

The following brief sermon, found on pp. 227–28 of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 190, appears to have been composed for delivery at a national assembly or synod. There is a shorter version of this text on p. 238 of the same manuscript, which may represent an earlier ‘draft’ version. Unfortunately, neither the title nor the full extent of this ‘draft’ version can now be known, as the beginning of this shorter version has been lost.¹ As the ‘draft’ version shows substantial differences from the more polished sermon on pp. 227–38, both versions have been transcribed in full below.

Certain features of the sermon suggest Wulfstanian authorship. The supposed national audience and authoritative tone of the work indicate delivery by an archbishop. Moreover, the themes involved—averting national peril by an act of corporate penance, a ‘foreign nations are holier than us’ motif, and allusion to ‘what books tell us’—are in keeping with Wulfstan’s known concerns and rhetorical methods. Stylistic elements are also Wulfstanian. For example, there is an inventory of disasters, a feature also found, e.g., in the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*. There is also repetition based on aural similarity: consider the string of nominative plural participles ‘dantes ... humiliantes ... largientes ... intelligentes’, and the obviously rhetorical ‘deridemur. blasphemamur. uituperamur’. The concluding ‘Conuertimini ergo conuertimini ad dominum’ (based partially on Scripture) also carries rhetorical force, though, to my knowledge verbatim repetition of words was not part of Wulfstan’s rhetorical arsenal, at least not when writing in the vernacular, where he rather preferred variation. Unfortunately, Wulfstan’s Latin style has not yet been studied in any detail; until such time as it has, claims for his authorship of Latin works can only be tentative.

The text should be compared with the Wulfstanian legal code known as *VIIÆthelred*, which contains similar provisions for rituals of corporate penance in situations of public emergency, including a three-day fast and barefoot processions (compare the ‘Gangdays’ of Rogationtide). Our text also has thematic parallels with the series of short

¹ The text begins imperfectly at the top of page 238, probably due to a missing folio in Corpus 190’s exemplar; see C. A. Jones, ‘Two composite manuscripts from Archbishop Wulfstan’s Commonplace Book: the *De ecclesiastica consuetudine* and the *Institutio beati Amalarii de ecclesiasticis officiis*’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 27 (1998), 233–71, at 236–37 with n. 18.

works/extracts on militarism and national disaster found on pp. 138–43 of Corpus 190.² One of these works, titled ‘De tribulationibus’ in the manuscript,³ shares some wording with our text, and concludes with the same quotation from Ezekiel. Note that Simon Keynes has suggested that ‘De tribulationibus’ could represent some of ‘Wulfstan’s working notes for the *Sermo Lupi* itself.’⁴ More generally, our text bears importantly on current scholarly discussion about the practice of, and availability of rites for, public penance in late Anglo-Saxon England, a debate which touches in particular on the works and books of Wulfstan.⁵

² Partially edited by James E. Cross and Alan Brown, ‘Literary impetus for Wulfstan’s *Sermo Lupi*,’ *Leeds studies in English* 20 (1989), 271–91, at 273–74 and 289 n. 15.

³ ‘De tribulationibus’ has been edited by Mary Bateson, ‘A Worcester Cathedral book of ecclesiastical collections, made c. 1000 A.D.’, *The English historical review* 10 (1895), 712–31, at 731.

⁴ Simon Keynes, ‘An abbot, an archbishop, and the Viking raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 36 (2007), 151–220, at 205–06. I owe this reference to Dr. Emily Butler of John Carroll University.

⁵ See S. Hamilton, ‘Rites for public penance in late Anglo-Saxon England’, in *The liturgy of the late Anglo-Saxon church*, eds H. Gittos and M. B. Bedingfield, Henry Bradshaw Society subsidia 5 (London, 2005), 65–103, and M. F. Giandrea, *Episcopal culture in late Anglo-Saxon England*, Anglo-Saxon studies 7 (Woodbridge, 2007), 113–14. I owe these references, along with the notice of parallels in *VIIÆthelred*, to Prof. Christopher Jones.

[p.227 ...] **DE PĒNITENTIA COMMUNI
PRO QUACUMQUE TRIBULATIONE;**

Volumus uos scire fratres quod *in multis prouintiis in quibus religiositas et christianitas uigent. sapientes adtendunt diligenter* et doctores *quid* necesse sit populo dei *in aduersis casibus* a deo precibus exorare. siue si ultra modum pluit. aut si siccitas nocet. uel pestilentie tempestas ingruerit. seu mortalitas in hominibus aut in iumentis. seu incursiones hostium si terram occupauerint. et ecclesiam perturbauerint;

Statim itaque predicant euang [sic] omni populo. *processionemque* agere tantum spatium ad uicina monasteria. quantum illis uidetur oportunum posse fieri; Pergunt tunc omnes uiri et femine *discalciatis pedibus* et si iubentur a docto[p. 228]ribus *cilitiis induti. orantes et psallentes.* sonora uoce omnis populus simul. *kyrieleison. christeleison;* uolentes sic amore { amouere p. corr. } a se iram dei imminentem. et *placare* sibi benignissimum *iudicem christum;* Ieiuni ambulant usque ad locum destinatum. et post missas caritatem aliquando inuicem faciunt. sumentes unusquisque { sic } III offulas de pane manducando. et singulos calices in

[p. 238] [i]n multis igitur prouintiis in quibus religiositas et christianitas uigent sapientes diligenter adtendunt. si quid in aduersis casibus pro peccatis contigerit. quomodo possint *placare* mitissimum *iudicem christum;*

Statimque [corr. Statim] itaque predicant ieiunium. cum fructu elemosinarum. *processionemque* agunt triduo *discalciatis pedibus cilitiis* quoque uel saccis *induti. orantes et deprecantes* dominum.

Michael D. Elliot, June, 2011

bibendo. et sic ad propria remeant; Sic
itaque faciunt IIIbus diebus dantes
honorem deo et semetipsos humiliantes.
elemosinamque pro nomine domini
largientes. *ut flagella eius ab eis amoueat.*
intelligentes quod etiam hoc ipsum
animabus illorum proficit ad salutem; Nos
quoque habemus in nostris libris missas et
officia ad omnia ista constituta. sed si
aliquid taliter egerimus in ista patria. statim
deridemur. blasphemamur. uituperamur; Et
quia monita doctorum contempnitis. et
salutem animę negligitis. ideo regnum
uestrum propriis exigentibus culpis
alienigenis datur ad depredandum;
Conuertimini ergo conuertimini ad
dominum. et penitemini. ut deleantur uestra
peccata; {Act 3, 19} Scriptum est enim; In
quacumque die peccator conuersus fuerit et
ingemuerit. saluus erit; {cf. Ez 33, 11–12}

ut flagella eius ab eis amoueat.
intelligentes etiam quod hoc ipsum
animabus illorum proficit ad salutem;