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1. Introduction

1   Exploring vice-vocabularies in Old English reveals a fascinating intersection of lexico-semantic innovation and sociolinguistic dynamics. While interest in sin concepts and lexemes dates back to the time of Aldhelm (d. 709 / 710) and Alcuin (c. 740-804), it gained broader traction with the onset of the Benedictine reforms in the tenth century. Initiated by the church with royal support, these reforms aimed not only to revitalize and standardize monastic practices and religious life across England, but also to develop a religious vocabulary that could be associated with this progressive movement, fostering a certain unification of lexical practices (Lenker [2000]). This top-down innovation can be traced at the conceptual and lexical levels through documented diffusion from key figures like Æthelwold and Ælfric to early adopters such as Wulfstan and his anonymous contemporaries, and eventually to the wider populace, as evidenced by confessionals and penitentials. Correspondence between these actors (Godden [1980], [2004]) and the social networks of the clergy (Lenker [2000]) illustrates the negotiation and diffusion of these vocabularies and semantic domains, both among individual writers and to common believers.

2   The lexicon of sins in Old English is both polysemous and fuzzy. This has to do with the innovative character of the whole lexical domain within a newly Christianized Anglo-Saxon culture still dominated by military values, as well as with the interconnectedness of the individual concepts and lexemes making up the lexicon of vices. In medieval moral theology, the sins are construed as interrelated, springing from the same evil root and / or as being committed in a sequence. For example, PRIDE leads to VAINGLORY, GREED leads to GLUTTONY and GLUTTONY (especially indulgence in alcohol) leads to

FORNICATION. Conceptually, as a result, the boundaries between individual sins can become somewhat blurred: VANITY is a type of PRIDE (a pride in one's origins or ambition) and GLUTTONY is a type of GREED (greed for food or drink). Conceptual fuzziness is amply reflected at the lexical level, in that many lexemes can denote both the more general and the more specific sin categories: OE *gielp* is both "pride, arrogance" and "vanity, self-admiration"; OE *gīfernes* is both "covetousness, avarice" and "gluttony, overeating". Aware of the polysemy, medieval theologians introduce the sins as lists first and then define and describe them one by one, also suggesting hierarchies within the individual categories (see examples 2-4 below). Such lists are particularly helpful because they offer us a glimpse into medieval linguistic thinking, into a thesaurus-like treatment of concepts and lexemes, which can often be obscured by modern approaches to historical lexis, when PRIDE becomes part of category "07 Opinion" and GLUTTONY that of "04 Material Needs" in the *Thesaurus of Old English* (*TOE*). In this essay, we are frequently concerned with lists of sins because dealing with lists will help us disambiguate within sin categories that are prone to polysemy.

3   A related conceptual problem is that of how sins are assessed as moral categories within the broader domain of a culture's immaterial values and, sometimes, whether they even exist as moral categories, for what is a sin in one culture may be a virtue in another culture or may not be conceptualised in another culture at all (Clark [2016: 172-173]). Such conceptual conflicts are likely to come to the fore when an intensive contact between cultures and their languages leads to borrowing and imposition (of concepts and lexemes), and accepted moral judgements suddenly have to be re-evaluated due to new ideas about them. The obvious case in point is the Christianization of pagan Germanic communities, by which many of the virile values of their military elites (boasting, feasting, raging in battle) come under sharp critique from the evangelizing missions propagating humility and moderation. Thus, in newly Christianized communities, including those of Anglo-Saxon England, vices and virtues can be under-conceptualized and under-lexicalized, or conceptualized and lexicalized differently from the source culture of late Roman Christianity. Just how this plays out in the lexico-semantic field of sins in Old English is one of the foci of this paper. More specifically, we deal with how conceptual arbitrariness and semantic fuzziness are reflected at the lexical level, i.e. in semantic borrowings and loan translations of the Old English period, and which individual sin categories exhibit more lexical variation than others.

4   Given the prominent place that the sins occupy in medieval Christian thought, we are also interested in how and how far the vocabularies of sins were able to diffuse geographically and socially. So, on the one hand, we look into geographical spread by comparing sin-vocabularies from different parts of England; on the other, we are concerned with inter- and intra-speaker variation as attested in writings by Ælfric, Wulfstan, Byrhtferth and their anonymous colleagues of the late-tenth - early-eleventh century. This second endeavour is particularly exciting because the three named authors not only belonged to the same generation of Benedictine writers that shared an educational background (and therefore inspiration for knowledge and reform of human nature), they also participated in the same ecclesiastical networks and, in the case of Ælfric and Wulfstan, are known to have exchanged letters that dealt explicitly with the points of doctrine to which the vices were particularly pertinent, and to have mutually influenced each other's lexicons (Godden [1980], [2004]). Another dimension of this

sociolinguistic investigation is the extent to which the lexical norms promoted by members of the reformed clergy were able to reach common believers. Here we are well served by such genres as confessionals and penitentials, that is, guidebooks and manuals intended for parish priests and the privileged laity which outlined the sins, and offered advice on eliciting confessions and directives for seeking contrition and penitence. Thus, we track lexical diffusion from the ecclesiastical centres in Winchester, Ramsey, Worcester and York to parish churches and aristocratic households, and try to establish whether the centralization of the church in the late tenth century was able to trigger a kind of lexical standardization in the domain that was central for the doctrine.

2. Data and method

5   Our analysis is in some ways data-driven because we study the lists and establish the meanings of sin-lexemes on the basis of the collocates within those lists and the usage elsewhere in the same treatise or homily. The *Dictionary of Old English web corpus* (*DOEC*) and printed / electronic editions were consulted for this purpose. It is also comparative, that is, we seek to trace individual lexemes across authors, texts and regions, as well as to determine how consistent our authors are in their lexical choices. At the same time, the analysis is data-informed because we use previous research and the *TOE*, with its semantic hierarchies and definitions, along with the *Fontes anglo-saxonici* database, which keeps track of the textual links (quotations, translations and paraphrases) between individual sources and authors.

6   Our data consists of the following texts (sigla for each text in brackets):
   • The Capitula Theodulfi (*ThCapA*, *ThCapB*; ed. Sauer [1978]);
   • Ælfric: Vices and virtues (*ÆLS 16*; ed. Clayton [2013]); Letter to Wulfstan (*ÆLW*; ed. Whitelock [1981]); Catholic homilies II 12.2 (*ÆCHom*; ed. Godden [1979]); Ælfric Homily 20 B1.4.20 (*ÆHom* 20; ed. Pope [1968]);
   • Byrhtferth: Enchiridion (*BEnc*; ed. Baker & Lapidge [1995]);
   • Wulfstan: Sermo Lupi ad anglos (*WSL*); Homily Xc (*WHomXc*); Homily VIIIc, De baptismate (*WDB*) (all ed. Bethurum [1957]); De uitiis principalibus (*WDUP*; ed. Wilcox [1991]);
   • The Canons of Theodore (ed. Fulk & Jurasinski [2012]);
   • Confessional prayers: London, British Library (BL), Cotton Vespasian D.xx, ff. 87r-92v (*CPV*); BL Cotton Tiberius C.i, ff. 160r-161r (*CPT1*); BL Cotton Tiberius C.i, ff. 161r-v (*CPT2*); BL Royal B.2.v, f.197r-198r (*CPR*) (all ed. Logeman [1889a])[1];
   • Directions for confessors: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 190, pp. 414-416 (*DC1*); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 320, f.117r–v (*DC2*); Oxford, Bodleian Laud Misc 482, ff. 46r-47r (*DC3*) (all ed. Fulk & Jurasinski [2012]);
   • Old English penitential: Poenitentiale Pseudo-Ecberhti (*OEPen*; ed. Raith [1933]);
   • Old English confessional: the Scriftboc (*Scr*; ed. Spindler [1934]).[2]

3. Sins in medieval Latin and Anglo-Latin

7   In moral theology, the sins started to be theorized by Evagrius in the late-fourth century and elaborated by John Cassian just a generation later. Both writers led an ascetic life and paid special attention to how monks (young monks in particular) could gain control over the flesh, by purging their desire for material things, food and sex.

