amplify virtues, a characteristic pattern typical of much early medieval rhetoric.

Epanaphora and the use of maxim can also be found within this homily, for example when Ælfric writes, "Nacode we wæron acennede, and nacode we gewitað," or "Naked we were born, and naked we depart" (64-65). Another example, which also contains disjunction as well as reduplication, repetition of one or more words for the purpose of amplification or appeal to pity (Caplan IV.XXVIII.38), is

Hé carað dæges and nihtes þæt his feoh gehealden sy; hé gymð grædelice his teolunge, his gafoles, his gebytl; he berypð þa wannspedigan, he fulgæð his lustum and his legan; þonne færlice gewitt he of ðissere worulde, nacod and for-

scyldigod, synna ana mid him ferigende; forðan þe he sceal éce wíte ðrowian.  
(66-67)

He cares night and day that his money be preserved; he attends greedily to his gain, his rent, his buildings; he bereaves the indigent, he follows his lusts and his pleasure; then suddenly departs he from this world, naked and charged with crimes, bearing with him his sin alone; therefore shall he suffer punishment everlasting. (66-67)

With this last example, the character and behavior of such a man is almost on trial, which is what classic epideictic does, although early medieval rhetoric often altered this focus so that communication enlivened spiritual truths within the heart and soul of individuals. Instead of evaluating legal ramifications for past or future action or planning future events, epideictic centers on how morality can aid the present moment, and early medieval rhetoric continually compared earthly life and its disappointments to a heavenly, spiritual existence full of promise. The message is apparent. Those who are greedy, obsessed with money and material possessions, and full of earthly lusts commit moral crimes and will spend eternity in hell. Throughout this homily, these actions and qualities are thoroughly condemned.

Ælfric also adds further detail to Biblical stories, giving certain characters names like Stacteus, a man who had been raised from the dead. Allowing these characters to speak and act on their own and including more personal details about their lives allowed Ælfric to engage his audience through rhetorical strategies of dialogue, vivid description, portrayal, and character delineation. Looking closer at the story of Stacteus, for example, demonstrates these rhetorical precepts where Ælfric writes,

Mid ðam þa arás se cniht Stacteus, and feoll to Iohannes fotum, and began to ðre-  
agenne þa gebroðru þae miswende wæron, þus cweðende, 'Ic geseah þa englas, þe  
eower gymdon, dreorige wepan, and ða awyrigedan sceoccan blissigende on  
eowerum forwyrd. Eow wæs heofenan rice gearo, and scinende gebytlu mid  
wistum afyllede, and mid ecum leohte: þa ge forluron þurh unwærscipe, and ge  
begeaton eow ðeosterfulle wununga mid dracum afylled, and mid brastligendum  
liguim, mid unasecgendlicum witum afyllede, and mid andræcum stencum; on  
ðam ne ablinð granung and þoterung dæges oþþe nihtes: biddað forði mid inwear-

dre heortan ðysne Godes apostol, eowerne lareow, þæt he eow fram ðam ecum forwyrd arære, swa swa he me fram deaðe arærde; and he eowre saula, þe nu synd adylegode of þære liflican béc, gelæde eft to Godes gife and miltsunge.’ (66-69)

Stacteus arose, and fell at the feet of John, and began to chide the brothers who had been perverted, thus saying, ‘I saw the angels who had charge of you sadly weeping, and the accursed fiend rejoicing in your destruction. For you was the kingdom of heaven ready, and shining structures filled with repasts, and with eternal light: these ye have lost through heedlessness, and have got for yourselves dark dwellings filled with serpents, and with crackling flames, full of unspeakable torments and horrible stench; in which groaning and howling cease not day nor night: pray, therefore, with inward heart, this apostle of God, your teacher, that he raise you from eternal perdition, as he hath raised me from death, and that he your souls, which are now blotted from the living book, lead back to God’s grace and mercy.’ (66-69)

This passage relies upon allegory, appeal to scriptural authority, dialogue, and vivid details like “brastligendum liguim,” or “crackling flames.” This dialogue serves to amplify the instruction against and condemnation of sin, particularly covetousness, “agylton” (68-69), through the rhetorical strategy of reduplication, which repeats a word or phrase to move the audience to an emotional response, in this case, terror and repentance. Ælfric concludes his homily with a prayer of surrender to God, “þam is wuldor and wurðmynt mid Fæder and Halgum Gaste, á butan ende. Amen,” or “to whom is glory and honour with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever without end. Amen” (76-77), which adheres to the encomium based epilogue of prayer and exhortation demonstrated throughout Ælfric’s homilies.

Though the epideictic underpinnings in Ælfric’s homilies are abundantly clear, a further important example of a homily that praises a specific person according to the encomium structure is *The Nativity of St. John the Baptist*, which begins by discussing John’s origin, his parents, Zacharius and Elizabeth, and his life, using transplacement and reduplication to amplify John’s virtues and his important role in preaching and baptizing. Ælfric writes,

Se witega hine het stemn, forðan ðe he forestóp Criste, ðe is Word gehaten: na swilc word swa men sprecað, ac he is ðæs Fæder Wisdom, and word bið wisdoms

geswutelung. þæt Word is Ælmihtig God, Sunu mid his Fæder. On ælcum worde bið stemn gehyred, ær þæt word fullice gecweden sy. Swa swa stemn forestæpð worde, swa forestóp Iohannes ðam Hælende on middangearde; forðan ðe God Fæder hine sende ætforan gesihðe his Bearnas, þæt he sceolde gearcian and dæftan his weig. (260-263)

The prophet called himself a voice, because he preceded Christ, who is called the Word: not such a word as men speak, but he is the Wisdom of the Father, and a word is the manifestation of wisdom. The Word is Almighty God, the Son with his Father. In every word the voice is heard before the word is fully spoken. As the voice precedes the word, so did John precede Jesus on earth' for God the Father sent him before the sight of his Son, that he might prepare and make ready his way. (260-263)

This passage relies upon synecdoche where the whole is known from a small part, as with the term, "stemn," which is a loud voice used when singing or teaching, and also functions as an anonomasia in that it is a new name for a person or thing that indicates whether characteristics are praise or blame-worthy.

It is also interesting that Ælfric chooses this analogy for John because Ælfric's discussion about words, tone, and verbal impact portrays an understanding of how rhetoric functions in influencing the hearts and minds of audiences. In this case, the sound of the word and tone of voice is heard before the full impact of the word is felt, indicating that Ælfric understood the importance of delivery, organization, and arrangement, which are all classical rhetorical concerns. Ælfric also views words as signs of wisdom, and moreover that of divine wisdom and understanding, that spark divine wisdom in the heart and soul, and consequently the mind and actions, of the audience. Indeed, this passage suggests that all words have a spiritual aspect, whether they are inciting an earthly, bodily desire and agenda; the virtues and godliness of the soul; or used for vices and for evil.

Similarly, a significant encomium that also blends the condemnation of vituperation is *The Passion of the Apostles Peter and Paul* that specifically praises both apostles for their belief and virtuous acts. The introduction of *The Passion of the Apostles Peter and Paul* begins by cit-

ing the authority of Bede and his explanation for why God referred to Peter as a stone on which he would build his church, “þæt þu eart stænen, and ofer ðysne stán ic timbrige mine cyrcan, and helle gatu naht ne magon ongean hí” (364-365). Ælfric states, “Beda se trahtrere us onwrihð þa deopnysse ðysre rædinge, and cwýð, þæt Philippus se fyðerríca ða buruh Cesarea getimbrode, and on wurðmynte þæs caseres Tiberii, ðe he under rixode” (364-367). This statement by Jesus explains and defines Catholicism and is an extremely pivotal discussion for medieval religious leaders. By appealing to the authority of Bede in his discussion, Ælfric leaves little room for argument or reinterpretation, as Bede’s influence and writing were highly regarded.

Ælfric goes on to explain that Peter is referred to as son of a dove, “culfran sunu,” because he was filled with meekness and with the grace of the Holy Ghost, “fordan ðe he wæs afylled mid bilewitnysse and gife ðæs Halgan Gastes” (368-369). Ælfric continues discussing these analogies by interpreting the comparison of Peter to a stone, “stænen,” referring to Peter’s strength of belief and steadfastness, “ðære strence his geleafan, and for anrædnysse his andetnysse he underfencg ðone naman, forðan ðe he geðeodde hine sylfne mid fæstum mode to Criste, se ðe is stán gecweden fram ðam apostole Paule” (368-369). Again, Ælfric communicates praise, and he focuses his writing upon amplifying these praiseworthy qualities

The epilogue is unique among other homilies because Ælfric ends with a vituperative judgment and warning instead of a prayer. Ælfric writes, “Ac forði is seo cæig Petre sinderlice betæht, þæt eal ðeodscipe gleawlice tocnáwe, þæt swa hwá swa oðscyt fram annysse ðæs geleafan ðe Petrus ða andette Criste, þæt him ne bið getiðod naðor ne synna forgyfenys ne infær þæs heofenlican rices,” or “But the key is especially committed to Peter, that every people may with certainty know, that whosoever deviates from the unity of the faith which Peter then professed to Christ, to him will be granted neither forgiveness of sins nor entrance into the kingdom

of heaven” (370-371). This final statement is harsh in its finality and seems uncharacteristic of Ælfric’s writing, but such a tone is to be expected from a discussion that hits close to the heart of Catholicism. This ending is full of vituperation in the harsh condemnation of those who leave the unity of the Catholic faith and do not repent, although the rest of the homily has praised the actions and examples of Peter and Paul. This conclusion still functions as an exhortation of proper behavior for the audience by condemning what should not be done, and it is a perfect illustration of how early medieval rhetoric combined both encomium and vituperative purposes to amplify a point and stir reader’s to morality.

An almost identically named homily, *Of the Passion of the Apostles Peter and Paul*, also begins with a brief introduction discussing the purpose of the homily and the choice of narrative, “We wyllað æfter ðisum godspelle eow gereccan ðæra apostola drohtnunga and geendunge, mid scortre race; forðan ðe heora ðrowung is gehwær on Engliscum gereorde fulllice geendebyrd,” or “We will after this gospel relate to you the lives and end of those apostles in a short narrative, because their passion is everywhere fully set forth in the English tongue” (370-371). Again, the consideration of audience is apparent, as is the careful creation of an introduction or preface to the homily’s instruction. Ælfric uses description, dialogue, and vivid details to tell this narrative of God’s resurrection of a corpse, Peter and Paul’s confrontation with Emperor Nero, the condemnation of Simon the magician, and the deaths of Peter and Paul.

This homily is extremely fanciful and vivid, discussing rumors of Nero’s punishment where he was torn apart by wolves, “Pa sprang þæt word þæt hé swa lange on ðam holte on cyle and on hunger dwelode, oðþæt hine wulfas totæron” (384-385) and how the attempted removal of Peter and Paul’s corpses by the Greeks resulted in a great earthquake, “micel eorð-styrung,” (384-385). This homily indulges more in the imagination combined with scriptural stories than



just a discussion of scriptural stories themselves, which functions as a type of encomium or eulogy for the saints Peter and Paul and as an exhortation to others to live for God because, even in death, they will be blessed and protected and will be able to influence others.

A further example is found in *The Nativity of St. Paul the Apostle*, whose introduction clearly models the epideictic nature of an encomium in that it describes a person's origin, upbringing, and deeds before ending with a prayer and encouragement to follow the person's virtuous example. Within this homily, Ælfric discusses Paul's background and deeds, praising his virtuous qualities while condemning his immoral ones. The homily begins by mentioning Paul's killing of the apostles, yet lessens this crime by stating that "nis ðeah-hwæðere be him geræd, þæt hé handling ænigne man acwealde" or Paul never killed anyone with his own hands (386-387). So, while Ælfric condemns Paul's actions here, he also lays the stage for Paul's redemption because Paul personally never killed any of the saints or followers of God.

Ælfric then relays the narrative of Paul's salvation and conversion to Saul. In explanation and justification for Paul's redemption, Ælfric writes, "We willað nu mid sumere scotre trahtnunge þas rædinge oferyman, and geopenian, gif heo hwæt digles on hyre hæbbende sy. Paulus ehte cristenra manna, na mid niðe, swa swa ða Iudeiscan dydon, ac he wæs midspreca and bewerigend þære eakdab æ mid micelre anrædnysse" or "We will not run over this reading with a short exposition, and explain any obscurity there may be contained in it. Paul persecuted Christian men, not with hate, as the Jews did, but he was a partisan and defender of the old law with great steadfastness: he thought that the faith of Christ was an adversary to the old covenant" (388-389). Although Paul is condemned for his disbelief and persecution, he is praised for his adherence to the laws of the covenant, and this later observance of morality is one reason why Paul was rewarded with salvation and sainthood.

Ælfric also praises Paul/Saul because “Micele maran witu he ðrowode siððan for Cristes naman, ðonne he ær his gecyrrednysse cristenum mannum gebude,” or “Much greater torments he suffered afterwards for Christ’s name, than he had ordered for Christian men before his conversion” (392-393). Paul/Saul suffered greater torment than he had ever ordered for any persecuted believer, so Ælfric also highlights this point to indicate the course of justice on earth, where Paul/Saul was severely persecuted because he was living for God. This homily makes an excellent example for Ælfric to teach a spiritual lesson on the consequences of actions. Ælfric both condemns Paul’s actions through vituperation while praising Saul’s virtue and martyrdom through encomium.

Then, after continuing the story from the gospel, Ælfric praises Paul for giving up everything he had to follow God and for enduring such torture and hardship before exhorting his audience, “Ða oðre ðe ðas geðincðe nabbað, þæt hi ealle heora æhta samod forlætan magon, hí dón þonne ðone dæl for Godes naman ðe him to onhagige, and him bið be hundfealdum écelice gelæanod swa hwæt swa hí be anfealdum hwilwendlice dælað,” or “Others, who have not the merit of being able to forsake all their possessions together, let them then give, for the name of God, what portion it may please them, and they will be eternally rewarded an hundredfold for whatsoever they singly and temporarily distribute” (398-399). Again, the epideictic rhetoric is clear: sacrifice all for God in the present moment and live in eternal happiness.

Ælfric concludes his homily thus, “Is nu forði munuchádes mannum mid micelre gecnyrdnysse to forbugenne ðas yfelan gebysnunga, and geefenlæcan þam apostolum, þæt hí, mid him and mid Gode, þæt éce líf habban moton. Amen,” or “Now it is therefore for monastic men to shun with great care these evil examples, and to imitate the apostles, that they, with them and with God, may have everlasting life. Amen” (400-401). Just as Paul shunned his evil deeds

and fleshly life, so too should Ælfric's audience, and particularly religious leaders and monastic men who greatly influence others. Only then will individuals find happiness, eternal fulfillment, and salvation. The dual worldview and merging of encomium and vituperation is clear in both the form of a Christian rhetoric as well as an early medieval rhetorical tradition that encompasses a variety of writings, not just religious, within this dualistic view.

Finally, there are numerous homilies discussing the Virgin Mary, including *On the Purification of St. Mary*, *The Annunciation of St. Mary*, and *On the Assumption of the Blessed Mary*. Each of these homilies discusses the origin of Mary's sainthood: her belief in the angel's words and her faith, her development as a righteous figure on earth, and her praiseworthy qualities and virtues. Within *On the Purification of St. Mary*, the story of Christ is given before Mary's qualities are discussed, as a means of an introduction, again following the encomium structure. In discussing the story of Simeon, who was given the privilege of holding baby Jesus, Ælfric uses reduplication in order to amplify the issue and focus upon moral and immoral qualities. Ælfric writes,

þone bær se ealda Symeon on his earmum, þe ealle ðing hylt and gewylt. Lytel he wæs ðær gesewen, ac ðeah-hwæðere he wæse swiðe micel and orrmæte. Lytel he wæs gesewen, forðan ðe he wolde gefeccan þa lytlan, and gebringan up to his rice. Hwæt synd ða lytlan ðe he wolde habban up to his rice? þæt synd ða eadmodan. Ne sohte Crist na ða modigan, þa þa micelle beoð on hyra geþance; ac ða ðe beoð lytle and eadmode on heora heortan, þa cumað to Godes rice; ac ðider ne mæg astigan nan modignys. (138-139)

The old Simeon bare in his arms him who preserves and rules over all things. Little he there appeared, yet was he, nevertheless, very great and infinite. Little he appeared, because he would fetch the little and bring them up to his kingdom. Who are the little ones that he would raise up to his kingdom? They are the humble. Christ sought not the proud, those who are great in their own imagination, but those who are little and humble in their hearts, these shall come to God's kingdom; but thither may no pride ascend. (138-139)

This passage relies upon epanaphora with its repetition of successive beginning phrases as well as interlacement with its repetition of the word "lytle." Both rhetorical tropes help to amplify

this Biblical narrative to praise humility through encomium purposes and to condemn pride through vituperation. Simeon also stands as a comparison for Mary's belief, and he, like Mary, is rewarded for his faith and morality by being able to hold baby Jesus.

Ælfric also uses the strategy of transition to recall what has been said and bring his audience back to the scriptural story after he has explained an event or thought. For example, after discussing the reward of virginity, widowhood, and lawful marriage, Ælfric states, "Uton fon nu on þæt godspel ðær we hit æ forleton," or "Let us now resume the gospel where we previously left it" (148-149). Not only does this phrase briefly recall what has been discussed and present the message or what is to follow through transition, but it is also an example of dwelling on the point, where one stays on and returns to the topic that the whole cause rests upon (Caplan IV.XLIV. 58), which, in this case, is humility and purity of thought and deed. Finally, the homily ends by praising God, the one "seðe us alysde fram þystrum, and us gebrincð to þam ecan leohte, seðe leofað and rixað á butan ende. Amen," or "who redeemed us from darkness and bringeth us to the Eternal Light, who liveth and ruleth ever without end. Amen" or (Thorpe 150-151). Such a prayer enunciates how the epideictic rhetorical structure was uniquely altered by early medieval rhetoricians to continually highlight eternity and the dire importance of living a life of morality during human's transitory existence on earth.

Similarly to *On the Purification of St. Mary*, *The Annunciation of St. Mary* recounts the story of Mary's life, praising her virtuous actions, but only after creating an introduction that praises God's love and condemns Satan's actions. Ælfric writes,

Ure se Ælmihtiga Scyppend, seðe ealle gesceafta, buton ælcon antimbre, þurh his wisdom gesceop, and þurh his willan geliffæste, hé gesceop mancynn to ði þæt hí sceoldon mid gehyrsumnysse and eadmodnysse ða heofenlican geðincde gearnigan, þe se deofol mid ofermettum forwyrhte. Þa wearð eac se mann mid deofles lotwrencum bepæht, swa þæt he tobræc his Scyppendes bebod, and wearð deofle betæht, and eal his offspring itno helle-wite. Ða ðeah-hwæðere ofðugte ðam Æl-

mihtigum Gode ealles mancynnes yrmða, and smeade hu he mihte his hand-geweorc of deofles anwealde alysan; forði him ofhreow þæs mannes, forðon ðe he wæs bepæht mid þæ deofles searo-cræftum. Ac him ne ofhreow na ðæs deofles hryre; forðan ðe hé næs þurh nane tihtinge forlæred, ac hé sylf asmeade ða up-ahedefnysse þe he ðurh ahreas; and he forði á on ecnysse wunað on forwyrde wælræw deofol. (192-193)

Our Almighty Creator, who created all creatures, without any matter through his wisdom, and through his will animated them, he created mankind that they might with obedience and humility merit those heavenly honours which the devil through pride had forfeited. Then was man deceived by the devil's wiles, so that he brake the command of his Creator, and was, with all his offspring, delivered to the devil into hell-torment. Then, nevertheless, the Almighty God was grieved for the miseries of all mankind, and he meditated how he might redeem his handiwork from the power of the devil; for he took pity on man, because he had been deceived by the wiles of the devil. But he had no pity for the devil's fall, because he had not be misled by any instigation, but had himself devised the presumption through which he fell; and he therefore, to all eternity, dwelleth in perdition, a bloodthirsty devil. (192-193)

Here Ælfric stresses the qualities of wisdom, obedience, humility, and pity, and he condemns pride and vain presumption, disobedience, and trickery, as seen in the dual nature of good and evil, God and the devil. As with all of Ælfric's homilies, these qualities are discussed until the very concluding exordium and prayer of surrender such as "Uton biddan nu þæt eadige and þæt gesælige mæden Marían, þæt heo us geðingige to hyre agenum Suna and to hire Scyppende, Hælende Criste, seðe gewylt ealra ðinga mid Fæder and mid þam Halgum Gaste, á on ecnysse. Amen" or "Let us now pray the blessed and happy Virgin Mary, that she intercede for us to her own Son and Creator, Jesus Christ, who governs all things with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever to eternity. Amen" (204-205). Christians believe humans are caught between the choice to follow God or to follow the devil. Consequently, Christian communication is based upon this view of life, which naturally led to incorporating and emphasizing both vice and virtue within the same passage to present the entire, troubling picture of earthly existence and human life in hopes that the audience would gain divine knowledge and realization, choosing morality and heavenly thought and action in their day to day lives. This classical rhetorical underpinning of epideictic

rhetoric is the foundation for Christian rhetoric, which became the foundation for early medieval rhetoric, though Christian and early medieval rhetoric blended the focus of both the encomium and vituperation, and often the chreia and the commonplace, in their holistic view of earthly and spiritual existence.

