Holy Body, Holy Place: The Veneration of St. Swithun from the Old Minster to Winchester Cathedral

Abigail G. Robertson

University of New Mexico - Main Campus

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/engl_etds

Part of the Literature in English, British Isles Commons

Recommended Citation

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Language and Literature ETds by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.
Abigail G. Robertson

Candidate

English

Department

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

Jonathan Davis-Secord, Chairperson

Timothy Graham

Anita Obermeier

Justine Andrews
HOLY BODY, HOLY PLACE:
THE VENERATION OF ST. SWITHUN, FROM THE OLD MINSTER TO WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

BY

ABIGAIL G. ROBERTSON

B.A., English, The Ohio State University, 2012
M.A., English, Bowling Green State University, 2014

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

English

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
December 2018
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation first and foremost to my parents, Dale and Sarah, the light of my life. In spite of the wealth of words on these pages, I will never be able to put together the right ones that reflect how incredibly lucky I feel to call you dad and mom, pop and ma, abba and ima. Thank you for raising me in a world full of stories. Everything I accomplish is because of you and for you.

To my friends Kali, Janine, Maggie, Kelly, Bobbi, Katie, Cait, Amie, Jenna, Sally, Sarah, JJ, Kevin, and Dalicia, thank you for your never-ending support and putting up with me through the thick of it.

To Thomas, my partner and biggest cheerleader, thank you for enduring two straight years of nothing but talk about St. Swithun. Your patience and love are more incredible than any miracle in this dissertation.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to begin my acknowledgements by saying that I am all but certain that I will leave people out—not because they were not an important part of the dissertation process but because I am fortunate to have had countless people supporting me and my work these last four years. It seems only right to open with an apology that is something of a humblebrag because I am incredibly fortunate to have been in a program and a field full of so many helpful role models and colleagues.

First and foremost, I give a massive thank you to my dissertation director, Jon Davis-Secord, for pulling me into his office one afternoon in the spring of 2015 to ask “have you ever heard of St. Swithun?” If it were not for that question, I would have never been introduced to the topic of this dissertation nor would I have been lucky enough to have (once again) fallen in love with hagiography. Listening to hours of self-deprecation, (mostly) incoherent rambling, and the occasional good idea, Jon never wavered in his support of my project and was a constant champion of my vision for how I wanted to tackle the enigma that is Swithun.

I find it hard to put into words how fundamentally important my committee was throughout this project. Anita Obermeier is the closest thing I have ever met to a living, breathing superhero and a model for the kind of scholar I hope to be one day. Thank you for allowing me to colonize the couch in your office over the last four years and serving as an example of the kind of dynamic, resolute leadership that the humanities needs and deserves. Thank you for your mentorship, friendship, and time.
I am thankful beyond words for the opportunity to have worked with Timothy Graham, who taught me that I am capable of more than I think I am and challenged me to do better every time I walked into his office or classroom. I cannot explain how much your guidance and support has meant to me; thank you.

Finally, I am fortunate to have worked with Justine Andrews, whose dynamic teaching and passion for medieval art inspired my interest in relics and reliquaries. Thank you, Justine, for introducing me to a topic that inspired so much of this dissertation—I count myself fortunate to have worked with you these last two years.

A great number of departments, offices, and organizations at the University of New Mexico have supported me throughout this process. Thank you to the Office of Graduate Studies for helping me attend conferences across the US and Europe, the Institute for Medieval Studies for bringing incredible medievalists to Albuquerque, and the Graduate and Professional Student Association for giving me the opportunity to lead and advocate on behalf of an institution I love. Joann Comerford, Sarah Davis-Secord, Nasha Torrez, Trajuan Briggs, Sally Barker, and Gregor Hamilton: thank you for your support. Along with this, the wonderful staff at Little Bear as well as Richard Pearce at Satellite Coffee—thanks for being a second office space during the home stretch.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the scholars outside of UNM who have supported me and my work. Elaine Treharne, thank you for cheering me on throughout this project and helping me spread the word about my research—this field is better because of your voice. Stewart Brookes, Damian Fleming, Dot Porter, and Chris Riedel: thank you for making #medievaltwitter my academic home away from home and helping me laugh through the tough times. JJ Gallagher, Trisha O’Connor, Lynneth
Miller, Clint Morrison, Courtney Barajas, Jon Quick, Emma Cole, Margie Housley, Erik Wade, Carla Maria Thomas, and Jennie England: thank you for your friendship and support, proof that the future of this field will be built upon kindness. Johanna Green, Dana Oswald, Christine Voth, and Christine Kozikowski, thank you for making Leeds feel like medievalist homecoming and, coincidentally, my favorite time of year. Martin Foys, Lisa Fagan Davis, Andrew Prescott, Ben Albritton, Bill Endres, Peter Stokes, and (once again) Johanna Green: thank you for pushing the digital humanities forward with your thoughtfulness and acumen and thank you for inviting me to be part of the ride.

Thank you to Justin Vernon for providing me with a writing soundtrack that made the difficult moments bearable.

Finally, I am forever indebted to the Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Foundation for providing me with the time and resources to write on something I have truly come to love. Thank you for believing in my research and giving me the means to do it full time. At a time when the humanities are in crisis, providing funding for graduate research is as important as ever; I am well aware of how incredibly fortunate I am to have been a Bilinski fellow.
HOLY BODY, HOLY PLACE: 
THE VENERATION OF ST. SWITHUN, FROM THE OLD MINSTER TO 
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL 

by 
Abigail G. Robertson 
B.A., English, The Ohio State University, 2012 
M.A., English, Bowling Green State University, 2014 
Ph.D., English, University of New Mexico, 2018 

ABSTRACT 

By considering the way that medieval people would have responded to the hagiography, relics, and shrine of St. Swithun based on their experience as readers and pilgrims, this project will survey the rationale behind the veneration of a saint whose life was largely unknown yet who was ardently beloved and honored in death. That there is not any book-length scholarship dedicated to St. Swithun or his cult aside from Lapidge’s edition, *The Cult of St. Swithun*, further demonstrates the way that this project will fill a gap in scholarship about the history and sociocultural relevance of this still-famous saint. My dissertation paints a picture of how St. Swithun’s afterlife affected the ecclesiastical communities at Winchester and how the cult of the saint developed and changed in Winchester and beyond through the end of the medieval period. By considering this, I argue that the architectural features of the original Saxon cathedral, the Old Minster
(particularly after the cathedral was rebuilt in the late-eleventh century), and eventually the Norman Winchester Cathedral compelled visitors to the saint’s shrine to reenact Swithun’s *translatio* and thus fundamentally connected Winchester as a *locus* to Swithun’s *virtus* in an experiential way; as a result, pilgrimage to Winchester was a necessary component for any medieval person who aspired to venerate Swithun.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF PLATES.................................................................................................................. xi

LIST OF FIGURES................................................................................................................ xiii

LIST OF TABLES.................................................................................................................. xiv

ABBREVIATIONS.................................................................................................................. xv

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION............................................................................................... 1

  Historical Context and Sources .................................................................................. 21
  Commemoration in England and on the Continent .............................................. 22
  Swithun’s Hagiographers, Manuscripts, and their Hagiography.............. 26
  Burial and Building................................................................................................. 27
  Architecture and Enshrinement ....................................................................... 28
  Future Projects....................................................................................................... 30

CHAPTER 2: THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION OF THE
CULT OF SAINT SWITHUN................................................................................................. 32

  The Relationship of the Manuscripts of Lantred’s Translatio .......... 37
  Theorizing a New Stemma Codicum ............................................................... 42
  Textual Evidence for a Continental Recension ....................................... 50

CHAPTER 3: THE ANGLO-SAXON HAGIOGRAPHY OF THE CULT OF
SAINT SWITHUN............................................................................................................... 67

  The Structure of the Opus Geminatum for Swithun ......................... 72
  Lantred of Fleury’s Translatio et Miracula S. Swithuni ..................... 78
  Conclusion.......................................................................................................... 101
CHAPTER 4: BODIES AND BUILDINGS: HOLINESS AND CONSTRUCTION

IN THE OLD MINSTER.................................................................103

Methodology for Statistical Analysis of Body and Burial Words....108

The Pre-Translation Body .........................................................111

The Post-Translation Body in Lantfred’s Text.............................122

The Post-Translation Body in Wulfstan’s Text............................124

Use of Ossa .............................................................................127

Wulfstan’s Lone Use of Soma .....................................................131

Comparing Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s Use of

Body and Burial Words..............................................................133

Wulfstan, Construction, and the Legacy of the Cult..................137

CHAPTER 5: ENSHRINEMENT AND VENERATION: THE SHRINES,
RELIQUARIES, AND RELICS OF THE CULT OF SAINT SWITHUN

.................................................................................................151

The Original Shrine Spaces and Objects of the Old Minster ........165

The First Old Minster Shrine.......................................................168

The Devotional Artifacts from the Anglo-Saxon Period .............171

King Edgar’s Reliquary for St. Swithun.................................171

The Reliquary Object .................................................................177

The Material Culture of Winchester Cathedral .......................184

The Morley Library Wall Painting.............................................184

The Relic of St. Swithun’s Head...............................................192
The Old Minster and Winchester Cathedral as Spiritual Loci...........196

CHAPTER 6: FUTURE WORK ..........................................................213

APPENDICES ...................................................................................243

APPENDIX A: PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION OF
THE OLD MINSTER...........................................................................244

APPENDIX B: BODY AND BURIAL WORD DATA .........................246

APPENDIX C: DIGITAL PORTFOLIO .............................................248

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................................249
LIST OF PLATES

Plate I. Lantfred’s name as it appears in R and N ........................................... 55
Plate II. Proper names in majuscule in R and N ................................................. 63
Plate III. Martin Biddle’s renderings of Swithun’s original
    grave site in the Old Minster churchyard .............................................. 116
Plate IV. Portrait of Swithun in The Benedictional of St. Æthelwold ............. 158
Plate V. Martin Biddle’s rendering of the Old Minster
    after its final stage of construction ......................................................... 170
Plate VI. Photograph of the bookcase in front of the wall painting in Morley Library
                                                                                           .......................................................... 186
Plate VII. Renderings of the location of the wall painting in Morley Library
                                                                                           ............................................................................. 187
Plate VIII. Photograph of the Head Relic of St. Swithun ............................. 194
Plate IX. Pilgrims crawling into King Edward’s tomb shrine ...................... 200
Plate X. Pilgrims kneeling before the finished shrine of King Edward ........ 202
Plate XI. London, British Library, Royal 15 C. vii, f. 2r .............................. 218
Plate XII. London, British Library, Cotton Nero E. I, part 1, f. 35r .......... 219
Plate XIII. Map of Winchester ........................................................................ 220
Plate XIV. Comparison of the Old Minster and Winchester Cathedral ....... 221
Plate XV. Diagram of the Old Minster in final form .................................... 222
Plate XVI. Artistic Rendering of the Old Minster ......................................... 223
Plate XVII. Exterior of Winchester Cathedral ............................................. 224
Plate XVIII. North wall of Winchester Cathedral ....................................... 225
Plate XIV. The Outer Close of Winchester Cathedral,
the brick outline of Old Minster foundation.......................................226

Plate XX. The north transept entrance to Winchester Cathedral..............227

Plate XXI. Wall painting in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre
in Winchester Cathedral..............................................................................228

Plate XXII. Stone steps along the pilgrimage route
through Winchester Cathedral.....................................................................229

Plate XXIII. Thirteenth-century tiles on the floor
of Winchester Cathedral..............................................................................230

Plate XXIV. Anglo-Saxon columns in Winchester Cathedral....................231

Plate XXV. Chantry of Stephen Gardiner..................................................232

Plate XXVI. Entrance to the Holy Hole in Winchester Cathedral.............233

Plate XXVII. Holy Hole in Winchester Cathedral......................................234

Plate XXVIII. The interior of the Holy Hole in Winchester Cathedral........235

Plate XXIX. The Great Screen in Winchester Cathedral..........................236

Plate XXX. Feretory column in Winchester Cathedral..............................237

Plate XXXI. Feretory base in Winchester Cathedral..................................238

Plate XXXII. Stonework bishop in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral......239

Plate XXXIII. Stonework screen in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral......240

Plate XXXIV. Stone burial casket in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral.....241

Plate XXXV. Stone burial caskets excavated at St. Mary’s Abbey in Winchester
......................................................................................................................242

Plate XXXVI. Front of the modern shrine for
St. Swithun in Winchester Cathedral.........................................................243

Plate XXXVII. Modern Shrine for St. Swithun in Winchester Cathedral...............................................................244
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Lapidge’s Stemma for Lantfred’s Manuscripts .........................40

Figure 2. Proposed Stemma I for Lantfred’s Manuscripts ..........................47

Figure 3. Proposed Stemma II for Lantfred’s Manuscripts ..........................49

Figure 4. Proposed Stemma III for Lantfred’s Manuscripts .......................49

Figure 5. Miracle Episodes in Lantfred’s Translatio .................................75

Figure 6. Length of Description of Events in Lantfred ................................77

Figure 7. Recalibrated Length of Description of Events in Lantfred ............78

Figure 8. Frequency of Body and Burial Words Before and

After Swithun’s Translation in Wulfstan’s Text .................................124

Figure 9. Frequency of Body and Burial Words Before and

After Translation in Lantfred .................................................................135
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Omissions and Emendations Between Manuscripts R, N, and J ........................................64
ABBREVIATIONS

DOMLBS: The Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources

E: Cambridge University Library MS Ee.3.59

J: Rouen, Bibliothèque Jacques Villon 1385

N: London, British Library, Cotton Nero E. i, part 1

Narratio: Wulfstan’s Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno

R: London, British Library, Royal 15 C. vii

T: London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. xv

Translatio: Lantfred’s Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni

V: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 566

Y: London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. xiv
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To understand the development of the cult of St. Swithun in Winchester (d. 2 July 863) and how its popularity grew beyond the borders of Wessex to other kingdoms in England and then, ultimately, to the Continent, we must think about the elements that were kindling to the initial spark of veneration for the saint. In a way, this discussion is not so much about the miraculous events that took place after Swithun’s death as they were recorded by his hagiographers, Lantfred of Fleury (writing in early 970s) and Wulfstan of Winchester (born c. 960, writing in the 990s), as it is about the methods by which the materials that promoted veneration worked to affirm the venerators. That is to say, the formation and promulgation of the cult of St. Swithun was made possible by a cyclical relationship between community and construction, whereby the structure of the hagiographical narrative was built upon a foundation that cast the locals who lived and prayed a stone’s throw from a churchyard as the primary players in the story of a former bishop’s elevation to sainthood. This concept of construction and building is simultaneously rhetorical and literal. On one hand, we can imagine each of the *miracula* detailed by Swithun’s hagiographers as metaphorical bricks laid upon one another, each supporting and affirming the next; on the other, we can look at the actual archeological and artistic evidence of what was physically constructed in Winchester to encourage and support pilgrimage to visit the saint. With this in mind, we can see that the act of construction is essential to the veneration of St. Swithun. The cult itself was built from events that took place after the saint’s life, made manifest by writers within that
community. These events that inspired this cult of veneration thus became a catalyst for building churches and shrines for visitors to the community.

Ultimately, these efforts worked together to connect Swithun with Winchester so that the holy body of the Old Minster’s former bishop was tied to the place where he was laid to rest. From 660 to 1093, the Old Minster was the seat of the Anglo-Saxon diocese for Winchester, a city that was, in the words of Barbara Yorke, “a showcase for the [Benedictine] reformers’ ideals”¹ and home to a shrine for its former bishop, Swithun, who was translated into the cathedral in 971. Thanks to the translation of Swithun’s remains and the account of the miracles that followed as recorded by his first hagiographer, Lantfred, in his Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni (written between 971-3), the Old Minster became a focal point for veneration of the saint and drew a “substantial numbers of pilgrims … to the Old Minster.”² This would have pleased Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester from 963–984, widely considered one of most important monastic reformers of the tenth century; according to Robert Deshman, Æthelwold saw the miracles that Swithun worked in Winchester as “heavenly approval


for the bishop’s policy of monastic reform.” This, along with Wulfstan’s rendering of Lantfred’s *Translatio* into verse as well as the oral reports of Swithun’s miracles that circulated amongst the laity, worked to create a reputation for Winchester as a site of heavenly intervention.

While this is indisputably the case for other saints in Anglo-Saxon England, the interplay between Swithun’s holy power and locality found in the accounts of his hagiographers tells us that this paradigm was especially important to his cult in particular. Although his reputation spread across Anglo-Saxon England and across the sea to the Continent, Swithun’s miraculous power to heal was limited to a small swath of land in the modern-day churchyard of Winchester Cathedral, bestowed first upon a handful of local laymen as proof of his saintliness before Swithun called for his own translation. I will refer to this power by the same Latin term used by Swithun’s hagiographers: *virtus*. Lantfred and Wulfstan frequently attribute Swithun’s ability to propagate the miraculous to his *virtus*, a power evidently granted to him by God. *The Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* offers twelve possible definitions for *virtus*, among them “power to produce some effect” (entry 4), “excellence of character” (entry 10), and “authority”

---


These proposed definitions impress upon us, through their connotations, that *virtus* can be a characteristic (like “authority”) as well as the power by which something is accomplished. If we consider these definitions together, we can understand *virtus* as the ability to do something on account of an excellence of character, a kind of authority attributed to the virtuous. These different shades of *virtus* come together in the definition in *DMLBS* entry 7: “manifested divine power.” Within the context of a figure like Swithun, these definitions of *virtus* hint at a figure’s mortal past and suggest that his conduct in life made him a conduit for miraculous intervention in the present. It is Swithun’s *virtus*, according to his hagiographers, that ultimately ends up compelling his *translatio* and the *miracula* that follow, this unique power refracted through him by God as evidence of the *post mortem* reward for his devout worship in life. Swithun’s *virtus* is of a dual nature: it is what inspires people to venerate him as well as facilitates that veneration. It is through Swithun’s *virtus* that he is able order his own translation through a vision, an event that marks the beginning of what Lantfred says are “countless” miracles attributed to him. Those miracles chronicled in the works of Lantfred and of Wulfstan are a testament to his *virtus*—a quality that is rather ineffable but nonetheless palpable for those who visit his shrine.

The concept of *virtus* is fundamentally connected to cult formations, especially in cases related to local saints. The surviving material culture from Swithun’s cult at

---


Winchester perfectly illustrates those things that are the cornerstones of a cult—that is, materials that attest to the divine power of a saint in a way that compels veneration. In essence, these are materials that catalog the miraculous occurrences that have been identified as performed by the saint and subsequently contributed to the emergence of a cultic following. Like countless other saints across antique and early-medieval Christendom, hagiographical writing about Swithun is an essential piece of the puzzle.

Swithun’s hagiographical works, first written in Latin prose by the Frankish monk known as Lantfred of Fleury c. 972-3 and later adapted and expanded upon in verse by Wulfstan of Winchester (sometimes known as Wulfstan Cantor) in the 990s, are akin to an “argument” for situating the former bishop among the saintly canon, a written testimony of the extraordinary goings-on at Winchester that monastic and secular people alike attributed to Swithun. In this way, Swithun’s hagiography is much like that of other Anglo-Saxon saints such as St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (d. 687) or St. Æthelthryth of Ely (d. 679); perhaps the most significant difference is that the accounts related to Swithun were entirely focused on events after the saint’s death. The hagiography for Swithun is meant to inspire a community of veneration by relaying episodes of the impossible made possible. I say this not to assume the intent of Swithun’s hagiographers but because this is a universal ingredient in hagiographical writing—the employment of tropes that recall miracles performed by or associated with Christ.

This concept speaks to a broader phenomenon related to veneration: the relationship between audience—reader, listener, visitor—and materials that attests to the virtus of a saint. These materials are meant to provoke and inspire, encouraging either mental or physical interaction and rumination as they metonymically replicate and recall
each other. An example of this kind of metonymy is perfectly illustrated by the concept of *pars pro toto*, evident in both literature and material culture, where the word “bones” stands for the entire body of a saint just as a single bone in a reliquary simultaneously substitutes for and thus substantiates the notion of a complete saintly body. In the end, the material and literary culture crafted to honor a saint is meant to be emotionally moving, to strike something within its audience that motivates the act of veneration, that elevates the reputation of an unknown or little-known saint like Swithun to that of saints in the Christian canon with which they were familiar.

Christian veneration, perhaps even religious veneration more generally for that matter, hinges on one thing in particular: the response of a human to some type of emotion.\(^7\) Emotion is intrinsically tied to belief in the sense that that belief, while it certainly can be informed by fact or reason, is more often reliant upon and associated with the senses. In the Middle Ages in particular, the act of persuading lay people to believe seems to require that person to understand something viscerally—the genre of *passio* in particular is wrought by descriptions of pain (or, miraculously, a lack thereof)

that finds an empathetic audience revering the sufferer’s ability to withstand what would otherwise be certain death or grave harm or becoming awestruck by the God that mitigates what would otherwise be excruciating torture. This response, what Keagan Brewer calls “wonder,” is “expected to arouse a similar bodily response in medieval people to that described today, including arresting the responder, inciting curiosity and generally implying belief in the truth of a phenomenon.” It is this response, one of human emotional empathy, that strengthens belief—if an audience can conceive of the pain that St. Sebastian should feel as he is struck by arrows but see God protect him from pain, then faith is “produced” by an emotional response (awe) to what is expected but never comes to fruition (pain). This means that faith is often staged upon the body of a saint or those who are healed by a saint; in this way, faith becomes a locus where the miraculous meets the physical in a way that rings “true” for an ordinary person. It is thus apparent that this mode of persuasion (if we agree on the premise that these texts were indeed intentionally persuasive) is dependent upon experience; in essence, it “works” because the audience can empathize with the saint or the person being healed. This means that the burden of proof, so to speak, of the hagiographer is relatively low—in the case of St. Sebastian, for example, a hagiographer need not describe the pain of being struck by arrows because the hagiographer’s audience can imagine, with little effort, the bodily harm arrows inflict. In this way, hagiography subliminally charges readers to understand the potential for pain or harm in a saint’s life within the context of their own experience.

When it comes to pass that the saint is unscathed through God’s protection, the audience is astounded by this breach of their expectation (no pain when pain ought to be a certainty) and, thus, the stage has been set: the miraculous suspension of what that audience imagines should have occurred by an act of God as a reward for a saint’s belief and piety. The disparity of what should be and what has occurred is the space where emotion leads to belief.

This means that, within the context of medieval devotion, belief was bolstered and strengthened by some type of empathic connection between audience and narrative, Christian and vita. It was not simply the story of what a saint’s virtus was capable of that compelled medieval people to worship—rather, it was what that ability signaled to the individual. Even the term virtus itself, so often attributed to saints and holy people, is a signpost rather than a location; translated as “strength” or “power,” virtus does little more than to gesture vaguely at some type of potential that is made comprehensible and meaningful only when it is manifest in some type of physical action. In essence, it is one thing to understand a saint’s “strength” or “power” conceptually; it is another thing to be made to believe in that virtus as it plays out across the landscape of a narrative. This is not to say that virtus does not do intellectual work within the context of hagiography. Indeed, the term’s frequency in late-antique and early-medieval saints’ lives is a signpost of another kind, connecting one saint who has this God-given virtus to a larger canon of saints who too have been revered for their holy accomplishments. Instead, a saint’s holiness is something that must be proven in physical performance and cannot be reliant upon association with the term virtus alone—qualities that elevate a bishop to sainthood are evidenced by the action or conduct of either the saint himself, his relics, or places
with which he was associated. This means that the hagiography, art, and architecture that was born from a saint’s cult can be understood as something akin to a testimony for the saint’s holiness, inherently arguing rhetorically and aesthetically that a saint is worthy of being venerated.

To do this, medieval writers, artists, and architects were tasked with finding ways to inspire and provoke veneration. At the most basic level, the cult of St. Swithun was formed from a shared belief in the miraculous power of a former Old Minster bishop. In order to understand how this shared belief came to fruition, it is necessary to consider the rhetorical methods by which Swithun’s reputation was established, how tales of miracles were affirmed, and how these miracles acted as the foundation for further belief and further veneration; in this way, we can imagine each contribution that added to Swithun’s reputation as another point in a kind of “argument” for his holiness and thus an “argument” as to why he ought to be elevated within the community and abroad. The father of western rhetoric, the Greek philosopher Aristotle, conceived of different paths of persuasion. For Aristotle, persuasion existed in the form of multiple routes by which ideas and claims earned credibility and are thus adopted by individuals and community based on the way they were expressed to those audiences. From Part II of Book I of *Rhetoric*:

> The first kind [of rhetoric] depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself. Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character...
when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible [ethos]. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions [pathos]. Our judgements when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile. It is towards producing these effects, as we maintain, that present-day writers on rhetoric direct the whole of their efforts. This subject shall be treated in detail when we come to speak of the emotions. Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question [logos].

---

Within the context of the materials related to Swithun’s cult, we see all three of these methods of persuasion at play—efforts to bolster reputations as a means of garnering credibility are an obvious appeal to ethos, those that inspire awe are in line with Aristotle’s description of pathos, and others that attest to something that occurs on behalf of God are examples of truth and fact and thus related to logos. It is necessary to recognize these methods of persuasive argumentation because they are at work across all of the media by which Swithun’s virtus is represented. They do rhetorical work to assert his position as a notable and worthy figure within the Christian canon, promote his fame as a source of miracle-making, and thus encourage followers whose belief affirms his reputation. These strategies are both explicit and implicit in the literature, art, and architecture that make up the written and material culture of Swithun’s cult, utilized by hagiographers and artists and builders in different contexts to self-referentially affirm each other; an ornate reliquary, for example, at once affirms and reflects the wealth of miracles in the hagiography and vice versa.

The cult of St. Swithun presents a unique situation through which to examine the pathos of devotion because so much of what once was is no longer. Though we have accounts of Swithun’s reliquaries and medieval shrine locations in Winchester, the objects themselves did not survive the late Middle Ages. In their wake, we have almost nothing but the impression of their impact as detailed in the hagiographical works about Swithun and the archeological record. This fragmentation is frustrating for those of us who aspire to have at our fingertips a complete collection of Swithun-related materials, yet the loss of these objects presents us with an opportunity to consider the material impact of these features free from the distraction of the materials themselves. By this, I
mean that rather than focusing attention on the ornamentation of the reliquaries or relic shrines, we can instead consider the impression that these objects made upon their audience. As the Greek rhetorician Cassius Longinus (c. 213–273) put it:

For grandeur produces ecstasy rather than persuasion in the hearer; and the combination of wonder and astonishment always proves superior to the merely persuasive and pleasant. This is because persuasion is on the whole something we can control, whereas amazement and wonder exert invincible power and force and get the better of every hearer.

In this context, my interest is less in the minutiae of decoration as it is in the way in which reliquaries and shrines affected the pilgrims and parishioners who came before them. In his discussion of a miracle in his homily for Midlent Sunday, Ælfric of Eynsham (born c. 955) says that the miracle is “swiðe micel and deop on getacnungum”—very great and deep in meanings. Here, Ælfric imagines someone seeing something but only admiring it on a surface level without access to meaning; to Ælfric, while admiration and praise are obvious responses to looking at the splendor of something like an illuminated

10 This premise relates to a theoretical conception of the relationship between object and thing devised by Continental philosopher Martin Heidegger, the inspiration for the critical field of Thing Theory. For more on this, see Bill Brown, A Sense of Things (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).


12 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 575.
manuscript, to understand the purpose of a thing beyond its basic physicality is substantially more significant. Ælfric even says: “ne bið na genoh þæt we þæs tacnes wundrian”—“it is not enough that we admire a sign.” Ælfric stresses that while the sign is what promotes meaning, it must be understood as just that—a signal to something higher. “Ne bið na genóh þæt we þæs tacnes wundrian, oþþ þurh þæt God herian,” Ælfric goes on, “buton we eac þæt gastlice andgit understandon”—“it is not enough that we merely admire a miracle, or thank God for it, without understanding its spiritual meaning.” 13 It is likely that Ælfric is echoing a sentiment offered by Augustine of Hippo, often viewed as the most important of the Church Fathers for his Patristic era writings. In his work titled On Christian Doctrine, Augustine opines, “All teaching is teaching of either things or signs, but things are learnt through signs.”14 This paradigm can be extended to the context of architecture and reliquaries; to admire the material is important, but to consider the tribute it pays to a saint of God and the impact of what it is working to represent offers far more insight into understanding the impulse to create these objects and, further, their effect on a viewer.

This means that there is a rhetoric or kind of dialectic to representing holiness, a way of treating a saint in devotional materials that capitalizes on this duality—superficial


spectacle and the divine power it simultaneously represents and affirms in order to encourage reverence. It would be just as reductive to approach this phenomenon in an attempt to establish whether or not these devotional materials were fabricated solely to elicit profit for the church as it would be impossible; without underlying evidence from those who wrote the hagiography, gilded the reliquaries, or designed the great churches, an argument that church officials methodically peddled falsehoods to their flock for financial gain can be only speculative and cynical. What is far more important—and, in fact, more fascinating—is the way in which local saints came to be known and commemorated throughout their bishoprics, kingdoms, and even the Continent. Swithun is a particularly striking case in the canon of Anglo-Saxon saints as he is one of few whose miraculous accomplishments were limited to his afterlife. In this way, Swithun is a saint whose reputation was built quite literally from the ground under which he was buried up. This means that as a reader’s eyes traveled across the pages of Lantfred’s *Translatio*, that reader’s engagement with Swithun’s miracles replicated the narrative itself; as the text unfurled and the narrative transformed a virtually unknown, deceased bishop into a miracle-making saint, so too might a reader transform from one to whom Swithun was a meaningless name to someone incited to pilgrimage to his shrine, awestruck by his miracles. The significance of construction to the veneration of the cult of Swithun can be uniquely traced in the accounts written by his hagiographers as well as the objects erected to honor his remains, which illustrate a direct relationship between the material culture and pilgrimage. These materials meant that venerating Swithun’s cult was something that had to take place at a certain *locus*—the reliquaries, shrines, or burial locations in Winchester—and thus made pilgrimage to these locations essential to
veneration and miracle making. That is to say, the hagiography and material objects built for Swithun characterized the enshrinement sites as a *locus* where *virtus* was made manifest. As Nicole Discenza puts it: “The Anglo-Saxons did not simply exist in ready-made spaces and places but constructed the places around them mentally and often materially.”\(^{15}\)

But how is this accomplished? How do accounts of miracles, gems embedded into gold, and the stones cobbled into churches work to affirm one another, build upon one another to heighten the *virtus* that each represents? In *The Stones of Venice*, John Ruskin imagined the rhetorical responsibilities of architecture to be as follows:

… the practical duty divides itself into two branches,—acting and talking:—acting, as to defend us from weather or violence; talking, as the duty of monuments or tombs, to record facts and express feelings; or of churches, temples, public edifices, treated as books of history, to tell such history clearly and forcibly.\(^{16}\)

Here, Ruskin treats buildings as being capable of the same kind of rhetorical discourse as hagiography, a kind of “book of history” able to “tell” their stories. Shortly after this, Ruskin says that a building is required to “… speak well, and say the things it was


intended to say in the best words.”\textsuperscript{17} Certainly Ruskin does not imagine buildings with literal tongues capable of relaying their significance—instead, he imagines the significance of a building’s construction as manifest in the physicality of the building itself. Ruskin indicates that the building, practical purpose aside, is in conversation with those who encounter it, that there is an interconnection between building, which informs, and patron, who experiences and is informed by it. It is no surprise, of course, that Ruskin uses churches and monuments as examples of structures that talk and express as they are always already signs in and of themselves in that they are wrought from symbols that work together to represent the metaphysical presence of a Christian past and future.

If we consider the Old Minster as an example of this, it is clear that the cathedral in Winchester was meant to function as a place for local worship as well as a symbol of a rich Christian tradition beyond England. The Old Minster expanded from a modest chapel to an impressive cathedral by four phases of construction\textsuperscript{18} from the time it was built in the seventh century until it was demolished in 1093.\textsuperscript{19} The series of construction projects began with the addition of a shrine in the churchyard over the spot where Swithun was originally buried (c. 971/2) and culminated in a large structure that connected the original foundation of the Old Minster—previously a modest, double-bay chapel—to the tower to the west of its front doors (c. 993/4), enclosing the area that had

\textsuperscript{17} Ruskin, \textit{The Stones of Venice}, 29.

\textsuperscript{18} See appendix A.

\textsuperscript{19} These stages are discussed in greater depth in Chapter IV.
once been the churchyard within its walls.  

By the time it reached its final form, the Old Minster had grown to three times its original size and had transformed from a small chapel to what was most likely the largest stonework cathedral in Wessex, if not the whole of England. Among the most notable aspects of the building projects of the Old Minster was a remodeling of the section erected over the tomb shrine in the churchyard, Swithun’s initial burial place, into a Carolingian style, adding Frankish architectural features to the Anglo-Saxon foundation. This means that the Old Minster—or any Christian church, for that matter—exists in a kind of cyclical relationship where it is representative of its own local community and history as well as a larger Christian past—in this case, a Continental one. This concept is certainly observable in terms of the Old Minster; although it stood in Wessex, served the monastic and lay communities in Winchester, and championed its own local religious figures like Swithun and, later,

---


21 Eric Fernie made this remark in his keynote address at the conference on “Winchester: An Early Medieval City” on July 9, 2017, and mentioned that an article about Anglo-Saxon church foundations is forthcoming.

Æthelwold, the cathedral itself was dedicated to St. Peter, drawing Christian history and Wintonian veneration together through a single building.

This is the same kind of cyclicity found in hagiographical tropes and reliquary ornamentation, the same means of appreciating the glory of Christian figures in the present by situating them alongside those who lived and died for the faith in the days of persecution, with the cross as a reminder for a future where the rewards of devotion can be reaped. Medieval people like Bede, for instance, were absorbed by attempts to determine how far removed they were from the days of Christ, engrossed in undertakings to delineate the ages of the world so that they could ascertain just how much longer it would be until the promises in Revelation would come to fruition. Many imagined themselves on the cusp between the now of their daily life and the apocalyptic future, each saint acting as evidence for a God who was ever closer, whose return was ever closer. While this might seem beyond the relevance of a study of devotion related to St. Swithin, the importance of these ideas cannot be understated; the collapse of past, present, and future is exactly what is accomplished in hagiography, art, and church spaces thanks to a rhetoric of devotion that is assembled by allusion to Christ, other saints, and the history and future of Christianity.