The virtues, as antidotes for the sins, were theorized alongside. Prudentius, writing around the same time, presented an allegorical battle between vices and virtues in his *Psychomachia*, giving the conflict between body and soul an epic dimension. Later authors, among them the Church Fathers, Gregory the Great and Isidore of Seville, engaged with the sins repeatedly, and the whole conceptual domain gradually became one of the central doctrinal points in Western moral thought (Bloomfield [1967]; Newhauser [2007, 2012]). Its inherent problem was that the concepts developed by and for monks and hermits were adopted and adapted as the principles of lay moral behaviour (Frantzen [1983: 39-49]). Reverberations of this problem will be observed at the lexical level in our source texts.

8 In England, the vices featured prominently in Anglo-Saxon Latin works, from Aldhelm and Alcuin in the early period to the *Regularis concordia* during the Benedictine reform. From the Carolingian period onwards, two works on vices and virtues, encouraging preaching, private confession and reading, emerged as particularly important: *De virtutibus et vitiis ad Widonem comitem* by Alcuin (*c*. 800), written for a noble layman (Lees [1985]); and *Capitula ad presbyteros parochiae suae* by Theodulf of Orléans (*c*. 800), addressed to parish priests (Sauer [1978]). Both tracts were immensely popular on the Continent and in England, as attested by the high number of surviving manuscripts and a good record in Anglo-Saxon libraries.

9 Alcuin's work is represented in around 140 copies.[3] Its Old English translation survives in three fragments, dated between *c*. 1050 and the second half of the twelfth century, but probably going back to an earlier copy of the translation from some time after 900, and (possibly) to the Alfredian period (Schabram [1965: 73]; Hofstetter [1987: 320]). In his study of pride-vocabulary, Schabram [1965: 72] observes that the extant copies appear to be "saxonisiert", i.e. changed according to West Saxon lexical norms. The initial translation and its vocabulary may, thus, be derived from a Northumbrian gloss tradition.

10 The *Capitula Theodulfi* survives in forty-six Latin manuscripts, including at least four produced in England, and in two Old English translations, independent of one another (Sauer [1978: 20-55]). The work was used by Ælfric in his pastoral letters and homilies, and by Wulfstan in homilies and legislation (Sauer [1978: 281-291]). Dating to between c. 1000 and c. 1050, the earlier *ThCapB* version was written in Late West Saxon, with the slightly later *ThCapA* in Mercian, though the original translations for both extant copies could be up to fifty years older (Sauer [1978: 77-118, 510-513]). Like Alcuin's tract, the Old English *Capitula Theodulfi* represents Anglian and West Saxon lexical norms, demonstrating widespread interest in instructional literature for parish priests in both dialectal regions. How these vocabularies fit into the negotiation of lexical norms during the Benedictine reforms is explored further below.

11 For most of the studied period, it is typical for authors to discuss eight capital sins. Here is one typical sequence used to refer to the principal concepts (cf. Table 1):

- 1. *superbia* "pride"
- 2. (*vana gloria / inanis gloria / cenodoxia / iactantia* "vanity")
- 3. (*invidia* "envy")
- 4. *ira* "wrath"
- 5. (*accidia* or *acedia* "sloth")
- 6. *tristitia* "sadness"
- 7. *avaritia* "greed"

- 8. *gula / gulae concupiscentia / ventis ingluvies / castrimargia* "gluttony"
- 9. *luxuria / fornicatio / philargyria* "lust"

12   In this sequence, introduced by Gregory the Great in his *Moralia in Iob* (xxxi.45), PRIDE is seen as the origin of all sins, the vice committed by the fallen angels. There is considerable variation in how VANITY, GLUTTONY and LUST are lexicalized and in whether Latin or Greek terms are preferred for the concepts. As the brackets in 2, 3 and 5 indicate, variation also exists at the conceptual level, in that, first, as discussed above, VANITY is often perceived as an instantiation of PRIDE; second, SLOTH and SADNESS are often lumped together, as a kind of "spiritual boredom, apathy", experienced by people living in seclusion and depriving themselves of bodily needs; third, ENVY may be omitted from the lists, depending on how 2 and 6 are conceptualized. For example, for Theodulf, *accidia* and *tristitia* are the same sin (*tertia* in example (1); Wenzel [1967: 29]), while *inuidia* is a distinct entity (*sexta*), and so are *uana gloria* (*quinta*) and *superbia* (*octaua*).

> (1) Confessiones dandae sunt de omnibus peccatis, que siue in opere siue in cogitatione perpetrantur.
> Octo sunt principalia uitia, sine quibus uix ullus inueniri potest. Est enim **castrimargia** – hoc est **uentris ingluuies**, secunda **fornicatio**, tertia **accidia siue tristitia**, quarta **auaritia**, quinta **uana gloria**, sexta **inuidia**, septima **ira**, octaua **superbia**.
> Quando ergo quis ad confessionem uenit, diligenter debet inquiri, quomodo aut qua occasione peccatum perpetrauerit, quod peregisse confitetur;
> (*ThCap* i.31 [A], Sauer [1978: 356.3-10])
> "Confessions must be given of all sins committed either in action or in thought.
> There are eight principal vices, without which no virtue can be obtained. There is **castrimargia** – that is the **gluttony of the belly**, the second is **fornication**, the third **sloth or sadness**, the fourth **avarice**, the fifth **vainglory**, the sixth **envy**, the seventh **wrath**, the eighth **pride**.
> Therefore, when one comes to confession, he must be carefully probed as to how or on what occasion he committed the sin which he confesses to have committed."[4]

13   Theodulf's sequence starts with *gastrimargia* or *uentris ingluuies* "gluttony", the sin that led to the Fall, and places *superbia* last. Sins are also grouped into sins of the flesh (GLUTTONY and LUST) and sins of the spirit (the rest). The groupings are observed in both Theodulf and Gregory, and in both sequences the gravity of the sins of the spirit is greater. The Gregorian lists generally exerted more influence on later writers, but many of them had access to both the Cassianic (eight sins) and Gregorian (seven sins) textual traditions and some, like Aldhelm in his *Carmen de uirginitate*, attempted to reconcile the two approaches (McDaniel [2007]).[5]

14   Note also that Theodulf instructs parish priests to inquire about the details of when and how the sins were committed, so that appropriate penance could be assigned to the sinner. Thus, the institution of confession, already at this early stage, presupposed mutual engagement of and interaction between the confessor and the penitent, as well as at least some knowledge of the key concepts and lexemes associated with morally reprehensible actions and thoughts. Within this framework, lists of sins also served as plans on the basis of which confessions could be structured and expanded, as individual cases required. The institution then provided an outlet for the dissemination of a

subset of religious vocabulary from the clerical elite (including vernacular writers discussed below) to the secular clergy, and from the secular clergy to parishioners.

4. Sins in Old English

15   Vernacular authors, among them Ælfric, Wulfstan, and Byrhtferth, as well as the anonymous compilers of the *Blickling* and *Vercelli Homilies*, and translators of *Capitula Theodulfi*, regularly engaged with the topic of capital sins. It is not coincidental that all of these authors can be placed within a generation or two of the Benedictine reforms of the tenth century. The reforms themselves, the royal and aristocratic support for the movement, as well as extensive construction of local churches increased lay participation in religious observances (Blair [2005: 346-354, 456-463, 492]), so that the demand for penitential literature rose both among the laity and parish priests. In response to this demand, translations and original works were commissioned. The textual record presented here bears witness to these developments. We begin the analysis with the two roughly contemporary versions of the Old English *Capitula Theodulfi* (*ThCapA* is quoted first, following Hans Sauer's edition of the two texts). For the Latin source underlying them, see example 1 above.

> (2) **Eahta** syndan **heafodlice synna** þonne is swiðe lyt monna þæt ne sy mid þæm sumum oððe eallum besmiten. An is **gyfernes metes**, oðer **unrihthæmed**, þrydde **worulde unrotnes**, feorðe **gytsunge feos**, fyfta **ydelgylp**, syxta **æfest**, seofoða **yrre**, eahtoða **ofermedla**. (*ThCapA* 31.357.4-6)
> "There are **eight capital sins**, and so there are very few people who are not tainted with some or all of them. One is **gluttony for food**, the second is **unlawful intercourse**, the third **worldly sadness**, the fourth **greed for possessions**, the fifth **vainglory**, the sixth **envy**, the seventh ire, the eighth **pride**."
> **Eahta** synt **frymþlice leahtras**, buton þam earfoþlice ænig mæg beon gemet. Þys hy sindon: se forma is **gyfernis**, þæt is **wambe frecnes**, oþer **forliger**, þridda **asolcennes oþþe unrotnes**, feorþa **gytsung**, fifta **idel wuldor**, syxta **anda**, seofeþa **yrre**, eahtoþa **ofermodnes**. (*ThCapB* 31.357.3-4)
> "There are **eight principal sins**, without which hardly any virtue can be obtained. They are the following: the first is **gluttony**, that is **voracity of the belly**, the second is **fornication**, the third **idleness or sadness**, the fourth **greed**, the fifth **idle glory**, the sixth **malice**, the seventh **ire**, the eighth **pride**."