In the same manner as the other two, *On the Assumption of the Blessed Mary* also praises Mary's virtue. *On the Assumption of the Blessed Mary* begins by referencing the authority of Jerome and his epistle on the death of the Virgin Mary to Eustochium. Ælfric engages in reasoning by contraries to emphasize Mary's purity and to praise chastity when he states, "Nis on nanum oðrum men mægðhád, gif þær bið wæstmbærnys; ne wæstmbærnys, gif þær bið ansund mægðhád," or "In no other person is there virginity, if there be fruitfulness; nor fruitfulness, if there be perfect virginity" (438-439). This passage relies upon reasoning through contraries in its amplification of Mary's purity and virtue, and it creates a perfect epideictic format where Mary is praised as the purest of all women and becomes a model for others to follow.

As demonstrated in numerous other homilies, Ælfric also repeats the word "Verily," "Soðlice," to draw attention to the message and help the reader focus upon his instruction, using amplification produced by repetition. Ælfric ends his discussion of Jerome's epistle by addressing the audience, "Þes pistol is swiðe menigfeald ús to gereccenne, and eow swiðe deop to gehyrenne. Nu ne onhagað ús na swiðor be ðam to sprecenne, ac we wyllað sume oðre trimming be ðære mæran Godes meder gereccan, to eowre gebetrunge," or "This epistle is very complex for us to expound, and very deep for you to hear. It does not now seem good to us to speak more concerning it, but we will relate for your bettering some other edifying matter of the great mother of God" (448-449). Ælfric both cleverly addresses and dismisses this passage by appealing to his audience, and his rhetorical strategy in this passage resembles an aposipesis where a thought or

discussion is left unfinished (Caplan IV.XXIX.41), and often intentionally so to pique the audience's interest and to advance a moral lesson or point. Ælfric chooses this rhetorical strategy here so he can quickly move on to more relevant examples and actions that can be praised or condemned.

It is also within this homily that Ælfric makes the connection between divine command and praising and condemning where

God ðurh his witegan us bebed þæt we sceolon hine herian and mærsian on his halgum, on ðam he is wunderolic: micelle swiðor gedafenad þæt we hine on ðisre mæran freols-tide his eadigan meder mid lofsangum and wurdfullum herungum wurðian sceolon; forðan ðe untwylice eal hire wurðmynt is Godes herung. (Thorpe 446-447)

God has commanded us through his prophets, that we should praise and magnify him in his saints, in whom he is wonderful: much more fitting is it that we, on this great festival of his blessed mother, should worship him with hymns and honourable praises; for undoubtedly all honour to her is praise of God. (Thorpe 446-447)

Based on this passage, the use of epideictic rhetoric is seen as a divine mandate where men should judge what is moral and immoral, praising moral actions and those who are moral and condemning immoral actions and those who practice them. And, of course, God is always to be praised for his qualities like mercy and love, while Satan is to continually be condemned for his pride and deception. Consequently, the expressions and purposes of epideictic rhetoric would naturally fulfill this mandated form of communication, although Christians tailored this classical form of rhetoric to be more dualistic and pertinent for human understanding.

As the homily concludes, there is an apostrophe and exordium, "Min gegroðra ða leofostan, uton clypigan mid singalum benum to ðære halgan Godes meder, þæt heo ús on urum nyðbearfnyssum to hire Bearne gedingige," or "Dearest brothers, let us call with constant prayers to the holy mother of God, that she may intercede for us in our necessities with her son" (452-455), again ending with an address to the audience and a prayer, although this time to a saint.

Ælfric's final statement is or "Swa swa gehwilce man wunað on sawle and on lichaman án mann, swa is Crist, God and man, án Hælend, seðe leofað and rixað mid Fæder and Halgum Gaste on ealra worulda woruld. Amen," or "So as every man exists in soul and body one man, so is Christ, God and man, one Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever and ever. Amen" (454-455). The reason the epideictic structure worked so well within early medieval writing and formed the underpinning for much early medieval literature, particularly religious writing and homilies, was because Christian writers saw the world in black and white with the concepts of soul and body, heaven and hell, God and Satan, and virtue and vice. These were the concepts that guided medieval intelligent thought and instruction, naturally giving rise to an emphasis upon epideictic communication, and an epideictic communication presented as humbly, clearly, and simply as possible in the exhortation of each individual to form his/her own epideictic discourses within daily life.

Two final homilies that will be briefly discussed are *The Invention of the Holy Cross* and *On the Dedication of a Church* because both homilies are unique in that they praise objects as a means of praising virtue, again indicating that epideictic rhetoric does not necessarily have to focus on a specific person or quality. *The Invention of the Holy Cross* introduces the cross, quotes the authority of Jerome, condemns the evil general Maxentius, and praises the holy rood, ending with

Cristene men sceolon soðlice abugan to gehalgodre rode, on ðæs Hælendes naman, forðan ðe we nabbað ða ðe hé on ðrowade, ac hire anlicnys bið halig swa þeah, to ðære we abugað on gebedum symle to ðam Mihtigan Drihtne, þe for mannum ðrowade; and seo ród is gemynd his mæran þrowunge, halig ðurh hine, ðeah ðe heo on holte weoxe. We hí wurðiað á for wurðmynte Cristes, seðe ús alysde mid lufe ðurh hí, þæs we him ðanciað symle on life. (Thorpe Vol II 306-307)

Christian men truly should bow to the hallowed rood in the name of Jesus, for although we have not that on which he suffered, its likeness is, nevertheless, holy, to



which we ever bow in our prayers to the Mighty Lord, who suffered for men; and the rood is a memorial of his great passion, holy through him, through it grow in a wood. We ever honour it for the honour of Christ, who redeemed us with love through it, for which we thank him ever in life. (Thorpe Vol II 306-307)

This epilogue is a powerfully expressed exhortation to the audience where, if an inanimate object such as carved wood can serve God and remain virtuous and steadfast, certainly humanity can praise God and serve him as well. Within this passage, Ælfric addresses his audience through use of the apostrophe and relies upon the cross as an example and a symbol for Christ's passion and suffering, encouraging others to endure earthly pain brought on through holiness and virtue so they too can be remembered by Christ. The homily ends with an encomiastic prayer of praise, though tailored for medieval purposes in its surrender to God, again making it clear that Christ is the ultimate topic for any homily.

*On the Dedication of a Church* once again proves that encomiums do not have to praise a person, but can also praise a thing or any other noun – as with the homily about the rood. The building becomes a metaphor for the body, which must be pure and clean before God – free from earthly lusts and vices. Ælfric begins the homily, “Mine gebroðra þa leofostan, we wyllað sume tihtendlice spræce wið eow habban be ðyssere cyrclican mærsunge, and eow læran þæt ge sylfe beon Godes temple gastlice, nu ge his eorðlice temple wurðiað,” or “My dearest brothers, we will have some hortatory speech with you concerning this ecclesiastical celebration, and instruct you so that ye may yourselves be God's temple spiritually, now that ye are honouring his earthly temple” (Vol II 574-575). Through this apostrophe, Ælfric specifically admits that the purpose of his homily is to give praise and honor, as with every homily. Then, relying upon an encomium format, Ælfric next relays the history of the temple, its builders, its rulers, and its communal importance, especially in regards to the wisdom of Solomon, before ending with an exhortation and

a prayer where, just as the physical church building should be honored, so too should the earthly body be honored, abstaining from fleshly lusts and desires.

Ælfric ends his collection of *Catholic Homilies* in volume two of Thorpe's edited anthology much the same as he began, closing with his own epilogue addressed to the audience,

Ic ðancige þam Ælmihtigum Scyppende mid ealre heortan, þæt hé me synfullum þæs geúde, þæt ic ðas twá béc, him to lofe and to wurðmynte, Angelcynne onwreah, ðam ungelæredum; ða gelæredan ne beðurfon þyssere bóca, forðan ðe him mæg heora ágen lár genihtsumian. Ic cweðe nu þæt ic næfre heonon-forð ne awende godspel oþþe godspel-trahtas of Ledene on Englisc. Gif hwá má awendan wille, ðonne bidde ic hine, for Godes lufon, þæt hé gesette his béc onsundron fram ðam twám bécum ðe we awend habbað, we truwiað þurh Godes diht. Sy him á wuldor on ecnysse. (Vol II 594-595)

I thank the Almighty Creator with all my heart, that he has granted to me a sinner, that, to his praise and honour, I have disclosed these two books to the English race, for the unlearned; the learned have no need of these books, because their own learning may suffice them. I say now that I never henceforth will turn gospel or gospel-expositions from Latin into English. If any one will turn more, then will I pray him, for love of God, that he set his book apart from the two books that we have turned, we trust through God's direction. Be to him ever glory to eternity. (Vol II 594-595)

There is evidence of asyndeton here with the inclusion of short clauses, and this conclusion is interesting for its own display of epideictic rhetoric. Not only does Ælfric praise God's mercy, but he also comments about his target audience – the unlearned, making it clear that his focus has been the spiritual enlightenment of his audience. Ælfric tries to exemplify what he has been preaching and instructing all along – the importance of following and praising God, helping the less fortunate, converting the lost, and exhorting believers in their faith. In the epilogue for his entire collection of *Catholic Homilies*, Ælfric displays an encomium style ending with a prayer of surrender, providing evidence that early medieval rhetoric was a rhetoric for all individuals based upon the Christian dualistic view of life expressed through the Christianization of epideictic rhetoric.

As “incontestably a master in the portrayal of Biblical story” (White 76), Ælfric demonstrates his skill with rhetorical tropes, a skill that would have been, if not widely recognized, widely imitated because, from “the time of the Danish wars, far on into the period after the Norman Conquest, Ælfric’s sermons were copied again and again” (86). Ælfric derives substance of thought and authority from his sources and Latin and Biblical inspirations, clothing them in “his own language” (104). Like Alfred, Ælfric demonstrates great skill and understanding in how to most influence and affect an audience. Ælfric’s “pedagogical clarity, polished language, clean stylistic lines, and unique rhythmical prose have attracted scholars and intelligent readers throughout the centuries. Significantly, Ælfric never stopped revising, reissuing, and extending his earlier work” (Butcher 11). Ælfric was constantly writing and communicating with an eye for moralizing his audience, and such an attitude changed the purpose and focus of human communication for the medieval world. Both Alfred and Ælfric adhere to epideictic figures of diction, though they often link praise and blame together in the same passage, often even in the same sentence. Together, the works of these two early medieval figures demonstrate unique adaptations of a classical tradition preserved through the rise and dominance of scripture.

Through Ælfric’s writings and rhetorical decisions, it is clear that early medieval rhetoric was, by and large, more concerned with the trials and reality of daily human life than with persuading audiences to prosecute, condemn, or deliberate upon a topic. Early medieval rhetoric represented the transition from ancient ideals to more individualized, moral thought with its synthesis of pagan, epideictic structure, philosophy, and religious instruction and optimism. Early medieval rhetoric is both based upon a Christian rhetoric and is the environment from which Christian rhetoric evolved. Christian rhetoric has continued to evolve and is still evolving today,

while medieval rhetoric represents a paradigm shift in thought, word, and deed significant to the years following the fall of Rome to the rebirth of classical learning and humanistic pursuits.

Both types of communication endeavor to detail how earthly thought and action have eternal consequences. Early medieval rhetoric evidences a changing social structure where words yielded power, but a power of the soul and of individuals within a community. The focus is upon content and instruction and on using communicative methods not as a means of forgetting daily struggle, but as a method of aiding and embracing that struggle. Early medieval rhetoric, demonstrated through Ælfric and Alfred before him, was not meant to dazzle the masses and certainly did not overlook them. Instead, early medieval rhetoric reminded audiences of life's realities and disappointments so as to impress upon the soul greater nobility of thought, word, and action.

EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC AND STRUCTURE IN WULFSTAN'S *SERMO LUPI AD  
ANGLOS* AND IN VERCELLI, BLICKLING, AND ANONYMOUSLY WRITTEN MEDIE-  
VAL HOMILIES

During the time of Ælfric, and from the late tenth to the early eleventh century, England was witnessing “a movement no less important than the Danish attack, namely the great revival of organized monastic life. Not only in England, but widely in western Europe, this revival had profound significance for religious organization, for art and learning, as well as for political and economic development” (Stafford 11). Ælfric was at the forefront of the movement, as was Wulfstan, and both of these religious writers characterize much Old English writing and thought. As “chief executive of two major dioceses – Wulfstan was bishop of Worcester as well as archbishop of York – the great orator had to administer one of the largest sets of landholdings in England” (Lacy 48). Because of Wulfstan’s leadership roles that required effective speaking and writing and because of his formulaic and recognizable sermon style, scholars such as Dorothy Bethurum, Richard Marsden, Albert Baugh, Kemp Malone, and Ruth Morse have described Wulfstan as an orator.

While referring to Wulfstan, and Ælfric, as an orator or rhetorician in the classical sense may be problematic, again it is not an essential qualification in observing and characterizing a rhetoric of the early medieval period. Whether consciously relying upon the rhetorical tradition or not, Wulfstan’s sermons “have a crispness and firmness which is striking and effective” (Chamber 122). Wulfstan structures his content upon epideictically oriented rhetorical figures of speech with clear concerns for audience, invention, and arrangement.

Like Ælfric, although filled with more vehemence, Wulfstan was a man of practical morality, who was concerned with the “moral regeneration” of the English and wanted to “heal the political and social maladies of his people” (Jurovics 203). While he came from the same “theological milieu as Ælfric and worked closely with the abbot,” Wulfstan was a completely different type of preacher than Ælfric, where “moral fervor, combined with legalistic and moralistic terminology and an impatience with detail and subtlety of idea, marks Wulfstan as preacher and theologian” (McC Gatch 21-22). While Ælfric’s tone was more subdued and full of hope and encouragement, focusing upon God’s mercy, Wulfstan is more direct, passionate, and focused upon God’s anger and judgment. In fact, the “great English churchman of the time was Wulfstan of York, the Billy Graham of the year 1000, whose fire-and-brimstone sermons had folk trembling” (Lacy 48).

In addition, Wulfstan’s tone is also often compared to the eighteenth-century Calvinistic preacher Jonathan Edwards and his *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* because Wulfstan also excelled at stimulating “obedience through fear” by accusing “his hearers of sinfulness” and then promising them “a horror-filled hell” (Butcher 22-23). In his own way, Wulfstan created a “systematic attempt to produce something stylized” (Chambers 127), although he often liked to finger point (Butcher 23). Wulfstan’s preaching is “topical and occasional, not exegetical and encyclopedic” like Ælfric’s, and his homilies were more like sermons in that they were not “explanations of the Gospel periscopes for selected occasions of the liturgical year but public discourses on religious topics” (McC Gatch 19). As a writer, Wulfstan was far less forgiving than Ælfric and excelled in condemnation rather than praise, relying more upon the style of vituperation rather than the encomium.

Wulfstan often “made it a point to avoid theological subtlety, to drop exempla and most traces of allegorical interpretation and, usually, to delete specific historical allusions” (McC Gatch 20). While his corpus of writing is small, particularly in comparison to Ælfric’s, Wulfstan was much more direct in his style and judgmental in his tone, leaving no doubt as to his epideictic purposes – the condemnation of immorality, often severe, and the exhortation of moral living, often highlighted and amplified through a scathing vituperation of vice. Furthermore, it is “one of the curiosities of literature, this relationship between Ælfric and Wulfstan, and the finicky technical transformation that Wulfstan makes of the writing of the other” (Chambers 123) where Wulfstan took liberties in rewriting some of Ælfric’s homilies, “producing original work although inspired by Ælfric’s works,” and indicating his lack of interest in “theological discussion, biblical story, and commentary” with a preference for “moral discussion” alone (Godden “Ælfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition 112). Again, Wulfstan’s writings were more concise and dry than Ælfric’s and followed more of the vituperation style with little deviation or instructional discourses, stories, or interpretations.

Although both Ælfric and Wulfstan attacked heathen living, drunken festivities, immoderation, and all forms of profane, pagan beliefs and practices (Blair 483), Wulfstan did so with the focus of amplifying these vices and the sinful nature in man in order to consistently display how man’s immoral behavior lead to England’s social turmoil. While Ælfric tried to convert individuals largely through an encomium based structure of praising God’s love and virtue, couched in wisdom and reason, Wulfstan dwells upon vice and God’s wrath to motivate his audience to repent and follow Christ.

The relationship between Ælfric and Wulfstan is a “curious situation in a troubled age; one man produces a special kind of rhythmical writing with a distinct and recognizable texture,

then another, heavily burdened with the cares and duties of an enormously responsible position, takes the trouble to dissect all this and reconstruct it according to the rules governing his own rhythmical practice” (Chambers 123). Although they differed on style and grammar, both Ælfric and Wulfstan were concerned with rhetorical precepts in their understanding and instruction of audiences. As such, they not only chose their words carefully, but also meticulously arranged their writings in order to exert the most influence upon their audiences.

Notable scholars have spent hours discussing the stylistical differences between Ælfric and Wulfstan. Dorothy Bethurum, for example, suggests the contrasting styles of the two men where Wulfstan is “basically trenchant” and Ælfric is “scholarly and poised” and that this difference may “have much to do with their very different clerical lives: Wulfstan was a public figure, an archbishop and a statesman who made laws, while Ælfric was a more private man, a scholar and a teacher (and, one might add, a Benedictine abbot, or father)” (Bethurum 218). In essence, Wulfstan was less concerned with philosophical questions and more preoccupied with pragmatism, which is another element that characterizes early medieval rhetoric

While Wulfstan relied upon the rhythm of two-stress phrases (Pope 113), which was an intentional means of division (McIntosh 8-9), that was “related in structure to the classical [Anglo-Saxon poetic] half-line” (McC Gatch 20) and served “to join the two important elements within a single phrase” (Kubochi 34), Ælfric preferred “the straight narrative technique” (Chambers 111) and used alliteration to “join pairs of such two-stress half-lines into whole-lines” (Kubouchi 34), sometimes even adding “two or three syllables into two two-stress phrases” (Chambers 124). Additionally, “whether Wulfstan understood Ælfric’s system of joining pairs of half-lines by alliteration or not, he certainly did not regard this procedure as sacrosanct, and felt quite at liberty to interpolate one or more of his own two-stress phrases between any two of Ælfric’s



half-lines” (122-124). These metrical and grammatical strategies are rhetorical concerns that indicate rhetorical considerations and once more suggest that rhetorical notions were very much alive in early medieval England, although the focus here is on how this rhetoric was epideictic in style and structure, relying upon classical underpinnings of structure and diction.

Such proof of rhetoric within Ælfric and Wulfstan’s writing, and all religious writing, was particularly justified by both Augustine and Gregory who “argued that the good preacher should adapt his teaching to suit the tastes of his audience, so that for homilists and congregations traditionally moved by the pleasant rhythm of poetry the dissemination of doctrine through poetic prose is simply good pedagogy” (Letson 143). Because rhetorical figures of speech are interwoven within the Bible and relied upon and mirrored in the writings of St. Gregory and Augustine, two foundational figures for Christian development, rhetorical tropes and concerns like arrangement and style were imitated and preserved within subsequent religious writings, creating an early medieval rhetoric that centered on moral instruction and the education of everyone.

Both Ælfric and Wulfstan have been classified as “unusually gifted rhetoricians” (McC Gatch 20) in their use of language, and scholars such as John Blair have noted the rhetorical repetition, use of metaphors, similes, allegory, and analogical interpretations of scripture, as well as a reliance upon authoritative sources within Wulfstan’s writings (Blair 490). Wulfstan was familiar with the ideas of “his Carolingian predecessors,” and believed, as Alfred and Ælfric did, that earthly society “must reflect the divine order and that the major aim of government was to produce this order” (Stafford 204). Wulfstan was also familiar with early English writers, such as Bede, Aldhelm, and Alcuin, besides such continental scholars as Theodulf of Orleans and Rabanus Maurus (Godfrey 343), and he drew his rhetorical inspirations and tactics from the tradi-

tion represented by Cicero, Augustine, Boethius, and later manuals based on their theories written by medieval figures such as Isidore (Jurovic 206).