---

23 Wulfstan, Narratio, 371; Epistola specialis, line 3.

24 Wulfstan the Homilist discusses this in his Sermo Lupi ad Anglos. For more on this, see Dorothy Whitelock, trans., Sermo Lupi ad Anglos (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
On its face, the impetus to use Swithun as a case study through which to observe the interconnectivity of space, community, and veneration might seem an unlikely choice. It is true that next to nothing about Swithun’s life was recorded by his hagiographers. Perhaps even more isolating is the fact that Swithun was an Anglo-Saxon saint and his reputation was celebrated with greater frequency in England than abroad for the first century or so after his death. Finally, it would also be accurate to note that the extant hagiography that narrates Swithun’s miracles does not contain any of the more popular tropes that so often appear in hagiography for saints; Swithun was not martyred by any heathen king or enemy, he does not appear to have been famous to any degree in respect to his position in the church or in Wessex during his lifetime, nor was he touted for being especially critical of the material world as was the case with saints like Æthelthryth or Aidan. That said, it is precisely these attributes that make Swithun’s cult such an excellent window into the rhetoric and ethos-building of tenth-century culting because we are literally left with little but the bare bones—the bones themselves, the writing about the miracles they refract, and the objects and structures commissioned to store and represent them. In this way, Swithun is perhaps as much of a blank slate as can be found within the canon of saints with multiple instances of hagiographical writing as well as a major cult. The absence of even the most trivial of detail related to Swithun’s life results in a divorce between the hagiographical Swithun and the personal identity of the historical Swithun, whatever that might have been. Because we know next to nothing about who Swithun was, his figure has the capacity to be coupled to an illustrious afterlife without worry about the possibility that his personal identity might interrupt his casting as a saint. Simply put: the fact that Swithun’s life was a proverbial question mark
did not problematize the ability to project upon him a detailed, august afterlife; in fact, it was the perfect foundation upon which to build.

The word “literally” often finds its way into this description of the formation of the cult of St. Swithun due to the fact that it so perfectly illustrates both the metaphorical building of Swithun’s reputation in hagiography and the actual physical act of construction fundamental to a cult—the construction of reliquaries, shrines, and churches. Evidence for this emphasis on building is apparent in the prefatory materials to the *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*, where the hagiographer Wulfstan takes great pains to discuss the plan for the Old Minster at the time he was writing before shifting his focus to the saint who is otherwise the center of his undertaking. While this is evident from only a cursory glance at the *Narratio*, the narrative itself is punctuated by episodes of excavation, fabrication, and construction, which effectively subdivide the *Narratio* into a triptych composed by complementary installments dependent upon the preparation for and production of Christian architectural and artistic edifices. This preoccupation with the word “literally” in this study both emphasizes the correlation between saintly ethos building and the physicality of the erection of buildings related to Swithun and alludes to the necessary symbiosis of these elements in regard to the formation of the cult.

By considering the way that medieval people would have responded to the hagiography, relics, and shrine of St. Swithun based on their experience as readers and pilgrims, this project surveys the impetus behind the veneration of a saint whose life was largely unknown yet who was ardently beloved and honored in death. That there is not any book-length scholarship dedicated to St. Swithun or his cult aside from Lapidge’s edition, *The Cult of St. Swithun*, further demonstrates the way that this project fills a gap
in scholarship about the sociocultural relevance of this still-famous saint. This project also considers the way in which Swithun’s afterlife affected the ecclesiastical communities at Winchester and how the cult of the saint developed and changed in Winchester from the time Lantfred wrote his *Translatio* through Wulfstan’s approach twenty years later, sometime in the mid-990s. The hagiography, along with the architectural features of the original Saxon cathedral, the Old Minster, and eventually the Norman Winchester Cathedral (consecrated in 1093), compelled visitors to the saint’s shrine in a way that reenacted Swithun’s *translatio* and thus fundamentally connected Winchester as a *locus* to Swithun’s *virtus* as a saint in an experiential way; as a result, pilgrimage to Winchester was a necessary component for any medieval person who aspired to venerate Swithun.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND SOURCES**

**St. Swithun of Winchester**

While little is known about the ninth-century Anglo-Saxon bishop Swithun of Winchester, what was said to have taken place after his death has made him one of the best known and most widely culted Anglo-Saxon saints in England as well as the Continent. Swithun was born sometime around 800 and, according to MS F (London, British Library, Cotton Domitian A. viii) of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, died on July 2, 863. Records show that Swithun’s remains were exhumed and translated by Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester (963–84) into the Old Minster on July 15, 971 and it is this
date which subsequently became his major feast day. While Swithun’s translation marked the beginning of the cult, Swithun’s divine power had been cited as the source for a handful of miracles as early as 968; this number increased exponentially after the translation. These early accounts were recorded by Lantfred of Fleury, a Frankish monk of the Old Minster who became Swithun’s first hagiographer, in his work *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*; approximately twenty years later, this was expanded upon and reworked into verse by another monk at the Old Minster, Wulfstan of Winchester.

COMMEMORATION IN ENGLAND AND ON THE CONTINENT

It is apparent that Swithun was a popular saint because he appears frequently in liturgical documents from both England and the Continent. This popularity was one that spread relatively quickly, with accounts of his miracle-working disseminating throughout southern England shortly after his translation orally before they were accompanied and enhanced by the circulation of copies of Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s hagiographical works. He is mentioned in no less than twenty-one Anglo-Saxon calendars and twenty-five calendars (both English and Continental) produced after the turn of the twelfth century. Swithun is commemorated in twenty out of sixty litanies of saints produced in England between c. 960 and c. 1100. Observing that a number of Anglo-Saxon litanies are of an abbreviated nature and contain few petitions to saints other than the apostles as well as the fact that that some of them were written on the

---


26 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 27.
Continent, Lapidge remarks that the fact that Swithun appears in a third of surviving litanies is a “very respectable showing” for the saint.27

As Swithun’s fame spread beyond Winchester, so too did the geographical distribution of churches founded in his name. While Wessex was host to the highest concentration of churches dedicated to Swithun, churches were dedicated in his name in Lincoln, Norwich, Worcester, and London—over fifty-five in England alone. The number of dedications to Swithun compares favorably to those for other English saints—after excluding saints who were martyr kings (like Oswald and Edmund), only Thomas Becket and Cuthbert have more churches founded in their names.28 His influence extended to Ireland, Scandinavia, and—most important of all of these places—France as monks disseminated narratives written about him as well as sequences and other liturgical texts in his honor. Swithun’s popularity in France can be attributed to his first hagiographer, Lantfred of Fleury, who recorded a number of miracles which took place in France which were probably personally known to him.29 Perhaps the most striking evidence of the cult of St. Swithun in France can be found in its association with Évreux, which commemorated the Anglo-Saxon saint in several liturgical calendars and possessed (and still possesses to this day) the only known relic for Swithun outside of Winchester—a head relic—which arrived at the cathedral there sometime before the end of the

27 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 34.

28 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 47.

29 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 59.
fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{30} While Lapidge acknowledges that Swithun was not culted in Europe outside of these places, the surviving liturgical calendars, litanies, and the record of church dedications in his name indicate that Swithun was a “widely, but not universally, 

\textsuperscript{30} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 60.
culted saint” who was commemorated extensively throughout southern England and also at “scattered locations” in Ireland, Scandinavia, and France.

---

31 The feast of Swithun’s deposition (2 July) is commemorated in the “Martyrology of Christ Church Dublin,” preserved in Dublin, Trinity College 576 which dates from sometime between the second half of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century. Both of Swithun’s feast days (2 July and 15 July) are commemorated in an Irish liturgical calendar dating from the early-thirteenth century preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 405. For more, see Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 51.

32 By way of Anglo-Saxon missionaries, Swithun’s reputation spread to Scandinavia where, by the late-eleventh century, a bishopric was established in his name at Stavanger. Swithun is commemorated in a litany known as the *Presta Handbók* (produced between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries) and a calendar of the Nidaros Breviary (Lapidge cannot date this exactly but indicates that it was likely produced sometime in the fifteenth century) as well as in the Ordinary of Nidaros and a breviary printed in 1519 of the same name. Stavanger Cathedral listed one of Swithun’s arms among its relic holdings in an inventory of 1517 but this relic does not survive. For more, see Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 54–8.

33 Upon leaving Winchester and returning to Fleury, Lantfred took with him a copy of the *Translatio* which was the basis for Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 566. While Swithun was not commemorated in any liturgical books or calendars in Fleury, he was commemorated in a sacramentary from Laon (Laon,
SWITHUN’S HAGIOGRAPHERS, MANUSCRIPTS, AND THEIR HAGIOGRAPHY

The second chapter of this dissertation discusses the relationship of the manuscripts that contain Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s hagiography, particularly the oldest extant manuscripts of the tradition: London, British Library, Royal 15 C. vii and Rouen, Bibliothèque Jacques Villon 1385, both made at the Old Minster shortly after 996. By analyzing the differences between the manuscripts, I argue that the two earliest extant versions of Lantfred’s Translatio reflect what I am calling a Continental Recension of the hagiography that has been trivialized and thus largely dismissed by scholars. While Michael Lapidge has pointed out that there was indeed a version of Swithun’s translation and miracles meant for a Continental audience, I take this a step further by outlining evidence that supports the idea that this version is representative of a Continental Recension that actively reinterpreted the accounts of a localized English saint in order to better address a Frankish audience.

From there, the third chapter shifts to the content of the manuscripts—the hagiographical works themselves—and considers the illustrious afterlife of St. Swithun as told by his earliest hagiographers: Lantfred of Fleury (born c. 950) and Wulfstan of Winchester (born c. 960). As the primary focus of this study is on the construction and

Bibliothèque municipal, 238) dating from the mid-eleventh century along with the liturgical calendars from Évreux. For more, see Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 59–61.

34 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 238–40.
impact of Swithun’s cult in the Anglo-Saxon period, these texts paint a vivid picture of the advent of Swithun’s veneration in Winchester. Lantfred and Wulfstan composed *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni* and *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno* respectively, each detailing the miracles associated with St. Swithun’s relics and translation. These texts are the most appropriate accounts for any investigation into the miracles and other happenings surrounding St. Swithun’s first interment in the churchyard of the Old Minster and his subsequent translation into the newly remodeled Old Minster. This chapter will also discuss why the Old English version of Swithun’s life recorded by Ælfric of Eynsham (c. 955–c. 1010) is of little use to the present study of Swithun’s miracles and the architectural expansion in Winchester that followed his translation.

**BURIAL AND BUILDING**

Next, in the fourth chapter, I compare how Lantfred and Wulfstan discuss Swithun’s burial, the state of his body before and after translation, and how literal building and construction worked together to metaphorically build Swithun’s reputation as a saint and, in turn, established Winchester as a *locus* for miracle-making in order to inspire veneration for the saint from the 970s through the end of the tenth century. While Lantfred and Wulfstan cover the majority of the same events in largely similar language, the differences between the ways that they describe Swithun’s remains reveal a difference in philosophy. Through the disparity between how the two men imagined the relationship between Swithun’s body, *virtus*, and *locus* as the three related to the cult, we can observe a shift in how Swithun was understood from the inception of his status as saint as recorded by Lantfred through the time Wulfstan was writing twenty years later.
From an exhaustive survey of the vocabulary used to discuss body parts and burial in the hagiography, it is clear that each hagiographer had a unique way of connecting Swithun and his miracles to Winchester; while the *Translatio* focuses on connecting *virtus* to Swithun’s remains before and after the translation ceremony, the language related to body and burial in Wulfstan’s *Narratio* reflects the importance of commemoration through building and enshrining from a literary perspective. Lantfred’s interest in Swithun’s bodily remains and their movement from the Old Minster churchyard into the cathedral itself is evident in his *Translatio* through the repetition of body-part words, his account consistently acknowledging the importance of Swithun’s body to miracle-making. When Wulfstan writes twenty years later, his *Narratio* reflects a trend in which construction and memorialization through enshrinement are a significant aspect of Swithun’s cult; this is evident in his thorough overview of the building projects at the Old Minster in his prefatory materials to the *Narratio*. By examining the way in which Lantfred and Wulfstan tell the story of Swithun’s *translatio* and subsequent *miracula* through their use of body-part words, we can observe the way in which Swithun’s cult changes from its inception in 971 and how new burial containers played a role in establishing Winchester as a holy place through building projects related to Swithun.

**ARCHITECTURE AND ENSHRINEMENT**

In order to consider the sociocultural implications of the cult of St. Swithun, it is necessary to examine the building efforts that began shortly after Swithun’s translation into the Old Minster in 971 and those that followed. Chapter Five considers the
construction projects at the Old Minster as a distillation of the development of the cult; that is, as building projects increase on the original monastic foundation, so too does pilgrimage to Winchester. Chapter Five surveys the transformation of the initial foundation of the Old Minster from a seventh-century, late-antique truncated basilica into what was ultimately the most impressive stonework cathedral in Anglo-Saxon England when it reached its final form in the late 900s. This chapter also discusses the architectural features of the Old Minster at the time of Swithun’s translation in 971, during the renovation period that took place from 972–75, and the large-scale reconstruction efforts that were completed prior to the Old Minster’s rededication c. 993-95. To get a sense of how these construction efforts related to Swithun’s cult, this chapter considers miracle accounts detailed in Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s *opus geminatum* and proposes a timeline for construction based on the historical record and the dates recorded by Swithun’s hagiographers. Finally, this chapter explores the way in which Swithun’s hagiographers detailed lay interactions with shrine structures in order to understand the relationship between veneration and material objects and takes into consideration a number of burial and shrine locations associated with the saint, including Swithun’s original burial place; his relics in the high altar, reliquary commissioned by King Edgar, and sacristy; and the location of his remains once they were translated into Winchester Cathedral after the Old Minster was demolished in the late-eleventh century.

From here, the chapter shifts to an investigation of the art and material culture of the cult of St. Swithun. While there is little that survives from Anglo-Saxon Winchester in terms of art related to the cult, there is a wealth of historical, archeological, and artistic evidence that, when analyzed, tells us more about the relationship between material
culture and veneration in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Through Wulfstan, readers of Swithun’s hagiography learned of the lavish reliquary commissioned by King Edgar for Swithun’s translation in the mid-970s. Based on his description of the program for the reliquary, Wulfstan illustrates how the gold and silver bejeweled container connects Swithun and Winchester to a larger Christian context and serves as an excellent example of reliquaries in the medieval period.

This chapter also examines surviving Anglo-Norman artifacts related to the cult. Preserved behind a bookshelf of Winchester Cathedral’s Morley Library until the 1970s, a thirteenth-century wall painting that depicts Swithun—perhaps during his first translation—is confirmation that Swithun continued to be an important figure after the Conquest. This notion is substantiated by discussing what remains of the thirteenth-century shrine and screen in Winchester Cathedral as well as by a head relic of Swithun, now at Évreux Cathedral in France. These materials provide a basis for discussion related to the function of art and veneration in the cult of St. Swithun and the visual rhetoric by which these objects associated with the saint relay the concept of *virtus* to the viewer.

**FUTURE PROJECTS**

In addition to a conclusion for the dissertation, the final chapter, Chapter Six, suggests future applications of this research specifically within the arena of the digital humanities. These projects include a print edition of the Continental version of Lantfred’s *Translatio et miracula*, various digital editions of texts related to Swithun, and a multimodal map of Winchester Cathedral. These projects illustrate the trajectory set
forth by this research project and reflect the ways in which the information gathered and analyzed in this dissertation can be made more accessible to a public audience interested in the history of Winchester or students working in Latin who are interested in hagiography, textual editing, or manuscript studies.
CHAPTER 2

THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION OF THE CULT OF SAINT SWITHUN

Before considering the content of the hagiographical narratives relayed by Lantfred and Wulfstan and their respective accounts of Swithun’s *inventio, translatio,* and subsequent *miracula,* we must first examine the extant codices that preserve them. While Lapidge, in his *Cult of St Swithun,* presents a compelling argument for a *stemma codicum,* this chapter serves as a collective reconsideration of the relationship between the codices, the paleographical features of the texts within them, and what the historical record suggests about the extent to which Swithun’s *miracula* were known in England and on the Continent. By reassessing these features of the manuscript tradition of Swithun’s cult, we can at the very least provide more color and texture to our present scholarly understanding of the interworkings of the dissemination of Swithun’s hagiography. More interestingly, a closer consideration of the codices and their contents illustrates metatextual features that suggest that the two earliest extant manuscripts that preserve Lantfred’s *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni* illustrate two unique traditions of the *Translatio:* one rendered for an Anglo-Saxon audience, the other intended for Continental readers.

In order to discuss the importance of the order and structure of Lantfred’s *Translatio,* it is first necessary to examine these surviving versions of the text. While materials from the *Translatio* appear in six manuscripts, only three contain the *Translatio* in its entirety:

---

35 There are three additional manuscripts that contain parts of the *Translatio:*

R, widely considered one of the most important manuscripts for the cult of St. Swithun, is effectively a Swithun *libellus*; it contains a dossier of liturgical material pertaining to Swithun, including the earliest copies of Lantfred’s *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*, an abecedarian hymn for Swithun, Wulfstan’s *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*, and a number of materials added sometime in the late-eleventh century, including a dedicatory poem commemorating Swithun’s construction of a bridge, a rhythmical poem that recounts the legendary miracle of Swithun and the broken eggs, and a shorter entry that details a number of miracles unattested in other hagiographical works. The original portion of the manuscript was probably written at the Old Minster shortly after Wulfstan finished writing his *Narratio*, probably around 996; the materials within date from between 990

V = Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 566, fols. 39–42; this manuscript contains just two bifolia of the *Translatio* and is thus fragmentary.

T = London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. xv, fols. 144v–155r; this manuscript contains two badly-damaged folios with Lantfred’s prefatory letter to the *Translatio*, now largely illegible.

Y = London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. xiv, fol. 158; this manuscript also contains only Lantfred’s prefatory letter to the *Translatio*. For more on these, see Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 238–42.

and 1200. The original contents of R were written by a single, “highly accomplished scribe” whose script is, according to Lapidge, “an elegant example of Anglo-Caroline Style I.” While R does not feature any illumination, *incipit* and *explicit* chapter titles are differentiated from the body of the text by alternating lines of green and red text; additionally, the first letter of the first word of each chapter is set apart by a green *littera notabilior* (see Plate XI).

**N = London, British Library, Cotton Nero E. i, part 1, fols. 35r–52v.**

N, along with Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 9 and London, British Library, Cotton Nero E. i part 2, forms an immense collection of saints’ lives known as the “Cotton-Corpus Legendary” that was produced at Worcester in the third quarter of the eleventh century and recorded the *vitae* of over 165 saints; the other half resides in Cambridge in the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College. Though damage from the Cotton fire caused some of the text, specifically at the edges of several leaves that contain the abecedarian hymn for Swithun, to shrink in size, the folios containing Lantfred’s *Translatio* are perfectly legible. It is clear that the scribe of N used R as an exemplar for the *Translatio*. The text of N is arranged into two columns per folio and written in Anglo-Caroline Style IV, according to Lapidge. The titles of each chapter are set apart from the text in a dull, rust-

---

37 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 240.

38 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 239.
colored pigment, as is the *littera notabilior* that begins the first word of Lantfred’s text (See Plate XII).

**J = Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale Villon 1385, fols. 29r–80v.**\(^{39}\)

J is a composite codex, some parts of which were written on the Continent and some in England. Lantfred’s *Translatio* is written in Style I Anglo-Caroline minuscule which points to a Wintonian origin, according to Lapidge, and can be dated on paleographical grounds to about the same time as R, shortly after 996.\(^{40}\) J’s *Translatio* is the work of three scribes and features a number of Latin glosses which might have been authorial.\(^{41}\)

Of these, R and J are undeniably the most important manuscripts related to Lantfred’s *Translatio* based on a number of factors. First, the texts in R and J are the oldest surviving versions of Swithun’s translation and miracles. They were produced in Winchester, probably within a year of each other (if not at the same time), a short time

\(^{39}\) This manuscript has also been referred to as Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, U. 107, fols. 29r–80v. This is the shelfmark that Lapidge cites in his *Cult of St Swithun*. For more information, see the Bibliothèque nationale de francias online catalog entry: https://ccfr.bnf.fr/portailccfr/jsp/index_view_direct_anonymous.jsp?record=eadcgm:EA DC:D08A13502.

\(^{40}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 238.

\(^{41}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 239.
after 996.\textsuperscript{42} While R, a \textit{libellus} for Swithun, consists entirely of Swithun-related hagiography and hymns and is of solely English provenance, J is a composite manuscript in which the \textit{Translatio} and Wulfstan’s later reworking of it are the lone examples of English writing in a manuscript otherwise dominated by Continental hagiography.\textsuperscript{43} The version of the translation and miracles preserved in R is overwhelmingly favored by modern scholars thanks to Michael Lapidge’s use of it as the base text for his edition of the \textit{Translatio} in \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}. Prior to its appearance in Lapidge’s publication, the \textit{Translatio} had not been printed in its entirety, though two partial editions, both based on versions of the \textit{Translatio} preserved in the Continental manuscripts, were published in the early-eighteenth and late-nineteenth centuries: the Bollandist Jean Pien prepared an edition based on the fragment found in V for the July volume of the \textit{Acta Sanctorum} published in 1719 and E.P. Sauvage produced a second partial edition based on J in the \textit{Analecta Bollandiana} in 1885.\textsuperscript{44} Given that Lapidge’s edition is at once the most recent edition of the \textit{Translatio} and the first that presents the entirety of the work itself, it is not surprising that scholarship related to the hagiography of St. Swithun published since the book’s release in 2001 is, more often than not, based on Lapidge’s edition. Although Lapidge’s \textit{apparatus criticus} and extensive prefatory materials offer insight into J, V, and N, the \textit{Translatio} as preserved in J—the version that differs the most from R—has yet to

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{42} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 238–40.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{43} For an in-depth discussion of the manuscripts of the \textit{Translatio}, see Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 238–42.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{44} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 249.}
be reproduced in its entirety. As a consequence, there is a gap in our scholarly understanding of the manuscript tradition of the *Translatio* as well as our ability to comprehend the significance of what R and J can tell us about the relationship between Swithun’s cult in local Wintonian and Continental cultures.

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MANUSCRIPTS OF LANTFRED’S *TRANSLATIO***

While this chapter discusses the minutiae of the differences between these manuscripts, what is most important to understand about the manuscripts is that while they all serve as almost-identical catalogs of the events that comprise Lantfred’s *Translatio*, they do not all relay the narrative in the same order. Michael Lapidge has identified that while R and the copy made from it, N, follow the same narrative structure and include the same number of chapters with identical chapter titles, J differs. The two most notable differences between J and R are a) J’s distinct chapter order (and accompanying transition sentences) and b) J’s exclusion of proper names and place names.

First, J does not relay the events of the *Translatio* in the same order as R. In order to facilitate a flow between chapters, the scribe of J included what Lapidge calls “transition sentences” at the end of each chapter that provide context for the next. This phenomenon is unique to J, as neither R nor N provide any introduction or transition from one chapter to the next even though a number of chapters in these manuscripts are not in
chronological order themselves.\textsuperscript{45} Along with this difference of ordering, J also excludes place names and proper names of locations and individuals that are identified in R and N; altogether, J omits or amends proper names and place names on ten separate occasions. Lapidge theorizes that J excludes this information because J was made for Continental use and this hypothesis is supported by the subsequent movement of the manuscript to an extent; it is unsurprising, given both Lantfred’s and Winchester’s connections with Fleury, that the manuscript ultimately ended up in Francia. It is clear, on the other hand, that the manuscript was not immediately transported to the Continent, evidenced by Old English interlinear glosses that Lapidge surmises, based on the hand, date from the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{46} That R and N have nearly identical texts is also not surprising given that it is beyond question that N is a copy of R made some fifty years later\textsuperscript{47} and that it shares many of the same errors in addition to the aforementioned similarities. In order to discern how and why these differences occur, it is necessary to approximate the relationship between these versions as they came about in the manuscript tradition.

While Lapidge has presented his theory of the relationship of manuscripts containing Lantfred’s \textit{Translatio} in his book, there are a number of factors that, when taken into account, problematize the notion of such a straightforward tradition. Lapidge

\textsuperscript{45} Most notably, Chapter ii of R and N describes events that occurred before the action of Chapter i.

\textsuperscript{46} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 239.

\textsuperscript{47} Lapidge gives the \textit{terminus post quem} for R as 995/6; that for N is the second half of the eleventh century; see Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 239–240.
argues that manuscripts of Lantfred’s text fall into two branches that include intermediary, lost manuscripts and two offspring of each of those intermediary branches: one intermediary served as the exemplar for R and J (which themselves were exemplars for N and V, respectively) and another intermediary was the exemplar for the versions of Lantfred’s *Epistola specialis* in T and Y. Lapidge does not provide a stemma for this relationship, but one is given here based on the argument that appears in his text.\(^{48}\) Given that T and Y contain only the prefatory materials for the *Translatio* and do not feature the hagiographical account itself, we need only consider the relationship between manuscripts that contain the *Translatio*: R, J, N, and V.

\(^{48}\) See Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 238–50. While Lapidge does not include a stemma in his section explaining the relationship between manuscripts, he does clearly trace their relationship to one another in certain terms; my diagram actualizes the relationship he dictates.
Figure 1. Lapidge’s Stemma for Lantfred’s Manuscripts

According to Lapidge, both R and J were copied in 996 in Winchester from the same intermediary manuscript that descended from what Lapidge proposes is the autograph made by Lantfred (ω). In spite of his claim that the manuscripts were made at the same time, in the same place, and from the same exemplar, Lapidge points out numerous differences between R and J, ranging in type from commonplace scribal errors to far more remarkable deviations such as differences in chapter titles and the order of chapters, as noted above. Lapidge argues that the vast majority of differences between R and J can be accounted for if it is assumed that R adheres closely to the lost intermediary text while the scribes of J intentionally altered the content and structure of the Translatio
for the purposes of their audience, purposefully creating what I will refer to henceforth as the Continental Recension of Lantfred’s *Translatio*. While this conclusion is certainly compelling, it relies on the hypothesis that R and J were copied from the same intermediary manuscript. Lapidge explains the differences between R and J as the result of efforts by the scribes of J to create a version of the *Translatio* more appropriate for a Continental audience and contends that the scribes of R and J consulted the same exemplar.

It is undeniable that R and J are far more similar in terms of content than dissimilar, though, again, they are by no means identical. That said, Lapidge also notes that an episode concerning the healing of a man who had been blinded by judges, described in Chapter xxvii of R, is missing in J. Lapidge does not attempt to explain why this particular chapter was eliminated from J. This chapter does not deal with any people or locations that are identifiably local and is void of any proper names as it appears in R and, as such, its absence in J cannot be explained by the criteria for elimination attributed to the scribes of this recension. It is perhaps difficult, then, to ascribe the exclusion of Chapter xxvii as an intentional editorial decision and it seems rather more likely that either Chapter xxvii was mistakenly excluded or determined unnecessary for some unknown reason besides audience when the original compilers of the Continental Recension organized their reworking of the text. The final difference between R and J has to do with an instance where Lantfred quotes directly from the Vulgate. With Lapidge’s argument in mind, one would expect R to supply the correct reading from the Vulgate, but this is not the case—in the place where Lantfred quotes the Vulgate, J features the correct reading while R is in error. This should be understood as an alternative meaning
with a slightly different meaning rather than an error of content: where J supplies the correct quotation, R erroneously replaces *quid* with *quod*.\(^{49}\) While this error is not of such great significance that it alone can substantiate the theory that J is not a copy of R or a copy made from a shared intermediary, it is just one more example of the departure between the two manuscripts.

**THEORIZING A NEW STEMMA CODICUM**

With this in mind, there are a number of factors that support the conclusion that R and J might not have been copied from the same intermediary manuscript and, further, that it is possible—perhaps even probable—that the scribes of J consulted or even used as an exemplar a manuscript other than the exemplar for R when they created J, the manuscript that represents the Continental Recension. While the basic notion that scribes intentionally created a version of Lantfred’s *Translatio* that was more suitable for a Continental audience is one that Lapidge and I agree upon, the way in which that version, as it appears in J, came into being is a point of disagreement. Lapidge argues for a tradition where J is a departure from an intermediary parent shared with R, claiming that J is the first version of the text that restructures the *Translatio*, inserts transition sentences to accommodate for the chapter rearrangement, emends nearly all of the chapter titles, and eliminates Chapter xxvii. All of these changes, Lapidge contends,

\(^{49}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 326; emphasis mine. From Luke 23:34:

J: “Pater, ignosce illis; non enim sciunt *quid* faciunt.”

R: “Pater, ignosce illis, non enim sciunt *quod* faciunt.”
would have been unique to J and a departure from the intermediary exemplar that, according to him, closely resembles R and Lantfred’s (theoretical) autograph and, therefore, would have been made at the time of production.

While it is certainly possible that the scribes of J made these changes at the time of that manuscript’s production, this idea may be less probable than the idea that J and R are different because they were not copied from the same exemplar. It is my opinion that J reflects a now-lost branch of the manuscript tradition of the Translatio that was produced at Winchester with the specific purpose of being circulated beyond the Anglo-Saxon world. This would mean that J is less an anomaly within the tradition than it is representative of a particular recension of that tradition, a Continental Recension that was reorganized to walk foreign audiences through the account in ways that centered on the miracles related to Swithun and Winchester rather than localized contextual information about England and its inhabitants. It is evident that J was meant to leave Winchester and thus could stand to deemphasize places outside of Winchester in a way that R could not; even though many Anglo-Saxon names for people and places are not included in J, it still includes names for important people in Winchester, those most at the center of the narrative. Understanding J as a member of its own family within the manuscript tradition of the Translatio is supported by evidence of Swithun’s name being known well beyond

50 As Lapidge puts it, “Because J was on the Continent at an early date, one might surmise that it was in fact written for export to a continental house which had close connections with Winchester and an interest in its patron saint.” For more on this, see Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 247.
Wessex and used in the founding of churches across the Continent. For Swithun to have been so well known meant that his hagiography had been widely disseminated; that J exists is evidence that there were concerted efforts to structure a narrative that would be comprehensible and impactful to audiences who would not recognize Latinized Anglo-Saxon names and cities. The fact that monks—like Lantfred—were coming to Winchester from major reformed Continental centers such as Fleury, Corbie, and Ghent and were present at the time that the Regularis Concordia was drawn up in 973 can explain the connection between Swithun and the Continent.51

There is evidence for a Continental Recension tradition of the Translatio for a number of reasons. First, J is intended to read fluidly and reflects intellectual efforts to aid its audience in its content. That J presents a reordered version of the events of the Translatio alone is significant but bolstered in significance by the fact that J includes transition sentences and provides alternative chapter titles in clear, grammatical Latin. This characteristic can be a bit puzzling given that J also includes more errors than R on the whole and thus presents a curious question: why does J feature errors not found in R but also features grammatical Latin in the content that is unique to it? There are three different possible stemmata that can explain this phenomenon, each of them offering a rationale that reflects the shared content between R and J while accounting for the features unique to J. The crux of understanding the relationship between R and J requires

theorizing the way in which the intermediary manuscripts that parented R and J were connected.

In essence, I argue against Lapidge’s relationship of manuscripts as it subjugates the relevance of J within the canon and fails to recognize the fact that J belongs to a separate pedigree within the Translatio’s tradition. In asserting that J was copied from an exemplar shared by R, Lapidge effectively imagines that the large-scale structural changes (the reordered chapters), additions to the text (the transition sentences), and editorial emendations (the elimination of proper nouns specific to Winchester and Anglo-Saxon England more broadly) found in J were made at the same time that the text was copied. Even if we accept that an undertaking of this capacity would have been possible, the number of hands in J does not support the notion that J was the first of its kind in the tradition of the Translatio. If it had been, we would expect J to have been written in one hand—indeed, the text of the Translatio as it appears in R is the work of a single scribe. Having been the work of three scribes, however, it is difficult to imagine how J could have come to fruition by any other means than being copied from an intermediary other than the one used by the scribe of R.

The glosses that appear in J also act as evidence for an intermediary exemplar other than the one used for R. Before discussing the ones in Latin, it is necessary to determine how to interpret the Old English glosses in J. It is my opinion that the significance of the Old English glosses in the manuscript has been greatly overstated and has led to erroneous conclusions about the function J was meant to serve, obscuring the provenance of the manuscript. Only three words of Old English appear in the entirety of J, all on a single page (fol. 80v) and all in the same hand. Neil Ker has determined that
the script indicates that these glosses were written in the early eleventh century, leading Lapidge to conclude that “the manuscript remained in England for at least some time after being written.” While it could be the case that J did not immediately leave England after it was copied, it is also possible that the glosses were added by an English reader of the manuscript at Fleury; given that there are only three of them, it is also possible that they could have been made by a Continental reader with knowledge of Old English. In any event, the paltry number of glosses undermines arguments as to their significance.

The Latin glosses, on the other hand, further support the notion that J was copied from an exemplar unique to it. According to Lapidge, the majority of the glosses in J “provide etymological explanations of Lantfred’s frequent Grecisms” and, based on a shared appetite for Grecisms between the glossator and Lantfred, “suggests that [the glossator] was identical with the author, and that the glosses derive ultimately from Lantfred’s own copy of the text.” If it was the case that R and J shared an exemplar, we would expect the text of R to have the same glosses that are in J, but this is not the case. Given that the scribe of R was otherwise so meticulous, it seems curious that he would have omitted glosses if they had been present in the exemplar from which he was working.

With this in mind, consider the premise that there are at least three intermediary manuscripts that descend directly from Lantfred’s archetype (α): α, β, and γ where α

52 For more on this, see Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 239 as well as N.R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), 448.

53 Lapidge The Cult of St Swithun, 238.
reflects what previous scholars have considered the base text for the *Translatio*, \( \gamma \) reflects a manuscript styled in what I am proposing as the Continental Recension of the text, and \( \beta \) reflects a later medieval copy of the *Translatio*. As this analysis concerns comparisons between manuscripts that contain the *Translatio* itself and T and Y contain only the *Epistola specialis*, the \( \beta \) branch of the pedigree of codices does not provide useful data for comparison and should be disregarded with respect to this argument. With this addressed, we can consider three options for a stemma for the *Translatio*, as follows.

![Proposed Stemma I for Lantfred’s Manuscripts](image)

Figure 2. Proposed Stemma I for Lantfred’s Manuscripts

Stemma I presents a pedigree for the *Translatio* where \( \alpha \) represents the intermediary exemplar for what has been assumed to be the standard, local order for the
events of the *Translatio* and γ the intermediary for the Continental Recension. This stemma suggests a sibling relationship between α and γ that reflects the similarities in content but positions γ as the parent of a tradition of texts that depart from the archetype. This presentation means that J is not an anomaly or a reworking of α but the product of a distinctly different branch of the stemma. Theorizing a γ branch allows us to account for the mistakes featured in J that are correct in R by surmising that these mistakes were not made in the process of copying a shared R/J α exemplar as Michael Lapidge has posited but were inherited through a completely separate pedigree of the archetype. The dotted line between α and γ in Proposed Stemma III suggests that it is feasible that the scribe(s) of γ had access to and might have consulted α should we accept Lapidge’s claim that R and J were both created in Winchester within a year of one another; this too explains the content similarity between R and J.
Figure 3. (Top) Proposed Stemma II for Lantfred’s Manuscripts

Figure 4. (Below) Proposed Stemma III for Lantfred’s Manuscripts
Stemmata II and III also reflect the closeness of R and J by proposing a pedigree for J that still indicates the intention for a Continental Recension but argues for a γ pedigree wherein the parent of J was made from an exemplar (α) shared with R. This stemma is closer to the relationship proposed by Lapidge but repositions J once more as the offspring descendant of a new tradition of the Translatio. The difference between this tree and Lapidge’s may seem pedantic on its face but it visualizes and expresses an important distinction that underscores J’s place as it can be imagined within the tradition of the transmission of the Translatio. It is essential to understand R and J as two separate, independent accounts of the narrative with different rhetorical aims in spite of their shared content. Each narrative is constructed for its own audience and purposefully formulated for that audience. Lapidge’s claim that J is an idiosyncratic reinterpretation of R has the effect of implying that J is a quirk in the tradition rather than representative of a discrete tradition. Further, the notion that J is an anomaly is not supported by extant manuscript evidence. If J were a quirk in the stemma, we should expect there to be a greater number of surviving Translatio manuscripts that are similar to R than J. This, however, is not the case: the manuscripts that contain the Translatio relay the Continental Recension (my γ) as often as the local version (α).