16   In both translations, Latin lexemes are not only provided with equivalents but also qualified, especially in *ThCapA*, with genitive modifiers (*gyfernes metes*, *worulde unrotnes*, *gytsunge feos*) to make the terms more specific, as well as with prefixes (*æfest*, *ofermedla* / *ofermodnes*) and negative adjectives (*unrihthæmed*) to signal inappropriateness or sinful excess. Although the lists are markedly different, there is agreement on some of the sin-terms: *gyfernes*, *unrotnes*, *gytsung*, and *yrre* (cf. Tables 1 and 2).

17   While Ælfric used *Capitula Theodulfi* in his later works (Sauer [1978: 281-283]), his earliest list of sins in the *Catholic homilies*, written in two instalments of forty homilies and possibly commissioned by Archbishop Sigeric and Ealdorman Æthelweard, is derived from Cassian and Alcuin (*Fontes: Catholic homilies* 2.12). Ælfric completed his opus between 990 and 995, but continued revising it for the next two decades (Kleist

[2019: 20-87]). He introduces the list in the *Second Series* (example 3; Mid-Lent: Secunda sententia), although the individual sins are also discussed earlier, in the *First Series*. In (3), ENVY is not listed among the eight sins, while SADNESS and SLOTH are distinguished as two separate sins in the Cassianic tradition (Lees [1985: 179]; cf. Table 1).

> (3) Swa sceolon eac cristene men **ða eahta heafodleahtras** mid heora werodum ealle oferwinnan... Se forma heafodleahter is. **Gyfernyss**. Se oðer is. **Galnyss**. ðridda. **Gytsung**. Feorða. **Weamet**. Fifta. **Unrotnys**. Sixta. **Asolcennyss**. Oððe *æmelnys*. Seofoða. **Ydelgylp**. Eahteoðe. **Modignys**; Þas eahta heafodleahtras fordoð and geniðeriað þa unwæran. into helle wite; (*ÆCHomII* 12.2 Mid-Lent: Secunda sententia 123.479-124.486)
>
> "In the same way, the Christians must destroy all **eight capital sins** along with their armies... The first capital sin is **Gluttony**; the second is **Lust**; the third, **Greed**; the fourth, **Wrath**; the fifth, **Sadness**; the sixth, **Sloth**, or **Weariness**; the seventh, **Vainglory**; the eighth, **Pride**. These eight capital sins corrupt and condemn the unwary to the torment of hell."

18   Having listed the key terms, Ælfric goes on to elaborate on what makes each of the moral concepts a sin and what other vices can spring from it. In this more detailed discussion, he provides synonyms and subtypes of the eight sins, which offer a glimpse into the hierarchy of moral defects and into the thesaurus-like structuring of the respective lexical subfields.

> (4) *gyfernys* (*Dictionary of Old English* (*DOE*) approx. 115 occurrences) / *oferflowendnys ætes oððe wætes* "excess in food and drink" begets
> *oferfyll and druncennys* "excess in food and drunkenness", *unclænnys lichaman* "uncleanness of the body", *modes unstæððignys* "unsteadiness of the spirit", *ydel gafettung* "idle scoffing";
> *galnys* (approx. 175 occurrences) / *forliger* (approx. 125 occurrences) "adultery" leads to
> *modes mægenleast* "impotence of spirit", *ungemetod lufu* "immoderate love", *hatung godes beboda* "hatred towards God's commandments", *higeleas plega* "foolish play", *fracodlic spræc* "shameful speech", *eagena unstæððignys* "bad eyesight";
> *gytsung* (approx. 300 occurrences) / *grædig beon* "to be greedy" begets
> *leasung* "falseness", *anda* "envy", *facn* "deceit", *reaflac* "rapacity", *stalu* "theft", *forsworennys* "perjury", *leas gewitnys* "false witness", *unmæðlic neadung* "excessive violence";
> *weamet* / *nagan modes geweald* "to lack control of one's mind" / *yrsung* "irascibility" leads to
> *hream* "shouting", *æbilignys* "indignation, anger", *dyrstignys* "rashness", *mansliht* "manslaughter";
> *unrotnys* begets
> *yfelnys* "evilness", *wacmodnys* "moral weakness", *heortan biternys* "bitterness of heart", *his sylfes orwennys* "despair of one's self";
> *asolcennys / æmelnys* begets
> *idelnys* "idleness", *slapolnys* "sleepiness", *gemagnys* "petulance", *wordlung* "idle talk", *worung* "rambling", *fyrwitnys* "(immoderate) curiosity";
> *ydel gylp* (approx. 35 occurrences) / *idel wuldor* / *gylp* (approx. 200 occurrences) / *getot* begets
> *pryte* "pomp", *æbilignys* "indignation", *ungeðwærnys* "discord", *hywung* "pretence", *lustfullung lease herunge* "delight in false praise";

> ***modignys*** begets
>
> *forsewennys* "contempt",   *ungehyrsumnys* "disobedience",   *anda* "envy",
> *yfelsacung* "blasphemy", *ceorung* "grudging", *gelomlic tal* "constant scorn".

19   It becomes apparent that Ælfric not only explores the conceptual field of vices and their interconnectedness, but also moulds and negotiates his vocabulary in search of accurate and transparent terms. The sins have a hierarchical structure; they "beget" each other, and by contemplating human moral faults and their consequences, Ælfric is able to articulate his *sin*-thesaurus in a more elaborate way. As he does so, it becomes clear that some lexemes cause him more anxiety than others. For instance, the conceptual fuzziness of SADNESS-SLOTH (Wenzel [1967: 23-26]) translates into terminological uncertainty. Ælfric refers to SLOTH as *asolcennyss oððe æmelnys*. Of these the former is introduced for the first time as a term for "laziness, negligence" (not in connection with the capital sins) in the opening lines of the Old English translation of the *Benedictine Rule*, a generation before Ælfric (cf. Sauer [1978: 224]). *DOEC* suggests that neither term has wide currency in Old English: *asolcennys* is attested about 35 times in the surviving corpus, most frequently in Ælfric, while *æmelnys* occurs only 14 times, exclusively in Ælfric. So, we can see that he both repurposes the words that were used by his teacher Æthelwold and coins new ones.

20   In the *Lives of saints*, completed between c. 993 and c. 998 and revised c. 1006 (Kleist [2019: 135-144]), Ælfric returns to the topic with renewed zeal and updated vocabulary, this time calibrating it against the benchmark of Latin terms. An abbreviated quotation from the "Memory of saints" is given in (5).

> (5) Nu syndon eahta heafodleahtras, þe us onwinnað swiðe. An is gecwæden
> <u>gula</u>, þæt is **gyfernyss** on Englisc, seo deð þæt þæt man yt ær timan and
> drincð, oððe he eft to micel nimð on æte oððe on wæte.
> Se oðer leahtor is **forligr** and ungemetegod **galnyss**. Se is gehaten
> <u>fornication</u>. ...
> Se þridda leahter is <u>auaritia</u>, þæt is seo yfele **gitsung** ... heo is helle gelic .
> forðan þe hi habbað butu unafylledlice **grædignysse** þæt hi fulle ne beoð
> næfre.
> Se feorða leahtor is <u>ira</u>, þæt is on Englisc **weamodnyss** ...
> Se fifta is <u>tristitia</u>, þæt is ðissere worulde **unrotnyss** ...
> Se sixta leahter is <u>accidia</u> gehaten, þæt is **asolcennyss** oþþe **slæwð** on Englisc
> ...
> Se seofoða leahter is <u>iactantia</u> gecweden, þæt is **ydelgylp** on ængliscre
> spræce ...
> Seo eahteoðe leahter is <u>superbia</u> gehaten, þæt is on ænglisc **modignyss**
> gecweden... (ÆLS XVI Memory of Saints 267-307)
> "Now there are eight capital sins, which greatly oppress us. One is called
> <u>gula</u>, which is **gluttony** in English; it makes one eat and drink before the
> proper time, or consume too much food or drink. The second sin is **adultery**
> and immoderate **lust**. It is called <u>fornicatio</u> [...] The third sin is <u>auaritia</u>,
> which is evil **avarice** [...] it is like hell, because they both have insatiable
> **greed**, so they are never full. The fourth sin is <u>ira</u>, which is called **wrath** in
> English [...] The fifth is <u>tristitia</u>, which is the **sadness** of this world [...] The
> sixth sin is called <u>accidia</u>, which is **laziness** or **sloth** in English. [...] The
> seventh sin is called <u>iactantia</u>, which is vainglory in English [...] The eighth
> sin is called <u>superbia</u>, which is **pride** in English [...]"