Of Wulfstan's homilies and writings, the most well known is *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, written in 1014, "in which he declares in impassioned language that the renewed invasions of the Danes are a judgment of God upon the English for their sins" (Godfrey 344). Of the events he witnessed during his life, Wulfstan saw nothing but sin and foreboding, and he believed that right living was the only way to combat such a world of evil. Although bearing a Latin title, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos quando Dani maxime persecute sunt eos*, probably for authoritative emphasis (Snell 230), Wulfstan's English vernacular reveals how displeased he is with the status of society, and it also reveals his impassioned style of instruction that focused upon judgment and consequence.

Moreover, "Wulfstan's famous *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* is well known for its threats. It begins on a menacing note, lists one English fault after another, harping throughout on hell's answering awfulness, then concludes with a final reminder of the fire disobedience deserves" (Butcher 20). With such awe-inspiring images, it is apparent that Wulfstan's sermon was intended for oral delivery and truly had to be "read aloud to be appreciated" (McC Gatch 20). Wulfstan's tone is both hortatory in its indignation as well as pathetic in its appeal to pity, blending both amplificatory tones to bolster his moral points and to emphasize human fault.

Wulfstan begins his sermon by dating it and establishing a background for writing – England's persecution by the Danes – where "*Sermo Lupi ad Anglos quando Dani maxime persecute sunt eos*" (Whitlock 1-2). The sermon or homily then begins with the well known phrase, "Leofen men," or beloved men (4), before reminding the audience that the world moves quickly and the end is near or "ðeos worolde is on ofste, 7 hit nealæcð þam ende" (4-5). The homily then

goes on to recount the vices, crimes, and works of the devil, “deofel,” that has spread too widely throughout the land or “ealles to þide 3ynd ealle þas þeode” (14). This introduction is a clear vituperation that follows the same structure as the encomium, although the focus is on vice and the punishment for immorality.

Wulfstan’s homiletic sermon then relies upon reduplication to amplify the issue and appeal to the audience’s emotions through repeating the word “micel” or “great.” Wulfstan writes,

Forþam mid miclan earnun3an þe 3eearnedan þa yrmða þe us on sittað, 7 mid sþyþe micelan earnun3an þe þa bote motan æt 3ode 3eræcan, 3if hit sceal heonanforð 3odiende þeorðan. La hþæt, þe þitan ful 3eorne þæt to miclan bryce sceal micel bót nyde, 7 to miclan bryne þæter unlytel, 3if man þæt fyr sceal to ahte acþencan 7 micel is nydþearf eac manna 3ehwilcum þæt he 3odes laze 3yme heonanforð 3eorne 7 3odes 3erihta mid rihte 3elæste. (17-25)

Here Wulfstan states that sinful man has earned their misery and can only obtain remedy from God, making an analogy that a great deal of water is needed to quench a great deal of fire, and that each man needs to heed God’s law. Within this passage, Wulfstan discusses the origin of England’s misery – the sin of its people, which is the first step within the progymnasmata of vituperation, after the introduction has been given. This also indicates that early medieval rhetoric was emphasized the vitally important role given to words to inspire spiritual contemplation and living.

The next step is to describe the qualities of sin and vice, and Wulfstan does so. Wulfstan adds credibility to his statements by stating, “Ac soð is þæt ic sec3e” or what I say is true (37), and this is a rhetorical tactic designed to grab the reader’s attention. Wulfstan then recounts the sin and injustice he sees all around him that has lead to the Dane’s persecution of the English, again relying upon reduplication and, this time, also epanaphora,

7 folclaza þyrseadan ealles to sþyþ, 7 haliznessa syndan to 3riðlease þide, 7 3odes hus syndan to clæne berypte ealdra 3erihta 7 innan bestrypte ælcra 3erisena 7 pydepan syndan fornydde on unriht to ceorle, 7 to mæne3e foryrmode 7 3ehynede sþyþe; 7 earme men syndan sare bespicene 7 hreoplice besyrpde.... (39-44)

Here Wulfstan laments the desolation and defilement of churches, widows, the poor, foreigners, innocents, infants, and even slaves. Wulfstan says that no one will be spared or protected unless they come to God. The emphasis of this entire homily is on the negative consequences of following earthly desires and living a life full of vice, particularly highlighting the resultant destruction and devastation of human interaction as well as God's vengeance and justice laid upon the earth.

Then, a comparison or contrast is usually made to further amplify the topic, and Wulfstan adheres to this step by comparing vice and the consequences of vice with more destruction and examples of immorality. After relaying many more shameful vices and scenes of destruction using the rhetorical trope of reduplication, Wulfstan engages in question and answer technique, “7 la, hu mæ3 mare scamu þurh 3odes yrre mannum 3elimpan þonne us deð 3elome for a3enum 3epyrhtum? (102). Here Wulfstan asks if greater shame can befall the sinful men with whom God is angry, as a means of instilling fear in his audience and jolting them to repentance. He then compares the futile practice of the English paying the Danes for protection against the Danes to slaves who futilely pay their masters for freedom, asking another question to drive his point home, “þe him 3yldað sin3allice, 7 hy us hynað dæ3hiað 7 hy bærnað, rypaþ 7 reafiað 7 to scipe lædað; 7 la, hpæt is æni3 oðer on eallum þam 3elimpum butan 3odes yrre ofer þas þeode sputol 7 3esæne?” (128-132). This passage relies upon disjunction through the use of strong verbs within separate clauses (Caplan IV.XXVII.37) as well as the question and answer strategy. In addition, these questions serve to create comparisons of vice and judgment where each scene of destruction is greater than the last and the Day of Judgment will be extremely severe for those who do not repent now and live a virtuous, Godly life.

As he begins to conclude, Wulfstan appeals to the authority of Gildas who detailed the past misdeeds of the Britons and how their sins infuriated God so that God allowed the English

army to conquer and destroy them completely, “An þeodpita þæs on Brytta tidum, zildas hatte, se apart be heora misdædum, hu hy mid heora synnum spaoferlice spyþe 3og 3e3ræmedan þæt he let æt nyhstan En3la here heora eard 3epinnan 7 Bryta du3eþe fordon mid ealle” (184). This is another comparison that continues to amplify the dire consequences of sin in order to spark repentance and moral living in the audience. Wulfstan cleverly bases his rhetorical structure upon this cycle of destruction and unhappiness in order to teach his audience that man is destined for disaster without God and will be punished severely either on Earth, in heaven, or both. In Wulfstan’s confrontational and terrorizing style, the only way to break this cycle is to change the actions and thoughts of the present, so each subsequent moment and day will be spent in virtuous activity. This concern for the present moment is the sphere of epideictic rhetoric. Wulfstan’s writing treats rhetoric as a means of breaking the cycle of humanity’s selfish, fleshly pursuits and indulgence in vice, and as a means of humanity’s redemption. Wulfstan’s communication rests upon an epideictic structure similar to that of the vituperation where he desires to jolt readers out of their sinful living and point them toward God.

Wulfstan’s conclusion is a warning to the audience to not let history repeat itself. Wulfstan ends by exhorting his audience to think upon God’s indignation with man’s sin and his subsequent judgment of humanity, “7 uton 3elome understandan þone miclan dom þe pe ealle to sculon, 7 beor3an us 3eorne pið þone peallendan bryne helle pites, 7 3eearnian us þa mærpá 7 þa myrhða þe 3od hæfð 3e3earpod þam þe his pillan on porolde 3e3yrcað. 3od ure helpe. Amen” (207-211). Because this homiletic sermon only condemns wrong action, exhorting the audience to repent and turn to God, it clearly follows the vituperation pattern instead of an encomium as Wulfstan finds very little, if anything, to praise. However, Wulfstan does use the condemnation of vice to extol virtues, though his purpose is solely to censure and condemn.

In addition to Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, analyzing a few of Wulfstan's eschatological homilies further reveals epideictic rhetoric as the core of much early medieval writing. *Lectio Sancti Evangelii Secundum Mattheum*, for example, displays a blending of the vituperation and chreia structures and begins with a Latin passage discussing Jesus' famous statement about nations rising against nations before using the opening phrase, "Leofan men" (Lionarons 2), which is reduplicated throughout. Although Wulfstan mainly blames and condemns within this homily, he begins by praising God and with praising such Biblical statements like Jesus' discussion of each temple stone being destroyed, "Ða sæde he heom þæt his sceolde weorðan æghwylc stan on uferan dagum grundlinga toworpen" (5). Wulfstan also praises Christ for his just statement that great strife would arise in the world, "þæt his sceolde weorðan æghwylc stan on uferan dagum grundlinga toworpen, 7 fela eorðstyrunga 7 earfoðnessa geweorðan on worulde ær worulde ende" (5). In Wulfstan's reliance upon anecdotal dialogue and Christ's sayings, he incorporates the focus of the chreia within this homily.

The other characteristic of the chreia that Wulfstan incorporates into his vituperation structure is the constant contradiction and comparison where a contradiction or comparison is not simply made once or twice, as it is within the encomium and vituperation styles, but the entire work revolves around this contradiction designed to edify the audience. Within this homily, Wulfstan spends his time contrasting man's actions to God's, and uses this contradiction to further explain the maxims of Christ, again indicating the early medieval tendency to combine various epideictic formats and purposes – seen here with vituperation and chreia. Wulfstan relays these passages to show that Jesus knew man's sin would lead the world to tragedy and to encourage his audience to change their ways. Wulfstan also provides the first step of the vituperation in

discussing the origin of man's unhappiness and sin when man disobeyed and turned away from God.

The rest of the homily follows the vituperation format in which Wulfstan describes vice and those who practice immorality by condemning deceitful liars, then compares these liars with all manner of men who follow after worldly pleasures, and he finally concludes with an exhortation to his audience to love God above all and do good to ensure eternal reward, "Leofan men, utan beon þe wærran 7 don swa us þearf is, lufian god ofer ealle oðre þing 7 his willan wyrcan swa we geornost magan. þonne geleanað he hit us swa us leofast bið. Him sy lof 7 wuldor a butan ende, amen" (6). Of course, the homily ends with the standard prayer and exhortation of epideictic conclusions, and also relies upon reduplication and apostrophe of beloved men to capture the audience's attention. As typical of Wulfstan's style, he saves his exhortation and positive discussion until his conclusion, again displaying how the condemnation of vice can be used to extol virtue, even without specifically praising and interpreting virtuous or moral actions, as Ælfric does. The only praise Wulfstan offers here is his praise of God and God's scriptural sayings that have become forms of anecdotal expressions, which, again, is part of the chreia.

Additional homilies such as *De Temporibus Anticristi* and *Secundum Marcum* follow the same pattern and repeat the phrase, "leofan men" in their reduplication of antichrist material and the bleak nature of life because of sin, and in his *De Anticristo*, Wulfstan defines what an antichrist is: one who is against Christ or contrary to Christ or "contraries cristo" (1). Here he presents the origin or definition for his topic on vice. Next, Wulfstan defines these immoral qualities and calls everyone who sins a limb of the antichrist, which is an analogy, antonomasia, and a synecdoche, "7 ðeah þæt sy þæt fela manna Antecrist sylfne næfre his eagam ne geseo, to fela is þeah his lima þe man wide mæg nu geseon 7 ðurh heora yfel gecnawan mæg" (3). After discuss-

ing the evils of sin and comparing various sins and consequences, Wulfstan concludes with a prayer for protection, “God us gescylde wið þæne egesan 7 he us geryme to þære ecan myrhðe þe þam is gegearwod þe his willan gewyrcað. Ðær is ece blis 7 æfre byð in ealra worulda woruld a butan ende, Amen” (6). Again, positive thoughts are saved until the conclusion where the ending prayer praises God, surrenders the matter to him, and imbues the work with supernatural authority and depth. Unlike the *Lectio Sancti Evangelii Secundum Matheum* previously mentioned, Wulfstan relies upon the vituperation format in his condemnation and only uses the encomium focus on praise at the end, again blending the epideictic exercises for the purposes of moral instruction.

Lastly, *Secundum Lucam* again discusses the signs of judgment day, opening with “Leofan men” and recounting sins. Full of alliteration, parallelism, and rhyme, Wulfstan also relies on epanaphora with his phrase, “strive against” or “winð wið þonne” and the use of darkness or “ðystrað/adeorcað” to describe these end of days, for example saying,

Eal woruld winneð swyðe for synnum ongean þa oferhogan þe gode nellað hyran. Seo heofone us winð wið þonne heo us sendeð styrnlice stormas 7 orf 7 æceras swyðe amyrræð. Seo eorðe us winð wið þonne heo forwyrneð eorðlices wæstmas 7 us unweoda to fela asendeð. Eac hit awriten is, Ðæt sunne aþystrað ær worulde ende 7 mona adeorcað 7 steorran hreosað for manna synnum, 7 ðæt bið þonne Antecrist wedeð þæt hit bið gelic þam swylce hit swa sy. Hit is gecweden þæt sunne aþystrað; þæt is, þonne god nele cyðan on antecristes timan his mægen ne his mihta swa swa he oft ær dyde. Ðonne bið gelic þam swylce sunne sy aþystrad. 7 mona, hit cweð, adeorcað. (6-7)

This passage presents a very gloomy picture of life on earth during the last days where everything will be shrouded in darkness and sin will rule the world. Here Wulfstan indicates the prevalent medieval mindset that the judgment of God was upon them, a mindset cultivated and perpetuated because of the Danish invasions, social war, and general unrest that littered the landscape of medieval England. Wulfstan blames this suffering and destruction upon sin, condemning hu-



manity's desire for earthly pleasure and vividly describing the consequences of such immoderation and vice.

Wulfstan ends his vituperation with an encomium like exordium to love God and do God's will and with a prayer of praise to God, "Ac utan lufian god ofer ealle oðre þing 7 his wyllan wyrcan, swa we geornost magan: þonne geleanað he hit us swa us leofast bið þonne we æfre þæs betst beþurfan. Him symle sy lof 7 wuldor in ealra worulda woruld a butan ende, Amen (10). Wulfstan is unique among medieval writers such as Alfred and Ælfric in his all consuming focus upon condemnation and judgment. He rarely focuses solely upon emphasizing virtue and praising moral men, though he does use vice to emphasize and amplify virtue. Wulfstan evidences clear rhetorical decisions in his content and structure, and the rhetorical tropes and epideictic structure serve as an underpinning for all his writings and sermons designed to appeal to such emotions as fear, anxiety, and horror to curtail present and future immorality in his audience.

As Wulfstan demonstrates here, the Christian rhetorical tradition that permeated the medieval world relied upon the strategies of eloquence for moral purposes and for the teaching of virtue (Jurovics 206) in its aim to induce "virtuous action and at provoking moral regeneration" (209). The tone and style of Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan are all a bit different, but this suggests that early medieval rhetoric adapted to meet the needs and understanding of the audience, just as classical rhetoric did. However, the subject matter was emphasized above all else within early medieval writing, and rhetorical tropes and structure were considered and imitated in order to convey the most effective message. Christian leaders such as Wulfstan brought the focus of communication squarely upon the content, and only used rhetorical tropes and structure that em-

phasized content and placed it in the forefront, as seen with epideictic rhetoric and its praise and judgment of present realities.

This defining characteristic of early medieval rhetoric is also seen within the earlier Vercelli and Blickling homilies. Wulfstan and Ælfric evidence the same rhythm, alliteration, adornment, and “poetic prose homilies” of the Vercelli and Blickling homilies (Letson 141), probably written “no later than the generation preceding the activity of Ælfric and Wulfstan,” although the Vercelli homilies are traced to the transition from the tenth to the eleventh century and the Blickling homilies are dated even earlier in the middle of the latter part of the tenth century (McC Gatch 8). In fact, tenth century Old English prose is typically restricted to the anonymous Vercelli and Blickling homilies and the homilies and sermons of Ælfric and Wulfstan, which had “an immediate purpose and audience” in that they articulated “a Christian community’s place in history, making the texture of the scriptures audible, even tangible, to people who otherwise would not have them” (Jeffrey 1). Many of the Vercelli and Blickling homilies themselves were probably compilations from older Latin works, certainly imitations of the gospel and its plain, direct style of writing. This tradition of using epideictic rhetoric was well established before Ælfric wrote his homilies, although these Old English figures continued to modify the encomium and vituperation styles to Christian, spiritual ends.

As with the homilies of Ælfric and Wulfstan and the translations of Alfred, the Vercelli and Blickling homilies contain an introduction, or *exordium*; the translation and reading of a Biblical passage or topic, or *narration*; an exegesis and explanation, or *argumentum* (Campbell 180), also known as the *confirmation*; and a concluding section and epilogue, or *peroration* (Knappe 6). In relying on a rhetorical structure that was solidified in the Greco-Roman tradition, early medieval preaching, homilies, and sermons succeeded in transforming the “invisible spectrum of

the spoken word into an energized promissory body...” that retained “an autonomous existence apart from the speaking and the hearing that realize[d] it” (Jeffrey 182). In these homilies’ ability to convert the abstract terms of human communication into realized moral action within the lives of its audiences, Old English homilies excelled at rhetoric. These Old English homilies are also based upon a rhetorical structure first identified by Aristotle and later refined by Cicero and Quintilian. Furthermore, these rhetorical divisions were used in regards to epideictic arrangement of content so amplification of the issue would remain the focal point.

Such rhetorical communication is fully displayed in the collection of poems and homilies from the Vercelli book. In a poem from *The Legend of St. Andrew* for example, Andrew’s virtuous qualities are praised through an encomium structure where the content is organized through an introduction, narration, discussion, and epilogue. *The Legend of St. Andrew* begins with an introduction that recalls the memory of twelve godly heroes, “twelfe under tunglum/tíreádige hæled,/þeóðnes þegnas” (Kemble 1.3-5) that were celebrated warriors and brave in battle, “and fyrdhwate,/rôfe rincas” (1.16-17), referencing the twelve apostles. This introduction lays the groundwork for the poem and narrates the story of Andrew’s path to sainthood, which was linked to St. Mathew’s persecution. St. Mathew’s adventures are narrated not only to praise St. Mathew’s virtue, but as an epideictic comparison to Andrew, the homily’s specific subject of praise.

The homily’s concise use of words is quite notable, and the topic is relayed in a very direct manner. The vivid details and character descriptions are also very rich, and alliteration is prevelant, “hettend heorogrimme,/ héafodgimme/ âguton gealgmôde/ gâra ordum” or “sword-grim enemies,/ the gem of the head/ gallows-minded poured out/ with javelin points” (3.61-64). There is also clear use of dialogue. At one point Mathew states, “Hû me elþeóðige/ inwitwâsne,/

searonet,seowađ/ â ic simles wæs/ on wega gehwâm,/ willan þînes/ georn on mode;/ nû þurh  
geohða sceal/ dæda fremman/swâ þâ dumban neat,” or “How for me these strangers/ a chain of  
mischief,/ a net of snares, are sewing/ I was evermore/ in every way,/ of thy will/ desirous in my  
mind;/ now with sorrow must I/ deeds do/such as the dumb cattle” (4-5.125-134). This dialogue  
also includes allegorical comparisons where strangers are compared to a chain of mischief and a  
net of snares, which are both metaphors.

The poem then more fully discusses the origin of Andrew’s sainthood by relaying the sto-  
ry of St. Mathew, praising Mathew for his trust in God despite being captured, and also praising  
St. Mathew for his prayer, which itself praises God: “ic beó sôna gearu/tô âdreóganne/þæt þû,  
dryhten mîn,/ engla eádgifa,/ êðelleásum,/ dugeða dædfruma,/ dêman wille,” or “I shall be soon  
ready/ to endure/ whatsoever thou, my Lord,/ bliss-giver of angels,/ to me an exile,/ thou origin  
of virtuous deeds./ art willing to adjudge” (4-5.144-150). The structure is clearly encomiastic,  
focusing upon Mathew’s virtuous words and deeds. In addition to metaphors, there are also nu-  
merous similes used, for example, “Æfter þyssum wordum com/wuldres taken/ hâlig of heofen-  
um,/ swylce hâdre sægl,/ tô þâm carcerne,” or “After these words came/ a token of glory/ holy  
from heaven,/ like a serene star,/ to the prison” (6.175-179). As a reward for virtuous prayer and  
seeking after God, Mathew is granted serenity and the assistance of Andrew.

Within the discussion of scripture, Mathew and Andrew are again contrasted as favorable  
comparisons for one another, according to the encomiastic structure. The narrative of this poem  
follows God’s power and mercy for humanity, as displayed in the life of Mathew and Andrew,  
who are themselves praised for trusting and following God. It is also interesting the way the po-  
em depicts speech and preaching, as God’s words in a human mouth, “gen weges weard/ word  
hord onleác,/ beorn ofer bolcan/beald reordade,” or “the ruler of the wave/ unlocked the treasure

of speech,/ the man over the balks spake bodily” (35.1201-1204). The phrase, “word-hord,” is a famous Old English kenning, as is “whale-lake,” “hwælmere,” for ocean (Kemble 22.739), and weather-candle, “wedrcandel,” for the sun (22.744). As seen within this passage, the idea that all effective communication stems from God was the early medieval view of rhetoric and communication, which is one explanation for why rhetorical exercises were not consciously prescribed nor proscriptive works studied or written. In the mindset of praising and following God, which is epideictic, the words would come from intuition and inspiration and would follow their own epideictic journey – as demonstrated by these prose homilies and poems.