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE FOR A CONTINENTAL RECENSION

While there is less evidence for this, it is also possible that Lantfred himself created or provided instruction for the Continental Recension. This idea is beyond the realm of concrete justification but is not outside the realm of possibility, given Lantfred’s connection to Fleury. This idea would explain the similarities between R and J if we
accept that Lantfred himself created or inspired the Continental Recension; it too could account for the transition sentences between chapters if we imagine that Lantfred made or suggested an alternative version of his text for a Continental audience. While Lapidge acknowledges that J omits localized place and proper names, he does not mention the changes between R and J when it comes to chapters of the Translatio related to Francia. Although the spirit of both R and J reflects the immediate relationship between Swithun and England, there are a number of chapters that relate miracles that either took place in Francia or featured Frankish characters. It is in these episodes that R and J address Francia and Frankish characters differently—that is, the implications of the textual variation between R and J effectively portray the episodes in J related to Francia as equally important to the Translatio as those that took place in England.

The differences between R and J are subtle in this respect, with both accounts strictly adhering to the same plot and, more often than not, doing so in nearly identical phrasing. Take Chapter xxxii, for example: an account of a woman whose pain was cured after her husband, by recommendation of “sacerdos quidam,”54 ordered a new candle and gave it to the priest to light, presumably in honor of Swithun, in a church in Francia. In R, the title of this chapter is “de muliere quae in Gallia sanata est” [concerning a woman who was cured in Gaul] while in J it appears more concisely as “de matrona in Gallia

———

54 While R and J both refer to this person as a “certain priest,” only R identifies that priest as the author of the text, Lantfred, by name; nomine Lantfredus is omitted from J.
sanata” [concerning a married woman cured in Gaul]. While the meaning of the title is not overwhelmingly different, J’s treatment of the titular character is more specific and deferential. R’s use of muliere does not offer any specific detail about the woman while matrona provides some general information—that she is married and almost certainly of an elevated social status. That which was implied by the use of matrona in J’s title is quickly confirmed by the content of both chapters; R and J alike refer to the woman as nobilis shortly after, though J goes even further, saying she is “nobilis in predictis Gallorum terminis” [a noblewoman in the aforementioned region of Gaul]. Although this does not provide a great degree of detail related to the woman, it might imply that she was a well-known or well respected member of her community, suggesting that this particular miracle could have made a significant impact on that part of Francia at least within the context of the narrative if not in reality. In this case, the inclusion of “in predictis Gallorum terminis” after “nobilis” provides a kind of specificity in J that is absent in R—that she was not merely “a certain” well-known or high-born woman but one who was familiar and recognizable within her community. It can be reasonably concluded that this particular episode, as J records it, was meant to encourage veneration abroad by showcasing an instance where a Frankish woman was healed by beseeching an Anglo-Saxon saint.

---

55 Lantfred, Translatio, 320; Chapter xxxii title.

56 Lantfred, Translatio, 320; Chapter xxxii title.
Comparing the opening lines of Chapter xxxii in both R and J provides another illustrative example of the intentional efforts to tailor Continental miracle episodes to R’s English audience and J’s Frankish audience. R opens the chapter as follows:

Nec solum in finibus Anglorum, sed etiam in prouincia Francorum miracula sunt peracta per huius sancti merita. In eadem—ut perhibent qui hoc uiderunt—regione, quedam matrona nobilis ita erat eodem tempore graui constricta dolore…

Not only in England, but even in the Frankish province were miracles performed through the merits of this saint. In this same region—as people who saw it report—a certain noble woman was, at that time, so greatly burdened with pain…

This differs drastically from J’s reading:

Nec iudico dignum esse silentio preterire quod quedam matrona nobilis ita erat eodem tempore graui constricta dolore…

I do not think it is appropriate to silently omit that there was, at that time, a noble woman so greatly burdened with pain…

---

57 Lantfred, *Translatio*, 320; emphasis mine.

58 Lantfred, *Translatio*, 320; emphasis mine.
There are a number of points to note about the difference between the respective approaches of R and J in these opening lines. In R, the miracle episode in Chapter xxxii is introduced in terms that spotlight the reach of Swithun’s *virtus*, the construction “nec solum ... sed etiam” [not only … but even] creating a juxtaposition between England and Francia whereby the miracles performed in Francia are presented as extracurricular to those done England. R’s reading prepares the reader for a shift away from English-oriented miracles toward those that took place in Francia and thus creates a kind of rhetorical distance between this incident and the miracle episodes that came before. This could suggest that readers of R might not expect a discussion of Francia. This transition from English miracle accounts to Frankish ones was ostensibly unnecessary for J’s audience as the text jumps immediately into the action of the *miraculum* rather than offering language to prepare the reader for a transition to a Continental episode. Perhaps this too explains why R mentions Lantfred by name as the “sacerdos quidam nomine Lantfredus de Anglorum finibus” who experienced this miracle firsthand, as it creates an apparent connection that justifies the inclusion of this chapter within the greater context of the *Translatio*: that Lantfred, the author and denizen of Winchester, was witness to the miracle.  

---

59 Lapidge notes that that Lantfred must have been the primary witness for the Frankish miracles that appear in Chapters xxxii, xxxiii, and xxxiv. For more on this, see Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 321.
Plate I. Lantred’s name as it appears in R (above) and N (below).

J, on the other hand, omits Lantred’s name entirely but does include the same language in reference to him as a “certain priest from England . . . traveling to Francia at that time” [“sacerdos quidam de Anglorum finibus . . . dum pergeret ad Galliam in illis temporibus”]. While we might expect the opposite (that is, for the Continental manuscript to explicitly mention a priest from Fleury by name while the Insular manuscript omits it), Lantred was writing about a former bishop of the monastery in which he dwelt and thus we can assume that Swithun would have been more familiar to a Wintonian audience reading the Translatio than a Frankish one.

These stylistic differences between R and J continue in the following episode, described in Chapter xxxiii of the Translatio. R titles this section “de altera muliere gentis Francorum,” literally “concerning another woman of the Frankish people,” while J better reflects the action of the episode in its title: “De muliere in Gallia a

60 Lantred, Translatio, 320; Chapter xxxii, line 5.
demonio obsessa,” “concerning a woman in Gaul possessed by a demon.” The distinction here is how each iteration of the *Translatio* addresses the woman: while R introduces her as “another” woman of Frankish heritage, drawing attention to her Continental residence, J instead applies “Gallia” as an indication of the location of the miracle. In this way, J does not take pains to acknowledge the fact that it is directly following another episode that took place in Francia. R’s chapter title reflects a kind of categorical grouping, whereby Chapter xxxii and Chapter xxxiii are “Frankish miracle accounts” understood together as a section of episodes related to the Continent. Interestingly, R’s opening line for Chapter xxxiii is almost identical to J’s opening for Chapter xxxii—“Nec iudico dignum esse silentio preterire quod in predictis Gallorum terminis” [I do not think it is appropriate to silently omit that, in the aforementioned region of the Franks]—while J is rather brief by comparison: “In eadem Francorum regione” [In the same region of Francia]. There is a rhetorical difference between how J used this phrasing and how it is employed in R. Given that it appears in the first of the episodes related to Francia in J, it reads as an explanation for its inclusion in the *Translatio*—whereas when it shows up in the second of the Frankish episodes of R, it has the effect of providing justification for including yet another Continental narrative given

---

61 Lantfred, *Translatio*, 320; Chapter xxxii, lines 18–19.

62 Lantfred, *Translatio*, 322; Chapter xxxiii, lines 1–2.

63 See note b for Chapter xxxiii in Lapidge’s *apparatus criticus*, The Cult of St Swithun, 322.
that the text itself implies that including the episode in the R version of the *Translatio* was an “appropriate” choice rather than “inappropriately” and “silently” omitting it.

While there is no concrete evidence for Lantfred having a hand in the proposed Continental Recension, the organization of chapters in J, along with information related to the dating of J’s exemplar, offers some credence to this conjecture. Lapidge rightly remarks that the appearance in J of three chapters after the conclusion (Chapter xl) is idiosyncratic; the arrangement of three miracle episodes after the apparent ending of the *Translatio* is indeed nonsensical.\(^{64}\) When we compare these final chapters of R and J, R’s order certainly makes the most sense structurally; that is to say, the final chapter of R ends with “Finit libellus de miraculis sancti Swithuni episcopi”\(^{65}\) [(here) ends the little book of the miracles of St. Swithun the bishop] while J includes three additional chapters after its own Chapter xl. The three chapters that follow the finit conclusion in Chapter xl correspond with Chapters xxxvi, xxxvii, and xxvi in R.\(^{66}\) There is no obvious contextual explanation for ordering miracle chapters after the conclusion as they are in J. What could account for this idiosyncrasy, however, is the possibility that these three episodes were missing from the exemplar used by the scribes writing J. According to Chapter iii of J, the tomb of St. Swithun remained a site for miracles following his translation on July 15, 971, which was, according to the text, “iam sole decimum replicante annum”\(^{67}\) [now

\(^{64}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 243.

\(^{65}\) Lantfred, *Translatio*, 332; Chapter xl, lines 4–5.

\(^{66}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 243.

\(^{67}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 246.
with the sun unfolding the tenth year]; this same section in R substitutes “vicesimum quintum” [twenty-fifth] for “decimum”\(^{68}\). It is possible that J was copied from an exemplar that was older than R (copied or produced in 981 while R was copied in 996) and provides the original reading and the scribe of R updated the number of years that had passed between the *translatio*. Conjecture aside, we can say for certain that it is not possible for the reading in R to have been provided by Lantfred.\(^{69}\) Whether or not we accept J’s reading as authorial, it does show that J might have had an exemplar older than the one that was used to copy R. This possibility might also explain the bizarre inclusion of the three post-conclusion episodes in J if these were episodes that appeared in a later exemplar, such as the one used for R, and then were added to J or its exemplar after the fact. That is to say, if it is the case that the 981 dating of the text that appears in J is the date that J’s exemplar was produced, it is possible that the three aforementioned chapters were not included in that exemplar but rather were added later to J when it was being copied. If this is the case, the scribes of J could have supplied those three chapters by working from R or its exemplar given that R and J were copied at the Old Minster at the same time.

Further, there is a quirk found throughout the *Translatio* in both R and N that relates directly to the aforementioned issue of localization. Whenever an Anglo-Saxon personal name or place name appears in the text of R and N, it is written in the majuscule script that each respective manuscript uses for titles; while both manuscripts are almost

\(^{68}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 246.

\(^{69}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 246.
entirely written in English Caroline minuscule, these words appear in uncial in R and in rustic capitals in N. While switching between scripts to set apart the chapter titles of a hagiographical work is commonplace in Anglo-Saxon hagiographical manuscripts, there is not a consistent precedent for using this practice to differentiate or bring attention to proper names or place names. In both R and N, the place names and personal names that are differentiated from the text by another majuscule script are names for local people (Æthelwoldus\textsuperscript{70} and Eadric,\textsuperscript{71} for example) or locations other than Winchester (such as Sceftesbyrig\textsuperscript{72} and Bedefordscire\textsuperscript{73}). This practice is made even more peculiar by the fact that Swithun’s name does not receive this treatment; his name is always in the same script as the words that surround it. Along with Swithun’s name, Latinizations of “Winchester” (Wintonia/Winthonia), the Isle of Wight ( Vectam/Vectam), and references to Rome (Roma) and Francia (Gallia) also appear in the same script as the majority of the text. Continental proper names receive a similar treatment: for example, “Flodoaldus,” like “Swithun,” is not marked in any distinctive way in either R or N. Lantfred mentions Flodoaldus in Chapter xxv of the Translatio and does not provide any information about him aside from mentioning that he is a slave owner.\textsuperscript{74} That Flodoaldus’s name is not set apart from the text is peculiar in and of itself as it is an anomaly in the aforementioned

\textsuperscript{70} See Royal 15 C. vii, f. 25r; Cotton Nero E.i/I, f. 37v.

\textsuperscript{71} Royal 15 C. vii, f. 32r; Cotton Nero E.i/I, f. 47v.

\textsuperscript{72} Royal 15 C. vii, f. 46v.

\textsuperscript{73} Cotton Nero E.i/I, f. 45r.

\textsuperscript{74} Lantfred, Translatio, 308; Chapter xxv, line 2.
majuscule/proper name paradigm, but this disruption is made even more interesting when considered against the information Wulfstan provides about Flodoaldus in his *Narratio* and the fact that the name itself evokes an association with the Continent. In his *Narratio*, Wulfstan provides more context about Flodoaldus that is not found in Lantfred’s version of the *Translatio*, particularly that he was “gnarus in urbe Wentana,”\(^7^5\) which Lapidge advises should be taken to mean that he was well-known in Winchester. Lapidge also points out that “Flodoaldus” is not an English name, suggesting instead that the man was from somewhere in France (Lapidge points to a Picard or Norman background);\(^7^6\)

Wulfstan further elevates Flodoaldus’s reputation in his reworking of Lantfred’s original, referring to him as “nobilis … Flodoaldus onomate quidam.”\(^7^7\) While we might expect a name like Flodoaldus to appear in a majuscule script based on the paradigm discussed above, the fact that it appears in the same script as the rest of the body of the text instead tells us more about how the proper name paradigm is functioning. Like references to *Roma* and *Gallia*, *Flodoaldus* is another example of a Continental reference that is not set apart from the text by a change in script.

Based on this practice, it is an oversimplification to say that R and N present all personal names and locations in their respective higher-grade scripts—more accurately, R and N present *certain* personal names and locations in higher grade scripts. In terms of the names for locations, the most obvious common trait between all that

\(^{75}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 508; Book II, Chapter viii, line 300.

\(^{76}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 308 n. 227.

\(^{77}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 508; Book II, Chapter viii, line 300.
appear in majuscule script is that they all refer to people and places outside of Winchester with Anglo-Saxon names; people and places from the Continent, on the other hand, are not differentiated from the text. Aside from Swithun’s name, all Anglo-Saxon personal names in R and N appear in the respective majuscule script of that manuscript’s titles. Further, there are not any personal names or place names that are in a majuscule script in one manuscript that are not in majuscule in the other—it is clear that the scribes of N preserved this aspect of R when they made their copy. This practice of differentiating place names and personal names continues into Wulfstan’s Narratio in R; the Narratio does not appear in N as it is a Passionale rather than an anthology of hagiography related to Swithun. That said, the scribes of N did not continue this practice in any of the other vitae in N, a fact that further emphasizes the idiosyncrasy of this particular attribute.

When we compare these manuscripts with J, we can begin to understand why these words appear in majuscule script in R and N. To identify the pattern of majuscule use, I compiled an inventory of every word that appears in the respective majuscule scripts of R and N and looked at how those names appeared in J. The result is that 70 percent of the words that appeared in rustic capitals or uncial in R or N were names or locations that had been eliminated or altered by the scribes of J. By altered, I mean changed in a way related to the context of the person or place. An example of this phenomenon is the appearance of Edgar’s name in rustic capitals and uncial in R and N. In Chapter xxvi of Lantfred’s Translatio, an episode that details a miracle by which a blind man’s sight was restored, R and N read “Prenotato denique tempore, glorioso rege

---

78 See below for a table of the capitalized names and locations in R and N.
Eadgaro precipiente” [at the aforesaid time and at the order of the glorious King Edgar], with both texts presenting Eadgaro in capitals.⁷⁹ While King Edgar’s name still appears in J, he is referred to as only “Eadgaro rege,” with “glorioso” eliminated from the text entirely. In the majority of instances, however, J omits the personal name or place name entirely; on a few rare occasions, J presents the names of English towns or people with alternative spellings, as is the case of Eadgari in R and N which is spelled Æpgari in J.⁸⁰

Though there is certainly a correlation between the use of majuscule script in R and N and those highlighted proper names and locations not appearing in J, it could be the case that the use of majuscule script represents a kind of intratextual metadata whereby scribes copying the Translatio could elect to leave the proper names in the text when copying a manuscript for local use or eliminate them when making a manuscript bound for the Continent. This theory certainly reflects the fact that words that appear in majuscule in R are either eliminated from or altered in J the vast majority of the time at a rate that is too frequent to be a coincidence. While there is not a known tradition of a practice such as the one that I have proposed, the fact that there are so many differences between two manuscripts made at the same time in the same place and that these differences are part of a distinct pattern seems to validate this theory.

---

⁷⁹ Lantfred, Translatio, 310; Chapter xxvi, lines 2–3. See also R, f. 35r and N, f. 47v.

⁸⁰ Lantfred, Translatio, 328; see footnote b for Chapter xxxvi in Lapidge’s apparatus criticus.
Plate II. Proper names in majuscule in R (top) and N (bottom).

Given that that 70 percent of the same words differentiated by majuscule script in R and N are words that are missing or altered in J, we can assume that this convention reflects something about the manuscript tradition of the Translatio. The fact that the scribes of N retained R’s system of attributing a script of a higher grade to personal names and place names in the Translatio but did not carry it over into the other vitae of the Passionale attests to the fact that there is something special happening in R. This system of highlighting notable Anglo-Saxon people and places and not merely all people and places reflects a particular interest in locality that is consistent with the thematic emphasis on locality within the narrative of the Translatio itself. If we accept, as Lapidge does, that J was intended to go to the Continent, the elimination of the majority of references to local people and places that appear in majuscule script in R/N suggests these alterations were made systematically for Continental audiences to form a Continental Recension of the Translatio.
Table 1. Omissions and Emendations Between Manuscripts R, N, and J

With this in mind, we can consider what the majuscule script might be able to tell us about the manuscript tradition of the Translatio. Given that 70 percent of the majuscule script in R is absent or altered in the text of J, it is possible that R’s exemplar (or another intermediary manuscript that inspired the exemplar for J) utilized this system of capitalization as a kind of metadata for scribes who copied from it—that is to say, the majuscule script signaled to scribes when there was a reference to localized information.
and the scribes, depending on their purposes for creating a new manuscript, could either copy the local names or places into the new manuscript or leave it out. Of course, this process certainly would not have been cut and dried; we need only look at J to see that removing local references was not as straightforward as simply not copying the name of a local bishop or Anglo-Saxon town. Instead, the intermediary or exemplar for J would probably have undergone a drafting process whereby a scribe could have used a manuscript with features like those retained in R as a reference for the Translatio while making revisions, adding transition sentences, and possibly reordering the chapter structure. If we consider the text of R and J alone, the manuscripts are closely related in terms of common mistakes and language; although there is evidence of emendation throughout J, the manuscripts have more in common than not. That said, when we take an inventory of the most significant differences between the texts, it is clear that the disparity between R and J is more thematic than it is contentual. Based on this, it is feasible that an intermediary shared by R and J was the base text for R or its exemplar while serving as the base text for one of the initial drafts in the manuscript tradition of the Continental Recension.

The implication of understanding J as representative of a Continental Recension of the greater manuscript tradition for Lantfred’s Translatio is twofold. First, and perhaps most importantly, conceptualizing the differences between R and J as efforts to craft a version of the Translatio that effectively universalized the narrative means that we acknowledge J is a new branch of the tradition in its own right rather than an
“incompetent redaction” of R. By detaching our assessment of J as based on R, we are able to theorize real, logical explanations for the differences in chapter order between the two manuscripts and acknowledge that the transition sentences between the chapters illustrate that J’s reordering was intentional. While it may certainly be the case, as Lapidge suggests, that R must resemble Lantfred’s autograph more closely than J, this conclusion should not mean that we dismiss J as derivative of the source text; instead, when we acknowledge that J is a reinterpretation, reorganization, or recapitulation of the Translatio for a Continental audience, we can better conceptualize its function within the scheme of the tradition.

---

81 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 250.
CHAPTER 3
THE ANGLO-SAXON HAGIOGRAPHY OF THE CULT OF SAINT SWITHUN

The hagiography for St. Swithun of Winchester is, in some ways, not unlike hagiographical writing for the cult of any saint—the various hagiographical works for Swithun detail the posthumous miracles that took place before the tombs, shrines, and reliquaries built to honor him. Recorded in Latin and the vernacular and composed in prose and verse, accounts of happenings associated with Swithun—especially those related to his translation and the miracles which occurred thereafter—began to circulate shortly after the events they documented.

The earliest narrative in Swithun’s hagiographical corpus was composed by Lantfred of Fleury within a few years of Swithun’s translation on July 15, 971. Known as the *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*, Lantfred’s account of the life of the former bishop of Winchester is one of the most substantial Latin prose texts that survives from Anglo-Saxon England.⁸² Lapidge dates the *Translatio* as having been composed at Winchester no earlier than 972 and no later than 974 or 975.⁸³ While these dates are certainly plausible given contextual information provided by Lantfred, a comparison of Lantfred’s text and the archeological record means that we can more closely date the final version of the *Translatio* to between 972 and 973, the middle of 974 at the very latest.⁸⁴ Lantfred’s work was commissioned by the monks at the Old Minster and was written, according to

---


⁸⁴ For more on the dating of the *Translatio*, see Chapter Five.
Lapidge, “with this local and restricted audience in mind” but came to be widely circulated on the Continent as well as in England.85

About twenty years later, another monk at the Old Minster, Wulfstan of Winchester, reworked Lantfred’s Translatio into verse, casting the prose into Latin hexameters. Little is known of Wulfstan’s life aside from the fact that he was given to the Old Minster as a child oblate and was the precentor at the church in the 990s.86 Wulfstan’s text, known as the Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno, formed half of what is considered an opus geminatum, or “twinned work,” that recorded the events of the saint’s afterlife. Wulfstan’s version of Swithun’s posthumous miracles built upon Lantfred’s original text considerably, adding extensive description of the building projects that had taken place at the Old Minster in the years following Lantfred’s Translatio as part of an Epistola specialis addressed to Bishop Ælfheah, successor to Æthelwold, who oversaw the see at Winchester from 984 to 1006.87 While Lantfred’s version of Swithun’s Translatio reached a wide audience, Wulfstan’s Narratio did not have the same popularity; this was apparently by design. Lapidge notes that there was a “lively tradition of rendering hagiographical prose into verse” in Anglo-Saxon England, beginning with Bede who rendered the anonymous, prose Vita S. Cuthberti into a hexameter version titled Vita metrica S. Cuthberti. Wulfstan’s Narratio, in contrast to Lantfred’s text, was

85 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 67.

86 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 67.

87 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 67.
meant to be read “in meditation by small numbers of scholars who had a taste for refined verse.”

While there is a later account of Swithun’s life preserved in a collection of hagiography known as *Lives of Saints* by Ælfric of Eynsham (c. 955–c. 1010), whose monastic life began in Winchester at the time that Swithun’s cult was forming, his text is little more than a partial abridgement of Lantfred’s original prose version with some elements taken from a work commonly referred to as the *Epitome* which was not known to Lantfred. Lapidge argues that the *Epitome* was written by Ælfric based on the fact that “Ælfric had apparently assembled a number of Latin texts, excerpted them, and then used the excerpts as the basis for translation and adaptation into Old English.” To this *Epitome*, Lapidge says that Ælfric adds “several miracles which were known to him personally” and “frequently provides valuable personal observations on the growth of the cult of St. Swithun in late tenth-century Winchester.”

Although it is undeniable that Ælfric’s vernacular account of Swithun included content that was not found in either Lantfred’s or Wulfstan’s hagiographical works, the notion that this content is completely original is one that I contest. While it is true that there are episodes in Ælfric’s account that do not follow the order of events as Lantfred

---

88 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 68.


91 Lapidge, *The Cult of St. Swithun*, 575.
records them in R,\textsuperscript{92} it is not the case that all of these episodes are “new” to Swithun’s hagiographical corpus. It is more accurate to say that Ælfric provides authorial context to content that is similar to episodes found in Lantfred’s and, subsequently, Wulfstan’s accounts. An example of this can be found in Chapter xxvii of Ælfric’s hagiographical work.\textsuperscript{93} Lapidge notes in brackets that this episode has “no source” though he points out that the opening for the episode mirrors Chapter xxxix in Lantfred.\textsuperscript{94} There is a second similarity in the same chapter of Ælfric’s account that Lapidge does not note, this time to Book II, Chapter xxvii of Wulfstan’s \textit{Narratio}. In each of these respective works, the authors discuss the objects hanging on the walls of the Old Minster as evidence of different kinds of healing cures.\textsuperscript{95} It is impossible to say for certain whether Wulfstan was

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[92]{London, British Library, Royal 15 C. vii.}
\footnotetext[93]{Ælfric, \textit{Life of St. Swithun}, 606; Chapter xxvii, lines 224–33.}
\footnotetext[94]{Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St. Swithun}, 606; see footnote 64.}
\footnotetext[95]{Wulfstan 506; Book II, Chapter xxvii, lines 294–98. While discussing an arm band that had been removed from a man by Swithun’s \textit{virtus}, Wulfstan says that “cum multisque aliis testantibus inclita signa/ compedibus, manicis, scabellis atque bacillis,/ coenobio pro teste fuit suspensus in ipso” [along with many other fetters, manacles, crutches, and walking sticks which signal illustrious miracles, (the armband) was suspended as testimony in the monastery itself]. This is almost identical to how Ælfric discusses the objects on the walls of the church in Chapter xxvii: “Seo ealde cyrce wæs eall behangen mid criccum and mid creopera sceamelum fram ende oð oþerne on ægðerum wage, þe ðær wurdon gehælede… .” [The old church (the Old Minster) was}
\end{footnotes}
the source for Ælfric in this case or if the opposite is true; either way, it is inaccurate to suggest that Ælfric’s account of the wall hangings is “new” material. Given that Wulfstan and Ælfric were contemporaries of one another, it is possible that they each recorded their observations in their respective hagiographical works independent of one another. While Chapter xxvii of Ælfric’s narrative contains new information—namely, an anti-Semitic rant about how Jews are “þurh deofol beswicene” [deceived by the devil]—the content related to Swithun is largely a retelling of accounts drawn mostly from Lantfred. This example is a microcosm for the vast majority of the kinds of differences between Ælfric’s work and the work of the hagiographer who wrote before him. Of the twenty-nine chapters of Ælfric’s version, there are only six that Lapidge indicates as having no source material; if we exclude the aforementioned Chapter xxvii which clearly does use Lantfred as a source, only five out of the twenty-nine chapters are of Ælfric’s own invention. Of those five chapters, only two contain miracle accounts: Chapter xix, wherein a man who mocked Swithun fell ill before later being cured at the saint’s shrine, and Chapter xxvi, a single-sentence entry that describes a man who visited hung all around with crutches and with the stools of cripples—from one end to the other and on either wall—of those who had been healed there]; Ælfric 606; Chapter xxvii, lines 227–29.

96 Ælfric 606; Chapter xxvii, lines 230–31.

97 These are Chapters xix, xx, xxiv, xxvi, and xxvii.

98 Ælfric 606; Chapter xix, lines 152–160.
Swithun’s grave and was relieved of a painful headache.\textsuperscript{99} The other three chapters read as authorial interventions; Chapter xx is a warning against acting foolishly while holding vigil at a grave,\textsuperscript{100} Chapter xxiv is a warning against putting too much stock in dreams,\textsuperscript{101} and Chapter xxviii is an account praising King Edgar (c. 943–8 July 975), Æthelwold, and Dunstan (909–988).\textsuperscript{102} As only two chapters of Ælfric’s account contain original miracle accounts and one of these accounts is a single sentence, Ælfric’s text does not contain enough significant, original content to contribute to the present discussion. Furthermore, the fact that Ælfric does not provide any new information about construction in Winchester means that Ælfric’s account of Swithun’s miracles is of little use to the present study of building in Winchester. For these reasons, Lantfred’s account of Swithun’s afterlife is the best source for the events before and after the saint’s translation while Wulfstan’s Narratio attests to events that took place after Lantfred’s Translatio and discusses at great length the various building projects that took place at the Old Minster after 972/3.

\textbf{THE STRUCTURE OF THE \textit{OPUS GEMINATUM} FOR SWITHUN}

While Wulfstan’s Narratio is the focus of later chapters of this dissertation, it is appropriate to begin discussion of Swithun’s hagiography by looking at Lantfred’s

\textsuperscript{99} Ælfric 606; Chapter xxvi, lines 222–23.

\textsuperscript{100} Ælfric 602; Chapter xx, lines 161–66.

\textsuperscript{101} Ælfric 602; Chapter xxiv, lines 212–17.

\textsuperscript{102} Ælfric 606; Chapter xxviii, lines 234–44.
Translatio for two reasons: because it is the first in the hagiographical tradition for
Swithun’s cult and also because it is the basis for Wulfstan’s text. While Lantfred’s and
Wulfstan’s versions of Swithun’s translation and miracles feature a number of differences
on a lexical level, their chapter structures and accounts within the chapters are
overwhelmingly similar. I argue that these two works together form an opus geminatum.
As Erica Weaver has discussed, the opus geminatum was a popular genre of writing in
Anglo-Saxon England and was taught widely in Anglo-Saxon schools; first introduced to
readers of the English vernacular by Aldhelm, the tradition was utilized by Bede in his
treatment of the life of Cuthbert and, later, by Alcuin for St. Willibrord. 103 While this
term typically refers to a pair of texts (one in prose and the other in verse) written by the
same author about the same subject, Lantfred’s Translatio and Wulfstan’s Narratio
should be considered as a set of twin texts in spite of the fact that they were written by
different authors. 104 Given that Wulfstan uses Lantfred’s accounts of the translation and
the miracle accounts that follow as his source for Book I of his Narratio, these particular
sections are almost identical; it is only in Book II of Wulfstan’s Narratio that he

103 Erica Weaver, “Hybrid Forms: Translating Boethius in Anglo-Saxon

104 Erica Weaver has discussed the concept of considering metrical and prose
versions of the same topic written by two authors as still meeting the conventions of an
opus geminatum in her discussion of the vernacular prose and prosimmetrical versions of
Boethius’s De consolatione philosophiae. For more on this, see Weaver, “Hybrid Forms:
introduces the miracle accounts and building projects that took place after Lantfred wrote the *Translatio*. With this in mind, using Lantfred’s *Translatio* to discuss the organization of the hagiographical account, instances of *miracula*, and the more pervasive themes of the text is the most logical option. It is also the case that the issues addressed in this chapter that reference Lantfred’s hagiographical account of Swithun’s translation apply as well to Wulfstan’s *Narratio*; that is to say, that sections quoted from Lantfred’s text also appear in Wulfstan’s, though of course altered slightly to meet the metrical conventions of the *Narratio*. I have also provided charts for chapter breakdown and miracle occurrence for Wulfstan’s *Narratio* in Appendix C. This is based on the methodology used to account for the differences in section length between the prose and metrical versions of the texts that is detailed in this chapter. This chapter also considers Lantfred’s *Translatio* as a narrative with three discursive parts: episodes detailing events that took place prior to the translation, the translation episode itself, and the series of episodes after the translation. If we look at the *Translatio* with these three parts in mind, we can better understand how each section sets the stage for the next based on Lantfred’s rhetoric and, more importantly, how the arc of the narrative reflects the purpose of the narrative for the monastic and secular populations in Winchester. Considering the *Translatio* from this perspective also brings to the forefront how different types of *miracula* are employed within the body of the text and how the kinds of *miracula* in each of these parts of the narrative have a rhetorical function that relates to monastic and lay interactions within the framework of the cult at the Old Minster.

Before discussing the structure of the *Translatio*, it is important to consider how miracle occurrences are distributed throughout the narrative. First, the sheer number of
miracles Lantfred packs into his *Translatio* seems large to begin with given his relatively brief description of the translation itself; miracles are the focus of thirty-nine of forty-one chapters. That said, the true number of individual miracles Lantfred recounts is even greater—at least 239 miracles are explicitly counted by Lantfred in addition to one chapter that cites “innumerable” others. Consider where these miracles occur within the timeline of the *Translatio*:

Figure 5. Miracle Episodes in Lantfred’s *Translatio*

It is something of a misrepresentation to refer to Lantfred’s text in a way that suggests the *translatio* of Swithun’s remains from the churchyard to the Old Minster is the primary focus of the narrative; on the contrary, the translation is one of the shortest chapters of the *Translatio* and contains but a single miracle in a text that is otherwise
densely populated with miracle episodes. Rather than a text about the translation of Swithun’s remains, Lantfred’s text is the story of how the relocation of Swithun’s body allowed that body to facilitate almost one hundred times more miracles than it had when it was buried in the Old Minster churchyard. This is a text that makes a rhetorical argument in favor of translation, that acts as a template for how to set into motion the formation of a cult for a man who did not perform any significant miracles in his lifetime, at least not any that were recorded or passed down through cultural memory to the extent that they were recorded by Lantfred. This purpose is evident in even the most basic structure of the hagiography as the miracles before the translation do little more than pave the way for the translation to take place, each miracle instance provided as a kind of rationale for the relocation. If we consider the Translatio as a narrative in three parts—the events before the translation (inventio), the translation itself (translatio), and the events after (miracula)—we can understand the narrative as one that details miracles that “argue” for or set the stage for the translation, the fulfillment of the translation, and the miracles that are thus able to take place once the body was translated. Considering the episodes before the translation, there is no single instance in the hagiography where Swithun’s body is a viable source for any kind of miracle aside from ones that have to do with setting the gears in motion for what seems like his inevitable translation. The narrative is thus teleological; the first miracle in the narrative is a vision that calls for the translation that is necessary so that all of the subsequent miracles can take place. Lantfred does not attempt to disguise this impulse in his Translatio; on the contrary, he has front-loaded his text with this intention.
If the distribution of miracle occurrences on its own was not compelling enough evidence to justify this reading of Lantfred’s rhetorical intention, the attention given to the three phases supports this claim as well. Provided we divide the narrative into the same three discursive sections, Lantfred’s focus and, consequently, where he directs his readers’ attention remain the same. Using Lantfred’s own chapter divisions (excluding his letter to the brothers of the Old Minster as well as the *Translatio*’s preface), the breakdown of action is as follows:

![Figure 6. Length of Description of Events in Lantfred](image)

Here, it is evident that Lantfred’s concentration is almost entirely on the miracle episodes after Swithun’s translation rather than on the translation itself; in fact, the translation episode is the shortest component of the narrative. Even this chart significantly exaggerates the length of the translation episode as it reflects the length of the section that contains the action of the translation but does not take into account the
fact that that episode is almost entirely preoccupied with a miracle account that took place before the translation. If one ignores Lantfred’s structure and considers only what is occurring in the action of the narrative, the distribution is even further skewed:

Figure 7. Recalibrated Length of Description of Events in Lantfred

LANTFRED OF FLEURY’S *TRANSLATIO ET MIRACULA S. SWITHUNI*

By ignoring Lantfred’s chapter divisions and considering the content of the arc of the narrative discursively, it is clear that the majority of the text is concerned with relaying miracle accounts after the translation of Swithun’s remains into the Old Minster. Lantfred’s account of the events before the translation is dense and packed with detail to an unparalleled degree compared with the level of detail of the rest of the narrative. This section contains what is clearly meant to be a transcription of a conversation including seemingly direct quotations from each speaker (a smith, a bishop, and the corporeal spirit of St. Swithun) as they discuss the necessity of unearthing Swithun’s remains from the churchyard. It should not be surprising that it is these episodes that Lantfred is the most
careful to recount, as they act as testimony of holy permission for mortal action. The structure of the episode, in spite of Lantfred’s verbosity, is rather straightforward: a holy person appears miraculously to a laborer to advise him to initiate efforts that lead clergymen to excavate his body and call for the construction of a relic shrine for the saint’s remains.