21 Ælfric has introduced a number of adjustments into his keywords (cf. Tables 1 and 2): *forligr* is now at the fore as a term for LUST, *grædignys* (one of the only two survivors into the present day) is used in the definition of GREED, *weamodnys* has replaced *weamet* as a term for WRATH (later in the Life (l. 336) Ælfric also employs *yrre*), and, in the binomial previously used for SLOTH, the second slot is now occupied by *slæwð* instead of *æmelnys*. Unsurprisingly, uncertainly still surrounds the latter concept, as Ælfric's sources are contradictory on its status in relation to SADNESS. Ælfric adds *slæwð* to his terminological pool, which, although a late arrival and a relatively infrequent word in the *DOEC* (37 occurrences in total), is the only lexeme that survives into the present day as part of the list of sins.

22 *Weamodnes*, n. "woe-mood-ness" > "wrath" is another rare word on the list. It has no attestations in poetry and only 14 occurrences in prose: seven in Ælfric, of which four appear in *þæt is on englisc*-clauses as in (4), four in confessionals, two in the Alfredian translation of the *Cura pastoralis*, and one in Wulfstan (see below). It does not appear to be any more accurate than the *weamet* he has used on previous occasions – both are defined as "anger, passionateness, irascibility" in *Bosworth-Toller* (*BT*, [s.v. *wéamódness*]). Its attractiveness may lie in the morphology, as together with several other sin-lexemes, as well as virtue-lexemes (*clænnes* "chastity", *eadmodnes* "humility", etc.) it fits a recognizable morphological pattern of feminine abstract nouns and allows for stylistic and rhetorical embellishments, a point to which we return below.

23 Finally, one more text by Ælfric allows us to reconstruct not only the evolution of his own sin-vocabulary but also the spread of some of the lexemes from Ælfric, and the Winchester school more generally, to Wulfstan and his community at York. Our two protagonists have long been known to have written letters to each other. Until recently this correspondence was documented only from Ælfric's side through the pastoral letters he had written in response to Wulfstan's commissions. However, Winfried Rudolf [2019: 275-280] has recently been able to identify a possible draft of Wulfstan's letter to Ælfric (in BL, Additional 38651, f.57v), dating to the early years of the eleventh century, in response to which Ælfric wrote one of his Latin letters to Wulfstan (in Whitelock [1981: 247-255]). Replying to another undocumented request from Wulfstan, Ælfric put together a short treatise, known as *Second Old English Letter for Wulfstan* (c. 1006), on pastoral care and clerical conduct, in which among other doctrinal and moral issues, he discusses the capital sins. As before, we present an abridged version:

> (6) Se forma heafodleahtor is on leden <u>superbia</u> and on englisc **modygniss** ...
> Se oðer heafodleahtor is <u>castrimargia</u> uel <u>gula</u>, þæt is on englisc **gyferniss**. ...
> <u>drunconnysse</u> ... and on <u>oferflowednysse</u> ...
> Seo þridda heafodleahtor is <u>Fornicatio</u>, þæt is seo **galniss** ...
> Seo feorða heafodleahtor is <u>Auaritia</u> on leden and on englisc **gytsuncg** ...
> Se fifta is <u>Ira</u>, þæt is **weamodniss** ...
> Se sixta is <u>accidia</u>, þæt is **asolcennyss**, ðæt is **modes swærniss** and **ungemetegod slapulniss** ...
> Se seofoða heafodleahtor is <u>Tristitia</u> on leden, þæt is on englisc **unrotnyss** for mislicum gelimpum ...
> Se eahtoðe heafodleahtor is: <u>cenodoxia</u>, id est, <u>iactantia</u> uel <u>uana gloria</u>, þæt is **gylp** on englisc oððe **getot**, **gereht**, þæt se mann beo <u>leofgeorn</u> and <u>mid gylpe afylled</u> [ll. 401-459]
> "The first capital sin is in Latin <u>superbia</u> and in English **pride** ... The second capital sin is <u>castrimargia</u> or <u>gula</u>, which in English is **gluttony** ... <u>drunkenness</u> ... and in <u>overindulgence</u> ... The third capital sin is <u>fornicatio</u>,

> which is **lust** … The fourth capital sin is <u>avaritia</u> in Latin and in English **greed** … The fifth is <u>ira</u>, which is **wrath** … The sixth is <u>accidia</u>, which is **sloth**, that is **mental indolence** and **excessive sloppiness** … The seventh capital sin is <u>tristitia</u> in Latin, which in English is **sadness** for various misfortunes … The eighth capital sin is <u>cenodoxia</u>, that is, <u>iactantia</u> or <u>uana gloria</u>, which is **vanity** in English or **pomp**, **cockiness**, when a person is <u>eager for praise</u> and <u>filled with vanity</u>."

24   Rearranging the order of the list (cf. Table 1), Ælfric now starts with pride, so all other sins move by one position, whereas SLOTH and SADNESS are inverted (Appendix 1). He follows a familiar pattern, in which some of the concepts are clarified by providing synonyms of the eight vices or other wicked deeds they may lead to. Thus, *asolcennyss* "sloth" is defined through *modes swærniss* and *ungemetegod slapulniss* "mental indolence and excessive sloppiness"; *gyferniss* "gluttony" begets *drunconnysse* "drunkenness" and *oferflowednysse* "overindulgence" (cf. (4)). Vanity is defined against the background of Greek and Latin terms as *gylp* "lit. glory", *getot* "pomp" and *gereht* "cockiness". It is an attractive theory that some of Ælfric's lexical choices and differences with the previous lists might have been conditioned by Wulfstan's request (Appendix 1). A few facts below may point in the same direction.

25   What seems certain is that Wulfstan was working on sins in parallel to Ælfric, using Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* as his main source (Bethurum [1957: 328]; Wilcox [1991: 9-10]). An early short tract by Wulfstan, *De uitis principalibus*, derives its ordering of sins from Alcuin: 1) superbia, 2) gula, 3) fornicatio, 4) avaritia, 5) ira, 6) acedia, 7) tristitia, 8) cenodoxia / vana gloria (*De virtutibus et vitiis* [xxvii–xxxiv]). Wulfstan replicates the same order in Old English with a few interesting additions to our thesaurus.

> (7) DE UITIS PRINCIPALIBUS Micel is eac neodþearf. manna gehwilcum þæt he wið deofolscin. scilde him georne 7 wið þa deofollican eahta leahtras. dæges 7 nihtes. warnige symle. þæt is .i. **modignes**. .ii. **gifernes**. .iii. **galnes**. .iiii. **Gitigendnes**. .v. **weamodnes**. .vi. **Asolcennes**. .vii. **hohfulnes**. .viii **Gilpgeornes**. Of þissan eahta deofles cræftan. ealle unðeawas. up aspringað. 7 siððan tobredað ealles to wide. (Wilcox [1991: 9])
> "On the Principal Vices. It is also very necessary for every person that he diligently shield himself against devilishness and against the devilish eight sins, day and night, always be wary. That is against: .i. **pride**, .ii. **gluttony**, .iii. **lust**, .iiii. **avarice**, .v. **wrath**, .vi. **sloth**, .vii. **anxiety**, .viii. **vainglory**. From these eight devilish crafts, all evil habits spring up and then spread widely.