In the poem’s discussion of Andrew’s virtuous traits, definition is also used to further detail comparative figures such as “ealdorsacerd/ herme hyspan,” or “the high priest/ mischievously to revile him” (39.1340-1341), which also contains alliteration, and “Ða se þeóden gewât/þegna hearra,” or “Then the king departed/the lord of men” (41.1391-1392). There are also several examples of direct address, or apostrophe, designed to spark grief or indignation. For example, “Weórđ me nû milde/meotud ælmihtig,/ bliðe beorht cyning,” or “Be now merciful to me/ O Almighty God,/ blithe, bright king” (53.1803-1805). This is also an example of definition, and these rhetorical tropes serve to amplify Andrew’s qualities and actions so they can be praised and used as examples for others.

The entire poem relies upon refining, staying on the same topic but saying something in a new way (Caplan IV.XLI.54). Refining is one of the most often used tropes within religious writing and homilies because it serves to expand and deepen the discussion. Whether refining terms, praise for God, or endowing an object or concept with two similar, yet distinct definitions, names, or descriptions, the tool of refining is reiterated and repeated numerous times throughout the narrative so the audience can never forget the point. The poem states, “in þam morđorcofan,/

hæleð hygerðfne/under heólstorlocan/secgan dryhtne lof,/ dômweorðinga/engla þeódne,” or “in the den of death,/ the hero famous of mind/within the gloomy locks/ singing praise to the Lord,/ glory/ to the King of angels” (Kemble 58-59. 2008-2013). In the next few lines, this same sentiment is echoed again: “Swâ þâ wîgend mid him,/ hæleð hygerôfe,/ hâlgum stefnum/ cempa coste/ cyning weorðodon/ wyrda waldend,/ þæs wuldres ne bið/ æfre mid eldum/ ende befangen,” or “So the warriors with them,/ the men noble of mood,/ with holy voices,/ the choice champions/ glorified the king/ the ruler of fates,/ of whose glory shall not/ ever in the ages/ the end be comprised” (61.2108-2116). Although refining is a tool found within ancient rhetoric, its repetition and renaming is also a staple of Anglo-Saxon, Germanic literature, evidenced by such Anglo-Saxon poems and literature from *Beowulf*, *Dream of the Rood*, and *The Battle of Maldon*, which all rely upon this technique to amplify their narratives. This not only suggests that many rhetorical strategies are innate within humanity but that Germanic, Anglo-Saxon literature may have come in contact with Roman rhetoric and its patterns of refining and repetition to amplify a point.

Refining is also seen when the poem states, “Lætað gâres ord,/ earh ættre gemæl,/ ingedûfan/ in fægges ferð,” or “Let the javelin point,/ the arrow stained with poison,/ dig into/ the life of the doomed one” (77.2662-2665), which also relies upon definition, and “þrymman sceócon/ môdige maguþegnas/mordres on luste,” or “heavy shook/ moody warriors/ lusting for murder” (66.2280-2283). Here the same subject is being discussed, but it is being discussed and described in a new way. As a precursor and model for Ælfric and Wulfstan’s writings, these Vercelli homilies and religious poems display an adept understanding of how to use the rhetorical tool of embellishment, which the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* defines as consisting of figures of diction like similes, examples, amplifications, comparisons, repetition, and previous judgments,

which all serve to “expand and enrich the argument” (Caplan II. XXIX 46 141). In these Vercelli poems and homilies, as with all Old English literature, the content is greatly embellished in order to praise and condemn. And, almost every subsequent line deals with explaining, defining, and refining.

As Andrew is captured and tortured, the poem evidences alliteration and vivid description, “swungen sârslegum;/ swat yðum weóll/ þurh bâncofan,/ blôd lifrum swealg/ hâtan he-olfre,” or “beaten with wounding blows;/ the blood bubbled in waves/ through the bone-chest,/ the blood in the liver swelled/with hot gore” (Kemble 74.2551-2555). These details were included to capture and enliven the audience’s emotions in order to make clear the point of earthly suffering in the life lived apart from God or in the blessed persecution of saints whose eternal reward increased in abundance and who became a godly example for others. The poem ends with an epilogue where the soldiers are unified on the ship and praise God through prayer,

and þâ weorðodon/ wuldres âgend,/ cleopodon on cordre,/ and cwædon þus:/ An is êce god/ eallra gesceafta,/ is his miht and his æht/ ofer middangeard/ breme gebledsod,/ and his blæd ofer eall/ in heofonþrymme/ hâlgum scînedð,/ wlitige on wuldre,/ tô wîdan ealdre/ êce mid englum;/ þæt is æðele cyning!’ (99-100. 3426-3441)

and there they worshipped/ the Lord of glory,/ they called in companies,/ and thus said:/ ‘One is the eternal God/of all creatures,/ is his might and power/ throughout the earth/ gloriously blessed,/ and his joy over all in heaven’s majesty/ shineth on his saints,/ beauteous in glory/ for ever and ever/ eternally among angels;/ that is a noble king!’ (99-100. 3426-3441)

Here, in accordance with prayerful encomium conclusions, the poem ends with a prayer of praise and surrender to God. Reduplication is also present here with the re-naming of God. A variety of scholars such as Lewis Nicholson, Janie Steen, and Samantha Zacher easily note the rhetorical sections of these homilies from introduction to conclusion, but what is often left unobserved is the fact that these homilies adhere to epideictic structures, and those modified for Christian purposes. While praise and blame appear to be naturally occurring human tendencies, these homi-

lies and religious writings follow the pattern of encomiums and vituperations according to classical structure, and also rely upon classically defined figures of amplification and embellishment that, although blending the praise of encomium with the blame of vituperation, target present understanding, thoughts, ideology, and actions to higher moral purposes.

A more unique Vercelli poem that once again proves epideictic does not have to praise a person or even an object, is *A Fragment, Moral and Religious*, which follows the commonplace progymnasmata with the focus on more general qualities and traits that are not linked to a specific person, place, or object. The commonplace was practiced in preparation for the encomium and vituperation exercises and typically condemned, though the commonplace exercise could also be used to praise. Within this Vercelli poem, the topic of sorrow is being lamented and condemned, though the encomium focus is integrated with the later discussion of sorrow's positive aspects. The poem defines sorrow as a result of unrighteousness and begins with, "sorh cymeð,/ manig and mislíc,/ in manna dream;/ eorl óðerne/ mid æfþancum and mid teónwordum/ tæleð behindan,/ spreceð fægere beforan,/ and ðæt fácen swá ðeáh/ hafað in his heortan,/ hord unclænne," or "sorrow cometh,/ many and various,/ into the joy of men;/ one man another/ with envy/ and with despiteful words/ blameth behind his back,/ speaks him fair before his face,/ and nevertheless the evil/ hath in his heart,/ an unclean hoard" (1-9). In this way, the poem discusses the origin of sorrow and then describes its manifestations and qualities, adhering to the encomium structure while relying upon the more general discussion of a quality used within the commonplace.

As it describes the effects of sorrow, the poem also employs reasoning through contraries, similes, and metaphors in discussing false men and deceptive speakers who are "gefylled mid fácnē,/ ðæh he fæger word/ útan ætywe./ Ænlíce beóð/ swá ða beón berað/ butu ætsomne/



árlícne ánleofan,/ and ætterne tægel/ hafað on hindan,/ hunig on múðe,/ wynsume wist,/ hwílum wundiað/ sáre mid/ ðonne se sæl cymed” (30-43). There is also refining here with the description of the poisonous tail and honey as a pleasant food. Within the interpretation and discussion, the poem mentions how sorrow can lead to peace and spiritual love and is a reminder of the eternal bliss that is to come for those who are believers. Lastly, the poem concludes with, “Uton tó ðám beteran./ Nú we cunnon hycgan,/ and hyhtan/ ðæt we heofones leóht,/ uppe mid englum/ ágan móton,/ gástum tó geóce,/ ðonne God wile/ eorðan lifes/ ende gewyrca,” or “Let us now turn to the better!/ Now we can think,/ and hope/ that we the light of heaven,/ above with the angels/ may possess,/ for the comfort of our spirits,/ when God will/ of our earthly life/ make an end” (82-91). Although there is no ending prayer, the exhortation to live a moral life is clear, as is the message: sorrow will be avoided or used for good if an individual will follow after God in the present and those who follow God will be rewarded with eternal happiness.

These epideictic structures and figures of diction are demonstrated within every Vercelli poem from *Elene, or The Recovery of the Cross* to *Salomon and Saturn*, once more indicating that the amplification of epideictic rhetoric was only successful through focus upon content and its embellishment instead of the preoccupation with argumentation and proof. Ultimately, early medieval writers and teachers did not need to prove God was divine or that certain traits were virtuous or sinful; they merely had to discuss how these vices lead to destruction, in every sense, from communities and politics to families, health, and relationships, and how virtue and clean moral living in the present life lead to eternal happiness. The commonplace used to employ the technique of amplification was the appeal to and discussion of authority – God, scripture, and past leaders – demonstrated at the end of every early medieval religious homily and writing, which is a vital tool of epideictic rhetoric. In addition, as with many medieval writings, the tone

of amplification was largely hortatory, with the amplification of a fault to incite the hearer to indignation (Caplan III XIII. 24), or at least to repent and live morally for God. The mentality of medieval rhetoric was such where any person could be inspired to divine communication, pointing humans to heaven or exhorting human activity and impulse to follow a divine order.

Turning now to specific Vercelli homilies will serve to further portray how pervasive the epideictic structure was within the medieval mindset and forms of communication. Each Vercelli homily that survives intact contains an introduction; a narrative that discusses origins, definitions, and details, and creates a comparison or contrast; some type of explanation, interpretation, and a specific moral address to the audience; and a conclusion that ends with a prayer and also exhorts the audience. Not only does this represent a classic rhetorical division and arrangement, but these homilies follow the encomium, vituperation, and the commonplace formats quite closely.

*Homily XI: Homily for the First Rogation day* praises holy days as opportunities for contemplating God and for studying holy books. The homily relies upon transplacement and reduplication in order to amplify this topic and appeal to the audience's emotions where, "Ða men þe mæstne dream 7 mæstne welan 7 mæstre blisse butan Godes ondrysnum up ahebbað her on worulde, hie þonne eft mæste unrottnesse butan ende 7 mæstne ungefean butan ænigre blisse hie onfoð 7aræfniað" (Szarmach 64-66) or "Those men who raise up the most joy and the most prosperity and the most bliss here in the world without the fear of God, they then afterward will receive and endure the most unhappiness without end and the most misery without any joy" (Nicholson 65-68). This passage admonishes the audience to live for God while on earth and not seek after earthly happiness because it is fleeting. Also, as a more general topic on holy days and with its basis upon comparisons and contradictions, this homily originally appears as a common-

place epideictic exercise, though it both praises and blames human qualities and actions, melding together all three exercises.

The homily ends by describing the plunder and despoliation of churches by invaders, noting that the end is near and that suffering is an opportunity for virtue and a test of character,

Lufigen we nu þy geornlicor þas haligan dagas, 7 þy we magon mycel god ussum sawlum on him gestrynan. Þancien we ussum Dryhtne wordum dædum þybbe gesamnunga, 7 þæt we gebidan moston þybbe halgan tide. Tilien we nu forðan þæt we hie gedeflice begangen mid gastlicum mægenum þe ðær to geset is. Se God us to ðam gefultumige þe ofer us ealle liofað 7 rixað. Amen. (Szarmach 81-85).

Let us now love these holy days the more zealously, and by that we may acquire in them much good for our souls. Let us thank our Lord by words and deeds for this congregation, and that we may pass this holy time. Let us endeavor now, therefore, that we observe it fittingly with spiritual deeds for which thereto it has been established. May that God who lives and rules over us all assist us in that. Amen. (Nicholson 79-86)

The repeating opening lines are an example of epanaphora, and this repetition is also designed to stir the emotions to sadness and, in this case, reliance upon God. Once more, the homily ends with a prayer of surrender to God, which also serves to unify the audience and solidify the message. Ultimately, this homily, and many of the Vercelli homilies, while not as structured as Ælfric's or Wulfstan's, relies upon the epideictic structure, although for more general concepts and ideas like pride and lust or kindness and mercy, resembling more of a commonplace structure than the specific structure of the encomium or vituperation, though elements of all three exercises are included.

Transplacement, reduplication, and refining are further demonstrated in *Homily XV: Another Homily Concerning the Day of Judgment*, which begins with the often repeated word, "Brethren" or "Men" (Szarmach 1), similar to the reduplicated homiletic phrase, "dearly beloved" or "Men ða leofestan" (1). These repeated phrases like "Men ða leofestan" become standard expectations of homiletic structure that serve as markers in which to address the audience,

progress the narrative or interpretation, and rely upon transplacement and reduplication to amplify the dual nature of virtue and vice and to praise virtue and censure vice. The homily then introduces Jesus' quote about the anti-christ before including Jesus' dialogue and discussion, in the vein of the chreia that amplifies sayings and anecdotes. This homily relies heavily upon epiphora in describing the destruction and horror of the end of the world by repeating, "And then," "Þonne arisað" or "Þonne æfter" (Szarmach 23, 26, 32, 35, 42, 63, 70, 73, 89, 102, 109, 118, 126, 135, 144). Such repetition amplifies the discussion and advances the narrative, keeping interest and creating a rhetorical climax where ideas, words, and concepts are advanced and heightened (Caplan IV.XXIV.34). Early medieval rhetoric, like Christian rhetoric, thrived on repetition and comparison, two vital elements for epideictic rhetoric. Though relying upon divine inspiration, early medieval communication and rhetoric could not successfully alter the hearts, minds, and souls of an audience unless words were repeated, exemplified, and fully defined and addressed. This required component of early medieval instruction and communication is demonstrated through the often elaborate comparisons of Old English homilies that are presented here in this Vercelli homily and elsewhere within the Vercelli book.

Amplification is also achieved through detail and vivid description like

7 þonne æfter þan arisedð fram eastdæle on ðam mycelan Babilonia ceastre swiðe mycel hungor sweorda gefeoht fram suðdæle on Cananea lande. 7 þonne æfter þan bioð ealle wæteras/ 7 ealle wyllas on blode. 7 steorran feallað of heofenum on eorðan 7 sunne bið aþyrstrod; 7 se mona his leoht ne syleð 7 ealle hit bið on þeostra gecyrred. (Szarmach 44-47)

And then after this will arise from the East in the great city of Babylon a very great famine; and the strife of swords (will come) from the South into the land of Canaan. And then after that all waters and all wells will be filled with blood, and the stars will fall from heavens to earth, and the sun will be darkened and the moon will not send forth its light. And so everything will be turned into darkness. (Nicholson 44-49)

The rhetorical commonplace indicated here is an analysis of humanity and the “mutability of things” (Caplan II.XVII.25). Relaying these accounts and the narrative so vividly can also be classified as an ocular demonstration, which again is where “an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass vividly before our eyes. This we can effect by including what has preceded, followed, and accompanied the event itself, or by keeping steadily to its consequences or the attendant circumstances...” (IV. LV 68). Ocular demonstration is a tool used within all three branches of rhetoric, and it was particularly effective for amplifying an issue when the focus was not on proving or defending something or someone but on discussing the praiseworthy or blameworthy qualities of a trait, person, or object. Conclusively, early medieval rhetoric is not based upon the proof, defense, or argumentation of classical rhetoric but upon the exemplification of a message that defined both philosophic rhetoric as well as Christian pursuits.

The homily concludes with the repetition of the word, “Men” or “Brethren,” again an indication of interlacement and reduplication, and ends discussing eternal rewards, the heavenly kingdom, “heofenarice” (Szarmach 158), and praising God through the expected homiletic, epideictic ending: “ðam sie symble wuldor 7 wyrðmynd 7 ece gefean a butan ende in secula seculorum. Amen” (Szarmach 160), or “to whom always is the glory and the honor and eternal joy ever without end throughout generation of generations. Amen” (Nicholson 156-161). The ending of this Vercelli homily, and indeed the majority of medieval homilies, makes it clear that praising God is a virtue that should be done regularly.

*Vercelli Homily IX* reiterates the idea that earthly life is fleeting and opens with an introduction that discusses the transitory, “gewitendlicum” (Szarmach 9), earthly existence of all life, and by addressing the audience, “Men ða leofestan, manað us 7 myn gaþ þeos halige boc þæt we

sien gemyndige ymb ure sawle þearfe 7 eac swa ures þæs nehstan dæges 7 þære toscedednesse ure sawle þonne hio of ðam lichoman lædde bion” (1-3), or “Dearly beloved, this holy book admonishes us and reminds us that we be mindful of our soul’s need, and also of our last day, and of that separation when our soul is led from the body” (Nicholson 1-3). Because this homily does not analyze a specific person, it mirrors the commonplace exercise discussing general subjects based on comparisons where earthly and spiritual death is contrasted with the soul’s eternal life. In addition, the homily references the psalms as an appeal to authority, and grounds its use of amplification within this rhetorical trope.

The homily does quotes Jesus or the “holy teacher, “halega lareow” (Szarmach 20), as stating, “Wa la ðam mannum þe sculon mid dioflum habban geardungstowa, forðam þær is sar butan frofre 7 þær is yrmð butan are 7 þær is weana ma þonne hit ænig man wite to asecganne” (20-23), or “Woe, indeed, to those men who must have dwelling-places with devils, for there is pain without consolation, and there is misery without mercy; and there are more woes than any man may know to tell” (Nicholson 21-24). Here there is a warning and an expressed condemnation for living life for earthly pleasure where the result is pain and misery. Not only does this homily rely upon the commonplace, but it also relies upon the chreia in the specific quotations of Christ’s sayings that are used for anecdotal purposes; are used to amplify the subjects of death, mercy, and sorrow; and are used to edify the audience. Again, early medieval rhetoric blended the various epideictic structures, and this resulted not only from the fact that classical rhetorical structure was so fragmented within medieval England but also from the fact that Christianity stressed impression, inspiration, and intuition in communication rather than strict adherence to communicative rules.

The homily then goes to great lengths to describe and define death:

Ponne syndon þry deaðas liornode on bocum. Þæt is þonne se æresta deað her on worulde, þæt se man [se ðe] mid mænegum synnum oferhealden bið. Ponne/ is se æftera deað þære sawle gescead [wisnes] lichoman. Ponne is se þrida deað þæt þa sawla sculon eardigan on helle þær nis nænig man þætte mæge his Scippend herigan for ðam sare þe him onsite. (Szarmach 26-30).

There are three deaths learned about in the books. The first death is that here in the world; namely, that man who has been overcome by many sins. The second death is the separation of the soul and the body. The third death is those souls who must dwell in hell where there is not any man who may praise his Creator for the pain which oppresses him. (Nicholson 26-30)

*Homily IX* surmises that death is to be feared, “fyrenfullum” although it can be both sad, “unrotlice,” and happy, “bliðelic” (Szarmach 44, 45). This dual nature is exactly what epideictic communication focuses upon, and it is natural that early medieval Christian writings would fall under this category because humans naturally tend to classify, divide, and judge, although Christianity really turned this structure into an elevated art form. Definition is used within this passage to amplify the different types of death that result from immoral living, although physical death cannot be avoided, but can be transformed into eternal, heavenly bliss through moral, virtuous action on earth.

Although death is inevitable, humans do have a choice of where their soul will go, “Forðan we sculon ure sawle georne tilian 7 hy geornlice Gode gegearwian. Ne mæg þonne eall manna cyn mid hyra wordum airman þa god þe God hafað soðfæstum sawlum gearwod togeanes for hyra gastlicum worcum” (47-49), or “We must, therefore, earnestly cultivate our soul and prepare it earnestly for God. All the race of men may not number with their words the good which God as made ready for true souls in return for their spiritual deeds” (Nicholson 46-49) There is also repetition in this passage with the word earnest, “georne,” to amplify how one should properly treat the soul, and this is also an example of reduplication. Personification is additionally used in describing death and in discussing the visible images of hell on earth: suffering, “wæc”; old age, “oferylde”; death, “deað”; grave “byrgen”; and torments, “tintrega” (Szar-

mach 71-83), which fall into the discussion of a topic's qualities according to the encomium structure, adding elements of the encomium structure and focus to the already established commonplace and chreia.