This episode is impressive because it accomplishes everything that is necessary for Swithun to become a saint worthy of veneration in an extremely tight span of time and with very little action. In almost all cases of Anglo-Latin hagiography, a person reaches the status of saint for one of three reasons: 1) a saint or his/her body performs or exhibits evidence of some kind of miracle during his/her lifetime as proof of his or her holiness; if a hagiographical work does not illustrate the saint in this manner, it may present the saint-to-be as 2) a figure who eschews a life of worldly things in favor of a life dedicated to God; or 3) the saint’s piety is acknowledged by God after his/her death, often through the saint’s burial place becoming a site for miracles or his or her

---

105 Examples of this can be found in the lives of Cuthbert, Aidan, Dunstan, and Neot.

106 There is some crossover here, particularly in the case of Neot. Alternatively, examples of this are found in the lives of Æthelthryth, Guthlac, John of Beverley, Bede, Seaxburh, and Æthelwold who were said to have reached the status of saint due to their piety and devotion to God.
body being found incorrupt after a number of years.\textsuperscript{107} Even the hagiographical narratives where the majority of the narrative is concerned with a saint post mortem—Bede’s account of the life of St. Æthelthryth, for example—follow this formula.

Lantfred, on the other hand, does not do this in his account of Swithun either because he does not know of any particular instances of piety he can include in order to attest to the saint’s holiness or he refuses to fabricate biographical information about the saint. This is curious in and of itself because Lantfred does know that Swithun was a bishop and could, to a reasonable degree of extrapolation, note that his piety, disinterest in the secular world, and clerical leadership resulted in the honor of being named bishop—even if Lantfred did not have written record of this, it would be a fair assumption given Swithun’s title at the Old Minster. While the notion that Lantfred ought to have extrapolated or generalized about Swithun might be unsavory to modern audiences, this was a widespread practice in hagiographical writing: according to Rachel S. Anderson in her discussion of Anglo-Latin saints’ lives, the vitae of English saints “are often modeled on the classics of the hagiographical tradition” and the “formulaic nature of the legends in fact evolved as a method to secure membership in the ecumenical

\textsuperscript{107} In their respective vitae, Æthelthryth, Edmund, Guthlac, and Judoc of Winchester were found incorrupt when their graves were opened; Saints Hilda, Oswald, and Wilfrid of Hexham were associated with miracles after their deaths.
communion of the saints for the person commemorated.”

With this in mind, the lack of biographical information in the *Translatio* is striking even when we account for the fact that hagiographers often borrowed from similar works.

It seems peculiar that Lantfred did not find it necessary to record even the most trivial of detail about Swithun the bishop at any point in his *Translatio* only if this choice is separated from the context of the intentional structure of Lantfred’s account. The section that opens the account and sets the stage for the *translatio* is almost entirely concerned with circular logic that creates and validates the translation to come with efficient miracles and a convenient cast of characters. First, consider what the narrative needs to situate Swithun as a saint who can be venerated: an attested miracle, a place that can be marked as a site for communion with the saint, and some impetus for enshrinement. Lantfred takes care of all of this in the first section of his *Translatio*; that Swithun is present in this section and has a discussion with the smith is the miracle. In a matter of a single sentence, Swithun arrives as a vision to the smith and immediately asks for his remains to be translated; the miracle is not one that benefits the smith or the brothers of the Old Minster but the future of a cult of St. Swithun that is, in that moment, nonexistent. It is not unfair to say that Swithun’s miracle perhaps ought to be understood as a promise of future miracles rather than a miracle in the traditional sense. From a hagiographical standpoint, almost all the *vitae* of Anglo-Saxon saints that include

---

miracles record the first miracle as one related to healing or the fact that the saint’s body was found incorrupt; almost without exception, hagiographers at least take care to describe the saint’s life before death—even if it did not include any significant miracle accounts—to tell their audiences of that particular saint’s piety in life. Whatever the reason behind Lantfred’s decision to begin the Translatio in the manner he did, we are left with a text that is unmistakably interested in what is left in the wake of a translation rather than the saint himself.

If we consider the chapters of Lantfred’s Translatio as they are distributed throughout the aforementioned three-part model, we are able to understand a narrative wherein the first part provides impetus for the translatio, the second act describes the translatio, and the third act affirms the translatio as the Old Minster and the cult reap the rewards of venerating the translated saint. In this way, the focus is always on the act of translation—declaring the need for it, canonizing it with a ceremony, and recounting all the miraculous things that were able to come to pass on account of it. There is nothing that is uniquely “Swithun” about Lantfred’s Translatio and, subsequently, Wulfstan’s Narratio, aside from the fact that he fits the bill for a Wintonian cult—that is, he is a former bishop of Winchester. This portrayal of “blank-slate saint” might have worked to the favor of the hagiographical audience; in her discussion of the purpose of hagiography, Anderson notes that “historical and personal particularities of the saints tend to be smoothed away in an effort to render the appeal of the saint as ecumenical as possible.”\textsuperscript{109}

Given Lantfred’s lack of detail about Swithun’s time as bishop, it is difficult to imagine

Swithun as a figure with any kind of illustrious accomplishments that would have made him renowned in his lifetime; had he earned a reputation in Winchester prior to his death, certainly Lantfred or Wulfstan would have included it in their respective hagiographical works. In spite of this, the hagiographical Swithun is a teleological saint who demands his own making by entering the dreams of a blacksmith and commanding that the blacksmith tell a member of Eadsige’s retinue to tell Eadsige to translate Swithun in the manner of an overwrought game of telephone. Swithun orders the blacksmith to pass along a message:

\begin{quote}
Hoc tibi, Eadzine, presul mandat Suuithunus, quatinus ad Wintoniensem festinanter pergas ciuitatem dicasque antistiti (qui modo eandem regit diocesim, cui olim prefuit) quo corpus suum de monumento eleuet et digne in ecclesia collocet. \textsuperscript{110}
\end{quote}

Bishop Swithun commands this of you, Eadsige, that you go quickly to the city of Winchester and say to the bishop (who presently rules in the diocese in which he [Swithun] once ruled) that he exhume his body from the tomb and place it fittingly within the church.

\textsuperscript{110} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 260–62; Chapter i, lines 25–6.
The smith, who Lantfred calls “veridicus” [trustworthy] when he introduces him at the onset of the chapter,\textsuperscript{111} argues with Swithun’s request, claiming that Eadsige would never believe what the saint had asked him to relay [“Domine, nullo modo uoluerit meis credere dictis”].\textsuperscript{112} To try to quell the smith’s concerns, Swithun then gives him a way to prove to Eadsige that the message from his vision was true—that Eadsige would be able to pull a ring from the lid of Swithun’s tomb. This act, Swithun tells the smith, will make it clear to Eadsige that it was Swithun that sent the smith to him.

This exchange is rather bizarre in and of itself. Resistant at best and argumentative at worst, the smith’s disposition is anything but awestruck by the fact that a saint commandeered his dreams in order to use him as an agent on behalf of the divine. On the contrary, the smith is remarkably hesitant and doubtful of the apparition of Swithun in spite of his angelic appearance which Lantfred describes as “decora preeditus canitie angelicaque preclarus effigie, necne bissino amictus peplo pedesque aurato comptus sandalio”\textsuperscript{113} [provided with graceful white hair and dazzling in the likeness of an angel, clothed in a linen robe and wearing on his feet golden sandals]. The smith neither recognizes Swithun nor is he described as being impressed by Swithun’s visit—instead, he meets Swithun’s introduction and request with skepticism and concerns about the logistics of finding Eadsige and convincing Eadsige to believe him. When Swithun leaves the smith, the smith ultimately decides to ignore the message, “primo metuens

\textsuperscript{111} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 260; Chapter i, line 8.

\textsuperscript{112} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 262; Chapter i, lines 28–9.

\textsuperscript{113} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 260; Chapter i, lines 8–9.
uideri sicofanta falsidicus ac deinde diuulgari insana mente furiosus"\textsuperscript{114} [fearing first to be seen as a lying deceiver and thereafter to be slandered as a demented madman]. The smith ignores Swithun’s request a second time when the saint visits him but is finally provoked to action after a third encounter wherein Swithun levels a death threat against him:

\[\text{Qui commonitus secundo ab eodem sancto, nec minus tertia commonitione acriter increpatus ab euchari pontifice—uidelicet cur eius nollet sacris obedire preceptis—cruedelique insuper comminatus nece si non allubescret edictis sacratissimi uatis.}\textsuperscript{115}

He was warned a second time by that same saint, and by a third warning no less he was severely reproached by the gracious bishop, as to why he [the smith] did not obey his [Swithun’s] commands—and, furthermore the smith was threatened with a ruthless death if he would not submit to the requests of the most holy soothsayer.

The smith’s resistance to Swithun’s orders is more than disobedience or stubbornness—it is a sign of disbelief. On one hand, it is the disbelief he relays to Swithun—that is, fear that he will not be trusted if he were to tell Eadsige of his vision—

\textsuperscript{114} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 262; Chapter i, lines 42–3.

\textsuperscript{115} Lantfred, \textit{Translatio}, 262; Chapter i, lines 44–6.
but, more importantly, what appears to be a lack of belief in Swithun’s status as saint or divine agent. Although Swithun appears before the smith in all of the trappings of a saint, the smith denies him three times (perhaps an allusion to the Denial of Peter?) before finally complying with the saint’s orders, even then only doing so after Swithun threatens him with death. This passage suggests that Swithun was not a popular cultural figure identifiable to the laity of Winchester and is thus a reflection on the degree to which he was virtually unknown prior to his translation. The fact that Lantfred calls the smith “trustworthy” at the beginning of the episode suggests that the smith was of sound judgement; rather than chastising the smith or disavowing his lack of action after the initial visits, Lantfred’s description of him has the effect that the smith’s response to Swithun, his reluctance to follow the saint’s orders, is perhaps understandable. When the smith finally does comply with Swithun’s demands, he is the one who goes to Swithun’s tomb to pull out the ring, an action that clearly demonstrates that the smith still doubts Swithun’s virtus (however he understands it) even after the visions.

In a footnote for this passage, Lapidge expresses his bewilderment at the smith’s behavior in this regard, attributing the smith’s actions as “an odd inconsistency in Lantfred’s account.”116 “However, it is the smith and not Eadsige who goes to the tomb and pulls on the ring. Yet the smith had no need to verify Swithun’s request, since he had seen the saint in visions on three occasions,” Lapidge continues, after recounting the episode, pointing out that it was Eadsige who was meant to use the ring test as a means of substantiating the smith’s account. While it is certainly the case that Swithun intended

116 Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 264 n. 59.
this to be proof for Eadsige rather than the smith, I disagree with the assertion that this is an “inconsistency” in Lantfred’s account. Given what Lantfred has demonstrated of the smith’s reaction to Swithun and given that it took three visits from Swithun and, ultimately, a death threat to motivate the smith to even consider relaying his vision to anyone else, it is clear that the smith’s actions are yet another reflection of his disbelief in Swithun’s message.

An equally important aspect of this first chapter of Lantfred’s Translatio is the extent to which Lantfred depicts the socio-religious climate in Winchester in the first two years of the 970s. In a telling passage in his Vita S. Æthelwoldi, Wulfstan illustrates the way in which the cult of St. Swithun effectively affirmed Æthelwold’s advocacy of monastic reform:

Erat … Æthelwoldus … sermone et opera magnifice pollens, in plerisque locis ecclesias dedicans et ubique euangelium Christi praedicans… Cuius praedicationem maxime iuuit sanctus antistes Swithunus eodem tempore caelestibus signis declaratus et infra templi regiam gloriosissime translatus ac decentissime collocatus. Ideoque gemina simul in domo Dei fulsere luminaria …: quia quod Æthelwoldus salubri uerborum exhortatione praedicavit, hoc Swithunus miraculorum exhibitione mirifice decoravit …
sicque factum est ... ut ... monasteria ubique in gente Anglorum ... constituerentur.\textsuperscript{117}

\textit{Æ}thelwold ... was ... splendidly strong in word and deed, dedicating churches in many places and everywhere preaching the gospel of Christ.... His preaching was greatly aided by the holy bishop Swinun’s being at this time marked out by signs from heaven and gloriously translated to receive proper burial within the church. So, it was that at one and the same time two lamps blazed in the house of God....: for what \textit{Æ}thelwold preached by the saving encouragement of his words, Swinun wonderfully ornamented by display of miracles ... and so it came about ... that the monasteries were established everywhere in England.\textsuperscript{118}

While an intensive discussion of the role of the Benedictine reform in Winchester is beyond the scope of this dissertation,\textsuperscript{119} Wulfstan’s assessment of \textit{Æ}thelwold’s

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{118}] Translation from Deshman, “Saint Swinun in Early Medieval Art,” 92.
\item[\textsuperscript{119}] For more information about the role of the Benedictine reform on the religious and lay communities as it relates specifically to Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s depiction of Winchester in the hagiography related to the cult of St. Swinun, see Christopher T.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
preaching “must be understood as synonymous with his advocacy of monastic reform.” Wulfstan’s passage suggests that the surge of miracles and subsequent fame of Swithun’s cult “would appear as signs of heavenly approval for the bishop’s policy of monastic reform. That heaven should have sent such timely divine support and sanction in the form of St. Swithun must have been of great importance for Æthelwold.” Given Æthelwold’s efforts to reform the Old Minster and in light of his expulsion of the secular canons from the Old Minster, Wulfstan’s assessment of the effect of Æthelwold’s preaching on Swithun’s cult suggests that Æthelwold promoted Swithun so that the infinite number of miracula attested to in the hagiography would effectively endorse the reform itself.

While Æthelwold’s expulsion of the secular canons from the Old Minster in 964 might on its face suggest a rift between the monastic and secular communities in Winchester, the smith’s important role and Lantfred’s praise for him suggest an effort to repair the relationship between the secular and monastic communities. Though I am not arguing that Lantfred intentionally framed it this way, I do think it is useful to examine the smith, the first lay character of the Translatio, as a parallel for the state of the laity in Winchester in the early 970s. Lantfred’s text is not indicative of this attitude toward the


120 Deshman, “Saint Swithun in Early Medieval Art,” 94.

121 Deshman, “Saint Swithun in Early Medieval Art,” 94.
laity at large given the role they play throughout the *Translatio*; it is in fact the smith, a layperson, to whom Swithun first appears. First and foremost, the smith is introduced in positive terms—not only does Lantfred refer to him as trustworthy but he also is the first person, layman or cleric, with whom Swithun interacts. Further, the smith is the *only* person in the entirety of the narrative who has a dialogue with Swithun and it is the smith that Swithun entrusted to set into action the events that ultimately lead to his translation.

In this way, there is a reciprocity between Swithun and the smith, each playing a role that mirrors the relationship between the religious and lay communities in tenth-century Winchester. It is no coincidence that the concept of symbiosis rears its head repeatedly when discussing the relationship between Swithun, the community (lay and religious) at Winchester, and the Old Minster—each of these play a specific role vital to the success of the cult. In this first chapter of the *Translatio*, Swithun typifies the kind of behavior expected from those in clerical roles within Æthelwold’s reformed monastic community by providing pastoral care. Swithun’s discourse with the smith does not seem so strange when we consider the role that Swithun has adopted in his interaction with the smith: teacher. The smith’s reluctance, his choice to deny Swithun’s request on multiple occasions, and his doubt dovetail perfectly with what Lantfred says about the purpose of miracles:

*Nimirum idcirco Deus tot et tam inaudita nouissimis temporibus mundo prebet mirabilia, ut mollescant hominum saxea ac resipiscant prauorum corda et festinent ad celestia bonis operibus gaudia; quoniam signa infidelibus populis sunt tribuenda, fidelibus autem nequaquam necessaria.*
Numquid Deo rerum conditori obedient, qui eius beneficia floccipendunt?
Nonne Deum ad iracundiam prouocant, qui silendo eius magnificentiam negant?\(^\text{122}\)

In fact, God is showing the world so many and such unheard-of marvels in these recent times so that the stony hearts of evil men may become gentle and recover their senses and make haste toward heavenly joys with their good works, since miracles are granted to the unfaithful people but are in no way necessary for the faithful. Do those people obey God, the creator of all things, who ignore his kindness? Do they not incite anger from God, those who, as they keep silent, deny his magnificence?

The smith’s disobedience, his silence in the face of Swithun’s request, and his desire for proof of Swithun’s message reflect Lantfred’s sentiments about the purpose of miracles and their audience. The smith is very much an example of a “stony-hearted” man who is changed when he becomes witness to a miracle and, subsequently, an instrumental part of Swithun’s translation. In the above passage, Lantfred seems to be sketching out what it means to become a believer, suggesting that it is a process wherein the concept of “evil” is defined by a resistance, something impermeable and unyielding as stone; it is evil, based on Lantfred’s own words, to be closed off. It is the act of ignoring and the practice of inaction, silence and denial. Although scholars have

\(^{122}\) Lantfred, *Translatio*, 294; Chapter ix, lines 25–9.
generally adopted the translation “smith” for the titular character in Lantfred’s first chapter, *Narratio de visione fabri*, every suitable translation for *fabri*—craftsman, architect, or artisan, for example—is associated with the act of forging or building. In essence, no matter how one chooses to translate *fabri*, the underlying implication is that this is a man whose trade involves some kind of refining, shaping, and constructing in one form or another. This mirrors how Lantfred imagines someone becoming a believer: that the stony hearts of evil men become softened and re-made so that they can recognize God through his miracles, so they can glorify God through their actions. It is indeed an apt parallel, especially given that the smith undergoes these changes himself, even recognizing that his misgivings and failures related to what Swithun had commanded of him were, in retrospect, a display of ignorance and ineptitude in the face of *mirabilia*. Certainly, the smith incited anger from Swithun—and, by association, God—because of his silence. It is clear that the smith was ultimately compelled by what Lantfred refers to as God’s *beneficia*; the smith only hastens to Swithun’s tomb after God alleviates some of his pain after the smith prays for guidance:

> Qui, consurgens ab oratione, sentiens remedium aegritudinis suae, ilico intellexit supplicationem suam celitus a Domino esse exauditam qui uitam¹²³ eternam prestat omnibus ad se confugientibus.¹²⁴

---

¹²³ *uitam* is the interlinear gloss for what J and R supply as *zoen*, evidently a Latinization of the Greek ζωή; N supplies *uitam* outright.

¹²⁴ Lantfred, *Translatio*, 262; Chapter i, lines 52–54.
Getting up after his prayers and sensing relief from his illness, he immediately realized that his prayer had been heard in heaven by God who grants eternal life for all who take refuge in him.

Lantfred’s attention in the opening chapters of the *Translatio* is consistently on detailing the way that lay veneration works within the context of the cult. One of the most ubiquitous themes of these early chapters is the importance for laypeople to remain dedicated and diligent in their pursuit of healing from Swithun. In spite of the hiccups on the part of the cleric and the smith, the resounding message of Chapter i is the need for Christians to remain persistent and recognize doubt or hesitation as a shortcoming, whereas overcoming them are an indication of steadfastness. Lantfred says as much of the cleric who did not immediately report the smith’s message to his lord:

> Qui, postquam ad proprium peruenit herum, per longinquus interuallum temporis (siue inmemor commissae legationis, seu metu herili territus) siluit dominoque intimare distulit quod supplicant amico spopondit. Quadam tamen die, sagaci pertractans mente, cognouit sese nefandum scelus committere occultando macarii missatica Suiuthuni ac neglegendo fidi precamina amici.\(^{125}\)

---

\(^{125}\) Lantfred, *Translatio*, 264; Chapter i, lines 65–9.
After [the cleric] returned to his lord, he remained quiet for a long time (either because he had forgotten the duty with which he had been assigned or because he was terrified with fear of his lord) and was silent as he delayed telling his lord that which he had promised to his imploring friend. However, on a certain day, ruminating on this in his wise mind, he realized that he had committed an abominable crime by concealing the messages of the blessed Swithun and by neglecting the request of his faithful friend.

From this, we can get the sense that realization of the cult is predicated upon the actions of secular and monastic individuals at Winchester and the way that they manifest what is required of them. This first chapter in particular evinces the importance of communication between the secular and monastic populations related to the cult—at its core, Lantfred’s account of the smith and the cleric is about how the simple act of relaying conversation led to the translation. It is important to note that the onus is not solely on the smith or the cleric, nor is the lack of communication the fault of the smith or the cleric—instead, both the smith and the cleric (which we can take synecdochally as the lay and religious) play a critical role in the genesis of the cult as their accounts ultimately engender the *translatio*. So, although it is true that Swithun orders a translation for himself, his very request clearly demonstrates a requirement for communication between these subsets of the Winchester community—lest we forget, Swithun’s intention was for the smith to pass along his message to a tenant of Eadsige (one of the secular canons expelled from the Old Minster who returned to become a monk), and for the
message then to pass from the unnamed tenant to Eadsige, and, finally, pass from Eadsige to Æthelwold who would execute Swithun’s request. If we consider the smith’s and the cleric’s respective silences and procrastinations as a setback to Swithun’s roadmap to translation and examples of, in Lantfred’s words, “abominable” crimes, we are left to conclude that communication and action are perceived as essential components of veneration, especially communication between the lay and religious Wintonian populations.

The relationship between the lay and monastic communities at Winchester can be understood within the context of pastoral care and religious education. While the smith has been tasked as messenger by Swithun, it is clear from Swithun’s request that the burden of the translation would not be left to a layman—while the miracle might have happened to the smith, it is up to the cleric to interpret the smith’s message within a monastic context and thus, by the authority of the church, see to its implementation. That is to say, it is the duty of the religious community at Winchester to teach the laity—through liturgy and ceremony—how to understand miracles and, in turn, facilitate lay veneration and worship. As Riedel puts it, “It is immediately apparent that Lantfred expected the laity to converse with members of the reformed community, and he gives every indication that the monks were interested and ready to hear the stories.”126 In this way, Lantfred’s Translatio was not meant to serve as a didactic text for educating laymen; instead, the narrative was meant to teach the monastic community at the Old Minster how to educate and provide pastoral care to the laypeople it served. Lantfred

---

repeatedly references the importance of belief and turning away from sin throughout the *Translatio* as layperson after layperson is cured through Swithun’s *virtus*. While this message is one that would certainly resonate with the monks at the Old Minster, the fact that it appears again and again in chapters that describe *miracula* related to the laity rhetorically emphasizes that Swithun’s ability to heal those who visit his remains is possible if people believe in him. Given that laypeople are the recipients of these *miracula* in all but two cases, Lantfred’s message to his monastic audience is a reminder of their need to encourage belief and foster veneration as agents of the Old Minster.

All of this is to say that while we can understand the first part of the *Translatio* as laying the foundation for the translation specifically, we can also understand it as the foundational moment for Swithun’s cult in general. This initial chapter sets in place a series of precedents that are, in the end, of fundamental importance to how veneration works in the cult. First, it establishes Swithun as a saint who works miracles for and through the lay population in Winchester. It details interactions between layman and clergyman, underscoring the importance of the relationship between the secular and religious communities in that Swithun’s translation is ultimately realized thanks to the actions of a layman (the smith) and the monastic community at Winchester (via the unnamed tenant whom the smith first alerts to Swithun’s request and, in the end, Bishop Æthelwold).

The three chapters of the narrative that lead to the actual *translatio* detail the means by which a community comprised of secular and monastic Wintonians are able to come together on behalf of a local saint, so that, through the act of translation, the saint is properly honored. The fact that there is no real sense of reputation or identity for
Swithun—Lantfred provides no account of his conduct in life or accomplishments as bishop, after all—means that Winchester, the Old Minster, and members of the secular and religious community that comes together to honor him are essential to the hagiographical narrative.

In the second section of the Translatio, the episode that details the events of the translation itself, Lantfred does not incorporate or borrow from the more popular hagiographical tropes that one tends to expect from translationes—most notably, Swithun is not found incorrupt when he is exhumed from the Old Minster churchyard, nor is there any type of miracle that takes place during the episode. Instead, the focus of the middle portion of the narrative is on the translation ceremony and the importance of resituating the remains in the Old Minster. As is the case with the overwhelming majority of the miracula described in the Translatio as a whole, Lantfred’s emphasis is consistently on the way in which the events would have had an impact upon the person receiving the miracle and those who witnessed it. The brief account is conspicuously sparse when compared to any other episode in the Translatio. Following two chapters about miracles related to the translation, the ceremony itself takes place in Chapter iii of the Translatio, titled “De quodam ciu Wintoniens et de translatione sancti antistitis” [Concerning a certain citizen of Winchester and the translation of the holy bishop].

That said, Lantfred does make a bizarre reference to translatio in Chapter ii, “De clerico gibberoso nomine Æðelsino qui ad sepulchrum sancti pontificis Suuiouni curatus

127 Lantfred, Translatio, 274; Chapter iii, line 1.
est primum dominica die .III. nonas Iulii”128 [Concerning the hunchbacked cleric named Æthelsige who was the first to be cured at the tomb of the holy bishop Swithun on Sunday, four days before the nones of July].129

The fact that this mention of Swithun’s tomb is effectively tacked on to the end of Chapter ii is strange on its own—it is even stranger considering that the titular episode (Æthelsige receiving a cure for an ailment) takes place two years before Swithun’s remains were translated. We can set a definitive date for the miracles described in Chapter i and Chapter ii as Lantfred describes them relative to Swithun’s translation which is fixed to July 15, 971 in the historical and hagiographical record. In Chapter i, Lantfred opens by noting that the smith’s vision took place “triennio igitur antequam sanctae egregii ac uenerabilis presulis exuuiae de mausoleo quo olim fuerant humate”130 [three years before the holy remains of the excellent and venerable bishop were exhumed from the tomb where they had previously been buried…]. Based on this, we can fix the smith’s vision as having occurred sometime in 968, which was apparently a year before the main event of Chapter ii, Æthelsige receiving a cure at Swithun’s tomb, which Lantfred says took place “ante sancti translationem corpusculi biennio”131 [two years before the translation of the holy body]. By comparing these dates, we can fix the date of the action of Chapter ii to July 4, 969. This means that Chapter ii describes a miraculum

128 Lantfred, Translatio, 266; Chapter ii, lines 1–2.

129 This Julian date corresponds with July 4.

130 Lantfred, Translatio, 260; Chapter i, line 5.

131 Lantfred, Translatio, 266; Chapter iii, line 19.
that took place at Swithun’s churchyard gravesite in 969 before unexpectedly addressing the 971 *translatio* in the penultimate sentence of the chapter without any significant degree of detail.

That said, Lantfred’s description of the *translatio* in Chapter iii is relatively meager compared to the extent to which he describes the *miracula* related to the smith and Æthelsige in Chapters i and ii. Given that Lantfred devoted 82 lines to the smith’s vision in Chapter i and 107 lines to Æthelsige and his cure in Chapter ii, it is baffling that the translation episode—what is meant to be the single most important moment for Swithun and the precursor to innumerable *miracula* in the thirty-seven chapters that follow—takes place in less than 14 lines; of those 14 lines, only 6 directly describe the *translatio* ceremony. Lantfred’s perfunctory account of the translation reads more like a verbose entry in an annal rather than the hagiographical account of the most important event in the formation of Swithun’s cult.

Quibus transactis, Idus Iulii sanctae ac uenerabilest antistitis reliquiae sublatae sunt de monumento—imperante glorioso rege Eadgaro atque beatissimo—a domno presule Aþeluulodo uenerabili atque abbatibus Ælfstano necne Aþelgaro precluiibus et a fratribus Olimpicam in utroque

132 This chapter is actually 113 lines long but lines 108–13 comprise the brief reference to the *translatio* that I discussed above.
After these events transpired, the remains of the holy and venerable bishop were exhumed from his burial place on the ides of July [July 15, 971]—at the order of the glorious and blessed King Edgar—by the venerable Bishop Æthelwold and the noble abbots Ælfstan and Æthelgar and by the monks leading the heavenly life\(^\text{134}\) in both monasteries, and [the remains] were appropriately concealed in the aforementioned church.

After he describes Swithun’s translation, Lantfred’s authorial voice interjects:

“Increduli quique etiam ad sanctum Dei famulum ueniant ut beneficia conditoris agnoscant et creatorem laudent”\(^\text{135}\) [Let even those who do not believe come to the holy servant of God so that they may acknowledge the gifts of the Creator and thus praise Him]. Again, Lantfred is clearly focused on non-believers at this moment, not only

\(^{133}\) Lantfred, Translatio, 284; Chapter iii, lines 144–48.

\(^{134}\) The phrase “leading the heavenly life” as a translation for Lantfred’s use of Olimpicam … uitam is provided by Lapidge. It seems that this is another instance of Lantfred demonstrating his knowledge of Greek and is probably a Latinization of the Greek Ὀλύμπια [Olympia], here meant to be taken metonymically to stand for the idea of a heavenly dwelling. For more on this, see Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 285.

\(^{135}\) Lantfred, Translatio, 286; Chapter iv, lines 12–13.
suggesting that visiting Swithun’s reburial site might result in renewed faith but also acknowledging non-believers as an important audience within the scheme of the hagiography. Given that he provides so few details about the *translatio* itself, this is yet another example of Lantfred prioritizing the experiences of visitors to Swithun’s burial site over the translation event—based on the aforementioned distribution of episodes, this conclusion should not come as a surprise.

**CONCLUSION**

While later chapters will discuss the differences between Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s versions of Swithun’s translation and miracles as well as present a case for a more precise date for Lantfred’s *Translatio*, the discussion of the relationship of manuscripts—as well as a new approach to the J manuscript as part of an intentional Continental Recension—and the analysis of Lantfred’s version of the narrative reflect the fact that Swithun’s hagiography is able to tell us a great deal about how we ought to understand the production of literature related to Swithun’s cult as well as the impact of that literature at a local level. It is clear that the concept of locality is twofold—within an Anglo-Saxon context, the use of local names and places appears to be important not only in order to establish Swithun as part of the Christian canon but also to foster the saint and his reputation as interconnected with Winchester as a *locus* for veneration. By evoking the names of local figures and places that might have been familiar to his audience (both the monks who read the narrative and, through them, those laypeople living near Winchester or visiting), Lantfred thus presents his *Translatio* as a text primarily focused
around the impact of Swithun’s \textit{virtus} on the people who come into contact with it. What is most important is the illustration of religious life at the Old Minster that is born out of Lantfred’s \textit{Translatio: a locus} where the divine power of a saint—Swithun’s \textit{virtus}—can be experienced by believers and non-believers, kings and slaves, a few monastic brothers but countless laypeople. Lantfred’s lack of focus on Swithun’s background gives the impression of a saint whose good works were more recognizable than his reputation, underscoring the importance of his miracles instead of his identity. In this way, Swithun’s identity virtually is his \textit{virtus}, his \textit{virtus} made manifest in the physical world by his burial place at the Old Minster. An understanding of Swithun’s power necessitated a journey to Winchester, to the very place the saint’s remains were interred—as the saint’s bones were originally buried within the Old Minster, this location meant that visitors had to enter a building, the very gathering place of the local religious community, in hopes of experiencing a miraculous display of the saint’s \textit{virtus}. If someone was reading Lantfred’s hagiography in Worcester or Canterbury, the Anglo-Saxon names of the figures who facilitated the saint’s translation would have struck a familiar chord; for readers of the Continental Recension, free of references to unfamiliar people and places, Swithun’s \textit{virtus} and its manifestation in the \textit{miracula} he produced would have been the focus of the \textit{Translatio} and might have put Winchester on the proverbial map for an audience living in a monastic setting in Francia, for example.
CHAPTER 4
BODIES AND BUILDINGS: HOLINESS AND CONSTRUCTION IN THE OLD MINSTER

There are a number of notable characteristics about the ways in which Lantfred and Wulfstan each discuss Swithun’s remains in their respective works. Given that Wulfstan’s *Narratio* for Swithun is based on Lantfred’s, one might erroneously assume that there are few significant departures between the two hagiographical works upon comparison. This assumption is categorically false—instead, it is because Lantfred’s work was Wulfstan’s source for his version of Swithun’s *post mortem* miracles that the conclusions drawn in this chapter regarding the differences and similarities in each author’s account are so valuable within the context of Wintonian hagiography. As is the case here, it would be a rather reasonable expectation that a comparison of a source text and a later version based on that source might indicate that the texts differ only slightly in respect to the way in which each goes about describing the remains of a saint; on the contrary, the number of systemic differences between the *Translatio* and the *Narratio* allow us to glean insight into how burial and enshrinement were both a reaction to and means by which Anglo-Saxons in Wessex understood holy bodies.

The words used to describe Swithun’s body in each account of his life can be divided into four groups: 1) words that suggest a complete body, 2) words that suggest an incomplete or partial body, 3) words that describe a body buried in a churchyard, and 4)
words that describe the body as located within or as part of a reliquary or shrine. These four categories reflect the four ways that Swithun’s body appears in the narrative arc of both hagiographical accounts: a) in a tomb containing a complete body in the churchyard, b) as part of a temporary shrine where Swithun’s remains are kept after their exhumation but prior to the *translatio*, c) as part of a feretory (portable frame used to transport Swithun’s remains into the Old Minster before translation), and d) as part of Swithun shrine at the high altar of the Old Minster. With this paradigm illustrated, it is important to note that there is a certain fluidity in both versions of the narrative as to whether Swithun’s temporary and final burials are shrines—that is, fixed monument-style structures—or reliquaries—small, portable objects that house remains. While the distinction between these terms and the importance of the distinction are the subject of Chapter Five, the difference between the two is of lesser importance within the context of the present discussion as both words fall under the same aforementioned category: that is, words that describe the body as located within or as part of an enshrinement structure.

The four ways in which the authors name the body reflect larger conventions of the narrative itself and the two manners in which the body appears within the action of the hagiography: use of body-part words that work contextually to substantively mark a

---

[136] Neither Lantfred nor Wulfstan appear to have a discernable pattern by which they ascribe something a reliquary or a shrine; for the sake of continuity, I will use “shrine” when discussing the structure erected over where Swithun was initially buried in the churchyard (tomb shrine) and reliquary to refer to the reliquary commissioned by King Edgar.
location and use of body-part words that reflect the quality, capability, or action related to the physical body itself. As an example, both Lantfred and Wulfstan use *corpus* at different times, sometimes in reference to a pilgrim arriving at the location of Swithun’s remains and at other times describing something happening to Swithun’s body itself, as is the case when his body is being translated. This means that the significance of body-part words in these narratives lies not only in the meaning of the words themselves but in how they are employed within the context of the narrative. Thus, how we understand *corpus* is dependent upon not only on how it is being used (as a substantive location marker vs. denoting the physical body itself) but also on where it appears in the action of the narrative (prior to translation vs. post-translation). Through examining which body-part words are attributed to Swithun’s remains before and after the translation episode in Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s respective accounts of Swithun’s afterlife, we can ascertain a pattern that reflects what the act of translation means for a saintly body by examining the lexicon of body-part words employed by the hagiographers. Through this data collection, we can see that different body-part words are applied to the body before translation than the ones attributed to it after the translation, each set reflecting the status of a complete body and an incomplete body respectively. This suggests that the *translatio* ceremony marks a watershed in the hagiographical narrative that reflects a shift in the cultural imagination wherein the act of translation symbolically “transforms” a mortal body into holy, saintly relics.