26   Wulfstan introduces three new items: *gitigendnes* "avarice", *hohfulnes* "anxiety, sadness", and *gilpgeornes* "glory-eagerness, vanity". *Gitigendnes*, a hapax, seems to be derived from the same verbal stem as *gitsung* (> *gitsian* "to covet, desire") but uses a different derivational suffix. *Hohfulnes* is attested five times in the *DOEC*: four in the *The rule of St. Benet*, glossing Latin *sollicitudo* ("anxiety, uneasiness"), and one in a charter attributed to King Æthelred (S914 of doubtful authenticity but dated to c. 1006). *Gilpgeornes* is used two more times, both by Wulfstan. It is conceivable that around this time exchanges between Wulfstan and Ælfric took place, perhaps even involving Wulfstan seeking Ælfric's opinion on his equivalents to the Latin lexemes. The fact that the order of sins in Ælfric's *Second Letter to Wulfstan* matches that in Wulfstan's short tract and its Alcuinian source, while departing from Ælfric's earlier practice (Lees

[1985]), supports this notion. Wulfstan's commission may have prompted Ælfric to revisit Alcuin's treatise and respond accordingly (example 6). In York, Alcuin's heritage was particularly pronounced; once Wulfstan moved there, he likely gained access to a local vernacular lexicon derived from *De virtutibus et vitiis* with fewer parallels to other regional traditions.

27   Whatever the exact nature of the communications between the two authors on this doctrinal point, Wulfstan's subsequent treatment of the lexemes belonging to the sin list in Homily Xc is a revision and a compromise between his earlier usage and that of Ælfric (cf. Tables 1 and 2).

> (8) La, hu mæg man eaðost gehwyrfan fram yfele & fram unrihte, butan þæt man deofol georne forbuge & his undæda ealle oferhogie & wið his unlara geornlice scylde & wið **þa deoflican eahta <leahtras>** dæges & nihtes warnie symle? Ðæt is **gitsung** & **gifernes**, **galnes** & **weamodnys**, **unrotnys** & **asolcennys**, **gylpgeornys** & **ofermodignys**. Of ðyson eahta deofles cræftan ealle unþeawas up aspringað & syðþan tobrædað ealles to wide. (*WHomXc* [Bethurum 1957: 202.60-203.66])
>
> "Lo, how can one most easily turn away from evil and from injustice, unless one diligently avoids the devil and proudly overcomes all his evils and steadfastly shields against his false teachings and constantly guards against the devilish eight vices day and night? That is against **greed** and **gluttony**, **lust** and **wrath**, **sadness** and **sloth**, **vanity** and **pride**. From these eight crafts of the devil, all vices arise and then spread far and wide."

28   Wulfstan retains *þa deofollican eahta leahtras* "the devilish eight vices" (rather than *heafodleahtras* "capital sins" we find in Ælfric) and *gylpgeornys* (vs. *gylp*), but gives up his *gitigendnes* and *hohfulnes* in favour of *gitsung* and *unrotnys*. His ordering now places PRIDE at the end and aligns with the lists we have seen in Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* and *Lives of Saints*, except for *gitsung* which moves into the first slot (Appendix 1). As a result, all four binomials also form appealing semantic, morphological, metrical as well as rhyming and alliterating units.

29   On *modignes*, Wilcox [1991: 10] observes that ""De Uitis Principalibus" [ex. 7] contains a surprising lexical choice in view of Wulfstan's authorship: Wulfstan never uses the word "modignes" elsewhere to express the sin *superbia*". If Wulfstan knew Ælfric's work on the vices and solicited his advice on terminology, it stands to reason that he was willing to negotiate the individual terms and to try out some of the Winchester words. In the end, Wulfstan adopted *ofermodignes* (ex. 8) as his preferred term. The reasons for that may lie in the potentially positive semantics of *modignes*. *Modignes* "pride" is a Winchester coinage (Schabram [1965]; Hofstetter [1987]). It has 157 occurrences in prose but no attestations in poetry. When its base *modig* is used in verse it is connoted positively and occasionally comes up in emphatically positive constructions: *þæt wæs modig secg* (*Beo* 1812; "that was a noble man") referring to Beowulf; *Þæt wæs modig cyn* (*Dan* 7; "that was a noble people") of the Jews preparing to leave Egypt. Hebrew patriarchs in *Hell* (43-46) are described as *monig modig eorl* "many a noble hero" (cf. German *mutig*). It must have been difficult to construe the derivative of *modig* as something sinful. A conflict with secular values was too strong. So, what *ofermodignes* achieves is that it signals that only the excess of *modignes* is reprehensible (but see ex. 10 below).[6]

30   What Ælfric's and Wulfstan's lists ultimately achieve is the creation of a lexicon of sin-words that are all morphologically feminine. This is significant because these lexemes mirror the morphology of their Latin counterparts – seemingly, a deliberate choice. In the iconography of vices, such as the illuminations in the *Psychomachia* in BL, Cotton Cleopatra C.viii (ff. 15v and 19r), vices are depicted as female figures. Moreover, the majority of these lexemes end in *-nes*, which, along with occasional alliterations, creates ample opportunities for rhyme and other stylistic embellishments, e.g., *Crist wunað on eaðmodnysse, and deofol on **modignysse*** (*ChrodR* 1 1.12) "Christ lives in humility, and the devil in pride".

31   Beyond the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan, the capital sins also appear in texts by Byrhtferth and, as might be expected, in vernacular penitential literature. Byrhtferth's lists of sins appear in his *Enchiridion* (*BEnc*), a bilingual commentary on his computus (see Tables 1 and 2). From the evidence of his surviving works, it is "reasonable to infer that he was master at the Ramsey [Abbey] school" (Baker & Lapidge [1995: xxvi]), and in his youth he had been deeply impressed by the visit of Abbo of Fleury to Ramsey in 985-987. Writing in 1011, he was a contemporary of Ælfric and Wulfstan; however, his sin list does not fully align with the one we see being negotiated by those two writers. The sins are discussed twice in *BEnc*. In the first instance, towards the end of the work, Byrhtferth demonstrates the moral application of arithmology, listing eight capital sins:

> (9) Hyt ys gecweden and on halgum gewritum geræd þæt eahta synd heafodgyltas. Se forma is ælces yfeles ord, se ys <u>superbia</u> gehaten. Se oðer <u>inuidia</u>, þæt <ys> **anda**. Se þridda ys <u>ira</u>, þæt <ys> **yrre**. Se feorða ys <u>tristitia</u>, þæt ys **unrotnyss**. Se fifta ys <u>auaritia</u>, þæt ys **gitsung**. Se syxta ys <u>uentris ingluuies</u>, þæt ys **oferfyll**. Se seofoða ys <u>luxuria</u>, þæt ys **galscype**. Se eahtoða ys <u>uana gloria</u>, þæt ys **idel gylp**
> "It is said, and we read in sacred scriptures, that there are eight deadly sins. The first, the source of every evil, is called *superbia* [**pride**]. The second is *invidia*, or **envy**. The third is *ira*, or **anger**. The fourth is *tristitia*, or **sadness**. The fifth is *auaritia*, or **avarice**. The sixth is *uentris ingluuies*, or **gluttony**. The seventh is *luxuria*, or **lechery**. The eighth is *uana gloria*, or **empty boasting**" [ed. and trans. Baker & Lapidge [1995: 238-9]).

32   *BEnc* is notable for its bilingual layout, with many Latin sections followed by an Old English equivalent, and Stephenson [2015: 39] suggests that it may have been created as a supplement to Byrhtferth's teaching activities. In keeping with this organizational rationale, Byrhtferth's list pairs the Latin sins with their Old English equivalents, and following Theodulf does not have separate categories for SADNESS and SLOTH. One exception, *superbia* ("pride"), is named only in Latin; however, when Byrhtferth expands on its treatment as the root of all evil in a postscript (the *Ammonitio amici*), he names the sin in the vernacular as well as in Latin, as he exhorts readers to keep fasts and avoid sin:

> (10) Ærest stæpð <u>se modiga deofol</u> to mid his gefilce and wyle wið minre sawle campian and me upgebredan ælc þære þing þe ic wið God agylte þurh **modignysse**. þæt byð **modignys** þæt ænig man forseo Godes beboda and þa forgymeleasige. Seo **modignyss** ys ealra unþeawe angin and ealra mægna hryre. Æfter þam modigan unþeawe ingæð seo fule <u>fornicatio</u>, seo hatte **fylðe** on Englisc [...] Ealra swyðust deofol gewylt mancyn mid þissum twam unþeawum, þæt ys mid **modignysse** and **galscipe**

> "First <u>the proud devil</u> approaches with his army and wishes to battle for my soul and to reproach me with every occasion when I sinned against God through **pride**. It is **pride** when any man rejects and neglects God's commands. **Pride** is the origin of all sins and the ruination of all virtues. After the sin of pride the foul *fornicatio* (called **uncleanness** in English) attacks [...] The devil subdues mankind most of all with these two sins, that is, with **pride** and **lechery**" (ed. and trans. Baker & Lapidge [1995: 246-7]).