The homily begins to conclude, “Ac utan gearwian us nu ða mid innewardum gebedum 7 mid gæstedome þæt we ne weorðan aslidene innon þa fyrenfullan þystro þæt synfullum sawlum is gearwod on helle togeanes” (99-101), or “But let us make ourselves ready now with inward prayers and with spirituality so that we may not be aslide within that fiery-full darkness that has been prepared in hell against those sinful souls” (Nicholson 99-101), and the last few lines state, “Gif we þænne swa don wyllað swa us Dryhten geboden hafað, þonne moton we mid him 7 mid his þam halegan gæste wunigean in ealra worulda woruld. Amen” (Szarmach 144-146), or “If we so will to do as the Lord has commanded us, then may we with Him and with His Holy Spirit dwell in that world of all worlds. Amen” (Nicholson 144-146). The epilogue is both an exordium and a prayer focused on changing the present life and circumstances of the audience and adhering to the conclusions delineated within encomium structure.

One final Vercelli homily that will be addressed is *Homily X*, whose introduction displays the Old English mindset of praise as well as the veneration of the gospel,

Her sagað on þyssum halegum bocum be ælmihtiges Dryhtnes godspelle þe he him sylfum þurh his ða halegan mihte geworhte mannum to bysene 7 to lare. 7 he sylf gecwæð his halegan muðe: ‘þeah man anum men godspel secge, þonne bio ic þær on middan.’ 7 þam bioð syn/na forgifena þe ðæt godspel segð 7 gecwið; 7 synna þam bioð forgifene þe hit for Godes naman lustlice gehyreð; 7 þam bið wa æfre geworht þe secgan can 7 nele, forðam men sculon þurh ða godcundan lare becuman to life. (Szarmach 1-7)

Here they recite in these holy books about the almighty Lord's gospel that He Himself through His holy power made as a rule and lesson for men. And He Himself said with his holy mouth: ‘Even if a man tells the gospel to one man, then I will be there in the midst.’ And to him sins will be forgiven who says and tells that gospel, and sins will be forgiven to him who hears it gladly for God's name; and woe will be made forever for him who knows how to speak and will not, for men must through that religious teaching enter into life. (Nicholson 1-9)



This passage relies upon reduplication with the repetition of the phrase “sins will be forgiven” in order to amplify the fact that it is never too late for virtue and redemption. This homily even goes so far as to condemn those who know scripture and know how to speak but choose not to do so. These people are condemned because they do not offer their knowledge to others in a world where religious teaching is the key to a successful, virtuous life, and where the illiterate are in need of instruction because they can not read scriptural truths for themselves. Not only was writing, specifically religious writing, believed to be holy, but the very spoken word was said to evoke a spiritual experience, particularly if the employed words praised God or discussed scripture. The idea that words themselves had a mystical quality lingers in the background of early medieval rhetoric where effective communication was believed to be divinely inspired and where intuition and faith were emphasized over learning and logic.

This homily takes as its subject the advent of Christ, discussing Christ’s miraculous human birth, “7 in þam halegan breostum he eardode nigon monoð. 7 þa ealra fæmnena wuldor cende þone soðan Scyppend 7 ealles folces Frefrend 7 ealles middangeardes Hælend 7 ealra gasta Nerigend 7 eallra sawla Helpend” (Szarmach 14-16), or “And in that holy womb He dwelt nine months. And then the glory of all virgins bore the true Creator and Comforter of all people and Savior of all the world and Preserver of all spirits and Helper of all souls” (Nicholson 14-16). This passage presents the first step of an encomium structure in discussing a person or topic’s origins. The homily continues to describe Christ’s life on earth, relying upon analogies like “stony of heart and blind” (20) or “stænenre heortan 7 blinde” (Szarmach 21) and repetition as seen through epanaphora, “Ne syn we to gifre, ne to frece, ne to fyrenlusteorne, ne to æfestige, ne to inwitfulle, ne to tælende, ne to twyspræce...” (34-36), or “Nor let us be too greedy, nor too rash, nor too wanton, nor too envious, nor too wicked, nor too slanderous, nor too deceitful...”

(Nicholson 35-37). These clauses are also an example of asyndeton where ideas are being expressed in separate parts discussing what should be done.

There is a very strong moral warning against vices like greed, envy, and slander that are further detailed and condemned, again indicating a merging of the classical encomium focus on praise with the vituperation of blame and condemnation. In combining both forms, the entire picture of human life and supernatural elements can be seen, where free will was at the crossroads and needed the divine inspiration and moral instruction that words and communication had to offer. For this reason, early medieval rhetoric aimed at influencing the heart and the soul because human emotion and soulful cares often superceeded human intellect, even in periods where human learning could be more readily cultivated and practiced.

The homily quotes various passages from scriptures, has Christ speak, and cites from St. James and Luke as appeals to authority that amplify the morality of the message and the issue of the advent of Christ. In appealing to these authorities, analogies are also created to indicate the dangers of living life for the moment,

Emne swa ða woruldgeþing þu bioð maran, swa bioð þa frecennessa swiðran. Swag e magon bi ðan þa bysene oncnawan 7 ongitan: þæt treow, þonne hit geweaxed on ðam wudubearwe 7 hit hlifað up ofer þa oðre ealle 7 bræðeþ. 7 hine se stranga wind þonne gestanded, hit bið swiðlicor geweged 7 geswenced þonne se oðer wuda. Swa biðeac gelic be ðam hean clifum 7 torrum, þonne hie feorran ofer ða oðre eorþan hlifiað, 7 hie þonne semninga feallan onginnap 7 ful heardlice hrioseð to foldan. Swylce eac be ðam micelum muntum 7 dunum þa þe hyht standap 7 toriað ofer ealne middangeard; 7 þeahhwæðere hi wite habbað þæs ealdordomes þæs ealdordomes þæt hie bioð geneahhe mid hatum fyre 7 geþread geþræsted mid lige. (Szarmach 155-163)

Even as the things of the world are greater, so will the dangers be stronger. So you may by that understand and perceive the example: that tree when it grows in the forest and it towers up over all the others and spreads out, and when the strong wind assails it, it is more violently moved and troubled than that other (tree) of the forest. So it is also, likewise, concerning those high cliffs and crags, when they tower far above the other land, and they then suddently begin to fall and very harshly crash to the ground. Also, those great mountains and heights, those which stand highest and tower over all the earth have, nevertheless, the penalty of that

pre-eminence; they are often afflicted with hot fire and tormented with flame.  
(Nicholson 155-164)

This passage contains a warning against pride. It also engages in ocular demonstration with vivid detail in order to compare and demonstrate how a life filled with such vices as pride leads to destruction and unhappiness. Again, a duality is established. Even if there were no scriptural documents and no past religious leaders to teach which qualities were and were not praiseworthy in humans, each individual, and particularly communities, naturally agree on “what qualities are praiseworthy in a human being” (Wisse 2.45), making epideictic the most organic branch of rhetoric and the one that forced introspection as well as honesty.

In a society punctuated with the chaos of war and political and social turmoil, the rhetoric of the deliberative and judicial branches could not remain, as political court proceedings became obsolete and daily survival became the overall focus. In addition, the writing and communication of the early medieval period that was most influential and spanned the greatest portion of medieval England was largely directed by religious writings and teachings of church leaders who preserved classical rhetorical concepts for the Middle Ages and who themselves relied upon epideictic rhetoric. Therefore, for early medieval rhetoric, epideictic communication would alone remain, although these Vercelli homilies, as well as the religious translations of Alfred and the religious writings of Ælfric and Wulfstan, indicate how early medieval rhetoric often blended epideictic structure and forms to meet the specific needs of the message and the audience.

The homily ends with “Utan we þænne wendan to þam to þam beteran 7 gecyrran to þam selran; þonne we moton gesion soðne Dryhten 7 on gefean faran to fæderrice” (Szarmach 196-198), or “Let us then wend to that better (place) and turn to that happier; then we may see the true Lord and in joy travel to the kingdom of the Father” (Nicholson 197-199) and “7 sio biorhtu þara haligra sawla 7 þara soðfæstra scinaþ swa sunne 7 þa men rixiað swa englas on heofenum. 7

we syndon þyder gelaðode 7 gehatene to þan halegan 7 to þam cynelycan fridstole, þær Drihten Crist wunaþ 7 rixað mid eallum halegum a butan ende. Amen” (Szarmach 202-205), or “the brightness of the holy souls and of the righteous shines as the sun and the men reign as angels in the heavens. And we are invited thither and summoned to the holy and to that kingly sanctuary, where Lord Christ abides and reigns with all saints forever without end. Amen” (Nicholson 202-206). Relying upon similies, this homily ends with a prayer of surrender to God and an exordium on how to behave virtuously on earth to receive eternal reward.

Furthermore, comparisons are particularly appropriate for religious topics because comparisons often create a resemblance or metaphorical word for an idea or concept “that can scarcely be signified by a proper word,” and metaphors, similes, and analogies create meaning and understanding by borrowing from another source (Wisse 3.155-156). Supernatural truths were often best understood through earthly examples, and this is a strategy that Old English homilists understood, particularly demonstrated in Ælfric’s works, which were largely an imitation of the earlier Vercelli and Blickling homilies. Resultantly, the Vercelli homilies rely upon rhetorical tropes to amplify their discussions and are also based upon an underpinning of epideictic rhetoric, following the classical formats of progymnasmata chreias, commonplaces, vituperations, and, most especially, encomiums.

Such epideictic strategies are used within every homily, and within other Vercelli homilies that rely upon amplification through comparison, refining, and reduplication: *Homily XIII: Homily for the Third Rogation Day, Homily XIV: Homily for such time as one wishes, Homily XVI: A Homily Concerning the Epiphany of the Lord, Homily XIX, Homily XX, Homily XXI, Homily XXII, and Homily XXIII*. Additionally, the blending of chreia, commonplace, encomium, and vituperation structures and aims represent a unique adaptation of classical delineations in

order to most effectively convey a message – imbuing medieval rhetoric with less concern for the confines of structure and freeing rhetorical devices to develop as needed.

Like the Vercelli homilies, the Blickling homilies follow the same epideictic patterns that are also seen within Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan’s writings. The Blickling homilies include nineteen sermon homilies full of saint lives, discussion of the marvelous, and quotes from scripture. Written before the Vercelli homilies, although with more fluid writing, complex sentences, and loosely connected conjunctions (Morris vi), the Blickling homilies contain stories of Christ’s incarnation and the apocrypha. The Blickling homilies take “place outside of familiar times and locations, moving instead through the narrative of Christ’s life,” and this “medieval stylistic designation for how preaching stories were to sound is *sermo humilis*, the plain rhythms of natural, spoken prose that can inscribe the gospel in the heart, according to the first treatise on sermon composition, Augustine’s *On Christian Doctrine*” (Jeffrey 13). As Augustine first described in his *On Christian Doctrine*, early medieval rhetoric endeavored to use words effectively so that the message would be inscribed on the hearts of the audience and thereby form actions that were in tune with spiritual truths.

As with all Old English homilies, the Blickling homilies are written in a plain style, as typical of Christian pragmatism, although they integrate a variety of rhetorical tropes typically associated with epideictic and amplification. Blickling homilies rely upon the authority of multiple sources, again suggesting that “a major principle of Anglo-Saxon composition is editing and adapting sources to help an Anglo-Saxon homilist preach his particular understanding of the gospel to people who would not know Latin or their own written language” (179). As a collection, the Blickling homilies lay a solid foundational structure for future medieval homilies, rely-

ing upon epideictic structures and further clarifying the qualities that define early medieval rhetoric

Blickling Homily I: *The Annunciation of Saint Mary* follows an encomium structure and begins by praising Mary's virtue and discussing how Mary came to be pregnant. When the angel appeared to her, "heo wæs gecacnod; forþon þe he hire þ[a ecean] hælo on his tungon brohte," or "she conceived, because he brought her everlasting salvation upon his tongue" (Morris 2-3). Here the divine aspect of words and communication is seen to evoke immediate results and change, as with Mary's pregnancy, and this is also the hope of religious leaders teaching these homilies – they want their listeners to live moral lives and shun what is sinful or evil.

As the tale is being told, and the origin of Mary's conception is relayed, the homily states, "Hwæt we nu gehyrdon þæt se heofonlica cyning ineode on þone medmycclan innoþ þære á clænan fæmnan, þæt wæs þæt templ þære gepungennesse & ealre clænnesse," or "Lo! we have now heard that the Heavenly King entered the humble womb of the ever-pure virgin – that was the temple of piety and of all purity" (4-5). This recalling what has been said and then presenting what will be discussed is an ancient rhetorical trope known as transition (Caplan IV.XXV.34), and this opening word, "Hwæt" is the preferred opening for a majority of religious prose and verse, indicating reduplication. Here it is used to amplify and refresh what has already been discussed and to introduce what will be discussed further. In addition, the phrase, "hál, Maria, geofena full, Drihten is mid þe," or "Hail Mary! Full of grace, the Lord is with thee!" (Morris 4-5) is repeated several times throughout the homily, demonstrating reduplication as a tool used for the amplification of this narrative and the appeal to emotion. As displayed in various other homilies, the success of this homily's rhetoric depends upon repetition as a means of transcribing the message onto the hearts of the audience.

As the homily begins to describe Mary's virtuous qualities, it specifically exhorts the audience, "Lufian we urne Sceppend & hine herian æfter urum gamete, ealle mægene, swa we gehyran magon þæt seo halige fæmne dyde, seo hine lufode mid innewealde heortan," or "Let us love our creator, and praise him according to our means with all our might, even as we may hear that the holy virgin did, who loved him with sincerity of heart" (4-7). Mary's example is amplified so the audience will also trust and praise God. In detailing Mary's faith as the origin of Christ's Immaculate Conception and in embellishing Mary's virtuous actions, this homily resembles the encomium structure. Mary is even contrasted with Christ to highlight her morality. The homily's epilogue further exhorts the readers to love God,

Nu þonne, men þa leofestan, gelyfan we on urn Drihten, & hine lufian, & his bebodu healdan, þonne bið on ús gefylled þæt he sylfa cwæþ, 'Eadige beoþ þa clænan heortan, forþon þe hie God geseoð.' On þære gesihðe wesað ealle geleafulle, and his blisse ne bið nænig ende, ah hie á motan mid him gefeon, þær leofað & rixað á buton ende on ecnesse. Amen. (12-13)

Now then, dearest men, let us believe in our Lord, and love him and keep his behests, then shall be fulfilled in us what he himself hath declared – 'Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' In that sight shall be all believers, and of his bliss there shall be no end, but ever may they rejoice with him, where he liveth and reigneth, ever without end everlastingly. Amen. (12-13)

The quoting of scripture serves not only as an appeal to authority, but also as a maxim, or a saying drawn from life that is often repeated for its wisdom (Caplan IV.XVI. 24). The scriptural story of Mary is given and analyzed to demonstrate how God blesses those who are faithful to him. In praising God, the author demonstrates his or her own virtue and faith, again exhorting the audience to follow these godly examples and be virtuous. While early medieval rhetoric did not stress the role of the speaker or author as much as the message and audience, the author and speaker were important as examples of divine knowledge and moral living, further underscoring the didactic and spiritual message and the need to implement the message's instruction into daily life.

In a similar vein, *II: Shrove Sunday* begins by addressing the audience as dearest men, “men þa leofestan” (14-15), which is repeated several times and is an example of reduplication as well as apostrophe or a specific address to the audience to grab attention and appeal to emotions. The homily also begins by discussing Luke’s message on present and future time before plunging right into a narrative where Christ tells his disciples he will be crucified. The goal of this homily is to amplify Christ’s death on the cross to move the audience to seek life-giving knowledge drawn from scripture: “Cleopian we nu in eglum mode inneweardre heortan, swa se blinda dyde, & cweþan, ‘Miltsa me, Dauides sunu, miltsa me.’ Smeagean we nu & þencan hwæt þæt he cleopode,” or “Let us now cry out with sorrowfulness of mind and with sincerity of heart, as the blind man did, and say, ‘Have mercy upon me, Son of David, have mercy upon me!’ Let us now consider and think what was denoted by the multitude that endeavoured to restrain the blind man from crying out” (18-19). Reduplication is used within the passage through the repetition of the word “mercy,” repeated to appeal to emotion. Analogy is also used with discussion of, and repeated reference to, the blind man, although this analogy comes directly from scripture.

In discussing the qualities of Shrove Sunday, the homily specifically states,

Men þa leofestan, onhyrgean we þone blindan þe on lichoman wæs gehæled gee ac on mode. Ne biddan we urne Drihten þyses lænan welan, ne þyssa eorþlicra geofa þe hrædlice from monnum gewitaþ, [a]c biddon we Drihten þæs leohtes þe næfre ne geendað. Þis leoht we habbaþ wið nytenu gemæne, ac þæt leoht we sceolan secan þæt we motan habban mid englum gemæne, in þæm gastlicum þrymmum. Þæt leoht on nanre tide ne ablinneþ; oþon leohte is fulfremednesse weg þe we on feran sceolan, þæt is se rihta gelcafa. (Morris 20-21)

Dearest men, let us imitate the blind man, who was healed both in body and in mind. Let us not entreat our Lord for this transitory wealth, nor for those earthly gifts that swiftly pass away from men, but let us ask the Lord for the light that never endeth. This (earthly) light we have in common with the brute creation, but we must seek the (heavenly) light that we may have it in common with the angels in the spiritual assembly. That (spiritual) light shall never fail. In that light is the way of perfection in which we must walk, that is to say, the true belief (faith). (Morris 20-21)



Within this philosophical passage, the light is a metaphor used to discuss goodness, morality, and eternity, and is therefore also an example of *antonomasia* or *pronomonition* in that this concept is not referred to by its proper name, but it is given a name that refers to its qualities (Caplan IV. XXXI.42). *Antonomasia* is a primary tool of *epideictic* rhetoric. Definition is also used to explain what the light means, which becomes a rhetorically repetitive tool and one method of amplifying the emphasis on morality

The homily continually praises God and amplifies his words and deeds, concluding by exhorting the audience to repentance and confession of sins,

For-þon we sceolan beón gemyndige Godes beboda, & ure sawle þearfe, þa hwile þe we motan, & biddan we georne urn Drihten þæt he us generige from þon ecan cwealme, & us gelæde on þone geféan his wuldres. Þær is ece blis & þæt ungeendode rice; nis þær ænig sár gemeted, ne adl, ne ece, ne nænig unrótnes; nis þær ege, ne geflit, ne yrre, ne nænig wiþerweardnes; ac þær is gefea, blis, fæ[ge]rnes, se hám is gefylled mid heofonlicum gastum, mid englum heahenglum, mid heahfæderum & apostolum, & mid þy únarimedan weorode haligra martyra þa calle motan wunian mid Drihtne in callra worlða world. Amen. (Morris 24-25)

Therefore we must be mindful of God's behests and of our soul's need the while we may; and let us earnestly beseech our Lord to deliver us from the eternal death, and bring us into the joy of his glory where there is eternal bliss, and the everlasting kingdom; there no sorrow is found, nor sickness, nor pain, nor any sadness; there is no awe (fear), no strife, no wrath, nor any opposition; but there is joy and bliss, and fairness; and the home (abode) is filled with heavenly spirits, with angels, archangels, with patriarchs, and apostles, and with the innumerable host of holy martyrs who shall all dwell with our Lord for ever and ever. Amen. (Morris 24-25)

This passage repeats the opening structure in discussing heaven, which is an example of *epanaphora*. The description of heaven is also designed to move the audience through feelings of awe, and the praise of heaven is another indication of *epideictic* rhetoric. Additionally, this *epideictic* epilogue relates the idea that only God can truly remove and forgive sin, but that individuals should try to live a moral life on earth to avoid God's judgment and wrath; try to point others to the truth of supernatural, Christian principles; and try to obtain eternal happiness in heav-

en. The lesson is that a moral man is virtuous in both word and deed, and this passage again indicates that early medieval rhetoric was centered upon considerations of individual and communal morality, the effectiveness of content, and the content's effect on the heart and soul in contrast with classical rhetoric's desire to impress the audience or obtain renown through eloquence.

Correspondingly, *VI: Palm Sunday* begins with “men þa leofestan” (65) and discusses how Christ humbled himself to become a human and die for humanity. The topic is Jesus' sacrifice, which is contrasted with Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet, “Maria genam an pund deorwyrþre smerenese, merede þæs Hælendes fét, & eft mid hire locum drygde” (68-69). The discussion of Mary amplifies virtue like trust and obedience, while the mention of Judas Iscariot's anger and later betrayal of Christ is used to condemn vices such as deception, lying, and wrath:

Iudas hæfde onlicnesse þara manna þ willað Godes cyricean yfelian & strudan, & hwæþere se þe wæs lareow, & soþfæstnesse bysen, & cining ealre clænnesse, forlet mid him beon þone godwracean þeof. Ac mid þære bysene, he gecyþde þæt soþfæstnesse men habbaþ mid him þeofas & synfulle on him selfum. (74-75)

Judas was like those men who will do ill to and destroy God's church. Yet he who was the teacher and example of soothfastness, and the king of all purity, permitted this godless thief to be with him. But by this example he hath shown us that true men have among them thieves and sinful men, and nevertheless they must suffer patiently their wickedness against themselves. (74-75)

Here there is an example of antonomasia with the reference to God as “the teacher and example of soothfastness, and the king of all purity,” as well as condemnation and explanation for wickedness. This homily also uses virtue to discuss and condemn vice and vice to praise virtue, once more blending and tailoring the focus of the encomium and vituperation. As seen with this homily, most Blickling homilies either relied upon a combination of the encomium and vituperation styles or solely relied upon the encomium style of praise and exhortation.