With that in mind, there are certain words for which the aforementioned paradigm does not apply; this is because specific body-part words are always used in the same way and thus do not provide a means for analysis. An example can be found in the use of the
word *ossa* “bone”, used by both authors only in episodes that occur post-translation; while Lantfred and Wulfstan both use *ossato* signify different things within the context of their respective narratives, *ossais* always used metonymically for a location in Lantfred’s text or, in Wulfstan’s, in reference to the objects themselves—bones. For words used like *os*, the significance of the word is not as much in the way it is used but when it is used by the authors. As both Lantfred and Wulfstan only use forms of *ossa* in post-translation episodes and *ossarefer* to the partial body by definition, we can extrapolate that the notion of thinking about a body in terms of being comprised of bones is something both authors reserve for discussion of an exhumed, translated body and not a body laid to rest in its original burial place.

In spite of exceptions like *os*, the rest of the body-part words employed in the two Latin versions of Swithun’s hagiography can be coded based on their semantic function (in that they refer to either a marker of location or the body itself) and the state of Swithun’s body (complete, partial, exhumed, or enshrined). *Corpus* is the word most frequently used by Lantfred and Wulfstan alike when referencing Swithun’s body and both authors use it two times more often than any other body-part word prior to translation. Lantfred continues to use *corpus* after translation, though his use is much less frequent and the word is only employed metonymically after the translation episode to stand for the location of a site of enshrinement; of the five instances in which Lantfred uses *corpus*, it is used three times in conjunction with an *ad* phrase describing a pilgrim traveling to the Old Minster from beyond Winchester. The other two uses of *corpus* after Swithun’s translation are used in brief flashbacks, where Lantfred reminds readers that the body had been translated or recovered from the churchyard.
Wulfstan, on the other hand, does not once use *corpus* after his account of the translation. His use of *corpus* conforms with Lantfred’s in that both use it in reference to Swithun’s body while it is still buried in the churchyard or at the time it is being moved into the Old Minster itself. The most notable point about the use of *corpus* across both narratives, however, is that the word is used more often than any other to describe Swithun’s body all but exclusive to the shortest segment of the narratives: the episodes leading up to and including the translation. Perhaps most striking is the fact that *corpus* appears in Wulfstan’s text more often than any other body-part word yet all instances of *corpus* are relegated to the shortest section of the *Narratio*: the two chapters before the translation and Chapter iii which contains the *translatio* itself.

Furthermore, Wulfstan does not use any word other than *corpus* to describe Swithun’s body prior to translation and promptly abandons use of it in the miracle accounts that follow Swithun’s enshrinement in the Old Minster; in fact, Wulfstan’s use of body-part words decreases drastically after the description of Swithun’s *translatio* in Chapter iii. In the episodes leading up to and including Swithun’s translation, Wulfstan uses a body-part word at a rate of once in every 46 lines; after translation, on the other hand, he uses body-part words about 50 percent less frequently, one instance per every seventy lines. This observation makes two things apparent: first, there is something about the meaning of the word *corpus* that made it an appropriate descriptor only within certain contexts of the narrative and second, the act of *translatio* changes the way that Swithun’s remains are discussed and understood in the post-translation miracle episodes.

There are a number of reasons to pay more attention to Wulfstan’s use of body-part words than Lantfred’s in terms of understanding the differentiation between word
uses pre- and post-translation. On one hand, it is not unfair to assume that Lantfred and Wulfstan might use the same words in the same way given that Wulfstan’s text is, again, based on Lantfred’s version of the *Translatio*. Given that Wulfstan does not stray far from Lantfred’s organization of the narrative and titles for the episodes within it, we might expect Wulfstan to use body-part words in the same way that Lantfred does; indeed, it could be expected that it might have been easier for Wulfstan to use *corpus*, a familiar word that does not present any particularly complicated metrical features, in some post-translation episodes rather than substituting a new word. This leads to something that is perhaps the most remarkable difference between the two authors’ uses of body-part words: whereas Lantfred uses the same body-related words in the pre-translation episodes as those after the translation, Wulfstan clearly has “pre-translation words” and “post-translation words” that refer to the body and are assigned to their respective narrative segments. It is this phenomenon that is the crux of this chapter: the point of occurrence in the text, the word itself, and the way the word is used contextually together illustrate how Lantfred and Wulfstan understood the changing status of Swithun’s body as it moved from a meager churchyard burial and became enshrined in the church itself, imbued with celebrity as a site of *miracula*.

**METHODOLOGY FOR STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF BODY AND BURIAL WORDS**

Before discussing the use of pre-translation and post-translation body-part words and their significance, it is essential to detail the methodology employed to yield the statistical evidence that will be presented in the following sections.
First, it was necessary to find a means by which to compare Wulfstan’s and Lantfred’s use of body-part words in their respective hagiographical works that accommodated for the inherent differences between the texts, namely prose versus verse. First, I determined that the best way to compare how often body-part words were used by both authors was to look at the rate of word use per individual narrative. Given that raw data like word frequencies only acknowledges how many times a word occurs in a text and does not, for example, take into account differences in the narrative lengths, comparing rates of use by proportion created a common ground by which to consider the different versions. This presented a complication—I could not compare how often Lantfred and Wulfstan used a body-part word based on a rate of occurrence per line because the length of words per line greatly differed between Wulfstan’s metrical lines and Lantfred’s prose. To solve this issue, I calculated the proportion of words per line length between the metrical and prose versions (that is, 2.5 lines of Wulfstan’s meter contain the same number of words as a single line of Lantfred’s prose) and adjusted the line counts for Wulfstan’s version of the life in order to establish a control for the difference in line length between the prose and verse versions. From there, I compared the frequency of body-part words to these new standardized line counts in order to discern which author used body-part words more often. This method allowed me a universal foundation by which to compare rates of use and which was not skewed by the forms of the hagiographical works.

Next, I compiled a corpus of body-part words (a corpus-corpus, if you will) and determined the frequency of the words across Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s works individually. From there, it was necessary to determine where these words occurred
within the action of the narrative to yield a distribution that reflected the frequency of body-part words in pre-translation vs. post-translation episodes. Next, the data was adjusted to reflect the parameters of the study; that is, given that I am examining words that discuss the state of the body and differences between episodes, it was necessary to look at the words not just in terms of their frequency but in terms of context to avoid skewed results. To do this, I examined the context in which the body-part word appeared in the text in order to avoid extraneous data. In order to be counted toward the frequencies for each section the word must a) be used in reference to the status of Swithun’s body or his remains as complete or incomplete and b) not accompany another word that altered the meaning of the word in the context of the narrative. This latter requirement meant that some instances of body-part words were eliminated from the pool for analysis as they were used with another word that either negated or changed the meaning of the word itself. This was the case in the majority of the occurrences of forms of corpus in the post-translation episodes of Lantfred’s narrative; four out of the seven instances of corpus were accompanied by burial or enshrinement words such as tumba or mausoleum. As corpus in this case is not being used to discuss the status of the body (complete or incomplete) but instead the location of the remains (within a shrine or burial container), these words were eliminated from the data pool.\footnote{These instances were eliminated from the data pool based on the context in which they were used in the narrative, taking into account the way in which medieval people conceived of the body in reliquaries or burial shrines. While this is discussed in greater depth in the penultimate chapter of this dissertation, it is important to note that}
THE PRE-TRANSLATION BODY

One of the most basic characteristics of both authors’ versions of Swithun’s afterlife is that corpus, as previously mentioned, remains the word of choice to describe the body prior to translation. While this is the only body-part word used by Wulfstan, Lantfred uses corpus almost three times more often than the only other word he assigns to Swithun’s body in this section of the text, soma, a Latinization of the Greek σῶμα. Not only does Lantfred use an additional body-part word that Wulfstan chooses not to adopt in his reworking of the Narratio but, even more importantly, Lantfred uses body-part words at a greater frequency than Wulfstan in this segment of the narrative even without accounting for the difference in length between each author’s version of the segment. This is clear even when we examine the normalized lines: Lantfred’s description of the events leading up to the translatio is 339 lines long, dwarfing the translation episode itself which is only 13 lines total. While Wulfstan’s account of the events prior to the relics and burial shrines were meant to present the saint’s body as complete, masking the fact that they contained only part or parts of the body. Because of this, hagiographers like Lantfred and Wulfstan frequently refer to the contents of burial objects as if they contain the entirety of the holy body rather than part of it. For these reasons, instances of corpus that appeared in conjunction with instances of burial objects were eliminated. It is worth noting this construction in Wulfstan’s version as it appears only twice and is nonexistent in Lantfred’s.
translation is slightly longer at 364 normalized lines, he dedicates significantly more detail to the *translatio* itself; this section is four times longer than Lantfred’s at a resounding 52 lines. In his account, Lantfred employs body-part words 20 times (*corpus* 14 times, *soma* 6 times), over two times more often than Wulfstan’s 12 instances of his two pre-translation body-part words, *corpus* and *reliquiae*.

Prior to the translation episode, Wulfstan describes a structure that has been built in the churchyard that was evidently erected to protect the excavation site where the clergyman had uncovered Swithun’s original tomb. Wulfstan refers to this structure only once in his text and calls it a *tugurium*. *Tugurium* evades simple translation and seems to be dependent upon context; the *Thesaurus Linguæ Latinæ* yields the definitions of “cabin” or “little lodge,” both results suggesting a rustic structure possibly made of wood. The *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* entry for *tugurium* defines it as a “hut, shelter, [or] small dwelling” and notes that it has been used in reference to “the place of Christ’s birth.”

Wulfstan’s use of the word is clearly a borrowing from Lantfred. Although it only occurs on a single occasion in Wulfstan’s account, Lantfred’s narrative features *tugurium* in four separate instances, all of which describe Swithun’s original burial place. While

---


*tumulus* can denote a burial place that is something other than a simple mound or barrow, *tugurium* implies something built or assembled. The occurrence of *tugurium* is rather perplexing as there is no other point in the text where either Lantfred or Wulfstan describe Swithun’s initial burial place as anything other than a standard grave. It is possible that *tugurium* might refer to some sort of tent or cover that the monks of the Old Minster placed over Swithun’s grave in order to protect the tomb itself prior to the saint’s translation; this practice is mentioned by Bede in his account of the translation of St. Æthelthryth of Ely, but Bede refers to this structure as a *papilio* which more directly translates to “tent” than Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s use of *tugurium*.

What might be happening, however, is that Lantfred and Wulfstan understood *tugurium* as a compounding of *tego*, “to cover,” and *urium*, referring to a kind of earth that is rich in minerals. This would roughly equate to something like “earth-cover” which expresses the same sense of something like a burial mound as *tumulus* does, though this etymology depends on a connection to Greek to account for *urium* (in Greek, οὐρός), “mountain” or “hill.” Although this compound would still be somewhat bizarre, the fact that it is first used by Lantfred, whose knowledge of Greek was superficial, might explain

140 For more on οὐρός, see its entry in the Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon.
its occurrence. While the definition for tugurium already implies a humble, simply-constructed edifice, an “earth-cover” or burial mound is certainly more modest.

The archeological record seems to support this reading of tugurium as relating to a burial mound rather than some kind of shrine structure meant to function as a veneration site. Citing findings from Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle based on their excavation of the Old Minster churchyard, John Crook concludes that Swithun’s original coffin would have been buried rather than part of a shrine. Crook does not deny that it is possible that the coffin might have had features that were above ground—rings set into the coffin lid used to carry the coffin, for example—but ultimately


143 It is not clear whether or not Crook has drawn this conclusion based on archeological evidence or the fact that both Lantfred and Wulfstan mention that Swithun’s original churchyard burial containers had ring features in their respective accounts of the vision of the smith; this account is in Book I, Chapter i of both the *Translatio* and the *Narratio*. 
concludes that the structure in question “was not a funerary chapel, as the terms first suggest,” but instead a kind of covering over a tomb. Although the difference between these two structures might seem to be an issue of semantics, this analysis of the extant archeological evidence provides important insight—namely, that there is no evidence of a permanent structure at the original burial site, thus suggesting that this churchyard site was not a *locus* for pilgrimage after the initial translation to the Old Minster as the Old Minster itself was after the translation into Winchester Cathedral.
Plate III. Martin Biddle’s renderings of Swithun’s original grave site in the Old Minster churchyard. Based on his excavations, Biddle has concluded that Swithin’s burial site remained uncovered until c. 980.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ This chart has been adapted from one provided by Biddle. For more, see Martin Biddle, *The Search for Winchester’s Anglo-Saxon Minsters* (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing, 2018), 17.
Even with this confusion, it is not necessary to assign a definitive direct translation to *tugurium* to understand the bearing it has on how *reliquiae* ought to be translated in the translation episode where both words appear. In the action of the narrative, *tugurium* is employed only when Wulfstan is describing Swithun’s body in a liminal setting—that is, when Swithun’s body is being excavated but not yet translated into the Old Minster. This is a distinctive switch in terminology as *tumulus* is the only other word Wulfstan uses to discuss the pre-translation burial site. This shift in language is best explained as a shift in burial style—no longer are Swithun’s remains in a permanent burial site nor have they yet been placed in a new burial vestibule. The definitions for *tugurium* discussed previously all suggest something simple, perhaps small, and certainly something of a humble nature; in short, not a structure that was meant to be a site for pilgrimage or built to house any kind of shrine. Meaning (b) for *tugurium* in the *DMLBS* notes that the word has been attributed to the place of Christ’s birth. Whether Lantfred or Wulfstan would have known of this attribution is unclear, but given that Christ’s birthplace is generally conceived of as humble, it can be surmised that the *tugurium* in Swithun’s hagiography is of an equally humble nature. The humility implied in this reading of *tugurium* means that *reliquiae* in this context would be an unlikely choice to describe any kind of reliquary or relic shrine and is instead referring to Swithun’s body itself—a distinction perhaps captured by translating *reliquiae* as “remains” rather than “relics.”

---

The trend of the data is undeniable: while the lexicon is of limited variety for body-part words that appear in episodes up until and including the translation, this section is nonetheless where body-part words are most frequent for both Lantfred and Wulfstan. Moreover, although there is greater diversity of body-part words used by each author in the episodes after the translation, those words occur nearly 50 percent less frequently than body words in pre-translation episodes. This disparity means that even though Lantfred and Wulfstan use different body-part words in different ways in their respective versions of the *translatio* and miracle accounts, the method of discussing Swithun’s remains shifts from mentioning the body in outright, certain terms to focusing instead on the church space as a *locus* for miracles. Even the trends in word use signify a shift in attitude; as the narrative continues into miracle accounts after the translation, Swithun is referred to in terms of the material objects made to memorialize or contain his remains or by terms that denote the fragmentary nature of his remains.

It is clear that at some point in Lantfred’s text, Swithun’s body ceases to be a body and is instead a relic (or collection of relics) and a tomb is replaced by a reliquary. While the delineation between these may seem on its face to be mere pedantry rather than a difference that is meaningful, the distinction reveals the hagiographers’ changing conceptions of Swithun’s body. In Lantfred’s *translatio*, it is Swithun’s *reliquiae* that are being exhumed from the original burial place. Lantfred’s use of *reliquiae* instead of *corpus* or another term that implies wholeness suggests that, in his mind, Swithun existed not as a complete body but already as relics. The motivation(s) behind Lantfred’s use of *reliquiae* might imply something about the condition of Swithun’s body—perhaps it is already in a state of decay?—but might also be indicative of a relationship between the
body of the saint and the body’s potential as a site for miracle making. Front and center in Lantfred’s account of Swithun’s translation are the miracles that take place at Swithun’s original burial place in the churchyard as well as the miracles that occur after Swithun’s translation into the Old Minster. Since Lantfred only covers what occurs in Winchester after Swithun’s death, it is possible that Lantfred’s focus on miracles and scarce detail about the saint’s translation signals that he already conceived of Swithun’s tomb as a marker, a *locus* of spiritual power because of the *reliquiae* buried there. In essence, rather than writing his *translatio* as the story of how Swithun’s body was moved and resituated within the Old Minster, Lantfred’s is an account of how relics with known *virtus* were more appropriately situated within a place that better reflected the extensive history of miracles with which Lantfred was familiar—that is, the high altar.

In the first chapter of his first book, Wulfstan too refers to the miracles that occurred “antequam sanctae reliquiae illius sublatae essent de monumento”\(^\text{146}\)—that is, before his holy relics were taken up from his monument. Notably, this is one of only two places where Wulfstan uses *reliquiae* to refer to the remains of Swithun’s body; in another place, he curiously substitutes “sanctissima gleba”\(^\text{147}\)—holiest earth—in place of

\(^{146}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 412; Book I, Chapter i, line 2.

\(^{147}\) It is possible that *sanctissima gleba* ought to be taken here to refer to the land Swithun is buried under rather than his body itself. It is possible, given that the earth is in contact with Swithun’s tomb, that Wulfstan is referring to the earth itself as a contact relic—sometimes referred to as a second-class relic—rather than the actual bodily relics of the saint. The *DMLBS* cites this occurrence of “gleba” in its fifth entry for the word,
a word that directly signals that it is Swithun’s body or remains through which the
subsequent miracle is accomplished.148

Aside from these places, Wulfstan consistently uses corpus in reference to
Swithun. Throughout Book I, Wulfstan refers to Swithun’s body when he describes
Swithun appearing to the smith in a vision and demanding his own translation,149 how
Swithun’s body is buried in its tomb,150 the location in which Swithun was buried in

______________________________
defining it as “mortal clay, body (esp. w. ref. to remains of saint).” This duality between
“mortal clay” and a holy body further promotes the notion that the land is imbued with
significance because of its contact with the body. Given that the DMLBS definition
allows for both clay and body as translations for “gleba,” it is clear that there is a
relationship between body and burial place wherein the burial place is given meaning on
account of the holy body interred there. For more on this, see the entry in DMLBS for
“gleba.” DMLBS, s.v. “gleba,” accessed May 12, 2018,
http://logeion.uchicago.edu/index.html#gleba.

148 Wulfstan, Narratio, 444; Book I, Chapter iii, line 709.

149 Wulfstan, Narratio, 412; Book I, Chapter i, lines 1–198.

150 Wulfstan, Narratio, 418; Book I, Chapter i, lines 122–24: “caelicus iste
sacerdos/ qui in tumulo hoc sancto requiescit corpore”; Wulfstan, Narratio, 448; Book I,
Chapter iii, lines 756–57: “corpore in isto/ qui sancto pausat tumulo.”
relation to the Old Minster, the length of time Swithun had been buried in that place, how Swithun’s spirit departed his body after his death, the manner in which Swithun lay in his tomb, what the monks saw when they opened his tomb, the monks handling Swithun’s body during his translation, Swithun’s remains in a new reliquary being carried into the Old Minster. From these examples, a clear pattern emerges: Wulfstan uses a form of corpus when referring to Swithun’s body only prior to and during the act of his translation into the Old Minster. Specifically, Wulfstan’s use of

151 Wulfstan, Narratio, 432; Book I, Chapter ii, line 451: “corpore uir Domini sanctus requieuit humatus.”

152 Wulfstan, Narratio, 432; Book I, Chapter ii, lines 454–56: “iam tempore longo/ utpote transacto postquam sacer ille sacerdos/ corpore ibi tumulatus erat.”

153 Wulfstan, Narratio, 434; Book I, Chapter ii, lines 487–88: “ab isto corpore mortali felici tramite migrans.”

154 Wulfstan, Narratio, 442; Book I, Chapter ii, lines 667–68: “Statim defertur ad illam/ in qua sanctus erat requiescens corpore tumbam.”

155 Wulfstan, Narratio, 458; Book I, Chapter v, line 973: “corpore sacro.”

156 Wulfstan, Narratio, 458; Book I, Chapter v, line 976: “pretiosum corpus.”

157 Wulfstan Narratio, 460; Book I, Chapter v, line 1029: “Intrant ecclesiam sancto cum corpore laeti.”

158 The only exception to this rule is Wulfstan’s language during his account of the translation itself. There, Wulfstan uses corpus during the physical act of translation—for instance, when Swithun’s body is carried into the Old Minster and when the monks
corpus is reserved for instances where it is Swithun’s literal body that is being moved, lying in a tomb, or being touched. Once the translation into the Old Minster is complete, however, Wulfstan refrains from employing any form of corpus when describing the miracles that occur at the locus of his shrine. The shift is one that is not altogether surprising, given the appearance of corpus freely throughout Lantfred’s translatio. The distinction that Wulfstan is drawing between the significance of Swithun’s body prior to its translation and its significance after the translation is almost certainly something of his own invention, at least within the context of his account.

**THE POST-TRANSLATION BODY IN LANTFRED’S TEXT**

Unlike Wulfstan, Lantfred does not shy away from describing Swithun in a way that addresses his body, actually increasing his use of body-part words after Swithun’s body is translated. The shift in this case is not a move away from discussing the body entirely but instead a move toward concern with the status of Swithun’s remains. The act of translation and the translation ceremony clearly suggest a change in perspective in the way in which Lantfred imagines the newly-enshrined remains—that is to say, the enshrined body is, based on the new vocabulary used to describe it, inherently different than the pre-translation body.

are handling Swithun’s body as they transfer it to the temporary reliquary—but ceases to use it once Swithun’s remains are placed in the reliquary.
Before discussing the new vocabulary, it is important to note that Lantfred does continue to use two of the same body words from the pre-translation episodes—corpus and soma—albeit at a significantly reduced rate. If we consider the use of corpus in post-translation episodes and exclude instances where Lantfred is detailing flashbacks to events before the translation, the frequency of corpus drops by over 70 percent; the frequency of soma declines even more significantly with an over 80 percent decrease. Interestingly, evidence in MS J suggests that Anglo-Saxons might have understood corpus and soma as synonyms for one another as corpus is provided as a gloss of soma on more than one occasion in the manuscript—this trend supports the argument that these two words reflect a similar attitude about the status of the body.

The language of Lantfred’s post-translation episodes is dominated by his use of reliquiae which he uses twice as often as any other word related to Swithun’s body in post-translation episodes. That reliquiae refers to an incomplete body is evident from the word itself, which can be translated as “remains” or, more appropriately given the context of the text, “relics.” This is complemented by the other words Lantfred uses for Swithun’s remains in this section of the text: ossa and exuviae, “bones” and “clothing” or “remains.” While Wulfstan follows in Lantfred’s tradition and only uses ossa in post-translation episodes, he does not adopt Lantfred’s use of exuviae in reference to Swithun. Lantfred’s repeated use of corpus after Swithun’s translation complicates what is for Wulfstan a distinct paradigm. Wulfstan imagines what is in the reliquary for Swithun as fragmentary, only remnants of a complete body, while Lantfred thinks about the relationship between complete body, bones, and enshrinement differently than Wulfstan.
THE POST-TRANSLATION BODY IN WULFSTAN’S TEXT

This shift is even more prominent in Wulfstan’s accounts of the post-translation miracles. Of the seven occurrences of language related to Swithun in this section of the narrative, all but two of the words cannot be read as referring to anything other than man-made burial containments.

Figure 8. Frequency of Body and Burial Words Before and After Swithun’s Translation in Wulfstan’s Text

Once the translation of Swithun’s body is complete, Wulfstan’s description of Swithun effectively deemphasizes the saint’s physicality in favor of focusing instead on the virtus evidenced at the site of the reliquary shrine. Tracing Wulfstan’s language, his logic is quite unmistakable: while Swithun’s body is a corpus before and during his translation, it becomes reliquiae after the translation when it becomes part of the shrine in the Old Minster. From that point forward, on the few rare occasions in which he makes mention of the saint’s body in the way that signals its physicality, Wulfstan references Swithun’s body in a way that emphasizes fragmentation as it is part of the reliquary.
shrine. These instances are shockingly scarce, especially when compared to how frequently Lantfred emphasizes Swithun’s corporeality even after his translation.

In the accounts after Swithun’s remains are put in a new reliquary, Wulfstan uses language that relates to his relics explicitly only three times. Twice, Wulfstan refers to Swithun’s bones with *os*. On the third occasion, Wulfstan makes mention of Swithun’s remains when he describes the program of the reliquary within which Æthelwold placed “corpor de sancti partem” [part of the body of the saint] in the first chapter of Book ii. That Bishop Æthelwold put *partem* of Swithun’s body within the reliquary is a particularly thought-provoking moment of Wulfstan’s *Narratio*. It is highly unlikely that Swithun’s body was found incorrupt at the time of his first translation as both Lantfred and Wulfstan would have most certainly made mention of that in their hagiographical works; that neither attests to this state means that it is safe to assume that the body had decayed at least in part by the time it was first exhumed. In his account of Swithun’s first translation, Wulfstan says that after Swithun’s body was washed, the abbots swaddled the relics in clean linen (a common practice in *translatio* narratives, as Bede records both Cuthbert and Æthelthryth receiving the same treatment) and put “sancissima membra,”

159 Wulfstan *Narratio*, 412; Book I, Chapter i, line 3: “ossa uiri benedicta”; Wulfstan 464; Book I, Chapter vii, line 1086: “ossa beata uiri.” Although these occurrences of *ossa* come near the beginning and end of Wulfstan’s account, both refer to a time after Swithun’s translation.

160 Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 492; Book II, Chapter i, line 18.
the most holy limbs, in the new, temporary reliquary. There are two ways in which “sanctissima membra” can be read in this context. First, we can take the expression metonymically as an expression for the whole body; given that Swithun is a saint, every part of his body would be the most holy part. This also is an example of a common medieval treatment of saintly bodies wherein part of the body can be understood as the entire body, *pars pro toto*. A second possible explanation for Wulfstan’s use of “sanctissima membra” could be that only part of the body is translated into the reliquary. The most obvious explanation for translating part of a body into a reliquary would be that some of the relics were translated into different containers. This practice is not especially abnormal and certainly known within the context of Swithun’s cult in Winchester; the various relic shrines and reliquaries for Swithun that were established at the Old Minster are the topic of Chapter Five.

---

161 Julia M.H. Smith points out that this notion was born from Late Antiquity, where “there had gradually emerged the normative medieval theology of relics—that of *pars pro toto*,” literally “part for the whole,” wherein a fragment of a body, such as a relic, was as potent as the whole, undivided body. For more on this, see Julia M.H. Smith, “Rulers and Relics c. 750-950: Treasure on Earth, Treasure in Heaven,” *Past and Present* 206.5 (2010): 74.

162 For more on this, see Chapter Five.

163 Though unlikely, Wulfstan could be hinting at the fact that not all of Swithun’s relics were translated into the reliquary for a reason other than the possibility that they were divided between reliquaries and shrines. While less likely, it is possible that
USE OF OSSA

Ossa is the lone exception to what seems otherwise a rule to how body-part words are used by Wulfstan in post-translation episodes of Swithun’s Narratio. That said, when we consider the contextual use of ossa, it is less of an anomaly than it appears to be when considering frequency alone. The first time that Wulfstan uses ossa in the Narratio is in a chapter that appears before the translation but describes an event that took place after the translation itself, describing a time in the future in which Swithun’s remains had already been translated. In this way, ossa appears as part of a prolepsis, interrupting the episode in order to preface what is going to come to pass in terms of Swithun’s translation. This

Wulfstan uses “sanctissima membra” as a way of suggesting a partial translation of Swithun’s relics because not all of his remains were in suitable condition for translation. Given that Wulfstan never points out that Swithun’s remains were found to be incorrupt—something he undoubtedly would have mentioned—it is safe to conclude that Swithun’s body was in some state of decay at the time of translation. While it would be strange for Wulfstan to state outright that Swithun’s remains were in decay, Wulfstan might have glossed over the saint’s lack of incorruptibility with his employment of “sanctissima membra.” Although this is the least likely of the three aforementioned explanations for the meaning of “sanctissima membra” in this context, I offer it as a complement to the overall lack of discussion of the state of Swithun’s bodily relics, a strange absence in the narrative in and of itself.

164 Wulfstan, Narratio, 412; Book I, Chapter i.
moment is particularly interesting because it bridges the two ways that body-part words are used by Wulfstan in pre- and post-translation episodes: it refers to both the physical body and location, simultaneously discussing events before and after the translation all within the same sentence.

Prima Dei nutu patuit haec uisio ternis
solibus ante- sacri -quam cum cælestibus hymnis
ossa uiri benedicta forent translata sepulchro
quo quondam pausans in pace quieuit, et ante
quam ferret nostro caeli noua lumina saeclo
sicut eam cui uisa fuit narrare solebat.\textsuperscript{165}

Three years before the blessed bones of the holy man were translated, accompanied by celestial song, from the tomb where he once lay resting in peace, before he brought new light of heaven to our world, this first vision was revealed by the will of God—just as the man to whom [all of this] was revealed used to tell it.

Within the action of the narrative, this sentence appears within the translation episode itself but references a time before the translation—three years prior, when a man had a vision—and reflects on what happens after the translation—the new light that is

\textsuperscript{165} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 412; Book I, Chapter i, lines 1–6.
brought to the world from heaven after Swithun’s reburial in the Old Minster. In essence, the use of \textit{ossa} cannot be tied exactly to any point in the narrative because the narration itself is not tied to a particular point in the narrative; what is clear, this collapse of time aside, is that Wulfstan uses the idea of the bones resituated within the \textit{sepulchrum} as a reference point, the future burial container as an implied opposite to the original burial location in the pre-translation “present” of the chapter. In this way, \textit{ossa} is contextually paired with \textit{sepulchro} to illustrate what will be the relationship between the two: the burial container standing as a marker for the holy remains.

This situation can be found at another point in the \textit{Narratio} wherein Wulfstan for a second time employs a form of \textit{ossa} in combination with a burial word.

\begin{quote}
Expletum triduum menses dum quinque sequuntur,
rara dies fuerat qua non sanata redirent
corpora languentum quo sunt tumulata sacello
ossa beata uiri.\footnote{Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 464; Book II, Chapter vii, lines 1083–85.}
\end{quote}

As five months followed [what was] completed in those three days, there was rarely a day when the bodies of the ill did not return cured from the tomb/shrine where the holy bones of that man were buried.
Given that *ossa* is paired with a word for a man-made burial container (*sacello*) and that all of the other words related to the body that Wulfstan uses in his post-translation episodes also refer to man-made structures, it appears that *ossa* is merely validating the burial containers by emphasizing what they would have been known to contain. With the mention of *sacello* and *sepulchro*, Wulfstan reminds readers of what has been built for Swithun and remarks that it is a visit to these objects that results in the miraculous. In this way, *ossa* reminds readers of the very reason why these particular places were able to function as a conduit for miracles: the fact that they contained Swithun’s remains. By using *ossa* within the context of burial containers—whether we understand *sacello* and *sepulchro* as graves, tombs, or rudimentary shrines—Wulfstan rhetorically connects the apparent *virtus* of Swithun to the location of the tomb or shrine. Given that the early chapters of both halves of the *opus geminatum* are almost entirely interested in the location and subsequent relocation of Swithun’s remains, Wulfstan’s construction (that is, the combination of a term for a burial container with *ossa*) works to establish a connection between this new burial structure and the relocated bodily remains. This positioning effectively marks a trend in Wulfstan’s language in his discussion of Swithun’s body in his post-translation chapters: far from the humble, almost forgotten *tugurium* where Swithun’s remains lay in the pre-translation chapters, Swithun’s new burial container is a point of interest for the reader and pilgrim, simultaneously marking the site where Swithun’s remains reside while obscuring the body itself. In this way,
Wulfstan’s narrative draws greater attention to the burial container rather than the saint’s remains, privileging the enshrining structure as a *signum* identifying holy space.\(^{167}\)

**WULFSTAN’S LONE USE OF SOMA**

At every point that it seems that there might an exception to the way in which Wulfstan uses body-part words, a closer examination instead proves a commitment to the aforementioned paradigm. This paradigm is best illustrated by Wulfstan’s only use of *soma*. While Lantfred uses forms of *soma* a total of eight times over the course of his *Translatio* (the majority of which are used to describe Swithun’s body prior to translation), Wulfstan uses *soma* only once, specifically in an episode that takes place after Swithun’s translation into the Old Minster. As previously discussed, this is a somewhat curious development given that, aside from this, Wulfstan only uses one body-part word, *corpus*, and limits use of *corpus* to episodes occurring before the translation. To have *soma* used some five hundred lines later seems, on its face, an obvious rupture in a pattern that has been, to this point, free of exception.

Yet again, these seeming deviations in Wulfstan’s narrative practices reveal themselves to be further evidence of a distinctive pattern rather than anomalies when considered contextually. Wulfstan’s single use of *soma* in a post-burial context appears in

\(^{167}\) The concept of burial memorials as markers, destinations, and locations within the context of Swithun’s hagiography from a theoretical perspective as well as from an archeological one is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.
Chapter ii of Book II within an account wherein a beshackled serving-girl is miraculously transported to Winchester and placed by Swithun’s shrine by an apparition.

Ponit—adhuc uinctis gemino cum compede plantis—
infra aditum claustri seris atque obice clausi,
iuxta altare sacrum, iacuit quo soma beatum.168

Feet still bound in twin shackles, [the apparition] places her within the sanctuary of the monastery secured with locks and bolt next to the holy altar where the blessed body lay.

It is undeniable that soma must be translated as “body” when it appears in this way in Wulfstan’s narrative. This is unavoidable and may perhaps seem like a rupture in the aforementioned paradigm but on the contrary, as was the case outlined above withossa, context offers insight into how this employment of soma further reinforces the relationship between body-part words and location in Wulfstan’s post-translation episodes in the Narratio. As has been demonstrated with every other mention of Swithun’s remains in these post-translation episodes, Wulfstan employs a body-part word to describe someone approaching the shrine location—in other words, Swithun’s remains are mentioned only insofar as they are able to indicate where a pilgrim is going rather than used in order to discuss any quality or condition of the enshrined body itself.

168 Wulfstan, Narratio, 498; Book II, Chapter ii, lines 120–22.
Essentially, these mentions of Swithun’s body (soma as well as ossa) are used rhetorically to remind readers that the shrine site is holy because that is where the holy body lies. In Michael Lapidge’s translation of the woman approaching the shrine, he says she arrives at the “holy altar where the holy body lay,”\textsuperscript{169} an interpretation that further suggests that the significance of the shrine is directly connected to its proximity to Swithun’s body. This construction is similar to the aforementioned construction used by Lantfred (corpus plus a burial object word); the context of soma makes clear that while Wulfstan, like Lantfred, is using a body-part word, this mention of Swithun’s body is employed to reaffirm the holiness of the shrine location itself. Furthermore, it is unsurprising to see a word like soma in this context given the way Wulfstan has chosen to describe where exactly the shackled woman has been led by the apparition.

**COMPARING LANTFRED’S AND WULFSTAN’S USE OF BODY AND BURIAL WORDS**

There are a number of points to note when reflecting upon the aforementioned data and what it demonstrates in regard to the locations of body-part words throughout the two narratives. While, as discussed previously, Lantfred uses these words at a greater rate than Wulfstan overall, both hagiographers use more body-part words in episodes before the translation than they do in episodes after the body has been resituated within the Old Minster. By the same token, both Lantfred and Wulfstan refrain from describing Swithun’s body outright in their accounts of the translation episode itself, and, from that

\textsuperscript{169} Lapidge, *The Cult of St. Swithun*, 499.
point forward, the use of body-part words drops significantly in both texts. In episodes
after the translation, both authors’ use of body-part words is about half as frequent as in
pre-translation episodes. This is especially remarkable given that the post-translation
section of each hagiographical narrative is almost two times longer than the pre-
translation and the translation episodes combined.