33   Although one sin is depicted as leading to another, as in *ÆCHom*, here only two sins are mentioned. While Ælfric begins his list with GREED as the begetter of LUST, for Byrhtferth LUST develops from PRIDE. In this vision, the devil targets mankind through these twin sins as a gateway to sins of the mind (through PRIDE) and the body (through LUST), and Byrhtferth's wider point warns against making the soul and body a dwelling-place (*eardungstow*) for the devil.

34   In its vocabulary choices, too, Byrhtferth's main list fails to align with those of Ælfric or Wulfstan. By choosing *yrre* over Ælfric's *weamodness*, the *Enchiridion* shows affinities with lists from older traditions, such as *ThCapA* and *ThCapB*, and the second confessional prayer in the Cotton Tiberius manuscript (*CPT2*), while *oferfylle* ("greed") only appears in the confessional prayer in the Royal manuscript (*CPR*) and the *Canons of Theodore*. In its ordering of the sins, Byrhtferth's list partially coincides with that of the *Old English Penitential* (*OEPen*) and shares its first three sins, starting with PRIDE and followed by ENVY and WRATH. However, the labels used for each sin differ; Byrhtferth's *superbia, anda* and *yrre* have no counterparts in *OEPen*'s *ofermetta, nið / æfesta* and *hatheortnes*. For the remainder of the list, the two texts disagree on the order of the sins and even on which ones to include, as *OEPen* omits SADNESS and VAINGLORY (although it does include many of the sins discussed in other penitential works, e.g., stealing, magic and manslaughter). The only two terms on which they agree are *gitsung* ("avarice"), which is fairly stable across the sin lexicon, and *galscyp* ("lust").

35   Byrhtferth's term for LUST, *galscyp*, shares its first element *gal-* ("lust", "wantonness") with *galnes*, the more usual term found in the sin lists. *Galscip* is recorded 22 times in the *DOEC* beyond its use in *BEnc* and *OEPen*. Among these are three examples from texts by Wulfstan (his homily on baptism (*WDB*); *Institutes of Polity* and Cnut's lawcode (*Cnut1*)); it is notable that in *WDB galscyp* appears alongside *oferfylle*, clearly showing links between Wulfstan, Byrhtferth and more confessional-orientated works:

> (11) Scyldað eow wið **gitsunga** 7 wið **gifornessa** [...] And scyldað eow wið **galscypas** 7 swyðe georne wið **æwbrecas**, 7 wið **oferfylle** beorgað eow georne (*WDB* 161-165; Bethurum [1957: 183-184])
> "Protect yourself against **avarice** and **lust** [...] and shield yourself against **fornication**, and especially against **adultery**, and carefully protect yourself against **gluttony**".

36   The other notable use of *galscyp* occurs in various glosses and glossaries, accounting for 10 of the total 22 instances. Three of these are glosses to the *Liber Scintillarum*, three to Aldhelm's prose *De virginitate* (*DLV*), and one each to Book 3 of Abbo of St Germain's *Bella parisiacae urbis* (*BPU*) and the London-Antwerp Glossaries. Porter [2024] makes the case for the Aldhelm and Abbo glosses, and the London-Antwerp glossaries, being produced by a group of scribes working in a monastic school setting (possibly Canterbury, and possibly related to Ælfric's pupil, Ælfric Bata), strongly influenced by Ælfric's pedagogical works (his *Glossary* and *Grammar*). As schoolmaster at Ramsey, it

would be unsurprising for Byrhtferth to have had knowledge of works like *DLV* and *BPU* (and possibly their glossaries), as they formed the cornerstone of more advanced Latin learning in the Anglo-Saxon school curriculum (Porter [2024]), although in many cases the exact manuscripts he had access to remains unknown (Lapidge [1998], [2012]). Nevertheless, it is also apparent that Byrhtferth had a love of (and was strongly influenced by) the language of glosses and glossaries: he "loved the sound of learned, glossary-derived words, in both Latin and Old English, and it is striking that there is considerable overlap between Byrhtferth's ornate, "hermeneutic" vocabulary and the glosses in a small number of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts" (Lapidge [1998: 37]). Indeed, Baker and Lapidge state that, rather than being influenced by the language of glosses from any particular centre, "he was influenced by the language of glosses, whatever their origin" [1995: cx]. It seems, therefore, that Byrhtferth's influences in his sin vocabulary come partly from confessional / penitential sources, and partly from sources related to the Benedictine reform. Unlike Ælfric, he was not directly influenced by Bishop Æthelwold (Ramsey was founded by Bishop Oswald in 966); rather, influence seems to have been more indirect, through glossed teaching texts, some of which seem to have been shaped by scholarly methods developed by a group related to, though perhaps at some remove from, Æthelwold.

37   The capital sins are also detailed in confessional prayers, examples of which can be found in British Library manuscripts Cotton Tiberius C.i (two versions, *CP1* and *CP2*), Cotton Vespasian D.xx (*CPV*), and Royal 2 B.v (*CPR*) (see Tables 1 and 2). These prayers form part of what Frantzen calls the "literature of penance", that is, texts designed to aid the administration of penance, which include penitentials outlining various misdeeds and their accompanying penitential tariff, homilies exhorting their hearers to confession, instructions for confessors, and prayers to be recited by the penitent during private or public confession (Frantzen [1982: 23]). It is clear that these documents were envisaged as playing an important role in the spiritual life of the secular population (Hamilton [2005]), and that confessors were to "teach the laity how to live" (Cubitt [2006: 52]); in his letter to Bishop Wulfsige, Ælfric mentions penitentials as one of the books necessary for priests to own (Dyson [2019: 35]). Nevertheless, the appearance of a confessional prayer in the vernacular does not automatically indicate its intended use by lay penitents; Cubitt [2006: 54] notes that the prayer found in *CPV* is "an encyclopaedic confession which includes admissions of sins for one in orders, including negligence in office and in psalm-singing". Penance was a top-down initiative, and the textual and manuscript evidence shows the involvement of senior churchmen (including Wulfstan) in the development and / or production of texts enabling its administration (Heyworth [2007]). Despite the continued interest of eleventh-century writers and copyists in penitentials and confessional prayers, such material had a long (though perhaps not unbroken) tradition in Anglo-Saxon England, as earlier Latin texts had been exported to Continental Europe in the eighth and ninth centuries, and subsequently reimported by the reformers along with Carolingian penitential works (Frantzen [1983: ch.4]).