The homily then discusses all the war and violence on earth as a result, and indication, of sin. As it draws to a close, the epilogue exhorts the audience to believe in God and live moral lives to prepare the soul for the afterlife,

Ða halgan ær Cristes cyme on hine gelyfdon, & hine lufodan, & hine towardne sægdon, & mid his æriste gehælde. Wé þonne synt þe þær æfter fylgeap; & we witon eall þis þus geworden, forðon we sceolan on hine gelyfan, & hine lufian, & we eac witon þæt he is toward to demenne, & þas world to geendenne. Nu we habbaþ myccle nedþearfe þæt he us gearwe finde. We witon ful gearu þæt we sceolan on þisse sceortan tide geearnian éce ræste, þonne motan we in þære engellican blisse gefeón mid urum Drihtne, þær he leofað & rixað abuton ende, on ecnesse. Amen. (80-83)

The holy men, before Christ's coming, believed in him, and loved him, and spake of his coming; and by his passion they were redeemed from hell-torment, and were saved through his resurrection. We, then, are those who come after, and we know all this that has thus come to pass, wherefore we must believe on him, and love him, and we also know that he will come to judge and put an end to this world. Now it is very needful for us that he find us ready; and we know full well that we must in this brief time earn eternal rest, then may we in angelic bliss rejoice with our Lord, where he liveth and reigneth without end, everlastingly. Amen. (80-83)

This passage relies upon epanaphora in its repetition of opening lines. It also highlights the importance of faith and living virtuously in preparation for God's judgment and second coming.

Early medieval rhetoric desired to move the audience to faith, so that, through faith, the spiritual truth of the words could be encoded upon the hearts and souls of the listeners, positively altering their thought and action on earth and securing their eternal rest in heaven. In order to inspire faith and awaken morality in the soul, rhetoric relied upon spiritual inspiration, guidance, and scriptural passages as well as saints' lives and other religious documents. The invention stage was dependent upon a spiritual experience, although the arrangement stage followed that of epideictic rhetoric tailored to present a more dualistic, and, by Christian standards, realistic, picture of life.

Another example, *VIII: Soul's Need*, begins with the importance of remembering how the Lord delivered humanity from the devil's power through his sacrifice on the cross, and the topic

of the homily is doing what is best for the soul, “Us is þonne nédþearf þæt we secan þone læcedóm ure sawwle,” or “It is then needful for us to seek the medicine for our souls because the Lord is very merciful who hath assured and informed us” (96-97). In discussing the temptations of the world, the homily uses the *ubi sunt* motif found within other Old English works like *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, as well as both the question and answer trope and reduplication.

For example, the homily asks,

hwýder gewiton þa welan, & þa glengas, & þa idlan blissa? oþþe hwýder gewiton þa mycclan weorod þe him ymb ferdon & stodaþ? & hwær syndon þa þe hie heredan, & him olyhtword sprecaþ? & hwær cóm seo frætwodnes heora husa & seo gesomnung þara deorwyrþra gimma, oþþe þæt unmæte gestreón goldes & seolfres, oþþe eal se wela þe him dæghwamlice gesamnodan má & ma, & nystan ne ne gemdon hwonne hie þæt eall anforlætan sceoldan? oþþe hwær com heora synttro & seo orþonce glaunes, & se þe þa gebregdnan domas demde? (98-99)

whither have gone the wealth, and the adornments, or the vain pleasures? Or whither have gone the great throngs that encompassed and surrounded them? And where are those who praised them, and spake to them flattering words? And where have gone the adorning of their houses and the collection of precious gems, or the vast acquisition of gold and of silver, or all the wealth which they daily, more and more, amassed, and knew not nor took heed of the time when they should leave all? Or where have gone their wisdom and their ingenious skill? And where is he who hath given false judgements? (98-99)

Just like Anglo-Saxon figures who lamented the loss of wealth, status, and community, this passage laments the loss of earthly comforts and happiness. However, the homily is not content to merely express loss and sadness, but it uses this emotion to emphasize the fact that because life’s wealth and happiness vanishes, the only true happiness and treasure that remains is the soul’s eternal rest in heaven. This same *ubi sunt* theme is found within a variety of other anonymously written medieval homilies such as *A Message from the Tomb*. The *ubi sunt* motif is also built upon the rhetorical strategies of epanaphora, with the successive beginnings of phrases; apostrophe, with addressing specific peoples and places as well as the arousal of grief or indignation in

the audience; and, finally, transiting to the conclusion, where the author “briefly recalls what has been said, and likewise briefly sets forth what is to follow next” (Caplan IV. XXVI. 35).

The homily ends in painting a glorious picture of heaven to encourage the audience to live morally so that one day they can live in heaven,

þæt wuldorfæste life þætte englas, & heahenglas, & heahfæderas, & witgan & ealle halige on Drihtnes onsyne wuniap; þær biþ á éce geféa buton unrotnesse, & geogop buton ylde; ne biþ þær sár ne gewinn, ne nænig úneþnes, ne sorg ne wop, ne hungor, ne þurst, ne ece yfel; ne þær mon his feond fíndeð, ne his freond forlæteþ; ac þær wunian mót se þa stowe geseceþ, mid engla sibbe on ecean wuldre for urum Drihtne se leofað & rixað mid God Fæder & mid þon Halgan Gaste abuton ende. Amen. (104-105)

the glorious life, wherein angels, and archangels, and patriarchs, and prophets, and all the sanctified abide in the presence of the Lord, where is eternal joy without sadness, and youth without age; where is no grief nor toil, nor any uneasiness, nor sorrow, nor weeping, nor hunger, nor thirst, nor ache nor ill; - where no man will meet his enemy, nor leave his friend, but there may he, who shall visit that place, dwell peacefully with angels in eternal glory before our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with God the Father, and with the Holy Ghost with out end. Amen. (104-105)

To the minds of Anglo-Saxons hearing this message perhaps for the first time or as a reminder of previous discussions, this passage would have offered hope and comfort that tomorrow would bring an end to pain and reveal true, eternal happiness, but only if the present life was lived through faith and virtue. This message is consistently reiterated in every homily, and here it is extolled and amplified using the repetition of epanaphora as well as vivid description.

Another equally vibrant Blickling homily that solidifies these aspects of medieval rhetoric is homily X: *The End of this World is Near* that begins with the clearest introduction for the purpose of every homily,

Men ða leofostan, hwæt nú anra manna gehwylene ic myngie & lære, ge weras ge wif, ge geonge ge ealde, ge snottre ge unwise, ge þa welegan ge þa þearfan, þæt anra gehwyle hine sylfne sceawige & ongyte, & swa hwæt swa he on mycclum gyltum oþþe on medmycclum gefremede, þæt he þonne hrædllice gecyrrre to þam selran & to þon soþan læcdome; þonne magon we us God ælmihtigne mildne

habban; forþon þe Drihten wile þæt ealle men syn hale & gesunde, & to þon soþan andgite gecyrran. (106-107)

Dearest men, lo! I now admonish and exhort every man, both men and women, both young and old, both wise and unwise, both rich and poor, - everyone to behold and understand himself and, whatsoever he hath committed in great sins or in venial ones, forthwith to turn to the better and to the true medicine, then may we have God Almighty merciful (to us) because the Lord desires all men to be whole and sound, and to turn to the true knowledge. (106-107)

Within this passage of warning, the homily relies upon epanaphora, antithetical contrasts (Caplan IV.XV.21), and an apostrophe or direct address to underscore the idea that the English's suffering was a result of their disobedience to God and their rampant immorality, and that God would demonstrate his mercy once individuals turned to God and exercised Godly wisdom. Both of these actions are made possible only through the instruction and inspiration of early medieval and Christian rhetoric.

As the homily progresses with general praise and blame, following more of a commonplace structure with comparisons and principles associated with a topic, it engages in question and answer as well as reduplication of questions to amplify the issue of how fleeting earthly life is in contrast with spiritual truths,

hwæt bila ells seo láf buton wyrma mete? Hwær beoþ þonne his welan & his wista? Hwær beoð þonne his wlencea & his anmedlan? hwær beoþ þonne his idlan gescyrplan?hwær beoþ ðonne þa glengeas & þa mycclan gegyrelan þe he þone lichoman ær mid frætwode?hwær cumað þonne his willan & his fyrenlustas ðe her on worlde beeode?hwæt he þonne sceal mid his saule anre Gode ælmihtigum riht agyldan, ealles þæs þe he her on worlde to wommum gefremede. (110-113)

what else is the remnant, but the food of worms? Where shall be then his riches and his feasts? Where shall be then his pride and his arrogance? Where shall be then his vain garments? Where shall be then the ornaments and the expensive attire with which he previously decked his body? Where shall be then his will and his lusts that he followed here in the world? (110-113)

This theme is always at the forefront of every homily because vice is more alluring than virtue, and the audience needed constant reminding that the pleasures associated with vice were temporary whereas righteous living was rewarded with eternal bliss.

And, as expected, the homily ends with an epilogue telling the audience “þæt we us georne to gode þydon. Uton urum Drihtne hyran georne, & him þancas secggan ealra his geofena, & ealra his miltsa, & ealra his eadmódnessa & fremsumnessa þe he wiþ us æfre gecyþde, þæm heofonlican Cininge þe leofað & rixaþ on worulda world áá buton ende on ecnesse. Amen,” or to “press on to what is good; let us obey our Lord diligently, and for all his gifts and for all his mercies, and for all his kindness and benefits that he hath ever showed to us let us give thanks to Him – the heavenly King that liveth and reigneth everlastingly, for ever without end, in eternity. Amen” (114-115). The ending extols the audience to be obedient to God and praises God for his mercy and kindness, two virtues that were often praised within epideictic progymnasmata.

Three more important Blickling homilies that closely follow the encomium structure in their praise of a specific person are the *Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, *The Birth of John the Baptist*, and *The Story of Peter and Paul*. Within *XIII: Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, the homily begins with “Men ða leofestan” and tells the story of Mary’s miraculous ascension to heaven, after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, because of her pure life on earth where Jesus descended like a cloud, “þa come þær semninga ure Drihten Hælend Crist þurh wolcnum mid mycclen mengeo engla & wæs ingangende on þære halgan Marian hús on þæt þe heo hie inne reste” (144-147). The cloud is used as a metaphor for heaven as well as a metaphor for the passage from earth to heaven, attempting to explain and demystify spiritual beliefs for the audience.

The homily ends with “Ac utan we biddan þa fæmnan Sancta Marian þæt heo us sy milde þingere wið urne Drihten Hælendne Crist ondweardes rædés & eces wuldres: to þæm us gefultumige ure Drihten. Amen,” or “Let us intreat the Virgin St. Mary to be a merciful advocate with our Lord Jesus Christ of present benefits and of eternal glory: and threto may our Lord aid us. Amen” (158-159). The use of surrender here is not simply given to God, as is typical of the homiletic structure, but the matter is also surrendered to St. Mary, who is entreated in the epilogue to assist the audience in attaining obedience and purity. Such a tactic is employed to underscore the spiritual fame and success that may result from morality, a rather subtle allusion to the Germanic warrior mentality that sought fame and renown above all, characterized in Anglo-Saxon literature and particularly evident in *Beowulf*.

Likewise, XIV *The Birth of John the Baptist* opens with “dearest men” or “Men þa leofestan” and discusses the birth, training, and qualities of John the Baptist in true encomium form. The homily also describes the vices of king Herod as a comparison and foil to emphasize and amplify John’s morality, while condemning Herod’s immorality. The homily even states,

Mycel is þonne þeos weorþung þæs halgan Sancte Iohannes gebyrde, & eal rihtgelyfed folc sceal gefeon on þone his tocyme & hine blestian, forþon þe þæt gewrit swa be him cwæþ þæt monige on þa his gebyrd gefeon sceoldan. Mycel is se haligdom & seo weorþung Sancte Iohannes þæs mycelnesse se Hælend Drihten sylfa tácn sægde; & hit cuþ is þæt betus wifa begyrdum ne wearþ mara mon geworden þonne Iohannes se fulwihtere. (166-167)

Great then is the glory of the holy St. John’s birth. And all right-believing folk ought to rejoice at his advent and to bless him, because the Scripture so spake concerning him, that many should rejoice at his birth. Great is the holiness and wrothiness of St. John, whose greatness the Lord and Saviour himself pointed out. And it is made known that among those born of women there shall not be a greater man than John the Baptist [excepting only Christ] himself, who was without a human father, conceived by an immaculate virgin. (166-167)

With the repetition of the word “great” or “mycel,” the rhetorical tool of epanaphora is used, along with transplacement and reduplication, which are all employed to amplify and expound



John's moral qualities such as perseverance and faith. And, of course, the epilogue ends with a prayer of surrender that every heart be filled with grace.

*XV: The Story of Peter and Paul* also starts with "Men ða leofestan" and praises the deeds of Peter and Paul who "begen on geleafan gelice, begen wuldres beag æt urum Drihtne gesæliglice onfengon, forþon þe hie, on þære halgan þrowunge ealra on Cristes soþre eaþmodlicre ándetnesse oþ heora lifes ende, untweogende mode þurhwunodan," or "Both alike in belief, both happily received a crown of glory from our Lord, because in all their holy sufferings they continued in true humility with an undoubting mind unto their lives' end in the confession of Christ" (170-171). Epanaphora is used here to amplify the comparison of these two godly, moral men.

The homily also contrasts the virtuous deeds of these two saints with the immoral, evil deeds of Nero; Simon the sorcerer; Livia, Nero's wife; Agrippa; and Agrippa's wife, Agrippina. Because of Peter and Paul's miracles and belief, they were rewarded in heaven, while Nero, for example, was hated on earth, indicated by his fate: "Sume men wæron þe sægdon þæt hine wulfas abiton & fræton, þær he mid cyle & mid hunger on wudum dwolgende asifod læge," or "There were some men who said that wolves tore and devoured him in the woods, where he, having gone astray, lay stiff with cold and hunger" (192-193). This imaginative and interesting form of punishment serves as an analogy for the torments of hell where demons, like wolves, will also attack and devour. Such a warning is very vivid and effective in its rhetoric and encourages the audience to continually turn to Christ in daily living.

Lastly, two Blickling homilies that form the basis of two of Ælfric's homilies on St. Michael and St. Martin are the *Dedication of St. Michael's Church* and the *Festival of St. Martin*. *XVII: Dedication of St. Michael's Church* contains the same tale that Ælfric recounts in his dis-

cussion of Garganus, who was accidentally poisoned by his own arrow while angrily hunting a prideful bull, but was healed and taught by the holy archangel Michael, “halga heahengel Michael, through dreams (198-199). The homily begins with the often reduplicated expression, “Men ða leofestan,” and again proves that epideictic structures do not always have to be solely about a person, but can also praise or condemn a condition or geographic location, seen here with the features of the holy church of St. Michael, “halige cirice Michaelæs” (196-197). The introduction displays encomium praise of the church and its spiritual qualities, following the encomium structure.

The homily next relays the origin of the church’s holy status by amplifying the tale of Garganus and focusing on how the angel Michael helped Garganus on earth because of Garganus’ faith where “Englas beoð to ðegnunge gæstum fram Gode hider on world sendeð, to ðæm ðe þone ecean eðel mid mode & mid mægene to Gode gearniað, þæt him syn on fultume ða þe wiðe þæm awergdum gastum syngallice feohtan sceolan,” or “Angels are as ministering spirits, sent hither into the world by God, to those who with might and main merit from Got the eternal kingdom; so that they (the angels) should be a help to those who shall constantly contend against the accursed spirits” (208-209). Here definition is used to identify the role of angels and to discuss how they are available to help those who live moral lives. Garganus’ story is narrated through vivid detail to serve as an example of how God redeemed mankind and to also amplify the holy nature of the church.

The homily ends with a prayer and exhortation, “Ac uton nu biddan Sanctus Michael geornlice þæt he ure saula gelæde on gefeán, þær hie motan blissian abuton ende on ecnesse. Amen,” or “But let us know bid St. Michael earnestly to bring our souls into bliss, where they may rejoice without end in eternity. Amen” (210-211). The prayer to Michael is a rare ending as

it indicates surrender of the matter to him instead of to God. However, a plea to Michael's moral example helps the audience find strength in human example and remain ethical and resolute in facing life's challenges. Ultimately, this conclusion follows the established pattern of early medieval homilies in that the end of the message is designed to put the audience in a prayerful state of mind and to exhort them to accept the instruction into their heart and soul and to evidence these spiritual truths in their lives.

Finally, *XVIII: Festival of St. Martin* also forms the background for Ælfric's same homily and represents a true encomium with its detailed discussion of St. Martin's life. The homily begins with "Men ða leofestan" and discusses St. Martin's origins, in the land of Pannonia and in the town of Sabaria, "He wæs on Pannania þære mægðe ærest on woruld cumen, in Arrea ðæm tune," before discussing his noble birth, his parents, and his education, "Þa he wæs tyn winter, & hine hys ylðran to woruld-folgaðe tyhton ond lærdan, ða fleah he to Godes ciricean, & bæd þæt hine mon gecristnode," or "When he was ten years old, and his parents put him to, and taught him, a temporal occupation, then he fled to the church of God, and entreated to be christened" (210-211). Martin is praised and his deeds are amplified because, at a young age, he chose to seek God and pursue a life of virtue.

Then, the moral deeds of Martin are recounted, including healing the dead:

Ðis wæs soðlice eadig wer, ne wæs æfre facen ne inwid on his heortan, ne he nænigne man unrihtlice forðemde, ne nænigum yfel wiþ yfele geald; ne hine nænig man yrne ne grammódne ne funde, ac he wæs á on anum mode; & efne heofonlice blisse & efean mon mihte á on his mode & on his andwleotan ongytan. (222-223)

He was truly a blessed man, never was deceit or guile within his heart. Nor did he condemn any man unjustly, nor returned to any evil for evil; nor did any one find him angry or cruel, but he was ever of one mind; and truly one might always see in his disposition and in his countenance heavenly bliss and joy. (222-223)

Although the end of this Blickling homily is missing, this passage serves to adequately bring the homily to a close and punctuate its epideictic nature. This passage also relies upon epanaphora with its repetition. Martin's morality is praised and amplified as an *exempla*, encouraging the audience to aspire to be equally as virtuous and positively influence the community.

The homilies within the Blickling and Vercelli books are earlier representations and models of Ælfric and Wulfstan's sentiments and reliance upon rhetorical precepts. Together these works reveal that early medieval writing was linked with Greco-Roman communication and rhetoric in as much as human thought and desire remained the same in any age. What early medieval rhetoric did was to further sculpt the uses and methods of epideictic rhetoric so that this form of communication was foremost in medieval minds. The early medieval period simplified and redeemed this branch from the classical tradition that often overly embellished and undervalued it.

Other anonymously written homilies confirm these Old English and early medieval rhetorical patterns and the fact that these patterns were carried beyond the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries into the Middle English period and beyond. A twelfth century, anonymously written homily entitled *John iv. 46* in MS Bodley 343 begins by recounting a Biblical story of Jesus' visit to Cana where he turned water into wine and healed a ruler's sick son with his words (Belfour 23). The homily pinpoints the power of words in a very effective manner, and the belief that words could so supernaturally influence others in both positive and negative ways was a central focus of medieval rhetoric and writing. The homily's introduction describes the Biblical story using the rhetorical device of ocular demonstration where "an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subjects to pass vividly before our eyes" (Caplan IV.LV. 68). This occurs most often within the Bible itself as well as in sermons and homilies in

order to hold the attention of the audience and help them experience these lessons and events firsthand. Here, the ocular demonstration is achieved through setting, action, and dialogue.