Whereas Lantfred frequently makes reference to the remains of Swithun’s body,
Wulfstan is decidedly more reserved in his language relating to the body or bodily
remains. The discrepancy between Lantfred’s language and Wulfstan’s reveals a
difference in the two authors’ understandings of the status of Swithun’s body as it moved
from its original grave into the open air, from the churchyard into the temporary reliquary
and, ultimately, into the shrine itself. Perhaps the most telling difference between
Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s approaches to the post-translation episodes is Wulfstan’s
emphasis on burial containers. Aside from his use of *tugurium* in pre-translation episodes,
Lantfred does not discuss Swithun’s tomb, reliquary, or anything else that suggests a
shrine or burial container in post-translation episodes in any significant detail, instead
emphasizing words that suggest an incomplete body, like *reliquiae*. Conversely,
Wulfstan’s account of the post-translation episodes is dominated by references to burial
structures and containers.
A system of thought can be gleaned from considering the trajectory of how the body is treated from the beginning of Lantfred’s version of the narrative through the end of Wulfstan’s. Lantfred’s account of Swithun’s afterlife is the story of how an unassuming grave in the Old Minster churchyard was opened so that the body of the saint within it could be better situated and the translated parts, the saint’s relics, could work miracles to the benefit of pilgrims from England and Francia. This treatment of Swithun and his remains is appropriate given the time Lantfred is writing—no more than five years after the events themselves, c. 975—and the importance of his writing as the hagiographical debut for a local saint. While his text suggests that there was perhaps a local custom for venerating Swithun’s original burial site or at least some kind of collective acknowledgement of Swithun’s piety in the community’s cultural memory, Lantfred emphasizes the holiness of Swithun’s body as a kind of rhetorical argument for his translation; when his body is resituated within the Old Minster, Lantfred continues to attribute the miracles that occur to Swithun’s remains.
When Wulfstan completed his metrical version of Lantfred’s *Translatio* twenty years later, the Old Minster had recently been reconstructed and, subsequently, seen a rededication that had been attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury.\(^\text{170}\) Also by this point, the community at Winchester had translated a second saint into the Old Minster: the very man who had arranged Swithun’s translation thirteen years previously, Bishop Æthelwold (d. 984). Wulfstan had seen firsthand the lavish reliquary that King Edgar had commissioned for Swithun and, based on his accounts in his *Narratio*, perhaps even witnessed some of the miracles that occurred after Lantfred had finished his *Translatio*. After all, Wulfstan was a young monk at the Old Minster when those miracles would have taken place. Swithun’s reputation had evidently flourished in the time between Lantfred putting down his pen and Wulfstan picking his up, and by the accounts from Lantfred that Wulfstan supplemented as well as those that were written down by him for the first time Winchester had come to be associated with a multitude of miracles by virtue of the local saint. This means that Wulfstan’s task was almost certainly different than Lantfred’s—rather than verifying Swithun as a miracle-making saint in his writing, Wulfstan’s text instead affirms Swithun’s burial site and thus Winchester as a locus for miracle occurrence. From this perspective, Lantfred’s text illustrates Swithun’s *virtus* by cataloging the episodes wherein his bodily remains healed affliction after affliction, thereby establishing a relationship between the former bishop and the miraculous; writing after Swithun’s cult was already well known, Wulfstan’s text is focused on those

\(^{170}\) Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 336.
structures built for the saint as a locus where his renowned virtus made itself manifest for pilgrims visiting from across Wessex, England and the Continent.

**WULFSTAN, CONSTRUCTION, AND THE LEGACY OF THE CULT**

To understand Wulfstan’s preoccupation with the reconstruction and rededication of the Old Minster, it is essential to consider what the religious climate was like at Winchester just before the turn of the eleventh century. Wulfstan opens the *Narratio* with a series of prefatory materials which provide background and context for the rededication of the Old Minster, its former bishop, and clerical leaders who must have been present for the rededication including then-bishop Ælfheah and the monks at Winchester. From there, Wulfstan regales readers with a brief account of the renovations to the monastic precincts at Winchester — a number of additions, a new roof, new décor for the interior of the monastery, and an enclosed watercourse drawn by some sort of irrigation system from a nearby river. His overview of the work done throughout the monastic precincts is comparatively plain next to his description of the Old Minster, though this is not unexpected; as a member of the religious community at the cathedral and given the subject matter of the *Narratio*, Wulfstan clearly prioritizes the Old Minster and emphasizes the importance of the construction projects to the wellbeing of the brothers, laity, and pilgrims within the greater context of Winchester. This section of the *Narratio* is verbose, even by standards that account for Wulfstan’s penchant for detail; it accounts for over 17 percent of the poem at a length of 587 lines and is almost five times longer.
than Wulfstan’s description of Swithun’s translation. Considered as a single unit, the prefatory materials are, on average, four times longer than all but three chapters of the

---

171 Wulfstan’s chapter dedicated to Swithun’s translation takes up 104 of the 3,400 lines that comprise the Narratio.

172 I argue that these materials should be considered as a single literary unit as they are not labeled as chapters nor do they feature the incipit/explicit pattern of introduction/closing as it is found in the body of Wulfstan’s Narratio; in fact, there is language throughout the dedicatory epistola that indicates continuation between the description of one element of the Old Minster and the next that implies that, while they discuss separate structures within the Old Minster, they ought to be considered parts of a single section. For example, the section on the tower (De turris aedificio) begins with the word insuper which Michael Lapidge translates as “moreover,” an apt translation given that these sections about the various aspects of the Old Minster seem to read as a kind of tour of the facility.

While these sections are labeled in the manuscripts that contain the Narratio, they do not appear as part of either Book I or II of the narrative and are not numbered as the chapters within Books I and II are numbered. What is most important is the fact that these sections are not set apart by rubrication or majuscule script in MS R but are instead labeled in brown ink in the margins of the page, only about 50 percent as tall as the script in the body of the text itself. I mention this to clear up any potential misconceptions about the manuscript’s treatment of the section headings in the Epistola specialis and Lapidge’s treatment in his edition in The Cult of St. Swithun. Lapidge presents the marginal titles
Narratio; coincidentally, those three that are longer are the first three chapters of Book I and detail the three miracles that lead up to the translation episode.

At the time of the Narratio’s composition, the Old Minster had a new bishop, Ælfheah, the future Archbishop of Canterbury. As was his predecessor, so too was

______________

within the Epistola specialis as if they were headings that divided the epistola in the same manner as chapter headings divide Books I and II into sections. Lapidge’s editorial technique certainly makes the different sections of the church discussed in the epistola clearer for the modern reader but gives a sense of separation that does not appear in the manuscript’s mise-en-page, which creates an inaccurate impression of the manuscript’s organization of the Epistola specialis.

In addition to this, as these sections appear prior to Wulfstan’s list of the chapters which he introduces with the words “incipiunt capitula de miraculis sancti Swithuni episcopi et confessoris” [here begin the chapters of the miracles of St. Swithun, bishop and confessor], I contend that this indicates that everything prior to these chapters was thus not part of the narrative and, I argue, can thus be considered together under a broad understanding of prefatory materials. This includes the following sections: the opening of the dedicatory letter to Ælfheah [Epistola specialis ad Ælfegum episcopum]; the original church dedication [De dedicatione magne ecclesie]; sections concerning the eastern chapel [De orientali porticu], crypts [De cryptis], organ [De organis], and tower [De turris aedificio]; the second dedication [De dedicatione], a dedicatory letter to the Old Minster monks [Epistola generalis ad monachos ueteris coenobii], and a final preface [Praefatio].

139
Bishop Ælfheah an ardent promoter of Swithun’s cult, evidenced by Wulfstan’s praise in the *Epistola specialis ad Ælfegum episcopum*. In this dedicatory letter, Wulfstan states that the *Narratio* is something of a gift to Ælfheah for his accomplishments as bishop:

Haec igitur commendo tibi munuscula patri

quae uoui Domino reddere corde pio,

ut tua dignetur haec corroborare potestas

haec et ab infestis protegere insidiis.¹⁷³

Therefore, I commend this little gift to you, father, which I vowed with pious heart to render to the Lord so that your power may deign to fortify it and protect it from harsh attacks.

With these lines, Wulfstan makes clear that he is offering his metrical version of Swithun’s afterlife so that Ælfheah will continue, by his authority as bishop, to strengthen and protect the cult of Swithun from criticism. Wulfstan seems to acknowledge the importance of his work as a continuation of Lantfred’s, a piece of the foundation that first inspired and now promoted further veneration of the local saint. More importantly, Wulfstan places the responsibility for advancing the story of Swithun’s miracles as well as tending to the religious laity in Winchester in the hands of Ælfheah by implication of the gift as well as within a legacy of promulgation that began with Æthelwold, as is made

apparent by his very next sentence: “Quod quondam renouuit ouans antistes Aðeluuold” [“which the triumphant Bishop Æthelwold previous renewed”].\textsuperscript{174} From here, Wulfstan’s \textit{Epistola specialis} is little more than a record of Bishop Æthelwold’s construction efforts, noting that the series of projects at the Old Minster were meant to “increase the Christian flock” (“Christicolas augere greges”) at Winchester.\textsuperscript{175}

It is clear that the Old Minster must have been an impressive and remarkably up-to-date structure at the time Wulfstan was writing, certainly nothing short of extraordinary, by English standards, at the time its reconstruction was completed in the early 990s. Martin Biddle notes that the double-apsed portion of the cathedral erected over Swithun’s original place of interment measured 33 meters from north to south apse, dimensions almost identical to those of the internal diameter of the rotunda surrounding the Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem and the external diameter of the rotunda which Charlemagne erected at his palace in Aachen.\textsuperscript{176} This is certainly not by chance, according to Biddle; whether it was derived directly from the rotunda in Jerusalem or the one in Aachen, the “huge, sophisticated structure surrounding the site of the saint’s original grave” was “the most astonishing building constructed in Anglo-Saxon England up to this time—a clear sign of the honour with which Bishop Æthelwold intended to celebrate the miracle-working saint.”\textsuperscript{177} While Lantfred may have been familiar with

\textsuperscript{174} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 374; \textit{Epistola specialis}, line 35.

\textsuperscript{175} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 374; \textit{Epistola specialis}, line 37.

\textsuperscript{176} Biddle, “Archaeology, Architecture, and the Cult of the Saint,” 24.

\textsuperscript{177} Biddle, \textit{The Search for Winchester’s Anglo-Saxon Minsters}, 49.
large stonework structures given his Continental roots, a stone cathedral the size of the Old Minster would have been a spectacular sight to an Englishman like Wulfstan who probably never traveled beyond his home country. By 993, three and a half centuries after its initial construction in 648, the newly-renovated Old Minster had grown to three times its original size and had transformed from a modest single-room structure to what was most likely the largest stonework cathedral in Wessex, if not the whole of England.\footnote{178}

If nothing else, it is clear that Wulfstan was impressed by the state of the Old Minster at the time of the rededication in 993 or 994. His portrait of the cathedral is one characterized by something akin to awe at the addition of “plures sacris altaribus edes” [more structures with scared altars],\footnote{179} that is, a set of side chapels; he was moved to such an extent that he imagines that a visitor to the Old Minster could easily find himself so overwhelmed as to become lost “omni parte fores quia conspiciuntur apertae/ nec patet ulla sibi semita certa uiæ” [because doors can be seen in every direction and there is no fixed path apparent to him].\footnote{180} Wulfstan then goes as far as to compare the Old Minster to the mythical labyrinth built by Daedalus, a comparison which, according to P. R. Doob,\footnote{178 This is also from Eric Fernie’s remarks at the conference on “Winchester: An Early Medieval City” on July 9, 2017, and mentioned that an article about Anglo-Saxon church foundations is forthcoming.}

\footnote{179}{Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 374; \textit{Epistola specialis}, line 49.}

\footnote{180}{Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 376; \textit{Epistola specialis}, lines 53–4.}
was employed by medieval authors as “a sign of inextricability or impenetrability.”"\(^{181}\)

The Old Minster was, according to Wulfstan, so expansive and so complex that negotiating it was something that could only be accomplished with the assistance of a *ductor* to lead the way but, even then, “unde exeat, attonito pectore scire nequit” [still, in his amazed state, he is unable to know where he may exit].\(^{182}\) Perhaps the most likely explanation for this passage is that Wulfstan describes the Old Minster hyperbolically in an attempt to capture the affect of the building itself—that is to say, Wulfstan felt that, while informative, his catalog of the Old Minster’s attributes did not equally or authentically reflect just how grand, immense, and impressive the cathedral was when one stood before it in the flesh.

This kind of hyperbole is typical of hagiographic writing generally, though it is especially apt given that it is being applied to a local minster in England. In order to paint a picture of the glory of their local saint and the cathedral meant to honor him, the religious community at Winchester needed to find a way to cast the Old Minster as a focal point for pilgrimage, home to a peerless architectural triumph and bona fide saint who was appreciated by the impoverished and important alike. Without any other relics for famous saints, Winchester relied on Swithun’s celebrity as well as associations with prominent figures in Anglo-Saxon England like Æthelwold, Dunstan, and King Æthelred—all of whom are mentioned in Wulfstan’s account of the original dedication of


\(^{182}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 376; *Epistola specialis*, lines 59–60.
the Old Minster [De dedicatione magne ecclesie]—to build a sense of ethos for the bishopric.\textsuperscript{183} Wulfstan’s acknowledgement of these figures suggests a kind of endorsement by them on behalf of the Old Minster, capitalizing upon their prominence within the Anglo-Saxon world in order to legitimize what was the literal foundation of the cult. Just as the community at the Old Minster honored their esteemed guests with myriad dishes and innumerable drinks at both the dedication and rededication,\textsuperscript{184} so too in turn did the attendance by the famed guests, royal and religious alike, effectively legitimize the community and cult by virtue of mere association.

Wulfstan writes at great length detailing what these guests would have seen during their visit to the cathedral, boasting of a massive organ whose operation required the effort of “ualidi septuaginta uiri” [seventy strong men]\textsuperscript{185} in order to project sound through its four hundred pipes. His penchant for the hyperbolic strikes once more as he details the features of the tower which gleamed “ab axe”\textsuperscript{186} [down from the heavens].\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{183} Wulfstan, Narratio, 376; Epistola specialis, lines 61–80.
\textsuperscript{184} Wulfstan, Narratio, 378; De dedicatione magne ecclesie, lines 85–90; Wulfstan, Narratio, 392; Epistola specialis, lines 249–53.
\textsuperscript{185} Wulfstan, Narratio, 382; Epistola specialis, line 150.
\textsuperscript{186} In his footnote for axe, Lapidge notes that this line was taken “verbatim from Venantius Fortunatus” and that the metaphor “apparently means that the tower was so high as to stand in the realm of perpetual light.” For more on this, see note 178 for De turris aedificio in Lapidge, The Cult of St Swithun, 386.
\textsuperscript{187} Wulfstan, Narratio, 386; Epistola specialis, line 179.
where “sine nocte manet continuata dies” [day abides uninterrupted by night].

His description throughout this section is remarkably rich as he imagines what it would be like to see the tower in the dark, as if looking upon it for the first time with new eyes—“Si nocte inspiciat hanc pretereundo uiatorem et terram stellas credit habere suas” [if a traveler passing by night would gaze upon this [the tower], he might think that the earth had stars of its own].

What is most telling about Wulfstan’s section on the tower is the way in which he envisions the Old Minster—at once a cathedral that honors God and is honored by God. This is the same dialectic at play as that of the famous royal and religious men discussed above—the Old Minster standing as a tribute to the glory of God as well as a symbol for the glory of God in and of itself. This concept is much more candidly expressed in this section than in any others: “Luna coronato quotiens radiauerit ortu/ alterum ab ede sacra surgit ad astra iubar” [Whenever the moon shines down from its crowned rising, another beam ascends from the holy church to the stars].

Wulfstan evidently sees heaven offering a shining beacon to the Old Minster as the Old Minster answers heaven with a signal of similar ilk.

Fascinatingly, Wulfstan describes Swithun in similar terms later in the dedication. After discussing two miracles that took place at Swithun’s shrine in the Old Minster—a

---

188 Wulfstan, Narratio, 386; Epistola specialis, line 178.

189 Lapidge’s translation includes “golden rod,” referring to the lightning rod described by Wulfstan as topping the tower. Wulfstan, Narratio, 388; Epistola specialis, 191–92.

190 Wulfstan, Narratio, 386; Epistola specialis, lines 189–90.
man whose glaucoma was cured and a girl whose health was restored—Wulfstan remarks: “Talia quid mirum rutilant quod signa per illum/ et quod post mortem clarus in aethre micat?”¹⁹¹ [What wonder that such miracles shine forth through him, and that he, after death, gleams radiant in heaven?] This seems to underscore the notion that the building was meant not only to represent the body of the church more broadly—that is, a symbol of the Christian faith and legacy—but also functioned as a signum for Swithun as well.

While the parallel between what Lantfred and Wulfstan are doing rhetorically is not obvious and each hagiographer certainly gravitates and, from there forward, adheres to his own devices in order to emphasize the virtus of Swithun, the Old Minster, and Winchester more generally, their methods of argumentation are very much the same. In writing the first account of Swithun’s translation and miracles, Lantfred emphasizes the holiness of Swithun’s body at its very states before, during, and after the translatio in order to boost the reputation of the former bishop of Winchester. Lantfred emphasizes Swithun’s body to a far greater degree than Wulfstan and, as might be expected, spends scarcely any time providing description of Swithun’s burial containers, perhaps most succinctly illustrated by Lantfred’s vague use of tugurium in his pre-translation chapters as well as an absence of discussion of the shrine at the Old Minster after the translation. That is not to say that Lantfred completely fails to mention the tomb or any of the shrines related to Swithun but rather to acknowledge that, when he does, he does so only to signal that that place is where Swithun’s body is located. Whereas Wulfstan allows burial

¹⁹¹ Wulfstan, Narratio, 396; Epistola specialis, lines 301–2.
containers to function as markers for the body and therefore very rarely employs the
aforementioned body-part words in post-translation episodes, Lantfred does the opposite.
While Wulfstan details that miracles took place in front of or near a shrine, tomb, or
sanctuary, Lantfred instead describes these same events as occurring before or because of
Swithun’s relics.

But how do these differences in expressing virtus culminate in a similar rhetorical
style and argumentation? To answer this, we must consider the perspective of the
hagiographers. Within the scheme of Swithun’s hagiography, Lantfred’s focus is on
drawing a connection between Swithun’s remains and miracle working. In this way,
Lantfred’s text functions as a witness to these miracula as a kind of verification for
Swithun’s power and holiness—he is writing almost immediately after the translation,
three years after the fact at the very most. Lantfred is something of a documentarian in
this case—he relays the impetus for the translation and what comes after to virtually
canonize Swithun within the corpus of saints that would have been known to the Anglo-
Saxons in Wessex. By the time Wulfstan writes, Lantfred had already laid the
metaphorical foundation for the saint who was, from all accounts, at legendary status by
that point. Bolstered by the work of his hagiographical predecessor, Wulfstan’s Narratio
paints a picture of a cult that has grown in popularity, its home cathedral expanding
through construction efforts to better honor and accommodate the saint and his cult. In
his 2017 remarks at a conference on Swithun and the architecture of the Old Minster at
the University of Winchester, Eric Fernie noted that some of the cathedral’s architectural
features must have been erected in order to accommodate a large number of visitors and,
from there, been adopted in the design for Winchester Cathedral in the 1090s.\textsuperscript{192}

Wulfstan himself comments on the masses of people who had made pilgrimage to the Old Minster after the reconstruction in Book II, Chapter vi which does not have an analogue in Lantfred’s \textit{Translatio}:

\begin{quote}
Quid loquor innumeratas strictim numerando salutes
innumerossumpsisse greges? Nam claudere nullus
signa ualet numero, quae sunt diuinitus acta
presulis ad tumulum per singula puncta dierum.
Nocte dieque simul tandem mora non erat ulla
qua non languentes sanctum petiere gementes,
et dicto citius subitam meruere salutem.
Denique prandendi nobis cum tempus adesset,
saepe fuere simul ter quinque, bis octoque, sani.\textsuperscript{193}
\end{quote}

What should I say about the innumerable (that is, innumerable even with careful counting) cures which incalculable crowds received? For no one

\textsuperscript{192} Martin Biddle has argued this as well; see Martin Biddle, “\textit{Felix Urbs Winthonia}: Winchester in the Age of Monastic Reform,” in \textit{Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia}, ed. David Parsons (London: Phillimore, 1975), 123–40.

\textsuperscript{193} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 504; Book II, Chapter vi, lines 232–40.
could mark in number all of the miraculous signs which occurred at the tomb at every point in the day. Day and night alike, there was no duration of time during which the sick, in lament, did not beseech the saint and in turn obtain, just as quickly as they had asked, a cure. Indeed, when it was time for us to eat, often fifteen or twice eight [sixteen] people were cured at the same time.

From here, Wulfstan goes on to say that he and his fellow clergymen often abandoned their meals to witness miracles and chant hymns of thanks to the Lord. Even if we accept the premise that Wulfstan is once more being hyperbolic to some degree, the above passage—at the very least—reflects the fact that the number of visitors to the Old Minster was significant enough to interrupt the everyday life of its brothers. While Lantfred too remarks upon the wealth of miracles he himself or people he knew witnessed, his *Translatio* does not reflect an overwhelming number of miracle events. Lantfred’s *Translatio* gives the impression of a burgeoning shrine location, his eye trained on the translation and what he witnessed at the site of the bones of Swithun as they made their way from a humble, modestly-marked grave to the interior of the Old Minster. Wulfstan, however, was audience to the spectacle of what must have been a fully-realized cult at that point, Swithun’s reputation proven in the popular imagination of the community at Winchester and beyond who swarmed the newly-rebuilt Old Minster which featured a lavish, gleaming shrine gifted by a king. For Lantfred, the physical act of translation and, thus, Swithun’s remains themselves were connected to the Old Minster as signs of Swithun’s *virtus*; for Wulfstan, the buildings, shrines, and reliquaries for Swithun were
the proof for that same concept—they existed because of Swithun’s *virtus*, constructed because his *virtus* had inspired such veneration.
CHAPTER 5
ENSHRINEMENT AND VENERATION: THE SHRINES, RELIQUARIES, AND RELICS OF THE CULT OF SAINT SWITHUN

In his formative book *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, David Freedberg proclaims that “the consecration of an image makes it work.”¹⁹⁴ The implication of this claim is that detailing the mere consecration or canonical approval of relics is only the beginning of their impact upon the religion and its followers; that this process “makes it work” suggests that the relic does something beyond becoming part of the religion, but instead performs some sort of ideological action for those who view it. The phenomenon of the veneration of saints and, subsequently, relic veneration was widespread throughout Christendom from late antiquity, resonating in part due to monastic hagiographical writing and the emergence of local saints; in the case of tenth-century England, this practice was especially prevalent. Relics connected the religious laity with a concept of divinity that was immediate in its physicality—comprehensible due in part to the accessibility of the material associated with saints—complemented by hagiographical narratives that attested to the holiness and piety of the saints. The harmony of abstract narrative and physical relics resulted in an affect which allowed Christians a locus where religion could be practiced in a literal, experiential manner. Insofar as Christians visited relics with an understanding of their

holy associations, these visits collapsed time and space—the presence of saints’ bodies
(or body parts) made manifest the “truth” of hagiographical writing, merging the body
from the narrative with the relic before them. In this way, visiting a saint’s relics was not
a means of accessing that saint’s past, but instead being in the presence of relics
perpetually reinforced the immediacy of the Christian faith, God, and religious devotion.

In *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England*, David Rollason discusses cult
formation contemporary to the rise of Swithun’s cult, noting that the impetus for
construction for reformed communities in the tenth century was almost always related to
the formation of a cult of veneration. Of course, this is obviously the case when it comes
to the production of hagiography as well, especially in light of the influx of writing and
literacy as a result of the reform itself. Rollason rightfully acknowledges that this
increase of literacy ought not to be confused with a kind of over-production of
hagiographical writing, a point that keeps his argument from falling susceptible to
considering cults like Swithun’s and the religious leadership at the Old Minster too
cynically. A discussion of the rise of local veneration and, subsequently, fame throughout
England and the Continent need only be centered around what the products of the cult—
the materials that reflected and simultaneously facilitated a spiritual relationship between
visitor and shrine, reader and narrative—tell scholars about the community at the Old
Minster in order to illustrate how building efforts in Winchester realized Bishop
Æthelwold’s dream of a loyal, plentiful flock of Christians.

---

First and foremost, it is necessary that we consider the importance of buildings and monuments in the Anglo-Saxon world and, more broadly, how they connected the secular and monastic communities at Winchester to the greater arc of Christian history. To think of the Anglo-Saxon world is to think of a landscape wrought from a patchwork of boundaries, of lines drawn in stone and timber between king and invader, servants of God and the secular. As Nicole Discenza puts it, “the most obvious mechanism of human control over space and place is building.” Space and structure signified freedom and dominion, wilderness and sanctuary as works of limestone, granite, and scraps of Roman rubble were cobbled together to separate something from nothing. Just as hagiographers used allusions to the martyrs of antiquity and testimonies of miracles as the scaffolding by which to build the *virtus* of their local saints, so too did masons lay brick upon brick to separate from the rest of the world a space not only for the saint but also for those who would dedicate themselves to that for which the saint stood. Shrines, cathedrals, and monuments made the incredible concrete as they gave a physical, permanent presence to what could without them be dismissed as tale or rumor; they made it real. Buildings were, in a way, more than evidence of a saint’s *virtus*—they were a reflection of time and resources, the devotion and dedication and endorsement of kings, clergy, and the laity alike who were made similar, in spite of a wealth of difference, by their belief. These works of architecture were a guarantee by people of all social classes of something they all knew to be true: that the stone that carved cathedral from churchyard enclosed a *locus* where the divine dwelt.

---

The hagiographical works about Swithun are stories about this very thing—stories of how *virtus* is discovered and made recognizable, accounts that illustrate how to honor and celebrate one of God’s beloved bishops. It is not surprising that building and construction are of such fundamental importance to the welfare of Swithun’s cult beyond the confines of the hagiography when the very first miracle related by Lantfred is that which sets into motion his translation. The rich archeological evidence uncovered beneath the soil of Winchester Cathedral reveals the extent to which the bishops of the last quarter of the tenth century set out to memorialize Swithun and his legacy, enfolding the site of his original grave within cathedral walls that reached westward, extending the foundation of the Old Minster. To mark the space was not enough—it needed to be separated from the outside and swaddled within its own context, the context that it both made and of which it was made. That is to say, Swithun the saint was made a saint as his remains left the unmarked space of the churchyard and entered the Old Minster, subsumed into and substantiated by Christian canon by the translation ceremony; as the boundary of the Old Minster stretched to incorporate Swithun’s original grave, the same thing happened metaphorically. As Foley describes it, this is a kind of “traditional referentiality” where “value-added phrases, scenes, and other patterns resonate in a network of signification, with the singular instance dwarfed—but implicitly informed—by the whole.”

---

In this way, we can understand building and enclosing as representative of a Christian impulse to delineate space from sacred space, regular things from holy things. This concept is one that is pervasive throughout the Bible; Genesis opens with God dividing light from dark, the waters from Heaven, Heaven from earth, while Exodus details the manner by which to separate the holy of holies from the rest of the tabernacle. This concept is part of a larger Christian paradigm wherein certain spaces are fundamentally imbued with religious meaning and significance to the extent that these spaces—and what happens within them—can be recognized and understood by all members of the faith; “over time, certain types of structures become invested with powerful connotative meanings in specific cultural contexts.” Structure, in the literal and figurative sense, is a universal language. The physicality of the church itself, a building with a high altar where feasts, fasts, and holidays are celebrated, is as much of a Christian touchstone as the ceremonies that take place within it—a saint’s translation, for example. Once again, the concept of cyclicity or symbiosis comes to mind; just as the church space affirms that which is within its walls, so too do those things within the walls of the church affirm the church space; in Deshman’s words, “Swithun’s translation and the miracles within the cathedral demonstrated that monasticism had literally sanctified

---


Ecclesia once more. As a result, there is a sense that a particular church space is representative of the Church in the broader socio-religious sense, unus pro omnibus, and in this way the church as a space is able to effectively endorse, through ceremony, what takes place within its walls. While it is a place with cultural meaning, the building itself is a sign that stands for the almighty, amaterial Christian afterlife; in the words of Gregory the Great in his Dialogues: “For we know, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.”

This notion of symbiosis between holy figure and sacred structure is affirmed by imagery in the Benedictional of St. Æthelwold (London, British Library, Additional MS 49598), commissioned by its namesake and produced at his scriptorium in Winchester in the 970s, certainly after 971 but before 979. The manuscript contains the earliest

---


202 Discenza, Inhabited Spaces, 215.

203 Given that the manuscript commemorates Swithun’s 971 translation, the terminus post quem for the manuscript is late 971.

204 After comparing the illuminations in the Benedictional of St. Æthelwold to the Leofric Missal (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 597), the illuminations of which can be dated to 979, Deshman has concluded that the illuminator of the Leofric Missal was influenced by the illuminations in the Benedictional of St. Æthelwold. From this, Deshman identifies that terminus ante quem as prior to 979. For more on this, see Robert
known image of Swithun, which appears as a miniature that precedes a liturgical blessing for the feast for Swithun’s translation.\textsuperscript{205} The illumination itself is ornate; Swithun stands beneath a golden arch with two gold columns on either side of him, each of the columns’ shafts and capitals decorated further with green and red pigment. This exterior structure is a symbol of the dome of heaven; referred to by Deshman as a baldachin, it marked the special eminence and importance of the person beneath it.\textsuperscript{206} What is most important, however, is Swithun’s placement within the baldachin—standing upon the base of another column, Swithun himself appears almost as if part of a third interior column. Swithun’s elbows, under the blue fabric of his vestments, seem to press against the slender gold columns on either side of his body and the gold halo around Swithun’s head runs perfectly parallel to the innermost golden dome above him; additionally, as Deshman notes, “two small arches appear to spring from the saint’s head rather than from the capital which presumably stands behind him.”\textsuperscript{207}

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{205} Deshman, “Saint Swithun in Early Medieval Art,” 91.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{206} Deshman, “Saint Swithun in Early Medieval Art,” 91.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{207} Deshman, “Saint Swithun in Early Medieval Art,” 92.
\end{flushright}
Plate IV. Portrait of Swithun in London, British Library Additional 49598, f. 97v, commonly known as The Benedictional of St. Æthelwold.
The miniature presents Swithun as if he were part of the structure itself, simultaneously framed by the exterior columns as well as part of the interior support features that hold the structure itself in place. The structure is thus founded around him and by him; he is integral to the integrity of the architecture and the religious community who venerated him. Deshman concludes:

The assimilation of the human form to architecture create[s] a pleasing decorative unity between the figure and the framework, but this [is] not simply an aesthetic feature … This architectural symbolism stems ultimately from the Bible. Galatians 2:9 had metaphorically described three of the apostles as columns and, on the basis of this and other biblical texts, medieval commentators frequently likened the apostles and their successors, the doctors and preachers of the Church, to columns which spiritually supported the church through firm faith, upright deeds, and sound teachings. Like the liturgy, the picture of Swithun characterized him as an apostolic column of the living edifice of the Church.²⁰⁸

With this in mind, it is evident that Swithun can be conceived of as both “sanctifying” the church space insofar as he facilitates *miracula* as well as defined by the church space itself.

Within the context of the cult of St. Swithun, there are a number of methods by which space is divided, each individual practice reflecting the ways in which separation

plays a role in how these spaces and the objects within them are understood by their respective audiences. As discussed in Chapter 4, movement and place are of fundamental importance to Swithun’s cult from a hagiographical perspective and it is clear that objects—remains of holy bodies, namely—were interpreted differently depending on how they were situated in the church space. Before, this discussion paid particular attention to the way in which space and burial defined the bodily object before and after translation; now, we focus on the memorialized space itself.

This shifts our attention from the three chapters that record the events leading up to and including the translatio in Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s accounts to the more than thirty-five chapters that detail the miracula after Swithun’s translation. As mentioned previously, while discussion related to Swithun’s body declines dramatically after the translatio episode in the work of both hagiographers, there is a greater emphasis on locus in each of the hagiographical works, especially in the case of Wulfstan’s Narratio. If the events before the translation (inventio) and the translatio episode itself are characterized by their concentration on the movement of holy remains, those that come after reflect a newfound interest in how people moved into and interacted with holy spaces, thus implying an underlying need to demarcate space with visual and physical boundaries.

This impulse to divide and mark space is evident in both the hagiographical and archeological record as each relates to the cult of St. Swithun. A close analysis of Wulfstan’s Narratio as well as evidence uncovered through various excavations at the foundation of the Old Minster show that the Old Minster saw a series of expansion projects in the nearly thirty years after the translation in order to better commemorate and memorialize Swithun’s interment locations. That these building projects were meant to
better accommodate pilgrimage and, in turn, encourage veneration for Swithun is evident when we consider at once the dates of Swithun’s various *translationes*, the approximate dates attributed to Lantfred’s *Translatio* and Wulfstan’s *Narratio*, and the fact that Swithun’s was a cult on the move, its popularity growing beyond Anglo-Saxon Winchester and remaining prominent and revered after 1066. The present chapter considers how, by memorializing holy spaces, these new material objects function as *loci* in and of themselves and create physical and visual points of interaction for pilgrims. To do this, I consider the functionality of memorial spaces and constructions such as feretories, reliquaries, and shrines and how these objects and spaces operated in relation to the collective consciousness of the cult and were able to synecdochally represent the miraculous hagiographical past of the cult while serving as a referent to the present for the pilgrims who visited those spaces. This notion is best encapsulated by Uwe Michael Lang, who says that “buildings have the capacity of communicating ‘values’ that transcend their proper function. One such value is the sacred,” which Lang describes as “the realization of a connection that leads us beyond the technical or functional aspects of a building and allows us to recall an experience of a reality that transcends what is immediately perceptible to the senses” where “the idea of the sacred is linked with a particular history or memory.” As Katherine O’Brien O’Keeffe puts it, “…the senses

---

… acted as conduits of information between the body and the soul, the material and spiritual.  

There is a kind of strange duality when discussing memorial sites in the context of a saint’s cult as these sites are as much loci as they are aedificia. This means that memorial sites carve out a space for a saint with brick and mortar while metonymically standing for the space itself by virtue of contiguity; simply put, a memorial shrine that is built around a grave is conceived of substantively as the memorial itself, the result of a collapse in meaning between something that marks space and the actual space. In Uwe Michael Lang’s words:

Unlike personal and interior prayer, the liturgy is an external action, which has its concrete and material forms of expressions, in which the human senses are always involved. Public worship thus is in need of its proper place, its proper time, and its proper objects that are specifically dedicated so that it can be celebrated as a sacred action. It is in relation to this sacred action that we also speak of sacred space, sacred time, or sacred objects.  