38   What is notable about the lists of capital sins provided by the confessional prayers is the wide range of vocabulary used to describe them, a trait the prayers share with the directions for confessors. For example, among the GLUTTONY vocabulary we find *druncennys* ("drunkenness"), *gifernes* ("greediness, avarice, voracity, gluttony"), *gifernes metes 7 drinces* ("greed for food and drink"), *oferfylle* ("excessive eating and drinking"),

oferdruncennes ("drunkenness, intoxication"), *æræt* ("eating before the proper time"), *gytsung* ("greed") and *yfele gewilnung* ("bad appetites"). The confessional texts thus take the opportunity to explore different instantiations of each sin; GLUTTONY is not confined to one meaning, but is variously described as voracity for food and drink, and excessive appetites:

> (12) Ic eom ondetta sodomiscre synne þe hie on gegyltan þæt is geligre, leasunga, gitsunga, getreowleasnesse, yfelre recceleasnesse 7 ðristlæcnesse minra synna. Ic ondette **gifernesse metes** 7 **drinces ærtidum** 7 **in tide ge eac oferriht tide**. Ic ondette ælcre gitsunge cynne þe ic æfre beeode. Ic ondette æfste 7 tælnesse, twyspræcnesse 7 leasunge, ellenhete 7 nið, unnyttes gylpes bigong 7 idle glengas, uncyste 7 idelre oferhygde, orgello […]
> (*CPV*; Logeman [1889a: 98])
> "I confess the sins of Sodom which they were guilty of, that is fornication, lying, avarice, faithlessness, evil recklessness and the boldness of my sins, I confess **gluttony for food and drink, before, during and after the normal time**. I confess every kind of greed which I ever committed. I confess envy and calumny, deceit and lying, jealousy and envy, the undertaking of vain boasting and idle ornament, miserliness and idle arrogance, pride…"

39   Here, the penitent confesses not only to gluttony for food and drink, but also to overindulgence before, after and at dinner time. Many sins are paired; *ellenhete* and *nið* ("envy"), *æfste* and *tælnesse* ("envy" and "calumny"), *twyspræcnesse* and *leasunge* ("deceit" and "lies"). In this way, the penitent is able to explore the different facets of their own sinful behaviour. *Uncyste* and *idelre oferhygde* ("avarice" and "idle pride"), while at first sight incongruous compared to the previous pairings, illustrate how the sins can lead from one to another; vanity and vain ornament (*unnyttes gylpes* and *idle glengas*) lead to miserliness or avarice, but also to pride. In this way, the variation found in penitential texts is functional, and allows them to be used both for public and private penance.

40   Some of the sin terms found in these texts are peculiar to penitential literature, for example *hatheortnes* ("anger"; *CPV, OEPen, Scr*), whose popularity may be due in part to the contrast it forms with the *mildheortness* ("mercy, compassion") the penitents seek from God in the confessional prayers (e.g., *CPV* 89-90). What is certain is that many penitential texts contain dialectally or socially distinctive vocabulary, for example, *morðor* ("murder, mortal sin"; *CPT1, DC1, DC2, Scr*), *oferhygd* ("pride"; *CPV, DC1*) and the phrase *dyrne geligro* ("fornication"; *OEPen* and *Scr*), which are restricted to Anglian texts (Jordan [1906: 106]; Wenisch [1979: 189, 280]; Schabram [1965]). Socially restricted terms are found in *þristlæcnes* ("boldness, audacity"; *CPV*), *ofermetto* ("pride"; *CPV, CPR, OEPen, DC3*), and *ThCapA*'s *ofermedla*, which fall into Hofstetter's [1987] category C words, that is, ones which are avoided by Æthelwold and his Winchester followers. Their varied language underlines the diverse origins and evolution of the penitential and confessional texts.

41   Not only do the confessional prayers and directions for confessors employ numerous terms to describe each sin, they also encompass a wider range of sins than texts such as the *Capitula Theodulfi* or those by Ælfric. In addition to the capital sins, such expanded lists include sins of speech such as *leasunga* ("lying"), *lease gewitnysse* ("bearing false witness"), *mæne aþas* ("swearing false oaths"), *tælnes* ("calumny"), *geflitfulnes* ("quarrelling"), *unnytte word* ("idle speech"); breaches of Christian faith: *unhyrsumnesse* ("disobedience") and *lyblac* ("occult arts"); and the further sins of *twyspræcnysse*

("deceit"), *æðbrycas* ("oath breaking"), *stala* ("theft"), and *morþor* ("murder"). Many items in this list have their roots in the Ten Commandments (Lees [1985: 181-3]), and there are, moreover, some parallels with the sins enumerated by Wulfstan in his *Sermo Lupi*:

> (13) ac wearð þes þeodscipe, swa hit þyncan mæg, swyðe forsyngod þurh mænigfealda synna 7 þurh fela misdæda: ðurh morðdæla 7 ðurh mandæda, ðurh **gytsunge** 7 ðurh **gifernesse**, ðurh **stala** 7 ðurh strudunga, ðurh mansylene 7 ðurh hæðene unsida, ðurh swicdomas 7 ðurh searocræftas, ðurh lahbrycas 7 ðurh æswicas, ðurh mægræsas 7 ðurh **manslihtas**, ðurh hadbrycas 7 ðurh æwbrycas, ðurh siblegeru 7 ðurh mistlice **forlegeru**. (*WHomXX*; Bethurum [1957: 264.129-265.136])
> "but these people, it seems, have sinned so greatly through manifold sins and through many transgressions: through deadly sins and evil deeds, through **avarice** and through **greed**, through **theft** and through robbery, through the wrongful selling of men into slavery and through heathen customs, through deceit and cunning, through law-breaking and through sedition, through attacks on kinsmen and through manslaughter, through violation of holy orders and through adultery, through incest and through various **fornications**".

42   It is in his homilies, with their extensive explorations of his audience's misdeeds, that Wulfstan's discussion of the sins most resembles the lists in penitential literature (see Table 1). Perhaps this should not surprise us, as homilists – including Wulfstan – are well known for their recombining and reuse of earlier material. Bethurum [1957: 318] notes that in *WDB*, lines 156-174, Wulfstan reworks material both from his own homilies (including the selection from *WHomXc* in example 8), along with the *Canons of Edgar*. However, such textual borrowing is not a one-way affair; Wulfstan's sin list from *WHomXc* was reused and added to the end of a confessional text in British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.iii (ff. 54v-55r; Logeman [1889b: 518]), while Byrhtferth's list (example 9) was used along with Wulfstanian material as the basis of the anonymous homily Napier 47 (Napier [1883: 245]; *Fontes*: Byrhtferth *Enchiridion*). It is possible, then, that the homilies are where we see most evidence of the sin vocabulary being reworked for the needs of a lay audience.

5. Conclusions

43   The data on Ælfric and Wulfstan offer a unique lens into the lexical development of both authors, providing insights into their mutual influence and relation to other contemporary sources. They demonstrate that writers who participated in the reform movement continued to work towards a lexicon that could perform a unifying function for church institutions, among which penance was particularly prominent. As the two decades on either side of the year 1000 witnessed a surge in vernacular literature addressing the sins and confession, aimed at educating both the laity and the secular clergy, a compromise between different local traditions, archaic and innovative terms, their secular and religious connotations, as well as Latin sources and vernacular equivalents was probably more than welcome.

44   Since monks of the reformed monasteries, like Ælfric and Byrhtferth, and churchmen of high status, such as Wulfstan, enjoyed considerable prestige, their influence extended to a degree of lexical prescriptivism. The terms they legitimized in their

writings had the potential to become standard. Indeed, some of these terms – such as *gifernes*, *gitsung* or *unrotnes* – achieved wide geographical and chronological reach, while others, particularly those for "pride" or "sloth", exhibited considerable variation. Certain lexemes, especially derivatives ending in *-nes*, like *weamodnes*, appear more "artificial", created to establish equivalence with Latin terms by replicating their grammatical gender and morphological structure.

45 This aspect of the lexicon might have been very appealing to the high-brow monastic intellectuals like Ælfric. Leaders with a broader audience in mind were willing to adopt such terminology, but they were also aware that, to reach their lay congregations and lesser-educated lower clergy, they needed to move beyond abstract debates about the nature of *tristitia* and *acedia* and address more immediate and widespread transgressions. Thus, in Wulfstan's homilies and in the penitentials and confessionals, the sins are lexicalized and categorized differently, in a more practical, hands-on manner. Moreover, the terms in these documents are often found in the company of a wider range of transgressions, allowing listeners or penitents to explore and more precisely identify their own shortcomings.