The passage also displays synonymy or interpretation, where the same word or concept is repeated but through different wording (IV. XXVIII. 38): “ferde þá to þam Hælendes 7 hine bæd 3eorne Ð he sceolde faren 7 his sune hælæn, þe læ3 þá æt forðside his lifes unwæne,” or “he went to the Saviour and prayed him earnestly to come and heal his son who lay then at the point of death, his life despaired of” (Belfour 22, 23). This is a strategy that Old English society enjoyed, as seen with their plethora of kennings. The Old English term “forðsid” meant to go forth or to be deceased, while “unwæne,” “unwemme,” or “unwéne” refers to unstained, unexpected, or hopeless. So, in this case, the synonym for death is a life unlived, unstained, or hopeless. Within Christian dogma, those who believe in God will never die, and, in this sense, medieval rhetoric was concerned with using words to ensure the immortality of the soul, where, again, the words influenced the heart and the soul to action and moral change.

*John iv.46* also engages in defining: “ac he næfde swa ðeah alne 3eileafan, swa swá món ilyfæn scéal on ðone lifizenden Hælend, Ð he mæ3 alle þing on ælcere stówe,” or “he had not complete faith, such as one ought to have in the Living Saviour, believing that he can do everything in every place” (Belfour24). The term “3eileafan” is a derivative of “geléaffulne,” meaning faith and is a state of belief and life that was praised and condoned for all Christians. This homily demonstrates epideictic rhetoric of praising and blaming through amplifying the issue of faith in order to spark emotion and encourage the readers to have faith in God, “Gif he rihtlice ilyfde, he sceolde ðonne witen Ð God sylf is æ3hwær, on ælcere stowe, þurh his mycele mihte; 7 mæ3 aefre hælpan alum ðe to him clypiæð on ælcere stowe,” or “If he had had proper faith, he ought to have known then that God himself is everywhere, in every place, because of his great power;

and he can ever help all who call on him in every quarter” (24, 25). The passage later calls men exceedingly foolish who question Christ’s power or “heo dweloden swyðe þa ða héo swylces axeden, hwanon Cristes miht wære on his mycle wundrum” (30, 31). Again, the emphasis is upon belief in God and moral living, which is the point of using words: to express faith in God and exhort self and others to moral living.

Finally, *John iv. 46* ends with surrender and the standard prayer of exhortation where, “Þe ðe him sylf makæð mihte 7 wundræ butæn ælcum mén; ðam is anweald 7 wuldor 7 wurdment on ecnyse á to worulde. Amen,” or “He who himself works miracles and wonders apart from all men; to him is power and glory and honour in eternity ever world without end. Amen” (30, 31). The alternate name for Christ that is used within this passage is an antonomasia, and the homily exhorts the audience to also praise God and remember his merciful and loving deeds in order to themselves be merciful and loving on earth.

All medieval homilies tended to begin with and rely upon the commonplace of quoting or citing authority, typically God and scripture. Many start by discussing what Christ has done or by mentioning Christ’s words, as with the homily entitled *Mathew XVIII.23* which begins, “Cristes iwunæ wæs ðæt he wolde oft spæcæn on deopum biʒspellum to his discipulis; ða sæde he hwilon biʒspel to héom,” or “It was Christ’s custom that he would often speak in deep parables to his disciples; and once upon a time he told a parable to them” (30, 31). Such a rhetorical technique is, according to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, based upon amplification, which relies upon commonplaces “to stir the hearers” by appealing to authority and by recreating events (Caplan II.XXX. 47). This homily’s purpose is to move the reader to pity as well as indignation with the analysis of the parable about forgiving debts. The writer even references St. Augustine’s discussion of this parable and lesson: “Hér is mucel andʒit eow monnum to witenne; 7 we

nimæð hér to to ðissere trahtnunge Augustinum ðonne wisæ, e we wæl truwiæð, swa swa he hit 3elozode on ðare Ledenspæce; 7 we al swa hit sæcgæð on Engliscere sprece eow” (32). Unlike Greek and Roman rhetoricians and orators who left the matter in the hands of earthly authorities, Old English leaders, as has been demonstrated previously in countless other homilies, tended to submit their thoughts and preaching to the will of God. Words were developed to praise God and exhort others to follow moral dictates, awakening the necessary faith and grace that allowed for emotional, mental, and spiritual growth and change.

In several places within *Mathew XVIII.23*, and within other homilies, the rhetorical device of parable or “bi3spell” (30), meaning example, proverb, story, allegory, or parable is mentioned or referenced. Similarly, Belfour translates the Old English word “licnesse” (34) within *Mathew XVIII.23* as “simile” when the literal translation is a likeness or similarity to an image, object, or idea. While the reference to a comparison made by the Old English author here may not use “like” or “as” according to more modern definitions of a simile, it is clear the author of the homily understood the rhetorical concept of making comparisons, as displayed by scriptural and other religious writings and homilies like Ælfric’s and Wulfstan’s, and was consciously employing this technique. The *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* states that the simile “is the comparison of one figure with another, implying a certain resemblance between them. This is used for praise or censure” (Caplan IV. XLIX. 62). Here again is a rhetorical device used within epideictic rhetoric to praise or condemn certain actions or thoughts, in this case, the idea of payment for sin and forgiving those who sin against us or “þæt we þam for3ifan þe wið us a3yltæð, þ God us for3ife ure gyltæs wið him” (Belfour 34).

The homily continues to dissect Biblical passages of doing good (gód) to others and showing others mercy “mild(t)sunge” and forgiveness “for3ifnes” so mercy, forgiveness, and

good deeds will be done to you in turn, relying upon repetition or transplacement where the same word is “frequently reintroduced, not only without offence to good taste, but even so as to render the style more elegant” (IV. XIII.19). The author of the homily writes, “Forʒife ʒe, and eów biđ forʒifen. Dođ gód ođrum monnum, eów biđ god iʒifen. Đu bist mildsunge æt Gode; mildsæ đū ođre men” (Belfour 34), and continually returns to these three words.

*Mathew XVIII.23* also refers to St. Augustine’s sermon where children should be taught through fear and love how to obey in order to end their “dysiʒ” or “foolishness” (Belfour 38). Then, the author continues to use variations of the word “dysiʒ” with the same transplacement technique used with the terms mercy, foolishness, and good. These repetitive ploys are consistently used for all three types of rhetoric, but mostly with epideictic and amplification in order to discuss present circumstances, thought, and action that is appropriate and worth following or inappropriate and deserving condemnation. The homily concludes with the prayer and surrender typical of a Biblical discussion, giving the speech and subject matter over to God: “Beo him á á wurdmynt 7 wuldor Amen,” but also condones and praises the pity “mildheortnysse” (mild heartedness) and gentleness “liđnysse” of God as the qualities human beings should also follow (40, 41).

Another homily entitled *John IX.1* begins with Jesus healing a blind man and the discussion of blindness as a physical manifestation of sin, “For hwæs synnæ wæs đæ mon swá blind acenned –hwæder þe for his áʒenne, ođđe for his maʒæ?” (58). In asking whether the man was punished with blindness because of his own personal sin or the sins of his heritage or ancestry, the homily clearly intends to explore right and wrong action through the strategy of epideictic rhetoric in evaluating personal qualities along with physical attributes and external circumstances (Caplan III.VI.10-11). The focus is on the consequences for right and wrong actions or qualities,



along with the mercy of Christ to heal the blind. Christ is praised for his compassion, mercy, and gentleness (*mildheortæ*); the blind man is praised for his perseverance, faith, and longsuffering; the quality of blindness is seen as both a test of character and as punishment for sins; and the Pharisees (*synderhalȝan*) are condemned for their anger over God healing the blind man on the Sabbath (Belfour 60, 61).

The blindness motif is also used to carry the theme of the homily where Christ says, “*Ic côm hider on dome on đisne middaneard, þ̅ ða men ȝeséon þe ne mihten ær iséon, 7 ða þe iséoð sceolon beon blinde,*” or “For judgment came I hither into this world, that men might see who could not see before, and that those who see should become blind” (62). This play on words follows the rhetorical strategies of a comparison, from where we derive current understandings of an analogy, a metaphor, and even an allegory that compares the “element of likeness” (Caplan IV.XLV. 59–XLVI). In this case, physical and literal blindness is being compared and even contrasted with the inability to see spiritual truths and the gift of deciphering right from wrong.

The author of *John IX.1* makes this even more apparent by stating, “*Đis godspel is nu isæd swytellice on Englisc anfealdum anȝite, ac we willæð eow sæcgen þ̅ gastlice anȝit mid Godes fultume be þam ðe ðe wisæ Augustine hit awrát on bocum,*” or “This Gospel has now been repeated plainly in English in its literal sense, but we want with God’s help, to speak to you of the spiritual meaning, according as the wise Augustine has set it down in books” (62, 63). Not only does this homily use the commonplace of appealing to authority, in this case citing from dead authors such as Augustine, for the purposes of amplification, but it also makes plain the fact that these examples are used cleverly to convey a hidden message or meaning that encourages audiences to consider moral precepts and actions for themselves.

This specific address to an audience is clearly rhetorical, and it is epideictic in nature as it demands of the audience to judge for themselves, in accordance with Biblical principles of course, what constitutes morality and to consider how they are like the blind man who represents “all mankind in this world” or “al moncynn on þisse middanearde” (62, 63). In having the blind man represent the fact that all of humanity is blind and lost without God, the homily imitates the rhetorical device of synecdoche used within scripture as well where “the whole is known from a small part or a part from the whole” (Caplan IV. XXXIII.45). In this sense, these rhetorical strategies convey to the audience that all of humanity is blind and waiting for God’s redemption and miraculous power to save them or “Godes wundræ wyrdon on him iswytelode” (Belfour 66).

Furthermore, in *John IX.1*, as in many other homilies, Christ is compared to day (dæg) and light, “Crist cwæð him sylf þ he is ðeo soðe liht þisses middaneárdes,” while evil is compared to darkness (deorce niht) and blindness (blindnesse) (66, 67). Although these comparisons, metaphors, and similes are evident in scripture and are simply being imitated and recorded in these Old English homilies, these comparisons are, in turn, being further perpetuated and relied upon along with other rhetorical devices such as metonymy “which draws from an object closely akin or associated an expression suggesting the object meant, but not called by its own name” (Caplan XXXII. 43). In numerous situations, God will simply be referred to as the Supreme being, the all-knowing one, or the light of world instead of being called by his proper names (Belfour 67-69), which evidences antonomasia. All of these rhetorical devices serve to preserve shards of a rhetorical tradition long since past and help recreate rhetoric anew for the medieval world, a pragmatic rhetoric focused upon content, moral quality, and the present concerns of humanity.

After once again reiterating the story and the lesson, the homily ends with surrender and with praising God, in this case, because “we wurdon onlihte ðurh ðone lyfizendan Drihten þe leofæð á ón ecnysse. Amen” (74). By praising God’s qualities at the end of each homily, not only does the audience see how much God has done and how worthy he is to be praised, but the message is that the highest praise comes from striving to act like God and to imbue god-like qualities in every detail of life. Only these godlike qualities will be rewarded with the ultimate praise, and validation is what all humans are searching for and is what epideictic rhetoric provides.

A variety of other twelfth and thirteen century homilies also demonstrate the vital role epideictic played within medieval communication. *Christmas Day* for example relies upon Aristotelian concepts of unethical men as beasts (87), continually exhorts the audience to praise God (Belfour 78, 79), uses interlacement and transplacement in describing God (Beflour 80, 81, 88, 89), relies upon similes (84, 85), metaphors and analogies (Belfour 84, 85), and employs Latin maxims like *Revertatur pulvis in terram suam unde erat et spiritus redeat ad Deum qui dedit illum*, or “Let the dust, that is, the body, return to the earth whence it first came, and let the spirit return to God who sent it before”; *Ipse Deus dabit omnibus vitam et spiritum*, or “God himself shall give to all men life and spirit” (87); *Omnia nimia nocent*, or “All excessive things are harmful” (91); *Sapientia huius mundi stultitia apud Deum*, or “The wisdom of this world is foolishness before God;” and *Omnis sapientia a Domino Deo est*, which means “All wisdom is from God” (95). Such maxims are also appeals to authority. Invoking the Latin tradition not only serves to enforce the message but also indicates a degree of connection between Old English writing and Latin, rhetorical communication – a point of contact and reference leading to the fragmented inclusion of Greco-Roman precepts within Old English writing. Such snippets of

Latin language are relied upon in a variety of homilies and anchor these early medieval creations in Latin authority and considerations

Similarly, *A Message from the Tomb* begins with a specific address to “dear men” or “leofe men” (Belfour 124); uses similes such as earthly wealth “passes away, just as a man’s shadow does” or “toglit, swa swa monnes sceadu dæþ” (124, 125); and question and answer, as seen with “To hwán, þu earme, on þisse worlde 3ytsungum swinces? oðer to hwam þu on oferhydo þe sylf úp ahæst on ofermetto, 7 ón unþeawæs, 7 sunne to swyðe fylizgedest?” or “Why wretch, dost thou toil with covetousness in this world? Or why does thou arrogantly lift thyself up in pride and in evil habits and follow sin too much?” (124, 125). This is also a rhetorical question that the author never intends to truly answer, yet asks the question to condemn immoral actions and steer the audience toward Christian dogma. The question and answer strategy not only holds the audience’s attention, but serves to clarify the issue and the lesson for the audience. The way each question is worded and the fact that one question follows the other builds on the emotions and intended cathartic response from the audience. These questions also heighten the sense of emotion and cause the audience to feel grateful for Christ’s message and become impassioned with his morality.

Furthermore, *On the Lord’s Day* relies heavily upon epanaphora in praising Sunday for the rest it offers the soul (Morris OE 40-45). *Of the Prophet Jeremiah* is built upon apostrophe, question and answer, reduplication, and vivid description, particularly in depicting Jeremiah’s suffering in a pit of mire and his subsequent feeble, “feble,” body (46-47) and in appealing to the authority of Gregory the Great (52-53). *The Creed* bases its subject upon definition in discussing Christianity and Christian belief (72-73). *Sermon on 2 Corinthians* relies on reasoning through contraries in analyzing St. Paul’s message about sowing and reaping (130-133). *John III. 1* relies

upon dialogue, reduplication, antistrophe, and interlacement in repeating words such as “sóp,” meaning truthful, often translated as “verily” as in the case with many Biblical passages, references to scripture as “haliz” or “hallize” (Belfour 4) and to immorality and sinful living and priests as “yfela,” evil (4), along with the phrase “ic þa sæcge,” meaning I say this to you (3).

Additionally, *Be Strong in War* relates Jesus’ admonition against war, vengeance, and anger, using antonomasia, interlacement, and reduplication to amplify the subject (154-155). *An Orison of our Lord* also includes epanaphora, transplacement, reduplication, and definition. *Concerning Eight Vices and Twelve Abuses of this Age* lists, defines, and explains each of the cardinal sins - *Gula*, greed; *Fornicatio*, fornication; *Avaritia*, covetousness; *Ira*, wrath or anger; *Tristitia*, sorrow or self-pity; *Desidia*, sloth; *Janctantia*, idle boasting; and *Superbia*, pride (102-103) as well as the cardinal virtues - *Temperantia*, moderation; *Castitas*, cleanliness; *Largitas*, liberality; *Patientia*, patience; *Spiritualis lætitia*, heavenly bliss; *Instantia boni operis*, diligence in good works; *Caritas*, true love to God and man; and *Humilitas*, meekness towards God and man (104-107) in following the encomium format.

The list of Old English homilies that rely upon epideictic rhetoric is endless. What is consistent for each is the rhetorical structure of introduction, narration, interpretation, and conclusion containing the encomium, vituperation, chreia, or commonplace structure discussing origin, characteristics and qualities, making a comparison or contrast, and creating an epilogue full of prayer and exhortation. These early medieval homilies also consistently intersperse classic rhetorical figures of speech in order to use amplification and embellishment, two vital components of epideictic communication without which epideictic would not be successful. As has been determined by a variety of other scholars studying medieval prose and verse, repetition gave “aesthetic satisfaction” (Steen 5) to the audience, and the two most often used classically rhetorical

devices evident within these homilies are repetition and comparison, where comparison is also a form of repetition in its evaluation of two similar people, concepts, objects, ideas, or actions so that one overall idea is reiterated and underscored: live virtuously for God now before it is too late.

## FINAL THOUGHTS: FINDING EARLY MEDIEVAL RHETORIC

While social, political, educational, and religious bonds have always rested in rhetoric, early medieval Christian dogma imbued the use of words and human communication with greater power, greater weight, and, most of all, greater pragmatism. Without the rhetoric of the medieval period, rhetorical practices would have remained a broken toy of the elite used to entertain and manipulate audiences. Early medieval rhetoric is holistic in its presentation of human life and consequence and eternal in its goals for humanity. Where Greek rhetoric focused on human intellect and Roman rhetoric focused upon human power, early medieval rhetoric focused on human conduct inasmuch as it affected the soul. Instead of relying upon rhetorical precepts for their own sake, early medieval rhetoric used these precepts as a bridge between God and man. Although the clergy and priests used their own version of rhetoric or *ars praedicandi* to instruct and move, they recognized that skillful use of words ultimately rested with divine inspiration and not with study and practice, although an education and awareness of the human condition and human practices were important for understanding the purpose of human life on earth.

As rhetoric developed into an art in Greek society, as a “source of power” and the “life-blood of democracy” (Enos 25), it was used in literature and poetry to entertain and instruct, it was used in politics to motivate and inspire, it was used in education to train and empower, and it was used in religion to praise, exhort, condemn, and warn. Each of these rhetorical impulses revolved around one single strand of thought – judgment of what was good, virtuous, and beneficial in contrast with what was bad, full of vice, and harmful – defined and classified by Greeks as epideictic rhetoric. Because epideictic concerns are fundamental and basic to all rhetorical experience, they appeared too simple to categorize in their own field, which is why the epideictic

branch was a relatively late development in observing and defining human communication and why it remained in the shadow of the judicial and deliberative branches, becoming, as Stanley Stowers notes, a type of catch-all for various rhetorical practices like the eulogy, victory celebrations and weddings, and consolations (51).

When the Romans adopted Greek intellect and education, Greek sophists, and later Roman instructors and sophists, taught the codified principles, structure, and diction that the Greeks had observed and defined. Romans re-appropriated rhetoric into their more elitist system of politics, society, and education in which the wealthy and skilled were learned and well trained in the arts from combat to math to rhetoric, and where the well trained were the rulers. While many Roman intellectuals like Cassius Longinus, Tacitus, Petronius, Plutarch, Pliny the elder, and Quintilian noted how easily style and ornamentation could corrupt content and mislead audiences, thereby distrusting rhetoric's uses, there were many Roman leaders such as Philostratus, Lucian, and Polemon of Laodicea who delighted in these embellishments to bend the audience to their feeling and to display their own learning and skill.

This Roman conflict emphasized the reoccurring tension between philosophers who sought truth and facts above all and rhetoricians who studied how to use words for their own purposes and to their advantage. This conflict was exacerbated by rising Christian faith, which, as B.B. Price observes, quickly came to permeate medieval thinking (6), where, according to John Godfrey, of all the Germanic peoples, the English were the most easily and rapidly converted (65). Christian communication condemned selfish, earthly, transitory pursuits in favor of God focused activities like prayer, praise, and scriptural study that lead to eternal reward. Christianity absorbed the use of didactic reasoning and stasis theory within philosophy along with the epideictic structure and amplification of rhetoric, and both arts existed to some extent within medie-



val education. Even during the “darkest part of the medieval period,” the Catholic Church maintained schools for educating priests, offering degrees in medicine, law, and theology where “philosophy thrived within the faculty of theology” (Kaye 3). These schools, in turn, lead to modern university systems established loosely upon the art of Greek philosophy. The Carolingian education reform also “reinforced the church’s monopoly on learning” where literacy was “a preserve of clergy and monks” and where education was based upon the liberal arts, the mastery and analysis of authoritative texts, and the correct use of grammar (Lynch 96). As Peter Hunter Blair details, monastic schools were familiar with the classically derived seven liberal arts, the medieval trivium – grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, and the more advanced quadrivium – arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (242). Christian intellectuals were familiar with the rhetoric of antiquity, and they could not help but preserve snippets of arrangement, amplification, repetition, and analogy for example within the early medieval period, combining it with Christian philosophy. It was this Christian rhetoric, even evidenced in scripture, with epideictic rhetoric at its core, that came to define early medieval rhetoric, although Christian and medieval writers preferred the clarity of philosophy and the emphasis upon truth to the emphasis upon skill and verbal adornment.

The fall of the Roman Empire and the pre and early medieval period saw a “weakening of faith in and a loss of hope in the human intellect” (Duhamel 47), which is why Christian philosophy was so appealing. Yet, Hellenistic, pagan rhetoric fulfilled “basic religious impulses” (Stark 94) that included consideration of audiences, invention, and arrangement. For the early medieval period, it was the *ars dictaminis* that dominated the scribal habits of the Anglo-Saxons, afforded medieval England examples of both grammar and rhetoric (Murphy and Camargo “The Middle” 59), and was the “predominate practice of composition,” even expressed through Bede’s account

of *Caedmon's Hymn* where Caedmon was too shy to participate in the composing rounds in the “*meduheall*” and ran away as the “harp approached him” (Jeffrey 7).