From Lang’s remarks, it is clear that the emphasis on perception and interaction is fundamentally connected to a collective cultural consciousness of what a building or

---


object stands for within the scheme of the cult. In this way, the objects built to surround or stand in for Swithun’s remains formed focal points for veneration, spots where Swithun’s *virtus* became manifest via *miracula* as depicted in the hagiography written about him.

Within the context of Anglo-Saxon Winchester, there are a number of material objects that were created to memorialize the former bishop of the Old Minster:

1) Swithun’s original grave site in the cathedral churchyard;

2) The feretory, a portable frame used to carry Swithun’s remains into the Old Minster, which functioned as a kind of temporary shrine for Swithun;

3) The ornate reliquary commissioned by King Edgar and attested to in Wulfstan’s *Narratio*; it was probably kept as some part of shrine behind the high altar of the Old Minster and served as a site for pilgrims after Swithun’s second *translatio* in 974;

4) A shrine over Swithun’s original burial site that was incorporated into the Old Minster at the culmination of a series of construction efforts between 973 and 995.

These spaces and objects all relate directly to the Old Minster and are associated—in one way or another—with Swithun’s initial translation in 971. These objects and spaces are mentioned throughout Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s hagiography (with the exception of the reliquary commissioned by King Edgar which only appears in Wulfstan’s version) and thus would have been touchstones for those venerated of Swithun’s cult who made pilgrimage to Winchester.
In addition to the materials attested by Lantfred and Wulfstan, there are a number of later objects and locations associated with the veneration of Swithun that exist beyond the boundaries of what was recorded by Swithun’s hagiographers; these objects are associated with Winchester Cathedral and date from after 1093. Examining these objects and places allows us to understand the culture of veneration for Swithun after the tenth century:

5) Given that Swithun’s relics were concealed from public view within a structure built around the Saxon feretory, an aperture commonly referred to as the Holy Hole\(^{212}\) (Plate XXVII) offered visitors the opportunity to move closer by crawling past the western most wall of the shrine to move closer to where Swithun’s relics rested.

\(^{212}\) The earliest mention of the Holy Hole comes in the *Historia Maior Wintoniensis*, which chronicles the monastic history of Winchester from the second century through the late 1130s. The *Historia* is the work of a fifteenth-century monk of St. Swithun’s Priory named Thomas Rudborne. Rudborne’s text mentions the Holy Hole only once in an entry for 1118 wherein he describes the location of the bones of “Molde, the Good Queen” in Winchester Cathedral: “supra locum uocatum the Holy Hole” [above the place called the Holy Hole]. For more on this, see Henry Wharton, ed., *Anglia Sacra, sive Collectio historiarum, partim antiquitus, partim recenter scriptarum, de archiepiscopis et episcopis Angliae a prima fidei Christianae susceptione ad annum MDXL*, vol. 1 (London: Chiswel, 1691), 277.
6) A thirteenth-century wall painting of what is thought to be Swithun’s body and one of his relics or shrine locations in Morley Library (Plate VII) stands as the only surviving artistic depiction of Swithun from the Middle Ages.

7) A head relic of St. Swithun (Plate VIII) rediscovered by John Crook at Évreux Cathedral in France is the only extant relic of the saint. While little is known about the relic itself or how it ended up in France sometime before the end of the fourteenth century, it reflects the breadth of Swithun’s cult and suggests that Swithun’s name was known to some on the Continent after the fourteenth century.

THE ORIGINAL SHRINE SPACES AND OBJECTS OF THE OLD MINSTER

Given what is known about the Old Minster, it is clear that the cathedral was an important feature in the lives of many in Winchester. The scores of miracula—“countless,” according to Swithun’s hagiographers—experienced by secular people at the various interment places of the saint’s remains are evidence that the Old Minster played host to the laity and religious alike and that the relationship between the cathedral’s monastic population and secular visitors was a good one indeed. From the accounts detailed by Lantfred and Wulfstan, it seems that the visitors to the Old Minster were plentiful and that visiting a shrine location for the cathedral’s patron saint was something that could be done with relative ease; the only limiting factor seemed to be navigating the packs of sick people who were waiting for a cure. This wait was not one that was without reward, according to Lantfred: “post aliquot dies ita sunt curati—Deo fauente—meritis
sancti, ut etiam infra basilicam uix quinque inuenirentur languidi”\textsuperscript{213} [after several days, they were all cured—by the merits of the saint and with God’s favor—to the extent that within the church, scarcely five ill people could be found]. The relocation of Swithun’s remains into the Old Minster meant that those who participated in his cult did so within the boundaries of the Old Minster establishment; in order to visit the saint’s remains, one first had to enter the cathedral space. Rhetorically, Wintonian monastic leadership thus had ultimate authority over the context within which Swithun was understood, further evidenced by the production of Lantfred’s *Translatio* shortly after the translation. Based on his account, it is clear that Swithun was on the minds of at least some of the local religious population at Winchester, though perhaps not in any kind of edifying way. With the hagiography, translation, and, later, shrines for him, the Old Minster was able to present a portrait of Swithun that associated construction and material objects with *virtus* and thus the saint’s *virtus* with the Old Minster. While Swithun’s remains were still the conduit through which God’s will was refracted and made manifest, the remains were part of the cathedral itself, an essential part of cultic veneration given that the saint himself asked to be put there. Again, we can see the symbiotic relationship: Swithun’s remains consecrate the Old Minster’s high altar and the shrine in that place authenticates the *virtus* of the community’s beloved saint.

In understanding the role of the shrine within the Old Minster and, further, within the context of veneration in Winchester, we should consider shrines as falling under the umbrella of *res sacratae* [sacred things], a title given to holy objects by Theodulf of

\textsuperscript{213} Lantfred, *Translatio*, 286; Chapter iv, lines 9–11.
Orléans in his text *Libri Carolini*. Commissioned by Charlemagne in the 790s as a rebuttal to the Second Council of Nicaea’s decrees regarding sacred images, Theodulf’s *Libri Carolini* sought to redefine the role of and purpose for representational art in the Middle Ages, concluding that the use of sacral art in the ornamentation of ecclesiastical objects was of great educational and memorial importance to religious people. According to Theodulf, a *res sacrata* served an important function within the community of veneration—it stood as a reminder of God’s *virtus*, a tool that could be used to teach them of things that were possible through belief in God.\(^{214}\) As Celia Chazelle put it:

\[
\ldots \text{The Carolingians argued [that] the *res sacratae* differ radically from [artistic imagery] because their existence was ordained and blessed by God, a blessing that endowed them with invisible, spiritual qualities and powers. As opposed to the utter materiality of ordinary artistic productions, these objects are places in which it is possible to achieve, in a very immediate sense, contact with the holy.}\(^{215}\)
\]

From the accounts of Lantfred and Wulfstan, it is evident that the shrines and reliquaries for Swithun functioned in this manner: they were objects that marked particular locations both within and beyond the walls of the Old Minster as significant spaces. Through this


demarcation, shrines and reliquaries created *loci* for veneration that acted as signs and visual reminders for both Swithun’s *virtus* as well as God’s.

While the hagiography is considerably straightforward when it comes to detailing the various ways Swithun’s remains were commemorated in the shrine fixtures it details, the archeological record suggests that this may not have been the case in actuality. Lantfred and Wulfstan are in agreement about many things: that Swithun was buried in the Old Minster churchyard before he was translated into the Old Minster within a temporary reliquary or casket atop a feretory and, from there, his remains were laid to rest within the church—presumably at either the high altar or a shrine located near the altar. To the accounts recorded by Lantfred, Wulfstan adds an account of a second translation to his version, detailing the translation of at least some of Swithun’s relics from the original Old Minster shrine into an ornate reliquary commissioned by King Edgar that stayed in the church. From a hagiographical standpoint, these were the shrine structures whereby visitors to the Old Minster could expect to receive miracles.

**THE FIRST OLD MINSTER SHRINE**

After Swithun’s remains were translated into the Old Minster, the rate of miracle occurrences in Winchester increased exponentially. With his relics situated appropriately within the cathedral space, visitors to the Old Minster had a physical space, a *locus*, that had come to be associated with the manifestation of Swithun’s *virtus*. The translation into the Old Minster gave the community at Winchester and its visitors a virtual point of access that they need only navigate to in order to properly venerate the saint. The concept of a veneration *locus* for Swithun is one neither metaphorical nor imagined within the
context of the hagiography for the saint—both Lantfred and Wulfstan describe an unknown section within the Old Minster that was associated with miracles. Shrines served as the markers for loci associated with miracles, often erected to simultaneously house the remains of the saint as well as provide a visual reference for the concealed remains. While it is beyond question that medieval pilgrims would have visited shrine sites in order to pray before a saint’s holy relics, the interplay between the concealed material and the construction meant to house it means that shrines served as markers of a location, effectively functioning as signposts for where appeals to a saint ought to take place. As Swithun’s reputation spread throughout England, we can imagine medieval people conceiving of miracle workings as associated above all with the locus of a saint’s relics, a site where miracles took place on account of the relics.
Plate V. Martin Biddle’s rendering of the Old Minster after its final stage of construction was completed in 992–4 under Ælfheah’s supervision. 1a marks a monument built over Swithun’s original grave; 1b marks the place where Swithun’s body was translated with the feretory in 971.\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{216} This rendering has been adapted from one provided by Biddle. For more, see Biddle, \textit{The Search for Winchester’s Anglo-Saxon Minsters}, 59.
The importance of Swithun’s shrine location in the Old Minster cannot be understated, especially when examined within the context of Swithun’s subsequent translations out of the Old Minster and into the Norman Winchester Cathedral in the early-twelfth century. The hagiography of Lantfred and Wulfstan again and again affirms the concept that proximity to a holy site is of fundamental importance when it comes to the phenomenon of miracles. As a shrine or reliquary conceals a holy body and remains in fixed location, those structures become rhetorically synonymous with the saintly body itself. One does not need to see a holy body or relics to understand the importance of the saint’s body—that importance is illustrated in the location of Swithun’s shrine within the Old Minster, demonstrated when Æthelwold stands at the head of the feretory and celebrates mass, reinforced when visitors to the Old Minster traveled from afar to stand before the stonework that concealed the saint. Even after Swithun’s translation into the Norman cathedral, the site of Swithun’s tomb in the Old Minster remained a popular destination for pilgrims, perhaps even more popular than his new shrine location in the north transept.

**THE DEVOTIONAL ARTIFACTS FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD**

**King Edgar’s Reliquary for St. Swithun**

**Issues of dating**

There are a number of factors in the hagiography that complicate our understanding of these burial containers, the most significant of which relates to King Edgar’s reliquary for Swithun. While it is not inherently problematic that the reliquary is
only attested in Wulfstan’s *Narratio*, the point at which it enters the narrative is peculiar. Given that the reliquary is absent from Lantfred’s *Translatio* and that Wulfstan’s *Narratio* is twenty years younger, it would be reasonable to suppose that the reliquary had not been made when Lantfred was writing the initial version of the life. This explanation is bolstered by an analysis of the architectural and historical records related to the Old Minster that will be discussed later in this chapter. That said, Wulfstan includes his account of King Edgar’s reliquary in the first chapter of Book II, where it is immediately followed by a slew of chapters that correspond to miracle accounts in Lantfred’s *Translatio*. While this is a rather bizarre place for the reliquary account to appear in Wulfstan’s work, there is no apparent explanation for situating this new episode in the midst of episodes that Wulfstan has unquestionably adapted from Lantfred.

If we consider the range of dates for when Swithun’s remains might have been placed into King Edgar’s reliquary, we can use this not only to surmise why this is absent from Lantfred’s *Translatio* but also as a way to determine a more precise date for Lantfred’s original draft of the *Translatio*. Given that Lantfred does not mention this reliquary or this shrine building in his *Translatio*, it is safe to say that it had not arrived at the Old Minster by the time Lantfred finished writing his work. Lapidge estimates that Lantfred wrote the *Translatio* between 972 and 974 but not later than 975, noting that “all the miracles recorded by Lantfred arguably took place during the year 971/2.”

While I agree that the *Translatio* was certainly finished before 975, a comparison of the hagiography to the archaeological record reveals that he most likely finished the

---

217 For more on this, see Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 236.
*Translatio* prior to King Edgar’s reliquary arriving at the Old Minster and, therefore, prior to the completion of the shrine structure and other building projects.

Based on Lantfred’s description of the Old Minster, it is clear that the building was still in its seventh-century form anywhere from about six months to a year after the first translation. This approximate timeframe can be gleaned from the few instances of relative dating that appear in Lantfred’s text. In Chapter iv, Lantfred notes that the rate at which miracles had taken place in the five months after the translation [“ferme per interstitium quinque mensium raro fuit aliqua dies quo in basilica … non sanarentur languidi”]²¹⁸ had continued to be just as impressive as directly after the translation; later in the chapter, he says that the miracles had not stopped even a year after the translation [“in anni circulo qui carent numero”].²¹⁹ From this, we can suppose that Lantfred is discussing miracles that took place sometime in late December 971 through July 972 in Chapter iv. When he describes the Old Minster as a single-bay building in Chapter xx, it is clear that at least six months to a year have passed between the translation and the miracle outlined in the chapter based on the relative date from Chapter iv—from this, it is clear that construction of a shrine at Swithun’s tomb had not begun by July 972. If it had, Lantfred certainly would have mentioned it.

Given that there is no indication in either Lantfred’s or Wulfstan’s version of the miracles that followed Swithun’s translation that the Old Minster was under construction at the time of the translation and that Lantfred does not mention building efforts in his

²¹⁸ Lantfred, *Translatio*, 286; Chapter iv, lines 3–5.

²¹⁹ Lantfred, *Translatio*, 286; Chapter iv, lines 7–8.
account of the miracles that took place in 971/2, the first stage of the building project at the Old Minster must have begun sometime after July 972 and been completed prior to October 974, perhaps even in October 973. If we accept that Lantfred finished his *Translatio* before the second of Swithun’s translations, we can more approximately date the writing of his text as reaching its complete form between 972 and 973, the latest possible date being mid-974 though this seems slightly less likely given that Lantfred almost certainly would have explicitly mentioned plans for the reliquary—if not the new shrine location—had he still been writing a few months prior to the second translation. If we consider a passage from the *Praefatio*, it is clear that Lantfred did not know of plans for the second translation and the location in the shrine structure: “donec illi templum fabricaretur, infra moenia basilice apostolorum Petri et Pauli decenter collocatae”220 [until such a time as a shrine should be constructed for him, [Swithun’s relics] were appropriately housed within the walls of the church of SS. Peter and Paul]. If he had, this would have been the most appropriate point in the narrative for Lantfred to mention that there would be a translation of the remains once more.

Based on the archeological evidence, Martin Biddle has concluded that construction of the shrine erected over Swithun’s original grave did not begin until sometime after October 974.

On 15 July 971 Swithun was translated from his original grave into the church and on 8 October, possibly three years later in 974, he was translated a second time and his remains placed in two shrines, one

220 Lantfred, *Translatio*, 258; *Praefatio*, line 60.
attached to the high altar and another kept in the sacristy. It was probably during this period that the reconstruction of the Old Minster church began. The first plan was to build over the cemetery west of the old church, linking the west end to the detached tower of St Martin to the west. The new building was centered upon the site of St Swithun’s original burial, the importance of which was emphasized by the flanking apses\textsuperscript{221} of immense size to the north and south.\textsuperscript{222}

I agree with Martin Biddle’s argument for the October 974 date for the second translation of Swithun’s remains based on a number of factors. First, the translation could not have taken place before the new shrine was built over Swithun’s original churchyard burial grave, as Biddle acknowledges that this stage of the construction was completed at the same time as the sacristy. Keeping in mind that the reliquary commissioned by King Edgar would have had to have been gifted to the Old Minster before Edgar’s death in October 975 and Biddle’s conclusion that a major renovation of the cathedral almost certainly took place after 974, we can deduce that the building project at the Old Minster did not take place during the years covered by Lantfred’s account (971/2) and that plans for the new reliquary had not been fully realized by the time Lantfred finalized his account, probably by the middle of 973 if not earlier. Indeed, Biddle’s most recent publication concerning the findings of the eight excavations of the Old Minster suggests

\textsuperscript{221} Those being the apses that comprised the \textit{martyrium}.

\textsuperscript{222} Biddle, “\textit{Felix Urbs Winthonia},” 136.
that the wave of construction that included the erection of a shrine over Swithun’s original grave took place between 975–80 based on his dating of chalk foundations of structures that were part of the second wave of construction at the Old Minster; while there was an intermediary building effort prior to this that began sometime after 972, Biddle notes that the structures were almost immediately demolished and the archeological record does not reflect any shrine having been built as part of this effort.²²³

We can theorize a number of explanations as to why Wulfstan inserts this episode where he does. First, it might be the case that Wulfstan appends the reliquary chapter to the beginning of Book II in an effort to mirror the structure of Book I; in this way, each of Wulfstan’s books would open with a section related to translations prior to the miracle accounts, creating a sense of symmetry in the narrative. Indeed, this chapter describes a procession that is similar to the procession of the original translation and is effective in framing the narrative. More likely, this could be explained by the fact that Wulfstan needed to find a place to insert the reliquary account and did not know where to put it as it is unattested in Lantfred’s Translatio. Placing it toward the middle of the Narratio means that it was surrounded by miracle episodes that rhetorically affirmed the reliquary and thus Swithun’s virtue without having to directly ascribe any of the miracle episodes to the reliquary itself; this seems appropriate as the episode is dominated by description of the reliquary itself and the procession and does not report any miracles.

---

The Reliquary Object

Whether or not Wulfstan might have downplayed the appearance of a temporary reliquary purposely or not to pave the way for it, his description of Swithun’s second reliquary is far more detailed. In Book II, Wulfstan dedicates an entire chapter to describing the construction of a new reliquary commissioned for Swithun’s second translation on October 8 of an unknown year.\textsuperscript{224} The new book begins after an overview of miracles that took place after Swithun’s first translation at the spot of his reinterment within the Old Minster, transitioning somewhat abruptly to the second translation and a description of the new reliquary. According to Wulfstan, King Edgar provided three hundred pounds of silver, rubies, and gold to be used by skilled goldsmiths so that “patris dignum fabricent in honore sacellum”\textsuperscript{225} [(the goldsmiths) might make a suitable shrine in honor of the holy father].

While it is not surprising that a king commissioned an ornate material object to facilitate the veneration of a favorite saint of his, it is important to note that reliquaries for shrines and altars were—almost by definition—elaborate, expensive objects in the medieval world. Cynthia Hahn, in her essay “What Do Reliquaries Do for Relics?,” notes that the ornate, gilded reliquaries popular in the late-eighth and early-ninth centuries lack any insight into the character of the saint for whom they were made—perhaps especially in the case of a saint like Swithun, whose life is largely unknown. Instead, they would have seemed dazzling to the medieval eye, manufactured not to inform but to impress.

\textsuperscript{224} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 493; Book II, Chapter i, line 2 of the title.

\textsuperscript{225} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 493; Book II, Chapter i, line 8.
saintly and godly *virtus* upon anyone who looked upon them. Even the modern viewer’s experience looking at a reliquary is “of an entity, glittering, magnificent, static, and undeniably exotic.”

Hahn makes mention of the modern viewer not to comment on the reliquary (nor the relic inside) from this perspective, but instead to emphasize that the contemporary perception of “distance” between relic and reliquary would not have existed to medieval monk or pilgrim. On the topic of ornamentation, Hans Belting imagines that reliquaries effectively “represented this body of the saint and, as it were, was itself the saint’s new body … [and] made the saint physically present, while the golden surface made the saint appear as a supernatural person with a heavenly aura.”

The reliquary thus would have been striking to a medieval audience who would have associated the glory of the reliquary with that of the body it both represented and contained, at once a commentary on the saint, living a Christian life, and the power of God. By furnishing goldsmiths with rare, luxurious materials, King Edgar sought to create a reliquary that would reflect Swithun’s *virtus* to future visitors to Winchester and ensure his legacy and veneration continued for parishioners beyond those immediately affiliated with the Old Minster or present at the first or second translation.

---


Wulfstan describes the program of the reliquary within which Æthelwold placed “corpore de sancti partem” \(^{228}\) [part of the body of the saint] in the first chapter of Book II:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Qua passio Christi} \\
\text{sculpta beata nitet, simul et surrectio, necne} \\
eius ad astriferos ueneranda ascensio caelos: \\
\text{plura inibique micant, quae nunc edicere longum est.}^{229}
\end{align*}
\]

The blessed Passion of Christ shines [on it], sculpted there, and also the Resurrection, and his venerable Ascension to the starry heavens: many other scenes shine there, that are [too] long to describe at present.

While Wulfstan does not describe the rest of the program, it is likely that it continued to trace themes related to Christ and heaven, perhaps featuring the saint himself, the Old Minster, or an image associated with one of the miracles achieved by saintly *virtus* prior to the second translation. It is unsurprising that the life and *passio* of Christ were popular iconographic features of medieval reliquaries; programs of this nature at once connected the divine *post mortem* achievements of the saint to God in an immediate way as well as served as a reminder that saintly *virtus* was only possible

---

\(^{228}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 493; Book II, Chapter i, line 18.

\(^{229}\) Wulfstan, *Narratio*, 492; Book II, Chapter I, lines 12–15.
because of Christ’s passion. According to C.R. Dodwell, it is possible that the decoration of Swithun’s reliquary was concerned with the concept of “eternal life” given that Christ’s Resurrection and Ascension were included in the program of its decoration. To support this claim, Dodwell notes that this reliquary might have featured a program analogous to the one featured on a shrine for St. Edith (c. 963–c. 986) that was commissioned by King Cnut in the eleventh century. Like Swithun’s reliquary, the program of the shrine for Edith featured the Passion and Resurrection, and it also included “the Massacre of the Innocents [and] the miracle of Christ restoring life to the dead daughter of Jairus.” Given that the reliquary for Swithun and the shrine for Edith featured art about the life of Christ and it is unknown whether or not the shrines depicted the life or merits of the respective saints, Dodwell presumes that the programs illustrated Scriptural subjects as a way of “demonstrating the irrelevance of death to the Christian.”

Perhaps this emphasis on the latter part of Christ’s life relates to the fact that Swithun’s own miracula were manifest after his death, a way of emphasizing that Swithun’s virtus was connected to a divine power made manifest by God rather than something that was associated with Swithun’s life. In this way, Swithun’s reliquary “[worked] hard to ‘represent’ the relic as powerful, holy and sacred, part of the larger institution of the Church” in that it connected Swithun’s relics to the notion of a living, complete saintly body, and that body to a place within the Christian canon through its

---

iconographic program.\textsuperscript{231} This concept is one we can see in Swithun’s hagiography, found most succinctly put at the end of Wulfstan’s \textit{Praefatio} in a moment where he directly connects the events in Winchester and Swithun’s \textit{virtus} to Christ:

\begin{quote}
Haec cum felici uolitarent tempora cursu,
ipse Dei genitus—lux uera, nitorque perhennis—
aurea caelestis dignanter munera lucis
gentibus Anglorum direxit ab aethre polorum
Suuihuni per magna patris suffragia sancti
huius amatoris, huius pastoris et urbis;
sunt data millenis per quem medicamina turmis
omnia depulsis sanantia corpora morbis.\textsuperscript{232}
\end{quote}

When these times had hastened along their blessed course, the Son of God himself—the true light and the perennial brilliancy—courteously sent the golden gifts of heavenly light to the English people from the pole of the heavens by the great intercession of our holy father Swithun, the lover and pastor of this city, through whom remedies that cured the body and removed all illness were given to crowds of thousands.

\textsuperscript{231} Hahn, “What Do Reliquaries Do for Relics?,” 289.

\textsuperscript{232} Wulfstan, \textit{Narratio}, 408; \textit{Praefatio}, lines 168–75.
This moment of the hagiography affirms the underlying sentiments addressed by Dodwell and Hahn—as Wulfstan introduces Swithun as an agent of Christ through whom His *munera* of healing are thus made manifest. As Katherine O’Brien O’Keeffe has pointed out, Wulfstan’s text, like Lantfred’s, is primarily about healing. In her discussion of Lantfred’s text in “Body and Law in Late Anglo-Saxon England,” O’Brien O’Keeffe argues that “these miracles are designed as testimonies to Swithun’s power to heal, and there are two important themes that weave through the collection. The first of these is that the power of cure at the Old Minster operates through Swithun, whose body rests there. … The second theme is the ways in which the healed bodies are to be interpreted.”

Although Wulfstan does not mention Swithun’s relics directly, Swithun’s ability to enact miracles is consistently attributed to his enshrined remains, inextricably tied to a greater Christian past through their association with the Old Minster, itself a sign of the institution of the Church. While the program of King Edgar’s reliquary cannot be known for certain, Dodwell’s proposed “eternal life” theme would certainly align with the arc of Swithun’s hagiography, itself comprised of a narrative similar to that of Christ: a story of the triumph of divine *virtus* over the mortal body, a story of the way in which God is made manifest in the bodily vessels of his most devout. O’Brien O’Keeffe considers themes of healing and eternal life as inherently connected: “The power to forgive sins is signified by the healing of [a] man’s body, and spiritual health inside is read from the

change on the outside,” and “these miracles of healing show us what is most important in the cult”: that the body of the saint is analogous to the body of Christ.\textsuperscript{234}

No matter what program was featured on Swithun’s reliquary, the reliquary itself was a place of both text and context, simultaneously a location to experience the holiness of an object as well as an art form that commented upon the relic inside. No matter the state of the relics within, Swithun’s reliquary functioned as a complement to the bodily material within—with its lavish ornamentation, the gilded reliquary commissioned by King Edgar obscured Swithun’s remains and instead presented them as a spectacular object in and of itself. Rather than emphasizing its contents, Swithun’s reliquary shifted perception, offering the impression of a complete, intact object in place of a fragmented body. This idea of a reliquary communicating “wholeness” is discussed by Hans Belting in his book \textit{Likeness and Presence}, where he notes that a reliquary “was often used to restore the appearance of a body to a relic that had lost its shape through decomposition.”\textsuperscript{235} Given that Swithun’s body was not incorrupt during either the first or second \textit{translationes}, the reliquary effectively distanced Swithun’s remains from bodily associations and recapitulated the saint’s mortal body as something that could be understood more abstractly. Unlike a burial casket, an ornate reliquary like Swithun’s did not harken back to the \textit{corpus} of the saint; instead, the reliquary became a \textit{signum} for something greater, a visual point of reference where the opulent appearance of the reliquary at once made an impression as well as stood for something beyond the

\textsuperscript{234} O’Brien O’Keeffe, “Body and Law in Late Anglo-Saxon England,” 220.

\textsuperscript{235} Belting, \textit{Likeness and Presence}, 297.
impression it made upon the senses. Swithun’s enshrined relics, according to O’Brien O’Keeffe, connected heaven and earth and were imbued with the promise that “the saint would reclaim his body at the end of time, but for now, the laity could see and sometimes even touch these powerful links with the other world.” That is to say, Swithun’s reliquary would certainly have garnered the attention of the viewer on account of its beauty, but its beauty also attested to the *virtus* of the thing within, the thing contained even more spectacular than the container: the promise of an eternal afterlife.

**THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL**

**The Morley Library Wall Painting**

While King Edgar’s reliquary for St. Swithun does not survive, there is some evidence for what it might have looked like aside from the brief description provided by Wulfstan. In May of 1909, a medieval wall painting was uncovered behind a bookshelf of the Morley Library at Winchester Cathedral; in spite of the find, the wall painting was not studied until the 1990s when architectural historian and expert on early medieval Winchester John Crook reexamined it. Crook concluded that the painting depicts the ornate, gem-studded reliquary commissioned by King Edgar for Swithun’s second translation. The painting itself does not survive in its complete form—indeed, Crook’s sketches and description attest to only a fragment of what would have been a much larger work of art. What remains is a painting that depicts two scenes: On the left, a church with external masonry, a roof, and a turret presented in cutaway so as to show the interior of

---

the building. Inside, upon an altar draped in yellow cloth rests a chalice and a reliquary:

On the right, two human figures appear in larger scale, one on his feet and leaning over the second, prone figure whose head is surrounded by a nimbus. It is quite rare for images of reliquaries—much less reliquaries themselves—to have survived the iconoclasm of the Reformation, making this wall painting even more fascinating.
Plate VI. Photograph of the bookcase in front of the wall painting in Morley Library from J.D. Le Couteur and D.H.M. Carter’s “Notes on the Shrine of St. Swithun formerly in Winchester Cathedral.”

Plate VII. Renderings of the location of the wall painting as well as of the subject matter, from J.D Le Couteur and D.H.M. Carter's "Notes on the Shrine of St. Swithun formerly in Winchester Cathedral."²³⁸

Features of the reliquary in the painting such as its “outward-curling finials” do not appear in any known medieval reliquary illustrations, a factor that Crook uses to support his claim that “the reliquary depicted in the Winchester library painting was an actual tenth-century artifact known to the artist.” Crook further supports his claim that this wall painting depicted items at Winchester by noting that the hanging lamp in the left-hand panel of the painting resembles only one complete Anglo-Saxon hanging lamp in existence: a lamp excavated at Winchester, detailed by Biddle in his chapter “Early Medieval Vessel Glass.” Further evidence to support Crook’s claims about the provenance and date of the wall painting include parallels between the architecture of the building in the painting and Winchester itself. Based on the style of roof covering, the representations of windows, and the masonry of the structure, Crook has concluded that the wall painting depicts a stylized form of the pre-Conquest cathedral of Winchester which was obviously known to the artist given the close proximity of Morley Library and


the Cathedral.²⁴¹ With all of this in mind, Crook dates the wall painting to the twelfth century.²⁴²

Crook is not the only scholar to attempt to reconstruct what the thirteenth-century shrine for St. Swithun might have looked like. J.D. Le Couteur and D.H.M. Carter’s survey of the stonework that survives from the thirteenth-century shrine for St. Swithun can provide insight into the appearance of the shrine that held King Edgar’s reliquary. The shrine behind the high altar of Winchester Cathedral was cleared of stone fragments in the spring of 1921, revealing several pieces of carved Purbeck marble “of somewhat unusual character,” including a piece of thirteenth-century arcading, the capital of a corner shaft, a fragment of a similar capital, a large piece of ornamented Purbeck marble in poor condition, and five pieces of deeply-molded cable shaft. Upon closer examination of these fragments and consideration of the treatment of foliage ornamentation on them, they concluded that the fragments dated from the middle of the thirteenth century. When they compared the fragments to the base of the shrine at St. Albans Cathedral and Ely

²⁴¹ Crook, “King Edgar’s Reliquary of St. Swithun,” 184–189.

²⁴² Part of Crook’s inability to date the wall painting with more precision has to do with his theory that the painting was done in two phases, with the left panel completed prior to the figures on the right panel. Crook’s article compares the artistic style of the figures in the right panel to illuminations in the Winchester Bible and the Morgan leaf, noting that the postures and stylization of the figures might hint at a date sometime between the turn of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century. For more on this, see Crook, “King Edgar’s Reliquary of St. Swithun,” 192–93.
Cathedral among others, Le Couteur and Carter concluded the marble fragments were once part of a thirteenth-century shrine for St. Swithun that would have somewhat resembled the structures of St. Alban and St. William of York. These marble fragments have since been relocated back into the feretory in the location that is presumed to be the original location of the thirteenth-century shrine for Swithun, although this area has since been blocked off from public access.

After the Old Minster was demolished, a “modest chapel” which housed the altar and original gravesite was erected in the time before Winchester Cathedral was completed. According to an entry for the year 1093 in the Annales de Wintonia of Richard of Devizes, himself a monk of Winchester, Swithun’s remains were translated once more, this time from the chapel outside into the interior of Winchester Cathedral:

MXCIII. Hoc anno in praesentia omnium fere episcoporum atque abbatum Angliae cum maxima exultatione et gloria de ueteri monasterio Wintoniae ad nouum uenerunt monachi vi. Id. Aprilis. Ad festum uero sancti Swithuni, facta processione de nouo monasterio ad uetus, tulerunt idem feretrum sancti Swithuni et in nouo honorifice collocauerunt.
1093. In this year, on the 8th of April and in the presence of almost all of
the bishops and abbots of England, with great rejoicing and glory, the
monks came from the Old Minster of Winchester into the new monastery.
And on the actual feast of St. Swithun, after a procession from the new
church [Winchester Cathedral] back to the Old Minster, they carried away
the feretrum of St. Swithun and installed it with appropriate honor in the
new church.

Based on the accounts of pilgrims to the Norman cathedral and the pilgrim’s point
of entry through a door at the north transept, it is almost certain that the shrine resided
directly behind the high altar, concealed from the nave by a screen. It is probable that the
ornate Edgarian reliquary for Swithun’s relics still existed and was almost certainly part
of the shrine from the mid-thirteenth century; it is indisputable that the shrine and
reliquary remained in this location until at least the fifteenth century based on the account
of a chronicler who described the shrine as “locatum … ac conjunctum summo altari”
[located at and conjoined with the high altar].

246

____________________________

translation into Winchester Cathedral rather than the New Minster given that no record
indicates that any of Swithun’s relics went to the New Minster.

246 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 110, f. 336.
The Relic of St. Swithun’s Head

The rediscovery of the relic of the head of St. Swithun by John Crook at Évreux Cathedral in 2000 is the most recent development related to the materials associated with Swithun’s cult. There are a number of things that are peculiar about the relic alone, more still when we consider how the relic ended up in a cathedral over three hundred miles away from Winchester. While the shroud of history obscures, perhaps forever, exactly how and when a skull ostensibly belonging to the Anglo-Saxon bishop of Winchester found its way to France and lay hidden for the better part of three centuries between the construction of the Old Minster and the written record in France, the existence of the Relic of St. Swithun’s Head and its transcontinental journey further highlights the relationship between Winchester and the Frankish world in terms of the breadth of the cult.

What we can say for certain is that there were a number of opportunities for a relic belonging to Swithun to have been removed from a reliquary or enshrinement location in Winchester. Lapidge points to a translation of the relics of Swithun, among other saints interred in the Old Minster, during the episcopacy of Henry of Blois (1129–1171) and an account of a reliquary that was broken open in 1241 as occasions that would have allowed the relics of the saints to be removed and transported outside of the community. Additionally, Lapidge points out that relics were often carried in liturgical

---

Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 38.
processions and for this purpose may have been transferred from reliquaries into more portable reliquaries that could have been more easy to maneuver than ornate, gilded ones.

Regardless of the manner by which it happened, it is clear that Swithun’s remains came to reside at a number of churches throughout England and, ultimately, in France. By the twelfth century, fourteen English churches claimed to possess relics of Swithun. Relic lists from churches in Abingdon, Bath, Glastonbury (three churches), Meaux, Peterborough, Reading, and Waltham indicate the presence of relics associated with Swithun as part of their holdings as well as records from Christ Church Cathedral, St. Paul’s Cathedral, St. Albans Cathedral, Salisbury Cathedral, and the church of St. Mary in Warwick. The Head Relic is specifically mentioned in an eleventh-century tract by Eadmer of Canterbury titled De reliquiis S. Audoeni, which records that Bishop Ælfheah took the head of Swithun with him when he relocated from Winchester to Canterbury. This relic was then placed in a reliquary near the high altar at Christ Church Cathedral and evidently stayed in Canterbury until at least 1316 as it is included in a list of the relics possessed by the church compiled in that year. However, according to a printed breviary from Évreux that dates from the fifteenth century, the relic came to reside at Évreux sometime before the end of the fourteenth century. The fact that Swithun was a known figure in Évreux, evidenced by the commemoration of his life in a handful of

---

249 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 38.
250 Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 60.
liturgical calendars produced there, can be explained by the cathedral’s possession of the Head Relic.\textsuperscript{251}

Plate VIII. Photograph of the head relic by John Crook in Lapidge’s \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}.\textsuperscript{252}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{The relic of St Swithun’s head at Evreux Cathedral; photograph by John Crook (see pp. 61–3).}
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{251} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 60.