46 In the end, did the centralized reforms of religious practice lead to lexical standardization? There is limited evidence for the diffusion of some lexemes through individual social ties. On the whole, however, the standardizing process seems to have made little progress between *c.* 1000, when Ælfric and Wulfstan corresponded, and the end of the Old English period. While some focusing and selection of terms may have taken place, our data suggest that the negotiation process was still ongoing. Consequently, when the events of 1066 occurred, these processes were vulnerable to disruption, with the result that today, none of the terms coined by Ælfric, Wulfstan, or Byrhtferth have survived. The lexical efforts of our protagonists reflected their intellectual ambitions and practical needs, but were not sufficiently consolidated by the time of the Norman Conquest, leading to their eventual disappearance from the language.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix

Table 1. Order of the sins in different texts

ThCapA	ThCapB	ÆCHom	ÆLS 16	ÆHom 20	ÆLW	WDUP	WSL	BEnc
gyfernes metes / gyfernis	gyfernys / wambe frecnes	gyfernys	gifernys	modignyss	modignys	modines	gitsung	superbia
unrihthæmed	forliger	galnyss	forliger / ungemetod galnyss	gifernyss	gyfernis	gifernes	gifernes	anda
worulde unrotnes	asolcennes / unrotnes	gytsung	yfel gitsung	unrihthæmed	galnis	galnes	galnes	yrre
gytsung feos	gytsung	weamet	weamodnyss	gitsung	gytsuncg	gitigendnes	weamodnys	unrotnys
ydel gylp	idel wuldor	unrotnys	worulde unrotnyss	weamodnyss	weamodnis	weamodnes	unrotnys	gitsung
æfest	anda	asolcennyss / æmelnys	asolcennys / slæwð	worulde unrotnys	asolcennys / modes swærnis / ungemetod slapulniss	asolcennes	asolcennys	oferfyll

yrre	yrre	ydel gylp	idel gylp	asolcennyss	unrotnys	hohfulnes	gylpgeornys	fylð / galscyp
ofermedla	ofermodnes	modignys	modignyss	idelgylp	gereht / getot / gylp	gilpgeornes	ofermodignys	idel gylp

OEPen	CPV	CPT1	CPT2	CPR	DC1	DC3	Scr
ofermetta	geligre	geligre	gifernys	modignys/ ofermettu/ upahefednys	oferhyd	ofermetta	ofermodignys
nið/ æfesta	gitsung	gitsung	galnys/ unriht hæmed	druncennys/ gyfernys/ oferfyll	gytsunge	æræt; oferdruncolnys	hatheortnys
hatheortnes	gifernes metes 7 drinces	ofermodnys	unrotnys	forliger/ galnys	æfest	unrihthæmed	drunccennys/ untidæt
druncennes	æfst/ ellenhete/ nið		asolcennys	gitsung/ mid gitsigendum mode	ydel gylp	idel gylp	gyrnys oðra manna æhta
galscyp/ dyrne geligro	idle glengas/ unnytt gylp		hyrre	hatheortnys/ weamodnys	unrihthæmed		idel gylp
gytsung	ofermetto/ orgello/ ydel oferhygd		anda	unrotnys	oferdruncennys		æfest/ nið
	hatheortnes		idel wuldor	asolcennys	yrre		
	slacornes/ slapornes/ unmodenes		modignys	gylpes cepte/ gylplic spræc/ idel wuldor/ manna lyffetung/ wlenc			
			gytsung				

Table 2. Lexemes by sin category

		CapThA	CapThB	Ælfric	Byrhtferth
Pride	*Suberbia*	ofermedla	ofermodnes	modignys; superbia	modignys
Avarice	*avaritia*	gytsung feos	gytsung	gitsung; yfel gitsung	gitsung
Envy	*invidia*	æfest	anda		anda
Adultery	*fornicatio*	unrihthæmed	forliger	forliger; galnys; ungemetod galnys; unrihthæmed	fylð; galscyp
Gluttony	*castrimargia;* ventris ingluvies	gyfernes metes	gyfernis; wambe frecnes	drunconnys; gifernys; oferflowednys	oferfyll
Sloth	*accidia*		asolcennes	asolcennys; æmelnys; modes swæenis; slæwð; ungemetod slapulnis	
Sadness of the world	*tristitia*	worulde unrotnes	unrotnes	unrotnes; worulde unrotnes	unrotnys
Vanity	*vana gloria;* iactantia; cenodoxia	ydel gylp	idel wuldor	gereht; getot; gylp; idel gylp; leofgeorn beon; mid gylpe afylled	idel gylp
Wrath	*ira*	yrre	yrre	weamet; weamodnys	yrre

	Wulfstan	Conf. Prayers	OEPen	Dir. confessors
Pride	ofermodignys; pryte	modes morþor; modignys; ofermetto; ofermodnys;	ofermetta	oferhyd; ofermettu; ofermodignys

		orgello; upahefednys; yfel oferhygd		
Avarice	gitsung	gitsung; mid gitsiende mode	gytsung	gytsung; unrihtgitsung
Envy	anda; grama; nið	æfst; ellenhete; nið	æfst; nið	æfest; gyrnys; nið
Adultery	æwbryce; forliger; galnes;sibleger	forliger; galnys;geliger; sodomitisc syn; unrihthæmed	dyrne geligro; galscyp	dyrne gelire; oftrædlic hæmed;unrihthæmed
Gluttony	gifernes; oferfyll	druncennys; gifernes; gifernes metes 7 drinces; oferfylle; yfele gewilnung	druncennes	æræt druncennys; gifernys; oferdruncennys; oferdruncolnys; untidæt
Sloth	asolcennys	asolcennys; slapornes; sleacornes; solcennes; unnyttu wæcce		
Sadness of the world	unrotnys	unmodenes; unrotnys		
Vanity	gylp; gylpgeornes; idel wuldor	gylpes cepte; gylpllicere spræce; idle glengas; idel wuldor; manna lyffetung; menigfeald gleng; unnytt gylp		ydel gylp
Wrath	weamodnys	hatheortnys; hyrre; weamodnys	hatheortnes	hatheortnes; yrre

NOTES

1. See also Porck [2013] for *CPV* and *CPT1*.

2. A fragment from CCCC 320 f.170 is also edited by Fulk & Jurasinski [2012: 81].

3. For a recent English translation, see Stone [2015]: https://www.heroicage.org/issues/16/stone.php.

4. All translations by the authors unless otherwise specified.

5. For a detailed discussion of the differences between the Cassianic and Gregorian treatment of the sins, see Bloomfield [1967: 69-78, 105-106]; for surveys of more recent work on the sins, see Newhauser [2007] and [2012].

6. For an investigation of the meaning of *ofermod* in *The Battle of Maldon*, see Gneuss [1976].

ABSTRACTS

This paper aims to document the coinage and diffusion of sin-lexemes and to evaluate the extent of their regional, chronological, and social reach. It starts by tracing the genesis of these concepts and lexemes in Latin and Old English texts, with a particular focus on their usage during the Benedictine reforms in the second half of the tenth century. Special attention is given to the works of Ælfric of Eynsham (c. 950-1010) and Archbishop Wulfstan (d. 1023), who are known to have collaborated on texts for religious instruction. In addition, the paper examines evidence from anonymous treatises such as the *Capitula Theodulfi* (c. 800, translated into English around the time of Ælfric and Wulfstan), as well as the works of Byrhtferth of Ramsey (c. 970-1020) and penitential literature. Despite the strong link between Ælfric and Wulfstan, comparisons with other contemporary authors, and especially penitentials, reveal that Ælfrician vocabulary did not achieve widespread adoption. This lack of uniformity may have contributed to the limited survival of Old English sin-lexemes into the Middle English period.

Cet article vise à documenter la création et la diffusion des lexèmes du péché et à évaluer l'étendue de leur portée régionale, chronologique et sociale. Il commence par retracer la genèse de ces concepts et lexèmes dans les textes latins et en vieil anglais, en se concentrant particulièrement sur leur usage pendant la réforme bénédictine dans la seconde moitié du dixième siècle. Une attention particulière est accordée aux œuvres d'Ælfric d'Eynsham (c. 950-1010) et de l'archevêque Wulfstan (mort en 1023), qui sont connus pour avoir collaboré sur des textes d'instruction religieuse. De plus, l'article examine les preuves provenant de traités anonymes tels que le *Capitula Theodulfi* (c. 800, traduit en anglais vers l'époque d'Ælfric et de Wulfstan), ainsi que les œuvres de Byrhtferth de Ramsey (c. 970-1020) et la littérature pénitentielle. Malgré le lien étroit entre Ælfric et Wulfstan, des comparaisons avec d'autres auteurs contemporains et, en particulier, les pénitentiels révèlent que le vocabulaire d'Ælfric n'a pas été largement adopté. Ce manque d'uniformité a peut-être contribué à la survie limitée des lexèmes du péché en vieil anglais dans la période moyen-anglaise.

INDEX

Mots-clés: vieil anglais, latin, péchés capitaux, liens sociaux, normes lexicales
Keywords: Old English, Latin, capital sins, social ties, lexical norms

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