Monastic rhetoric primarily practiced “a craft of composition,” relying upon invention – the formulation of ideas – and arrangement – the organization of each part (Carruthers 3) to most effectively reach the audience and exhort each individual to moral living. For the preacher, “the problems of *inventio* were partially simplified, since his main goal was usually instruction in the facts, meaning and morality of the Bible” (Campbell 179). With the rhetorical focus on content, Christians believed God would supply the words and persuade the audience of the truth, so all that was left to accomplish through human words was to present the information, the consequences, and the choice.

Christianity condemned pagan practices for their lack of true understanding and for their reliance upon and worship of false gods, and this included the manipulative adornments of rhetoric. However, as the Christian religion itself displayed in its validation of certain teachings, beliefs, and actions and condemnation of the immorality and disbelief of the past, the admiration and condemnation of human judgment is a naturally occurring impulse that lies at the heart of human communication. For this reason, and also because, as Philip Satterhwaite observes, early Christian figures and patristic fathers like Ambrose, Gregory the Great, Basil, Cassian, Jerome, and St. Augustine were classically trained in Latin rhetoric (671), Christianity could not help but rely upon epideictic rhetoric for its own purposes in spreading the gospel and exhorting individuals and societies to moral, virtuous behavior.

Although early Christian authors condemned pagan religion, idolatry, and pagan literature, they were educated with these same rhetorical, literary, and artistic standards and “knew no other canons to follow when they tried for literary excellence. Therefore they could not but en-

deavor to give their Christian writings the excellences which had distinguished the antique pagan literature and art” (Taylor 7). However, the aim of Christian writing was not to defend or prove, and Christians cared more for the simple truth of the message than for flowery eloquence. Because epideictic tends to “simplify rather than complicate the values it treats, to pass over questions that might divide in favor of assumptions about good and bad around which people can unite” (Kallendorf 18), it was the perfect tool for Christian writing, and a way to explain and simplify the complexities of the age.

In fact, it did not matter that Germanic culture was far different from Greco-Roman traditions and had not defined and codified rhetoric as the Greeks and Romans had because the same desire to praise and blame, to prove oneself, and to fight against dishonorable, shameful behavior and thought (Burgess 94) is evidenced within Germanic and Anglo-Saxon writing and communication. This is particularly demonstrated in Germanic inspired Anglo-Saxon war poems that “embrace passages that are almost obtrusively religious” by displaying the same diction, style, and temperament (Snell 117). As with the Germanic warlike customs with its *comitatus* and *wergild*, religious leaders and monks were often viewed as an “elite force fighting the spiritual battles of others. And they were respected as warriors, as spiritual warriors, in a fighting age” (Stafford 19).

The Germanic tradition itself is full of oral poetic conventions, and such anonymously written poetry during the tenth century as *Beowulf*, *Judith*, *Andreas*, “The Wanderer,” “The Seafarer,” “The Battle of Brunanburh,” “The Battle of Maldon,” and “Liberation of the Five Bouroughs” are all profoundly communal and epideictic in their contexts, “questioning the values and destiny of a community or of an individual alienated from it” (Jeffrey 8). In addition, *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* also contain Christian themes with their reflection on the hard-

ship of life where the world is “a kind of voluntary exile through which one seeks to return to his true or heavenly homeland by eschewing transitory, worldly values” (McC Gatch 62).

A blend of epideictic and judicial rhetoric, along with Cicero’s ideas on “stasis theory” (May 149) (Barney 70), for example can be seen in *Beowulf* in Unferth’s questioning of Beowulf’s motives and Beowulf’s swimming match with Brecca (Chickering 1.506-528). In essence, Beowulf’s character is on trial and appears to be tested through four of the aspects of oration – prologue, narration, argumentation, and epilogue – that dictate and shape the structure and scope of Beowulf’s rhetorical reply. Because Beowulf must defend his past deeds (1.529-606b), his verbal defense imitates classical judicial oratory, but, because both Beowulf and Unferth evaluate Beowulf’s past and present actions through the lens of praise and blame and because this verbal sparring is a form of ceremony and entertainment, the poem ultimately hinges upon epideictic rhetoric (May 28). This same structure, or stasis theory as Cicero refers to it, is evident in Old English homilies that continue this rhetorical tradition. Similarly, *Beowulf* includes eschatological allusions throughout, but particularly in the sermon given by Hrothgar where Beowulf is exhorted by “the old king to use well the gifts of providence as long as he lives so that he may win a favorable judgment” (McC Gatch 63).

The Greco-Roman tradition merely gave humanity the much needed reflection and terminology to express, consider, and further adapt the process of communication. At the core, epideictic is the moderate, basic path for rhetoric, while the judicial and deliberative branches and the philosophic, poetic, technical, and sophistic paths are all offshoots and extreme concentrations of that middle path. As Paul Zumthor notes, the constant unrest that permeated England, and all of Europe, during the medieval period lead to a search for balance and stability, found within Christian ideals (29), that forced the rhetorical gaze to once again return to the organic,

middle path of epideictic, although this time, thanks to Christianity, epideictic was infused with profound spiritual significance.

With the Christian notion of humanity's purpose in life – to live for God and lead others to Christ – epideictic amplification, structure, and embellishment were once again aligned with philosophic rhetoric, a feat that had been attempted and discussed for quite some time beginning with the Greek culture that gave rise to the rhetorical art and through philosophers such as Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle. While early medieval writers may not have specifically known rhetorical terminology or consciously observed the Greco-Roman tradition, they imitated the religious writings and even Biblical passages that were written at a time of great rhetorical development and therefore incorporated rhetorical devices and structures that adhered to Greco-Roman development.

It was through the Roman domination of England and, as R.R. Bolgar observes, the later Christian proselytization by Roman and Irish missionaries (80) that Greco-Roman rhetorical fragments were introduced, preserved, and adapted within medieval England. Although any prescriptive, technical documents that discuss and reflect the art of rhetoric are sparse within the medieval period, particularly within the Old English period, and limited to Donatus, Cassiodorus, Capella, Bede, Isidore, Alcuin, St. Augustine, even Boethius (Chambers 49), and later figures like Rabanus Maurus, Guibert of Nogent, and Alain de Lille, classical rhetorical structures are evident in medieval writings themselves and supply the answers to what a medieval rhetoric entails.

The most widely cited evidence to support the theory that Latin rhetoric was known in England comes from the assumption that, as a distinguished historian and theologian, Bede's writing were well known, particularly his discussion of rhetorical schemes and tropes in his sev-

enth century *De schematibus et tropis*, based on Donatus' *Ars maior* (Steen 12), although these figures of speech come directly from the *Ad Herennium* and from Cicero. However, it is difficult to prove that "the tradition of the rhetorical theory of Roman antiquity was studied or that it was even known directly in England before the Norman Conquest" (Knappe 1-2).

If the focus is strictly upon medieval manuals, the medieval period did not leave a "concise hermeneutic"; however, to "fully come to terms with how authors and audiences understood meaning as it was made manifest in texts" is to "pay attention to what is not written" (Trojan 236) and to analyze early medieval writing for rhetorical practices. Even with uncovering epideictic rhetorical strategies demonstrated within Anglo-Saxon and medieval texts, this does not indicate that the classical tradition "was known in England" (Knappe 17), although the bottom line is that the classical tradition didn't need to be studied, observed, or specifically practiced within medieval England. It is enough to understand the art of rhetoric as a living tradition that attempts to codify human behavior and therefore changes with every age, and to find these changes within the content of medieval and Christian writing.

Nevertheless, Cicero was never "lost sight of although the lamp of learning did not always burn brightly. In the poor schools, even those of the Church for technical training in theology, Cicero had a part. During the Middle Ages he shared with Aristotle a sad eminence in the dialectical programmes of the time" (Slaughter 121). While Cicero and other classical rhetorical figures were not specifically emulated or studied during the majority of the medieval period, their ideas formed the backdrop for social development and thought as they came to be encoded in Christian writings of the period, and, as a result, Ciceronian ideals never vanished. Helmut Gneuss' *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* notes that Cicero's *Aratea*, "though incomplete" was widely known during the eleventh century (45), that there is evidence his *De Inventione* was

known in the second quarter of the eleventh century (54), that his *Philippicae* was read in the second quarter of the tenth century (139), and that his *Somnium Scipionis* and *Topica* were known in the first quarter of the ninth century (106).

It is unfortunate that the “rhetorical works of such Greek writers as Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle had virtually no influence in the medieval West,” although the ideals of these Greek philosophers and rhetoricians were adopted into Roman rhetoric, which “had great direct and indirect influence” on the medieval period in that Cicero’s *De inventione* and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* were “the books most influential in the Middle Ages,” and Aristotle’s “*Topica* influenced Boethius and others interested in the relation of rhetoric and dialectic” (Murphy *Latin* 1). While traces of Roman rhetorical knowledge are found throughout medieval works, from the didactic- rhetorical tension in *The Owl and the Nightingale* to specific references to Tullius or Cicero in John Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*, these classical connections are often scattered and incomplete.

For early medieval intellectuals and writers, the goal of communication was to explain and justify earthly events through a Christian worldview and exhort every individual to a higher standard of living to ensure humanity’s salvation. For Christians, the greatest virtue was to deny the flesh, take up the cross, and follow God. Significantly, the epideictic speaker’s “concern is virtue and vice; the one he praises, the other he censures. It is necessary, therefore, to inquire into the various forms which virtue takes – justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, wisdom; and to ask which are the greatest virtues” (Roberts 28). Christianity enhanced and further defined epideictic rhetoric, lending it an eternal importance. Besides praising salvation, Christians continually extolled virtues like love, moderation, humility, charity, mercy, and obedience, as indicated in medieval homilies and religious

writings from Alfred, Ælfric, and Wulfstan. As a result, the epideictic rhetorical tradition defined by the Greeks and furthered by the Romans became the underpinning of medieval writing that bridged the gap between the medieval world and that of ancient rhetorical study. Not only did epideictic bridge this gap, but its medieval uses created a niche for rhetoric that would later develop more fully within the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods with *belles lettres*, literary criticism, and writing based upon good taste.

Subsequently, early medieval rhetoric is not found in technical rhetoric, it is not found in sophistic rhetoric, and it is not found in philosophic rhetoric alone. Rather, early medieval rhetoric blended the philosophic focus upon content and truth with the sophistic, epideictic educative exercises of the declamations and progymnasmata, demonstrated in the chreia, commonplace, vituperation, and the encomium. For example, Roman progymnasmata exercises and declamation themes “were woven into the *Gesta Romanorum*, the tales so popular in the Middle Ages” (Winterbottom 70) that included dialectic and the canons of invention and arrangement, written for the moral purpose of exhorting preachers. Again, while Roman progymnasmata exercises were not widely known or practiced throughout the medieval period and, as Janie Steen observes, there is no direct evidence that the progymnasmata were ever taught in the monasteries of Anglo-Saxon England (9), these structures are present within a variety of religious writings that were preserved and emulated throughout the period. A Christian *paideia* or brotherhood of learning and language subsumed the Roman one and was created through “reading texts and discerning their appropriate application” (Young 241) and through emphasizing both philosophic content and epideictic purposes.

Resultantly, in as much as the encomium and vituperation exercises, along with the chreia and commonplace, were natural extensions of human thought and judgment and were



fragmented within scripture and early Christian writing, they formed the basis for early medieval rhetoric. This is demonstrated in such Old English literature as Alfred's translations of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*, Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* and *Lives of Saints*, Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, in the anonymously written homilies found in such collections as the Vercelli and Blickling homilies, and in various other anonymously written homilies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that imitate these epideictic structures in the reliance upon encomium and vituperation structures that discuss origins, upbringing through learning and advancement, qualities and deeds, favorable comparisons or unfavorable contrasts, and an epilogue full of exhortation or prayer. The chreia's distinctive reliance upon an anecdotal expression and comparisons and contrasts along with the commonplace's more general discussion of a vice or virtue are also intermingled with the more popular encomium of praise and vituperation of blame, creating an early medieval rhetoric that relied upon a variety of epideictic techniques to discuss the dual nature of words, actions, and life.

Each of these representatives of Old English and medieval culture evidence epideictic structure and the accompanying usage of amplification; figures of diction that compared, repeated, reduplicated, and redefined; and embellishments in the attempt to instruct the audience, capture their emotions, elevate their thought, and motivate them to moral, redemptive action. As a tool of invention, amplification relies upon rephrasing and repetition, going into details, comparisons, apostrophe, digression or comparisons, and restatements to enhance a work's "teaching and to delight the audience by varying the expression" (Mack 117). Furthermore, Cicero's *De oratore* states that nothing is better suited for "building up and amplifying a speech" than the ability to stir the audience's emotions and praising and blaming (Wisse 3.104-106). Each of these strategies is seen throughout the anonymously written homilies and within Alfred, Ælfric, and

Wulfstan's writings where the epideictic underpinning leads to praise and blame of moral values and judging the speaker or writer's ability to invest their topic with "dignity and nobility" (Kaplan 77).

Bede would not have given "such paramount importance to identifying and classifying what he calls the 'embellishment' of the Bible," if he thought of textual adornment and amplification as "superficial and trivial" (Carruthers 124). Instead, Bede believed, as did Augustine, that rhetorical embellishment and amplification added texture and invited the audience to engage with the text because tropes functioned like "the breads of Scripture. The more they need 'chewing,' the more difficult they are, the richer their nourishment" (124). Just like the rhetoricians of old from Homer and Vergil in Greek society to Cicero and Quintilian in Rome, medieval preachers and clergy had the task of persuading their audiences, although it was a persuasion to repentance, to salvation, and to moral thought and action that was ultimately achieved through God's supernatural intervention.

In relying upon figures of diction, early medieval rhetoric was able to express ideas and feelings uncommon to the human experience, to capture the meaning or essence of an entity or idea by creating a comparison or metaphor that would, as Cicero discussed, clarify the resemblance between "the thing and the thing we evoke by means of the metaphorical word" (Wisse 3.155-156), so that what was not known could become known to the human mind and so that spiritual truths could be conveyed. Rhetorical and poetic figures were "taught as an aid to scriptural exegesis" and "Greek rhetorical terms (often applied loosely, and sometimes corrupted in transmission)" were "enlisted to explain difficult expressions such as epanaphora, climax, metaphor, and hyperbole (Steen 11, 12). Furthermore, almost "every figure of speech and rhetorical device of composition" is illustrated in medieval sermons, treatises, and numerous letters (Ken-

ned by *Classical* 143) to the effect that these ancient rhetorical principles amplified the mystical and noble qualities of medieval messages, directing their logic and persuasion at the soul.

Early medieval rhetoric functioned as a conduit for divine communication with man and for man's communication with divinity and relied upon rhetorical devices and figures of speech to create this channel. As Aristotle, and later the counselor, inspirer, and the "master without rival" Saint Augustine (Marrou 156), most famously stated, the task of an orator is to instruct, win, and move, and early medieval religious leaders were careful to follow all three missives, as Christian leaders also do today. For early medieval orators, it was enough to present the information, recall past examples, and exhort the audience to more stringent moral behavior in their present life. In this way, early medieval rhetoric used words to point to God, awaken godlike qualities of the soul, and continually focus society's gaze upon eternity.

In addition, early medieval scholarship was a work of preservation and remembrance, of safeguarding the valued truths of the past, relying upon them to extol present morality, and transmitting these passages, stories, saints' lives, and sources into future advancements. Monastic education was centered on interpreting the Bible and patristic writings and not specifically on molding polished public speakers (Steen 9). While early medieval writing may not have excelled in creating unique rhetorical handbooks or intellectual discoveries, it did excel in imitating, analyzing, and interpreting the communication of others, even if this rhetoric was an unintentional imitation of the rhetoric found within Biblical passages. Without the Church, there would be little to no literature from this period because "all the manuscripts which have survived were copied in monastic and cathedral scriptoria," primarily by scholars of the Benedictine reform, that were kept and used in monastic schools and libraries (Cameron 35).

Through western monasticism, “the craft of rhetoric became primarily focused not on tasks of public persuasion but on tasks of what is essentially literary invention. It is not true to say (or imply), as histories of the subject have done, that the monks killed off rhetoric. They re-directed it to forming citizens of the City of God” (Brown *A Syntax* 11). This constant appeal to authority, particularly to God through prayer and praise, created a rhetoric of humility and hope where human decisions and actions were imbued with a creative power and were exhorted to reject fleeting earthly preoccupation that only lead to suffering and unhappiness in favor of spiritual pursuits that lead to membership in a heavenly city with eternal happiness.

The present, simple, daily actions and thoughts of each individual became the focus, not only for bettering the individuals themselves, but for bettering and moralizing the English society. Early medieval rhetoric is a rhetoric of hope – hope in the brotherhood of man, hope in religion, and hope for a more blissful tomorrow. Every human wants to be “recognized, to be praised, to be awarded and rewarded, to be made to feel special” (Ochs 6), and epideictic rhetoric offered this reprieve to early medieval citizens who too often felt unimportant in the disorder and harsh realities of their society.

While sophists viewed truth as unknowable and the use of language and rhetoric as a means of creating truth and knowledge (Gill 46), Christians believed that God alone was the creator of truth and that to speak with certainty, persuasion, and knowledge was to awaken moral truths created by God and placed within the soul. In this way, to use rhetoric was not to create or discover truth, although truth and morality were the focus, but Christians used words to release truth and a truth in action where moral thoughts created moral deeds. While classical rhetoric aimed at persuading men’s minds to achieve desired thoughts and actions, early medieval rheto-

ric focused on cleansing the soul and revealing the truths that already existed and were waiting to be acknowledged.

Thus, the “story of rhetoric from the fall of Rome to the end of the Dark Ages is a long one filled with misunderstandings,” where medieval rhetoric’s “journey begins with Augustine who, in retrieving rhetorical theory from such pagans as Cicero and Plato, synthesized it for use in a ‘higher purpose.’ That purpose was the conversion of souls to Christianity, as opposed to Cicero’s use of rhetoric to build civic virtue” (Craig 184). Instead of teaching rhetoric to instill virtue, early medieval educators taught virtue first and believed eloquence would follow. Augustine’s *City of God*, for example, rejects Cicero’s notions that virtue is fostered by politics and rhetoric, and St. Augustine instead believed that virtue is found in Christ, who “governs the city of God as the just society” and that “Christian rulers will find in Christ the supreme model of civic virtue and eloquence” (Dodaro 182).

Subsequently, oratory, the spoken practice and reliance upon the artistic devices of rhetoric, and the rhetorical art and study, were both classical creations imprinted onto the brotherhood of Christianity, creating an early medieval rhetoric that was both pragmatic and inspired, a rhetoric that at once had no set rules yet had established boundaries where content and contemplation were more highly regarded than strategy, persuasion, and human intellect. Unlike Greek and Roman notions of the communal and highest good benefiting the majority, Christian rhetoric was tailored to the needs of each individual, designed to influence even the most unlearned, and was therefore very dependent upon rhetorical figures and tropes that appealed to the interests of a varied audience. For early medieval rhetoric, the goal was to influence one in order to influence the many, where personal morality took priority over social morality because it was based upon a personal relationship with God, ultimately resulting in greater social virtue and change. Human

study and the search for knowledge were certainly practiced and praised, and Christians were exhorted to study scripture and the revealed truths and actions of the past, but Christian eloquence came not from a book, not from human study, and not from the observation of human communicative behavior, but from divine stimulation and revelation that moved each individual most effectively in the quest for godly pursuits and eternal life in heaven.

Though conceptions of medieval rhetoric have progressed, much remains to be done in analyzing early medieval homilies and placing early medieval rhetoric's qualities into a "sharper outline." What is certain is that early medieval rhetoric relied upon fragmented rhetorical exercises and figures of diction in the emphasis upon content and Christian moral judgments. These judgments rest upon an epideictic underpinning, though these epideictic concerns were transfigured so that the words and their arrangement became external signs of the soul's condition. As such, audience members themselves were encouraged to engage in their own epideictic forms of communication, centered upon Christian truths, and to embrace and instruct, unite and win, and inspire and move all of humanity toward moral ideals.

Gone was the humanistic basis of Greek rhetoric, gone were the hierarchical and elitist principles of Roman rhetoric, and gone were the express concerns for ornament and style. What was left was a ceremonial rhetoric of the common man devoted to the instruction of humanity, an instruction founded upon Christian enlightenment that blended classical praise of virtue and censure of vice, a unique early medieval worldview wrapped in classical trappings. Today rhetoric is in the hands of everyone, is the foundation for Western education, and is the socio-political system that holds communities together. Any individual, at any time, can be inspired to use their words to awaken others' emotions and change the world, and this is the legacy of early medieval rhetoric.

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