\textsuperscript{252} Lapidge, \textit{The Cult of St Swithun}, 61.
First and foremost, the Relic of St. Swithun’s Head stands in stark contrast in its corporeality to the rendering of the reliquary in the wall painting in Morley Library and Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s vague descriptions of Swithun’s reliquiae as found in their hagiographical works. Without the kind of enshrinement often associated with relic presentation in the thirteenth century, the relic of St. Swithun’s Head does not function as part of the sign/signified paradigm represented by relics encased within reliquaries; the relic exists without narrative context or ornamentation to signal its consequence. Because the relic is presented without a reliquary, it is striking in its inherent humanity—while the veracity of the relic’s attribution to St. Swithun is beyond the scope of the present argument, it is indisputable that the bare skull, if it did not have a titulus to indicate otherwise, would not have any physical demarcation to signal that it is in any way special or significant. Reliquaries instruct their audiences as to the way in which they ought to interact with them, using image and decoration as means by which the relics within can be understood; whether a casket, speaking reliquary (that is, a reliquary in the shape of a body part), or ampulla, the dual primary purpose of a reliquary is to protect the relic within while promoting its own veneration. Without a reliquary, however, a relic is almost completely without context in that it lacks visual consecration—in this way, the relic is unable to signify its importance, much less whatever virtus it is meant to have, to potential venerators.
THE OLD MINSTER AND WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL AS SPIRITUAL "LOCI"

Given that the Old Minster was quite literally steps away from the Norman cathedral, it may seem curious that an empty vessel might have retained much of the same kind of reverence it had when it contained Swithun’s remains—pilgrims standing at the base of the Old Minster shrine would have been no more than twenty feet away from the entrance to the north transept of the cathedral, the point of access for individuals who wished to visit the shrine that housed Swithun’s remains. Why, then, would they have held the Old Minster shrine in a regard just as great—if not greater—than the shrine in Winchester Cathedral? It is evident that this motivation was, once again, related to proximity. Pilgrims who entered the Old Minster very well might have been able to stand at the Saxon shrine itself, perhaps even to touch, if they wished, the stone vessel that had been home to Swithun’s remains after his first translation. This object is thus a contact or second-class relic, second only to the physical remains themselves in the hierarchy of saintly objects. Further, the *virtus* of the shrine at the Old Minster had been well-documented by the time Swithun’s remains were translated into the Norman cathedral; if twelfth- and thirteenth-century pilgrims were motivated to visit Swithun based only on his hagiography, they would have been inspired by events that took place at the Old Minster alone. Within the scheme of Swithun’s hagiographical corpus, the Old Minster shrine was the only shrine associated with miracles, and while the Norman cathedral was undoubtedly impressive due to its size and architecture, it did not carry the rhetorical weight of the Old Minster even after the demolition of the latter.

Newness aside, Swithun’s shrine at Winchester Cathedral did not allow for the same kind of intimacy between pilgrim and saintly structure as did the Old Minster.
shrine. Certainly, there was more pomp involved when pilgrims visited Swithun by way of Winchester Cathedral; as they navigated through the pilgrimage doors at the north transept and continued east toward the shrine, they would have passed on their right the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre and its impressive wall paintings depicting Christ and the deposition from the cross. Next, they would have climbed a short set of stairs running alongside the presbytery and followed the ambulatory, bordered by the northeastern wall of the cathedral on the left and the screen that concealed the high altar, ultimately reaching the east end of the cathedral. It is worth noting that this route ended at the east end; once a pilgrim reached this part of the cathedral, access to the south transept, the nave, and the general entrance to the cathedral on the west end was restricted. In this way, the pilgrimage route through Winchester Cathedral was an insular one, designed to move pilgrims to Swithun’s shrine site without impeding what might have been going on in the remainder of the cathedral. As pilgrims stood at the east end and faced west to the shrine site, they would not have been able to see the high altar or much else aside from an arched gap built into the wall opposite of the feretory known as the Holy Hole. From John Crook’s findings, it is certain that what we now call the Holy Hole dates from the same period that Swithun’s remains were translated, for their final time, into Winchester Cathedral253 and that the ornamentation dates from the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. The purpose of the Holy Hole was to offer pilgrims closer access to Swithun’s relics which rested behind the high altar and were concealed by various chantries and screens.

The Holy Hole exists today much as it did when pilgrims visited it from the twelfth century until the Reformation: the arched entrance to the hole in the back of the feretory wall is about a meter and a half tall at its highest point and a meter wide and opens into a small, domed chamber that is two meters high at its highest point, extends about two meters from the entrance, and runs nearly two and a half meters in length parallel to the feretory wall. There is no evidence that the interior of the Hole featured any ornamentation or inscription—it seems that it existed only so that pilgrims could journey slightly closer to the relics.

While not an image of the one found in Winchester Cathedral, an illustration found in an Anglo-Norman manuscript appears to show how pilgrims interacted with shrines like the Holy Hole. Cambridge, University Library MS Ee.3.59, also known as *Vita S. Eduardi, regis et confessoris*, dates from between 1250 and 1259. E is the only extant copy of the Old French verse life of Edward the Confessor, a text that is usually attributed to the Benedictine monk and chronicler of English history Matthew Paris (c. 1200–1259). Toward the end of the *vita* is an illumination depicting the burial of King Edward. The deceased king lies upon what appears to be a feretory, his temporary resting place before he is ultimately entombed, the latter event illustrated on the page that follows. Both illuminations indicate that Edward’s tomb functioned as a pilgrimage site where those seeking cures from various ailments could crawl beneath the feretory or shrine platform in order to pray. The first illustration shows three pilgrims interacting with King Edward’s tomb shrine. The first pilgrim, outlined by rust-colored pigment, can be seen in the act of entering the shrine through a hole on the left, his head and torso already inside the structure and, through the hole on the right side of the shrine, a pilgrim
appears to be already in the midst of prayer; kneeling outside the tomb, a third pilgrim directs his prayers to the king himself, perhaps waiting for his turn to enter the shrine.
Plate IX. Pilgrims crawling into King Edward’s tomb shrine in Cambridge, University Library MS Ee.3.59, f. 29v.
On the page that follows, Edward’s shrine has assumed what must have been its finalized form, his body entirely obscured by the tomb. As was the case before, a group of pilgrims is shown kneeling beside Edward’s tomb which is now highly ornamented—in addition to the covering, it is now surmounted by a gabled aedifice that includes a crowned figure, presumably Edward himself, within a central awning, flanked by two bishops in profile, facing him. Above this scene, a representation of Christ, set against a blue background and making the sign of the benediction, occupies the pinnacle of the structure, with two winged and genuflecting figures on either side. In front of the shrine, a row of men kneels before the shrine with their hands raised toward a figure (whose has since been erased from the illumination) who touches a book mounted on a lecturn. Above the figure’s head are the words “Te deum laudamus.” Between the book and the kneeling men, another man crawls into an aperture in the shrine.
Plate X. Pilgrims kneel before the finished shrine of King Edward while one crawls into a hole in the shrine itself in Cambridge, University Library MS Ee.3.59, f. 30r.
Just as the illumination in *Vita S. Eduardi, regis et confessoris* suggests, the Holy Hole allowed pilgrims at Winchester Cathedral to move as close as possible to Swithun’s bodily relics. As pilgrims experienced it, the Holy Hole must have been, for all intents and purposes, the shrine itself; given that the eastern face of the wall (the only surface that was ever decorated) in Winchester Cathedral was concealed from the public eye, this small, cave-like chamber allowed a pilgrim to draw near the shrine but not see or touch the shrine itself. There is nothing to see within the Holy Hole, no particular area aside from the back of the chamber that invites touch or contact. What there is, though, is the promise of nearness, the suggestion that entering the Holy Hole is as much as a pilgrim can do to situate himself close to the bodily relics of Swithun.

To make pilgrimage to the entrance of the Holy Hole and the portion of the wall facing the east end of the cathedral in a way replicated the *translatio* account found in both versions of Swithun’s hagiography. That the hagiography was built on the themes of movement and journey is undeniable: if we consider the three acts of the narrative, the story itself is about the inspiration to translate Swithun’s remains, the translation of the remains, and the miracles bestowed upon those who made journey to Swithun’s remains. When pilgrims arrived at the doors of the north transept of Winchester Cathedral, they would have passed the part of the churchyard that had once been Swithun’s original burial site and the site of the Old Minster. When they climbed the short staircase and passed the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, their movement from ground level to a new elevation mimicked the excavation of Swithun’s remains as they were removed from the ground and transported into the Old Minster. As they passed the concealed high altar and
put their backs to the east end to look at the shrine and prepared to enter the Holy Hole, they had to genuflect just as the those present at the original translation genuflected before the saint’s remains once they entered the Old Minster. This procession that began in the exterior churchyard and ended feet away from the high altar was a replication of the translation of Swithun in the works of Lantfred and Wulfstan, facilitated by the same series of movements that came just before accounts of the miraculous healings of believers, a reminder of how the cult itself began.

But this promise of nearness was not nearness itself; in spite of the rhetorical impact of the replication of the *translatio* narrative as a fundamental element of visiting the shrine in the Norman cathedral, the Saxon shrine building, even when it was empty, was the greater, more popular of the two primary sites associated with Swithun. This, I argue, is because the Holy Hole and the shrine at Winchester Cathedral are not structures that evoke an impulse for or an invitation to the act of touch and interaction. “Material objects,” according to Virginia Blanton in her monograph on St. Æthelthryth of Ely, are “objects that can be seen, inspected, touched, and venerated” and as such are essential to creating a monastic identity for a saint and are demonstrable markers for interaction between saintly and mortal bodies.254 In essence, a visitor to the shrine building for Swithun is able to come before a sign of the saint—his tomb, in this case—and can connect that sign to not only the saintly body itself, but what that saintly body signifies in relation to the monastic texts written about him, the tradition of miracles attested in those

---

texts or by word of mouth, and thus the potency of Swithun’s holiness and place among other saints as one of God’s agents. If a visitor cannot see a body, the ability to see or touch a tomb must then be the second-best thing as its existence is a constant reminder of what is meant to be inside: the body itself. Just as it is narrated in Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s respective texts, the excavated tomb is a reminder of the events that elevated a Wintonian bishop of humble burial to a saint physically enshrined and popularized across Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England. As Blanton puts it in her discussion of Æthelthryth, “If the corpse cannot be displayed, it cannot signify. These material objects, therefore, operate as a remapping of the virgin’s post mortem corporeality and they are encoded with the meanings associated with the virgin’s body.”

There is a balance at play here—a shrine location should as much as possible be a reminder of a body without displaying a body, instead properly honoring or replicating the effect of the saintly body by enclosure. Without an enclosure as a signifier, there is no point of access, no marker to approach as do the sick and weak of Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s accounts, no structure to stand before. The shrine is then a pseudo-meeting point, a space that can be shared by a pilgrim and divine presence. In a way, it is a shrine within a shrine, the ethos of a church space enshrining the shrine itself, attesting to its validity, professing it an even holier space within a holy space.

In this regard, the Holy Hole is unsuccessful—of course Swithun’s remains are respectfully enshrined in the cathedral, but the bare stone wall at the back of the small, arched space fails to act as a signifier. Even though pilgrims in Winchester Cathedral

\[255\] Blanton, Signs of Devotion, 135.
would have known that the remains of the saint were merely feet away, they were not available in a sensory way—via touch or sight—in the way that the shrine building displayed Swithun’s tomb. There was not a visual reminder of the saint, nor did the space have the *ethos* of a shrine building that had seen the countless miracles recounted by Swithun’s hagiographers. This was not a shared closeness nor a shared enclosure; this was a space that purposefully limited even visual interaction between the shrine and pilgrim, a physical barrier that did not exist in the shrine building nor in the Old Minster. In a corpus of hagiography where separation was an impediment to miracle making, the Holy Hole stood in stark contrast. Consider the account of the shackled serving-girl—not only is she transported to Winchester by Swithun in the form of an apparition but, perhaps even more importantly, she is ferried by the saint past locked doors normally under the protection of a member of the clergy. Presence before relics or the thing they are enshrined by is so fundamental to miracle making, so fundamental to the hagiography that Swithun himself facilitates contact, provokes pilgrimage, and performs a miracle as extraordinary as transportation in order to bring a Christian in need of help to the place where help is most often administered.

This means that the shrine building of the Old Minster achieved and retained its status as a pilgrimage site not through any kind of formal declaration but through what can best be called a public canonization or consecration. While these words have specific meanings within Christian institutional and liturgical contexts, I employ them to explain the cultural phenomenon by which a religious community—in this case, a lay religious community—either intentionally or unintentionally promulgates a veneration behavior for a cult, this behavior being one that is born out of popular practice or reverence. That
is to say, the veneration practices of the laity in Winchester and pilgrims to the Old Minster shrine building worked to constantly reaffirm or consecrate it within the public imagination even as the shrine and Holy Hole, parts of a shrine literally consecrated by its place in Winchester Cathedral, were only steps away. This is a testament to the symbiosis of Swithun’s identity as a saint and the foundation of the Old Minster and should not come as a surprise given the structure and rhetorical emphasis on place and saintly body in the hagiography. In this way, enshrining a saint is not accomplished by the mere act of enclosing his remains in a reliquary—a saint is enshrined by how his cult, pilgrims and the religious laity, practice veneration and propagate his virtus, established through their reaction to the interplay between locus and corpus as informed by his hagiography.

Before Swithun’s remains were enshrined by a shrine building, a reliquary, or a feretory, his life had first to be enshrined by the hagiographer. “Such a task involves a considerable degree of interpretation,” remarks Thomas J. Heffernan, “and it is an interpretive process which—if the life is to gain adherents for the cultic figure—must accomplish two vital objectives: it must complement and satisfy the specific community’s traditional understanding of this holy person, and it must establish the text itself as a document worthy of reverence, as a relic.”

Considering what Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s texts did for Swithun’s reputation as the saint who worked miracles at his shrine sites in the Old Minster and the shrine building with which it shared a foundation, there is a glaring gap between the saint’s second translation and his final translation in

---

Winchester Cathedral. By what miracle did Swithun relay a desire for a new translation into the Norman shrine? Where are the accounts of bodies being restored to health through the *virtus* of the saint as pilgrims came before the Holy Hole? Consider the rhetorical implication of Swithun’s hagiographical tradition: at its very inception, Lantfred’s text irrevocably ties the saintly body to its place of interment while encouraging the act of translation and subsequently affirming the importance of bodily enshrinement by detailing the influx of miracles and pilgrims. The narrative tradition, through the versions of Swithun’s afterlife penned by Lantfred and Wulfstan, is inherently cyclical as it details the impetus for resituating and thus better memorializing the holy body of Swithun rewarded by *miracula* each time Swithun’s remains are displayed in more ornate and public monuments. Without narratives that facilitate a connection between the Norman cathedral and Swithun’s body, there is a proverbial gap in the public imagination between the Old Minster and Winchester Cathedral. Without a hagiographical text that situates Winchester Cathedral within the tradition of Swithun’s translations and the miracles that follow, the shrine and Holy Hole are not part of the community’s literary memory of Swithun. The shrine and Holy Hole lack the context that make them prominent pilgrimage locations and fail to memorialize Swithun’s remains visually—of these two issues, the absence of the visual spectacle associated with shrines is the most significant.

Shrines and reliquaries are, most simply, a visual shorthand by which *virtus* is conceptually connected with a holy person. There is another, more important shorthand that has not been the subject of sufficient study when it comes to the discussion of shrines and reliquaries: the rhetorical connection that binds together the shrine or reliquary and
its location in physical space. Logically, the significance of all of these concepts and their connection to one another is clear when expressed as sets of modi ponentes:

FIRST
If figures are worthy of veneration, reliquaries/shrines are made for them.
Swithun is a figure worthy of veneration.
THEREFORE
Swithun has reliquaries and shrines made for him.

SECOND
If remains are in a reliquary/shrine, there is a potential for miracles.
The Old Minster has a reliquary and shrine for Swithun.
THEREFORE
The Old Minster is a location for miracle workings.

SO FINALLY
If a location has a reliquary/shrine, more pilgrims will visit it.
The Old Minster has a reliquary and shrine for Swithun.
THEREFORE
The Old Minster has more visitors because of its reliquary and shrine. \(^{257}\)

This conclusion speaks to a broader issue than the language related to burial and veneration: that the translation ceremony of 971 effectively canonized Swithun’s status as

\(^{257}\) It is worth noting that each of the above modi ponentes could be expressed with the elements in the first premise (in the first example, “If figures are worthy of veneration, reliquaries/shrines are made for them”) in reverse order (in the case of the example, “If reliquaries/shrines are made for a figure, that figure is worthy of veneration”) and the argument would still be logically valid. I make mention of this as there can be some contention as to whether or not a shrine is the impetus for veneration or whether, because something is venerated, it is enshrined; no matter which order one accepts for the first premise in each modus ponens, the consequent of each theorem remains true.
a holy person and marked a shift in the popular imagination for Swithun’s cult.

Lantfred’s words provide insight into what the act of translation does for a saint, his burial or enshrinement place, and the community. While the translatio is a ceremony, it also acts as a metaphorical (and perhaps even a metaphysical) marker of space. This seemingly simple act of exhumation and reburial recapitulates and redefines who Swithun was and what Swithun meant within a greater Christian context. Swithun’s translatio is also a translation of unknown to known—what was the exhumed body of a former bishop is redefined as the relics of a saint by virtue of the translation ceremony. His body takes on new meaning as it enters the Old Minster and, concomitantly, his status and reputation shift in the Wintonian collective consciousness. The translation is an event, of course, but it is also a reminder of a location that can be accessed in the collective memory of the monastic and lay communities through Lantfred’s Translatio.

To come before Swithun’s place at the high altar of the Old Minster was to access the translatio itself, the ceremony replicated ad nauseam by virtue of the semiotic, cyclic nature of the cultic materials; to walk into the cathedral to the high altar replicates the procession, to pray before the saint’s remains replicates the pilgrims in the narrative, to read the Translatio replays the translatio. Each of these affirms the next, all of them simultaneously building and affirming Swithun’s virtus as the mere act of recounting and revisiting—whether literally revisiting or revisiting in the hagiography—rhetorically substantiates the space or the literature itself. The result is a kind of dialectical monism, an ontology wherein we can understand Swithun’s miracula as at once the cause for and consequence of his translation, the materials created for him simultaneously evidence of his virtus and produced on account of his virtus.
By concealing Swithun’s relics within a reliquary, the clerics at the Old Minster were able to fabricate a particular version of Swithun and the miracles associated with him that emphasized his divine *virtus* while concealing the parts of him that would have testified to his mortality. The program of the reliquary commissioned by King Edgar was an extension of this agenda—with scenes from Christ’s *passio* and Ascension, the reliquary attested to the triumph of the divine over the mortal world, heaven over earth, and eternal life over death. The miracles performed through Swithun’s relics were, to medieval people, evidence of his saintliness.

While Swithun performed only one miracle during his life, those that took place after his death would have resonated as affirmation for his sanctity, allowing more people to witness his holiness. Both Lantfred and Wulfstan are careful to emphasize that it is God, not Swithun nor his relics, who has the ability to heal the ill, among other miraculous happenings—although neither Lantfred nor Wulfstan mentions this in reference to Swithun’s relics, it is likely that they would have imagined Swithun’s piety as the reason that God chose to work miracles through him. Examining the miracles associated with Swithun’s relics further emphasizes the physicality that is characteristic of hagiography; in order for Swithun’s holiness to be recognized, that holiness must be played out across his body (relics) and across the bodies of others (as his relics facilitate their healing). In her discussion of Lantfed’s *Translatio*, O’Brien O’Keeffe argues that bodies are able to “confess” things like guilt and that “forensic action on the body is ‘readable,’” acting as a kind of evidence for “truth.” That is to say, the body is a landscape upon which amaterial concepts like guilt and holiness can be “read” by an
The space of the body and relic in Lantfred’s and Wulfstan’s hagiography is a *locus* where the amateriality of faith is projected into and upon a bodily canvas, resulting in a body that is representative of Christian teachings. As hagiography positions Swithun’s bodily and contact relics at the epicenter of events in these miracle narratives, the potential for faith to become embodied and material is realized as divinity is refracted from God, through Swithun’s body and relics, and upon the person seeking a cure. These faith-embodied behaviors indicate that God has elected to perform miracles through Swithun, and this functions as a testament to Swithun’s piety and devotion to God; if the body cannot be acted upon or cannot perform in a significant space, it cannot be a sign of spirituality and thus cannot signify the holiness of a saint to a Christian audience.

---

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

While the details of the life of St. Swithun of Winchester are lost to history, the impact the saint’s illustrious afterlife made upon Anglo-Saxon England is as imbedded in the cultural and architectural landscape of Winchester as the ink in the surviving manuscripts that record his translation and subsequent miracles and the mortar that fastens together the bricks of the spectacular Norman cathedral. In this way, Swithun’s identity is less the identity of a single man but rather one defined by the intersection of a time, a place, and a people. The cult of St. Swithun is uniquely English, uniquely participatory in its own development as evidenced through the celebration of building efforts recorded in the hagiography, resulting in a kind of architectural accomplishment the likes of which were unmatched in Anglo-Saxon England. Swithun was a saint from Winchester, certainly, but more importantly he was a saint of Winchester—buried beneath Wintonian ground, attested in Wintonian hagiography, memorialized by Wintonian stonework. Through his translation into the Old Minster and the miracles recounted by Lantfred and Wulfstan, the events that inspired the cult around Swithun could be mapped onto a single plot of land. Today, one can stand in the Outer Close of Winchester Cathedral upon the very the ground that had once been the Old Minster churchyard, within steps of the locations in which every miracle in Swithun’s hagiographical corpus took place. To witness the virtus of the former bishop of the Saxon cathedral was to come to Winchester, to walk through churchyard where he was originally interred and come before the high altar of the Old Minster, effectively retracing the translatio processional path itself. Winchester was not merely a location but a locus—
a physical space divided from the countryside by stone, a place where the amaterial and ineffable power of God was made manifest, observable to the religious and secular alike first through miracles, then through the expansion of the cathedral that housed the holy remains. This relationship between divine power and place is thus cyclical: virtus gives a locus meaning and a locus is a point where virtus is accessible. Swithun’s divine power was manifest in the Old Minster where his remains were situated; the Old Minster was a point of pilgrimage for those who needed miraculous intervention.

Through the hagiography, manuscripts, and material culture that were born out of the cult of St. Swithun, we are able to understand the way in which these materials both defined and reflected the community of veneration that emerged after 971. By analyzing the way that his hagiographers narrated Swithun’s journey from churchyard to Old Minster, bishop to saint, we can see that Swithun’s translation depended greatly upon the local people of Winchester, monastic and lay communities alike. Even the Continental Recension of the Translatio, which does not preserve the majority of the names of people and places in England, retains the names of local people most fundamental to the formation of the cult, such as Æthelwold; this is a testament to the importance of Winchester within the scheme of the hagiography, even from a Continental perspective. In both the local and Continental versions of Swithun’s afterlife, the inextricable link between the saint’s remains and Winchester can be found in the very language of the Translatio and Narratio as the way that Swithun’s body is discussed shifts away from language that reflects a complete corpus to conceiving of it instead as reliquiae. Whether they were part of the high altar, a shrine, or the lavish reliquary commissioned by King Edgar, Swithun’s relics took on new meaning as they became part of these burial
containers—as they were resituated within the confines of the Old Minster, the relics became a locus for miracle-making and a pilgrimage destination for Christians across Anglo-Saxon England. The building projects described in Wulfstan’s Epistola specialis reflect a Winchester that had come to be a popular destination for hosts of people who sought a cure for various ailments; even in light of new shrines and reliquaries built for Swithun, the continued popularity of Swithun’s first burial place as a pilgrimage site shows that loci associated with miracles were just as important as the reliquiae of the saint. Together, these aspects of the cult of St. Swithun reflect a portrait of Anglo-Saxon Winchester wrought from a bond between virtus, locus, and miracula, each a fundamental aspect of the formation of the cult. As Swithun’s divine power was tied to the Old Minster through the miracles that took place there, Winchester itself seemed to become just as holy as Swithun’s body.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Deep Map of Winchester Cathedral

Building upon the topics of pilgrimage and veneration discussed in this dissertation, my next project will be a deep map of Winchester Cathedral. The term “deep map” refers to a map, often interactive, that is able to communicate more information about a particular place than a traditional paper map by layering information upon the map itself. My deep map of Winchester Cathedral will retrace the pilgrimage route through the north transept to the Holy Hole and will feature high-quality 3D renderings of the architectural and artistic features of the cathedral along the route. While the plates in this dissertation allow the reader to effectively “walk through” Winchester Cathedral
itself, the electronic deep map will give users a better overall understanding of the cathedral space and allow them to navigate along the route with the ability to turn 360 degrees. Along with this functionality, the deep map will feature “hot spots” over particular aspects of the church—the Outer Close outside of the north transept, for example—that will bring together archeological, historical, and literary research in order to paint a picture of medieval Winchester.

After a few days of viability testing at Winchester Cathedral in the summer of 2017 and research into the kind of equipment and technical skills necessary to produce the deep map, I drafted a plan to develop a prototype for the deep map that would feature the Outer Close as well as the interior and exterior of the north transept. Given constraints related to budget and access to equipment, I determined that mapping a small section of the cathedral as part of a prototype would be an economical and logical first step to prove project viability when applying for a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Advancement Grant in January 2019. To create the prototype, I spent three days doing 3D scans of the cathedral in July 2018 before editing the scans using computer-aided design and drafting software (CADD) in order to produce a seamless, 360-degree scan of the cathedral spaces that can be spatially navigated on a tablet or computer.

**Edition of MS J**

There is still much work to be done on Lantfred’s *Translatio*, especially considering that no complete edition of the text based on MS J has ever been printed. In light of the discussion of the relationship of the *Translatio* manuscripts in Chapter Three
and my proposed theory that J is representative of a Continental Recension, my project for 2018–20 is to make a critical edition of the *Translatio* based on the Rouen manuscript. While I intend to prepare this edition in a format appropriate for print as well, I am primarily interested in creating a digital edition of the text that will allow users to toggle between the order of chapters in R and J as well as compare variant readings alongside one another. While this would not be a diplomatic edition, the electronic edition would also replicate the *mise-en-page* of R and J to reflect rubrication, changes between minuscule and majuscule script, and marginalia. The edition will be encoded using XML, TEI, and XSTL, and will use CSS and JavaScript so that users can change the way the edition is displayed with controls built into the website itself. The digital edition will be open access and hosted alongside the other digital projects associated with this dissertation, including the parallel-text edition of the Hymn for St. Swithun published online in September 2017.

Together, these projects will build upon the research presented in this dissertation and will result in products that can be used by academic and non-specialist audiences. First, the deep map of Winchester Cathedral will help its audience understand the history of the cult of St. Swithun by tracing the development of the Old Minster and Winchester Cathedral. Additionally, the digital edition of Lantfred’s *Translatio* as preserved in J will be the first modern edition of the hagiography to use J for the *Translatio*’s base text. The goal of the digital edition of J is to challenge the assumption that R is somehow the “correct” or “default” version of Lantfred’s text with the hope that J receives more scholarly attention and is understood as representative of a Continental tradition of the work and therefore valuable to our conception of the breadth of the cult.
Plate XI. London, British Library, Royal 15. C. VII, f. 2r,

the *incipit* lines for Lantfred’s *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*
Plate XII. London, British Library, Cotton Nero E. i. part I, f. 35r,
the *incipit* lines for Lantfred’s *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*
Plate XIII. A map of the locations of the Old Minster and Winchester Cathedral (here “Norman cathedral”).

---

259 Biddle, The Search for Winchester’s Anglo-Saxon Minsters, 61.
Plate XIV. The Old Minster (in black) compared to Winchester Cathedral.\textsuperscript{260}

\textsuperscript{260} Adapted from the original. Biddle, \textit{The Search for Winchester's Anglo-Saxon Minsters}, 64.
Plate XV. Biddle’s rendering of the Old Minster after the final wave of construction was completed in 992–3.²⁶¹

Plate XVI. Biddle’s rendering of what the Old Minster would have looked like after construction was complete c. 992–4.  

---

262 Biddle, *The Search for Winchester’s Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, 53.
Plate XVII. The west end of Winchester Cathedral.
Plate XVIII. The north-facing exterior wall of Winchester Cathedral which runs parallel to the nave and faces the swath of land that was once the foundation for the Old Minster.
Plate XIX. Modern bricks trace the foundation of the Old Minster as it stood before its demolition after the completion of Winchester Cathedral in 1093. Standing at the easternmost limit of the foundation and looking west across the Outer Close, we can see the rectangular outline (upper-left corner of the image) that marks the location of the Old Minster’s high altar. In spite of a wave of extensive reconstruction and expansion that began in 974, the altar remained in the place in which it was originally erected at the time that the cathedral was first built in 648. By the time it was demolished in the last decade of the eleventh century, the Old Minster had doubled in size. The rounded path of brick at the bottom of the image as well as the rounded sections near the top map the latest additions to the cathedral: the ambulatory and the eastern end of the Saxon cathedral (the grassy area between the bricks in the foreground of the image and the near edge of the rectangle marking the high altar) and the north apse (to the right of the high altar), both completed by 993/4.
Plate XX. This Romanesque arch marks what was once the pilgrims’ entrance to Winchester Cathedral, accessed through a western-facing door in the north transept. This door stands less than twenty meters from what was once the east end of the Old Minster.
Plate XXI. If we were to follow the medieval pilgrimage route through Winchester Cathedral, we would next stand in the north transept and look southward toward the interior of the cathedral to encounter, below the tower arch, the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Painted within the chapel’s vault is a bust of Christ (left) accompanied by a program of biblical scenes on the other sections of the vault as well as the chapel walls. These scenes depict the Descent from the Cross (left image, below the bust of Christ) and, below that, the Entombment. These wall paintings date from the twelfth century and were uncovered in the 1960s.
Plate XXII. Turning east toward the rear of the cathedral to continue along the pilgrimage path, we encounter the original set of stone steps that led medieval patrons of St. Swithun east down the northern aisle toward the Holy Hole. Medieval pilgrims would often climb these stairs on their knees as a sign of reverence.
Plate XXIII. Covering the floor at the top of the stairs and down the northern aisle when facing east, these ornate tiles date from the thirteenth century and are the largest collection of intact medieval tiles in England.
Plate XXIV. Continuing down the aisle, to the left is a series of thin columns that climb from the cathedral floor to its ceiling. These columns were built from the rubble of the Old Minster after its demolition in 1093.
Plate XXV. Across from the Saxon columns is the Chantry of Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester in the mid-sixteenth century. This chantry acts as one of the borders to the shrine where Swithun’s remains were buried as part of the high altar.
Plate XXVI. At the east end of Winchester Cathedral is the Holy Hole, now roped off from entry. The hole is cut into the wall and would have allowed medieval people to crawl inside to touch an interior wall at the back that was adjacent to the shrine that housed Swithun’s remains.
Plate XXVIII. A closer look at the entryway to the Holy Hole.
Plate XXVII. The interior of the Holy Hole. This stonework is contemporary with the original construction of Winchester Cathedral and included stones salvaged from the Old Minster. There is a copious amount of medieval and early modern graffiti on the inside, the earliest dating from the 1300s.
Plate XXIX. Known as the Great Screen, this fifteenth-century stonework screen stands directly in front of the high altar and replaced a thirteenth-century screen. This screen, along with two chantries and the back of the wall where the Holy Hole is located, mark the boundaries that obstruct the Anglo-Saxon feretory from view.
Plate XXX. The darker marble section of stonework is probably the thirteenth-century Purbeck marble that was part of a shrine for Swithun, the topic of J.D. Le Couteur and D.H.M. Carter’s “Notes on the Shrine of St. Swithun formerly in Winchester Cathedral.” The base is probably the original Anglo-Saxon feretory column and is located behind the wall that makes up the Holy Hole.
Plate XXXI. The stonework underneath the modern wooden drawers is the base of the original Anglo-Saxon feretory. The back of this feretory is what is accessible through the Holy Hole.
Plate XXXII. This stonework bishop currently resides in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral.
Plate XXXIII. More stonework, possibly part of the thirteenth-century screen that would have divided the east end of the nave of Winchester Cathedral from the high altar and resided above the Holy Hole. This is now in storage in the crypt of the cathedral.
Plate XXXIV. This stone burial casket, like the arcading and figure of the bishop, resides in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral. While the casket has not been the topic of any scholarship to date, a cursory comparison reveals that it bears a striking resemblance to other Anglo-Saxon stonework caskets that have been excavated in Winchester (see Plate XXXV).
Plate XXXV. Medieval stone coffins excavated from St. Mary’s Abbey, Winchester.
Plate XXXVI. The modern shrine for St. Swithun. This resides in the east end of Winchester Cathedral only a few steps away from the Holy Hole.
Plate XXXVII. The modern shrine for St. Swithun at the east end of Winchester Cathedral.
APPENDIX A: PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE OLD MINSTER

Clockwise from the upper left: Phase I (The Old Minster Prior to Swithun’s Translation), Phase II (The Old Minster at the Time of Swithun’s Translation), Phase III (The Old Minster and Tomb Shrine for Swithun), and Phase IV (The Final Version of the Old Minster). Blueprints based on excavation reports provided by Martin Biddle.
# APPENDIX B: BODY AND BURIAL WORD DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words related to the body and burial in Lantfred’s <em>Translatio</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occurences of ossa, ossum in Lantfred</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occurences of corpus, corporis in Lantfred</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occurences of reliquia, reliquiae in Lantfred</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other body words in Lantfred</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exuia, exuivum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>membra, membri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soma, somata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other burial words in Lantfred</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turgurium, turgurii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tumba, tumbae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occurences of corpus, corporis in Wulfstan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Before/after translation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Neither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>Neither; future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>456</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>756</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>973</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>During</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>976</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>During</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>981</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>After/during</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>During</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>During</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1085</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occurences of reliquia, reliquiae in Wulfstan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title for Chapter I</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Before/after translation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title for Chapter IV</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title for Chapter IV</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other burial words in Wulfstan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Before/after translation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bustum, busti</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>400 After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>919</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>805</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tumba, tumbae</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>394 After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soma, somata</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>498 After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caps, capsae</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>492 Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sacellum, sacelli</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>408 After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1158</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1119</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>805</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarcophagus, sarcophagi</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>444 After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tugurium, tugurii</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>444 Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gleba, glebae</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>444 After</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

247
APPENDIX C: DIGITAL PROJECTS

Imaging Plan for 3D scan of Winchester Cathedral, the first step in creating the deep map.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://acta.chadwyck.com/?instit1=T193508&instit2=5NNGK549G1


http://bhlms.fltr.ucl.ac.be/


LOGEION, *The Online Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*.


